SECTION 3
EDUCATION

The history of education in the nineteenth century is for the most part the story of English education in its origin and diffusion. People perceived in this new learning the fulfilment of a historic destiny. The blessings of European literature and science which were conveyed through its agency should not, however, be taken as the necessary sequel to British dominion in India. Much the same influences have been felt during this period in Japan, China and other regions of Asia where the British flag has never flown. Nevertheless, English education has undeniably proved a rich stimulus and a mighty solvent. Under the quickening impulse of its rationalism and humanism, the soul of Bengal was released. The rusty fetters of sophistry and superstition that had cumbered the land so long were snapped. The new learning brought in its train new heresies, but if there was much that was tare along with the wheat in this intellectual outgrowth, the harvest was verily a rich one. The seeds of English education in Bengal were sown never too late. The native springs of learning were being choked up in consequence of economic dislocation and prolonged administrative neglect. The schools of elementary learning settled down to a soulless routine and wasteful formalism. The spirit of enquiry had departed from the agencies of higher learning where imitative pedantry was mistaken for creative imagination and ingenious logic-chopping replaced positive sciences. Even in the favourite field of metaphysical speculation few great names appear to stir the slough of despond.

It was not from dearth of elementary schools that education languished. In 1803 Ward found that in Bengal, "almost all villages possessed schools for teaching reading, writing and elementary arithmetic".¹ In 1835 Adam made a modest reckoning of 1,00,000 schools in 1,50,748 villages comprised in the province. A singular feature of these village schools was the uniformity that characterised them throughout India, inspite of local diversities. Housed in shabby strawbuilt structure or held in open air under shady trees, and run by teachers who were "little respected and poorly rewarded", these schools nevertheless, responded to the eminently practical needs of a poverty-stricken people. These were essentially secular institutions and in Bengal the Kayasthas constituted the majority of the teachers. Children began at the age of five or six and received about five years of schooling. They tried their hands in forming letters of the alphabet on ground and then proceeded to writing on palm-leaf, plantain leaf, and finally on paper with ink made of lamp-black. Books were in rare use and their introduction by the School Book Society in 1819, was resented as a new-fangled contrivance to inculcate Christianity. In the Report of the same Society in 1824, we observe that the managers of the schools had to be solemnly reassured on this score before their squeamish objections
could be waived. Manuscript copies of learned works as the Chanakya-
Sloka, the Datakarna, the Gangabandana, etc., were occasionally em-
ployed probably as a melancholy reminder of a more enlightened age when
these schools were interlinked with higher institutions through secondary
agencies of learning. Such useful bridgeheads, if they had ever existed
before, had fallen into irredeemable ruin, and Adam noted that "the
prosperity or depression of learning in any locality does not imply the
prosperous or depressed condition of vernacular instruction, and that the
two systems of instruction are wholly unconnected with, and independent
of, each other". The faulty orthography of the few manuscripts in use
confirmed the errors of the pupils. In the annual report of Seal's Free
College in 1868-69, the Headmaster, who was one of the oldest citizens of
Calcutta, wrote of these pupils, "In fact, every writer had his own way of
spelling words, and his language was not only desultory but mixed up with
Persian terms and technicalities handed down to us from time immemorial
by the predecessors of our present rulers". The schools excelled in the
study of mental arithmetic through the masterly compendium of the rules
of Subhankar and provided for commercial and agricultural accounts of an
essentially utilitarian character. The democratic nature of these schools is
exhibited by the presence of students of the lower castes e.g., Bagdis,
Sunris and Chandals and also of Muhammadans, both as scholars and
teachers in these schools, and it receives additional confirmation from the
customary use of the highly economical and effective method of the
monitor-pupil system which was to be later transplanted to England by Dr.
Bell. Discipline was enforced in these institutions in a rough and ready
manner by the lusty exercise of the cane as well as numerous forms of
sadistic infliction which are recounted with lively details by Lal Behari
Dey* and Rev. Long. One grave limitation of these schools did not escape
the notice of foreign observers. Buchanan believed that these schools
tended "rather to narrow the mind to sordid gain and low cunning than to
improve the heart and enlarge the understanding". Adam also was struck
by "the narrow and contracted selfishness" of the native character which
he ascribed to the absence of any training in these schools in wider civic
consciousness or in the cultivation of the generous impulses of youth.

The Muhammadan institutions known as the Makhtabs, laid natural
emphasis on the teaching of the Koran but superciliously neglected
arithmetic and vernacular as well as other means of practical instruction.
The frequent use of manuscripts served 'to stimulate the intellect and form
the taste', and the curriculum was 'more comprehensive and liberal than
that of the Bengali schools'. Careful attention was devoted to epistolary
composition which forms a distinctive and graceful feature of Persian
literature. The teachers possessed much superior attainments and enjoyed
higher salary averaging about Rs. 7/- a month, as against the Guru-
Mahassayas who were maintained on a precarious pittance of Rs. 3/- to
Rs. 5/- in cash and kind. The Arabic schools, which were fortunately very
few, were conducted by "Kath-Mullahs" whose pretentious ignorance qualified them for nothing better than the training of a similar race of the "lowest grade of Musalman priests". Wealthy Muhammadans occasionally supplemented the meagre school instruction with domestic tuition by Akhuns and a lower order of tutors called Ataliks (mentors). Domestic instruction was not confined to Muhammadans alone. It was sometimes the luxury of Zamindars, Talukdars and persons of "straitened resources but respectable character". In some of the poorest localities again, it was the desperate device of solicitous parents who clubbed together to maintain a teacher for their wards because no local schools existed.  

Higher education for the Hindus was imparted in the Tols. Besides offering gratuitous tuition, it was the customary duty of the teachers in Bengal, and of the Mithila Pandits who conformed to the Bengal tradition, to lodge and feed their students, though such generous practice did not prevail in the neighbouring provinces of Bihar and Orissa. Of the many princely assignments of rent-free lands which once enabled the learned Brahmins to maintain these institutions, a few survived in the beginning of the 19th century and were mostly the gifts of Rani Bhabani of Natore or Maharaja Krishna Chandra of Nadia. Gifts to professors and students were considered meritorious and where these sources fell short, it was deemed no disgrace for the students to go a-begging for their upkeep. The long vacation extended up to five months in the Nyaya Tols and two months in others. Besides, the frequent absence of the teachers was often imposed by the necessity of the impeccunious Pandits going on a tour in quest of petty donations and Vidayas or honorific presents on ceremonial occasions. The Tols must have fallen into evil days for lack of official patronage but Adam computed their total at 1800 in Bengal, on an average of 100 such Tols in every district.  

The plausibility of his conjecture is strengthened by the fact that 1801 Hamilton found 190 such Tols in 24-Parganas, and 150 schools of Hindu law alone with 5 to 20 scholars in each in the district of Hooghly. Buchanan found 119 Tols in Purnea, 34 professors in Rangpore, while in Dinajpur only 7 out of 22 thanas kept 16 schools of Sanskrit learning. In 1818 Ward came across 28 Tols in Calcutta and 17 or 18 such schools at Jyunjugur and Mujilee Puru (Jaynagar and Majilpur) and several schools at Andolee (Andul), Bhatpara, Vansvariya, Gundulpura and Bhudreshwuru (Bharodeswar), all in the vicinity of Calcutta. In the classic centre of learning at Nadia he enumerated 31 schools with 747 scholars. In 1829 Wilson ascertained on personal enquiry the existence of 25 such Tols with about 600 pupils in the same locality. Nadia attracted students from Assam, Nepal, Tirhoot and the extreme south, while Bengali students went out of their province to supplement their education. The Nadia schools stuck to their venerable tradition and specialised mostly in Nyaya and Smriti. The course of studies in other schools of Bengal included literature, grammar, law, logic, the systems of philosophy, the Puranas, the Tantras and medicine. The study of astrology was despised by intellectuals though it
was profitable and widely popular. Curiously enough, Vedanta schools scarcely existed. Raja Nobokissen's attempt to transplant this branch of learning to Bengal by importing trained scholars from Benares, as noted by Buchanan, failed of its purpose. Vedic studies proved a delicate exotic in the Tantric mental climate of Bengal and Adam found no Vedanta schools worth mentioning. The study of Alamkara (poetics), Tantras and of astronomical works was estimated by Adam to have acquired wider popularity since the review by Ward in 1818. Adam came across 24 Tols in Murshidabad, 56 Tols in Birbhum and 190 Tols in Burdwan district with an average of 7 pupils for each school in 1838; while in Rangpur alone he had enumerated 38 Tols with 397 pupils in 1836. The onerous character of the Tol study is borne out by the fact that the students entered the schools between the age of 9 to 15 and stayed on till 30 to 35. This long duration was often necessitated by frequent interruption in study in consequence of the absence of teachers. Teaching was the prerogative of the Brahmans except in the sphere of medical education where Vaidya professors were allowed. The pupils also were mostly Brahmans with a sprinkling of Vaidyas, Kayasthas or Vaishnavas, etc., "who were permitted to study such portion of sciences as were composed by mere men". Scholarship was held in high estimation even though it was often in inverse ratio to its economic return. The character and the accomplishments of the teachers extorted the glowing admiration of foreigners. Buchanan reverently noted, "The Brahmans, generally speaking, have an intelligence and acuteness far beyond other Hindus. I am further inclined to think that they are subject to many fewer vices and that those persons will be found to approach nearest the good qualities, who are admitted even to the porch of science". Adam speaks with equal fervour of their discrimination, mildness and unaffected humility and adds refreshing testimony to their unexpected eagerness for European science and learning in so far as these do not run counter to their basic religious tenets. The amount of authorship shown to exist in the different districts in 1838 was rightly interpreted by Adam as a luminous index of the intellectual activity. The obituary notices in the Samachar-Chandrika on the death of the Pandits in different parts of the country are also indicative of the high respect they commanded in society, even when the state had turned its back on their labours.

The Madrassas, as agencies of Islamic education, were in general, less systematic and organised than the Tols. The parental relation that linked the Guru and his pupils in the Tols was not so strongly marked here, nor was the practice of students living on the bounty of the teachers so widely prevalent. Again, the Muslim endowments were invariably assigned to institutions. But the Hindu land-grants or donations were usually personal gifts to Pandits and their heirs, of course, on the tacit understanding that these should be utilised for public instruction—a sacred trust which was often scrupulously executed by the less enlightened descendants of the donees by procuring the service of some learned man
as a substitute. In the early years of the nineteenth century the Madrassas were found by Buchanan to be as much frequented by the Hindus as by the Muhammadans. The use of Persian as the language of the courts and revenue transactions had stimulated its study among all. Persian was the language of the Akhbars or intelligencers of the native courts and of the printed newspapers of the educated classes in the days of Adam. The Hindus are said to have taken seriously to the study of Persian during the rule of Sikandar Lodi. A strong impetus was given to it later by the Emperor Akbar who had opened the Madrassa to Hindus. No wonder that the Hindus addressed themselves to the study of Persian with the same zeal as the Muhammadans and in the estimate of Adam, both acquired the same proficiency in the written language "that educated Englishmen have of their mother tongue". The Hindu students outnumbered the Muhammadans in the six districts surveyed in the Third Report of Adam in 1838 and counted 2087 over 1409 Muhammadans. There were 14 teachers of Persian who were Hindus, while the remaining 715 teachers of Persian and Arabic were all Muhammadans. Arabic was studied by 149 Muhammadans and only 9 Hindus of whom one was a Brahmin of Tirhoot. The Maharaja of Burdwan financed two Persian schools and in Murshidabad five Hindu families maintained Persian teachers for the benefit of all. The Madrassa at Hooghly and the one in the same district at Sitapore found respectful mention in the First Report of Adam in 1835, but surprisingly enough there is no reference to any school of higher Islamic learning in Dacca. The systematic use of manuscripts in the Persian schools gave them an advantage over the Bengali schools as an "aid to stimulate the intellect and form the taste." The course of Persian instruction was given a higher rating by Adam 'for its more liberal character and comprehensive tendency than that pursued in the Bengali schools". The paucity of information in Adam and in Buchanan about these institutions of Muslim learning and the meagre number specified may be suggestive of a greater measure of educational degradation among Muslims. In 1801 only one school of Muslim law was found in Murshidabad against 20 for instruction in Hindu law and customs.

