Chapter – VII

THE ROLE AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF RAJA RAMMOHAN ROY AS AN EDUCATOR
7.0. Introduction

This chapter deals with the educational ideas of Raja Rammohan Roy and his contributions in the field of education. Raja Rammohan Roy was the inaugurator of the new learning. He strongly felt the urgency of modern liberal education along western lines. He always advocated for that new learning through the medium of English. Raja Rammohan Roy did not consider the language English as a foreign language; rather he knew that for the regeneration of his country, it was necessary to get acquainted with the western Science and literature through the instrument of English. He was equally serious in the matter of improving vernacular, which he considered as an instrument of conveying useful information to his natives, for their awareness. He wrote as much in English as in his own language, Bengali. In the dispute between oriental system of education through Indian language and modern liberal western education through the medium of English, Raja Rammohan Roy always showed his endeavour and eagerness towards the emancipation of English schools to modernise the views of his countrymen. Therefore, he boldly attacked the then official policy of establishing more and more Sanskrit colleges for the revival of traditional oriental learning. He wanted to show his countrymen that without European Science and Literature, there could be no revival and revitalization of Indian culture. His idea had always influenced the Anglicists and liberals. He had great quest for rationalism, he advocated the use of reason and truth in analysing the then prevalent doctrines of the Hindu society and urged for their rational interpretation for ameliorating the then condition of his countrymen. For that reason, he tirelessly made his endeavour in the field of education too as he knew that education was the only tool for social transformation. His many sided educational activities and his unwearied labour for the reformation of education are still significant today.

7.1. Hindu College

7.1.1. Proposal for the College

Raja Rammohan Roy was an adherent advocate of scientific learning in English instead of scholastic education on ancient lines. Likewise he preferred the language English to the language Sanskrit. As soon as he settled down in Calcutta, not only he extended his
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valuable help to Christian missionaries for the spread of useful western learning, but also he personally made serious attempt in that regard. By that effort, he sounded the trumpet of Science at the national life of the race.

Raja Rammohan Roy, after settlement at Calcutta in the year 1814, established an association of likeminded people, a friendly association, a progressive association, named Atmiya Sabha. In that association, in one of its meeting, David Hare brought the proposal for the establishment of a seminary for teaching the natives liberal, modern and progressive type of education. David Hare consulted with Raja Rammohan Roy regarding the proposal. Soon it was decided after consultation that a seminary for teaching the native western Science and literature would be set up. That proposal emphasised over the betterment of the native people.

Jogesh Chandra Bagal in his “The Origin of the Hindu College” (Presidency College Centenary Volume, Calcutta, 1956) recorded that David Hare made the proposal for diffusing modern type of English education and the establishment of a higher institution for that purpose. The proposal was discussed before a small assembly of friends in Raja Rammohan Roy’s house. That proposal was supported by everyone who was present at that assembly.

The proposal was decided to be communicated by a learned Brahman and friend of Raja Rammohan Roy, Baidyanath Mukherje. That would be sent to the then Chief Justice of Supreme Court, Sir Hyde East. Sir Hyde East, who wrote on 18th May, 1816 to his brother Judge then in England, Mr. J. Harrington and mentioned that fact. In his letter, he further mentioned that he afterwards sent those proposals to the Governor General, and afterwards to the Supreme Council and its members. It was sanctioned then that a meeting would be arranged due to communicate and convey such information to the native inhabitants of India. It was decided that a college, rather than a school, to be called ‘Maha Vidyalaya’ was to be opened. At the first phase, a joint committee was decided to be appointed. That committee should consist of distinguished European and native gentleman. However the members of the committee made a strong opposition when they heard the name of Raja Rammohan Roy.
7.1.2. Opposition from Orthodox Circles

Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, Mr. Woodrow, commented on the matter of opposition of the orthodox circles. He recorded that when a plan for the establishment of a Mahavidyalaya (a great seat of learning) as the college was originally termed, was made by the natives of India, it was found that a strong opposition came from many of the orthodox Hindus. They proposed that they would remain silent to the establishment of the college, if Raja Rammohan Roy was associated with the committee. After hearing that, without a delay, Raja Rammohan retired from the management of the proposed institution. He could have done that because he possessed a dynamic character. Mr. Woodrow further mentioned that he was ready for self-denial as he was more eager for the distribution of useful western knowledge among his countrymen. Raja Rammohan Roy, Woodrow mentioned in his record, that advocated for the establishment of the college earlier. He had a great wisdom and patriotic heart. With his deep learning he understood that the project must carry on and therefore withdrew his name for the bigger goal of the benefit of his country.

7.1.3. Raja Rammohan Roy Withdrew his Name from the Project

Thus, it was found that, as soon as Raja Rammohan Roy, got the news, he dropped his name from the project so that the work should go on smoothly without any disturbance. The product of the project was named as the Hindu College. later that Hindu College was transformed into Presidency College. Because of his social and religious ideals free from superstitions, prejudices and darkness, he was never accepted rightly by the orthodox circles of the society. They considered him as a heretic and more of a Mussulman than a Hindu. The fact was that the orthodox leading Hindus of Calcutta failed to estimate him at that time. The superstitious society was unable to understand the main doctrine of that great man, which was universalism. Consequently he was denied of admission to the committee of the proposed college.

7.1.4. Raja Rammohan Roy’s Contributions in the Context of Hindu College

Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji in his article on “Rammohun Roy as an Educational Pioneer” in the pages of the journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society (June,
1930) quoted the full text of the letter of Mr. Hyde East, in the context of the foundation of Hindu College, mentioned that the letter of Hyde East made it clear the Raja Rammohan Roy gave the prime effort and enthusiasm in the move of the Hindu College. He further mentioned that the leading Hindus of Calcutta refused to cooperate with the project as soon as they heard about the name of Raja Rammohan Roy in that project. The reason was their religious orthodoxy and superstitions, with which they had never rightly estimated the modern liberal views of Raja Rammohan Roy and criticised him by saying as a destroyer of religion. They considered that great man as more of more of a Mussulman than a Hindu. But the appreciating fact was that, Raja Rammohan Roy did not enter into altercation to establish his sole credit in the establishment of the seminary. He soon withdrew him from the movement.

In his A Biographical Sketch of David Hare (1877), Peary Chand Mittra commented that it is of no difficulty to assume that why Raja Rammohan Roy withdrew his connection, “as he valued the education of his countrymen more than the empty flourish of a committee- man.” (Barua, 1988, pp 29).

In his paper called “The Origins of the Hindu College”. Jogesh Chandra Bagal mentioned that “the proposal for the foundation of the college was first made at a meeting that took place at Rammohan’s house. But Rammohan was not just one of the cohorts who worked for the establishment of that college. He was the creator of the intellectual climate which made that college possible.” (Barua, pp 30).

Hindu College, the first English seminary in India served a lot of educational purposes. Not only that, but also the alumni of that college was later established in various parts of the country and championed the cause of English education.

As per the record of the contemporary journal, Calcutta Christian Observer, apparently one might think that Baidyanath Mukherjee should be given sole credit for the establishment of the Hindu College as he went to Sir Hyde East with the proposal of Hindu College. But the journal recorded that originally when the proposal for the establishment of such a seminary for the benefits of the countrymen was raised by David Hare, it was placed in Raja Rammohan Roy’s Atmiya Sabha’s meeting. Raja
Rammohan Roy was the chief of that *Atmiya Sabha* and as soon as he heard the proposal he gave his consent and final approval. It was because of that final consent, Baidyanath Mukherjee moved with that matter.

Raja Rammohan Roy’s educational endeavour laid the foundation of modern India, which according to him was not possible until and unless India comes in contact with modern European thoughts. That contact, Raja Rammohan Roy realised could only meet the requirements of the modern age.

An Indian Correspondant on native improvement (Dec 11, 1830) as quoted in India Gazette by John Bull, December 11, 1830. mentioned that the improvement of native youth due to British literature and Science is always a matter of interest for those who wished to see their countrymen enlightened and also lended their aids towards it. (Majumdar, 1983, pp 272)

Principal students of Hindu College formed an association for literary discussions and for that they met once a fortnight. Afterwards with due course of time principal former and present students of the Hindu College, the school society’s English School and also Raja Rammohan Roy’s schools formed seven associations for discussing literature, Science and other matters. Among other matters subjects of written essays and intellectual philosophy were also there.

