CHAPTER IV

DEROZIO: TEACHER PAR EXCELLENCE
In May, 1826 Derozio was appointed the fourth teacher in English, and History in the senior department of the Hindu College on a salary of Rs. 100 per month.\textsuperscript{1} We learn from the diary of Radhanath Sikdar that he took lessons from Derozio in English grammar, composition and poetry, while he was in his fourth form.\textsuperscript{2} It is probable that Derozio later taught the boys of the second and third classes.\textsuperscript{3} That he was a teacher of the second, third and fourth classes is evident from H.H. Wilson's annual report on the Hindu College in 1831.\textsuperscript{4} He was a teacher not alone of the second and third classes as is supposed by some.\textsuperscript{5}


\textsuperscript{2} The Arya Darshan, Kartick, 1291 B.S. quoted in the \textit{Modern Review}, Vol. 55, 1934, p. 644.

\textsuperscript{3} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{5} For the view Edwards, Thomas: \textit{Henry Derozio, The Eurasian Poet, Teacher And Journalist} (Riddhi edition), p. 66.
It is interesting to note the syllabus of English and History (among other subjects) prescribed for the 2nd, 3rd and 4th classes during Derozio's tenure of service in the Hindu College. A study of the syllabus of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th classes makes it evident that the course of instruction in English and History was not uniform but varied from year to year. It included Goldsmith's History of England, or of Greece or of Rome, or Russell's History of Modern Europe, or Tytler's Elements of History. It chiefly comprised of Shakespeare's Julius Caesar, or Macbeth or Othello, Homer's Iliad, or the Odyssey, Milton's Paradise Lost, Joyce's Dialogues, Gay's Fables, Enfield's Speaker, Murray's Grammar and Tegg's Book of Knowledge. It included some Scottish works. It was chiefly concerned with English literature, English or Greek or Roman history and English works on History.

6. For details of the syllabus of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th classes appendix, III. pp. 735-759.


1) **Speciality Of Derozio's Teachings**

As a teacher Derozio was of exceptional calibre. The writer of a lengthy article appearing in the *Reis and Rayyet* of June 22, 1902, observes:

That eminent scholar, Dr. H.H. Wilson, who was the visitor of the Hindu College, was struck with his mode of teaching, and is said to have declared greatly more than once that it exceeded his expectations. Derozio taught History as one of philosophic mind would teach it.... Derozio possessed the rare power of weaving interest around any subject that he taught.  

It is noteworthy that Derozio took interest in teaching his students how to compose in English. He was ready to assist them in correcting English compositions, or even to superintend their studies.  

Gobind Chunder Bysack, a student and one of his followers, wrote verses which Derozio frequently revised. Derozio also gave him hints regarding them.

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9. GCPI (Copy Book of letters), Vol. 9, 1831, pp. 33-34.

A striking feature of Derozio's teaching was that it was not confined to the prescribed syllabus within the prescribed hours of the College, nor to the immediate circle of his class-lads. He gave his students and followers extra-readings. As noted before, before or after the school hours he conducted a Conversazione or a course of discussion without the knowledge of the Managers where readings in poetry, literature and moral philosophy were carried on. The students of the first, second and third classes had the advantage of attending it.\(^{11}\) In his house he often met with his students with whom he read books, chiefly poetical, metaphysical and religious.\(^{12}\) In the Academic Association poetry and philosophy were the chief themes discussed.\(^{13}\) His chief preoccupation lay with literature and philosophy. In fact, literature was his sole delight, and in it he most assuredly excelled. Moral Philosophy was his favourite study, next however to poetry.\(^{14}\)

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ii) Derozio And English Education

It is interesting that he chiefly concerned himself with the British or English literature. As noted before, he was a lover of the English romantic poets - Lord Byron, P.B. Shelley, John Keats, Thomas Moore, L.E. Landon and Sir Walter Scott. It was natural that he would foster the interest of his students in the English romantic poets. Some writers held that he carried his pupils through the pages of John Locke (1632-1704). Derozio's note on Locke, however, confirms the impression that he sought to arouse interest of his pupils in Locke's 'Essay Concerning Human Understanding'. That Derozio got his students acquainted with Francis Bacon is evident. It may be noted in passing that he had respect for


16. In a note entitled "Locke's Style And Reasoning" (December 4, 1829) in his "Thoughts On Various Subjects" Derozio wrote:

