CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION
1.0 Introduction

The period 19th and 20th century witnessed many stalwarts who showed the light of freedom to the Indians. Persons like Swami Vivekananda, Bankimchandra Chatterjee, Rabindranath Tagore, Subhash Chandra Bose, Chittaranjan Das, Bipin Pal, Sri Aurobindo Ghosh, Surendranath Bannerjee, Meghnad Saha, Srimati Renuka Roy, Sir Asutosh Mookerjee and many others remain immortal in the history of Indian renaissance. Syama Prasadis said to be the most worthy son of the great Sir Asutosh.

Syama Prasad’s illuminating life can be almost divided into two— as an educationist and a politician; though not simultaneously. When he walked through the garden of education, he never even tread into the political arena. Whereas, when he got himself tied up with politics, the world of education became a secondary factor. Hence, his reputation as a staunch patriot and great parliamentarian has been widely accepted.

According to the words of his daughter, Mrs. Arati Bhattacharjee, “my father had a towering personality and people were afraid to talk to him or approach him. But inwardly, my father was a very loving, affectionate, kind, and an unassuming person. He was always helpful and kind to others.” (Maitri. 2001., pp. 41).

Much later, in 1951, he relented to a public demand for setting up of a political party, in the name of ‘People’s party’ or ‘Janasangh’, and became its founder President. Syama Prasad floored everyone in the parliament with his brilliant speech. During the campaigning of the Janasangh in Bombay, he was greeted with the title of, ‘Lion of Bengal’.

1.1 Background of the study

In undivided India, a new era was introduced after the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 A.D. It brought about a new pattern of economy, politics, society, value system and of course, a distinct educational system. The traditional indigenous system
prevailed for a very long time, but was gradually challenged by the onslaught of the British, Portugese, Dutch and the French missionaries. It was for the very first time, India witnessed a modern system of education, provided by the foreigners. By then, the traditional system of education had already become very impractical. In the beginning of the 19th century, the British limited their spread of education only to a limited territory, such as Madras, Bengal and Bombay. Later, the British got a hold on the administration of the country and Bengal was made the capital. As a result, a lot of limelight was thrown on this state or Presidency, as it was known. English education brought about a very positive transformation in India. The Hindus of Bengal came forward and showed a great interest towards western knowledge, besides their own traditional culture. As a result, many English schools were set up in and around Calcutta. One of the institutions which is worth mentioning is that of Hindu college, later known as Presidency College, a non-missionary enterprise. Actually, the elite class among the Hindus, came forward to accept English education because they wanted to come out of their social order for a change, and ultimately towards freedom. The various Governor Generals put forward their views and worked out their own system of education. Many Committees and Commissions were formed to facilitate the Indians, both for the good or worse. It is important to study the historical background of a particular education system of a particular country, without which the cause behind any successive changes, whether social, educational or economic, will not be found. Every occurrence has a prelude to it. So, the researcher thought that while studying the University education for the last 100 years or so, she needed to know its background on which it grew, to its present state. Hence, the present educational system, especially that of the University, has a long history to tell about its root and its birth.

1.2 British Period

The researcher felt that while studying the political and educational background on which Sir Asutosh, and later Syama Prasad reviewed and renewed the educational system of the country, especially Bengal, an intensive study had to be dealt with, regarding the then scenario of the country, in both the aspects. It is a known fact
that the British system had quite a step motherly attitude towards the Indians. The educational system was not effective at all, since it did not cater to the needs of the masses at all. Also, there were very few Indian leaders who could take the responsibility of looking into the plight of the Indians. Hence the study of the historical background gives an insight into the entire study.

To start with, the Charter Act of 1813 needed to be renewed every twenty years. So the Charter of 1833 was renewed in favour of British East India Company and made provisions for more expenditure in the educational field. Though it wanted to expand education in India, the G.C.P.I. created a bar. At the arrival of Macaulay in India in 1834, Governor General Lord William Bentinck appointed him the chairman of the G.C.P.I and asked him to decide on the educational policy of the Government.

The confrontation regarding oriental and western education was already brewing since long. Macaulay herein wrote his famous ‘Minute’ and submitted it to Bentinck on 2nd February, 1835. He suggested that the Government should spread only European knowledge through the medium of English. Another novel idea was put forth by him, i.e. the Downward Filtration Theory. The Government would educate only the elite class, who would remain Indian by birth only. Later on, they in turn would spread education among the lower strata of the society. Lord Bentinck approved of this. Macaulay noticed that the Indians were not at all averse to western education. In fact, they were very eager to learn English and scientific knowledge for their own advancement. People like Raja Rammohan Roy and others supported this very idea of welcoming western knowledge. Macaulay also went on to say that the vernaculars were not adequately equipped to handle the advanced scientific knowledge of the West.

At this point of time, the orientalists claimed, that the grants already promised by the Government regarding the propagation of oriental education could not be withdrawn; as against this, Macaulay was of the opinion that English education
would arouse a new sense of awakening in India and that it would create a bridge between the British and the Indians.

But when the ‘Minute’ of Macaulay was sent to Mr. Princep, he opposed to it outrightly. He said that though a portion of the Hindu Community was in favour of English education, the Muslims highly opposed to it. Thereby, it would have been improper to stop funding the oriental education, on the part of the Government.

In spite of all this, Bentinck passed a resolution in favour of Macaulay’s Minute. It said that the Government would spend the earmarked money for European education only. But, the oriental educational institution would carry on with Government grants as before, as long as the Indians preferred this type of education.

Here it may be noted that many eminent people protested against this kind of educational system. But surprisingly enough, the upper class Hindus accepted the above policy. So this was the very beginning of the spread of western education in our country. Prior to this period, there was as such, no specific system of education in India and thereby, Bentinck’s resolution can be said to be the pioneer of western education in India.

At times, Macaulay is held responsible for the degradation of regional or vernacular language which lowered the Indian culture as a whole. But, on the other side, it sparked the idea of nationalism in the minds of people. So, it was said to be a blessing in disguise. Resurgent India was the outcome of a harmonious synthesis between the East and the West. Though political consciousness was brewing with the efforts of leaders like Raja Rammohan Roy, the educational policy of Bentinck gave an impetus to the growing nationalism.

It is a fact that the mother tongue was highly neglected since English was the major medium of instruction. But it is also true, that the orientalists did not insist on making the vernacular as the medium. Hence, there was both a negative as well as a positive effect on the society at large – it gave birth to two classes, those educated in English and those not having any access to it.
While Macaulay actually wanted to bring about cultural renaissance in India by creating a group of Indians who would have their allegiance only to western education, Lord Curzon and a few leaders of the National Education Movement realized the significance and the need of a national language. Herein, India started to discover herself along the line of independence. Macaulay observed that there was just one choice available – education in oriental classical language or in English. He stressed that English should be the obvious choice because the rulers, that is, the British, used this language. As already mentioned, the Indians could very well master English. Therefore, Macaulay opined that western knowledge should be given through English only. He also suggested that the Government should have limited responsibility, regarding the provision of education. At times, Macaulay is said to be the pioneer in English education in India, though he was not the first person to bring a new system of education to the country. Various English schools were already existent and the Indians were already demanding western education and scientific knowledge long before Macaulay's arrival. What Macaulay actually wanted was to build a class of allies, who would be Indians by birth, only. In a time, when the country was going through a makeover from complete traditionalism to modernization, Macaulay failed to realize that a synthesis between the two would have been a wise option. In reality, it was seen that English education actually activated the pace of the revival of the Indian culture. In fact, modern knowledge, which was rational in nature, gave birth to the so awaited nationalism.