### 7.2 Anglo Hindu School

#### 7.2.1. Raja Rammohan Roy’s Efforts in the Establishment of the School and the Description of the School

Raja Rammohan Roy had a great zeal for propagating western education through the medium of English. So, though he withdrew his name from the project of Hindu College to avoid any unnecessary clash or altercation, but in reality he did not stop his educational exertions and in 1822 for free instruction of Hindu boys, he started an English school out of his own expenses. That was known as Anglo Hindu School. Brajendra Nath Bananerjee unearthed the history of that school from the unpublished diary of Kishori Chand Mitra. Mitra had recorded those facts about the school after his
conversation with the close personal attendant of Rammohan Roy, Ramrutton Mukherjee. Those conversations revealed the fact that initially at Suripara, a free English school was started by Raja Rammohan Roy, two years after his arrival at the metropolis (i.e. In 1816). Initially the number of students of that school was 200. A barber by caste, was appointed as the first headmaster of that school and his name was Golak Mistri. An assistant teacher was also appointed under the head master, who was Debnarayan Dutta. That school was started out of the expenses of Raja Rammohan Roy. Afterwards with the most distinguished students of that school, an English class was started at Manicktala, where his garden house was situated. That English class was conducted by Mr. Morecroft whom he paid a monthly salary of Rs 100. Shortly afterwards near Cornwallis Square Raja Rammohan Roy reconstructed his initial school and reorganized his school under a new name in a new building there. In 1822, he shifted his school to that new premises. From that time the school came to be known as the Anglo-Hindu or the Anglo – Indian School. That school also used to run free for the Hindu boys. Raja Rammohan Roy used to bear all its expenses and in that endeavour, few of his friends had also assisted him.

Another dimension of the history of the said school was also received by the article of Abbe Gregoire in the Chronique Religieuse, France, in 1819. He published his article on Raja Rammohan Roy. That article revealed some more facts on the school, before it was named as Anglo- Hindu school. The article of Gregoire was actually the collected materials of the editor of The Times Calcutta, M. d’Accosta, who was a close acquaintance of Raja Rammohan Roy. As per the record, it was held that initially the school had fifty students and instructions were given to them in Sanskrit, English and Geography. Another remarkable fact was that many of the distinguished personalities of nineteenth century Bengal were associated with that school. Like Tarachand Chakravarti used to have attended Mr. Morecroft’s English class at the garden house of Raja Rammohan Roy. Moreover, when the school was renamed and reorganized as Anglo-Hindu school, it had another remarkable personality as it pupils. The very name of that personality was Debendranath Tagore.

Rev. William Adam, the Unitarian Missionary and also one of the visitors of Anglo Hindu School, mentioned an important fact regarding the nature of that school in his
The doctrines of Christianity are not inculcated but the duties of morality are carefully enjoined.......‖ (Sophia, 1988, pp 186).

Sandford Arnot, who conducted teaching in Raja Rammohan Roy’s Anglo Hindu School, was actually was a secretary to him in England and the assistant editor of James Silk Buckingham’s Calcutta Journal,. In the affairs of the management of the school, along with Raja Rammohan Roy there were men like David Hare and Rev. Adam and others. That Anglo- Hindu School, though commenced under the auspices of the Calcutta Unitarian Committee, but Raja Rammohan Roy never meant it as an institution of propagating Christianity, as he was a steadfast believer of the doctrine of universalism. He was equally responsive to the development of vernacular. So he made provision for teaching of Science in Bengali in that school. From the reports the school it was held that the school with its students had made a fair success in different fields.

7.2.1..1. Literary Society in the School

For the cultivation of the vernacular dialect of Bengal, some of the educated native youths of Calcutta formed a native literary society at Raja Rammohan Roy’s Anglo Hindu School in Simla, Calcutta. That was intended to raise the intellectual character of the natives and to improve the language thoroughly. The name of the society was Sarvattawwa Dipika Sabha, also known as the society for the diffusion of all branches of knowledge.

7.2.2. Contributions of Anglo Hindu School towards Education

As per the reports of India Gazette, issue no, February, 15, 1834, for the liberal education of the Hindu children, Raja Rammohan Roy started Anglo Hindu School to fit the better educated classes of India into the modern and new world of European Science and Literature. Brilliant, distinguished and eminent personalities like Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, Ramaprosad Roy and others were associated with that school as the students of that school. Those personalities were famous for their high position and fame in later life.. In his autobiography, writing of this school, Maharshi Devendranath
Tagore said: “I was a student in Rammohan Roy’s school at Hedua (Cornwallis square). His son Ramprasad was a classmate of mine.” (Sastri, 1911 pp 44).

Editorial remarks of the “Calcutta Gazette” dated February 28, 1829 made an appreciation of the progress made by Raja Rammohan Roy’s Anglo Hindu School. Mainly that school was commenced for ameliorating the intellectual condition of his country and proved fair success in that direction. That was evident from that editorial remarks which had given records of the examination of that school. As per the editor of “Calcutta Gazette, under the presence of Principal Merchants and gentlemen of Calcutta namely Young, Bracken, Calder, Plowden, Tytler, Raja Rammohan Roy, Dwarkanath Tagore and Radhaprasad Roy, reading, spelling, explaining words in Bengali and English and analysis of the parts of speech were given to the junior classes of the school as a context of examination in Geometry, English, History, Geography and the Elements of Mechanics and Astronomy. The proficiency of the first class students was noteworthy. The examination was held as mentioned above on February 27, 1829. Reports of Calcutta Gazette put an emphasis over the fact that the founder of the school, Raja Rammohan Roy, an enlightened liberal gentleman, who was a devotee to ameliorate the intellectual condition of his countrymen wanted success only from that school. He used that school as a tool for generating the moral and intellectual condition of the Hindus. The success of the school always pleased Raja Rammohan Roy and his philanthropist friends.

7.2.2.1. Contributions of Literary Society

The literary society which was formed at Raja Rammohan Roy’s Anglo Hindu School for the development, nourishment and cultivation of vernacular language was intended to benefit the countrymen by making of the members of the society well versed in that language. Those activities of the society were in a positive direction towards the full development of the country’s literature.

In the reports of India Gazette dated February 12, 1833, formation of that society was also appreciated as that was a mean to develop the vernacular dialect of the natives and as per the report therefore the society was conducive for material reform.
7.3. Raja Rammohan Roy and Alexander Duff

7.3.1. Raja Rammohan Roy’s Supports for Missionary Exertions in the Field of Education

The zeal of missionary activities in the country was always in favour of propagating western education. Raja Rammohan Roy, a man of multidimensional personality and a great educator was always intended to diffuse the knowledge of western Science and literature among the natives and therefore stretched his valuable, unwearied help to Christian missionaries. By that Raja Rammohan Roy began educational enthusiasm in the country. He knew very well that the best results in diffusing religious and moral knowledge in India could be achieved by missionary exertions. Raja Rammohan Roy saw the fair and reasonable prospect of spreading English education in the activities of the missionaries and therefore extended his support for them. When the first Chaplin of the Church of Scotland in Calcutta, Rev. James Bryce, presented a petition to the General Assembly demanding missionary exertions in India, that was too supported by Raja Rammohan Roy with zeal and enthusiasm. That support was also mentioned and appreciated by the editor of ‘John Bull’. So, the emergence of missionary activities into the field of Indian education for the diffusion of useful knowledge of Science, Literature and morality was always supported by Raja Rammohan Roy at the bigger cost of education.

7.3.2. Raja Rammohan Roy’s Cooperation with Alexander Duff

Raja Rammohan Roy was eagerly interested for the diffusion of western learning in the country. That is why he extended his labour and help in the missionary exertions. In the promotion of useful western knowledge, Raja Rammohan Roy did not bother for who was propagating such type of education. His objective was to enlighten the minds of his countrymen with the true knowledge of Science. Therefore, he made valuable help to Dr. Alexander Duff, a Scottish missionary, as Raja Rammohan Roy found a similarity in the thoughts of him and in the endeavour of Duff. He cooperated Alexander Duff in every aspect. With his cordiality and help, Alexander Duff opened the Scottish Mission Secondary School, which was developed later into a college, the famous Scottish Church College. Raja Rammohan Roy gave warm welcome to Dr. Duff at his arrival at...
Calcutta. However, Alexander Duff was under two major problems then. One was the accommodation and other was the arrangement for the students to attend the class, where Alexander Duff would teach Bible lesson in every class. All those problems were solved by Raja Rammohan Roy. First he solved his problem of accommodation by lending him a small hall of the Brahmo Sabha. Not only that, but also, on the opening date of the school, to solve the problem of Bible teaching Raja Rammohan Roy gave a speech pointing the students which reflected his synthetic philosophy of life. In his speech, he mentioned the name of Dr. Horace Hayman Wilson who, Raja Rammohan Roy pointed out had studied the Hindu Shastras, but never had converted into Hindu. He cited his own example and said that he himself had read all the Koran again and again, and Bible. Not only that but also he had mastered comparative literature and religion but never had any intention to become Muslim or Christian. So, after his speech, he advised them to read the Bible for judgement and estimation of what was right and what was wrong for them. His laudable help and support towards Alexander Duff was due to his urgent need for English education. When he listened to Alexander Duff’s objects and plans for English education, he declared that “All true education ought to be religious, since the object was not merely to give information, but to develop and regulate all the powers of the mind, the emotion, and the workings of the conscience.” (Sastri, 1911, pp 46).