One of my pupils, about fifteen years old, whose acquaintance with the English language commenced about two years ago, made a remark yesterday concerning Locke with which I was struck. I had been just reading to him and to some others a part of the 'The Essay On (Concerning Human Understanding) (1690), when he remarked with reference to Locke's style of writing and the excellence of his reasoning that he seemed to have the tongue of a child of five years old in the head of a man of a hundred. I never heard anything better said of Locke. The boy's name deserves to be mentioned - it was Ram Gopal Ghose - The Calcutta Literary Gazette, January 3, 1835, Cited in Sengupta, Pallab, Jharer Pakhi; Kabi Derozio (Bengali, 3rd edition), p. 102.
the British poets like John Milton (1608-1674) and William Shakespeare (1564-1616) and might be supposed to have inoculated the mind of his students with love of them.

Derozio, as noted before, got his students acquainted with the Scottish poets like Thomas Campbell and Robert Burns. As he sought to teach his students to argue for and against the existence of God, he introduced them to both anti-theistic and theistic schools of thought - David Hume and Dugald Stewart or Thomas Reid.

Derozio excited interest of his students in European literature. Drummond's enthusiasm for European learning was not altogether lost upon his favourite pupil, Derozio. In his observations on "The Modern British Poets" (1830) he paid some kind of compliment to Dante along with a few English poets or Scottish poets like Robert Burns. This was revealing of his interest in Dante (1265-1321) of Italy. That he had some knowledge of Imanuel Kant is evident from his 'Objections to the philosophy of Kant'. It is likely that he read Dante or Kant not in original Italian or German language. Thomas Edwards contends that Derozio knew French


and translated Maupertuis's moral philosophy from French into English. It is likely that Derozio added some knowledge of French to his acquirements in English.

Derozio sought to arouse interest of his students in European history. He was ready to welcome the progress made by his pupils in English history. He composed six poems on Greece and a note under the caption "The Greeks And What We Have Received From Them", which were likely to excite interest in the Grecian past. He composed three poems, one each on Portugal, France, and Italy, which were to lend interest to the past history of these countries. It is likely that he knew not Greek, Portuguese and Italian, and read not the history of Greece, Portugal and Italy (and even of France) in the original language. He possibly gathered some knowledge of the countries through English translations of their histories. Besides, his reference to the past of the countries was vague, sweeping and short.


19. The Hesperus, edited by Derozio, observes in an issue: "We more particularly noticed the interesting and able manner in which a young Hindu named, we believe, Krishna Mohan Banerjee explained the causes and consequences of the disputes between Red and White Roses of England" — Quoted in Chunder, Bholanath, "Recollections Of The Old Hindu College", The Calcutta University Magazine, March, 1895, p. 33.
Derozio imparted western education in the sense that he primarily taught English learning. He was basically an English scholar. He could write and speak English fluently. He knew not Greek, Latin and other European languages. Western education had various types, such as, the French type, the Italian type and the German type. These types were not introduced by him. Nor was it possible for him to do so within a brief span of his teaching career. What Derozio stood for was primarily British or English education.

Certain things need be kept in mind in speaking of Derozio's role in the spread of English education. The Roman classics were not his favourite pursuits. According to Thomas Edwards, "Derozio was little of a classic scholar". Mathematics was not Derozio's favourite pursuit. In Mathematics he did little more than cross the "asses' bridge".

It is noteworthy that Derozio, who was ready to awaken the enthusiasm of his students for English language and literature, was not ready to encourage his students or disciples or the Hindu Youths in undertaking a dramatic performance in English. It is curious that he took a live part in English theatrical compositions or performances in Drummond's

22. Ibid.
Academy, but discouraged his students or the Hindu Youths from taking such a part. The East Indian, edited by Derozio, disapproved of a project of a native theatre as conceived of in 1831 by some of his students and followers or by some Hindus like Tarachand Chuckerburtee, Madhob Chunder Mullick, Hurro Chunder Ghose, Prosunno Coomar Tagore, Gunga Churan Sen, Sree Kissen Singh and Kissen Chunder Dutt. The East Indian stated that "a theatre among the Hindoos with the degree of knowledge they at present possess will be like building a palace in the waste." It added that "useful information should precede amusement" and that the Hindoos should receive "some degree of knowledge before they are to be entertained with the theatres." It added further - when the Hindus were qualified to appreciate the compositions of refined notions through instruction, they should erect a theatre; otherwise the best dramatic composition in the English language would be murdered outright night after night and foreign manners misrepresented.

23. The East Indian quoted in the India Gazette, September 15, 1831.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.
It is interesting to note that H.H. Wilson, the visitor of the Hindu College, was a patron of the Chowringhee Theatre. It was largely through the exertions of Prusunno Coomar Tagore that the first native theatre came into being. Wilson encouraged Prusunno Coomar Tagore in setting up the theatre. On December 23, 1831 the Hindu Theatre was inaugurated in the garden-house of Prusunno Coomar Tagore at Sura Beliaghata in Calcutta. In the first night show the Uttar Ramcharit composed by Wilson, and a scene of the Julius Caesar (in English) were staged. Wilson gave directions to the actors.26

During Derozio's tenure of service in the Hindu College Dr. Tytler was a teacher in Mathematics and Mr. Ross in Chemistry. They used their best endeavour towards the promotion of scientific learning in the Hindu College. In fact, Radhanath Sikdar, a disciple of Derozio, who earned distinction as a mathematician and who actually calculated the height of the highest peak of the Himalayas (i.e. the Mount Everest named after his superior English Officer, Mr. Everest), was a favourite student of Dr. Tytler.27

Derozio might have provided impetus to the promotion of learning in Mathematics or in science in two ways. Firstly, he was a lover of Baconian philosophy of knowledge and might be said to have transplanted in the mind of his students seeds of love of new learning in place of medieval scholasticism. Secondly, he was ready to welcome the progress made by his students in scientific learning. 28

Derozio was alive to the material value of English education. The idea that education was to open up career within the British empire in India was entertained by him. While taking part in examining the pupils of the Parental Academy (later Doveton College) at their 9th Annual Prize distribution ceremony on December 13, 1831, he declared his intention of delivering a series of lectures on Law and Political Economy with a view to qualifying his young countrymen for availing themselves of the judicial situations, which had just been thrown open to the East Indian Community. 29

28. The Hesperus took a favourable notice of progress made by Krishna Mohun Banerjea in Chemistry, particularly in knowledge of "The properties of oxygen and nitrogen etc." - The Calcutta University Magazine, March 1895, p. 33.

In his annual reports on the Hindu College in 1831 and 1832, H.H. Wilson with an eye to the useful pursuits of education and practical prospects of the educated youths proposed to introduce courses in Political Economy and Law, Hindu, Muhammedan and English, in the College. Wilson had two objects in view. Firstly, he thought that such education would open up new avenues of employment to its recipients. Secondly, he hoped that the youths, trained in such courses, would prove to be efficient and trustworthy functionaries of the Government. He recommended Derozio as a lecturer in Law and Political Economy on a salary of Rs. 300/- per month. Derozio, as reported by Wilson, was willing to undertake tuition in the proposed course in the Hindu College. This report, one may contend, tends to suggest that Derozio had acquiescence in Wilson's idea of material prospects as also of the creation of a set of loyal and helpful hands for the Government behind the promotion of new learning. In fact, the utilitarian consideration behind English education was to cater to the imperial need of building up auxiliaries for developing an empire — a consideration, which was in the mind of the Court of Directors, Bentinck and Mecaulay in their pleas for English learning.


Derozio looked up to English education not only in utilitarian but also in liberal terms. As noted before, the idea that English education was a gateway to new values and judgement was reflected in his Sonnet, "To My Pupils" (July, 1829). It appears from another "Sonnet" (1830) that he looked forward to English education in regenerating India in future. He thus placed emphasis upon the regenerative role of English learning.

Derozio represented love of English culture in his dress and manner. As a near-contemporary journal put it:

In his dress he went to the extreme of foppery! He was like a woman fond of gold, and his person was adorned with a goodly quantity of it. He never wore a hat, and his hair was parted from the middle. He was conspicuous for his yellow-painted Stanhope and English horse; and it was languable to see him in the morning, spurred and booted to the knee, on a powerful Arab coursing the plain. The effect of his dress was increased by his diminutive stature. 31

iii) **Derozio And Oriental Learning**

Derozio did not conceive of a synthesis between the East and the West. But he had no unreasonable bias against oriental languages and literatures. Thomas Edwards contends that Derozio's 'Odes from the Persian Of Hafiz' (1827) "differs from Sir William Jones's translation of it in many respects and is an evidence that to his other requirements he had added some knowledge of Persian".\(^32\) Whether Derozio knew Bengali or not is, however, a matter of controversy among the writers.\(^33\) Like any other Anglo-Indian (banteringly called "Tyāsh Firingi" in Bengali), Derozio also knew Bengali. Perhaps he also spoke it in the company of his students. But this is a reasonable surmise. It is likely that he also spoke Hindi; all Anglo-Indians and even some so-called "Europeans" had to speak Hindi in the streets and markets. In his annual report of the Hindu College in 1831 Wilson, while recommending Derozio as a lecturer in Law, English, Hindu and Muslim

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(as also in Political Economy), observed that he would soon prove his competence by "collecting the requisite information without the labour of learning any oriental language."\textsuperscript{34} It is likely that Derozio had a workable knowledge of the major oriental languages.

Derozio's reference to 'the Chorus of Brahmins' and 'the Hymn to the Sun' in his poem, "The Fakeer Of Jungherea" (1828), or to 'the Legend of the Shushan' in his poem, "The Enchantress Of The Cave", presupposes his knowledge of the lore of ancient Indian tradition. It may be supposed that he had not read the oriental literature or the sacred books of the Hindus in oriental languages but depended upon English translation of those works. In a note to the Legend of the Shushan he wrote :

A student of that excellent Institution, the Hindu College, once brought me a translation of the Betal Puncheese, and the following fragment of a tale having struck me for its wilderness, I thought of writing a ballad the subject of which should be strictly Indian.\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{34} GCPI (Copy Book of Letters), Vol. 9, 1831, p. 33.
\textsuperscript{35} Edwards, Thomas, op. cit., p. 199.
Recently a writer thinks that 'the Hymn To The Sun' in "The Fakeer Of Jungheera" resembled that depicted in the Rig-Veda, and H.H.Wilson, who later translated the Rig-Veda Samhita in six volumes (Vols.I-IV, 1850-57 and Vols. V & VI after 1860), might have fostered the interest of Derozio in the Vedas. There is, however, no evidence in favour of his contention. Derozio tried to gather some knowledge of the Hindu Shastras, particularly of the Vedas, however, superficial it may appear to be to one. He left a note on the Vedas with reference to 'the Hymn To The Sun' in the 'Fakeer Of Jungheera'.

The over-emphasis upon the adolescent enthusiasm of some students of Derozio for western learning tends to obscure the efforts of a number of the followers of Derozio to pursue oriental learning or to undertake Bengali translation. One may say that Derozio had little or nothing to

38. For details Chapter V, Section IV, P.253-262
do with the promotion of oriental learning. But one can hardly say that he seriously discouraged the pursuit of oriental education.

Derozio was certainly not an 'orientalist'. But, apart from having a highly critical view of Hindu superstition and prejudice, he is not known to have ever denigrated the Indian literatures. It is perhaps reasonable to suppose that he felt some sort of 'romantic' attraction for the Indian folklore and ancient legends. Like the Evangelicals or James Mill, he did not make a highly critical comment upon oriental culture. As noted before, he in his essay on "Education In India" recognized the necessity of European or foreign learning for East Indian Children; but he regretted that serious efforts were wanting on the part of the people for the improvement of education system in India. English learning or western ideas was not what was unnecessary for the modernization of India. What was noteworthy was Derozio's disinterested zeal in the spread of English education as a teacher of the Hindu College.

iv) **Derozio As A Teacher**

The qualities of Derozio as a teacher were of high order. Being very young, he could naturally and freely mix with his young students in and out of the college.

He was deeply conversant with the subject he taught. He had wide knowledge of books.

He showed a keen and unflagging interest in the intellectual pursuits of his students. He was ever ready to impart knowledge to them.

He must have been a good lecturer equipped with sound memory.

He was a poet and a scholar - a fact at which his impressionable students marvelled.

He had a charming personality. He was possessed of the genial manner, the buoyant spirit and ready humour, patience and courtsey. His winning manner, open, generous and chivalrous nature, humour and playfulness - all these were but to attract his pupils. _The Oriental Magazine_ of 1843 wrote: "As a teacher he won the affections of his pupils. Never was he known to speak rudely to them." In conversation he was brilliant.

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42. Ibid.
He took some pains to instil into the minds of his young students a critical attitude towards the prevailing superstitions and prejudices, along with a vaguely "patriotic" or reforming zeal. He thus performed a sort of social work.

He had no 'colour prejudice,' and he considered himself an Indian. He was thus a bit different from the contemporary Anglo-Indians or Eurasians whose culture was quite different from that of the urban Bengalis. It was, therefore, possible for him to feel an abiding affection for his "native" students, eager for learning.

The role of Derozio as a teacher was noteworthy. No teacher ever taught with greater zeal, with more enthusiasm, with more loving intercourse between master and pupil than Derozio, whose connection with the Hindu College was short.

What was noteworthy was his philanthropic exertions in the cause of native education. The Government Gazette in its obituary on December 29, 1831 wrote: "That the interest which he took in the progress of his pupils was as deep as it was generous, and independent of all selfish motives, is sufficiently evident were there no other proof of it than the beautiful 'Sonnet' addressed to the students of the Hindu College." He succeeded in infusing this philanthropic zeal into the

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44. Cited in Edwards, Thomas, op. cit., p. 175.
mind of his students. Some of them came forward to undertake voluntary tuition in English learning and set up schools for gratuitous instruction of Hindu youths here and there in Calcutta. 45

What Derozio stood for was thirst for knowledge and love of learning. 46 He largely succeeded in this purpose. As noted before, in the Academic Association the students cited different European authors or philosophers including Gibbon, Jeremy Bentham, Adam Smith, Newton and Davy.

Derozio, as noted before, taught his students to think freely on any topic or subject they took up for study. His teaching was marked by freedom of exchange of opinion between the teacher and the taught. He thus sought to impart a new impulse to teaching and to create an intellectual stir.

The weekly Examiner of 1840, edited by David Drummond, observed in its obituary: "The talents and exertions of the lamented Derozio gave a life and impetus to the Hindu College, for which that institution is greatly indebted for its fame and celebrity." 47 According to Thomas Edwards, the teaching of Derozio, the force of his individuality, his fearless love of truth, free association with his pupils, and

45. For details Chapter V, Section III., pp. 247-250
unrestricted efforts for the promotion of virtue, knowledge and manliness among them produced an intellectual and moral revolution in Hindu society since unparalleled.48

The majority of the Managers of the Hindu College found no ground to declare Derozio an incompetent teacher. Yet they found it expedient to dismiss Derozio in April, 1831 in the state of native feeling existing at the time. It requires a thorough enquiry as to whether there was valid ground of his dismissal.49

Oblivion After Obituary:

Derozio died of Cholera on December 26, 1831. A meeting of friends and admirers of Derozio was held on Thursday evening, the 5th January, 1832, at the Parental Academy (then Doveton College) to consider the propriety of erecting a monument to the memory of the late H.L.V. Derozio. The meeting was mostly attended by the Eurasians. Three students of Derozio - Krishna Mohun Banerjea, Mohesh Chunder Ghose and Duckinarunjan Mukhopadhyay were present at the meeting. J.W.Ricketts took the Chair. The following resolutions were unanimously passed. Moved by W. Kirkpatrick and seconded by M. Crowe the first resolution recorded that this meeting

49. For details Chapter V, Section x. pp. 306-324.
"is desirous of recording its sense of loss which our community (The Eurasian) has recently sustained by the death of Mr M.L.V. Derozio, whose short but brilliant career of public usefulness has left a chasm in our ranks not easily to be filled up." 50

The second resolution was moved by Mohesh Chunder Ghose and seconded by Wale Byrn. It stated that "a stone monument bearing an appropriate inscription be erected by public subscription to late Mr Derozio, as a testimony of our esteem for the memory of one whose loss we have so much reason to deplore." 51

The third resolution was moved by J.A. Lorimer and seconded by Krishna Mohun Banerjea. It stated that a Committee consisting of the following gentlemen — Wale Byrn, A. DeSouza, W.R. Fenwick, D. Hare, D.H. King, W. Kirkpatrick, J.W. Ricketts, J. Welsh, Duckinarunjan Mukhopadhyay and Krishna Mohun Banerjea, be formed to carry the foregoing resolutions into effect. It stated further that W.R. Renwick be requested to officiate as Secretary to the Committee. 52

50. The Indian Gazette, January 7, 1832, quoted in Edwards, Thomas, loc. cit., p. 181.


Moved by L. Frazer and seconded by J.A. Lorimer the fourth resolution read as follows: "Any surplus that may be left from the subscription raised on account of the monument, be tendered to the family of Mr Derozio." Subscription books were handed round and donations to the amount of Rs. 900/- were entered.

In the meeting a letter was read by Mr. Byrn from Mr. Stapleton, who offered to publish a lithographic miniature of Mr Derozio without any remuneration for his labours. On the basis of this letter the fifth resolution was moved by Krishna Mohun Banerjea and seconded by R. Dias. It stated that Mr Stapleton's proposal be accepted and a miniature be published with the consent of his family.

But the movement to erect a monument to Derozio's memory and worth, inaugurated in the hall of the Doveton College, came to an ignominious end. W.R. Fenwick was entrusted with the money, Rs. 900/- raised on the day of the meeting and whatever other sums afterwards collected from native, Eurasian and European friends. But he appropriated the whole of the subscriptions of the Derozio memorial. Derozio's native friends were disgusted, and the Eurasians made no move to punish Mr. Fenwick.

53. Ibid, p. 182.
54. Ibid.
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid, pp. 183-184
No monument, not even a tablet over his grave was erected. His sister Amelio's advertisement in the *India Gazette* of December 30, 1831 for public patronage to a memoir of his brother, his mother, Mrs. Anne Derozio's advertisement for private tuition of females (obviously to obtain earning for their support) in the same Paper for a number of days and the appeal to the East Indians for the continuance of Derozio's Paper, *The East Indian* in the newspapers of December 29, 1831 all came to nothing. A person of little moral worth and some pretensions to literary skill obtained the direction and management of the *East Indian* and the confidence of Derozio's mother. This person, who had been characterized as little better than "a European loafer", brought the paper to ruin. A study of the will (Derozio wrote it on December 23, 1831) along with the papers enclosed with it reveals that Derozio's property including his library, poetical works and dear horse was to be sold to meet the dues. In fact, everything including the dwelling house was sold off, and mother and sister of Derozio disappeared from mortal ken.

It is curious that no biography, nor memoir of Derozio was written by any one of his students and disciples. Some of them, however, drew up a biographical sketch of some of Derozio's contemporaries or even of his opponents. Peary Chand Mitra wrote a biography not only of David Hare (1877) but also of Ram Comul Sen (1880), who requisitioned an emergent meeting of the Hindu College Committee that took the decision to dismiss Derozio. Kissory Chand Mitra wrote two articles on Rammohun Roy in the *Calcutta Review* of 1845 and 1866, a memoir of Dwarakanath Tagore, and a biographical sketch of Mutty Lal Seal (1869). He also drew up a brief biographical sketch of Radhakanta Deb in the *Calcutta Review* of 1867, who voted for the dismissal of Derozio at the meeting of the College Committee in April, 1831.

It is necessary to explain why Derozio's students and followers did little or nothing to perpetuate his memory or why Derozio was to pass into oblivion. Derozio was a Eurasian, but not a "pucca Sahib" like David Hare.

Derozio died young before he could show any substantial achievement to his credit.

His own community ignored him and later relegated him to the limbo of forgotten things.

He was dismissed from service. His students did not object to his dismissal. Their silence was really strange.
The "Pucca Sahibs", too, ignored him, Wilson, a good man, was an exception.

His pupils like Rusick Krishna Mallick, Dakshinarunjan Mukhopadhyay and Ramgopal Ghose - "the old Derozians" - were self-creatures; the "free thought", they so happily imbibed from Derozio's youthful preaching and teaching, was invariably used for self-promotion.

The authorities of the Hindu College, like such authorities at all times, totally, absolutely dismissed the brilliant young teacher from their collective memory. To them he was not only unimportant, but also dangerous.

The unity of Derozio's disciples or of young Bengal as a distinct group has been derived usually from the unique influence of Derozio. But it is wrong to think that young Bengal were all under homogenous influence even in Derozio's time. Tarachand Chukerburtee and Chunder Shaikhur Deb were close associates and followers of Rammohun Roy. Their connection with Rammohun's Brahma Sabha is well-known. There were some who, though not formal members of the Brahma Sabha, were Brahma or deist at heart. There were some like Hurro Chunder Ghose and Omrito Lall Mitra, who lived upto Hindu orthodoxy.61

61. For details Chapter V, Sections V & VIII. pp. 263-265, 292.
In fact, in Derozio's time or in the post-Derozio period young Bengal came under many other - not always homogenous (or not purely Derozian) influences, which were powerful in their minds. David Hare with his free-thinker reputation has usually been bracketed with Derozio; but it is important to remember that Hare's relations with Radhakanta Deb remained extremely friendly throughout and that this well-established patron of young Bengal did little to prevent the dismissal of Derozio from the Hindu College and of Krishna Mohun Banerjee and Rusick Krishna Mullick from the Pataldangah School. Hare had great influence over the mind of young Bengal. In 1830 a public meeting of the native inhabitants was called at Madhob Chunder Mullick's house for the purpose of taking into consideration the services rendered by David Hare to the cause of native education and determining on the testimonial voted to him. Duckinarunjan Mukhopadhyay, who prefaced the presentation of address to Hare, said, "Thou art the mother

64. Mitra, Peary Chand, A Biographical Sketch Of David Hare, pp. 37-38; Ghose, Manmathanath, Raja Dekshinaranjan Mukhopadhyay (Bengali), pp. 36-38.
who sucked us". 65 On this occasion Radhanath Sikdar, dwelling on the debased state of the country owing to misrule and oppression, instanced the coming of David Hare as the "Morning Star" to dispel our ignorance. 66 A Committee, which was formed to present an address to Hare, comprised of a number of Hindu intellectuals including some "Derozians" like Taranath Chuckerburtee, Krishna Mohun Banerjea, Rusick Krishna Mullick, Duckinarunjan Mukhopadhyay, Ramgopal Ghose, Radhanath Sikdar and Mohesh Chunder Ghose. The Committee took the decision to raise a portrait of Hare in the Hindu College at a meeting held on January 30, 1831. 66a The Jnananveshan, an organ of Young Bengal, desired to see the raising of such portrait as early as possible. 66b Later the Bengal Spectator 67 an organ of Young Bengal, paid a glowing tribute to David Hare, referring to his philanthropic exertions in English

67. The Bengal Spectator a bilingual Paper in English and Bengali, was started in April, 1842 as a monthly organ. According to B.N. Bandopadhyay, the Paper was conducted by Ramgopal Ghose with the help of his friend Peary Chand Mitra (Bandopadhyay, B.N., Bangla Samayik Patra, 1818-1867 (Bengali), p. 132. This view was accepted by some writers. (Ghose, Benoy, Samayik Patre Banglar Samajchitra (Bengali, 2nd edn.) Vol. 6, editorial, p. 7; Chanda, Mrinal Kanti, History Of The English Press In Bengal (1780-1857), p. 232) The Paper was a monthly one for five months. Since September, 1842, it became a fortnightly organ, and from March, 1843, a weekly organ. In November, 1843, it was given up for want of public support (Bandopadhyay, B.N., loc. cit., pp. 132-134).
and Vernacular education among his services to the cause of the Indian. The paper was eager to see the erection of statue in parts of Calcutta to perpetuate the memory of Hare. 68 It is noteworthy that in memory of Hare a Hare Prize Fund was started in 1844 by some members of Young Bengal and Rammohun's disciples for affording encouragement to the cultivation of the Bengali language among the English-educated youths. 69

H.H. Wilson was sympathetic towards Derozio. He communicated the Managerial decision of dismissal to Derozio. But Wilson's relation with the Managers of the College was cordial. A Director of the Hindu College, alluding to Wilson's unwearied exertions in Western and Oriental learning, proposed to put up the portrait of Wilson in the Hindu College. 70 Dwarkanath Tagore in a letter to the President of the General Committee of Public Instruction proposed to raise a portrait of Wilson in the college for the invaluable services rendered by him to the Institution. 71 The Jnananveshan expressed happiness at the portrait of Wilson being put up in the College. 72 Among those, who took initiative in presenting

68. The Bengal Spectator No. 4, June, 1842; No. 6, August 1842; No. 12, November 15, 1842; Vol. II, March 24, 1843 (No. 5).


70. The Government Gazette, June 24, 1830.


an appropriate address to Wilson in recognition of his services in the field of the education of the natives were Tarachand Chukerburtee, Rusick Krishna Mullick, and Madhob Chunder Mullick. It may be thought that Wilson had some influence over Young Bengal.

The conversion of Krishna Mohun and Mohesh Chunder to Christianity through the efforts of Alexander Duff indicated the working of another, and this time quite sharply opposed kind of influence. Duff according to his own testimony had concentrated all his efforts on persuading Krishna Mohun and his friends to adopt the Reformation as their model in place of "the terrible issue of French illumination and reform in the last century", to abandon, in other words, at least part of the legacy of the man described by Duff's biographer as "a Eurasian of some ability and much conceit." Mohesh died a premature death. Krishna Mohun deserted the Presbyterian Church of Duff. But in so far as Krishna Mohun, once a "Kulin" Brahmin, was inspired by the fervent proselytizing zeal of converting the Hindus, he remained a spiritual follower of Duff.

74. Smith, George (The Biographer of Duff), quoted in Edwards, Thomas, op. cit., p. 90.
75. For details Chapter VII, section 1, pp. 420 & 432.
Rammohun Roy had influence not only over his close associates like Tarachand and Chunder Shaikhur but also over a number of Derozio's students and followers. Rammohun's educational, social and religious idea or political idea of constitutional agitation proved acceptable to a number of Young Bengal atleast to some extent. The Jnananveshan and the Bengal Spectator paid glowing tributes to Rammohun as a benefactor of the nation. The Bengal Spectator referred to Rammohun's services to the cause of Bengali among his benevolent exertions and expressed eagerness to do something to perpetuate the memory of Rammohun. In 1845 Kissory Chand Mitra acknowledged with a grateful heart Rammohun's contribution to Bengali.

Rammohun's Brahma ideal did not die down with his death, though it underwent transformations in the years to come. Brahmaism proved to be inspiring to some followers of Derozio like Shib Chunder Deb. Shib Chunder became ultimately a prominent member of the Sadharan Prehmo Samaj.

The hold of Hindu tradition over some followers accounted for their conformism in practice in place of

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78. For details Chapter VII, Section II, p. 459.
their earlier non-conformism. Practical considerations as well as worldly occupations might explain their waning zeal for Derozio's ideal of reason and truth and for their conformism. This might also explain Young Bengal's renunciation of Derozio's stance of uncompromising resistance to Hindu prejudices and superstitions and compromising attitude towards the burning socio-religious questions of the day.

With Peary Chand Mitra embracing spiritualism and later theosophy the retreat from Derozio's ideal turns to rout. In his biography of Ram Comul Sen, Peary Chand even stated that Ram Comul's kind of religion was far preferable to the irreligion of Young Bengal and the theories imbibed from Huxley, Spencer, Mill or Bradlaugh. 79

As Derozio's students and disciples came under other influence (influences Un-Derozian) and retreated from Derozio's ideal, the memory of Derozio began to fade away from their mind. This might largely explain why nothing was virtually done by Young Bengal to perpetuate the memory of Derozio.

Yet the memory of Derozio was unforgettable. Tributes were paid to him by some of his notable students like Krishna Mohun Banerjea, Peary Chand Mitra and Radhanath Sikdar in various stages of their lives, though in a short

or in a passing reference to him. Krishna Mohun wrote in his editorial in the *Enquirer*:

As he esteemed highly the good opinion of the teacher alluded to and [was] fond of such names as those of a patriot, a philosopher and reformer, he entered fully into Mr. D's views and formed a strong resolution within himself of realising them in his conduct. 80

The oft-quoted observation of Peary Chand in his biographical sketch of David Hare, which spoke highly of Derozio's ideal of free thinking and love of truth, virtue and patriotism, began: "Derozio appears to have made a strong impression on his pupils as they regularly visited him at his house and spent hours in conversation with him. He continued to teach at home what he taught at school." 81

Radhanath Sikdar in his short autobiography published in the *Arya Darshan* (1884) observed:

Mr Derozio was a very kind and intelligent teacher ...
Cut off in the prime of life amidst innumerable


81. Mitra, Peary Chand, loc. cit., p. 27.
projects for the reformation of India, his untimely death must be a matter of regret. 82

It may also be noted that Kissory Chand Mitra paid a warm tribute to Derozio in an article on Ramgopal Ghose in the Calcutta Review of 1868. 83

Derozio's ideal of love of knowledge, torch light of reason upon tradition and antiquity, search after truth and cultivation of virtue was no doubt a beacon to the students of the Hindu College and the educated youths of Bengal. It is ever to be a beacon to the rising generation of the educated youths of India who are to build up the country's greatness.

Derozio was later revived by two sorts of persons - Englishmen like Edwards and Madge used the image of Derozio with a view to showing that "liberalism" in Bengal was the gift of a forgotten "Eurasian" and not a native product. On the other hand, Bengali nationalists revived his memory with a view to presenting a correct chronology of liberalism and nationalism in our country. Much later a third group, constituted mostly by Bengali Marxists, made an attempt at worshipping Derozio as a 'hero', who was a

'revolutionary' and a 'stormy-petrel' and who waged a great battle against social and intellectual obscurantism. On almost every occasion Derozio, the poor young scholar, poet and teacher, was mixed up with some sort of political and social ideology, with which he had almost nothing to do while he was alive. That is why we require a thorough enquiry into the results of Derozio's teaching or into the impact of Derozio's ideals upon his students and followers and need trace the legacy of Derozio, if there be any.