1.2.1 Lord Bentinck’s Policy

After Bentinck went back to Britain, Sir Charles Metcalfe was the next Governor General, though for a very brief period. Next in turn was Lord Auckland who became the Governor General in 1836. Till 1839, English had made quite a headway and Indians educated in English got jobs with the Government. In fact, English became the court language in 1837. Interestingly, the orientalists favoured this system. So, Auckland suggested that the system of oriental education would go on without hampering the growth of western education.
Next in the lineage was Lord Hardinge who became the Governor General in 1843. He wanted to make primary and higher education popular and, as an incentive, offered Government service in return. This resulted in an aversion to vocational training. Unemployment was rampant, as there were lots, who had educated themselves, but jobs were limited. The standard of education fell. At around this time, there was a proposal of establishing an Indian university, but the British authority did not give permission.

During this very time, around 1853, Vidyasagar established two free schools. He made propaganda for women education. Lord Bethune had already established the Calcutta Female School in 1849, of which Vidyasagar was the Secretary. This ultimately became the Bethune College in 1878. At this very time, the Hindu College was also established. It is important to note that a new type of education led to the establishment of new types of institutions. The missionaries concentrated specially on the field of women’s education. To name a few, William Carey founded a girls’ school in Serampore in 1819, the Calcutta Female Juvenile Society conducted 10 schools, and were the pioneers of women education in India. Modern women’s education was initiated at Madras in 1821 and at Bombay in 1824. Girls’ school were further established at Benaras, Allahabad, Bereilly etc. As a result, women’s education had already paved a strong foundation well before 1853 and today’s state of girls education definitely owe its debt to the missionaries in this respect. Infact, the teacher training classes that we have today, had originated well before 1853.

Similar educational developments spread throughout India. In this context, the name of Jagannath Sankerseth of Bombay, needs to be mentioned, who supported the cause of women’s education, secular education and the establishment of Indian enterprises in modern education. Alongside, another luminary, Mahatma Phule established a girls’ school in Bombay and schools for Harijan children. Infact, he demanded mass education which led to the future movement for compulsory primary education. Another remarkable contribution was the formation of ‘The Calcutta School Book Society’ in 1817.
Bengal in particular, experienced massive developments regarding this. The name of David Hare (1775-1842) may be mentioned. He took a great interest in spreading English education, though he discouraged scientific studies. He felt that India deserved a secular educational institute, for teaching both the mother tongue and English. Hence, he founded the first collegiate institution on western lines on a secular basis with the support of Raja Rammohan Roy and Edward Hyde East. The Hindu Mahavidyalay was opened on January 20, 1817 and was running very successfully in days to come. But, later on, the college was handed over to the Government for financial difficulties and was ultimately named the Presidency College in 1854. The college went on to attract future luminaries of Bengal and India, including Syama Prasad Mookerjee.

1.2.2 Indian Enterprises

Apart from non-official European enterprises, there were many Indian private enterprises, which was chiefly represented by Vidyasagar, Rammohan Roy, Radhakanta Deb and the Derozians. At this juncture, the educational policy after 1813 was highly influenced by the socio-cultural demand of the time, and was termed Renaissance. Western education gave birth to a new ideology regarding philosophy, political principles and science. While the European Renaissance led to the birth of a national language and humanistic literature, similarly, Bengal Renaissance paved the way for development of Bengali language and literature. The leaders of this movement adjusted both to the oriental as well as western education ideals. The first phase was led by Raja Rammohan Roy. It is a well-known fact that he was well ahead of his time and free from all sorts of superstitions regarding the type of education needed for a country to be independent and stand on its own feet. On the one hand, he wanted English to be the medium of education and on the other, he was known as the Father of modern Bengali Prose. He set up his Anglo Vedic School, through which he tried to bring about effective life based knowledge (which is still relevant today). Known for his rebellious thoughts and deeds, he expedited the movement of the New Age and brought about a social upsurge with far-reaching consequence. He stood for
modernisation of India under the influence of sciences. He was a strong supporter of national integration and dead against communalism. As is known, he was the pioneer of Brahma Samaj. He was highly successful in moulding public opinion in favour of western education and culture. Infact, he supported the Hindu College (providing western knowledge), as well as the Vedantic College, which spread oriental learning. The cause of Bengali language, interested him quite a lot. He helped William Carey in this regard. He wrote a Bengali Grammar book known as ‘Gaudio Byakaram’ in 1832. Similarly, he vehemently fought for women’s education which was not very popular in those days. He was rightfully acclaimed ‘Bharat Pathik’.

There was another group of conservatives, which was represented by Raja Radhakanta Deb. This group of reformers wanted change but not entirely. They accepted western education within the frame work of traditional Indian culture and opposed complete change. It ought to be mentioned that, Radhakanta Deb fought tirelessly for women education and medical education. He supported a combination of both tradition and modern thinking regarding science and knowledge. Alike Rammohan, Radhakanta also stood for progressive educational reforms.

1.2.2.1 Young Bengal and the Moderates

During Renaissance, another group, known as the Derozians or the Radicals came to the forefront. They were also called the Young Bengal and were mainly the students of Hindu College. Derozio, the leader, was a true educationist and creator of a New Bengal. It is important to mention here that they were absolutely opposed to Hinduism and its practices. They found everything good in Christianity and tried to spread it for which it did not find much support from the Hindu Society.

A fourth group, known as the Moderates, came into existence. Vidyasagar and Tagore were the exponents, besides many other luminaries. Vidyasagar played a very significant role in the Renaissance period. Besides being a social reformer, he
was an educational reformer as well. Inspite of him being a classical scholar, he educated himself in English. He welcomed western education and science. As he was an excellent translator, he translated many English and Sanskrit books into Bengali, like *Sitar Banabas, Shakutala* etc. His Bengali book, *Varnaparichay* is still essential today, for those striving to learn Bengali. He established the Metropolitan School and College (now Vidyasagar College), He worked hard to make our mother tongue the medium of instruction of education. The most pioneering work he began was the concept of a national and secular education, national curriculum, and that which is still relevant in today’s India. He promoted the 3 – language formula in the curriculum. He advocated women’s education for which he fought tirelessly for his entire life.

Considering the above situation, the Renaissance had quite a strong influence on the educational system of that time. They can be mentioned as follows:-

*Firstly*, the outlook of the common people was broadened.