7.3.3. Acknowledgement of Raja Rammohan Roy’s Help by Former Principal of Scottish Church College

At Rammohan Centenary Celebrations, the former principal of Scottish Church College, Rev. W.S.Urqhurt, acknowledged that willingness and cooperation of Raja Rammohan Roy, which he rendered to Dr. Alexander Duff and without which the establishment of Scottish Church College would not have been possible. He said: - “I represent a college which at the time of its foundation owed much to the assistance and encouragement of Raja Rammohan Roy. As is well known, it was he who provided Dr. Alexander Duff with the room in Chit pore Road, where his college was first started,” (Tagore, 1974, pp 54).
7.3.4. Acknowledgement of Raja Rammohan Roy’s Help by Alexander Duff

Once Alexander Duff acknowledging the great help and endeavour of Raja Rammohan Roy in Duff’s educational exertions mentioned that “He has rendered me the most valuable and efficient assistance in prosecuting some of the objects of of the General Assembly’s Mission.” (Krishnayya, 1969, pp 75). Raja Rammohan Roy’s active help in the educational endeavour of Alexander Duff championed the cause of English education making significant contribution in today’s perspective.

7.4. Vedanta College

7.4.1. About the College

Raja Rammohan Roy was deeply moved by the monotheistic flavour of Vedanta and therefore established the Vedanta College in 1825 to teach monotheistic doctrines. He made provision for teaching students in his Vedanta College by eminent Pandit. They used to give instructions to the students in Sanskrit literature. Raja Rammohan Roy had never underestimated the language Sanskrit. He knew that with that language, if his countrymen would be taught monotheistic doctrine of pure Hinduism, they would be benefitted. He actually had established a small but very neat and handsome college, (which was known as Vedanta College) to defend Hindu Unitarianism. But as a great educator, he was equally conscious about the importance of European Science and literature. So, he made provisions for European Science and learning also in that college. Apart from that along with Hindu monotheism, he was a supporter of Christian Unitarianism. So, he wanted that his countrymen should know the ethical and moral teachings of Christ to broaden their vision from narrow self centred ness. However, instructions in his Vedanta College were conveyed to the Students in the Bengali or Sanskrit languages. That nature of the institution revealed another trait of Raja Rammohan Roy’s character that was his adherent admiration and effort for the refinement of vernacular.

That college was established at Raja Rammohan Roy’s Manicktala garden house where, subjects like general philosophical and psychological studies were introduced.
by raja Rammohan Roy in the curriculum of that college. Actually he wanted to make his countrymen acquainted with the doctrine of Vedanta in a new and modern spirit. He realised that acquaintance would be conducive for general scientific progress and trends of his country.

Raja Rammohan Roy's Vedanta College was a seat of learning of Vedanta, thoughts of West and outlook of Science. For developing rationalism, a study of Unitarianism in Hindu as well as in Christian thoughts was emphasised to get the better results.

7.4.2. Raja Rammohan Roy’s Views on Vedanta

Raja Rammohan Roy was a staunch supporter of the real doctrine of the Vedanta. He knew it very well that the teachings of Vedanta would enlighten his countrymen with a pure notion of unity of Godhead. He wanted to make his countrymen conscious and cautious regarding their pure doctrines. He knew that if his countrymen went through the Vedanta Darshana, they would understand the evil effects of idolatry and polytheism as in their supreme scripture also it was held that adore God alone. Moreover, Raja Rammohan Roy had criticised vehemently the practice of idolatry. He considered that practice as destroying the texture of the society. The root of all social evils, Raja Rammohan Roy knew was the idol worship. He advocated that idolatry and its associated meaningless rituals and rites were meant for those people who failed to realise the true meaning of worship. That ignorant people, who did not understand that in each and every human being, Lord Dwells, only propagated for idol worship. Raja Rammohan Roy wanted to awaken his countrymen from their spiritual error and lathery. Because, he believed that when men would understand the true spirit of religion then only they would be made conscious. That consciousness, Raja Rammohan Roy advocated, would guide men towards the noble duties of charity to the needy people. Conscious men would understand that respect to other and an equal regard to all creatures could only bring salvation for them. He wanted to make his countrymen well aware of those high and lofty ideals of life and he was sure of the fact that only the teachings of Vedanta could serve that purpose. For that reason, only, he established the Vedanta College. He held Vedanta as a pure and elevated theism which would help his countrymen to move from polytheism to monotheism. He was opposed
to the worship through material aspects. Raja Rammohan Roy criticised narrow material aspects of worship and narrow rituals and rites as created by the follower of Hinduism later on. He knew that the pure and real scripture of Hinduism did not contain any narrow negativity. So, he, though propagated for western learning, never underrated Vedanta. He found in Vedanta the real spiritual core for his countrymen.

7.5. Raja Rammohan Roy and Bengali Prose and Grammar

7.5.1. Background of Bengali Prose

The origin of Bengali prose was traced to the efforts of Raja Rammohan Roy. Raja Rammohan Roy always preferred Bengali, a much simpler language to Sanskrit. A Baptist missionary of Serampore, William Carey first made a campaign for spreading Bengali prose among the masses. At that time Bengali prose was mainly used for the purpose of translation and preaching. William Cary also influenced the use of Bengali language for the same purpose of translation at the Fort William College. When William Carey took the charge of headship of Bengali department of Fort William College, he appointed many important and scholarly personnel for writing books on stories, fables, history and other subjects and supervised a lot of good quality works in Bengali, Sanskrit, Hindustan, Persian and Arabic. Well known Sanskrit scholar, Mrityunjai Vidyalankar was also appointed by Carey at that time and under his charge many Bengali teachers namely, Mrityunjaya, Golaknath, Chandicharan, Ramram Basu and Tarinicharan were inspired. A number of Bengali prose books namely New Testament by Carey (1801), Batrish Sinhasan by Mrityunjaya Vidyalankar (1802), Oriental Fabulist by Tarini Charan Mitra (1803), Rajabali by Mrityunjai Vidyalankar (1808), and Vedanta Grantha and Vedanta- Sar by Raja Rammohan Roy (1815) were. written at that period (between 1801-1815). So, that was an era of refinement and all round progress of Bengali language under the influence of Serampore Mission and Fort William College.

Though the development and improvement of Bengali Prose was started at that period under the eminent influence of the Pandits of Fort William College, but up to 1814, , Bengali prose remained cumbersome, ambiguous, and verbose. The profound reader
of Sanskrit text, Mrityunjaya Vidyalankar was then one of the eminent prose writers, who wrote Bengali prose full of writer unknown, uncouth and heavy complicated words devoid of any flow. Therefore an urge was felt to release the chains of burden of Sanskrit from the structure of Bengali prose.

7.5.2. Raja Rammohan Roy’s Writings of Bengali Prose

Raja Rammohan Roy as opposed to Mrityunjai Vidyalankar wrote simple prose with easy, neat and expressive meaning. To him, Bengali was common people simple and literary language free from unnecessary grammatical complications. Raja Rammohan Roy in Bengal was compared with Wycliffe in England and Luther in Germany. In 1815 and afterwards, to enlighten his countrymen with the real and pure theism of their scriptures, Raja Rammohan Roy felt a need for acquainting them with the principal Hindu text of Vedanta and Upanishad. Out of that urge, he translated Vedanta and Upanishad into Bengali. Raja Rammohan Roy published his first Bengali work, The Vedanta Grantha where he mentioned the limitations of the then Bengali prose with his power of analysis as:-

1. There should be the beginning and the end of each sentence.
2. The words “when”, ‘which’, ‘as’ should have their corresponding correlates ‘then’, ‘that’, ‘so’ etc.
3. Completion of a sentence must depend on the finite verb.
4. The particular noun (nominative) with which each verb agrees should also be found out.

7.5.3. Raja Rammohan Roy’s Bengali Translations of Vedanta Sutra

Raja Rammohan Roy made Bengali translation of the Vedanta Sutra, which came out sometime in 1815. In his translation he included his own explanations and comments to make the real essence of the work clear to his countrymen. His comments therefore worked as a mean of rearranging the original work. With his comments, the purpose of the original work was made clear to the natives in a simple language. Next year, i.e. in 1816, he made its English translation as “An Abridgement of the Vedanta, or the Resolution of all the Veds. Those works of Raja Rammohan Roy propagated the high
and lofty vision of unity, unity in worship. He, through his works wanted to bring the doctrine of universality in religion. In his Bengali prose writing he introduced Punctuation mark to complete a sentence. Raja Rammohan Roy replaced the formless and inflexible state of Bengali language with the muscular and flexible matured state.

7.5.4. Raja Rammohan Roy and Bengali Grammar

Raja Rammohan Roy wrote Bengali grammar for the special use of the Europeans. He wrote the first Bengali grammar, *Gaudiya Vyakaran* composed of 11 chapters and sixty eight subjects. That *Gaudiya Vyakaran* was published by Calcutta School Book Society.

The exertions of Raja Rammohan Roy in the field of vernacular were no less significant. He, with his tireless zeal and enthusiasm, worked hard for the refinement and for reshaping that language. In the field of Bengali Raja Rammohan Roy had published some eighteenth works, which included translations and original writings of him. He translated seven *Vedantic* texts in Bengali to connect his countrymen with their true core of religion. In his letter to Lord Amherst, though he was opposed to the promotion of Sanskrit system of learning in the country, but after that letter he wrote fourteen books in Bengali. Those entire endeavours showed his equal interest in the promotion of vernacular.