In 1836 in the district of Rajshahi Adam came across only one Madrassa at Kusheh Bagha 'with no organisation or discipline', while there existed 40 schools of Hindu learning. In the absence of state patronage, Tols and Madrassas depended alike on spasmodic private philanthropy. The course of Persian study began with the alphabet and comprised the formal reading of Koran, 'the Pandnameh', the "Amandnameh", the "Gulistan", the "Bostan". "Joseph and Zuleikha, Jamil Kawanin", "Insba Yar Mahomed", "Secandernamah", "Danish", etc. "In the Arabic schools", observes Adam, "the course of study takes a much wider range". The Arabic syllabus comprised Munshaib, Taarif, Sarf Mir, Miat Amils, etc., besides geometry of Euclid, Ptolemaic astronomy, natural philosophy and metaphysics. It is gratifying to learn that
some of the Persian teachers had literary compositions to their credit while four of the Arabic teachers in South Bihar and Tirhoot were authors of high repute for learning. But a few sparks of isolated brilliance could not redeem this formal and scholastic system from the listlessness that stifled it. The Annual Reports for 1844 and 1845 (pp. 87-88) sounded a note of despair on the effect which the Madrassas in general and the Hooghly Madrassa in particular had on the students. "Their intellect and feelings remain uncultivated and self-conceit strengthens their prejudices. To obtain the education they spend eight years, but few of them who attempt to obtain it succeed". The verdict recalls to our mind the caustic indictment of his old tutor, Mullah Shah by Aurangzeb for having imparted to him a laborious education which ended in the "dry, unprofitable and never-ending task of learning words" and its only effect was "to fatigue and ruin the intellect and to render a man headstrong and insufferable". Indeed, the system was felt to have long outlived its utility and vigorous re-organisation was sorely needed.

Besides these recognised organs of education one should not lose sight of the various impalpable but none the less living agencies, through which culture could be widely diffused among the illiterate masses. The Jatras (Mystery-play), the Kathakata (Recitation of epic themes), the Marionettes, the Kirtan, the contest of wit among the Kaviyals, all combined to enliven the mind of the people with a rich tincture of culture and redeem it from the sterilising influence of illiteracy. In the words of Rabindranath Tagore, "the education under discipline soaked into the heart of the people as education of delight and was integrated with the vital processes of society". The silting up of these spontaneous channels of mass culture during the British rule was a ruinous loss which the poet bitterly deplored.

The beginning of English education in Bengal is to be sought in private enterprise and in the intuitive appreciation by the people of its material and moral benefits. Pioneer efforts were made by Eurasians as purely commercial ventures. "Sherbourne kept a school in Jorasanko quarter where Dwarkanath Tagore learned the English alphabet. Martin Bowl in Amratolla taught the founder of the wealthy Seal family. Aratoon Petroos was another who kept a school of 50 or 60 Bengali lads". Puerile distiches linking up English words with their Bengali synonyms formed the essential scholastic pabulum; and "to write a good hand was far more important than to understand what was read, for to be a copyist or book-keeper was the destiny of the majority". In the opinion of Adam, till 1820, such schools even when they were run by "Europeans of reputed talents and acquirement" failed to secure a "humble livelihood". Probably the expensiveness of these schools restricted access to many poor aspirants. In his letter of February 2, 1824, to Rev. Henry Ware of Cambridge, U.S.A., Ram Mohan Roy felt himself "fully justified in stating that two-thirds of the native population of Bengal would be exceedingly glad to see their children educated in English learning." So strong an impetus
was imparted to English education in the ensuing decade that in 1835 Adam remarked that a school in which English language was not taught was sure to dwindle away.\textsuperscript{14} Gleanings from contemporary native journals fortify Adam's views on the pace of progress. The \textit{Sambada-Prabhakar} of 26 January, 1828, assessed the total number of students reading English in Calcutta, at 1000. In a memorandum submitted to the General Committee of Public Instruction in 1833, David Hare estimated the total number of students receiving education in English in all stages at three thousand. His figure was no broad guess-work but was computed from the reports of inspectors of the Calcutta School Society. On July 12, 1834, the 'Enquirer' reckoned the exact roll-strength of certain specified institutions at 1868. This list, however, does not include institutions of whose existence we are aware from contemporary newspapers, as for example, the free school for Hindus at Bhowanipur founded by Jagamohan Basu in about 1800 A.D., besides several morning schools run mostly by zealous ex-students of the Hindu College in the third decade of the century.\textsuperscript{17} The mixture of motives which whetted the new appetite for English was graphically summed up in a resolution of the villagers of Andool for the opening of an English school in their locality on July 28, 1838. In their opinion, English language "is at present the official language, it is lucrative, highly beneficial, a source of respectable living for the indigent gentry and of praise and prestige for the rich, an instrument of securing their property, a means for stimulating compassion, culture, knowledge and courage among the common people, etc."\textsuperscript{18} The different agencies which were at work to swell the feeble current of the first two decades of the century into a mighty spate in the thirties should now be reviewed.

The East India Company confined itself in the main to an exclusively Oriental education. In response to a petition from the Muslim gentry Warren Hastings founded the Calcutta Madrassa in 1781 by payment of £ 6,000/- out of his own pocket, for which he was subsequently reimbursed by the Company. The communal balance was redressed by the opening of the Sanskrit College at Benares in 1792 by Jonathan Duncan. In order to placate orthodox sensibilities the internal discipline and the list of holidays of these institutions were placed in strict conformity to scriptural dispensations. The spirit of research was kindled by the foundation of the Asiatic Society in January, 1784, as a semi-official centre of Europeans only. Indians were not admitted to its jealously guarded confines till 1829. Minto's lament in his historic Minute of March 6, 1811, over "the progressive state of decay of science and culture among the natives of India" roused the conscience of the British Parliament which had been impervious to the passionate appeals of Charles Grant between 1792 and 1797, and to the evangelical fervour of William Wilberforce. These two had vainly pleaded for sending school-masters and missionaries to India, 'tending to the advancement of useful knowledge and to religious and moral improvement'. The Charter Act of 1813 provided a
sum of not less than one lakh of rupees in each year "for the revival and improvement of literature and for the introduction and promotion of the knowledge of sciences". It is memorable only as a moral gesture signifying the assumption of responsibility of education by the Government. But the disbursement of the sum was optional and it remained a mere paper clause till 1823. Meanwhile indigenous as well as missionary efforts were vigorously at work. The Hindu College, 'Vidyalaya' founded in Calcutta in 1817 with only 20 pupils, was the brain-child of David Hare and Ram Mohan Roy. In its plan to impart secular education to respectable Hindus in the English and Indian languages and in the literature and science of Europe and Asia, it symbolised the noblest aspiration of a generation which valued the new education not only as a sordid bread-winning device but as an elevating intellectual and moral discipline. Incidental reference is found to the establishment of a college in Burdwan in 1817 by Maharaja Tejeschandra in the testimony borne by one who professed to have been its Principal, Charles Du Bordieux, in the historic law suit of Protapchand, on May 31, 1836.¹⁹ The Serampore College was founded in 1818 by the famous Serampore trio, Carey, Marshman and Ward, with the avowed object of conversion by training up a devoted band of Native Evangelists, but it extended to other youths the benefit of its instruction in 'Eastern Literature and European Science', without any offence to their conscientious feelings. Making due allowance for English as a subject for special and advanced study the noble founders of the College had the prescience to realise that "the hope of imparting a sound education to the people of the country, through the medium of a language not their own, was altogether fallacious". (The Story of Serampore and its College, pp. 24-25). The Bishop's College (1819) admitted a few non-Christians though it was intended for the training of the Indian clergy. In the sphere of elementary education a beginning had been made in 1817 by the School Book Society which distributed text books in English and vernacular and enjoyed a government grant for sixty years. The sale-record of their books is a clear index of the mounting popularity of English. Their report of 1830 shows the sale of 9,616 English books against 10,074 Bengali books.²⁰ But in 1835 they sold two books in English for one book in Bengali. The Calcutta School Society which occupied itself primarily with schools for the masses and with the preparation of necessary teachers, ran an English school at Patanānga as supplementary to its Vernacular school in the neighbourhood and preparatory to the Hindu College. Classes were so arranged as to enable the boys attending Vernacular schools in the morning and afternoon to join the English school from 10-30 a.m. to 2-30 p.m. Admission to the English classes was a privilege wistfully sought by boys who literally besieged the gate of the school. This English school was the sole survivor in the general wreckage of all the institutions of the Society consequent on its financial disaster in 1833. It still continues in a prosperous condition and perpetuates the name of the man who shunned the Church to tread the path of Christ.
and whose life of sacrifice and generous exertions for endearing education to the Bengali boys won for him 'the singularly inappropriate sobriquet of Padre Hare'. The General Committee of Public Instruction was set up in 1823, the year when the first grant was made, and it marks a "turning point in the history of Indian education". Acting on the suggestion of H. H. Wilson the Committee abandoned the project of a Sanskrit College at Nadia and organised the Calcutta Sanskrit College in the hope that 'the educated classes among the Hindus should, through the medium of their sacred language, be imbued with a taste for European literature and science'. Ram Mohan's memorable protest was overruled in a cavalier manner by the General Committee on the 2nd January, 1824, on the specious plea the "it bears the signature of one individual alone, whose opinions are well-known to be hostile to those entertained by almost all his countrymen". The generous aid by the Committee saved from impending extinction the Hindu College whose roll strength had declined by 1824 to 107, of whom 25 only were pay scholars and the monthly income had fallen to a paltry sum of Rs. 100/-.

English classes were grafted on Oriental Colleges like the Calcutta Madrassa and the Sanskrit College at Calcutta and Benares and the Agra College (1832). District English schools were established at Delhi and Benares. The printing of Sanskrit and Arabic books and the translation of European scientific works into Arabic were undertaken at an inordinate expense. The Committee interested itself with the education of the people and sought relevant information from its local agents in September, 1823, but no reply to the query is recorded.

English schools cropped up under the fostering care of the Calcutta Diocesan Committee, the Church Missionary Society, London Missionary Society, etc., but their achievements were eclipsed by the General Assembly's Institution of the Church of Scotland. It was founded by Alexander Duff in 1830 in a crusading zeal "to kill Hinduism by striking it at its brain, Calcutta". Rammohan rendered willing assistance to Duff in his educational efforts. The Hindu College had given the lead to the formation of native schools, both as 'pay schools' and on a gratuitous basis. The noble Rammohan averted sectarian bickering by his self-effacement in the management of the Hindu College and opened an English school at Simulia. The Union School and the Oriental Seminary of Gour Mohun Audy were notable triumphs in this direction. Even the backwaters of the mofussil were stirred to new vigour by the signal success of the schools at Taki and Birbhum under the patronage of enlightened landlords. Among free schools honourable mention must be made of the one founded by Jagamohan Bose which was in its thirtieth year of existence in 1829 when its pupils numbered 900, and some of them had made enough progress to be able to "grapple with difficult and abstruse books in English". Several schools were run by ex-students of the Hindu College. The Hooghly College, founded in 1836, stimulated its students to start two schools in the same locality on the completion of their education. As a token of the blatant secularism that animated these institutions we find the founders of the
Hindu Free School on September 10, 1831, vaunting of their unconcealed abhorrence of Hinduism and their scepticism to all religions whatsoever—a strange gospel which the neophytes of Young Bengal had presumably imbibed from their inspiring angel, Henry Vivian Derozio. Yet it was no mean encomium for Derozio that his pupils who derided customary norms were deemed incapable of any sham or falsehood. To him the members of the Academic Association owed their unwanted ardour for truth, social reform and intellectual integrity.

The Court of Directors watched developments. In their letter of February 18, 1824, they insisted on utility as the primary test, though they were prepared to make allowance for Hindu and Muhammadan media, or to consult special prejudices so far as these were compatible with useful learning. In their letter of September 5, 1827, they felt that "a little skill and address is in most cases all that is necessary to remove the prejudices of the natives, which fortunately on the subject of education does not appear to be too strong". On September 28, 1830, they had "the gratifying assurance that the higher classes of our Hindu and Muhammadan subjects are ripe for still further extension among them of European education and European science and literature. In the minutes of Evidence before the Parliamentary Committee on the Affairs of the E.I.Co., in 1832, Holt Mackenzie, James Sullivan, Lushington and others testified that the natives in Bengal were generally anxious and willing to learn English. English had already replaced Persian as the language of diplomatic correspondence and some of the Vernacular papers were urging its substitution for Persian as the language of judicial business. The rising tide of popular enthusiasm had its effect on the General Committee where the five younger members were ardent Anglicists, and in 1835 they had been locked in a tie with the Classicists for about three years. The prodigious literary prestige of T.B. Macaulay who was the President of the Committee tipped the balance. His renowned Minute was submitted to the Governor-General in Council in February 2, 1835. Its fanfare of rhetoric and cascades of satire swept away the lingering vestige of misgiving from the mind of Bentinck and the award of 7th March was proclaimed. Without waiting for the report of Adam who had been engaged by the Government for conducting and exhaustive enquiry about popular education, it pledged the British Government to the promotion of 'European literature and science among the natives of India', and declared that "all the funds appropriated for the purposes of education would be best employed on English education alone". Expenditure on Oriental publications was to cease. No fresh stipend was to be hereafter awarded to students in institutions of Oriental learning which were, however, to continue.