*Secondly*, due to the establishment of different educational institutions by different social organisations, there was an actual increase in the percentage of literacy.

*Thirdly*, it attracted Indian enterprises in the field of education and administration.

*Fourthly*, the sense of national consciousness had a great upsurge.

*Fifthly*, the standard of education was uplifted to a great extent.

*Sixthly*, the Government had to change its policy to a much liberal basis.

*Seventhly*, the content of education changed, as it had to be re-oriented with the inclusion of both classical and scientific knowledge.

*Eighthly*, the aim of education became much wider than before.

*Ninthly*, the significance of women education was felt strongly.

*Lastly*, the mother-tongue was recognized as the medium of instruction.
1.2.3 Wood’s Despatch

Alongside the Renaissance, various developments were continuing to happen. The Charter Act was due to be renewed in 1853, where a new educational policy was to be made. A Selection Committee was formed where an enquiry was made regarding the demand of education in India. It was reported that extensive education was needed and that educated Indians would not be a threat to the British Government. This gave rise to the famous Wood’s Despatch, which is of great educational significance with regard to the introduction of a unique system of education, still relevant today. Since 1835, English education was given sole important. Now, the Despatch asked the Government to spread primary and mass education as well as the development of the mother tongue. The Government declared that it would give grant–in-aid to the local educational institutions. The Despatch also proposed the establishment of the Department of Public Instruction under a Director. Several inspectors of schools would work under the Director and who in turn will submit report to the Government. The most important recommendation of the Despatch was the establishment of the Universities in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras for holding examinations and confer degrees. These Universities would be set up on the model of the London University. It was also suggested that the Universities were to have a Chancellor, a Vice – Chancellor, Fellows and a Senate. The Senate was to manage the funds of the Universities, frame regulations, conduct University examinations in Arts and Science streams and also appoint examiners. In addition to this, it proposed that there should be a graded system in the total education programme. The Universities and Colleges would be on the top to provide higher education; the middle stage would consist of the high and secondary schools; and the lowest stage will be that of the primary schools.

The Despatch was absolutely against the ‘Downward Filtration Theory’. Instead, it went for mass education and started to set up many secondary and primary schools. It proposed a system of grant-in-aid. These grants would be given out for specific purposes. It also provided for training of teachers and female education.
Further, it strived to give special grants and stipends to female students. The Despatch framed some general principles on which grant-in-aid would be provided to the Provincial Governments. It stressed that grants would be given to all schools maintaining religious neutrality. Other factors on which the grant would be made were as follows:

- Having a good local management
- Impart secular education.
- To levy a minimum fee from the students.
- Agree to be inspected and submit a report to the court.

1.2.3.1 Establishment of Education Department

In addition to the above, the Provincial Governments were asked to provide grants in special cases, viz. foundations for scholarships, building construction, salary increase of teachers etc. Actually, the main purpose of this system of grant-in-aid was to attract Indian private enterprise and lead to a gradual withdrawal of the Governmental responsibility from the direct management of education in India. Regarding training of teachers, the Despatch referred the training schools of England, and hence the Directors suggested that Training Schools should be established on a similar pattern, in each Presidency. The training would be conducted both in Government schools and colleges. It also proposed that stipends and scholarships will be given to teachers during their training. Similarly, it supported vocational education and establishment of industrial training schools. In fact the Despatch even took the responsibility of publishing books in Indian languages. It recommended that the best English books would be translated into the vernacular languages. Nevertheless, the Despatch left a significant mark in the field of education in India in bringing about a change in the attitude of the Government in the matter of education. The Despatch chalked out the educational policy which is still existent with certain modifications. It is known as the ‘Magna Carta’ of English education in India. The present system of education in India originated in the Despatch and, old issues like content of education, medium of instruction etc. were solved with the coming of the Despatch. It recognized the
State responsibility of education for the very first time. It touched all the grades of the education system, right from the primary to University level. By rejecting the Downward Filtration Theory, it ushered in the significance of mass education, that was long awaited. It also encouraged indigenous education. The striking effect of the Despatch was the creation of an Education Department in each province and that too, under a D.P.I. According to Lord Dalhousie, the Despatch contained a scheme of education for the whole of India, far wider and morally comprehensive than the local or the Supreme Government could have even ventured to suggest. (Purukait, B.R. pp. 56)

But in spite of all the above positive features, the Despatch failed to fulfill the expectation of the Indians. Most of the important recommendation of the Despatch was not fully implemented by the Government. Use of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction was not implemented for the next century. Mass education was equally neglected. Government institutions gradually increased in number, and the desire to encourage private Indian enterprise was shelved. Of course, one thing was significant for sure. The Despatch initiated a complete system of education in India, which was non-existent till then. Here also, the University was kept at the highest level, and had the responsibility of drawing the syllabi, conducting examinations and giving out certificates. In this way, the whole system of education was adequately controlled. It also suggested that the Universities would be autonomous, having its own rules and regulations.

As a result, we see that the Despatch looked forward to a partnership between official and private enterprises and missionary claims were rejected. Though the Government said that it would withdraw its responsibility from administration, the grants were in its hand as a pre-condition, and thereby the situation was, control without responsibility. Finally, according to the directives of the Despatch, Departments of Education were set up in each of the provinces in 1856. Three Universities were established in Calcutta, Madras and Bombay in 1857. Around this time, the Mutiny disturbed more or less, every effort of the Despatch. Later, Lord Stanley, Secretary of State for India, again ordered the implementation of the
recommendations of the Despatch, only adding the imposition of educational cess to raise funds for primary education.

Though the Wood’s Despatch is claimed to be the Magna Carta by some, it was just a document provided by a foreign ruler to the ruled. Mass education was hampered and the system was totally rigid. Inspite of all these, we see that it was the first of its kind in introducing secular education with centralised control. The system was far more comprehensive than before, besides the fact that it was only a state system heavily influenced by colonialism. It did not even give a thought to bring about a national system of education.

As a corollary to the Despatch’s suggestions, the grants-in-aid were appropriately given to the missionaries as non-official enterprises. But, English education was given such a heavy weightage, that secondary education was merely a one-way destination to the University education. By 1871, lot of girls’ institutions, teacher training institutes, Medical, Engineering and Law Colleges were established. Inspite of all the above propositions, the field of primary education suffered a lot for the want of fund. By this time, the country was already going through the phase of national consciousness, where mass education was demanded. The Government was given two alternatives, that is, either take total responsibility of education or totally withdraw from it.

1.2.4 Establishment of Anglo – Oriental college

On the other side, the outlook of the Muslims towards the British rule was highly negative, and so did not accept western education, whereas the Hindus went forward to welcome western knowledge. At this very juncture, Sir Syed Ahmed came forward as the savior for the Muslims. He set up his Anglo - Oriental College at Aligarh, which became very popular amongst the middle class Muslims. The British rulers tried to project this as communal education, but was not successful. There was a series of incidents which proved that a national consciousness had already found roots in the society. The educated gentry became very much restless
and demanded various reforms. A national system of education was demanded instead of a colonial system down the line.