7.5.5 Appreciative Notes on The Bengali Works of Raja Rammohan Roy

7.5.5.1. Appreciative notes on Bengali prose writing

The great contribution made by Raja Rammohan Roy in the field of Bengali Prose was his emphasis on the Bengali language as common people’s simple language. Those Bengali prose were written for both elite and masses and for their understanding he removed that language from heavy grammatical complications and made their language full of flow, neatness and less of drawbacks. Through his prose Raja Rammohan Roy covered philosophical, religious and metaphysical topics of scriptural, didactic or polemical works. Raja Rammohan Roy was rightly called the ‘FATHER of modern Bengali prose.’ (Majumdar, 1983 pp iii). His Bengali prose was lively, was full of
‘suavity of style and chastity of diction’. (Majumdar, 1983 pp iii.) The latter wonderful works of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Vidyasagar of Bengali literature was based on Raja Rammohan Roy’s Bengali works. He, by his careful cultivation, taste and genius successfully contributed to create a literature in Bengali, improved, classic and refreshed. His Bengali composition has been the “best expression of the best thought”. (Majumdar, 1983 pp iii). Another important mark of his contribution in the literary field was his association with the School Book Society to publish useful books for the benefits of the natives.

In the field of Bengali Grammar, his excellence and superiority were worthy of mentioning. In the higher classes of the native schools, his Bengali grammar served as text books. Raja Rammohan Roy, though was a passionate advocate of western learning, never degraded the standard of vernacular. He wanted to raise its standard even in the eyes of the European rulers. He stretched his valuable help for the establishment of English institutions for the promotion of liberal education was true, but at the same time for the cultivation of vernacular, he opened a literary society at his Anglo Hindu School.

Raja Rammohan Roy made Bengali prose refined and refreshed and relieved it from the burden of classical languages like Persian and Sanskrit. The then Bengali language was very much dependent on Sanskrit and Persian languages. Raja Rammohan Roy first freed the language and made it powerful and decent. He used that language as a tool for higher thought and expression and thereby prepared the foundation of future Bengali prose.

The remark of a well known Hindu historian of the Bengali language and literature, Pandit Ramagati Nyayaratne on Raja Rammohan Roy’s theistic hymns in Bengali could be read as:-- “they appear to possess the power of melting even stony hearts, of making the most irreligious devoted to God and of making hearts sunk in worldliness detached from the world.” (Chaterjee, 1918, pp 76)

Raja Rammohan Roy had a deep respect for the Vedanta and the Sanskrit language. But, one thing he kept in mind that the language was not the language of the common
and general class. The elite people, he knew used that language. For that reason, he preferred Bengali language as common people’s simple language and on the other hand he advocated for powerful foreign language for cultivating the intellectual growth of the natives. That was his concept of new learning, modern and western in outlook.

### 7.5.5.2. Appreciative Notes on Bengali Grammar

Raja Rammohan Roy in his “Gaudiya Vyakarana” made a careful study for its methodical presentation. He did it with his serious thinking and analytical power. Within a short time, with his sincere efforts, Raja Rammohan Roy published its four editions. That attempt was really praiseworthy. In his grammar, he presented the principle rules of writings and also mentioned the general rules; one should follow while reining Bengali Grammar.

*Bengal Hurkaru* in June, 27, 1826, published an appreciative note on Raja Rammohan Roy’s Bengali work. In its appreciation, the paper mentioned that Raja Rammohan Roy made a work in the field of Bengali which deserved a well recognition of his philological acuteness. Throughout the work, Raja Rammohan Roy had made philosophical research which was possible for him because of his credibility and worth. In his writings, Raja Rammohan Roy had proved that it was possible to write simple Bengali free from the loads of Sanskrit to use it as a tool for conveying useful information to the level of understanding of the common people. He used Bengali as a literary weapon for conveying highest and useful ideas for the benefits of his countrymen.

### 7.6. Raja Rammohan Roy and Hindi Prose

The beginning of the Bengali prose could be traced to Serampore Mission and Fort William College. In the case of the Hindi prose, the contribution of the Fort William College was again mentioned. However the contribution in writing Hindi prose was limited to the purpose of civil training and mainly contained fables, historical sketches and old tales. On the other hand Raja Rammohan Roy’s Hindi books contained India’s culture and religious history. In writing Hindi books, Raja Rammohan Roy used Devnagari.
At the time of his stay at Benaras, he went through a profound knowledge of Sanskrit and became well versed in that language. But, for day to day work, he believed the language Hindi is more conducive as compared to the language Sanskrit. Like Bengali he wrote tracts, books and scripts in Hindi with ease. He made translations of more than five *Upanishads* in Hindi. He started his journalistic venture and wrote newspaper both in Bengali and Hindi. With his spontaneous writings in Hindi, Bengali and English, he wanted to arouse consciousness of his countrymen to become a part of better equipped society. He wanted to enlighten his countrymen towards a new type of modern education and was therefore rightly called “ERASMUS” of India. (Majumdar, 1953, pp 235.)

### 7.7. Raja Rammohan Roy and Sanskrit

Raja Rammohan Roy had deep love and respect for the purest and regularly used language of Sanskrit and he admired the genuine *Pandits* of the old schools because of their notion of simple living and high thinking. He used to respect the way *Brahmans* of learning used to reside. He wanted to show his countrymen that truth and true religion did not mean wealth, power, high position, high rank or high names. He wanted to keep his countrymen separated from the interested works, works performed for rewards. So, he cited examples of the learned *Brahmin Pandits* of Hinduism, who used to reside in small huts, take simple food, such as, vegetable etc; and used to live upon charity. Not only he preferred the language Sanskrit for enlightening the minds of his countrymen, but also he defended it for protecting the language from the attacks of the missionaries.

In course of the Tytler controversy, Raja Rammohan Roy presented the hard core truth to a Christian. He remarked that that with respect to useful mechanical arts, the Indians are indebted to the English, is true. But the same obligation on the part of the Indians, does not apply with respect to the Science, and Literature or Religion. He further mentioned that “For by a reference to history it may be proved that the World was indebted to our ancestors for the first dawn of knowledge which sprang up in the East, and thanks to the Goddess of Wisdom we have still a philosophical and copious language of our own, which distinguishes us from other nations.” (Collet, 1988, pp 208).
Raja Rammohan Roy criticised the then Company’s policy of establishing Sanskrit Colleges for the revival of oriental learning. Though he was a supporter of the ancient language Sanskrit, but had never accepted its methodology of teaching. He considered that Sanskrit method of teaching as detrimental to country’s growth and progress. From that perspective only he had rejected official intention of Hindu learning and strongly propagated for western learning and modern education. Moreover another fact for which he had rejected Sanskrit as the medium of instruction was that at that time Sanskrit was used by a small population of the country, who were known as elite classes. But, Raja Rammohan Roy wanted to foster an education through a medium of a language which could serve the purpose and could fulfil the needs of a vast majority if population.

7.8. Raja Rammohan Roy and his Journalistic Venture

7.8.1. Background of Journalistic Literature

Raja Rammohan Roy was the father of native journalistic venture. At that time the only Indian owned newspaper which used to be published in English was Bengal Gazette. The year of the publication of the paper was 1816. A school teacher, an enthusiastic member of Raja Rammohan Roy’s Atmiya Sabha, and a devoted follower and supporter of Raja Rammohan Roy, Gangadhar Bhattacaharya was the editor of that paper. That is why that paper belonged to Indian origin. The span of the paper was from 1816 to 1820. In 1817, the next journalistic venture was undertaken by Serampore Christian Missionaries and they published their Bengali weekly, Samachar Darpan, under the editorship of J.C. Marshman They also published an English journal, ‘The Friend of India’. The other name of Samachar Drapan was “Mirror of news”. Samachar Drapan conveyed information both foreign and Indian.

7.8.2. Raja Rammoahn Roy and Sambad Kaumudi

The first Bengali newspaper written in a native language for the natives, named Sambad Kaumudi was started in 1821 by Raja Rammohan Roy, which was also known as “Moon of intelligence.” That was a real newspaper, appeared first on 4th December,
1821. From then, it was published continuously on every Tuesday morning with the aim of securing common good of public. Raja Rammohan Roy published that paper once in a week. Up to 13th issue, that paper continued to be published without any disturbance under the editorship of Bhawani Charan Banerjee. Soon, Bhawani Charan Banerjee left the work of editorship as he was an orthodox Hindu and consequently had never accepted the liberal versions of Raja Rammohan Roy on Sati. Bhawani Charan Banerjee started the rival paper of Sambad Kaumudi, ‘Samachar Chandirka’. Upto 1822, that paper continued to be published undisturbed as a Bengalis’ short lived paper. It again revived in April, 1823 under the editorship of Ananda Chandra Mukherjee. In 1830, it came to appear twice in a week. Local news, news of immediate interests and commercial news etc. were the subject matters of Sambad Kaumudi. Apart from those, another matter which was a regular subject matter of that paper was the agitation of Sati. It became a regular weapon in that matter which affected the attitude of the British authorities gradually.