The incisiveness of Macaulay's invectives upon Oriental learning is blunted by his stupendous ignorance of the same. His peremptory dismissal of the claims of the Vernacular can be condoned because none of the
parties who entered the fray did hold its brief and so its case obviously went by default. Moreover, Macaulay was not utterly insensible to the supreme need of the Vernacular. The report for 1836 of the General Committee of which he was the President observes, "We concede the formation of a Vernacular literature to be the object to which all our efforts must be directed".\textsuperscript{24} If the case of the Vernacular as the medium of education came to be disposed of in later years only by passing compliments about its importance by successive administrators and by a supercilious native intelligentsia, the cause must be probed deeper in social factors that favoured this attitude than in the myth of the inexorable fiat of an individual holding a nation spell-bound for more than a century. But the most invincible weapon in Macaulay's armoury for the defence of English was flaunted in the following terms: "In India, English is the language spoken by the ruling class. It is spoken by the higher class of natives at the seat of Government. It is likely to become the language of commerce throughout the seas of the East". As the Messiah of the new light from the West, Macaulay had the temperamental imbalance of an apostle whose zeal often outran his discretion. He was besides, a typical Whig of his age with his pathetic faith in the emergence of a public-spirited middle class as the custodian of the new learning and its subsequent purveyor to the masses in their own language. He hailed with prophetic augury the day when European knowledge must spur the people to demand European institutions. His capacious mind could foresee with equanimity the "imperishable Empire of our arts, our morals, our literature and laws" even when British dominion in India will have gone into the limbo of the past.\textsuperscript{25}

The Resolution of March 7, 1835, cut the Gordian knot. It not only determined the policy of the Government but accelerated native effort which expressed itself in a prolific growth of private institutions for teaching English in Calcutta and the mofussil. The Vernacular papers from 1835 to 1840 bristle with these records. Even the inhabitants of the French settlement at Chandernagore felt the need of English education for which they were ready with contributions to supplement the grant of the Pondicherry authority.\textsuperscript{26} Macaulay threw himself into the task of organising the new institutions with a crusading zeal to which, "in all probability, English education owes more than to his Minute".\textsuperscript{27} Besides the Medical College, six new schools were founded. The Government started with 14 institutions in 1835 and had under its control in 1837, 48 institutions with 5,196 pupils of whom 3,729 were in Anglo-Vernacular schools and colleges. The Hooghly College which was started in 1836 was, to become "the nursery of Bengali literature". It was financed by appropriation from the Hajee Mohsin Trust Fund. There was a hectic flush of about 1500 admissions in the course of the year in the English section in which the Muhammadans constituted an inconspicuous minority. Even after the primary excitement had subsided, the English pupils numbered 150 towards the close of 1837.\textsuperscript{28} The disgruntled Orientalists still stuck to a
forlorn cause and continued their efforts to procure a repeal of the Resolution of 1835. The controversy was finally set at rest by Lord Auckland’s Minute of November 24, 1839, which was conceived in the spirit of a judicious compromise. At an additional cost of Rs. 31,000/- only to the Government Auckland could guarantee the maintenance of the existing Oriental institutions without relaxing the effort for English education. "Vernacular instruction was to be combined with English, full choice being allowed to pupils to attend whichever institutions they might individually prefer". Meanwhile Adam had submitted his report at three stages on July 1, 1835, December, 23, 1835 and on April 28, 1838. The last Report embodied a concrete scheme of Vernacular education and trenchantly exposed the absurdity of any scheme of national education through the medium of English. Brian Hodgson, an erudite authority on Tibet, poured unmixed scorn at the fantastic unreality of the project of "the training of a promiscuous crowd of English smatterers". But the paucity of suitable text-books and efficient teachers and the failure of the plan of Vernacular education at Chinsurah, Dacca, Bhagalpore, Saugor and in the Ajmere district weighed heavily with Auckland. His personal preference for English at the expense of the Vernacular was evident in his opposition to the contrary counsel of James Mill but he allowed his convictions to be moderated by the logic of circumstances. (Ballhatchett’s articles on the subject in the Cambridge Historical Journal 1951 and 1954). Scarcity of funds was the rock on which all schemes of popular education were wrecked — "There are more villages at the Presidency than we have rupees annually at our disposal". Auckland advised patience in awaiting the results of rival experiments of English and vernacular education then under way in Bengal and Bombay respectively. Higher education in English was to be intensified by a project of 9 Central Colleges supported by feeder schools at every district. The 'stipend' system which encouraged apathetic laggards was to be replaced by a scheme of Senior and Junior scholarships for English and Oriental education. English Senior scholarships were of more than double the value of the Oriental, as more remunerative jobs were always available to entice such students away. The Annual Report for 1839-40 provides an abstract of the categories of employment with corresponding salaries for students of Government schools and colleges. There were 328 teachers and 128 vakils in the grade of Rs. 15 to Rs. 60, 170 writers getting Rs. 10 to Rs. 100, while 23 Deputy Collectors and 7 Sudder Ameens got Rs. 300 a month and 2 Abkari Superintendents earned the highest salary of Rs. 500 a month. Government purse-string was being slowly relaxed and the educational fund was increased from Rs. 4,00,000 in 1836 to Rs. 5,50,000 in 1840. In 1842 the General Committee was replaced by a more powerful body, the Council of Education which clung tenaciously to the filtration theory with its emphasis on higher education, which had been initiated by its predecessors. The Council directed its efforts to the improvement of the quality of text-books and teachers and organised regular system of examinations
which eventually became passports to public employment with Hardinge's Resolution of October 10, 1844. Even for the lowest offices it was declared that "persons who can read and write are to be preferred to those who can not". The system of examination provoked complaints from missionary institutions on grounds of discrimination in favour of the syllabus pursued in Government Colleges which, by the way, was denounced as a godless scheme of education based on the exclusion of the Bible. The Council in 1845 recommended the scheme of a University as an impartial examining body to set the standard of excellence. But it suffered the fate of an idea born before its time. Certain contemporary reflections on the norms of education may not be out of place here. The standard of fitness attained in the Senior Scholarship examination was considered "fully equal in extent to the Bachelor's examination of Oxford, Cambridge and Dublin", and "the creditable skill and proficiency" of the Medical Graduates were 'on a par with those required from graduates of most British Universities'.

The syllabus in some schools was exceedingly various, comprising, *inter alia*, astronomy, pneumatics, optics, natural philosophy, use of globes, poetry, Hindustani etc. Sensible people had a cynical suspicion that the real progress made in schools was often "in inverse ratio to the number of books studied". The list of examiners included venerable names like those of Macaulay, Trevelyan, Cameron, Prinsep, Dr. Grant and Principal Mill. Unfair practices of stowing in papers under ample robes in loose slippers by candidates to the examination-hall were not unknown, though these very rarely occurred. The tendency to cramming which has been a chronic pest of the Indian education system was already disconcertingly apparent. People who scoffed at this evil seldom stooped to consider that the inordinate strain of learning an utterly foreign language under sheer necessity, frequently with insufficient tutorial aids, compelled cramming. It was besides, an odious symptom of the anxiety neuroses to which the students were prone lest the avenues of higher education and better careers should be closed to them for lack of proper linguistic equipment. Their situation was not dissimilar to that of English boys, as depicted in Tom Brown's Schooldays (1841) conning the rules of Latin grammar which they detested before the reforms of Arnold at Rugby. Yet on an overall estimate it was observed that "the students of our Colleges receive a really good education, the best or about the best that is given anywhere in Asia".

Vernacular education kept up a sturdy and unequal struggle. An attempt to improve upon the indigenous schools by a new scheme of Vernacular education began with the missionaries. William Carey was the precursor of this new experiment and his school at Mudnabatty (Maldah) had 40 boys when he left the place for Serampore in 1799. Ellerton's school in Maldah in the beginning of the century was followed up by Robert May's scheme of a network of schools which covered the field from Kana to Chandernagore with its centre at Chinsurah. On his death in 1818, May left 36 schools with 3,600 pupils. Some of the schools
continued till 1836, when with the opening of the Hooghly College they were believed to have outlived their period of utility and were closed down. But these Vernacular schools had served their historic mission. In the opinion of the Friend of India 25th July, 1839, these had "cleared away all prejudices and imparted both the desire and the capacity for receiving any education the Committee might think of bestowing". James Stewart opened 10 schools in Burdwan in 1818. The Serampore missionaries maintained 21 schools which, being free, pushed out of existence the poor village schools. The Calcutta School Society which began its labour in 1818 had on its rolls in 1828, 6,126 students in 148 schools. In 1839, the Hindu College attempted a bold scheme of advanced national education comprehending the study of political economy, moral philosophy and geometry entirely in Bengali. In 1854 Rev. Long was agreeably surprised to find 200 students in this affiliated Pathshala "who pay 8 annas each- and that for Vernacular education". Effect was given to Act. XXIX of 1837 in the following year when the Vernacular was made the language of the judicial proceedings. In 1844 Hardinge found the moment opportune for opening 101 vernacular schools which were eventually smothered by administrative indiscretion of the Board of Revenue under which they were placed. The Inspector, "who knew nothing of Bengali reported on these schools and was even requested to draw up a scheme of school-books for them", while overworked Collectors were instructed to supervise a system which, it was complained, "held no prospects of temporal advancement". No wonder that the students thrust their books into the masters' hands and insisted on English education which had acquired a new value in terms of livelihood. The schools languished and were transferred to the control of the Council of Education in 1852. Halliday, the Lt. Governor of Bengal in his Minute of March 24, 1854, formulated a plan of Model Vernacular schools based on a close adherence to the existing institutions of the country and entrusted its execution to the indefatigable Vidyasagar who was then the Principal of the Sanskrit College. Vidyasagar began the experiment with 5 schools in each of the four districts under his charge in 1856 and provided for a normal school for the training of teachers who were to practise their art in the Hindu College Pathshala.

The Education Despatch of 1854 going under the name of Sir Charles Wood (though Alexander Duff and C. H. Cameron also had a big hand in it) was a triumph of constructive legislation. It formulated "a properly articulated system of education from the primary school to the University". Education was ostentatiously recognised as one of the sacred duties of the Government. The neglect of Vernacular was deplored. The Filtration theory was repudiated, at least, in its extreme form. It was toned down to one of concession and liberal compromise. The higher classes were called upon to bear a considerable part of the cost of their education, so that the funds thus released could be devoted to the hitherto neglected task of spreading "useful practical knowledge suited to every station of life, to the great mass of the people who are utterly incapable of obtaining any
education worth the name by their own unaided efforts". The board principle of "English for the select few and Vernacular for the masses" was adopted. But the most distinctive innovations proposed were the plans of the University and of grant-in-aid. In both these spheres, the prevailing English concepts of education served as the inspiration as well as the incubus. Universities were advocated and set up in the three Presidencies on the model of London as examining and affiliating bodies though the system was already outmoded in London and was to undergo a drastic modification four years later. The University scheme had the supreme advantage of costing little to the Government. The grant-in-aid scheme was inspired by the utilitarian principles which Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth had inculcated upon the English Committee on Education in 1846. Devised originally for training colleges and for incidental capital aid to schools it was extended subsequently to the maintenance of schools in England and of Queen's Colleges presided over by the Queen's University in Ireland during 1845-53. The faith in secular education was fortified by the resolution of the Manchester Conference 1851 attended by Cobden and many others. The grant-in-aid principle was calculated to lighten the financial burden of the state and yet make education cheap and efficient as a result of free competition and private enterprise, "Missions now had the additional claim of a legal right to these grants", irrespective of any religious instructions they chose to impart. This was followed by a phenomenal growth of secondary schools. The Council of Education had begun with 7 Colleges and 16 English schools maintained by the Government. When the Directorate of Public Instruction was set up in 1855 the schools had multiplied to 47; but within a year and a half 79 English schools received grant besides 140 Vernacular schools, mostly in metropolitan districts. But though the grant-in-aid succeeded to a great extent in democratising the base of education in England, it failed of its immediate purpose in India. The miserable poverty of the Indian masses prevented them from availing of its benefit, while the middle classes who profited most by its provisions swelled the ranks of the Anglicists and widened the cleavage between the educated few and the residual multitude. Scarcely had the newly constituted University of Calcutta and the aided schools been in operation than the Mutiny intervened. The Bengali intelligentsia harboured no illusions about the disruptive forces likely to be let loose by this movement. But the 'Hindoo Patriot' of Harish Mukherjee displayed superb courage in denouncing the vitriolic Anglo-Indian press and in firmly urging moderation and sanity to a Government that was bent on hounding the rebels with a pathological fury. Pessimists like Ellenborough, the President of the Board of Control, in the letter to the Court of Directors on April 28, 1858, cried alarm and regretted that "the promised good had not been derived from the system of 1854". The assumption of the responsibility of administration by the Crown after the Mutiny rendered a fresh stock-taking necessary. The outcome was the Despatch of 1859. This Despatch marked a new departure by the frank recognition of the
ineffectiveness of the grant-in-aid for the rapid expansion of vernacular education and of the paramount necessity of providing the means of elementary education by the direct instrumentality of the officers of Government. Provinces were authorised to devise schemes adapted to their peculiar needs and to levy a compulsory rate for the object. Thomason in the North-Western Provinces had already worked wonders in vernacular education with levy of 1% cess on land revenue. It should be borne in mind that the economic structure of the province favoured his scheme. There, the Government, as the landlord was brought into contact with the people through an elaborate hierarchy of officials who carried on their proceedings necessarily in the vernacular. In the absence of any professional class, the rudiments taught in the Tehsildaree schools sufficed for the practical needs of the teeming peasantry. But the situation in Bengal was radically different. Here, the Permanent Settlement had called into existence a large and intermediary middle class with heritable tenure on fragmentary holdings. This class had a veritable craze for English education as the open sesame to Government or professional employment and they looked upon the Government's scheme of primary schools based on donation as well as payment of tuition fees as a devious cul-de-sac. The passing of the Rent Act in 1859 provided the tenants with a new incentive to literacy in order to better guard their rights, but the peasantry were insensitive to the utility of the Government schools and consequently, for the maintenance or improvement of these they were unable to "make sacrifices which the same classes in England often refused to make". Infact, the Permanent Settlement impeded the levy of any new cess on land in Bengal for the furtherance of education. The justice and expediency of the cess was impugned on the ground that about a third of the children who attended the primary schools at that time belonged to non-agricultural classes. Hence, it was contended that a general educational rate would be more equitable than a cess on land only. This barren controversy staved off innovation, but "large government grants . . . . coupled with the adoption of the agency of indigenous schools helped considerable expansion in the province".