### 1.2.4.1 The Hunter Commission

In the backdrop, various industries were being established, which in turn demanded skilled people. As a result, the secondary and higher education, which was till then academic, turned to be vocational in character. Hence, at the end of the 19th Century the first Indian Education Commission (popularly known as Hunter Commission) was formed on 3rd February, 1862 by Lord Ripon. Sir William W. Hunter was appointed the chairman.

The main task of the Commission were the following:-

- To map the extent of the spread of primary education.
- To find out the activities of the provincial departments of education.
- The respective role of Government and private institutions.
- Expansion of grants.
- Government attitude towards religious instructions.

The Commission, after surveying the whole country more or less, submitted a report in 1883.

In the first place, the Commission was very much dissatisfied by the policy of the Government. It proposed that the Government should hand over primary education to local bodies; it should expand grants-in-aid; committees should be set up for the running of secondary and collegiate education. Regarding primary education, the Commission said that it occupied a crucial place in a national system of education. For the spread of elementary education, it made many important recommendation regarding the policy, administration, indigenous schools, management, teacher’s training and finance.

It also stood for secular education in Governement schools. It went on to say that if any school gave religious instruction, then attendance of the students will not be made compulsory. But moral instruction could be given. Hence, the claims of the
missionaries were defeated. The School Book Society was to take care of the text books provided to various schools. Again, non-official enterprise meant non-official Indian enterprise. It also said that the primary stage could do with the mother tongue, but the Middle Schools could opt for either mother tongue or English. But, surprisingly nothing was said about the secondary stage, and hence, English continued to be the medium. The starmark recommendation of the Commission was regarding the nature of curriculum of secondary schools. It suggested two equivalent parallel courses – ‘A’ Course for academic studies and ‘B’ course for vocational courses. Actually, this was the beginning of diversification of secondary education which we still see today. Another very important suggestion was that all indigeneous schools should open its doors to all and sundry, and state-aid, would be reciprocal to results. The Commission also dwelled into the qualitative side of the primary education. It suggested a recognised curriculum, that which will be life-oriented, through vernacular medium. Agriculture and sciences would also be given a practical tinge. Regarding administration and management of primary schools, the Local Self Government Bodies would be vested with the duty. As it is the situation today, compulsory primary education was in the card, but could not be implemented, as the then policy of Payment by Result negated everything. Again, the State was to take full responsibility of teachers’ training. Lastly, it may be observed that the Hunter Commission did away with all the obstacles that came in the way of the spread of Western Education. It can be duly said that the present state of primary education owes a great deal to this Commission. But parallely, the usage of mother tongue was neglected, because English continued to be the medium in the secondary stage. The Commission did not study deeply, the general working of the Universities and Colleges, though it made a few recommendation regarding it. It recommended that grants would be made more liberally, more freedom to be given to private colleges to determine college fees, introduce optional subjects, grants to be given for research work and libraries; scholarships for poor students. The Commission suggested the establishment of Night Schools for adults.
1.2.5 Social Revivalism

The growth of national movement after 1885 brought in a new type of sentiment regarding the education system. First of all, examination dominated-education caused the lowering of standards. The educated Indians thought that jobs were well secured for them in the offices. But, due to changed situation, the colonial system did not provide for infinite employment and hence could not keep pace with the educational expansion. During this very time, Indians blamed the foreign rule for educated unemployment. So, they demanded a national pattern. Herein came the consciousness, giving rise to revivalism of various sectors of the society, which in turn influenced education. First came the Arya Samaj (1876) which spread the ideal of life and culture. Again, the Ramkrishna Mission (1897) looked to the cause of man-making education. Tagore on the other hand, criticized Western Education as lifeless and useless. Everybody felt that the foreign system was actually spoiling the nationalistic, humanistic and spiritual approach of the educated Indians. The cultural reformation was actually associated with political extremism, which in turn brought about the movement for educational reforms. Vivekananda observed, “our great national sin is the neglect of the masses and that is the cause of our downfall. No amount of politics would be of any avail until the masses of India are once more well-educated, well-fed and well-cared for.” (Bannerjee, J.P., pp. 223). He stood for mass education, and that too through the mother tongue. He equally favoured women’s education with a specialized curriculum. With his great foresight, he went on to say that, India was in dire need for technical education, so that industries could develop and there could be a sustainable economy. At around this time, the contribution of the Dawn Society, the brain child of Satish Chandra Mookerjee, need to be adequately mentioned. He was incidentally the class-mate of Asutosh Mookerjee at South Suburban School. Satish Chandra was also the batch-mate of Vivekananda at Presidency College for some time. The Society published a daily known as the ‘Dawn” which was started in 1897, and later became the vehicle of the ‘Dawn Society Education Movement’. From 1907, the Dawn became the organ of National Education, its members consisting of erudite scholars like Tagore, Dinesh Chandra Sen, Sister Nivedita,
Mrs. Annie Besant etc. The Society was un politicized, with no connection with the University or the Government Department of Education. It also was completely a students’ organization with brilliant academic careers. In general, the Society gave vocational training classes, specially in industrial science, banking, technology etc. The Society demanded that Calcutta University become a National University, but due to the National Education Movement, they stopped short of this and concentrated on the Movement.

Very closely related to the Society was Rabindranath Tagore. He observed that complete education was to be the combination of modern western knowledge and the freedom of the students in the national context. He also said that education should be life-oriented, but unfortunately, the medium being a foreign language, the power of thinking of students was a great waste. He thought that language and concept should go hand in hand. He asked the students to prepare themselves for the service of their mother-land. Tagore with this view, established the Brahmacharya Ashram at Santiniketan. The above views paved the way for the demand of educational reforms. During this very time, the urge for national industries was simultaneously felt by the Indians.

1.2.5.1 Partition of Bengal

Just when the people were thinking of educational reforms, did the issue of Partition of Bengal come in the forefront, only to ignite the national sentiment, in various ways. Lord Curzon who came as the Viceroy to India in 1899 was an arrogant imperialist, and hence did not quite respect the Indian sentiment regarding nationalism, and especially, the educational field. He held an educational conference at Simla in 1902, where it was told that the total education system was top-heavy i.e. the University over-emphasized the examinations, and the colleges where just training centres of students. No research on higher studies were conducted. As a result, Curzon set up an Education Commission in 1902 where it suggested that no new Universities should be further set up. The Senate was to be limited between 50-100 members and the Syndicate would be the executive body of the University. The Commission suggested that the Board of Studies will be
looking after the academic affairs and the University will take up teaching responsibility at the Post-graduate level. Also, the affiliation to colleges would not be given unless it had well equipped staff. It also recommended that all colleges should have a Governing Body, sufficient professors, laboratories, libraries, hostel and furniture. The curriculum also had to be revised in the higher stage of education. The standard of Entrance Examination was to be more rigid. It also said that the Intermediate Examination should be done away with, and a 3-Year Degree Course introduced, and that which we still practice today. Lastly, it advised that the second grade colleges should be closed down.