In the first number of the said paper, Sambad Kaumudi, the author made an appeal to the Government for providing gratuitous instruction to the children belonging to the family of poor but respectable Hindus and for that purpose, an urge was made to establish a school. Second article of the paper gave an address to the natives mentioning the advantages of reading newspaper. In each and every article of the paper there was useful information for the natives. Like in sixth article, the author made an appeal to the rich Hindus of Calcutta to direct their attention towards the establishment of a society that would work for the relief of the destitute widows. The paper Sambad kaumudi gave an example of the powerful and analytical minds of its author, Raja Rammohan Roy. As per the content of number eight of the said paper, Raja Rammohan Roy pleaded to his countrymen for rousing their consciousness against the narrow system of caste. He wanted to cautious them regarding the evil effects of caste system and advised them to enrich their mind with such arts that would provide them comfort and happiness. Obviously, he knew that if his countrymen could reject the narrow concept of casteism, they could secure independency for them. Mention of few of the contents of the paper Sambad kaumudi revealed the fact that Raja Rammohan Roy made that paper a real one reflecting the example of his real and powerful mind.
7.8.3. Raja Rammohan Roy and his Persian Weekly *Mirat-Ul-Akhbar*

After the close of *Sambad Kaumudi*, in 1822, Raja Rammohan Roy started a Persian weekly newspaper which came out on Fridays. He also made a Bengali translation of the said paper which appeared on Tuesday. The name of the paper was *Mirat-Ul-Akhbar*. The political and social views of Raja Rammohan Roy were published through his paper for conveying useful information to the elite classes another name of the paper was “Mirror of News”. James Silk Buckingham, a great friend of Raja Rammohan Roy and the editor of that journal translated Raja Rammohan Roy’s editorials in the language the editorials appeared in the Calcutta Journal of May, 14, 1822.

In an editorial of August, 1822, an observation and remark on Trinity by Raja Rammohan Roy was considered as highly offensive. Again in an article, entitled “Ireland- The Causes of its Distress and Discontent”, the free and open discussion and criticism of the policy of European by Raja Rammohan Roy offended and aroused their susceptibilities.

When Lord Hastings departed from India (at the end of 1822), and before Lord Amherst’s arrival as a Governor General, the Hon. John Adam was appointed as acting Governor General. That arbitrary measure was freely criticised by Raja Rammohan Roy in his *Mirat*. The consequences were suppression of the paper and curtailment of the freedom of the press.

7.8.4. Raja Rammohan Roy’s Role in Journalism

In native journalism, also as an enlightener, Raja Rammohan Roy used the newspapers as means of communicating news, (both local and distant) and happenings to make the natives aware and conscious of the contemporary issues.

To Raja Rammohan Roy, a way of transmitting intellectual knowledge to the native was newspaper. *Sambad Kaumudi* was the first native newspaper started and edited by a native. Obviously that was a great landmark in the history of journalism. Its contents
were “Religious, moral and political matters; domestic occurrences; foreign as well as local intelligence.” (Collet, 1988, pp 173). Raja Rammohan Roy’s native paper, Sambad Kaumudi in native language also published native grievances in a “respectful expression”. (Collet, 1988, pp 174). His local newspaper, Sambad Kaumudi contained topics of immediate interest, shipping and commercial items, as well as it explored ‘local news and reports of the events in distant lands’. (Krishnayya, 1969, pp 78).

The short lived Bengali newspaper, Sambad Kaumudi successfully performed the work of upholding the enlightened cause of his countrymen, an objective which was always there in the minds of Raja Rammohan Roy. That paper also served for both for common as well as educated classes.

The deep impact which was left on the common people because of the exertions of Sambad Kaumudi was no less significant here. Calcutta Journal’s editorial dated February 14, 1823 published the impact as:- “The paper which was considered so fraught with danger and likely to explode overall India like a spark thrown into a barrel of gunpowder, has since fallen to the ground for want of support; chiefly we understand because it offended the native community by opposing some of their customs, and particularly the burning of Hindu windows etc” (Tagore, 1975, pp 63).

William Adam, in his lecture, “Life and Labours of Rammohan” at Boston remarked that “He established and conducted two native papers, one in Persian and other in Bengali, and made them the medium of conveying much valuable political information to his countrymen.”(Tagore, 1975, pp 63).

Raja Rammohan Roy’s Sambad Kaumudi was a mouthpiece of historical, literary and scientific subjects for enlightening the morality and intelligence of his countrymen. In the first issue of the Sambad Kaumudi Raja Rammohan Roy wrote “Appeal to the Bengali Public”, (Tagore, 1975, pp 63), where he mentioned the objective of the said paper as the common public good. He addressed his paper as the paper for the general people, common public. Actually he wanted that his paper Sambad Kaumudi should cater to the needs of the wider circles of the society. to make his paper as a paper for the mass.
The Role and Contributions of Raja Rammohan Roy as an Educator

Not only *Sambad Kaumudi*, but also his Persian weekly *Mirat Ul Akbhar* was the first periodicals in the language Persian. That paper was started to enrich a wider mass of the country with the social and political news to satisfy their needs. It was said that “these editorials are of inestimable value, as revealing Rammohun’s deep learning and his thoughts on the current political questions of his time.” (Sastri, 1911, pp 48). His weekly newspapers were not only the means of communicating social and political views, but also they were used to convey useful knowledge for educational developments of his countrymen.

In his Persian weekly, *Mirat Ul Akbar*, which was an appeal to the *Muslims*, Raja Rammohan Roy expressed the main objective of publishing such paper. He wrote that it was for the respectable part of the native community who were well versed in the language Persian. Another point of writing his Persian weekly, which he had also mentioned in *Mirat Ul Akbar*, was that most of the people of India were not accustomed in the language English. From that perspective he felt the need for writing such a paper. That meant, Raja Rammohan Roy wrote journals for benefitting the elite as well as the common people of the country.

**7.9. Raja Rammohan Roy and the Freedom of the Press**

**7.9.1. Press Ordinance**

In every sphere of reform, due to open and liberal views of Raja Rammohan Roy, he had been criticised by his adversaries. That time in the field of education also there was no exception. In his Persian weekly *Mirat Ul Akbar*, he openly criticised Governmental policy which offended the Europeans and they put a stop to the freedom of the press. An ordinance on the freedom was issued by the Governor General. That press ordinance made it compulsory for the author of the newspaper to obtain a licence from the issued a new Press ordinance which prescribed that henceforth no one should publish a newspaper or other periodical without having obtained a license from the Governor General in council, signed by the Chief Secretary. Consequently Raja Rammohan was compelled to stop that paper which he had started for ameliorating the intellectual conditions of his countrymen.
7.9.2. Raja Rammohan Roy’s Memorial to the Supreme Court

As against that press ordinance, which Raja Rammohan Roy knew was sufficient to block the intellectual development of his countrymen, he wrote a Memorial and sent it to the Supreme Court, containing the loyalty and attachment of the natives to the British rule. In the memorial the author pointed out that the Bengali and Persian journals were started to ameliorate the conditions of the natives. Those journals had no intention to attack the Governmental policy. The writer advocated that they “have done nothing to disparage the Government or to promote dissension.” (Collet, 1988, pp 181).

Further Raja Rammohan Roy in his memorial pointed out the fact that matter obnoxious to the Government had all times banned by the editors. Under such a circumstance the curbing of the freedom of the press and the requirement of the licence would create displeasure for all the newspapers.

The Memorial pointed out that diffusion of useful knowledge for the benefits and awareness of the countrymen would come to a complete end by such an Ordinance. Through newspapers, Raja Rammohan Roy continued, the natives became well versed in British laws and customs and could therefore easily communicate a knowledge of “the admirable system of government established by the British” (Collet, 1988, pp 182).

Another fact which was also there in the Memorial was that if such press ordinance would be applied; there would be a problem of communication of the errors and injustice of the executive officers of different parts of the country to the Government by the natives. So that would be a total injustice and would be unjustified for the natives.

Raja Rammohan Roy highlighted another truth of native newspapers. That was the native newspapers, he continued helped to communicate frequently the poor miserable conditions of the natives under many helpless situations to the Europeans “by translations from Native publications inserted in the English Newspapers or by the English publications.” (Collet, 1988, pp 392). He asserted that all those would be stopped completely by that Press Ordinance. Thus, that press ordinance as per the opinions of Raja Rammohan Roy was sufficient to keep the natives under ignorance, darkness and in a disadvantageous position.
The Memorial, at the Supreme Court, was read by the Registrar of the Court by the order of the Judge. Council member, Mr. Fergusson and Mr. Turton, took the support of Raja Rammohan Roy and appreciating his Memorial pointed out that those Rules and Ordinances as affixed by the Governor General were illegal and inexpedient. In spite of those, however that Memorial was rejected by the Supreme Court.

7.9.3. Memorial to the King in Council by Raja Rammohan Roy

After the rejection of the first memorial in the Supreme Court, Raja Rammohan Roy and his coadjutors wrote another Memorial and that time they made their appeal to the King in Council. That time, first admitting the benefits of British rule to the natives, the Memorial considered them as a “deliverers than conquerors.” (Collet, 1988, pp 18). The memorial pointed out the fact that the appropriate attitude of the gratification of the natives towards British because of the latter’s protection of native’s lives and properties were best presented by the native newspaper. ‘The Friend of India’, an organ of European Missionary, as per Raja Rammohan Roy had also supported the view that the native press was meant to raise the intellectual condition of the natives and therefore should not be denied of freedom and liberty. With the freedom of the press, an invaluable privilege was always presented to the natives. The press ordinance under such a context of privilege would be considered as interference on the part of the British and that would give a notion to the natives that rules and regulations would interrupt their regular course of justice.

Another point in favour of free press as mentioned by the writer was that free press helped natives to redress and communicate their grievances against any local authorities to the Supreme Government. Citing so many instances and causes in favour of a free press, the writer mentioned that those restrictions of the Government against a free press would be looked upon as “the most peculiar excellence of the British Government of India done away”. (Collet, 1988, pp 183). Further it was mentioned that if the intention of the British was to keep the natives far away from conscious and enlightenment, they would prohibit periodical publications. Such a termination of the diffusion of all sorts of useful knowledge would lead to bad results, because people under ignorance and for lack of enlightenment, always expressed their revolt against
the Governing power. An enlightened person would never express his agitation unnecessarily against the ruling race. So, the author pointed out that from that perspective also, the existence of a free press was necessary. By such free press, both the Governor and the Governed would be benefitted. By curtailing such freedom, the memorial mentioned, the civil, religious and educational rights of the natives were denied of and they were deprived of proper protection by the British. The continuation of such curbing of freedom would take away all sorts of hopes, comforts and happiness. The appeal concluded by saying that under such a circumstance it would be wise for the Majesty to restore the freedom of the press. If such freedom would be denied, then it would be the prime duty of the Majesty to appoint intelligent gentlemen of independent views to focus on the real condition of the Hindus and to communicate their condition to the ruling race for appropriate measures.

7.9.4. The Appeal to the King in Council Stands Unsuccessful

Lastly in spite of all such glorious exertions and reception, the appeal was unsuccessful. The case was not judged on the broad principles of equity and humanity.

7.9.5. Evaluation of Raja Rammohan Roy’s Role for Freedom of the Press

J.K. Majumdar, in his book “Raja Rammohan Roy, The Father of Modern India” had mentioned the fact that the first establishment of a liberal Indian press was indebted to Raja Rammohan Roy. He first urged for the freedom of the press. Through the memorial, which was sent by Raja Rammohan Roy opposing the rules for curbing the freedom of the press, he, with his diction and argument pointed out the fact that the natives should not be denied of their privilege, invaluably given to them by the British.

Raja Rammohan Roy’s bold step for seeking the freedom of the press obviously gave the notion of his freedom of mind. He was truly a modern man, who, like Bacon and Galileo had “outstripped the genius of his age.” (Majumdar, 1953, pp 237).

One of the eminent members of the Bar Council, Mr. Turton, had appreciated the boldness, manliness and the patriotism of Raja Rammohan Roy. The Memorial which
he wrote for restoring the freedom of the press seriously denoted his love for liberty and independence.

His appeal in the form of Memorial to the King in Council was designated as “one of the noblest pieces of English to which Rammohun put his hand.” (Collet, 1988, pp 183).

Pointing that memorial which was sent to King-in Council, Iqbal Singh, who wrote ‘A Biographical ENquiry in to the Making of Modern India’, a text on Raja Rammohan Roy, remarked “It is among the best of his English writings and has all the earnestness and passion of a personal statement.” (Krishnayya, 1969, pp 80.). Raja Rammohan Roy in that appeal, very carefully scrutinised and analysed the evil effects of the restrictions put on the writings of the journals by the press ordinance and successfully with his strong arguments established the necessity of a free press.

The greatest contribution which he made by writing the memorial was his intelligent exertions and analysis of the utility of a free press. First he showed that a free press was necessary for ameliorating the intellectual conditions of the people, by removing from their mind long lethargy. By such intellectual illumination, the people would be able to enquire into what was going forward in a world. That was not the end. He also showed that a free press was a necessary for good Government, by exposing the unjust acts of the Government and thereby facilitating native grievances and taking corrective measures thereon. Other Usefulness as shown by Raja Rammohan Roy was the diffusion of knowledge, moral instruction and free discussion.

That appeal in the form of Memorial to King in Council written by Raja Rammohan Roy in England influenced the thinking, attitudes and views of the contemporary liberal circles of that country. Finally freedom of the press was sought for. Raja Rammohan Roy was not alive then to see that. But that freedom recognised, appreciated and understood the objective of his movements. On February, 9, 1838, after the freedom of the native press, prasanna Kumar Tagore paid a tribute to raja Rammohan Roy for initiating the movement of the freedom of the press. That eloquent tribute was paid to him in a free press dinner.
Raja Rammohan Roy’s endeavours for freeing a native press were dully recognized by Montgomery Martin and he wrote “To no individual is the Indian press under greater obligation than to the lamented Rammohun Roy....” (Sen, 1967, pp 89).

7.10. Beginning of Western Education in India: Role of Raja Rammohan Roy

7.10.1. Mr. Holt Mackanzie’s Recommendations

In the beginning of the western education in India, a plan on the part of the official policy was made in 1821. The plan was for the establishment of the institution of the new Sanskrit College at Calcutta in lieu of the proposed colleges at Nuddea and Tirhoot. However up to 1824, there was no execution of such plan. The then Government therefore wanted to revive the oriental system of education without caring for the benefits of the countrymen.

However, with the due course of time along with the formulation of all the comprehensive nature of education, the secretary to the Department of Territories then in charge of education, Mr. Holt Mackanzie commented that the Government did not wish to impart such knowledge to the natives that would help them to secure jobs as only civil administrative agents, rather the Government was willing to diffuse such knowledge as would enlighten their mind and would help them to improve their moral conditions. The Governmental aim, as discussed by Mr. Holt Mackanzie was wide. The Government wanted to uplift the natives in terms of character, understandings and thinking. The Government, he continued wished to purify the heart of the natives by an enlightened system of education. such education, which could extend the scope of education was sought for the natives. By such education, people would understand the true relations of things and they would be better informed about their rights and duties. So, Mr. Holt Mackenzie gave a detailed plan of Government and gave a comprehensive nature of education as planned by the Government for the natives. Such an education, he felt could motivate the natives for invention and could stimulate their power of judgments. With such type of education, natives could enhance their power of imagination and could sharp his intelligence. So, Mackenzie proposed tat in short that
type of education which would make men wiser and would motivate them to make their country prosperous had been thought of by the Government for the people of India. By such type of education, the Government felt that people would be better fitted among the civilized nations of the world.

Next for implementation of the above comprehensive plan of the Government for promoting such type of education as would be beneficial from the view point of the success of the country, Mr. Holt Mackenzie recommended for the constitution of a General Committee of Public Instruction with such people as its members who were liberal and who with their open mindedness could understand the importance of the work.

A careful consideration was given to the Minute of Mr. Holt Mackenzie may easily summed up the following points:

1. An ideal of modern education in its outlook.
2. A theory of percolation of European or Indian culture, beginning from the influential classes and ending to the “lower orders”
3. An effort to reconcile western learning with the eastern learning and
4. A recognition of the necessity of the introduction of English education.

7.10.2. General Committee of Public Instruction

The Governor General in Council, in a letter to the Court of Directors on July 30, 1823 expressed their opinion of some changes in the original plan of the Government with due course of time. They wrote that the initial plan for the establishment of Sanskrit College as made by the Government, had a limited aim, to teach the natives mere Hindu learning, to acquaint them with mere Hindu literature. However the Governor General in Council expressed great caution in the application of any sudden changes. They opined that such change should not give the educated and leading classes a feeling, by means of which they could think that their so far obtained knowledge would be banned by the introduction of something new in the official policy. So, without hampering the feelings of the learned classes, some modification should be made in the
official policy keeping in view the interests of the common masses. Therefore, the Governor General in Council expressed that the Government should think of some provision for the introduction of European Science gradually.

After obtaining the letter of Governor General in Council regarding some provisions for western and modern type of education in the official policy of the Government, the Court of Directors decided to rest the matter on the General Committee of Public Instruction for their concern and consideration. It was subjected to the decision of the General Committee of Public Instruction, as the committee was responsible for ascertaining the condition of public education, for deciding the type of institutions to be constituted for the cultivation of better type of education to the countrymen and for submitting the Government timely suggestions regarding the adoption of better instruction for the natives, so that diffusion of useful knowledge among them was possible for the improvement of their moral character.

In 1811, as a redemption to the Governmental promise of advancement of Hindu literature, colleges were founded in Nadia and Tirhoot to inculcate not only Hindu culture, but also “practical means of effecting gradual diffusion of European knowledge” sought to be sought for. (Sen, 1967, pp 105). But the General Committee ignoring the original intention of diffusion of western knowledge, decided to give instruction only in the sacred literature of the Hindus as contained in the Sanskrit language. So at the first instance, as per the decision of the Committee, the proposal of diffusion of effective scientific knowledge of the West was rejected.

7.10.3. Letter to Lord Amherst by Raja Rammohan Roy Advocating Study of Western Science

Under those peculiar circumstances, Raja Rammohan Roy, a native Hindu reformer felt a strong urge for scientific knowledge for the reformation of Hindus. He wrote a letter to Lord Amherst protesting against the policy of the General Committee with regard to the Sanskrit College.

In his letter Raja Rammohan Roy expressed that the money which had been offered by
the Government in England should be utilised annually for teaching such subjects to the Indians as would ameliorate their intellectual conditions. For that reason, it was necessary to utilize the money for recruiting talented and educated European gentlemen who could lend their valuable instructions to the natives in the subjects like Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy and other useful Sciences. Then, in the letter, expressing his surprise, Raja Rammohan Roy wrote that under such a situation the Governmental decision of establishing Sanskrit schools rather infusing western knowledge was hostile to the question of improving the intellectual minds of the countrymen. Such a knowledge, as already common in India, Raja Rammohan Roy hoped, would load the empty fresh mind of the pupils with grammatical complications and burdens, fully unscientific keeping in view the demand of the age. Such learning under Hindu Pandits, Rammohan Roy advocated would be practically useless. He continued by saying that if the Government aimed at improving the intellectual state of the masses, that could not be achieved by learning unscientific and unfeasible philosophical doctrines. Under such a situation, the young native was would waste the valuable period of their life. So, Raja Rammohan Roy made an appeal to the Lord Amherst in his letter regarding the promotion of a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction having in its curriculum subjects like Mathematics, Natural philosophy, Chemistry, and Anatomy and other useful Sciences. For those, not only the appointment of talented European gentlemen was required, but also the provision of college was necessary. Such colleges should have necessary books, instruments and apparatus.

7.10.3.1. Opinions of Raja Rammohan Roy through that Letter

Raja Rammohan Roy knew very well that the General Committee of Public Instruction was the only agency to influence official policy of education. So, through his letter he intended to influence that committee for the promotion of meaningful western learning in the country. Raja Rammohan Roy appealed for a new and liberal type of education, which should be progressive in its outlook. He first discovered the ambivalence in the Committee’s policy as he understood that the committee was trying to promote such balanced diet in the field of education which could only compromise with the intellectual fate of his countrymen. Committee was actually trying to remain safe by not affecting
the religious sentiments of the natives. But in case of intellectual improvements, such view of the committee was rejected by Raja Rammohan Roy. As he was all-time conscious of the intellectual improvements of his countrymen, committee’s such decision was refused by him as he knew it would create an useless intellectual environment. Raja Rammohan Roy was opposed to an union of western and Indian learning, rather he wanted a thorough western learning. He did not want any neutral effect as he believed that traditional oriental system of education, through the medium of a traditional ancient language, Sanskrit, would only create obstacles to the introduction of modern western learning.

At that time when he wrote his letter to Lord Amherst, Sanskrit was one of the most important and popular languages. But, in spite of that, he showed that in a petition by the young men of Sanskrit college, it was held that the knowledge they had acquired would not help them to earn their livelihood. So, Raja Rammohan Roy was fully aware of the importance of the western education. He recommended that in spite of that, if the British authorities were interested in reviving the ancient knowledge of the country, they could do so by offering money to the large number learned Pandits of Tols and Chatuspathis. By those some sort of help could be led by the authorities towards the improvement of such learning in different parts of the country by. But, he mentioned that, by establishing Sanskrit colleges in different parts of the country, the authorities would ruin the future of the young natives. He, therefore, advised the Government to initiate such knowledge and to diffuse such type of education as would help the countrymen to place them better among the most civilized and modern nations of the world. With his clear, forceful and dignified reasoning and well calculated analytical power, in the letter, Raja Rammohan Roy was trying to influence the Governor General towards the common goal of the country.

At the juncture of low and old fashioned current educational ideas, Raja Rammohan Roy’s historic letter advocating the necessity of modern education was very significant, which showed the characteristics of great man as a maker of new India.

Appreciating his letter to Lord Amherst, Bishop Heber wrote in March 1824:- “Rammohun Roy, a learned native, who has sometimes been called, though I fear without reason, a Christian, remonstrated with this (Orientalist) system last year in a
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paper which he sent me to be put into Lord Amherst’s hands and which for its good English, good sense and forcible arguments, is a real curiosity, as coming from an Asiatic.” (Collet, 1988, pp 189).

In his letter to Lord Amherst, Raja Rammohan Roy mentioned two philosophies mainly old Aristotelian system of school and of Baconian philosophy and pointed out the fact that stage of enlightenment of the British was possible because of the replacement of the first by the second school of philosophy. The same replacement he mentioned for the natives of India. That time present Sanskrit system of education by western knowledge, he was opposed to the mechanical and traditional teaching of Sanskrit Shastras. He, at the cost of Sanskrit language made a prayer of “the Dawn of knowledge” for “the rising generation.” (Barua, 1988, pp 32). He made that appeal since he was very much aware of the necessity of the progress of the country with the view of modernity. As an enlightener and pioneer of intellectual advancement, he realized the limitations of Sanskrit language and made the above two quoted concepts as the cornerstone of his educational exertions.

In the concept of a country which was striving to find its proper place in the modern world, Raja Rammohan Roy expressed his doubt regarding the question of the usefulness of the Vedic system of education for his countrymen. So, his letter to Lord Amherst was very important from the view point of the modern education.

At that time, when he wrote that letter to Lord Amherst, Raja Rammohan Roy knew very well that all the forces were working towards the promotion of the Sanskrit system of education and realised that a great caution was required to think for western education. However he opposed the caution in educational reform and urged to the Governor General to introduce western system of education without any delay and pleaded to diffuse western knowledge without being hesitated. A very significant note was that as an Indian, he wrote his letter to a foreign Government urging for foreign learning for the Indian people.

7.10.4. Letter was Recognised by General Committee as Imperfect

However, at the time of such letter, the minds of the people, associated with the General Committee were not prepared for the acceptance of western education. the
The deputy secretary of the Committee was a scholar in Sanskrit. So, it was natural that he would oppose to the introduction of western Science. Actually that thing happened. The deputy secretary considered the letter of Raja Rammohan Roy as imperfect and erroneous. He, pointing out the author of the letter, mentioned that that the author had failed to understand the plan of education, and course of study. He further mentioned that the writer of the letter (Raja Rammohan Roy) had presented the defects and demerits of Sanskrit literature and Philosophy in an exaggerated light. It was easy to identify why the secretary considered the writings of Raja Rammohan Roy as faulty. Because the secretary was a learned Persian scholar, so, automatically he was in favour of ancient language and literature to the exclusion of scientific learning. However both of his charges like the erroneous concept of the letter and the charge against Raja Rammohan Roy that he had failed to realise the plan of education, could not be accepted.

After Secretary to the General Committee of Public Instruction, the President to such Committee also refused to accept the notion and high thinking of Raja Rammohan Roy as embodied in the letter. The President of the General Committee of Public Instruction, Mr. J.H. Harington did not consider it important to give a consideration to the letter of Raja Rammohan Roy. He also lodged vague charges against Raja Rammohan Roy to establish his own point. he pointed out that though the writer of the letter had made an appeal to the Governor General to reject the cultivation of Hindu literature, and to promote European tuition for the benefits of the natives of India, but the letter contained only the signature of the writer to the exclusion of a majority of his countrymen. So, the president remarked that it might happen that the above concept of substituting Hindu literature by western Science might be the opinion of the writer, whose opinion previously had proved hostile to the sentiments of almost all his countrymen. So, he asserted that at that time also it was not necessary to consider the opinion of Raja Rammohan Roy, as that opinion also might be hostile to the opinion of the, majority of his countrymen.

7.10.5. Support of the Letter

However though surprisingly an elementary courtesy to give a reply to such a letter was not felt, finally with course of time that letter was supported by many. Like, Bishop
Heber, through whom the letter was sent, remarked that “for its good English, good sense, and forcible arguments, it is a real curiosity, as coming from an Asiatic.” (Majumdar, 1983, pp xlvii).

In the context of the above resolution of General Committee, supporting Raja Rammohan Roy’s views, an authority of Education in India, Mr. Howell surprisingly remarked:- “.......when the natives themselves were crying out for instruction in European literature and Science..... a body of English gentlemen appointed to initiate a system of education for the country was found to insist upon the retention of oriental learning to the practical exclusion of European learning.” (Sen, 1967, pp 110).

7.10.6. Orientalists and Anglicists Controversy

Raja Rammohan Roy’s plea for western and modern type of scientific education gave rise to memorable controversy between Orientalists and Anglicists, which in course of time with strength and power was responsible for making proceedings of the General committee of Public Instruction to a standstill. A group known as the Anglicists group. Who followed the path of Raja Rammohan Roy’s modern education containing western Science and western literature gradually appeared in the General Committee and gave rise to a strong controversy between Orientalists and Anglicists. Gradually the controversy between those two opposite principles rose high and finally the matter was referred to the then Law member of the Governor General’s Council, Lord Mr. Macaulay for his expert opinion.

7.10.7. Court of Directors to Governor General Supporting Raja Rammohan Roy’s Views

Gradually the Court of Director supported Raja Rammohan Roy’s interpretation of Sec 43 of the East India Charter Act, 1813 and said that “the great end should not have been to teach Hindoo learning, but useful learning......” (Majumdar, 1983, pp xivii).

However still then, General Committee replied to the above letter of Court of Directors in accordance with the oriental learning, which they felt the only learning of acceptance
by the people. They replied by saying that under such a circumstance when the minds of the people were not ready for accepting anything new, an attempt to introduce other subjects would prove useless and futile. The General Committee continued by saying that any new learning should be introduced cautiously and gradually. Those instructions in European Sciences, the committee advocated should be combined with the learning the people loved. Further they remarked that before introducing any scheme for the improvement of the minds of the native people, the Government had to be first convinced of the desirability of such improvement. General Committee expressed their observation regarding the nature of the natives. They asserted that the native minds were unprepared to accept the language English in place of Sanskrit. The natives would have considered English as a tool for securing their livelihood, but not a mean of gaining the “knowledge of the practical Sciences”. (Sen, 1967, pp 112). So, the committee recommended that the natives held European Science and Literature in slight estimation.

Next question which was raised by the General Committee to the Court of Directors was the adequate ways of imparting the knowledge of European Science among the natives.

In spite of all those arbitrary difficulties as raised by the General Committee ultimately it was compelled to direct their attention to the line of thought as expressed by the Court of Directors to the Governor General with strong attitude. The court of Directors expressed their assurance to the Governor General regarding the introduction of the western Culture and western Science. They also assured the Governor General that by such activity, in no way, the feelings or the confidence of the natives would be surrendered. Rather, they would be benefitted by such action of the Court of the Directors. So, as early as in 1824, the General Committee partially was at par with the principles of Raja Rammohan Roy on western education.

7.10.8. Lord Macaulay’s Minute

Under such turmoil of the condition, for expert opinion and consideration, the matter of introduction of western education for the benefits of the countrymen was presented before the then member of the Council in Calcutta, Lord Macaulay. Lord Macaulay was
not opposed to the improvement of the vernacular language, however, he was opposed to the medium of instruction as Sanskrit or Arabic. He also did not support the revival of oriental culture at the cost of progress of Indian. He pointed out another interesting fact in favour of western education. He mentioned that though the preparation and the publication of the books in Arabic and Sanskrit involved large expenditure, yet the sale of such books during the last few years was not satisfactory as compared to the sale of books under School Book Society. The sale under such society was yielding much profit also. Therefore, he concluded that such an incident revealed the facts that people were interested for adopting western Science and Culture. Lord Macaulay continued by saying that from the perspective of education of the people of India, the effective means would be some foreign language. Teaching only in mother tongue would not work alone in that respect. Lord Macaulay therefore claimed the use of the language English for understanding western Science and western Culture. He further assured that such a decision was appropriate keeping in view the demand of age and time.

After twelve years from the year of writings of letter to Lord Amherst by Raja Rammohan Roy, i.e. in 1835, supporting the conventions of Raja Rammohan Roy’s letter, Lord Macaulay gave official recognition to the promotion of the knowledge of Science with the medium of English. In his celebrate minute, (dated February, 2, 1835) Lord Macaulay also mentioned that literature did not mean only Arabic and Sanskrit literature. He further remarked that by literature the parliament meant western literature which could give the natives a designation to become familiar with the poetry of Milton, the Metaphysics of Locke and the Physics of Newton.....‖ (Sen, 1967, pp 120).

Lord Macaulay was in favour of the introduction and promotion of knowledge of the Sciences to assess and to meet the needs of the people of India. Needless to say that the convention of Raja Rammohan Roy and his plea for western education were ultimately officially recognised by Lord Macaulay. Soil was already prepared by Raja Rammohan Roy. Over which it became easy for Lord Macaulay to plant the trees. The educational ideas which were given by Raja Rammohan Roy with his power of analysis were ultimately got support in Lord Macaulay’s Minute and was signed by Lord William Bentinck. Sivnath Sastri, in his Bengali work ‘Ramtanu Lahiri O Tatkalim Banga Samaj’ (1904), mentioned that “Lord Macaulay sowed his seeds on the prepared soil, and rich was the harvest reaped.” (Barua, 1988, pp 35)
7.11. Assessment of the Role of Raja Rammohan Roy for Modern Education

Raja Rammohan Roy was the inaugurator of the western kind of education and was more responsible for characterising India on western lines. As a Hindu reformer, Raja Rammohan Roy had truly interpreted the then social, political, educational and religious spheres and realised that a modern and liberal system of education embracing modern subjects was necessary for the upgradation of the condition of the country. As an educator, the prime importance to Raja Rammohan Roy was Science and scientific education for national regeneration. That importance was manifested through his movement of scientification of India.

In his significant book, ‘East versus West’, Mr. Rao had rightly pointed out that “The Raja was pleading for the displacement of scholasticism by Science, of dialects and metaphysics by useful knowledge. He was not asking for western as against eastern education.....He wanted Science instead of scholasticism.” (Das, 1958, pp 4).

Assessing the role of Raja Rammohan Roy as an educational pioneer, it could be said that the crux of his educational endeavour was the intellectual awakening of his countrymen through their contact with western civilization. With that intellectual advancement and illumination, he brought literary Renaissance. Another noteworthy significant fact was that he raised his voice against Sanskrit language at a time when that language was very popular and widely prevalent in India as one of the languages spoken. So, it must be admitted that Raja Rammohan Roy had a profound zeal, courage and enthusiasm to protest what was going wrong and to admit what was just and correct.

Raja Rammohan Roy’s view and ideals and doubts regarding the utility and usefulness of the language Sanskrit from the view point of the progress of the country were also supported by latter reformers of the country. Once Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar criticising the Sanskrit language wrote his views to the Principal of the Sanskrit College in Benaras, James Robert Ballantyne in 1853, long after Lord Macaulay’s Minute. He expressed his dissatisfaction of teaching Vedanta and Sankhya in the Sanskrit college.
he further remarked that by such knowledge pupils of the college were getting acquainted with a false systems of Philosophy. He continued that in place of teaching such false philosophy, it would be wise to connect pupils with the sound Philosophy in the English.

To Michael Madhusudan Dutta also, English was a beautiful stranger in the land of Hindus. Bankimchandra Chatterjee made an important remark on the new Bengali literature after being inspired by the influence the new learning. He remarked that the then writers in Bengali were of two types, one belonged to the Sanskrit school and other to the English school. he opined that while greater number of Bengali writers belonged to the Sanskrit school, greater number of good writers belonged to the other school of English. That remark was published in Calcutta Review in 1871.

On the 7th of March, 1835, finally following the line of Raja Rammohan Roy Lord Bentinck passed a resolution and declared that the promotion of European Literature and Science among the native population for improving latter’s intellectual condition had been the great object of the British Government. The resolution further incorporated the fact that all the funds should be utilised for that purpose of attaining English education. so, ultimately the official policy gave recognition of the educational endeavour of Raja Rammohan Roy with regard to western lines. For that alone, Lord Macaulay or Lord William Bentinck did not deserve credit. Raja Rammohan Roy had already prepared the ground for the seeds of western Science through the medium of English.

Actually the belief of Raja Rammohan Roy, that unless Indian came into contact with western thoughts, scientific and humanistic, the revival of Indian culture would not be possible, was at par with the above mentioned Lord Macaulay’s Minute and Lord William Bentinck’s resolutions. His movement was the movement of literary Renaissance with full of dynamism and vitality. His movement made remarkable impressions on the liberals and ultimately the essence of his movement was recognized.

Highly appreciating Raja Rammohan Roy’s advocacy of western education, Education Commission appointed by Lord Ripon in 1882 remarked :- “It took twelve years of
controversy, the advocacy of Macaulay, and the decisive action of a new Governor-General before the Committee could, as a body, acquiesce in the policy urged by him.” (Majumdar, 1953, pp, 45-46).

7.12. Conclusion

Thus it was found that the educational policy of the great reformer, Raja Rammohan Roy was based on modern Science, which he wanted to break the medieval scholasticism of India and to replace its dark age. That however did not mean that he was opposed to the study of Sanskrit. He established Vedanta College and wrote a number of tracts, prose, Grammar in Bengali, which showed his attention towards the vernacular. He, always in order to enlighten his countrymen favoured the study of modern Science through the medium of English. He had given his full support to the Anglicists, and proved with his sound reasoning and critical analysis, that English studies were becoming popular with the thinking of men. He founded school out of his own expense for that reason. Thus the present system of education is indebted to Raja Rammohan Roy’s interests and his views regarding the modernization of education. his liberal views and opinions regarding the westernisation of education is very significant till today.

So, the supreme importance of the historic role of Raja Rammohan Roy, the modernizer was lying in the fact that he wanted to place India as ‘Modern Scientific India’ (Das, 1958, pp 11), among the commonwealth of ‘Modern Scientific Nations’. (Das, 1958, pp 11). He was rightly called as the ‘Prophet of a Scientific India’, the ‘Father of Modern India’, and ‘a Precursor of Modern Asia.’ (Das, 1958, pp 11), In his book, ‘Rammohan the modernizer’, Jogananda Das mentioned that “It was Rammohun and Rammohun alone who first saw the future of coming Asia.” (Das, 1958, pp 11),
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References


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“Rammohun belongs to the lineage of India’s great seers who age after age have appeared in the arena of our history with the message of the Eternal man.”

Rabindranath Tagore