In 1855 the Department received charge of 9,884 pupils in primary institutions. It was estimated that the neglected indigenous schools still served willy-nilly, the need of 5,00,000 pupils. Hence in Bengal the new edifice of primary education was reared up on the ground-work of the indigenous schools, though the Government fumbled its way through various expedients. The Circle System was tried in 1855 but only 172 schools with 7,731 pupils were covered under it in 1860-61. Again, experience revealed that the system possessed no capability of success among the masses who would be content to stick to their customary vocations without regarding elementary education as the stepping stone to a new career. A modification of the scheme was proposed by A. M. Monteath,34 Secretary to the Government of India, and its operation was confined by Sir John Peter Grant to the care of Bhudeb Mukherjee. This
scheme envisaged the foundation of Normal Schools for the training of Guru Mahasayas for one year on a stipend of Rs.5/- a month with a written engagement from the village that on the completion of his training the Guru would be appointed by the local unit with a salary of not less than Rs. 5/- a month. The decentralisation scheme of Lord Mayo enabled Sir George Campbell to provide a liberal grant of Rs. 4 lakhs in 1872, by which date 2000 village schools had been taken in hand. But the success of the scheme was grievously impaired by the parsimony of the villagers who used to reduce their contributions in proportion to the stipend paid by the Government. Later developments bore out the unpalatable lesson that "the system helped the improvement of schools already in existence but failed to establish them where prima facie, the need is most urgent." It also failed in its major objective of reaching the masses. For vernacular schools of the improved class there was little or no demand. "No one wants them, no one will subscribe to them, no one will go to them when they are set on foot". This was the report of the Inspector. On the other hand higher instruction in Normal schools inevitably filled the Gurus with expectation of higher pay. H. L. Harrison's experiment of the Midnapore system of payment by results superseded the stipend system in 1875. Cheapness was its best recommendation so that in 1881-82, in spite of the enhancement of the primary grant to Rs. 5 lakhs the average annual grant to each school was little more than Rs. 11/- against Campbell's lowest estimate of Rs. 24/- a year. In 1870 there were only 68,500 pupils in primary schools recognised by Government. The corresponding figure for 1881-92 in 28 Government and 47,374 aided institutions was 8,36,351 pupils besides 49,238 in 3265 unaided schools awaiting incorporation. Yet this enormous expansion cost the public funds less than in any province in India. The Provincial Fund bore Rs. 5,97,000 out of the total expenditure of Rs. 21,32,000 for primary education which benefited 20.82 of the school-going population among males and 0.80 among females. 40 The Hunter Commission utilised Ripon's machinery of Local Self-Government by setting up Municipal and Local Board School Funds respectively with exclusive regard to primary education. To disarm a living apprehension on this score, the levy of the local fund was emphatically declared as strengthening rather than diminishing the claim on Provincial Funds. The reforms prevented the parasitic expansion of education in urban areas on the revenue raised from rural zones. But the results fell far short of expectation. Primary education which had made rapid headway between 1871-1882 made slow progress afterwards. In 1900-01 the number of unaided schools increased four-fold and stood at 12,141 (U.P. 186 & L.P. 11,955) against 34,079 (U.P. 4,039 & L.P. 30,040) aided schools, while the number of students receiving education registered a very moderate increase and stood at 11,96,003 only. 41 The Government Resolution of March 11, 1904, records with a note of deep despair that "4 villages out of 5 are without school; 3 boys out of 4 grow up without education and only 1 girl in 40 attends any kind of school". It was further recognised that
primary education "possesses strong claim upon the sympathy both of the Supreme and of the local Governments and should be made a leading charge upon provincial revenues". The results system, "universally acknowledged to have been a failure", in the Quinquennial Review on Education (1902-07), was abandoned in favour of a complicated but more rational system of aid. Happier results attended this enlightened policy of India Government. The report of 1911-12 registered a conspicuous achievement by indicating a decennial increase in the number of students which was double the increase of twenty years since 1881-82. Yet one must admit with a sigh that this tardy progress touched only a fringe of the colossal problem of mass illiteracy.

Secondary education evoked widespread interest because it answered the immediate need of the gentry for a career. It was not organised as the apex of a pyramid of which the primary and the middle schools were to constitute the base and the accessory stages. The various institutions were designed for the needs of different social levels and they ran on parallel lines. Thus 39% of the pupils in High Schools and 78% in M.E. and 83% in M.V. Schools belonged to the primary stage.42 Long before 1854, private enterprise had been more persistently active in Bengal in this sphere of education than in any other province of India, and in less than a year of its announcement, the whole of the grant-in-aid was eagerly seized upon and utilised. Secondary schools multiplied rapidly so that by 1863 they outstripped the Departmental ones in the ratio of 423: 221 and they received an appropriation of 33% of what was spent by the Government for its own institutions. In 1870 the Government was smugly complacent at having fairly met the needs of the people in this direction by means of 270 Department schools and 1400 aided schools, not to mention 113 schools that received no aid. By raising the grants from Rs. 1,60,000/- in 1862-63 to Rs. 5,47,500 in 1870-71, the Government stimulated private outlay to four times its own contribution.43 The shifting of the focus of Government interest to indigenous schools in 1870 was viewed by the people with a grave concern "which in some districts assumed such exaggerated proportions that it can only be fitly described as a state of actual panic".44 Public opinion construed it as a mere pretence for the ulterior design of arresting the growth of higher education by diverting funds from it, because higher education had already had the disturbing effect of kindling the national sentiment of the people. The Nildarpana of Dinabandhu Mitra presented a lurid picture of unspeakable indignities and oppression which goaded the indigo cultivators of Bengal to organised protests for which educated Bengalis manifested active sympathy. A Society for the Promotion of National Feeling among the Educated Natives of Bengal was founded by Rajnarain Basu in 1861 and the Hindu Mela of 1867 crystallised feelings which had been in a fluid state so long. But inspite of the shrinkage of Government aid and the closure of some Government institutions, the demands of the people for higher education could not be curbed. "The educational movement had
obtained so great momentum of its own that, it was already in Bengal, if not in other provinces, beyond the control of the Department of Public Instruction". The number of pupils who sought secondary education increased from 91,145 in 1870-71 to 1,39,198 in 1881-82, inspite of the separation of Assam in 1874. Private benefaction, commemorated in the names of countless schools, outdistanced not only Government but missionary endeavour. The Indian Education Commission was set up in 1882 in deference to the complaints of the missionaries that the Despatch of 1854 recommending the closure of Government institutions was not being properly implemented and that missionary efforts were being threatened with extinction by the scheme of ostentatiously secular education which the state fostered. The trumpery charges was conclusively refuted by the Commission which admitted that "in Calcutta where missionary effort is stronger than in any other city of India, the number of unaided high schools under native management is even greater", and that better result at cheaper cost by the former vindicated their superiority. Hence the Commission blighted the cherished hopes of the missionaries by recording its unanimous opposition to withdrawal in their favour. It must be recognised that the Commission accumulated an amazing mass of materials relating to different spheres of Indian education except university and technical education which were excluded from its purview. But it failed to strike out a new path. It simply "brought into prominence and gave greater freedom of action to forces which were already at work". It toed the line of British educational policy in vogue by reaffirming the need of state patronage of primary education in India. But the circumstances in the two countries were so widely different that a healing reform for one induced a stunted and languid growth in another. The new enthusiasts for mass education in India ignored certain rude realities and probably made the mistake of putting the cart before the horse. It should be borne in mind that it was only with the advent of the Reforms that the new democracy in mid-Victorian England first realised the necessary of teaching its masters to read the alphabet, while the extensive use of mechanical appliances added an economic incentive to mass education. In Bengal the economic motive was conspicuously absent nor was social conscience alive to the edifying effect of popular instruction. The Hunter Commission further recommended a bifurcation of studies by providing for a new course of non-literary and commercial character with the added bait of admission to public services. But the expensiveness of the new course precluded its adoption by private institutions while the want of adequate opening for such students in an industrially under-developed country condemned from the outset the technical courses to a futility from which no lip homage about dignity of labour could redeem it. The Commission lost the precious opportunity of making the Vernacular the medium of secondary education even after the enrichment of the Bengali language by the labours of Akshoy Kumar Dutta, Bhudeb Mukherjee, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, to name only
few, had removed all scruples on the ground of its inadequacy. The
admission test of the best school in Bengal, the Hindu School, had already
indicated that a steady majority of successful competitors came from the
Vernacular and not from English middle school." The English medium to
which the pupils were irrevocably committed turned out to be a Dead Sea
apple and the Indian Universities Commission 1902 made the discouraging
admission that students "after Matriculation fail to understand lectures in English when they join the College". This perpetuated the vice of
cramming, while for lack of any effective demand the preparation of
Vernacular text-books could not be earnestly undertaken. It did not escape
the observation of the Commission, as of all discerning critics, that
premature immersion in an alien language that was ill-taught by ill-paid
and ill-qualified teachers in the lower classes not only cramped the
linguistic foundation but clogged the path to all knowledge because of the
pupil's imperfect command of the language. The Government Resolution
of 1904 gave a salutary warning by forbidding the use of English as the
medium of instruction before the age of 13. The Indian Universities Act
(1904) replaced "laissez-faire" by state control over private management
in order to ensure quality instead of quantity. Recognition by the Depart-
ment was to be made a condition of existence rather than a qualifying
clause for state aid, while recognition by the University was equally
essential for admission to the Matriculation examination. Measures were
adopted to plug the loop-holes by which such regulations had been foiled
in the past, by preventing transfer of pupils from unrecognised schools
and by guarding the access to Matriculation examination for only bonafide
private candidates. But in Bengal the unaided schools, after the departure
of Lord Curzon, succeeded in shutting their doors to Government inspec-
tion. In any case, the dual control subjected both the Department and the
University to a new strain which sorely tested educational statesmanship
in ensuing years without impeding quantitative expansion on which the
Department had frowned since 1870. Thus, while the number of Depart-
mental schools remained virtually static, the total number of other schools,
showed a steady rise from 132 in 1870 to 218 in 1880-81, to 353 in 1891-
92, and 535 in 1901-02. This astounding expansion of secondary educa-
tion is a significant index of the broadening base of the new middle class
which administrative consolidation along with the slow industrialisation
of the country was inevitably throwing forward. But the efficiency of the
institutions did not, in any manner or measure, keep pace with their
number. In 1902 more than one-third of these were unaided venture
schools which converted education to a profitable business speculation
with low fees and a niggardly pitance to teachers, (euphemistically
termed salaries), ranging from Rs. 5/- to Rs.78/- per month.47 Education
in these schools was cheap because it was bad and bad because it was
cheap". Again, the institutions aspired to rise higher in the academic
hierarchy by the premature transformation of a middle school to the
Entrance standard and of the high school to an Intermediate college under
an inveterate misconception that a ramshackle college was intrinsically superior to a well-managed high school. Inspite of the luxuriant outgrowth of high schools, there was none to resemble the public schools of England or the lycées of France. Taken in the lump, high school education was considered the worst in the sphere of Calcutta University."