In order to pursue the above recommendations of the Commission, the Indian Universities Act was passed in 1904, which tried to improve the higher education system in India. If the merits are to be mentioned, it can be said that, the act aimed to bring about a better and efficient administration in the University. The Senate and the Syndicate were made more powerful. The rigid system of affiliation controlled the standard of the colleges successfully. Again, due to the Act, the Government for the first time made grants to the University. It granted Rs. 5,00,000/- a year for 5 years, which ultimately was made a permanent one. So, we see that the Act was more or less an administrative one. On the other hand, the Act did not ever try to destroy the Indian enterprises. Curzon tried to bring Governmental control along with provision of fund.

1.2.5.2 Educational Policy of 1904

Regarding college education, the Government increased the grants in order to enable the colleges to enhance its standard. So, Lord Curzon finally declared his education policy in 1904, which was actually based on the Simla Conference, 1901. In this resolution, the Government slowly withdrew from the control of the total education system, though the Government maintained a few institution which was to play a model to the other private ones. Besides, the Government showed its control over private institution by the system of inspection, which was under the jurisdiction of the Government. In the case of secondary education, the Government was to have complete control over all private secondary schools,
irrespective of aided or non-aided ones. Alongside, the schools had to get recognition from a University, in order to send up pupils for the Matriculation Examination. The above discussion proves that though the policy tried to improve the system of education in India, it hurt the national sentiment of the Indians, who thought that it was just a step to stop the native enterprises from flourishing and spreading mass education. The policy asked the Government to give grants to Provincial Governments who would in turn take up the cause of improving secondary education. It also emphasized the training of teachers. The policy stressed on the diversification of curriculum. The medium of instruction was to be the mother tongue in the primary stage and English was to be introduced only in the secondary stage. Regarding the primary stage, the policy had a very positive approach. It sanctioned grants on a very liberal basis. It also stressed that the quality should be enhanced along with the quantity of schools. The rural primary schools were also given attention for the very first time of its kind.

It can be concluded by saying that Curzon initiated the reconstructive movement of higher education, which is still of great importance even today. He was the first to realize the responsibility of the Central Government in relation to education. Reforms regarding agricultural education received a great impetus. He should be aptly praised for his introduction of research and the development of modern Indian languages and higher studies. As a retaliation to Curzon’s partition policy, Indian nationalists felt strongly that it was actually meant to cripple the National Education Movement by territorial separation. It brought in the Triple Boycott – boycott of law courts, foreign goods and foreign education, as a result. To stop this, the Government tried forcible repression. The National Council of Education was formed in November, 1905. In Bengal, Sir Gurudas Banerjee took quite an active part. A National Education Movement started with the national leaders’ stress on national education, under national control and based on national ideals and tradition.
National Education had some specific characters as follows:

- It is based on tradition of a country.
- The total administration of the education system of the country should be in the hands of the Indians.
- It should be imparted through the mother tongue besides other languages.
- National Education should be secular.
- It should aim at fast national economic development.
- It must aim at national progress and prosperity.
- National political liberty and a national state should be the aim.
- It should bring about justice and equal opportunity.
- Most important is the emphasis on vocational, technical and industrial education.

1.2.5.3 National Institutions

During this period, various national institutions were established. The first phase of the movement saw the establishment of the National Council of Education at Jadavpur and similar ones in other parts of the country. The National Art School and the National Medical College came into being. The Bengal National College was first set up at Bowbazar and was later shifted to Jadavpur. Sir Aurobindo became its first principal. But after the shifting of the capital from Calcutta to Delhi, in 1910, the strength and endeavour of the National Movement weakened somehow. Leaders like Asutosh Mookerjee, Taraknath Palit and Rashbehari Ghosh criticized the movement, saying that it was not very rational in character. The second phase of the movement was more rational in the sense, that the liberal leaders asserted that there should be a balance between tradition and progress. Lala Lajpat Rai very rightfully said that National Education could come only after National Independence. Without a National state, the system of education could not be nationalized. Gokhale commented that the official system of education should be absolutely Indianised. But with the withdrawal of the Non-Cooperation Movement by Gandhi in 1922, the national movement came to an abrupt end. During the third phase, Gandhiji introduced his scheme of Basic Education.
Besides this, nothing notable was done for quite a long time regarding the educational system. The National Education Movement passed into oblivion. Actually, there was a great difference of opinion among national leaders, but it definitely opened a new vista. Apart from the National Education Movement, Sir Asutosh Mookerjee brought about a second blow to the Curzon policy, in his very own way. Against all odds, he accepted the Vice-Chancellorship of the University of Calcutta with the aim of retaliating the University Act of 1904. Thus followed the implementation of Asutosh’s policies regarding:

- Secondary and Higher Education which was to be expanded on a more liberal affiliation.
- Liberal Entrance Examination.
- Bringing in of scholars from all over the country and from all walks of life, for the post of University teachers.
- The study of vernacular at higher stages.
- University to take the responsibility of teaching.
- Various new disciplines to be introduced.
- Researches to be conducted.
- University should be autonomous and free from any governmental control.

Sir Asutosh was highly acclaimed by the public. Infact, University of Calcutta got a new colour under the leadership of Asutosh between 1906 to1914. Gradually, Curzon’a policy was starting to be defeated. At the very onset, he set up a library in Darbhanga Hall and the University Press in 1908. He subsequently created ‘Chairs’ for various disciplines and invited scholars from different parts of the world, to teach here. Next in his scheme was the establishment of the University College of Law in 1909. Numerous academic stalwarts joined the University for which the full credit goes to Sir Asutosh. He believed that nationalism could only come through education. For the very first time, Bengali was introduced as an Honours subject. He always fought against any Government obstruction till his last days.
1.2.5.4 Calcutta University Commission

Finally, in 1917, the Government appointed the Calcutta University Commission, to delve into the problem of University education. It is also known as the Sadler Commission. It observed that a sound system of secondary education only could bring about a sound University education. It brought to light a few drawbacks regarding the secondary education:

- A large member of candidates could not avail secondary education because of financial constraint.
- Dearth of suitable teachers.
- Teachers were very poorly paid.
- Teachers were untrained as well.

It recommended that:

- There should be an Intermediate Examination, held between the Secondary Stage and the University stage. Hence, Intermediate Colleges should be set up.
- A Board of Secondary and Intermediate Education needed to be established whose majority members should be non-official.
- Mother tongue should be the medium of instruction at both the secondary as well as the Intermediate level.
- 40 lakhs of rupees to be given annually.

Regarding the working of the University, the Commission made the following recommendations:

- The Senate and the Syndicate should be made less rigid
- Department of Education should be started in the University of Dacca and Calcutta.
- For the first time, it suggested that Education should be started as a discipline in M.A., B.A.(Pass) and Intermediate Course.
- Degree Course should be made 3 Years after Intermediate.
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- A Board of Student’s Welfare to be appointed in each University.
- University to be made free from Government control.
- A special selection committee will appoint Professorships and Readerships.
- An Academic Council to be set up to conduct examinations, appointments of teachers and curriculum construction.
- A Vice-Chancellor should be appointed on a full-time basis and paid accordingly.
- Honours course should be introduced.

In addition to the above, it recommended a special Board of Women’s Education in University of Calcutta itself, with a special curriculum. Also, the University was required to include Applied Sciences and Technology, mainly for vocational and professional training. The commission made far-reaching suggestions on almost all the demands of a sound secondary and University education. It even stressed on residential Universities.

Considering all the above suggestion by the Commission, it may be said that the universities of the entire country were benefited. Though the commission aimed at University of Calcutta only, all the stages of education were influenced, as well as other universities and drew inspiration from it. In fact, all the subsequent educational reforms in years to come, referred to this commission for their own scheme.

1.2.6 Diarchy in the Government

Finally, in 1919, there came about a reform of the constitution which introduced Diarchy in the Government of India, through the Montague-Chemsford Report. Herein, Ministers, nominated by the Government were responsible to the Legislative Council. They were held responsible for education in their respective provinces; exception being that they could not look into the education of the Europeans. The Council made the educational finance a Reserved Subject, over which the ministers did not have any hold, as a result of which, it could hardly look into the expenses of education. Similarly, the Provincial Governor looked into the
main working of the education system in his respective province. This resulted in differences in standards in each of the provinces. At this time, due to the awakening of national consciousness, the system of education got highly disrupted, along with a fundamental decrease in the expenditure on education in Bengal. Grants made by the Government also fell alarmingly. This event, in fact, gave rise to widespread agitation for which, another committee was appointed under Sir Philip Hartog to look into the educational matter, which submitted a report in 1929.

The Hartog Committee in turn, paid special attention to mass education, both qualitatively and quantitatively. It observed that mass education had taken a spurt during 1917-1927. It was felt that there was an all-round awareness, even the female population, to get themselves educated.

The Legislative Councils also made a substantial expenditure towards the spread of education. But, during the next few years it was seen that there was a lot of wastage and stagnation, specially in the primary level. Schools grew in number, but not literacy. During the period 1927-1937, the Government’s attitude was indifferent towards the spread of mass education.

There were mainly two inherent causes for the above situation— firstly there was economic depression world-wide and secondly, the Hartog Committee suggested that the policy of the Government should not be expansion but consolidation.

The Committee made a few recommendations as follows:-

- A policy of consolidation should be adopted without any haphazard expansion of primary schools
- Adequately trained teachers should be provided with appropriate pay.
- Curriculum should be liberalized.
- The minimum duration of primary course should be four years.
- The British Government should not withdraw entirely from the field of primary education.
- Primary education should be of national importance.
In regard to secondary education the Committee found that the entire secondary system revolved round the Matriculation Examination with a lot of shortcomings.

Considering the University stage, it said that there was a general over-crowding in the Universities. The standard of University education fell because of poor quality of secondary education; besides, research work was not properly organized as well.

This Committee was actually the first ever official acknowledgement of the plight of education system in India. It proved to the people that qualitative expansion ruled over quantitative expansion of educational institutions.

1.3 University of Calcutta

The most significant changes that University of Calcutta underwent, was during the period 1924-34. The secondary education system was taking a new direction because of the changes in the Matriculation Regulations, and a few other things. At that very time, the British Government was bent upon curtailing the powers of the University. On the contrary, during 1924, the Chancellor of the University, Lytton, took over the task to strengthen and stabilize the University’s freedom and future development.

Under the inspiration of Sir Asutosh, the post-graduate departments were doing valuable works for the advancement of learning, inspite of weak financial backup. The conditions and terms for the teachers were not very sound. Again, the post-graduate department wanted specific recommendation to be made, for improvement in the field of research. Accordingly, on September 27, 1924, the Senate, on the motion of Pramathanath Banerjee, appointed a Committee with the then Vice Chancellor, Sir Greaves, asking it to submit a report. A report was submitted on December, 1924. The committee, herein, recommended three classes of University teachers - University Professors, University Lecturers and Assistant Lecturers and Demonstrators. The Appointment Board chalked out the tenure of the teachers. The Committee also recognized the importance of having a close connection between undergraduate and post-graduate work. The Chancellor said that, “We have made a tentative provision of two lakhs of rupees in this year’s budget and as soon as your
essential needs have been ascertained and agreed upon, we hope to be able to fix a suitable annual grant. The Government will give you whatever financial assistance that may be necessary to secure the permanence of important departments of the University.” (100 years of Calcutta University, pp. 325).

While addressing the University Convocation in 1926, the Chancellor, Lord Lytton, came to know that the people of Bengal expected the Government to contribute towards a permanent memorial to Sir Asutosh Mookerjee. He thought, that the best memorial they could build, was the stabilization of the department which represented his life’s work. So, Lytton, along with the Governor, the Education Minister and the Finance Minister made the Viceroy agree to give three lakh rupees to the University fund. This settlement was for a period of five years, and was due to end on 1930. In 1928, Senate appointed a committee to report on the then present condition of academic, administrative and general progress of the Postgraduate department, and for which Vice Chancellor Urquhart was the chairman, and Syama Prasad Mookerjee and Professor J. N. Mookerjee, its secretaries. The committee held as many as seventy-six sittings to prepare its report, which was placed before the Senate on 22nd March, 1930. Thereafter, the Committee, recommended the division of each course of studies into compulsory and optional branches.

The Committee revised the scales of pay for teachers, their retirement age, the appointment procedure, leave rules, as well as Providend Fund rules. For postgraduate studies, it suggested the appointment of a Head for each department. On 21st July, 1930, the University made an application to the Government for an annual recurring grant of six lakhs and sixty-six thousand rupees, for all departments, including post-graduate departments. Ultimately, in March 1932, the Government agreed to make a grant of 4,50,000 rupees for 1931-32 and 3, 60,000 rupees for the succeeding years.

Among other things, the University was fortunate enough to get teachers who were highly qualified and well-renowned in their respective fields. One of them was the Palit Professor of Physics, C.V.Raman, who was elected a Fellow of the Royal
Society in 1924; and in 1928, he discovered the ‘Raman Effect’, for which he received the Nobel Prize in 1930. Again, Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, was appointed George V Professor of Philosophy in 1921, and enlightened his department in the University till 1941. During 1934, Syama Prasad presided over the Council of post-graduate teaching in Arts. To perpetuate the memory of Sir Asutosh, three Professorships were founded. In 1926, two chairs were created in Sanskrit and Islamic Culture, and in 1930, another chair was sanctioned for Medieval and Modern Indian History. Bengal witnessed a most active and fruitful period of advanced study and research in the University of Calcutta.