Since the opening of the Hindu College, the cause of higher education made steady leeway with the Government and the people. Some Government schools were expanded into Colleges, as at Dacca (1841), Krishnagar (1845), Berhampore (1853), everywhere with generous local donations. Missionary enterprise supplemented its earlier activities with new institutions such as those of Doveton, La Martiniere and St. Paul's and of the London Missionary Society. In 1855 the Hindu College was transformed into the Presidency College, open to all communities, with liberal provisions for Arts, Science, Medicine, Law and Civil Engineering. The Despatch of 1854, as has been already observed, gave tardy recognition to the recommendation of the Council of Education in 1845 and suggested the opening of Universities on the model of London. The Calcutta University was constituted by Act II of 1857 as an examining and regulating body. But the Indian universities were set up, from the very beginning, "not as corporations of scholars, but corporations of administrators, they had nothing to do directly with the training of men but only with the examining of candidates". The adoption of the affiliating rather than the federal type of University left the colleges to shift for themselves, once the affiliation was secured; and there was no safeguard against their falling below the standard. There was a tendency to drab uniformity in the courses pursued with utter disregard of the eminently practical issues underlined in Wood’s Despatch. As Law and Public service each attracted about a third of the total of 11,589 students who obtained arts degree between 1854 and 1882, the degree was in hot favour. It was sought with a keenness and eagerness which made Sir Henry Maine observe in his Convocation address to the Calcutta University in 1866 that "the thing must be seen to be believed". In the same address occurs the pregnant remark, "The fact is, that the founders of the University of Calcutta thought to create an aristocratic institution; and in spite of themselves, they have created a popular institution". Meanwhile, the revised Regulation of the University in 1862 betrayed a strange lack of imagination by the exclusion of the Vernacular in the answer of all subjects other than the Vernacular in the Entrance examination. A new leaf in the chapter of collegiate education in Bengal was opened when indigenous enterprise, hitherto shy in this sphere, was boldly expressed by Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar who converted the Metropolitan Institution into a college which was soon raised to the first grade in 1879. The high percentage of success obtained by its students in the University examinations demolished the old prejudice against Indian management and the capacity of the Indians for teaching English creditably in higher stages. By 1881-82 the
number of colleges rose to 12 Government and 5 aided and 3 unaided ones. But, as was significantly noted by the Hunter Commission, no college had been brought into existence by the system of aid; the 5 colleges that received aid pre-existed the aid system. The Hunter Commission recommended the closure of certain Government colleges, which had been shown to be unsuccessful or highly expensive and the transfer of certain others to bodies of local gentlemen under proper guarantees. Fortunately for the country the last part of this admittedly retrograde measure was ignored. In pursuance of the first recommendation, the Government relinquished its responsibility for the Midnapore College which was entrusted to a municipality in 1887. The Berhampore College was saved from imminent extinction and was even expanded by the princely philanthropy of Maharaja Manindra Chandra Nundy. This policy of the Government gave rise to keen disaffection that was voiced forth by the Calcutta Students' Association founded by A. M. Bose in 1876. The Hindu School theatre became the forum of a democratic students' movement spurred into ebullient activity by the spirited leadership of Surendra Nath Banerjee who was then a professor. The cultivation of English language and the vitalising impact of European liberal ideas derived from Hume, Spencer, Comte, Mazzini, etc., furnished the common linguistic medium and the common stock of political concepts with which to ventilate grievances on an inter-provincial basis through the Indian Association and the Indian National Congress. The close parallelism between the rising tide of national movement and the swelling volume of higher education is obvious.

The period 1882 to 1902 witnessed a remarkable development of colleges not only in Calcutta where the fee-funds combined with cheese-paring economy managed to keep them alive, but also in the mufussil "where local Zamindars provided the building and in some cases contributed to the upkeep, but the cost of maintenance was met out of fees and Government grants". Indeed, the recommendations of the Hunter Commission had the opposite effect and were instrumental in raising the number of colleges to 20 in Calcutta and 26 in the province. Most of these throve as "coaching institutions rather than as places of learning". The losing grip of Government in this sphere was apparent from the fact that only one-fourth of the total of 8,150 students were receiving education in Government colleges in 1902, while the corresponding proportion in 1881-82 had been nearly two-thirds.

The transformation of the London University to a teaching one by the Act of 1898 led to a reassessment of educational policy in India. The Simla Conference of 1901 which kept Indian educationists out, gratuitously sowed suspicion which was intensified by the overbearing manner of Lord Curzon and his caustic philippics, notably about the mendacity of the Indians. The Indian Universities Commission (1902) grudgingly admitted a solitary Indian member, Sir Gurudas Banerjee, as an after-thought and his sagacious note of dissent was duly recorded. Its recommendations
provoked a 'sustained chorus of disapproval' but they were none the less embodied in the Indian Universities Act (1904). The Act permitted the Universities to assume the responsibility "for the instruction of students with power to appoint University Professors and Lecturers"—a halting clause, but it enabled Sir Asutosh Mookerjee to open out a noble vista for research and advancement of learning for the University of Calcutta in future. The membership of the Senate as the legal body corporate of the University was reduced to a more workable size from 200 to 100. A democratic flavour was added by the provision that 10 were to be nominated by the Faculties and 10 to be chosen by the graduates. The remainder were to be nominated by the Chancellor, subject to the proviso that two-fifths of the ordinary Fellows were to be teachers. The Syndicate, as the Executive, received legal recognition which it had lacked hitherto. It was radically overhauled with a minimum quota secured for teachers—but only teachers who were members of the Senate. "It was therefore only a half-hearted and imperfect advance that was made towards that constant and vital consultation of teachers which is of the essence of a genuine teaching University". But on the crucial issue which had provoked a storm of opposition from Asutosh Mookerjee and G. K. Gokhale, popular apprehension proved well-founded. The Act empowered the Chancellor to nominate 80% of the members and refuse approval to the election of the rest. Not only was the approval of the Government obligatory for appointments, regulations, affiliation and disaffiliation etc., but the Government gained the right which it had not possessed before viz., of initiating measures. The Calcutta University Commission (1917) made the candid admission that the Universities of India became under this Act "in theory, if not in practice, the most completely governmental Universities in the world". Gokhale's heart "was chilled to death" to find "the perpetuation of narrow, bigoted and inexpensive rule of experts". The Government in practice, disabused the minds of the people of their fears of a European preponderance in the Senate by nominating 43 Indians to 41 Europeans in the first Senate of the Calcutta university. But the number of students who flocked to the Colleges went on increasing by leaps and bounds. Ill-equipped colleges sustained by meagre fee-revenue reared their heads ominously in larger numbers to confront the educationists with a sheaf of unsolved and thorny problems. Yet at the back of this inflation, haunted a shadow of despair that was sadly reflected in the timely observation of the learned Principal of the leading College of the province. "The failure with which the University is reproached is a failure in practical results. It is said that the men it turns out are not educated in true sense, that the education it gives is largely a sham education..... Defective English, on the one hand, and on the other, reliance on merely verbal memory are the two ingrained faults which vitiate the whole education". The gravaman of this indictment has not lost its sting even today. The Partition of Bengal precipitated the distrust of the
Government which the University Act of 1904 had instigated and during the hectic years that followed, the students flung themselves with headlong zeal to the movement for unsettling the settled fact.

It is a paradox of Indian society that female education throughout the century should be found limping far behind. It was under the ban of an obscurantist social order that prescribed early marriage and purdah and threatened the educated female with the grim shadow of widowhood. Some education was often stealthily imparted to girls of aristocratic families to enable them to manage their estates in the event of their husbands' death. Buchanan Hamilton observed in Rangpore that such women of rank "were considered as intolerable nuisances by the sharks who preyed on their husbands". In the reminiscences of her early life, (which fell in with the first years of the nineteenth century) by Rasasundari Devi, we have a vivid glimpse of the social odium that was the lot of the woman who sought education in defiance of convention, and of how she had to elude it by burning mid-night lamp to eke out the rudiments of learning. The modicum of education which the ladies of the Tagore family of Jorasanko, or of the family of Raja Baidyanath Roy were permitted to receive from Vaisnabis are instances of exception that proved the rigours of the rule. Indeed, some of these ladies acquired rare distinction for scholarship in their days. The earliest recorded venture for female education was made by the Female Juvenile Society in 1819. Public opinion in England was roused in its favour by the fervent advocacy of Ward of Serampore who had been convalescing there since May, 1818. The society took up the publication of the 'Śrī-Siksha-Vidhayaka' of Gourmohan Vidyalamkara. It recommended portions of the book as the text for its schools, which according to the eleventh Report of the Society, appear to have extended to Katwa and Birbhum and contained 500 girls. This was followed up by the "Ladies' Society for Native Female Education in Calcutta and its vicinity". Under the able guidance of Miss Cook the Society made steady progress and opened the Calcutta Female Schools in 1828 for which Raja Baidyanath Roy made a generous donation of Rs. 20,000/-. Miss Cook received unstinted assistance from natives and even Muslim ladies offered active co-operation in their locality. The Society set up a network of schools spreading up from Calcutta to Allahabad. The Ladies' Association was started in 1825 as an auxiliary organ of the above and their Normal Training School survived till 1866-67 when it was mentioned as receiving grant-in-aid of Rs. 825/.

A missionary noted in 1855, "Almost every mission has at one time or another attempted to establish schools and many wives of missionaries have laboured unobtrusively in this department of hard work." But their heroic efforts had yielded discouragingly poor results. Adam remarks in 1838, "It is only children of the very poorest and lowest castes that attend the girls' schools and their attendance is avowedly purchased"... often by small daily cash rewards for presence. The highlights of Hindu society were not opposed to female education on principle. But they were
eventually scared stiff by the inescapable necessity of entrusting it to Christian ladies who alone were at that time fitted for the task. During 1821 and 1822 Radhakanta Dev invited the girls of the Female Juvenile Society to sit for the periodical examinations held in his palace under the auspices of the Calcutta School of which he was the Native Secretary. In 1822, 40 girls appeared in this test. But the ardour of the host soon cooled down and the girl students ceased to appear from 1824. A note of warning against the danger of infiltration of Christian influences in the sanctum of the Hindu home was sounded by Prosunno Kumar Tagore in his 'Reformer' in 1831. It was the agency and not the cause that stood condemned. Not only 'Young Bengal' went ahead in their advocacy of female education, through their literary organ, the 'Parthenon', but mature and orthodox leaders like the millionaire Mutty Lall Seal, and Haladhar Mullick proposed in 1837 to form an association for the purpose. Female education was the theme of prize essays by young intellectuals like K. M. Banerjee, Madhusudan Dutta and Bhudev Mukherjee. The need of female education was urged by the President of the British Indian Society of Calcutta in 1845. The offer by Joykissen Mukherjee of Uttarpura in the same year to open a female school was "curtly declined by the Government partly on the score of funds, partly on the novel nature of the experiment". The zeal of Peary Chand Sircar was responsible for the opening of a female school at Baraset in 1847. But "charges of assault, suits of arrears of rent and complaints of all kinds and character were brought against the parents of those who sent their daughters to the school". Hence J. E. D. Bethune was under no illusion of facile success when he opened his historic institution. Wishing the discredit of failure to rest on himself alone, he was chary of pledging the credit of the Government to this dubious experiment until its success was assured. With stoic detachment he felt it essential to exclude religious instruction altogether, even though he was a devout Christian, and to invest female education with respectability by only admitting girls high in the social scale. This was the vindication of the Filtration theory in a new sphere. English was to be taught only to those who expressly desired it. The Calcutta Female School was started by Bethune in 1849 with only 11 pupils. Rajnarain Basu in his 'Atmakarita' gives an amusing reminiscence of the Freemasons celebrating the event by a procession with music and band. From its inception the cause evoked the hearty co-operation of Ramgopal Ghose and Dakshinaranjan Mookherjee and it soon enlisted the ardent assistance of Vidyasagar and his friend Madanmohan Tarakalankar. The roll strength of the school dwindled to 7 and its maintenance was the toil of Sisyphus for its founder whom it cost Rs. 800/- a month. After Bethune's death in August 1851, the expenses were borne by his admiring friend, Lord Dalhousie. The frank approval of female education in Wood's Despatch encouraged the Government to take charge of the institution in 1856. It is first mentioned as Bethune School in the Report for 1862-63. Vidyasagar was encouraged by the Lt. Governor of Bengal to open 20
girls' schools in 4 districts in 1855. But these came to an abrupt end because of the close-fisted financial policy of the Government of India. Keshab Chandra Sen took the cue from the missionaries in organising the zenana education in 1863 and the Bama-Bodhini Patrika was started for propagation of useful knowledge among women. Mary Carpenter's experiment of a non-denominational Normal school failed to contend against what Vidyasagar had correctly foreboded, viz., "the insuperable barrier of the social prejudices of my countrymen" and it collapsed after a brief existence of three years in 1872. Better success attended the efforts of Brahmo leaders who organised a Female and an Adult Normal School on an improved standard on February 1, 1871. The Hindu Mahila Vidyalaya of Miss. Ackroyd (1873-76), was closed with her marriage, but her fleeting enthusiasm for the cause had already cooled down with her discouraging experience of her Indian collaborators and of the way of life of women in the homes of Indians with the highest education. The school was, however, revived under a new name and it continued until its final absorption with the Bethune School in 1878. The conferring of the B. A. degree on the first lady graduates, Chandramukhi Bose and Kadambini Ganguli in the Convocation of 1883 was characterised by the Vice-Chancellor as registering a landmark in the educational history of India. The zenana associations organised by missionaries or by the Uttarakari Sabha (1864) rendered valuable service and the total number of girls receiving this form of instruction at home by visiting teachers was estimated in 1883 at 50,000. Local associations with similar object were started during the next 20 years all over the country at Sylhet, Vikrampore, Faridpore, Bakharganj, Mymensingh, Tipperah, etc. The unremitting labours of Dwarkanath Gangopadhyaya in this cause won for him the popular epithet of Abala-Bandhava. In recognition of the utility of the zenana system of education, it was taken up in a limited measure by the Government in 1902 when 12 Hindu and Muslim peripatetic teachers were appointed. The bar to the admission of women to the Medical College was removed by the salutary intervention of Sir Rivers Thompson in 1881. The Victoria School was revived in 1886. In 1887-88 the Eden Female School, Dacca was raised to the status of a high school while the only unaided girls' school, the Brahmo Balika Vidyalaya sent students for the Entrance examination in 1891. The Bethune School expanded to a full-fledged College in 1888, though College classes had been attached to it since 1878 and the M. A. classes in English and Philosophy were opened in 1903. An attempt to adapt the education of girls to the strict scriptural injunctions of the Hindus was made in the Mahakali Pathshala by an ascetic lady from the Deccan in 1893. Sister Nivedita's school at Baghbazar, Calcutta in 1892 was an opportune measure for lending a utilitarian slant to female education. The Government Resolution of 1902 rightly realised that through female education "a far greater proportional impulse is imparted to the educational and the moral tone of the people than by the education of men". In pursuance of
the recommendations of the University Commission special provisions relating to syllabus were formulated by the Calcutta University for female candidates and very indulgent conditions were prescribed for their admission to its examinations with a view to help the expansion of higher education. In 1900-01 only 2.49 percent of the girls received any education whatsoever. In 1906-07 there were only 21 girls in Colleges, 680 in H. E. Schools, 1776 in M. E. and 653 in M. V. Schools. A century of exertion yielded results which are notable only as a record of aspiration rather than of achievement.

The ferment of English education had produced its scum along with its elixir of a richer life. In the case of boys who had received English education, Rajnarain Basu depicted their self-centred individualism, their tortuous cunning ways, the lowering of filial devotion and their mimicry of tawdry European fashions and manners. The "Model Bhagini" (1884-86) of Jogendra Chandra Basu, written in the vein of Moliere's 'Femmes Savantes', is a mordant satire on the mawkish sentimentality of the English-educated Woman, her foppishness, snobbery, romantic affections and her idly busy philandering. The Khas-Dakhal of Amritalal Basu is a later echo of this mocking banter. But these comic hyperboles should not be permitted to obscure the sterling virtues promoted by education and expressed in various enduring achievements. The Bengali woman made her debut in literature in 1856 with the poetical work ChittaVilasini by Krishna Kamini Dasi. Articles by women began to appear in journals. The first female venture in journalism was the short-lived fortnightly paper 'Bangamahila', published on April 13, 1870. It was followed by 'Hindulalana' which appeared in 1878. Thakamani Devi showed the way for monthly paper with a melancholy cognomen, the 'Anathini'. The 'Bharati' was edited with enviable distinction from 1885 by Swarnakumari Devi and later on, by Hiranmayee Devi and Sarala Devi. The 'Bangabasini' was a weekly paper that was edited by a woman towards the close of 1883. A model for a hebdomadal journal was set by Jnanadanandini Devi who edited the Balaka from April 1885. A flutter in higher levels of society heralding a distant social revolution was created, by the same lady on her appearing in a Government levee in the company of her husband, Satyendra Nath Tagore of the Indian Civil Service. A Bengali lady moved a vote of thanks to the chair in the Indian National Congress at Bombay in 1889. As a work of happy augury of the noble role the Bengali woman was to play in future struggle for national liberation Sarala Devi organised a choir of 55 women to sing a national anthem of her own composition in the Congress session of 1901.

Indigenous learning was not entirely supplanted by the triumphant march of western education. The religious and ceremonial implications of oriental studies wove them into the social fabric of the Hindus and the Muslims and ensured their continuance. But in a changing economic order where the customary avenues of employment were being closed down, purely oriental scholarship was bound to prove a costly anachronism. The
decay of Tols and Madrassas was an illustration of the atrophy of cultures severed from their social moorings. The Calcutta Sanskrit College, since its foundation, has been conceived as the official organ for indigenous Hindu learning. It showed rigid adherence to tradition in its course of studies, its list of holidays and in its proud exclusion of all castes except the Brahmans and the Vaidyas from its sacred preserve. English was hesitantly introduced as an optional subject during 1827 to 1835. The teaching of English provoked sarcastic comments in the native press to the effect that this meagre dose of English did more harm than good. It was apprehended that this would alienate from the hapless students the reverence of their hereditary spiritual disciplines without qualifying them even for the clerkship, not to speak of a professorship in English. Provision was made for the translation of the various works on Natural philosophy, geography and history into Bengali. Lectures were delivered on European medical principles accompanied with dissection of the softer parts of animals. In 1835, with the foundation of the Calcutta Medical College, this part of the College study lost its raison d'etre and was discontinued. A thorough-going renovation of the institution was effected during 1851-53 by Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar whose Principalship left the indelible stamp of his unique personality on the course of studies and discipline. Reforms crowded upon reforms with breath-taking rapidity. The doors of the College were flung open to Kayasthas in January 1851, and to all classes of respectable Hindus in December 1854. A modest tuition fee was instituted with enhanced stress on discipline and regularity of attendance. English was reintroduced, but with added emphasis as a compulsory subject and Mathematics was to be studied in English. The curriculum was thoroughly recast on a utilitarian basis. Graduates of this College were made eligible for the post of Deputy Magistrates. Two masterly manuals of Sanskrit grammar were composed by Iswarchandra to replace the grinding Mugdhabodha which had hitherto proved a bugbear to young learners of Sanskrit. His reforms tended greatly to the fulfilment of his "sanguine hopes" that the College should become "a seat of pure and profound Sanskrit learning and at the same time a nursery of improved Vernacular literature, and of teachers thoroughly qualified to disseminate that literature among the masses of his fellow-countrymen".

A survey of the achievements of the professors and alumni of the college not only illustrates the richness of their contribution to Bengali literature and Sanskrit culture but also dispels the popular myth of their having been stark social reactionaries. Ramchandra Tarkabagish, the same man who compiled the first Bengali dictionary, forestalled Vidyasagar in his advocacy of widow-marriage, and the first to practise it was Srishchandra Vidyaratna. The first Bengali journal *Samachar-Darpana* owed much to the literary labour of Pandit Jaygopal Tarkalamkar, from its first publication till 1823. Prankrishna Vidyasagar was a sanskrit poet of no mean repute and besides, he edited with great success, the *Samachar*
Chandrika, founded by Bhabani Charan Bandyopadhyaya. The acute intellect and prodigious learning of Jaynarayan Tarkapanchanan made him the foremost exponent of Nyaya of his day. But his mind was never petrified by canons and conventions and retained its receptivity to new truths from the west. To a later generation of luminaries belong the poet, Beharilal Chakravarty, the versatile Bhudev Mukhopadhyaya, Taranath Tarkavachaspati with his opus magnum, the Vachaspati lexicon. Dwarkanath Vidyabhusan of Somaparakasa fame and his nephew, Shivnath Sastri, the scholarly reformer, Ramnarayan Tarkaratna, the dramatist and a galaxy of names. While Vidyasagar's scheme of re-organisation was amply vindicated by the magnitude of its success, it had also its detractors among sympathetic and sagacious critics. On 14 March 1859, the learned E. B. Cowell in his report to the Director of Public Instruction observed, 'The great want in our studies appears to be the absence of contact with reality.' In a letter to the same authority on 6 October 1858 Dr. E. Roer, the Inspector of Schools of South West Bengal, expressed satisfaction with the efficiency of teaching in the Sanskrit College and the distinction attained by its students as 'Moonsiffs and Principal Sadar Ameen'. But he also remarked that "its studies are medieval. Its students have no opening". From the letters of the principal of the Sanskrit College on the 13th and the 23rd April, 1872 to the D. P. I., it appears that the college had meanwhile grown to an Anglo-Sanskrit institution where no pupils learned Sanskrit alone or English alone, even though the rules did not prevent anyone from taking up purely Sanskrit studies. The Lieutenant Governor came to the conclusion "that the school department attached to the college had been of late years turned to a sectarian institution for the education of the Hindus at a cheap rate, but at great expenditure to the Government." Hence he recommended that it should be made to pay its own way or be closed down. One is reminded of a similar plea put forward by Woodrow in his Minute in 1859. In 1872 the third and the fourth year classes were transferred to the Presidency College and in spite of vigorous protests from native organs like the British Indian Association, the Professorship of Hindu Law was abolished. In the above-mentioned letters of 23 April, 1872, the Principal had observed, inter alia, that "abolition of English in the Sanskrit College will lead at once to an withdrawal of the entire body of students and thus to a closing of the College......and the Pundits of Calcutta, I feel certain, would withdraw their boys from the Sanskrit College, if English were abolished". But in spite of its undoubtedly popularity, the modernised scheme of Sanskrit instruction roused lively apprehension in another quarter. The new system dwarfed the Tol department for a time to insignificance, till it was resuscitated by Mm. Maheshchandra Nyayaratna who in 1881 opened 'titles' (Upadhi) classes with 25 free students to serve as a model Tol and "to impart traditional interpretation of the sacred books on orthodox lines". In 1891 a survey of the Tols of Bengal, Behar and Orissa was conducted by the same Pandit whose Report embraced 761 Tols besides
others which he did not visit. The total attendance in Tols estimated at 16,000 to 17,000 pupils. It was found that "most of the best Pandits of Bengal and all the Mahamohopadhyayas without exception" were giving their wards an English education. Mahesh Nyayaratna, a Pandit of the highest eminence, kept pace with the times by giving his sons a thorough English education. The novel 'Jugantar' by Shiv Nath Sastri graphically illustrates this ideological conflict in the family of a venerable Pandit of the old tradition whose elder sons received Tol education while the youngest son and the grandson are sent to the Hindu College. In his own life, Shiv Nath Sastri stood at this cross-road of cultures when, as the son of a Pandit of stern orthodoxy he chose the highest University education and the career of a social and religious reformer. But the Tols suffered not only from desertion within its ranks. The Commission made the further depressing observation that "the aggregate intellectual capacity of the present generation of Tol students is lower than that of the past generation as unquestionably as the number is lower" and that the decline on both counts was progressive. The Tol instruction, though on the wane, was yet found to possess greater vitality in Bengal than in the neighbouring provinces. The usual practice of gratuitous maintenance of students by the Pandits could not be observed in Nadia presumably because of the influx of large number of pupils combined with shrinkage of donations. But a few Pandits still struggled desperately to keep up the ancient tradition while in the remaining Tols, Government grants supplemented by occasional gifts of the Rajas provided for the austere living of inmates of the Pucca (brick-built) and the Kaccha (mud-built) Tols at about Rs. 3 per head per month. The chief subjects of study were Nyaya, which always continued to be in special favour in Bengal as the noblest form of intellectual discipline, the compend of the Smriti of Raghunandan and grammatical works from which Panini was significantly excluded, except in a few Tols in Rajshahi. The Ayurveda was studied in Calcutta, Mankar (Burdwan), Jangalpara (Hoogly), Bankul (Howrah), and Vikrampur (Dacca). The order of precedence among scholars assigned the first place to experts in Nyaya and prescribed a diminishing scale of presents (Vidaya) to scholars in Vedanta, Samkhya, Smriti, Purana and Sabdashastra. The last branch of study including Kavya and Vyakaran was derived as a weaker intellectual performance. It was shunned in the Tols of Nadia till 1864 when Cowell visited them and it was relegated to Akharas or inferior establishments conducted by pupils, though Bhatpara had always taken kindly to these studies. The inclusion of this branch of study in the syllabus of the Title examination and the demand for its adepts as school Pandits led to its later incorporation in the curricula of Nadia Tols. Really good Tols still lingered on in the interior of Burdwan, at Bakla-Chandradwip and Vikrampur, and at Berhampur, Tribeni, Purbasthi, Bhatpara, Chinsurah, Mulajore and Nadia but their number was steadily falling off. A glorious recent addition was the Visvanath Chatuspathi created out of the munificent endowment of Bhudev Mukhopadhyaya whose life and teach-
ings alike symbolised the best that he found in the cultures of the East and the West. But the Tols were not prosperous in Mymensingh, Rajshahi and Rangpore. In Nadia, E. B. Cowell in his report to the Director of Public Instruction on 17th January, 1867, recorded the existence of 12 Tols with 150 pupils. In 1891 these had dwindled to 8 Tols with 99 students only. Numerical decline did not impair the prestige of the Tol Pandits who were described by the Inspector of Schools in the Dacca Division in 1867 as persons who "exercise more supremacy over the minds of the people than any other class". An examining association to confer titles was formed by the Dacca Saraswat Samaj in 1878, to be followed by similar local associations of secular or religious character till the Government, on the advice of Mahesh Nyayaratna, introduced in 1884 the uniform title of Tirtha in various subjects. The innovation proved immensely popular to Sanskrit students. In pursuance of the recommendations of the Commission of 1891, non-pensionary allowances were granted to Pandits of certain selected Tols with rewards in the form of annual stipends to students and teachers both, on the result of the examination. An attempt at securing uniformity of standard by centralising the examinations of the various Associations under a common body presided over by Principal of the Sanskrit College in 1897 attained a large measure of success because it secured better training. But it gave rise to grave resentment because of the exclusion of eminent Pandits from the Board regulating the syllabus and examination. The Pandits stood away in sulky silence which impelled revision of policy and resulted in the formation by the Government in 1908 of the Board of Sanskrit Examination composed of eminent Pandits of the orthodox type as well as of the western variety. This well-timed measure arrested the decline in the number of examinees which had been steadily going on of late.

The sterility of Muhammadan intellect in Bengal and the general apathy of the community to education formed an intriguing problem that still awaits a clear analysis. The widespread poverty of its members in a tottering social order, the conceit of by-gone glory and exaggerated fear of the traditional faith being tarnished with the heresy of the new learning or by contact with the culture of the majority of Hindu fellow students might have conspired to keep the Muslims away from English schools and native Pathsalas. In 1871 their proportion to the total number of pupils in schools in Bengal was only 14.4%, and in colleges barely 5%, while they constituted 32.3% of the population. Evidently the Muhammadans exhibited lesser capacity for adoption to the new environment than the high-caste Hindus who left the tols only to swell the registers of colleges. But the Muslim centres of indigenous learning for which the upper classes still cherished nostalgic affection and religious reverence were fast sinking into stupor of decadence. This was due as much to want of patronage from without as to listlessness of scholars within them. The pupils of the Imambara School at Hooghly before its merger with the Hooghly College were characterised by Macaulay in 1836 as "lazy, stupid school boys of 30
with large families which are subsisting on funds designed for education" as stipends.65

The Anglo-Persian classes attached to the Hooghly College since its foundation in 1836 were attended chiefly by the Hindus to escape fees, while the majority of the Muhammadan pupils were described by the Principal as "too old to make any progress in English and are besides very irregular in their attendance". The abolition of the Madrassa section was recommended by the Principal in 1858. But the protective clauses of the Mohsin grant saved it from extinction. Nor did the Calcutta Madrassa present a more enlivening prospect. Warren Hastings had considered its foundation in 1781 as a timely measure to arrest the decline of "erudition in the Arabic and Persian languages and in the complicated system of laws founded on the tenents of religion". But the adoption of Nizamiah syllabus, then in vogue in Buhar and other reputed Madrassas of Bengal, was to prove a costly blunder. This was based on the neglect of the Hadis and Tafsir which have been the fountain-head of Islamic culture and had the effect of alienating the scholars from the current of Islamic thought in India and abroad. The syllabus remained a chronic theme of complaint from competent critics as being weak in its Islamic and faulty in its practical aspects. In spite of the allurement of free tuition and stipends the Calcutta Madrassa was never thronged with eager learners. Its curriculum had a utilitarian bias and was devised to train students for the career of law officers. In 1835 the course extended to seven years comprising law in all classes and Company's Regulation from the fifth year onwards. An English class, formed in 1826, was converted to an English school open to all in 1829; but it was shunned by scholars of the Arabic foundation. Students were as reluctant to learn English as they were contemptuous of their vernacular which was Bengali. The 8000 Muslim students who protested against the historic Resolution of March 7, 1835 could discover in it nothing better than "the evident object of the conversion of Indians to Christianity". In 1847 Anglo-Arabic classes were opened with high hopes which were rudely shattered. It was no gratifying record for the section that not more than 2 students secured the Junior Scholarship in 22 years of its history. Dr. Sprenger's experiment of reforms undertaken on his own initiative led to grave disturbances which could be quelled only with police intervention. Indeed, discipline had never been a strong feature of this institution. In 1791 the Board of Revenue was conscious of culpable mismanagement and of the existence of spurious students who appeared only once a month in the College to receive their stipends. A daring burglary in the city was ascribed by the police to its pupils. The introduction of the system of public examination in the Town Hall in 1821 roused a storm of protest from teachers as well as students. In 1842 discipline was reported to be loose and unsatisfactory. The professors continued to be sulky at every scheme of reform. On June 11, 1858, Principal Lees issued the peremptory order that "if professors do not abandon the exploded methods of teaching by parrot-
like memorisation and render active support to the Principal in improve-
ment of the College, the Arabic Department of this College be abolished
as an useless encumbrance to the state". This produced a chastening
effect and an improvement in attitude was reported in 1862. But again in
1871 the D. P. I. made a painful allusion to "repeated disturbances in
which students as well as teachers are implicated and of gross misconduct
of a kind which need not here describe". But in spite of sporadic
unsavoury episodes the Madrassa was described by W. N. Lees in his
report of 11 Dec. 1862 to the Director of Public Instruction, as enjoying
a reputation that extended to the south of India and as far as Bombay on
the west. In North India it was outrivalled by the old orthodox
institutions.

After the enthusiastic innovations of Dr. Sperenger had ended in a
fiasco, the Council of Education in 1853 recommended the replacement of
the English and the Arabic classes by newly organised Anglo-Persian
classes. Henceforth the Madrassa was to "consist of two distinct and
separate schools having different courses of study and different objects.
Western and Eastern learning are completely dissociated". While the
Anglo-Persian section prospered as the conventional High English school,
the Madrassa was re-organised by Sir George Campbell in 1873 to realise
"the Muslim idea of liberal education". The Anglo-Persian school was
promoted to a college in 1867 which soon withered into a phantom
institution with not a single student on its roll in 1869-70. In pursuance
of the recommendations of the Committee of Inquiry in 1869, the college
classes were closed but admission for a few Muslim students was secured
in the Presidency College at charitably low fees. The economic alignment
behind Madrassa education is highly significant of its crumbling social
buttress. It was revealed by the Commission of Inquiry, 1869 that 80% of
the pupils of the Calcutta and the Hooghly Madrassas hailed from
economically backward tracts beyond the Brahmaputra and East Bengal
and these were attracted by the prospect of free boarding with charitable
gentlemen of their community or with butlers of Europeans, besides
stipends and free tuition. But an overwhelming majority of pupils from
Calcutta and its suburbs invariably flocked to English schools. It was
computed by the Principal of Hooghly College that during 1860-1869 only
21 out of 91 students from his Madrassa secured employments whose
maximum salary was Rs. 20/- a month. According to the Minutes on the
Hooghly Madrassa published by Abdul Latif Khan in 1877 the careers open
to Madrassa students were those of law officers or advisers, teachers,
Police staff, Regimental Moslems and Clergy.

In 1872 the Government removed a long-standing grievance of the
Muslims by providing a separate grant for the Hooghly College and by
devoting the Mohsina endowment thus released to the establishment of
Madrasses at Dacca, Rajshahi and Chittagong, besides scholarships and
substantial concession in fees for Muslim students in English institu-
tions. In 1882 Ameer Ali stood alone in pleading before the Indian
Education Commission for making English compulsory at all stages from the middle class onwards. But he was opposed by Moulvi Abdul Latif Khan⁴⁶. In the memorial presented before the above Commission by the National Muhammadan Association of Calcutta it was alleged that the resumption between 1828 and 1846 of revenue-free grants to men of learning and the replacement of Persian by English or the vernacular in administration were primarily responsible for Muslim decadence. But the Commission brushed aside these contentions on the ground that the revenue-free lands were never resumed, but were only taxed at a low rate, and that these changes concerned the Hindus equally without producing any baneful consequence on their education and culture. During the last two decades of the 19th century Madrassa education remained in a static condition though the English classes of the Calcutta Madrassa gained in popularity. In pursuance of the recommendation of a non-official conference, the Government in its resolution of February 24, 1903 approved the scheme of title examinations on law, literature and theology on the same lines as the Sanskrit Examinations. The Government in its Report of Education in Bengal in 1904-05 announced the adoption of a new course of studies for Muktabs. Special Urdu Inspectors were to be appointed to stimulate Muslim education in Bengal. But insistence on an exclusively denominational education proved a dead-weight.⁴⁷ Culture isolation fostered fragmentary political thinking which thwarted national integration.

From the earliest days of the Calcutta University no professional study proved more popular than law which was pursued for its practical benefits as well as for the excellent training it afforded for public life which had an irresistible lure for the educated classes. Organs of national agitation were led or sponsored by lawyers in such a large measure in the last quarter of the century that the movement came to be dubbed as the Vakil Raj. It was observed in 1893 that the aspiration of the zilla school-masters tended more towards municipal politics than to their own extra-curricular activities⁴⁸. No less than 581 of the 1589 arts graduates of the University between 1857 and 1887 adopted the legal profession for which the Bengalis evinced unusual aptitude and devotion. Yet paradoxically enough, in no other branch of study was the provision of instruction more neglected, and no college exclusively intended for the study of law existed till 1908.

The anomalous state of affairs was largely the outcome of inevitable historical exigency. Since the last quarter of the eighteenth century the legal system was being thrown in an increasingly helpless quandary. The foundation of criminal law rested ostensibly on the Muhammadan code but it was short of its objectionable features by the gradual replacement of Muslim law of evidence and punishment by intermittent Regulations of the East India Company from 1772 onwards. Marriage, property and succession still continued to be regulated by the distinctive laws of the respective communities. Sweeping changes in land tenure had been
effected by the east India Company at different stages. Access to these divergent systems of law could be obtained through erudite compilations like Colebrooke’s celebrated work on Hindu law and his Digest of Regulations (1807), W. H. Macnaghten’s Hindu Law (1829), Hamilton’s Hedayya, Halhead’s Gentoo Law, H. H. Wilson’s Anglo Mahomedan Law, Whitley Stroke’s Supplement to the Anglo-Indian Codes, Sir Archibald Galloway’s Observations on the Law, etc., of India (1825) and the various digests and analyses prepared by Beaufort, Morley, Stanley, Harrington, etc. The Serampore press brought forth useful manuals for the aid of students. The Madrassas trained pupils for the legal career and few posts of Judge-Pundits for the exposition of Hindu law to assist the judge were open to students of the Sanskrit College. The systematic study of law was impeded by the curious medly of legal systems and Regulations, all of which were in danger of being supplanted by the long-drawn labours of the Law Commission which came to be set up in 1833. By Act of 1814 the profession of law was restricted to Hindus and Muslims educated in the Government Colleges only. Act I of 1846 opened the office of a lawyer to persons passing a test conducted by a Sudder Court, without making any arrangement for their previous training. The General Committee of Public Instruction had already recognised the importance of this branch of study by the appointment in August 1831 of a Professor of Law and Political Economy who resigned after two months for a more lucrative practice. Sir John Peter Grant occupied the office for two months in 1831 before his elevation to the bench of the Supreme Court. In 1834 the Committee contended itself with the choice of a modest successor on the dubious merit of his being one “who was not encumbered with a large practice” and who would be at least in advance of his pupils. Lectures were delivered freely by the Advocate-General during 1843-44, but were discontinued on his untimely death. In 1851 a professor of law was appointed to the Hindu College. The feeling had come to prevail that legal skill was a craftsmanship to be acquired by apprenticeship and practice, rather than a technique, to be mastered by rigorous academic discipline. It was only in pursuance of the emphatic recommendation of the Despatch of 1854 “for attendance in certain lectures and the attainment of a degree in law” as “necessary qualifications for Vakeels and Moonshiffs” that regular law classes were attached to the Presidency College in 1857. Other Government Colleges soon followed the example. In 1882 the Metropolitan Institution opened law classes with a seductively low feeschedule which resulted in the exodus of most of the law students from the Presidency College. The City College opened law classes in 1883. The Ripon College in 1885 fixed the fee still lower at an uniform Rs. 3/- for all classes so that others were compelled to follow suit. This College had discovered the secret of making cheap prices earn higher profits by stimulating the volume of demand; and on its own assessment it incurred a loss of Rs. 10,000/- to Rs. 20,000/- in 1890 when its law classes were
suspended for eight months on account of grave irregularities. In 1892 the syllabus was reduced to one of two years after graduation instead of three years. The Universities Commission (1902) commented on the absence of Central College of law and on the deficiency of students not in book knowledge, "but in the power to apply their knowledge to the cases before them". A liberally endowed Tagore Law Professorship was set up in 1870 by the University and it continued to be the only Chair till the foundation of the University Law College. The Chair has been adorned by a galaxy of legal luminaries whose "lectures have attained the position of standard treatises in their respective subjects while some have taken rank as classics in Indian law". It is not without significance that the vanguard of the national movement has in a large measure been occupied by men in whom the spirit of legalism has inculcated a sturdy independence in the defence of constitutional rights.

The indigenous medical sciences, viz., Ayurveda and the Unani or Tibbi were long sunk into a state of neglect. Buchanan found no person teaching medicine in the district of Dinajpur and indeed, proper physicians "were very few in number". The existence of a medical school in Natore excited considerable interest of Adam in 1835, because it was the only institution of that kind in the district, and he adds that "the number of such institutions throughout Bengal, is, I believe, very limited". Of the medical practitioners of the district only 4 or 5 out of 123 were professionally educated, said Adam, and the rest practised medicine as a crude art without knowing anything of it as a science. Their number was reinforced by a host of conjurers and pretenders who offered their services in the form of herbs, drugs, charms and superstitious mummeries gratuitously though they were frequently rewarded with land and other privileges by an awe-struck and grateful community. Rev. Long wrote in 1855, "Before 1807 there were 50 to 100 native doctors who used to attend the native hospital to study the practice there and introduce it among his countrymen, one of them got so rich as to drive in his own carriage". Western medical instruction began in the School for Native Doctors opened on October 24, 1824, under Dr. Jamieson on the strength of a General Order of June 21, 1822. Provision was made for the teaching of Ayurveda in the Sanskrit College and of the Unani system in the Calcutta Madrassa. The School for Native Doctors produced 166 qualified doctors before it was condemned by a Committee set up in 1833 by Bentinck. The Government order on June 28, 1835 implemented the recommendations of the Committee by the supression of the school as well as of the medical classes in the Sanskrit College and the Madrassa and by the foundation of the Medical College at Calcutta for imparting a more advanced knowledge solely in English. Many people had grave misgivings about the success of this College though it was enthusiastically supported by Rev. Duff, and also by David Hare who was its first Secretary. Lord Auckland and Dwarkanath Tagore encouraged medical students with offer of prizes. Medical education began primarily as the prerogative of the
Hindus as in 1835 not a single Muhammadan with the necessary knowledge of English could be found in the country for admission to the Medical College. The insuperable Hindu prejudice of defilement by touching the dead was bravely overcome by a group of four students who "at their own solicitation undertook the dissection of the human subject". We are told on the authority of Dr. Mahendralal Sarkar in 1872 that Rajkrishna Dey "was the first to plunge the scalpel into the dead human body" though the honour has been customarily accorded to Madhusudan Gupta. The present hospital was erected in 1852-53 for clinical practice of students. In 1844 four students of the College maintained by the benevolence of Dwarkanath Tagore, Dr. Goodeve and the Nawab Nazim of Bengal, proceeded to England where they won the highest academic laurels. The Hindustani classes were reinstated in 1838 to provide doctors for Civil Hospitals and jails. In 1847 a two years' Apprentice Course was set up for members of the Subordinate Medical Service who could, in the words of Dr. Mouat, "provided the only check on common vendors of poison". In 1864 it was decided to divide the Bengali class, into a Native Apothecary Class and a higher class called the Vernacular Licentiate Class, which were opened in 1866-67. These classes were transferred in 1872 to a new school in connection with the Campbell Hospital in order to relieve the growing congestion in the Medical College. The Native Apothecary Class was abolished in a few years. The Dacca Medical School was founded in 1874 for the convenience of East Bengal which had hitherto sent out one-third of the medical students. The school course was extended from three to four years in 1896 when the medium of instruction was converted into English with a view to elevate the standard. The early fears and misgivings about the success of medical education in Bengal were entirely falsified and private schools began to appear. The Calcutta Medical School, founded in 1886, was amalgamated in 1903 with the Calcutta College of Physicians and Surgeons in Bengal eight years after the establishment of the latter, and was removed to its present site at Belgachia where it developed into a magnificent non-Government College. Other mushroom institutions cropped up and came to an abrupt and premature end. But the prestige and popularity of the medical degree rose higher and encouraged many graduates to go abroad for specialised training or for admission to the coveted Indian medical Service. Dr. Mahendra Lal Sarkar was a pioneer in starting the Calcutta Medical Journal in 1868 for the advocacy of Homeopathy. The Indian Medical Record which still survives, appeared in 1890 and was followed by other journals of varying scientific value.

The period under review was for the most part devoid of any striking advancement in the cultivation of science, though an awareness of its surpassing importance is evident from official utterances since the earliest times. Section 43 of the Charter Act of 1813, the Resolution of March 7, 1835 and the Education Despatches, all laid equal stress on the propagation of the Knowledge of the literature as well as of the sciences
of Europe. In his famous protest of December 11, 1823 Raja Ram Mohun hailed the advent of "useful sciences" "with sanguine hopes". But the pronounced humanistic tendencies of Macaulay chimed well with the literary proclivity inducted by traditional learning in Tols and Madrassas and gave to Indian education an over-stressed and lop-sided literary growth. This is in striking contrast to Japan where the new learning of the West made its first impact in medical sciences. "It was followed by Physics, Chemistry, Pharmacology, Mathematics and Astronomy, to which list military science was added after 1848 and later history, political economy and law. It was, however, not until 1868 when Fakuzawa secured Wayland's ethics that the moral ideas of the west were first introduced. ... people at first had eyes on the material side of the western civilization and were mostly strangers to the beauty of its spiritual side".74 The first fruit of western education in Bengal had been a moral awakening which made the educated men proof against bribery in public services. But the lofty tone of public morality born of patriotic ardour was devoid of any enduring achievement in the resuscitation of native arts and crafts or in the organisation of technical institutes of utilitarian character. The aversion to scientific and technical studies of those who proceeded for higher education to England remained a theme of bitter complaint by Rajnarain Bose in his memorable address "Ekal-O-Sekal", (past and Present) published in 1872. The study of science was introduced in Hindu College in 1824 by Dr. Ross who won from his students the nickname of Soda-Sahib because of his special fancy for this chemical element. Scientific subjects were included in the courses of junior and Senior scholarship examinations. On November 30, 1822, the Serampore College notified a course of ten lectures on Chemistry with a stiff fee for attendance which presumably was not intended to scare away the listeners. The Calcutta University in its regulations of 1872 made room for a specialised "B" Course in science for its B.A. Degree, which proved popular only because it was easier. The out-students who were previously permitted to attend the science course in the Presidency College began to fall off as laboratory facilities, hitherto lacking, came to be gradually provided in other Colleges and their number totally disappeared in 1884.75 Full-fledged B.Sc. Courses were introduced by the University in 1905. The fearless spirit of genuine scientific enquiry was evidenced in the heroic apostasy of Dr. Mahendralal Sarkar M.D., from Allopathy to the pursuit of what he believed to be the truth in much despised Homeopathy in 1887. The Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science came into being in 1876 as the result of his noble efforts. A glorious era of Bengal's original achievement in science was heralded by the paper on the 'Polarisation of electric ray by a crystal' read by Jagadish Chandra Bose before the Asiatic Society in 1895 and the paper by P. C. Roy on mercurous nitrate followed shortly after76. The two worthies provided the salt whereof a whole generation of brilliant Bengali scientists have been salted.

Europeans set the pace for scientific works in Bengali with Robert
May's primer on Mathematics in 1817, Felix Carey's treatise on Anatomy and Vidyaharavali, Marshman's Astronomy and John Mack's Elements of Chemistry (Kimiya Vidyar Sar), etc., mostly under the genial inspiration of William Carey. Rammohun Ray tried his skill on a bi-lingual geographical manual, the Jyagrahi. The credit of presenting advanced scientific principles in lucid Bengali goes to Akshoy Kumar Dutt whose articles in the Tattvabodhini Patrika from No. 47 onwards marked the dawn of a new era for scientific literature in Bengali. The writings of Ramendra Sundar Trivedi in the 'Prakriti' from 1896 onwards and in other journals expounded the latest scientific advances of his age with that "profound and orderly understanding by virtue of which principles become luminous".

The General Committee was always alive to the importance of practical instruction and strongly recommended Surveying as useful for employment in the Judicial and Revenue services. The Mechanical Institute was founded by private effort in about 1839 but it petered out after a brief existence. Attention was directed to Civil Engineering during 1843-44 by schemes of public works and railways projected by the Government and a Professorship of the subject was instituted in the Hindu College before 1844-45. As no suitable candidate was found, a nominal appointment was made "by conferring upon one of the Cambridge gentlemen attached to the Hindu college the title of Professor of Civil Engineering". Effective arrangement for the study of Engineering in Bengal was made by the Public Works Department which opened in 1856 a College occupying premises vacated by the Fort William College. It sought affiliation with the Calcutta University in 1857 and was amalgamated with the presidency College in 1864. During 1869-75 Col. Nicholls of the P.W.D. repeatedly expressed his dissatisfaction about the practical training provided there. The Cadell Committee, set up by the Government in January 1875 strongly urged the necessity of an integrated education under dyarchical control—the theoretical training being under the Education Department and the practical under the Public Works Department. In pursuance of these recommendations, the Government took active steps and the College was removed to its existing site at Sibpur purchased from the authorities of the Bishop's College in 1880, and it received its present name, "Bengal Engineering College" in 1887. A variegated course was provided for: (i) Civil Engineering, (ii) Civil overseers, (iii) Mechanical Overseers, (iv) Draughtsmen, (v) Skilled Workmen, and (vi) a class for the sons of artisans and Mistris. The Engineering course was extended to a fourth year with a certificate of practical training in the fifth year. The mechanical Engineering classes never got started. Various reports collected in the papers relating to Technical Education in India during 1886 and 1904 condemned the College as a gross failure. In 1883 Heaton, the distinguished Principal of the College, stated in despair that the College had produced on an average only 11.3 B.E.'s. annually, but even these few failed to obtain suitable employment and were often under-employed.
M. Finucane cynically reported that between 1879 and 1888 the College had produced 33 engineers and 68 passed subordinates. . . . . an output which could have been secured at much cheaper cost by sending these students to England at state expense. F.J.E. Spring of the P. W. D. pointed out that the chief difficulty of the College was that "it had been nobody's child. In so far as teaching was concerned it was under the Education Department, as far as manual work, under P.W.D.". The successive inquiries of this period seemed to have roused the College to new activity. In 1889 it was made a residential institution. In 1891 the Government decision to reserve the Upper Subordinate grades of the P.W.D. to Engineering for which the qualification for admission was raised to First graduates of this institution had the effect of promoting the study of Arts degree instead of the Entrance Examination. Agricultural classes were opened in 1899 but closed in 1910. In 1894 the Survey Schools of Dacca (1876), Patna, and Cuttack were affiliated to Sibpur College in order to make it the pivot of the system of technical instruction of the province. The Educational Conference at Simla in 1901 recognised the valuable work done by the College but resolved that "the first call upon technical effort should lie in other direction". The Government Resolution (1904) recommended assistance in the form of scholarships to Europe and America. But the scheme turned out to be a failure as men thus trained found themselves in no happier predicament on their return to India. Failure to find a job or to start an independent enterprise at last compelled them to seek an opening in the administrative services.

Agricultural education had been persistently neglected though a beginning had been made early in 1821 by William Carey with the Agricultural Society, warmly supported by Ramgopal Ghosh and others. The agrarian economy of the province wedded to customary empirical methods discouraged expensive scientific contrivances unless they were accompanied with drastic land reforms and vigorous state incentive. Agricultural education held out such forbidding prospect that the few Bengalis who received it in England towards the close of the century, were on their return driven to seek employment as Deputy Magistrates! The Bengal Veterinary College was founded in 1893 and developed to the stature of a College in 1899. The Universities Commission 1902 rightly stressed the importance of agricultural science in a predominantly agricultural country like India. The confession of the failure of the existing system of agricultural instruction in the Resolution of 1804 had little effect in Bengal where no agricultural school existed. The higher Agricultural course that was opened at Sibpur College in 1899 was abandoned in 1901 and the lower course of two years fell in a moribund condition. The recommendation of the Government of India in its Despatch to the Secretary of State in 1905 for an agricultural college in each province remained a pious hope never realised.

Nor was technical education under more favourable auspices. In 1886 Lord Macdonell in his Memorandum on technical education in Bengal
described technical schools as mere excrescences with neither plan nor object. But the Government was chary of further extension of technical schools lest it should "aggravate the present difficulties by adding to the educated unemployed a new class of professional men for whom there is no commercial demand" (Papers relating to Technical Education in India 1886-1904 p. 36). The years 1901 to 1904 were crowded with a series of inquiries opening with Sir E. Buck's inquiry on practical and technical education, the Simla Conference in 1901, the recommendations of the Committee on industrial Schools in India and the Government Resolution of 1904. These resulted in a crop of literature that has been described as "voluminous, suggestive, but comparatively infructuous". The Government of Bengal contemplated a scheme of ten craft schools of which the Weaving School at Serampore was actually started in 1907. A co-ordinated scheme of engineering and technical education in consonance with the industrial potentialities of the country was never formulated and this omission gave substance to the people's chronic complaint about the lukewarmness of the Government regarding technical advancement of the country.

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