Next, we may consider the revision of the Matriculation Regulation, which was a landmark in the educational system of Assam and Bengal. They were, firstly, the acceptance of vernacular as the medium of instruction and examination; secondly, the inclusion of Elementary Scientific Knowledge as a subject in the Matriculation course, and thirdly, an attempt to give a practical bias to school education by insistence on training in some craft in high schools. Infact, the University Commission by Sadler, had already suggested the use of vernacular as a medium throughout the secondary schools for all subjects other than English and Mathematics. It may be worthwhile mentioning, that during this period, the Government was actually contemplating to introduce the Secondary Education Bill. All the revised rules of Matriculation passed by the Senate was delayed as a result. Herein, according to the new rules, age restriction for admission to the Matriculation Examination was abolished; and the Government wanted a minimum age of fifteen years for appearing in the examination.

Nonetheless, the Government of Bengal co-operated with the University in its developmental process, but it did not want to give unlimited power to the University, wherein the University would be empowered to refuse recognition to schools, which were using English as medium. Also, the Government suggested to the University, that candidates should be given the option of writing their answers either in English or in their own vernacular, except in English and Mathematics; this was also the case in its aided schools as well.
According to the draft, the four compulsory subjects were to be:

(i) Vernaculars, (ii) English, (iii) Mathematics and (iv) Geography. Of course, the Government added a clause to it that the lowering of standard of English should be guarded against. The Secretary to the Government of Bengal in the Education Department wrote: “......it is the function of the secondary schools to lay the foundation of a sound general education, and they considered it would be disastrous if the school were to any great extent get diverted by false idea of their function from a taste which most of them even now perform utterly inadequately. A high school in which the course ends at 16 years of age is essentially not the place where boys should be trained to be tailors, typists, carpenters or motor engineers. This instruction should be given in special fields, example; politics to be entered at the close of the school course. (100 years of Calcutta University, pp. 342). In addition to the above, the Government suggested the inclusion of vocational training. In 1926, a Committee was formed with the representatives of the University and the Education Department, which suggested that the teachers, who were teaching English should have a minimum qualification. On December, 1931, the Syndicate placed the new Matriculations Regulations together with the syllabi in different subjects. Science subjects were going to be introduced for the first time in the University. A new report was placed in 1932, where it was suggested that there should be three papers in English instead of two; a classical language to be included in the list of compulsory subjects, students could take up a European language other than English or an Indian vernacular; elementary science was to be a compulsory subject. Considering the curriculum of girls, they could take up any of the subjects open to boys, otherwise, they were offered sewing and needle work, music and domestic science.

Syama Prasad Mookerjee in his own right, appealed for the acceptance of the above revised report, wherein he said:“.........these regulations have been long overdue. Let us bring to an end a long-drawn controversy. Let us go forward, looking ahead to the time when our mother-tongue will be the medium not only of our Matriculation Examination, but also of the highest examination in this University”
(100 years of Calcutta University, pp. 345-346). Herein, can be noticed the role of Syama Prasad Mookerjee as the leading guide in the affairs of the University. It was actually a pride for him for the fact that he could carry on the work started by his father.

1.3.1 Proposal for a Secondary Board

Sadler Commission wanted an independent Board that would take over the supervision of secondary schools and intermediate classes and side by side conduct the Matriculation and Intermediate Examinations, of course with financial assistance from the Government.

In 1923, the Chancellor forwarded the draft of a Secondary Education Bill to the Vice Chancellor, wherein, the Board was to be under the total control of the Government. But the University did not accept this, and as a result, it had to be revised with adequate compensation to the University. The Board was to arrange for the inspection of schools. It was to grant recognition to schools for the purpose of sending up candidates for the Matriculation Examination, which was to be conducted by the University. Again, in 1926, a new proposal was given by the Government to the University. The University was asked to prescribe the necessary standards and text books for the Matriculation Examinations and to realize the fees as well. But, apart from all this, there were various difficulties, especially the Dual Control of education, by the Board and the University at the Intermediate stage. A Committee of 19 members were formed, chaired by Ramaprasad Mookerjee, in 1926, who suggested that the three functions of the Board were that of, recognition of schools, fixing the curriculum and of holding of examinations. The financial assistance was to come from the Government.

Meanwhile, the Government recommended that Bengal should have two Boards, and that was forwarded to the University. The Syndicate considered the above recommendation and on 25th August, Syama Prasad Mookerjee moved in the Senate a letter containing a few suggestions that was to be sent to the Government.
He suggested the following:

- The Secondary Board should be for high schools only.
- There should be one Board for Bengal, instead of the suggested two Boards.
- The grants-in-aid should be distributed as per the general directions of the Government.
- The Board should get a fixed amount as grant at the beginning of the year. The Government should make this a permanent amount.
- The Board will control the inspection agency.
- The supervision and control of intermediate education should vest with Calcutta University only.
- All actions of the Board should be subject to the approval of the Senate of Calcutta University and confirmation by the Government.

However, during this time, the Secondary Education Bill was already on its way. It was ultimately placed before the Senate on 25th January, 1929. The Bill contained more or less what the University wanted to, but in some respects, the Bill was unacceptable to the University. In fact, the Bill wanted the Board to be under the rigid control of the Government. It also said that the President of the Board would be appointed by the Government. In reality, the Government was being made all-powerful in many respects. Ultimately, the Bill was sent back to the Government till it was again taken up again in 1937.

1.3.2. University and the Secondary Schools

In 1925, the Director of Public Instruction sent a letter to the Syndicate, requesting the University to introduce a system of a written contract for both the pay and tenure of teachers in non-Government schools. The Syndicate referred this to a committee, where, along with other members, Syama Prasad Mookerjee was appointed as one of them. As a result, a school code was formed, Provident Fund was introduced, and the salary of teachers was raised. The year 1935 is very much significant as Syama Prasad Mookerjee became the Vice Chancellor in 1934 and a very illustrious voyage began therewith. The very next year, Bengali was made the medium of language of Secondary Education. He also took up the initiative of
standardizing Bengali spelling. Simultaneously, the syllabus for the Matriculation was revised, so as to include Science, Geography and Domestic Science. A new Teachers Training Department was opened. The Central Library was shifted from the Darbhanga building to the newly built third floor of the Asutosh building. In order to enhance the working of the library, a post-graduate teacher in the name of Nihar Ranjan Roy, was sent abroad for advanced training in Library Science. Secondary and higher education were taken to the country-side through rapid expansion of schools and colleges.

Unfortunately, the Second World War broke out, which had a very far-reaching ill-effect—such as, the famine in Bengal, communal tension, national struggle for independence, ultimately leading to the partitioning of Bengal – which as a result paralysed the middle class people who was the mainstay of the University. Following these events, came the massive problem of the influx of refugees, and that which put a heavy stress on the resources of the University (before partition, the University had its network over the whole of Bengal). The University lost nearly two-third of its schools and colleges due to the partition. As if this was not enough, the Secondary Education Act of 1950 took away all the secondary schools and Matriculation examination and placed them under the Board.

On the other side, the researcher finds that Western education was an indirect blessing. India’s intellectual culture and population was highly enriched in various branches like Sciences and Humanities.

1.4. Observations

The researcher made an ardent effort to study the background right from the early days of the British East India Company, which made a remarkable beginning in the history of education in India, thereon. A study has been made from as early as 1883, when Lord Bentinck was the Governor General. Since Calcutta was the capital of the country at that time, the education system received quite an attention of the Government, if not too much. Later, people like Macaulay, Auckland, Hardinge played their respective role in the various stages of primary, secondary or higher
education. All the above personalities put forward their own system as the best. But, many Hindu scholars and leaders, held on to their oriental education as the best. As a result, many educational institutions of various types were set-up. Many luminaries of Bengal and other states, came forward to help in the growth of a national sentiment. ‘Renaissance’ was experienced. There came about various movements both cultural and educational. Later on, the Wood’s Despatch put forward a comprehensive system of education, which was really wanting at the time. It was found that Bengali as a language came to be appreciated by the Despatch and hence its advancement. So, today’s situation regarding the significance of Bengali language, owes a great deal to the Despatch. Vidyasagar’s 3- language formula is relevant still today. As in the present day, the State responsibility was felt even in those British times. Besides, the autonomy of the University, put forth by Sir Asutosh and later Syama Prasad, dates back to the time of Lord Bentinck. Again, while studying the background, we see the ‘A’ course and the ‘B’ course, suggested by W.W.Hunter, was highly popular in days to come. The various post-independence commissions on education definitely draw its concepts from these significant commissions.

Most important was the growth of the national system of education. It may be said that the British Government provided the impetus, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Again, Vivekananda, an exponent of mass education as well as women education, was a pole star in the then situation that India was facing. At this very time, Tagore set forth his Ashramic education as a protest against the British education system which was of no use. Ultimately, Lord Curzon ignited the spark already there in the minds of the Indians, who concentrated all their activities towards independence. In times to come, the British were blamed for all the failures in the educational system. The National Education movement started thereof. Gandhiji came forward with his Triple Boycott Movement where education was one of the factors. The Government put forth its various commissions like the Sadler Commission, Montague – Chemsford Report, etc., while trying to probe into the various levels of educational system and bring about
improvement by taking responsibility on its shoulders. Many recommendations were made, the result of which can be witnessed even today, in free India.

1.5 Operational definition of the terms

- **Educational Thoughts** - The thoughts were in regard to the existing education system in a particular socio-cultural context, which provoked Syama Prasad to suggest a few things that could possibly be introduced. This process was welcome for the future development and enrichment of the system of education of the country.

- **Practices** – Syama Prasad in his contemporary time, had some particular ideas and ideals as well, and which he wanted to implement in the mainstream education system. Being the Vice Chancellor of the University of Calcutta, he could easily put his thoughts into practice.

  For example, Syama Prasad always fought for nationalism and freedom in every field. He thought that without freedom, education could not be popularized among the masses. Thereafter, he was of the opinion, that a foreign rule could not give us the education, we needed; it tended to be lop-sided. Besides, he was a strong supporter of anti-communalism. Hence, all these thoughts were put into practices, when he worked in various capacities of the government, thereby framing new policies.

- **Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee** - Syama Prasad Mookerjee was born on 6th July, 1901 to Sir Asutosh Mookerjee and Jogmaya Devi. Syama Prasad became an educationist, rendering his service to the Calcutta University. The mantle of his illustrious father fell upon him, in the educational sphere nearly for two decades.

  In 1926, he left for England to study law. There he aptly represented his own University in the Conference of Universities in the British Empire. He brought about various reforms and introductions in the running of the Calcutta University, the results of which we enjoy till date.
Syama Prasad Mookerjee began his career in politics with his joining the Bengal Legislative Council as a Congress candidature in 1929. In 1934, he became the Vice Chancellor of University of Calcutta for two successive terms, – 1934-1938 during which he initiated various new departments and courses. Alongside, he became the President of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal from 1943 to 1945. In 1947, he joined the Cabinet and took over the portfolio of Industries and Supply Ministry. He died in the year 1953.

- **Analytical Study**- Here the ideas of Syama Prasad Mookerjee regarding his various educational activities, their relevance and applicability in modern times has been analysed.

**1.6 Rationale of the study**

While studying the educational thoughts and practices of Syama Prasad Mookerjee, the researcher felt that it is worthwhile studying the various contributions, especially in relation to the University of Calcutta.

This study will try to highlight his contribution in various fields throughout the country, and thereby try to focus on their present day relevance. To evaluate the present day context, the researcher will definitely need to know its past or its background, wherein may lie the cause of any practice, maybe, for example, a particular educational policy in a particular State in a particular time line.

By studying this, it would be possible to evaluate the reason behind any of his contribution towards the society. Therefore, the need of the study is to map the perspective from which Syama Prasad faced the problem and the background scenario, on which he had to work.
1.7 Research questions

- What were the different dimensions of Syama Prasad Mookerjee’s personality?
- How strong was Sir Asutosh Mookerjee’s influence on Syama Prasad Mookerjee’s educational and political thoughts?
- What is unique about Syama Prasad Mookerjee’s educational and political thought?
- What led to Syama Prasad Mookerjee’s joining the political scenario?
- What made Syama Prasad Mookerjee’s secular thoughts debatable?

1.8 Objectives of the study

To study in brief the socio-political picture of India in general and of Bengal in particular, with special reference to Syama Prasad’s life.

- To describe in brief the legacy of the colonial system of education from 1901 to 1947, which went on to highly influence the then education system.
- To describe the evolution of education with special reference to Syama Prasad’s contribution to higher education during the period 1924 to 1953.
- To study and highlight the formative forces that shaped the personality of Syama Prasad Mookerjee.
- To describe Syama Prasad’s educational ideas, ideals and activities.
- To study the contribution of Syama Prasad to the emergence of a robust Indian Nationalism.
- To juxtapose Syama Prasad’s contribution to education with those of his contemporaries and the present day relevance of this study.
1.9 Statement of the problem

Educational Thoughts and Practices of Syama Prasad Mookerjee: An Analytical Study.

1.10 Conclusion

With due application of historical research, the study on Syama Prasad Mookerjee has been analytical, in respect to his educational thoughts and practices. The researcher thought it her duty to bring into light all that he had done for his country. Again, the researcher felt that there was actually a need for the above study, because the relevance of his work in the present day needs proper appreciation. The study revolves around the several objectives and hence describes the evolution of higher education in the University of Calcutta, in a nationalistic way. It is important to know how our colonial system of education slowly passed on to the hands of national leaders like Raja Rammohan Roy, Vidyasagar, Sir Asutosh, Sir Asutosh, Vallabhbhai Patel, Syama Prasad, and many others. Alongside, the researcher highlights Syama Prasad’s educational thoughts, ideals, activities and his ever so valuable contribution to the emergence of educated Indian nationals.

Hence, it may be said that the research involves the study of Syama Prasad Mookerjee’s life and activities from various angles, thereby giving full acknowledgement, that was highly due, from us Indians, and particularly the people of Bengal.
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Introduction

“With you I pray, and pray fervently, that the University may for ever be pledged to discover and disseminate truth in every realm.”

- Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee