Chapter V

IMPLICATIONS AND RESULTS OF DEROZIO'S TEACHINGS
1) Promotion Of English Education In The Hindu College Of Derozio's Time :

Some contemporary writers praised the Hindu College of Derozio's time as an epoch-making institution for the progress in European learning and science. Quantitatively speaking,

1. The Government Gazette of January 17, 1828 observed:

"English education amongst the inhabitants of Bengal has hitherto had little more than mere language for its object, a sufficient command of which for conducting the details of official duty comprehended the utmost ambition of native students.... and little was effected than a qualification as a copyist or an accountant. The Hindu College is intended to compass something more; to teach Bengalee youth to read and relish English literature, to store their mind with facts of history and science, and to enable them to express just conclusions in a clear and polished style,... This may be called a remarkable epoch in the history of India. Nothing, we think, could be more gratifying to those who desire the extension of human knowledge and the diffusion of European learning and science among the native subjects of this great empire than the wonderful progress which was displayed on the present occasion ..."
one may feel justified in making the assertion.\textsuperscript{2}

Was the above assertion, qualitatively speaking tenable? Was it that prizes were awarded to Hindu youths for the encouragement of English learning or really for the wonderful proficiency in it? Let us examine the testimony of Wilson, who presented the statistics given below, which is likely to give rise to the impression that prize-winners were great in proportion to the number of pupils and that there was wonderful progress in English education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pay Scholars</th>
<th>Total number of students</th>
<th>Total number of prize winners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1827</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1828</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>(approximate)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>125</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1831</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>108</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1832</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>84 (excepting 3rd class students)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- GCPI (Copy Book of Letters), Vol. 4, 1827, pp. 246,295-300
  \[\text{ Vol. 5, Part II, 1828, pp. 493-494, 547-553.} \]
  \[\text{ Vol. 8, 1830, pp. 7, 52-60} \]
  \[\text{ Vol. 9, 1831, pp. 28, 35-44} \]
  \[\text{ Vol. 10, Part 1, 1832, pp. 38, 48-59} \]
Wilson, speaking of the improvement of two senior classes, first and second, in English language in 1827 wrote:

Satisfactory as is the command of the English language thus obtained, it still falls far short of that which with greater facilities might without greater difficulty be acquired ... What is of more moment [is that] a very extensive conversancy with the whole body of English literature might be imparted. ³

In his annual report of 1828 Wilson stated that the students of the first class were initiated in different departments of English literature, besides the ordinary miscellaneous selections from English writers. ⁴ It is to be noted that their study was not extended to European literature, or even to English translations of it.

It is noteworthy that in 1826 the first two classes began practising compositions in English and translations from English into Bengali and from Bengali into English. ⁵ In 1828 the first three classes could prepare compositions or render translations without any assistance whatsoever, and some of the pupils attempted poetical compositions - facts

³. GCPI (Copy Book of Letters), Vol. 4, 1827, pp. 248-249.
⁴. Ibid, Vol. 5, Part II, 1828, pp. 495-497
evincing their command of English and development of thought. But compositions or translations, particularly from Bengali into English, were not free from offences against grammar and idioms. Moreover, the performance of the senior class, particularly of the first class in composition, was less uniform and of a low standard in 1829, and showed some improvement in 1831, presenting fewer errors of construction than before.

In History the students of the first class, according to Wilson's annual report of 1828, read only the abridgements used in the school of Goldsmith's histories of Greece, Rome and England. They were tolerably familiar with the general course of events as derivable from these authorities, but were not profoundly conversant with the classical works. In chronology they were but imperfectly grounded. In his report of 1829 he stated that Russell's 'Modern Europe' was introduced to the class. In his report of 1830 he wrote that the class added considerably to their acquirements in History, ancient and modern. He added that the 2nd class had just completed Goldsmith's histories and made some progress in

Russell's 'Modern Europe' and read the first volume of Tytler's Elements of General History. It appears from Wilson's report of 1831 that their studies in Modern History reached only to the early volumes of Russell's 'Modern Europe'. It is noteworthy that the classes did not extend their studies beyond prescribed syllabus or books or to world history or Indian History.

In Geography the students of the first class in the session of 1827-1828 had a very accurate knowledge of the Globe and relative portions of all the tracts in every part of it, and were perfectly familiar with the problems on terrestrial and celestial globes. It is not known why in Wilson's statements between 1826 and 1831 there is no other report of the acquirements of this class in Geography nor that of other classes in it.

In Mathematics the first class, starting with the rules of Algebra or of common Arithmetic in 1827, advanced under the tuition of Mr Tytler to the third book of Euclid and was much forward in Algebra in 1828. The class made some

12. Ibid, Vol. 9, 1831, p. 31
progress in Algebra and Mathematics in 1829 or in Geometry and Algebra in 1829 and 1830. In 1829 the second class made some progress in Algebra and Mathematics. In 1830 the second class preferred little more than nominal proficiency in Geometry and Algebra. But the third class had little or no knowledge of these. At a time when Derozio was a teacher of the Hindu College Mathematics had already been changed beyond recognition by such great mathematicians as Auler, Gauss, Abel, Galois, Cauchy, Lobachevsky and Langrange. Were students of the Hindu College acquainted with the work of any of these great mathematicians?

In the cultivation of physical science the first class acquired some insight into the elementary principles of Chemistry in 1826 and 1827, an extensive familiarity with chemical facts in 1828 and acquaintance with Chemistry in 1829. It appears from Wilson's report of 1831 that the second and third class made some progress in Chemistry.

In his annual report of 1831 Wilson reported that the second, third and fourth classes made some progress in Natural Philosophy. In it the third and fourth classes did not, however, advance much beyond mechanics.\textsuperscript{22}

It appears from Wilson's report of 1828 that a drawing class was opened for the senior classes to give them a notion of drawing with a view to qualifying them for employment in situations where such skill was required. The progress made by the pupils was very variable. But they all made some advance and gave several proofs of extraordinary talents.\textsuperscript{23}

It is thus evident from Wilson's reports that the progress of the senior classes was not even or uniform or extraordinary in all respects. Even the performance of the first class, the topmost class, was not uniform in the years under review. It may be said that the students of the college were beginning to make some progress in English learning and science.

Among the factors preventing extraordinary progress in English education was, according to Wilson, want of books and teachers. Wilson was worried about the lack of suitable teachers.\textsuperscript{24} He wrote that the teachers were not competent for the task in all cases.\textsuperscript{25} The boys were in general

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid, pp. 29-30
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid, Vol. 5, Part II, 1828, p. 499
\textsuperscript{24} Ibid, Vol. 4, 1827, p. 249.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid, Vol. 5, Part II, 1828, p. 500
intelligent. The fault lay with the teachers. The attention of the Managing Committee and the headmaster being drawn to it, one of the junior teachers was dismissed. What was urgently wanted was the service of teachers of some superior English education. Speaking of the progress of the first class in Mathematics in his report of 1828, he stated that it had not been considerable due to the want of leisure and inadequacy of teachers. The headmaster of the college under whose tuition the first class was placed was not conversant with Mathematics. He contended that "the want of books and adequate tuition still continue(s) to retard and limit the progress of the College.""28

But Derozio was in the good book of Wilson. Wilson wrote in 1831: "That the second and the third and fourth classes have acquitted themselves as well as they have done under the circumstances, is ascribable to the unwearied and able exertions of Mr. Derozio." Wilson also spoke highly of Mr. Tytler and Mr. Ross among the science teachers. He wrote that at the time there was nothing in which the more advanced scholars could look for improvement except in the higher Mathematics under Mr. Tytler and in practical Chemistry under

Mr. Ross. The students were themselves aware of this. In Wilson's report Derozio was thus bracketted with Tytler and Ross for their contribution to the progress in English learning and science whatever made in the Hindu College.

ii) Young Bengal And Their Progress In English Education:

As noted before, Derozio, by his teaching inside and outside the college and winning personality, made him very attractive to the students, mostly teen-aged. As a result he acquired much influence over his students. He thus succeeded in gathering round him a band of devoted followers commonly known as Young Bengal.

30. Ibid, p. 32
32. GCPI (Copy Book of Letters), Vol. 4, 1827, pp. 262, 266-267, 270-273;
   Vol. 5, Part II, 1828, pp. 512, 514-520.
   Vol. 7, 1829, pp. 39-50, 81-84
   Vol. 8, 1830, pp. 11-21.
33. Edwards tells us that so great was his influence over the students that they did not even move in their private affairs without his counsel - Edwards, Thomas, loc. cit., p. 67.
A standard list of the members of Young Bengal may be prepared from Peary Chand Mitra's Book named 'A Biographical Sketch Of David Hare:

Krishna Mohun Banerjee (1813-85), Rusick Krishna Mullick (1810-58), Duckinarunjan Mukhopadhyay (1814-78), Ramgopal Ghose (1815-68), Shib Chunder Deb (1811-90), Hurro Chunder Ghose (1808-68), Ramtanoo Lahiree (1813-98), Radhanath Sikdar (1813-70), Peary Chand Mitra (1814-83), Madhob Chunder Mullick (born in 1807), Mohesh Chunder Ghose (1815-37), Gobind Chunder Bysack (born in 1816), Omrito Lall Mitra (1811-1879).34

To these may be added their elder associates, Tarachand Chuckerburtee (1804-1855) and Chunder Shaikhur Deb (1810-1879)35, and younger Kissory Chand Mitra (1822-

34. Mitra Peary Chand, A Biographical Sketch Of David Hare, pp. 27-28.
The first four sometimes acted as fire-brands - Ibid, p. 28. Hurro Chunder Ghose, According to Susobhan Sarkar, Shib Chunder Deb, Ramtanoo Lahiree, Radhanath Sikdar, and Peary Chand Mitra were only less famous than the first group - Sarkar, Susobhan, "Derozio And Young Bengal", Gupta, A.C. (ed.), Studies In The Bengal Renaissance, p. 29; Sarkar, Susobhan, On The Bengal Renaissance, p. 109.

35. Tarachand Chuckerburtee and Chunder Shaikhur Deb, though not to be ranked as Derozio's pupils, identified themselves with "Young Calcutta" - Mitra, Peary Chand, op. cit., p. 32.
brother of Peary Chand Mitra. There might have been many more who came under the spell of Derozio's teaching.

Young Bengal has been called "Young Calcutta" by Peary Chand Mitra. Some writers call them "Derozians".

Under the instruction and influence of Derozio Young Bengal made much progress in English education. Of the prize-winners among the Hindu College students for general proficiency after the annual examination in each year the

The peculiar spelling of the Bengali personal names, such as Rusick (রুসিক), Duckinarunjan (দুকিনরুজ্ঞান) etc. is found in many contemporary books, periodicals and journals. The spelling of these names is most undesirably anglicised, and it shows a marked eccentricity created by the dissemination of Anglo-Indian culture in a section of Bengali elite.


number of Young Bengal was not inconsiderable. It is noteworthy that most members of Young Bengal were prize-winners more than once — Peary Chand Mitra 5 times, Ramgopal Ghose, Ramtanoo Lahiree, Hurro Chunder Ghose, Omrito Lall Mitra, and Radhanath Sikdar 4 times, Krishna Mohun Banerjea 3 times, and Mohesh Chunder Ghose, Rusick Krishna Mullick, Madhob Chunder Mullick and Gobind Chunder Bysack 2 times.

Some members of Young Bengal earned distinction for proficiency in Mathematics. Of them were Radhanath Sikdar,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Number of prize winners</th>
<th>Number of Prize winners Among Young Bengal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1827</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1828</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1831</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1832</td>
<td>84 (excepting 3rd class students)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


, , Vol. 8, 1830, pp. 52-60
, , Vol. 9, 1831, pp. 35-44

40. GCPI (Copy Book of Letters), Vol. 4, 1827, pp. 295-299

, , Vol. 8, 1830, pp. 52-56
, , Vol. 9, 1831, pp. 35-38
, , Vol. 10, Part I, 1832, pp. 49-51
, , Vol. 12, 1833, p. 181.
Hurro Chunder Ghose, Madhob Chunder Mullick, Omrito Lall Mitra, Ramgopal Ghose, Ramtanoo Lahiree, Gobind Chunder Bysack and Peary Chand Mitra. In order of merit Radhanath Sikdar secured the first division in the annual examinations of 1831 and 1832. Radhanath Sikdar later earned distinction as a mathematician and a surveyor, who is said to have discovered the Everest peak in the Himalayan range of mountains.

In English composition, particularly in essay competitions at the annual examinations, the performance of some members of Young Bengal was striking.

**Essay Compositions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title of the Essay</th>
<th>A student who composes</th>
<th>Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1826</td>
<td>What is the utility of education?</td>
<td>Rusick Krishna Mullick</td>
<td>second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1828</td>
<td>The preference to be given to public distinctions or private happiness</td>
<td>Omrito Lall Mitra, Madhob Chunder Mullick &amp; Rusick Krishna Mullick</td>
<td>second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1831</td>
<td>The irruption of Northern barbarians and the consequent subversion of the Roman empire</td>
<td>Ramtanoo Lahiree</td>
<td>second</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

43. The John Bull, January 8, 1826; The Government Gazette, January 31, 1828; Supplement to the Government Gazette, February 10, 1831, Also the Calcutta Gazette, February 14, 1831.
1831 The cultivation of the Radhanath Sikdar

First

sciences is not more

favourable to individual

happiness

The regular discharge of Hurro Chunder

First

private duties and of Ghose

public functions is

equally essential to

special happiness

Referring to the composition of essay in 1828, the Government Gazette wrote that it was a proof of the progress made by the Hindu youths in English literature, particularly in the sense of propriety, the use of idioms and expression and in the intimacy with Greeco-Roman History and English writers. In 1831 it remarked that the compositions displayed considerable reading and very respectable powers both of composition and reasoning.

It is noteworthy that some disciples of Derozio like Hurro Chunder Ghose attempted composition in verse. In 1828 he composed two poems, "Benaras" and "Fire Play".

In recitation some disciples of Derozio acquitted themselves creditably. The recitation held on the occasion of prize distribution ceremony was introduced by Wilson.

44. The Government Gazette, January 31, 1828.
47. Ibid, June 24, 1830.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>A student who recites</th>
<th>Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1828</td>
<td>First scene of <em>The Merchant of Venice</em> Senate scene from Cato</td>
<td>Radhanath Sikdar</td>
<td>Fourth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Omrito Lall Mitra, Rusick Krishna Mullick, &amp; Krishna Mohun Banerjee Hurro Chunder Ghose</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1829</td>
<td>A scene from Julius Caesar The scene between Macduff, Malcolm &amp; Ross A scene from <em>Hamlet</em></td>
<td>Ramtanoo Lahiree Radhanath Sikdar Ramgopal Ghose &amp; Shib Chunder Deb Krishna Mohun Banerjee, Omrito Lall Mitra &amp; Hurro Chunder Ghose Rusick Krishna Mullick</td>
<td>Fourth Second Fourth First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td>A scene from Jane Shore</td>
<td>Ramtanoo Lahiree Ramgopal Ghose</td>
<td>Third</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A Scene from <em>Cymbeline</em></td>
<td>Omrito Lall Mitra Hurro Chunder Ghose</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A scene from <em>As You Like It</em></td>
<td>Radhanath Sikdar</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1831</td>
<td><em>The Merchant of Venice</em>, Act 3rd</td>
<td>Ramgopal Ghose</td>
<td>Second</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The recitations were in general done well. In 1828 the Government Gazette wrote that the recitations were indeed surprising, "whether we consider the youth of the speakers, or the propriety and effect with which the speeches were delivered." In 1829 it observed that most of the speakers, though very young, were distinguished for correct pronunciation and a just conception of the sentiments they had to express. In 1830 it remarked that the recitations were in general given with good delivery and in a full sense and spirit of the passages. In 1831 it wrote that the recitation was given with greater readiness and accuracy.

iii) Young Bengal And The Movement For English Education

The progress made by Young Bengal or Hindu College students in English learning and science made an impression upon the patrons of English education like William Bentinck. In a communique to the General Committee of Public Instruction from the Public Department of the Governor-General-in-council (No. 39 of 1830) it was written that the experiment in English education in the Hindu College "has had more decided success than either of the Calcutta

50. Ibid, February 19, 1829.
51. Ibid, February 22, 1830.
51(a) Supplement to the Government Gazette, February 10, 1831.
College i.e. the Calcutta Madrassa and the Sanskrit College of Calcutta in which the teaching in English learning and science was introduced." It was because of the success of the experiment in the Institutions that the Governor-General contemplated further measures for the diffusion of European learning and science among the higher rank of Indians. 52 As the letter reads:

The higher classes of our Hindu and Mohammedan subjects are ripe for a still further education among them of European education and European science and literature... The means should be afforded of cultivating the English language and literature, and acquiring a knowledge of European science, and a familiarity with European ideas than has yet been within their power... A scheme of this extended nature would now be warmly welcomed by the higher rank of the natives under your Government. Of the spirit which prevails in the Lower provinces the establishment and success of the Anglo-Indian College is a sufficient proof. 53

Perhaps more satisfying to Bentinck or promoters of English education might be the efforts of many students to spread

52. GCPI (Copy Book of Letters), Vol. 9, 1831, pp. 122-123, 125-126.
53. Ibid, p. 126.
the light of Western knowledge in the flush of their enthusiasm for English learning. Derozio considerably encouraged many of them in this venture.

i) In 1831 the Hindu Free School was started at Bowbazar by a number of Hindu College students including Madhob Chunder Mullick, Duckinarunj an Mukhopadhyay, Rusick Krishna Mullick and Krishna Mohun Banerjea. The school was conducted by Madhob Chunder Mullick and other young Hindu gentlemen. As Krishna Mohun remarked: "the small fund that has been raised by subscription for its support, added to the patriotic spirit with which its teachers have voluntarily given their assistance to it, without any desire of gain, gives us cause to hope that the seminary will continue to shed its benign influence over such as came within its sphere."54 The hours of attendance were from 6 to 9 in the morning, and the course of instruction was in the beginning limited to History, Grammar, Geography and Arithmetic. The progress made by the pupils reflected credit upon the promoters of the Institution.55

ii) Peary Chand Mitra started a morning free school in his house named Hindu Benevolent Institution where


55. The India Gazette, September 6, 1831.
Kissory Chand Mitra learnt the rudiments of English. In this school Peary Chand was the Headmaster and Rajkissen Mitra, Shib Chunder Deb and Gobind Chunder Bysack were honorary teachers. Derozio, David Hare and the Headmaster, D'Anslem used to take a lively interest in this school, frequently visiting and examining boys and distributing prizes to the most meritorious among them.\textsuperscript{56} It is to be presumed that Kissory Chand Mitra, who received early education in Peary Chand Mitra's school, came under Derozio's contact and had been considered a young follower.

iii) Two schools by the name of Hindu Free School were also started by Derozio's disciples - one by Rusick Krishna Mullick at Simla in 1831 and another by Govind Chunder Bysack in 1834.\textsuperscript{57} Rajendra Lal Mitra, who became a distinguished scholar in later life, was partly educated in the last-mentioned school.\textsuperscript{58}

iv) The East Indian of 1831 referred to a school set up by Hurro Chunder Ghose at Behala with a remark that "it is pleasing to observe the ray of education diffusing themselves from Calcutta throughout the country."\textsuperscript{59}

\textsuperscript{56} "Kissory Chand Mitra", \textit{The Calcutta Review}, Vol. 24, 1907, p. 231.
\textsuperscript{57} Gupta, Sushil Kumar, \textit{Unabimsa Satabdi : Banglar Nabajagarar} (Bengali), p. 190.
\textsuperscript{58} Edwards, Thomas, op. cit., 130.
\textsuperscript{59} The East Indian, December 6, 1831, quoted in the \textit{Asiatic Journal}, May, 1832, p. 19.
In 1831 there were, as Krishna Mohun Banerjea informs us, six morning schools conducted by Young students of the Hindu College in six different quarters for the education of the Hindus. In these schools upwards of three hundred and seventy boys received instruction.\(^{60}\)

The penchant of the students or Young Bengal for English education or the philanthropic exertions of them in founding English seminaries engaged the attention of the General Committee of Public Instruction. A report of the Committee in October, 1831 expressed jubilation at the acquirement of the Hindu College students in English and the diffusion of a taste for English through the establishment of independent schools by them. It anticipated the anglicist zeal in its gleeful note on the disbelief of a number of educated youths in Hindu religion and tradition and in looking forward to a very material alteration in the manners and feelings of the educated classes of the Hindu community of Calcutta.\(^{61}\)

In fact, Young Bengal, like Derozio, regarded English education as a gateway to liberal ideas. The Enquirer in an issue of 1831 struck up a note that an enlightened education could not but be inconsistent with prejudices and superstitions and was to prove an agency in liberalizing the mind of Hindu youths.\(^{62}\)

\(^{60}\) The India Gazette, September 6, 1831.


\(^{62}\) The Enquirer quoted in The India Gazette, September 6, 1831.
It is noteworthy that some disciples of Derozio, like Krishna Mohun Banerjea and Madhob Chunder Mullick held the view that English education would lead to the automatic subversion of Hindu religion and tradition along with Hindu superstition. Madhob went very close to Duff's view that Hinduism, which was false although, could not resist the onslaught of a liberal and scientific instruction. As Madhob Chunder Mullick wrote:

The Hindoos ... are now enjoying the blessings of moral and scientific instruction; nay, in some of their body the influence of truth and philosophy has been so considerable as to enable them to perceive Hindooism in its real shape - which is very ugly and horrible form indeed. These men knowing the extent of influence, which error has for ages exercised over the minds of their countrymen, are endeavouring by every proper means they can discover to free the rising generation of India from the shackles of superstitions.

In holding up to such a view Madhob Chunder Mullick went very close to the zealous Christian Missionaries like Alexander Duff and anticipated Macaulay in his idea of connection between English education and the automatic

63. The India Gazette, September 6 & October 1, 1831; Also Ghosh, Ram Chandra, A Biographical Sketch Of The Rev. K.M. Banerjea, ed. by Das Gupta, Asis & Biswas, Probodh, (First Reprint, September, 1980), pp. 9-10.
64. In India Gazette, October 1, 1831.
subversion of idolatrous form of Hindu tradition.64(a)

It is noteworthy that Young Bengal, like Derozio, looked up to English education not only in terms of liberalism but also of material prospects. No sooner was it made known that teachers in proposed English schools in Upper India were wanted from the General Committee of Public Instruction of Bengal65 than a number of Hindu College students including Krishna Mohun Banerjea, Madhob Chunder Mullick and Radhanath Sikdar applied to it for situations

64(a). Macaulay himself wrote to his father:
"It is my firm belief that if our plans of education are followed up, there will not be a single idolator among the respectable classes in Bengal thirty years hence. And this will be effected without efforts to proselytize; without the smallest interference with religious liberty; merely by the natural operation of knowledge and reflection" - Majumdar, R.C. (ed), Bharatiya Bidya Bhavan Series, Vol. X. The British Paramountry And Indian Renaissance, Part II, p. 36.

65. One may cite, for example, a letter to H.H. Wilson from E. Colebrooke, I.T. Metcelfe, C.E. Travelyan and E. Rankun from Delhi on February 12, 1829, requesting immediate appointment from Calcutta of a native qualified to teach English composition as well as elements of Arithmetic, Geography and Astronomy in order to meet the demand of English education of the region - GCPI (Copy of Book of Letters), Vol. 7, 1829, p. 255.
of English teachers. In 1831 Krishna Mohun Banerjea declared that they would not engage themselves in low situations of 'Sirkars' and 'Kerany' like their predecessors but were aspirants for high situations of honour and respectability which would be recompense for their learning and progress in civilization. He traced the connection between worldly prospects of employment and progress of education. The worldly consideration behind education was to help the fulfilment of the design of the Anglicists like Macaulay to build up an empire by creating helping-hands through English learning.

iv) Young Bengal And Oriental Learning:

Unlike Derozio, who was brought up in English intellectual tradition, most members of Young Bengal, prior to their admission in the Hindu College, were educated in vernacular


67. The Enquirer quoted in the India Gazette, September 6, 1831.
or oriental language and literature. Krishna Mohun Banerjea, Duckinarunjan Mukhopadhyay and Ramtanoo Lahiree received their early education in the Hare School, while Peary Chand Mitra, Ramgopal Ghose (who acquired elementary English knowledge in Sherbourne's School), Radhanath Sikdar, Rusick Krishna Mullick, Tarachand Chuckerburtee and Shib Chunder Deb (who learnt elementary English from some of his relatives for some time) in "Pathsalas" managed by native "Gurumahashayyas". Hurro Chunder Ghose learnt Persic at home and Peary Chand Mitra from a "Munshi".

At a time when a growing number of Hindu College students grew negligent of the cultivation of oriental languages, prominent members of Young Bengal prosecuted


70. Shastri, Shivnath, loc. cit., p. 127; Bandopadhyay, B.N. loc. cit., p. 175.
oriental learning. Krishna Mohun Banerjea, Madhob Chunder Mullick and Ramtanoo Lahiree studied Persian in the College. It appears from Wilson's report that in the academic session of 1826 Krishna Mohun Banerjea was irregular. In this session and in the next academic session Rusick Krishna Mullick was, according to Wilson's report of 1828, declared the best student in the Persian Department in the College. Madhab Chunder Mullick was regular in 1827 but absent throughout the year 1829. Ramtanoo Lahiree made good progress in Persian in 1831 and won a prize for proficiency in the next academic session. It appears from Wilson's reports of 1827 and 1828 that Radhanath Sikdar was a student of the Bengali Department in 1826 and 1827 and Duckinarunjan Mukhopadhyay in 1827. Radhanath Sikdar was regular in the two sessions. His knowledge of grammar, as Wilson's report

73. Ibid, p. 291; Also Ibid, Vol. 5, Part II, 1828, pp.539-540
75. Ibid, Also Ibid, Vol. 8, 1830, pp. 48-49.
79. Ibid.
of 1827 goes, was good. In 1827 Duckinarunjan Mukhopadhyay's attendance in the class was tolerable. Omrito Lall Mitra and Krishna Mohun Banerjea studied Sanskrit in the College. With reference to the progress of Omrito Lall Mitra and his class mates in Sanskrit Wilson wrote in 1827 that these students should study Sanskrit in the Sanskrit College. They learnt little or nothing in the Vidyalaya. But the report of the annual examination of the students of the Sanskrit College as submitted by W. Price on February 7, 1829 said that Omrito Lall Mitra made moderate progress and obtained little proficiency. It appears from W. Price's report of 1829 that Krishna Mohun Banerjee made progress in Sanskrit learning and obtained a prize for proficiency in it. It is thus evident that notable members of Young Bengal studied one or more than one oriental language.

It is but natural that Young Bengal were not in utter disrespect of oriental learning. In 1828, Hurro Chunder Ghose wrote a poem named 'Benaras'. In this poem he looked back

---

to the ancient literary tradition of Benaras, the centre of Sanskrit learning, with veneration, and enthusiastically looked forward to western learning and science for reformation and revitalization of the culture. 86

Omrito Lall Mitra contributed much to the excellence of that storehouse of Sanskrit literature, the "Sabdakalpadruma" founded by his illustrious father-in-law, Radhakanta Deb. 87 *Sabdakalpadruma* is a famous Sanskrit Lexicon, which was composed by a host of Sanskrit scholars directly patronized by Raja Radhakanta Deb. Omrito Lall Mitra's contribution to its "excellence", being unspecified, might have an editorial form.

Mohesh Chunder Ghose applied to the Governor-General-in-Council for a license on January 16, 1829 to establish a printing office in a house in Jaunbazar Street with an intention to print and publish several works of English, Sanskrit, Bengali, Persian, and Arabic languages. On January 30, 1829, Prinsep, the secretary to Government, informed him of the rules, ordinance and regulations prescribed for guidance in matters relating to printing. 88

Tarachand Chuckerburtee and Chunder Shaikhur Deb were in close contact with Rammohun Roy and shared his love of

86. The poem "Benaras" in the Appendix, II., pp. 733-734.
A Dictionary In Bengalee And English in 1827. In its preface he observed:

The want of a Dictionary in Bengalee and English of a moderate size and price, calculated to assist the European students in acquiring a knowledge of Bengalee, and the native youths in learning to translate from Bengalee into English, having long been felt and complained of, I thought a book of the following kind might not be without its use. 89

Tarachand Chuckerburtee along with Biswanath Turkobhusan undertook a venture to rectify errors in Sir William Jones's English translation of the Laws of Manu. They published a Bengali translation of Manu with original Sanskrit and Sir William Jones's English translation in one side and the proposed alterations in versions in English in other side. 90 They solicited the Government for patronage to their undertaking. 91

After leaving the College, Chunder Shaikhur Deb studied Sanskrit and acquired proficiency in Nyaya and other "Darshanas", 92 or philosophical systems.

89. Chakruburtee, Tarachand, A Dictionary In Bengalee And English, Preface V.
90. The India Gazette, January 31, February 10 & March 3, 1832
91. Home Public Department, August 2, 1831, pp.238-240; Also letter of Tarachand Chuckerburtee to H.H. Wilson dated March 5, 1832, GCPI (Copy Book of Letters), Vol. 10, Part I, 1832, pp. 208-209.
In 1831 Duckinaranjan Mukhopadhyay, as we have noted before, started a Bengali weekly named the Jnananveshan.

The prospectus of the paper published in its first issue on June 18, 1831 reads as follows:

Although books on subjects like Geography have been published in foreign and native languages in very many ways, there has not been wide publicity of these books. Therefore, for the immediate understanding of all, we shall gradually publish these books in native languages. And (according to our present knowledge) we shall not feel hesitant to publish books on different subjects, which need to be published. 93

A sanskrit verse was printed on the top of the prospectus. 94 It may be noted that Gourishankar Tarkabagish composed the verse. He virtually edited the paper. 95

93. An English translation of the Prospectus of the Jnananveshan by the Bengal Chronicle cited in Moitra, Suresh Chandra (ed), Selections From Jnananveshan, p. 32; For the Prospectus in original Bengali, The Samachar Durpan, July 2, 1831, Bandopadhyay, Brojendranath, Bengal Samyik Patra, (1818-1867), p. 56.

94. "এই জ্ঞান মন্ত্রানাং জ্ঞান তিভিণ্ড হয়।
দয়া সত্যকি সংস্কারা প্রচারণায় সংহর।"

It is noteworthy that Rusick Krishna Mullick published a Bengali Paper named the \textit{Jnanasindhutaranga} in 1832 (files of which are still not available). As noted before, he along with Mahob Chunder Mullick conducted the \textit{Jnananveshan} in English and Bengali in 1833.

Krishna Mohun Banerjea, the editor of the English weekly named \textit{The Enquirer}, in a letter to the Secretary to the General Committee of Public Instruction, submitted a proposal for the publication of a general outline of the Geography of India and a brief sketch of General Geography in Bengali. \footnote{Krishna Mohun Banerjea's letter to the Secretary to the GCPI dated February 27, 1833, GCPI (Copy Book of Letters), Vol. 12, Part II, 1833, pp. 789-790.}


\footnote{Bandopadhyay, B.N., \textit{Bangla Samayik Patra}, (1818-1867), p. 71.}
It may be noted that Young Bengal was not alone in the field of translation-works. Sir Edward Ryan, who was elected President of the Calcutta School Book Society in 1832, informed Lord William Bentinck that some of the Hindu College students with the assistance of the society were preparing Bengali translations of well-known English literary and scientific works "with the pure and single view of being useful to their countrymen." 

It is, therefore, reasonable to note that some members of Young Bengal had a liking for vernacular or ancient learning. The contempt of some of them for Hindu culture and tradition in their fervent excitement for English was not universal. Even those who showed contempt for Hindu culture, religion and tradition, were not negligent of the

100. One may cite, for example, that in 1828 Shib Chunder Thakoor and others (late students of the Anglo-Indian College) informed Wilson of the want of books in Bengali and proposed to translate certain European historical book with the aid of the General Committee of Public Instruction - Letter of Shib Chunder Thakoor and others to Wilson dated September 2, 1828, GCPI (Copy Book of Letters), Vol. 5, Part II, 1828, pp. 388-389.

Also Gunga Charan Sen's letter to the Secretary to the Committee of Education dated February 26, 1833 for Bengali translation of Mill's Political Economy. Home Public Department, March 1, 1833, pp. 590-592.

cultivation of Bengali like some of their associates or classmates. Therefore, Young Bengal or a number of Hindu College students may not be said to be a set of anglicized iconoclasts.

It is noteworthy that Kasi Prasad Ghose rejected Mill's contention that India's ancient history was bleak.\textsuperscript{102} Kashi prasad Ghose, who later achieved considerable distinction as a journalist, was once a student of the Hindu College. He was not a follower of Derozio. He composed hundreds of tappa-love songs in elegant Bengali. What was really remarkable was that he also composed a number of brilliant poems in highly elegant English. His poems, written in English, were no less remarkable than the poetical compositions of Derozio.\textsuperscript{103}

\textsuperscript{102} The Calcutta Gazette, January 24, 1828.

\textsuperscript{103} His poetical work, "The Shair And Other Poems" (Calcutta, 1830) was no less impressive than that of Derozio. He supported the conservative cause (one may, for example, refer to the views expressed in the Hindu Intelligencer, February 12, 1855). He was deeply versed in English literature and possibly in Western learning. As he was not associated with Derozio and his pupils closely, he did not become a truant and implacable critic of Hindu superstitions or of some religious observances. His English poems were applauded by many contemporaries.
v) Young Bengal And Religious Reform

It is noteworthy that Rammohun's ideal of Brahmaism or deism rather than Derozio's ideal of scepticism proved to be attractive to a number of Young Bengal or of Derozio's disciples. Both Chunder Shaikhur Deb and Tarachand Chuckerburtee, who were associates of Rammohun Roy, were Brahmas or neo-Vedantists. In fact, Chunder Shaikhur Deb and Tarachand Chuckerburtee suggested to Rammohun the idea of a prayer hall for the worship of One God. Tarachand took part in the foundation of the Brahma Sabha. He was the first Secretary to the Sabha. He wrote some tracts on Brahma religion.

It may be noted that some students and followers of Derozio, though not formal members of the Brahma Sabha, were Brahmas at heart. Shib Chunder Deb wrote in his autobiography: "When I was studying in the 4th class of the late Hindu College under the tuition of Mr Derozio, religious discussions were carried on under his guidance both in and out of the College, the result of which was


105. Leonard G.S., A History Of the Brahma Samaj, p. 52.
that ... I became a believer in one God, or in other words a deist.\(^{106}\) Though a deist, he, according to his own confession, "was obliged to conform to the rites and ceremonies inculcated in Hinduism" till 1844 under unavoidable circumstances.\(^{107}\) In a letter to Collet dated January 31, 1883 he wrote that he attended the weekly "Upashana Sabha" [of Rammohun] or Prayer Meeting during the period between 1828 and 1830.\(^{108}\)

It may appear from Peary Chand Mitra's later writing that he was a deist at heart. Peary Chand wrote:

"I was born in 1814 and brought up as an idolater ... My desire to understand God and His Providence was earnest from boyhood. Metaphysics and Psychology were my favourite studies and the reading of standard works on those subjects and of the theistic and Christian authors, as well as those of Arya works in Sanskrit and Bengali produced a living conviction that there is but one God of the infinite perfection."\(^{109}\)


\(^{107.}\) Ibid.


Dr Asit Kumar Bandopadhyay observes that Peary Chand was an earnest seeker after God from his College days - Bandopadhyay, Asit Kumar, Peary Chand Rachanabali (Bengali), Introduction, pp. 10-11.
Ramtanoo Lahiree drew close to the Brahmas, though he did not embrace Brahmaism formally.\(^{110}\)

One may, however, contend that the confession of Mohesh Chunder Ghose after his conversion into Christianity (August, 1832) suggests that he turned an atheist and suffered mental agony for a time.\(^{111}\) The case of Mohesh was perhaps a solitary example.

It is not proper to confound the public statement of one against Hindu religion or Hindu tradition with atheism. Rusick Krishna Mullick's refusal in the open court to swear by touching the holy water of the Ganges\(^{112}\) earned for him the notoriety of an atheist. The Bengal Hurkarau, referring to the incident, wrote that Rusick had faith

\(^{110}\) According to a writer, Ramtanoo and some of his friends encouraged Rammohun in his effort to establish the Brahma Sabha - Ghose, Shara Chandra, Ramtanu Lahiree (Bengali), p. 17; Another writer contended that Ramtanoo was a Brahma by heart - Mukhopadhyyay, Satish Chandra, Ramgopal Ghose (Bengali), p. 36.

\(^{111}\) As Mohesh Confessed: "A twelve month ago I was an atheist, a materialist, and physical necessitarian and what am I now? A baptized Christian. A twelve month ago I was the most miserable of the miserable, and what am I now? In my mind the happiest of the happy" - Cited in Smith, George, *The Life Of Alexander Duff*, pp. 97-98.

\(^{112}\) Once summoned as a witness before the Supreme Court of Calcutta, Rusick refused to take an oath by swearing on a copper vessel dipped in a little Ganges' water. He said: "I do not believe in the sacredness of the Ganges" - Shastri Shivnath, *Ramtanu Lahiri-O-Tatkalin Bangla Samaaj* (Bengali, 4th Reprint), pp. 120-121; Lethbridge, *Sir Roger*, op. cit., p. 188; Sarkar, Susobhan, "*Derision And Young Bengal*" *On Bengal Renaissance*, p. 103.
in no religion. In order to prevent misconception regarding him he openly stated before the Judge of the Court that he had firm faith in God, though had no faith in the traditional form of court-oath.

Of other members of Young Bengal, Radhanath Sikdar, Ramgopal Ghose, Madhob Chunder Mullick, and Duckinarunjan Mukhopadhyay are said to have renounced the religion of their forefathers. But there is no evidence to prove that they were all disbelievers in God. It is also difficult to say that they were all free from the influence of religion and tradition.

Thus as regards religion Young Bengal was generally divided into two groups - deists and the so-called "rebels" against Hindu religion or tradition. The religious view of some members is not known. The atheism of Mohesh was an exception. One can not safely say that the effect of Derozio's teaching was in general the rise of atheism among his students or followers or Hindu college pupils.

vi) Young Bengal And Socio-Religious Reforms

On the question of socio-religious reform some like Tarachand Chuckerburtee subscribed to Rammohun's faith in the reinterpretation of Hindu religion and tradition as a means of promoting reforms in Hindu society. Rammohun looked back to some phases in the history of Hindu religion as a guide to reformation and regeneration of the country. One may cite for example Rammohun's veneration for Yagnavalkya among the ancient sages and his plea for the restriction of polygamy in accordance with the dictates of Yagnavalkya. Following in the footsteps of Rammohun, Tarachand looked back to some ancient sages. He, however, held Manu in high esteem, and prepared a new translation of Manu into English and Bengali.

---

116. It may be noted that before Rammohun, Mrityunjoy Vidyalankar (1762-1819) a Kulin Brahmin, and a Pandit of the Fort William College and later of the Supreme Court, vindicated the verdict of the Shastra against Sutee in 1817, and cited a number of Hindu authorities in support of his contention - Bandopadhay, Brojendranath, "Mrityunjoy Vidyalankar," Sahitya Sadhak Charitmelal, No. 3 (Vol. I, 4th Reprint), pp. 8-9, 23-35.

Mrityunjoy Vidyalankar concluded: "I regard a woman's burning herself as an unworthy act and a life of abstinence and chastity as highly excellent, - in the Shastras appear many prohibitions of a woman's dying with her husband, but against a life of abstinence and chastity there is no prohibition" - Ibid, p. 33.

He regarded Manu as the "most comprehensive and authoritative code of Hindu law the knowledge of which was essential to the removal of ignorance and prejudice from the mind of his fellow-countrymen." He contended that because of the absence of any translation of Manu into the dialects of India, the Hindus in general in British India "are obliged to remain in utter ignorance of the laws by which they profess to regulate their civil and religious conduct and this ignorance alone has been the cause of many prejudices and practices which are detrimental to the prosperity and happiness of society." He added that the object of his proposed translation was to remove the evil effects which proceeded from the want of a more general acquaintance with the Institutes of Manu. He concluded.

A more general acquaintance with the laws of Manu may serve to remove many absurd notions and prejudices which have gained ground among our countrymen.

While some like Tarachand were looking back to some ancient Hindu authorities as a guide to Hindu social reform, some

---

118. Home Public Department, August 1, 1831, p. 232.
119. Ibid.
120. Ibid.
121. Letter of Tarachand to Wilson dated March 5, 1832, GCP1 (Copy Book of Letters), Vol. 10, Part-I, 1832, pp. 208 - 209.
like Duckinarunjan and Krishna Mohun rejected Hindu religion and tradition. One may contend that Duckinarunjan did not entirely reject Hindu religion or tradition altogether as some missionary papers would have us believe.122 The files of the Jnananveshan of 1831 are not available. But a study of the prospectus of the papers (June 18, 1831) suggests that it was chiefly concerned with the distortions of Hinduism. As it stated:

The fact that has necessitated its publication is that firstly, the native gentlemen coming of highly respectable families are getting deceived by lies and hear-says, and considering that there is the least prospect for by these men to profit them, we decided to make an attempt to allay or remove their errors by leading the discussion of the (sacred) books like the Vedas of different dissensions, the Vedanta Philosophy, the laws of Manu [and] those of Mitakshara.123

122. The Calcutta Christian Observer remarked: The 'Enquirer' and the Jnananveshan "are the organs of that small party of the educated Hindoos" who "have at once renounced in theory and practice the whole system of Hindooism, pure and impure, ancient and modern, vedantic and puranic, and who being thus left in a region of vacancy as regards religion, have announced themselves as free enquirers after truth" - The Calcutta Christian Observer, October 1, 1832, 1, p. 213, The John Bull in an issue noted the violent temper of the editor of the Enquirer in his gauntlet against tradition - The John Bull, October, 1832, No. 3, p. 189.

Moreover, the object of the paper was to expose the un-
"Shastric" conduct of the respectable persons: "the native
gentlemen inhabiting this land, if they are asked to relate
fully about their religious creeds, will explain everything
as recorded in the Shastras, but what are performed by them
in practice do not or should not befit any respectable
man." 124

A biographer of Krishna Mohun Banerjea, known as
Kristo Bando, who once achieved notoriety as a drunk,
contends that their revolt against Hinduism was chiefly a
reaction against Brahmanical or priestly impositions, Hindu
idolatry or prevailing Hindu customs. 125 Krishna Mohun wrote
in the Enquirer of October, 1831: "Our struggle is to work
upon the minds of the rising generation by examples and
excite their curiosity by expatiating upon the evils of
Hindooism and the tricks of those who are for chaiming and
confining the intellect. We are convinced that if a spirit
of investigation be diffused among youthful minds, they cannot
embrace a system of idolatry." 126

124. Ibid.
124(a) For details Chapter VII, Section iii. p. 522.
125. The India Review, October, 1842 reprinted in Bagal,
Jogesh Chandra, "Krishna Mohun Bandopadhyay",
Sahitya Sadhak Charitamala, No. 72, (Vol. 6),
pp. 36-37.
126. The Enquirer quoted in India Gazette, October 29,
1831.
Unfortunately, some of Derozio's disciples like Krishna Mohun confounded Hindu idolatrous customs or Hindu orthodoxy with Hinduism without offering any satisfactory explanation. They were young and inexperienced. They had little knowledge of Hinduism. Before them Rammohun Roy had already demonstrated by a number of works on Hinduism that Hindu idolatry or some superstitious customs was not sanctioned by the principal Hindu Shastras but later growths. Krishna Mohun or his associates should have countered Rammohun's arguments before they branded Hinduism as wholly idolatrous.

One may raise a question whether the condemnation of Hinduism by some members of Young Bengal was consistent with the spirit of rational enquiry or fully justified. Madhob Chunder Mullick wrote in the Parthenon: "If there be anything that we hate from the bottom of our heart, it is Hinduism." He considered Hinduism to be "the greatest

127. In answer to the charge of the India Gazette of October 21, 1831 that they had left the religion of their ancestors for the gratification of their appetites, Krishna Mohun wrote: "The very supposition that such thing is possible, is an absurdity. Is embracing a set of doctrines or renouncing a number of prejudices like putting on red coats, or silk stockings that any man has only to will it, and it is done? Is it possible for one to give up a creed from any motive whatsoever, when he feels it is true, and when in consequence such a renouncement paints before his mind eternal punishment?" The Enquirer cited in the India Gazette, October 29, 1831. Krishna Mohun's observation was hasty and sweeping. He did not provide any adequate explanation for his condemnation of Hinduism as being not true.

promoter of vice" and "the most hurtful to the peace, comfort and happiness of society". He announced that "neither insinuation, nor flattery, neither fear nor persecution can alter our resolution to destroy that monstrous creed". Krishna Mohun openly stated his disbelief in the sanctity of the prevailing form of oath and the Hindu religion in the police office. Krishna Mohun or Madhob should have conducted a thorough investigation into the Hindu religion before they passed a debunking opinion on it.

It is generally supposed that Young Bengal's gauntlet against Hinduism was the logical outcome of Derozio's teachings. But like Charles Grant, James Mill, William Ward or Alexander Duff, Derozio, as noted before, did not make any highly critical comment upon Hinduism. One cannot safely say that Derozio asked his students to debunk or to reject Hinduism. But one can safely say that Derozio taught his pupils to criticise Hindu superstitions or customs. It is likely that the writings of the Evangelical and Utilitarian schools or of the Baptist Missionaries of Serampore or the lectures of Duff (with whom some like Krishna Mohun were in

129. *The Enquirer* quoted in the *India Gazette*, October 1, 1831.
129(a). Ibid.
130. This happened when Krishna Mohun went to the police-office to obtain a licence to start the *Enquirer* but refused to be sworn by taking the Ganges' water—Edward Ryan to Bentinck, June 13, 1831, Bentinck Papers (File No. 14).
continual association for a time) on Hinduism in a highly critical manner might have shaded at least imperceptible influence upon the mind of some of Derozio's pupils. It is also likely that in their adolescent indignation against Hindu superstitions they burst into vehemence against Hinduism for a time. Thus they went beyond what Derozio taught them, attacked Hindu religion and roused alarm in the Hindu society. Unfortunately, Derozio was to be blamed for this adolescent excess of some of his pupils.

The rationalistic spirit of Derozio's teaching was not lost upon the mind of some of his disciples. Ramgopal Ghose held up the motto: "He who will not reason is a bigot, he who cannot is a fool, and he who does not is a slave." 131 Some members of Young Bengal, like Derozio, grew critical of Hindu prejudices and superstitions. In a letter to Lord William Bentinck, Krishna Mohun Banerjea wrote that "with an intention of making an attempt to eradicate prejudices from the Hindus" he had started The Enquirer. He added that time had arrived for completing "the defeat of that monstrous superstition which for a long time domineered over the Hindoo mind." He hailed the Regulation

Sarkar, Susobhan, On The Bengal Renaissance, p. 103.
against Sati as a step to the abolition of the prej udices.132

In the _Enquirer_ he denounced superstitious customs like idolatry and caste. He denounced idolatry as an absurd system which was unable to stand the test even of the most superficial examination.133 He remarked that the Durga Puja was an occasion for the Brahmins to play their trick upon the Hindus and for the wealthy Hindus to display their wealth in arranging "nautches" and in indulging in immoral pursuits.134

In his one act drama named _The Persecuted or Dramatic Scenes, Illustrative Of The Present State of Hindooism In Calcutta_ he contended that the traditional customs and practices were nothing but priestly impositions. In the work he sought to expose the wiles and tricks of the Brahmins in imposing them upon the Hindus.135 In the _Enquirer_ he argued that the austerities and severities to which Hindu women were subjected, and the degradation under which the


133. _The Enquirer_ quoted in _The India Gazette_, October 29, 1831.

134. _The Enquirer_ reprinted in _The India Gazette_, October, 22, 1831.

Hindus had been labouring were due to Brahmanical prescriptions induced by worldly or pecuniary considerations. In his words "Hindooism could be conducive to the satisfaction of his avarice, and that whatever is hostile to this be also hostile to religion." 136

He condemned caste as "the unnatural distinction which prevents man from looking upon his fellow as a brother." 137 Conformity to caste rules, he maintained, was instrumental in positively encouraging hypocrisy. 138

They were staunch advocates of female education and female emancipation. Krishna Mohun Banerjea wrote in the Enquirer: "Education, by improving their minds, refining their feelings and instilling moral courage into their hearts, can be the only effectual means of securing their lives against their own attempts." 139 He complained that "the natives have in a considerable degree neglected the interests of female society." 140

---

136. The Enquirer quoted in the India Gazette, September 17, 1831. Krishna Mohun Banerjea was shocked at the austerities and penances which his widowed mother practised daily, The Bengal Past and Present, Vol. 37 (Serial No. 74, April - June), 1929, p. 138.

137. The Enquirer quoted in the India Gazette, October 29, 1831.

138. Ibid.

139. The Enquirer, June 9, 1831.

140. Ibid.
Thus the attitude of some members of Young Bengal like Krishna Mohun towards some superstitious customs and practices was rational and uncompromising. Some contemporary English periodicals like the *India Gazette* dubbed these members of Young Bengal as "Radicals" or "Ultra-radicals" while referring to Rammohun Roy and his adherents as "Moderates". It is likely that the "Radicals" were to meet opposition not only of the so-called conservatives headed by Radhakanta Deb but also of the moderates led by Rammohun Roy.

It is noteworthy that some members of Young Bengal were, like Derozio, critical of the compromising tendency and inconsistency of Rammohun Roy and his disciples. Krishna Mohun Banerjea and some of his friends criticised Rammohun and his followers as 'half-liberals'. Krishna Mohun was of opinion that Rammohun "came as far as half way in religion and politics." He and his friends regarded Rammohun's opinions as vague and confused and leading nowhere. They roundly condemned his followers as merely opportunist whose sole motive was to acquire wealth and position. In their eyes these half-liberals as they were called,

141. The *India Gazette*, October 25, 1831.
were a set of unscrupulous persons who, in order to secure the patronage and influence of the high folks of Calcutta, did not hesitate to behave wholly according to convenience. "Before the bigots they are bigots; before the liberals they are liberals; before the whigs they are whigs and before the Tories they are Tories." 143

What, however, aggravated the opposition of their elder opponents was the freaks or frivolities or excesses of some of his pupils in their adolescent excitement for reform which Derozio did not anticipate but for which he was usually blamed.

Derozio did not launch any personal attack upon any of his Hindu opponents. Whenever he criticised them, he referred to them as a group or groups. He branded the bigotted Hindus as the orthodox natives or the Moderates as "half-liberals." 144 But some of his pupils carried on personal invectives against some of their elder opponents. The term "hypocrite" was not insinuated, or implied or conveyed in general terms, but was broadly expressed in connection with the names of the individuals like Rammohun. 145 The Enquirer ridiculed Radhakanta

144. The East Indian, October, 1831, quoted in the India Gazette, October 5, 1831.
145. The India Gazette, October 25, 1831.
Deb as "Gadhakanta" and Dharma Sabha as "Garum Sabha".\textsuperscript{146}

Derozio, an East Indian of English learning and culture, fostered a taste for English learning and literature in the mind of his students. But some of his pupils manifested fascination or craze for English manner and culture. According to Thomas Edwards, "Krishna Mohun Banerjea, though a Kulin Brahmin, sat down at Derozio's table with other advanced thinkers of his countrymen, and in defiance of all caste rules, partook freely of beef, beer and other European luxuries. The Brahmanical thread was thrown aside and Pope and Dryden were held in more esteem than the sacred books of the Hindoos".\textsuperscript{147} Edwards added: "Radhanath Sikdar lived after English fashion"\textsuperscript{148} Kissory Chand Mitra writes: "Ram Gopal Ghose's mode of living, eating and drinking was as English as his mode of thinking and dealing."\textsuperscript{149}

Derozio's teaching was to prove inspiring to his students to despise the caste-rules. Some of his students in violation of the prevailing rules of caste took to beef. But it appeared that the taking of beef and brandy was a

\textsuperscript{146. The Hindoo Patriot, May 18, 1885}
\textsuperscript{147. Edwards, Thomas, loc. cit., p. 122.}
\textsuperscript{148. Edwards, Thomas, op. cit., 132.}
\textsuperscript{149. The Calcutta Review, Vol. XLVI, 1868, pp. 520 & 523.}
hall-mark of liberalism of some. Beef-eaters, Radhanath Sikdar declared, ruled over the world. Ramgopal Ghose was forward in taking beef and brandy. He came to be known as "a heretic and a beef-eater," and became notorious in the community under the nickname of "Robert Gopal". His sins were visited on his father, who was nicknamed "beef-eating Gobind Ghose." A contemporary newspaper remarked that they manifested their heterodoxy by cutting their way "through ham and beef and wading to liberalism through tumblers of beer."

Derozio taught his disciples to attack Hindu idolatry and Hindu prejudices. But some of his pupils unnecessarily ran counter to Hindu prejudices and offended the feelings of their countrymen. Ramgopal Ghose took liberties in

thought and action which scandalized the worshippers of Krishna and Kali.\textsuperscript{154}

Krishna Mohun Banerjea and Rusick Krishna Mullick roused alarm in the Hindu society by declaring their intention to violate the caste rules by participating in a public dinner given in honour of John Ricketts, the East Indian leader. Thanks to David Hare's intervention they, however, refrained from taking the step.\textsuperscript{155} But in August 1831 some of Krishna Mohun's friends, after taking

\textsuperscript{154} Ibid, p. 520.

It may be noted that not only Ramgopal Ghose but also a number of Hindu College students committed imprudent acts by unnecessarily wounding the feelings of their fellow-countrymen. "Instead of repeating prayers to deities some chose to repeat noble passage from the Iliad" (Edwards, Thomas, loc. cit., p. 69). Others composed parodies on the Hindu religious mantras. The image of "Kartick" was caricatured as a Sahib dinning off a table with "Khidmutagar" at hand. They were delighted to exhibit the new spirit in an aggressive manner. -(Chunder, Bholanath, "Recollections Of The Old Hindoo College", The Calcutta University Magazine, March, 1895, p. 34). According to an account, in order to shame those who denounced beef-eating as sinful, some paraded the street with beef in their hands, inviting the people to take it and eat it. Shastri Shivnath, op.cit., Appendix, p. 349.

\textsuperscript{155} Edwards Ryan to Bentinck, Bentinck Papers, June 13, 1831 (Film No. 14) PWJF 1993/2a-2f.
in his house roasted meat apparently kid, brought from the "bazar", threw two pieces of flesh into the courtyard of an adjoining house of two orthodox Brahmans named Sambhu Chandra Chakrabarti and Bhairab Chandra Chakrabarti, crying out "there is beef! there is beef!" The incident shocked the Hindus in general.\(^\text{156}\) Irate Hindus assembled before Krishna Mohun's house where the incident took place, and offered two alternatives to Krishna Mohun Banerjea - either to deny the meat having been thrown from his house and affirm his belief in Hinduism or to leave the family house. Krishna Mohun chose the latter alternative,\(^\text{157}\) and was expelled from the house. The expulsion of Krishna Mohun typified the rift between the "Radicals" and their fellow-countrymen in general.

\(^\text{156}\). The Enquirer reprinted in the India Gazette, October 15, 1831; Ghose, Mamathanath, Raja Dakshinaranjan Mukhopadhyay (Bengali), pp. 50 & 52.

\(^\text{157}\). The India Gazette, October 15, 1831.
Confrontation Of Young Bengal, Particularly Of The "Radicals" With The Hindus In General.

In fact, Hindu society was up against them. Hindu parents and guardians adopted various measures to break the back of the "Radicals". It was firmly believed that by bribes, temptations, and especially threats and ill-treatment they would wear out the patience and spirit of the "Radicals". The "Radicals" drew upon themselves "the thunders and fulminations of some and the curses and maledictions" of others. 158 Rusick Krishna Mullick informed Sir Edward Ryan that he was being constantly abused by the bigotted Hindus. 159 Audit (sic) Chunder Doss informed Ryan that he was extremely disliked by his parents, and an object of contempt and aversion of them. 160 The letters of Rusick Krishna Mullick and Audit (sic) Chunder Doss to Edward Ryan reveal that their financial dependence was used by their elders as a weapon against them. 161

158. Duff, Alexander, India And India Missions, pp. 622 & 624.
the School Society, proceeded to dismiss Krishna Mohun Banerjea from the post of a teacher in the Society's Pataldangah School for his heretical views. He was prevented by Ryan from taking such a step for the time being.162 Rusick was also in Radhakanta Deb's bad book for his heretical tendency. Ultimately, both Krishna Mohun and Rusick were dismissed from the posts of teacher in the School Society's school.163 The letters of Rusick Krishna Mullick and Audit (sic) Chunder Doss to Ryan reveal that they were placed in a predicament primarily due to their economic dependence. David Hare informed Ryan that he personally knew between 20 and 30 youngmen, who were "pretty much in the same situation as referred to above."164 Ryan, therefore, requested the Government to offer employment to the "Radicals" to save them from the unpleasant situation.165

162. Edward Ryan to Bentinck, Bentinck Papers, June 13, 1831 (Film No. 14) PUJF 1993 p.2a-2f.
165. Ryan to Bentinck, Bentinck Papers, June 13, 1831 Bentinck Papers (Film No. 14) PWJF 1933/2a-2f.
Moreover, the youths were threatened with excommunication from caste or with loss of paternal property. The *Enquirer* complained that the bigots and fanatics resorted to persecution, thunders of fulmination and threats of excommunication. Rusick's letter to Ryan indicates that they were kept confined so that they could be detached from the company of fellow-mates of a like mind.

In fact, Hindu guardians and parents did not hesitate to administer even drugs to some of them to detach them from the society of fellow-friends. Rusick was administered drugs and kept in chains in an unconscious state. He, however, managed to escape and fled to Chorebagan in Calcutta wherefrom he later edited the *Jnananveshan*. Duckinrunjan Mukhopadhyay was drugged, carried away from Calcutta and kept for some time at Benaras.

---

166. Duff, Alexander, loc. cit., p. 622; The *Enquirer* reprinted in *India Gazette*, October 29, 1831.
169. Podder, Aravinda, op. cit., p. 64.
The *Enquirer* complained that the conservative newspapers, particularly the *Samachar Chundrika* and the *Sungbad Probhakur*, published baseless stories with a view to keeping alive the faith of the people in traditional religious beliefs.\(^{171}\) The *Enquirer* further complained that conspiracies were daily formed to hurt them in every possible way and circulars stuffed with falsehoods had been issued to defame their characters.\(^{172}\) Madhob Chunder Mullick held that the *Sungbad Probhakur* circulated false reports about a meeting of Hindu Free School Committee in order to discredit them.\(^{173}\)

Some like Krishna Mohun kept up the tone of revolt against Hindu religion and tradition in the *Enquirer*. Once he wrote:

> Persecution is high, for we have deserted the shrine of Hinduism ... Let us rather aspire to martyrdom than desert a single inch of ground.\(^{174}\)

He wrote again:

> ... The orthodox are in a rage; let them

---


burst forth into a flame. Let the liberal's voice be like that of a Roman - a Roman knows not only to act but to suffer. 175

It is not unlikely that in the face of the opposition of the bigotted elders or countrymen some might retreat. The following observation of the Enquirer is revealing: "It will not in consequence be surprising if some of our friends, who have been refined by knowledge and enlightened by education, be dismayed at the excitement of the bigots." 176

Some like Krishnadhan Mitra were no longer ready for rupture with their family members. As Krishnadhan wrote to Edward Ryan:

In fact, I am beloved by my whole family.
I do not for a single moment wish to separate myself from my parents but on the contrary to live amicably and peaceably in their affection. 177

175. Ibid, p. 628.
177. Krishnadhan Mitra's letter to Edward Ryan, June 1, 1831, Bentinck Papers, June 13, 1831 (Film No. 14), PWJf, 1991a.
In fact, the opposition of Hindu parents or guardians succeeded at least to some extent in breaking the back of some of the "Radicals". Thomas Edwards, speaking of the persecution of Duckinarunjan Mukhopadhyay, writes: "The drugging and the Benaras discipline, whatever it may have been, did more than its work. From the day of his return to Calcutta till his death, more than thirty years afterwards, he was never the same man intellectually or morally that he had been." 178

Rusick Krishna Mullick later conducted the Jnananveshan from Chorebagan (Calcutta). The Jnananveshan published a writing which took relatively a cautious and compromising stance on the abolition of the Charak 'Puja'. 179

179. The Jnananveshan quoted in the Reformer, April 7 & 21, 1833.
viii) **The Degree Of Radicalism In Young Bengal**

It is now a question whether the movement of Young Bengal, particularly of "the Radicals", had radical potentialities, or whether the movement was basically different from that of the Moderates led by Rammohun Roy and his disciples.

It is noteworthy that Radhanath Sikdar refused to marry a minor girl in the teeth of family opposition.\(^{180}\) This was a memorable instance of protest against the custom of early marriage at a time when few would challenge the dictates of their parents in the matter. Ramgopal Ghose made a mark by his "protest against Hindoo idolatry, which he denounced both by profession and practice."\(^{181}\) These evidences tend to suggest that some members of Young Bengal had integrity between thought and action which Derozio advocated.

But some of Derozio's disciples were not above the reproach of the inconsistency between thought and action which Derozio dispiked. Ramtanoo Lahiri denounced caste as a great social and moral evil, and is known to have taken

---

forbidden foods, namely beef in violation of the caste rules. But there are cases of his refusal to take tea in the house of a "Firingi" like Derozio, or a glass of "Sherry" in the house of Rev. Hough, a Christian Missionary of Habra. He retained his sacred thread till 1851 when he was forced by compelling circumstances to throw it off. Some like Ramtanoo and Shib Chunder Deb were given in marriage to girls of very tender age in conformity with the custom of early marriage. Even Krishna Mohun Banerjea, while only sixteen, married Bindubashini (daughter of Radhamohan Chatterjee), a girl of only nine.

The following letter of Krishna Mohun Banerjea (who along with a number of Hindu College students including Radhanath Sikdar and Madhob Chunder Mullick applied for the situations of English teachers in the proposed English schools of upper India) to the GCPI reveals that they were not free from the influence of conservative Hindu tradition:

186. The Bengal Past and Present, Vol. xxxvii, Part II. (Serial No. 74), April-June, 1929, p. 135.
I have only to add that our family will not (I fear) consent to our setting out in the next month (Bhadrow). Consequently the sooner the orders of the Committee are issued the better. However, if it be some days before we start we may set out in course of this month (Shrauban) and live somewhere without the town for a few days.\textsuperscript{187}

The "Radicals", like the Moderates, could not overcome the basic dilemma created by the conflict between family and freedom. As Krishna Mohun wrote in the \textit{Enquirer}:

The educated Hindoos are all young; however strong their feelings may be in favour of female improvement, they cannot realise their wishes while the heads of the families are averse to their intentions.\textsuperscript{188}

A lady correspondent of the Paper accused Krishna Mohun of tall talks and no performances. She wrote that an enthusiastic advocate of female emancipation though they were, they had adopted no means for their improvement. While they were scheming new schools and other institutions of the kind for promoting science and arts in the country, they had neglected "to polish our manners and instil knowledge in our minds."

\begin{enumerate}
\item[188.] The \textit{Enquirer} June 9, 1831.
\end{enumerate}
"Shame (!!!) to them for neglecting this part of duty." 189
In reply Krishna Mohun Banerjea wrote: "penned as a Hindu lady must be, she does not know the obstacles that lie in the way of her educated countrymen." 190

In fact, the "Radicals" were loud protesters against superstitious Hindu custom and practices. They were content with mere dreaming and declaration of revolt in their organs, particularly in the Enquirer. The naive belief that the spread of English education would automatically be followed by the eradication of superstitions from the bosom of Hindu society, was entertained by them. In Krishna Mohun's words: "The rays that have emanated from the Hindoo College and that are now diverging to other places must eventually dissipate the mists of ignorance and superstitions." 191 But they ignored the thick crust of reality beneath them - the sharp opposition of the bigotted elders of their countrymen in the teeth of which some of them even failed to profess the sentiments they adhered to. Audit (sic) Chunder Doss wrote: "My dependence upon my father for livelihood does alone prevent me from denouncing publicly the absurd tenets of Hindooism and the vile discrimination of caste." 192

189. Ibid.
190. Ibid.
191. The Enquirer reprinted in the India Gazette, September 6, 1831.
Mullick wrote: "the unpleasant circumstances "prevents my taking ... decided steps immediately in denouncing the degraded and debasing superstition(s) of which my unhappy countrymen are the slaves."

The lacked a plan and a clear programme of action for developing the movement. They had little contact with the masses. Krishna Mohun's complaint in a fervent tone against the hostility of those English-educated youths, who were convinced of the folly of Hinduism, tends to suggest that they failed to carry even a limited number of intellectuals with them.

It may be noted that some members of Young Bengal were, like the Moderates, compromising in practice. Hurro Chunder Ghose and Omrito Lall Mitra conformed to the practices of the orthodox Hindus. They were apparently orthodox. Hurro Chunder Ghose, in order to satisfy his prejudice-ridden mother, did not accept the office of Dewan under Lord William Bentinck. He did not share the freaks or frivolities of some of his fellow mates. It is likely that the "Radicals"

195. The Enquirer reprinted in the India Gazette, October 15, 1831.
failed to carry these elements of Young Bengal with them.

If we consider the non-conformist impulse of Derozio's followers, we may be permitted to make the following classification of them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The So-called &quot;Radicals&quot;</th>
<th>The &quot;Moderates&quot; or Apparently &quot;Moderates&quot;</th>
<th>Apparently &quot;Conservatives&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Duckinarunjan Mukhopadhyay</td>
<td>3. Peary Chand Mitra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ramgopal Ghose</td>
<td>4. Shib Chunder Deb</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Radhanath Sikdar</td>
<td>5. Ramtanoo Lahiri</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Madhob Chunder Mullick</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Rusick Krishna Mullick</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above classification may be made in a general and vague sense. From a deeper point of view none of the three groups or followers lived up to Derozio's rational or sceptic ideal ultimately. It is not, therefore, proper to call them "Derozians" one may suggest that they might better be called "Young Calcutta" rather than "Young Bengal". But since some of their ideals, social or political, and literary endeavours of some like Peary Chand Mitra, particularly in later years, had wide-ranging implications in the general context of Bengal, they might be designated as "Young Bengal" in a general and loose sense.
Like a number of intellectuals of the time, Young Bengal was obsessed with Hindu tradition, which kept them apart from the Muslims.

The movement of Young Bengal or of "The Radicals" thus suffered from limitations, which were to detract from their radical potentialities. But it should be kept in mind that they were handicapped by young age, inexperience and basic limitations of the age in which they were born and brought up. The spirit of revolt of some against Hindu superstitions on the ground of reason, the impulse of some towards non-conformism in social practice, or the readiness of some for sacrifice or losses of any nature for heresy, however short-lived all these may be, were rare in our history and certainly worthy of remembrance. Some members of Young Bengal, atleast some of the "Radicals", might be called "Radicals" for a time in a very limited sense of the term - a development in the social history of Bengal for which Derozio, their teacher, should be given due share of credit.
ix) **Reaction Against Young Bengal And Hindu College Students**

The reaction against Young Bengal was started by a number of intellectuals including some Moderates or liberals. Gunga Churan Sen, a student of the Hindu College, strongly disapproved of the frivolities of some members of Young Bengal. As he remarked:

> Is this education consistently displayed in hurting the feelings of our friends and countrymen? Does it consist in offering beef-sticks to the poor Hindus? 198

Gunga Churan Sen, who posed as the champion of Hindu religion and tradition in his wrangling with Madhob Chunder Mallick over the report of the proceedings of a meeting of the Hindu Free School Committee in 1831 as a Secretary to the Institution, was, however, a staunch opponent of the so-called "Radicals". 199

Rammohun Roy often deplored the existence of a party, which had sprung up in Calcutta, composed principally of imprudent youngmen, some of them possessing talent, who had avowed themselves sceptics in the wildest sense of the term. He described it as partly of the Hindu youth(s), who from education had learnt to reject their own faith without


199. Ibid, October 6, 1831; Also A letter of Madhob Chunder Mullick to editor of the *Enquirer* October 5, 1831 in reply to Gunga Charan Sen's letter, Ibid, October 15, 1831.
substituting any other. These he thought more debased than the most bigoted Hindus and their principle the bane of all morality. Rammohun Roy was possibly disturbed by the reckless tendency of some members of Young Bengal to attack Hinduism, and made a hasty and sweeping observation against them.

The Reformer of 1831 edited by Prosunno Coomar Tagore considered "the Radicals" as a set of impractical youths. In the opinion of the editor they were "regardless of the deep-rooted prejudices of the people they wish to reform". They wanted that moderation of Rammohun Roy, which was necessary for winning over prejudiced Hindus to the cause of reformation. On the other hand, they antagonized them by their violent tendency. They were violent in "warm sallies of a youthful heart overflowing with indignant feeling against all that may happen to oppose its peculiar bent of inclination". In "all this display of feelings and energy there is something which prepossesses our heart, even before our head has time to weigh naturally the causes and effects". The Reformer's view of Young Bengal was somewhat balanced.


201. The Reformer quoted in The India Gazette, October 15, 1831.
Some English newspapers like the Bengal Kurkarau made a detached assessment of the "Radicals". It wrote that in their strong enthusiasm in the cause of truth and in their abhorrence of superstition they had been in some instances carried away by the violence of their feelings into foolish extravagances and very idle bravadoes. These errors were, however, natural to the youth and difficult to avoid at the time of excitement. If they would be somewhat temperate, they might possibly effect more extensive good, for the superstitious and the infatuated were not to be convinced of their error by force or insult. But the example they presented of spirit and intrepidity would be inspiring to the rising generation of youths whose hearts were as warm as their own. 202

The editor of the India Gazette (1831) admired the intrepidity with which the "Radicals" had attacked error. 203 But the paper edited by William Adam, 204 an associate of Rammohun Roy, favoured the cautious and gradual approach towards social change, 205 even compromise with caste rules relating to eating and drinking. 206 Naturally it disapproved of their

202. The Bengal Kurkarau quoted in The India Gazette, October 25 & 26, 1831.
203. The India Gazette, October 25, 1831.
205. The India Gazette, October 25, 1831
206. Ibid, October 21, 1831.
reckless tendency to disregard Hindu customs and practices, particularly the rule regarding eating and drinking and the feelings of their countrymen.207 In fact, it brought several accusations against them - say, their disrespect for Raja Kali Kissen's praiseworthy literary work named "Neeti Sunkulan" and their intolerance not only towards the orthodox Hindus but also towards the Moderates, driving a wedge in the rank of the reformers.208 Krishna Mohun Banerjea refuted the accusations in his organ, The Enquirer.209 But the editor of the India Gazette contended that the "Radicals" had weakened the cause of reformation by antagonizing their countrymen against them through imprudent acts of unnecessarily violating Hindu customs, offending the feelings of their fellow people and evincing aggressive temper in their organs, particularly in the Enquirer.210 The concluding note of the India Gazette on the "Radicals" was striking. It wrote that they might not be taken seriously by their countrymen, because they were "young and inexperienced, imperfectly acquainted with the language in which they write, superficially informed on the religion of their fore-fathers they have forsaken, and not even professing to have any system of their own to substitute for it."211

207. Ibid.
208. Ibid, October 21, 1831.
209. The Enquirer cited in the India Gazette, October 29, 1831.
210. Ibid, October 21, 1831.
211. Ibid.
Perhaps the most serious reaction was started against Young Bengal or a number of Hindu College students by irate Hindu parents and guardians. A guardian wrote in the *Samachar Chundrika* of May, 1831 that a Hindu, who had violated the caste rule by resorting to forbidden food and drink, would not be permitted to perform the religious rites of Hinduism even after his "penance" or "prayaschitya" for such violation. He appealed to the Government to take measures in order to prevent deviations from established customs and usages. Some suggested that the College authorities should issue definite orders to the teachers and students that unless they adhered strictly to the ancestral customs and beliefs they should be expelled from the college. It is evident that some guardians sharply reacted against the liberal effects of English education.

A guardian complained in the *Sungbad Probhakur* of May, 1831 that his son, instead of offering prayer to the goddess of Kali at Kalighat, simply accosted her by saying, "Good morning, madam." It is noteworthy that the recklessness on the part of some youths was to prove a source of irritation to their guardians.


A number of guardians or parents expressed concern over the fascination of English-educated youths for English manner and culture. Some guardians, however, touched on the very trivial issue. As early as 1829 a guardian in a letter to the editor of the *Samachar Chundrika* wrote that the English-educated youths were used to sign their English names with English initials (say K.M. Banerjea in the place of Krishna Mohun Banerjea). 215

There were complaints on the part of Hindu guardians that the college students were in the habit of talking and writing letters in English, signing English names with English initials and neglecting useful knowledge of India while concentrating on Europe. 216

According to a report of the *Samachar Chundrika* of May 1831, some felt that those, who pursued the oriental learning, were used to speak, write letters and to transact business in their vernacular; but those studying English were accustomed to speak or write letters in English and to dress themselves like Europeans, whether that dress suited to them or not. 217


The Samachar Chundrika in an issue published a letter containing a list of grievances of a father. According to the father, his son "who was a good boy before" now "has his hair not cut", wears "European shoes", "eats food as soon as he receives it" and "without bathing". The boy's Bengali is "unintelligible": he knows "nothing of ready reckoning" or how to write "bazar bills". His son "can tell [the name of] any river or mountain in Russia but can give no account of his country." Furthermore, his son lost all respect for caste practices and calls "holy Brahmins and Pundits thieves, hypocrites and fools." And what seemed the worst blow of all was that the "son no longer wishes to sit with me because I have no great knowledge of English."218

Newspapers like the Samachar Chundrika and the Sungbad Prohbakur raised a hue and cry against the Hindu religion in danger from the 'atheist beasts' who aped that vagabond firingis.219 The editor of the Sungbad Prohbakur in an issue of July, 1831 expressed no less concern over the English manner of the students. He appealed to the Managers of the Hindu College to issue an order, directing the students to give up "Firingee" shoes and manner, to wear garlands, to cover their bodies with "Orna" or "Ekai" or to put on "Dhuties" or to

218. The Samachar Chundrika cited in the Samachar Durpan, November 6, 1830 (Kartick 22, 1237 B.S.) quoted in Bandopadhyay, B.N. (ed) op. cit. pp. 231-232; Also the Samachar Chundrika reprinted in the Asiatic Intelligence, New Asiatic Journal, August 11, 1831.

adopt nothing but those prescribed by the Hindu Shastras. He was of opinion that the rule of conduct as enjoined by the Hindu Shastra was good in the eyes of the Hindus. He wished that any violation of the order enforcing conformity with the Shastras should entail immediate expulsion from the College. 220

The editor of the Samachar Chundrika suggested that a conference of ancient castes or races held under Governmental auspices might confer upon the magistrates the power of punishing least deviation from religion and tradition. 221 It may be noted in this connection that the Dhurma Subha with which Bhabani Charan Bandopadhyay, the editor of the Samachar Chundrika, was closely associated was founded for the preservation of Hindu religion and tradition. 222(a)


It is noteworthy that a writer, who complained against the students of Hindu College in a letter to the Samachar Chundrika in May, 1831, pointed out that out of four or five hundred boys reading in the Hindu College, Missionary Schools and other institutions, only thirty or forty had given up religious beliefs or violated social customs. An implication of his contention was that this development would not pose danger for the existence of the long-standing Hindu religion (the cry of which was there in the air).

Defenders of Young Bengal were not found wanting. Some writers pointed out that many youngmen used to violate social customs even before the establishment of the Hindu College and were guilty of other moral lapses from which the boys receiving English education were comparatively free. A letter-writer in the Samachar Chundrika of January, 1831 referred pointedly to the habits of drinking wine and keeping Muslim mistress, freely indulged in by the rich Hindu youngmen, and their participation in various types of bad associations long before the establishment of the College. He referred, in particular, to the lurid picture of society drawn in a book.


named Nababubu-Vilasa. He argued that the heretics were not all bad and that the editor of the Samachar Chundrika had attacked all of them out of anger.

Even long after 1831 when the above letter was written, Rajnarain Bose remarked in his autobiography that in those days the students of the Hindu College looked upon drinking as a mark of civilization and found nothing wrong in it. The youngmen of the preceding generation, he said, did not only drink but were addicted to other evils such as visiting the prostitutes, taking intoxicants like "Ganga" and "Charas" and indulged in "bulbul" fighting and gambling or kite-flying. Hindu College students were free from these and

224. The work entitled "Nababubu-Vilasa" was written by Bhabani Charan Bandopadhyay (1757-1848), the editor of the Samachar Chundrika and one of the founders of the Dhurma Subha. It was a highly significant satire on the morals of the Hindu new rich of Calcutta. Of his other satirical works on the manner and morals of the novo riche of Calcutta were -
1) Dutibilas (Calcutta, 1825).
2) Nababibibilas (Calcutta, 1831(2)
3) Kalikata Kamalalay (Calcutta, 1823)

would not have taken to drinking wine if they had not regarded it as a badge of civilization.\textsuperscript{225}

In fact, the cry of a number of Hindu guardians or parents was the violation of Hindu Shastras by the students. It is noteworthy that Rammohun Roy in his Bengali work, "Isho-Opanishad" (July, 1817) contended that many acts not strictly scriptural were not being done by the Hindus.\textsuperscript{226} He in his another Bengali composition, "Chari Prasner Uttar" (May, 1822) wrote that some of many respectable families spent wealth in immoral and irreligious pursuits.\textsuperscript{227} Secondly, the tendency of a number of students to violate caste rules relating to eating and drinking as complained of by a number of Hindu guardians or parents persisted long after Derozio's period of teaching. Rajnarain Bose in his autobiography wrote that he along with his friends used to take forbidden food and wine in the park facing the University buildings and was forced to leave the college in 1844 on account of illness caused by excessive drinking.\textsuperscript{228} Thirdly,

\begin{itemize}
\item 225. Bose, Rajnarain, \textit{Atmacharit}, p. 45.
\item 228. Bose, Rajenarain, loc. cit., p. 45.
\end{itemize}
the view of some writers that one result of Derozio's teachings was the westernization of Hindu youths and the consequent alienation of them from their own culture over which a number of Hindu guardians or parents grew apprehensive, was too much broad and general. The students of Derozio educated in the oriental department of the Hindu College or engaged in vernacular translation of English works or in the publication of Bengali newspaper (as in the case of Duckinarunjan Mukhopadhyay) were not certainly alienated from their culture. The proceedings of the Academic Association were conducted in English. But the Association, as noted before, was followed by the establishment of some vernacular societies of similar kind. It would be a generalization to say that the effect of Hindu College education or of Derozio's teaching of the Hindu Youths was the complete alienation from their culture.

But Hindus in general were apprehensive over the effects of Hindu College education. As a result the withdrawal of students from the College was taking place, and this is evident when one makes a comparative study of the statistics as provided by Wilson's report of the College

229. To cite, for example, David Kopf's view, Kopf, David, British Orientalism And Bengal Renaissance, The Dynamics of Indian Modernization, 1773-1835, pp. 252, 258-259.
from 1827-1832. Even in 1832-33, sometime after Derozio's dismissal, the apprehension did not die down and the college, as James Prinsep's report of the college dated February 28, 1833 informs us, did not recover its full complement of students or scholars. 230

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pay Scholars</th>
<th>Total number of students of the College</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1825, January</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1826</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1827</td>
<td>233</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1828</td>
<td></td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1829</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td></td>
<td>421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1831</td>
<td></td>
<td>409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1832</td>
<td>316</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1833</td>
<td>315</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

X) Proceedings Of The Hindu College Committee:
Dismissal Of Derozio:

In order to allay the public panic the Managers of the Hindu College found it necessary to adopt measures. An emergent meeting of the College Committee was held on April 23, 1831. The requisition calling the meeting was drawn up by Ram Comul Sen. At the meeting various letters of parents or guardians withdrawing boys from the college were read. A memorandum, which set forth many points including proposed rules and regulations of the college, was also read and discussed. The first point of the memorandum reads as follows:

Mr. Derozio being the root of all evils and the cause of public alarm, should be discharged from the College, and all communications between him and the pupils be cut off.

Among other notable recommendations of the memorandum


233. For the memorandum Madge, op. cit., pp. 64-66; Ghose, Benoy, op. cit., pp. 140-141; Also Appendix, IV, pp. 74-75.

234. Ibid., op. cit., p. 64.

235. Ibid., op. 64-66.
were the following ones: 1) The students of the higher class whose bad habits and practices were known and who were at the dining party (obviously the party given in honour of John Ricketts at the Town Hall) should be removed. 2) Those students, who were hostile to Hinduism and who had proved themselves as such by their conduct, should be turned out. 3) Boys should not be admitted indiscriminately without previous enquiry regarding their character. 4) Europeans should be appointed after their character and religion being ascertained before hand. 5) Any of the boys going to attend private lectures or meetings was to be expelled. 6) More time for studying Persian and Bengali should be allowed to boys. 7) Sanskrit should be studied by the higher classes. 9) The students wishing to get allowance must have respectable proficiency in Sanskrit and Arabic.

The memorandum in its emphasis upon the study of Bengali, Sanskrit and Persian reflected concern over the negligence of oriental learning among the college students in the wake of western education. But it is relevant to note in this connection that some students of Derozio, as Wilson's reports inform us, prosecuted
oriental learning even in those days.\textsuperscript{236} Secondly, the memo-
randum in its prohibition upon the students from staying in
college after class hours or from attending private lectures
or meetings might reflect the concern of many over the pre-
sence of some students in Duff's lectures over Christainity
and the apprehension of Hindu parents regarding the christia-
nization of their sons. But it might mean discouragement of
philanthropic exertions carried on by Derozio outside the
college hours or in his house or in the Academic Association
with a view to inoculating the students with the liberal ideas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total number of scholars/students</th>
<th>Number of students/Examinees of the Oriental Department</th>
<th>Number of Young Bengal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1827 January</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>41 Persian, 50 Bengali, 23 Sanskrit</td>
<td>2 Persian, 1 Bengali, 1 Sanskrit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1828 ,</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>48 Persian, 71 Bengali, 3 Sanskrit</td>
<td>2 Persian, 2 Bengali, 1 Sanskrit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1829 ,</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>21 Persian, 11 Bengali, 5 Sanskrit</td>
<td>2 Persian, - Bengali, 1 Sanskrit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1830 ,</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>24 Persian, 11 Bengali</td>
<td>1 Persian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1832 ,</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>12 Persian</td>
<td>1 Bengali</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{236} GCPI (Copy Book of Letters), Vol. 4, 1827, pp. 245-246,
\hspace{2cm} Vol. 5, 286-292
\hspace{2cm} Part II, 1828 pp. 492-494, 537-544, 683
\hspace{2cm} Vol. 7, 1829, pp. 29-30, 99, 317-318.
\hspace{2cm} Vol. 8, 1830, pp. 7, 48-49
\hspace{2cm} Vol. 10, Part I, 1832, pp. 38-39, 48.
of the west. In fact, the memorandum expressed anxiety not only over the preservation of Hindu religion but also over the deviations from the Hindu customs and practices and suggested expulsion of students guilty of heretic views and conduct. It showed conservative distrust of liberal value of English education as reflected in the letters of many guardians and parents. Ram Comul Sen, who drew up the requisition for the emergent meeting of the College Committee (April 23, 1831), was enthusiastic for the dissemination of western learning but not ready to welcome its liberal effects. As such he was a champion of Hindu religion and tradition and hostile to the liberal and rational spirit of Derozio's teachings or of some members of Young Bengal. That was one of the chief reason why he suggested dismissal of Derozio removal of or some of his followers in order to allay public alarm.

With reference to the first point of the memorandum the following question was submitted to the meeting of the college committee and put to vote: "whether the Managers had any just grounds to conclude that the moral and religious tenets of Mr. Derozio as far as ascertainable from the effects they have produced upon his scholars are such as to render him an improper person to be intrusted with the education of youth."

Radhakanta Deb held that he

---

238. Radhakanta Deb held that he
considered Derozio a very improper person to be entrusted with the education of youth. Ram Comul Sen concurred with Radha Kanta Deb in considering him a very improper person as the teacher of the youth. Radha Madhab Banerjee believed him to be an improper person from the report he heard. But Chandra Coomar Tagore stated that he knew nothing of the ill effect of Derozio's instructions except from report. Wilson stated that he had never observed any ill effect from them and that he considered Derozio to be a teacher of superior ability. Russomoy Dutt said that he knew nothing to Derozio's prejudice except from report. Prosunno Coomar Tagore acquitted Derozio of all blame for want of proof to his disadvantage. Sree Kissen Singh was convinced that he was far from being an improper person. David Hare was of opinion that Derozio was a highly competent teacher and that his instructions had always been beneficial. Thus the majority of the Managers was in favour of Derozio on the issue. 238

The Committee next proceeded to the consideration of the negative question: 'Whether it was expedient in the present state of public feeling amongst the Hindu community of Calcutta to dismiss Mr. Derozio from the college.' 239

238. Ibid.

H.H. Wilson and David Hare declined voting on a subject affecting the state of native feeling alone. Chandra Coomar Tagore, Radhakanta Deb, Ram Comul Sen and Radha Madhab Banerjee voted that it was necessary. Russomay Dutt and Prosunno Coomar Tagore thought that it was expedient. Only Sree Kissen Singh held that it was unnecessary. As such it was resolved that Derozio's dismissal be carried into effect.\(^{240}\)

Wilson acquainted Derozio with the decision of the Managing Committee.\(^{241}\) Derozio in a letter to Wilson dated April 25, 1831 thanked the latter for communicating the decision of the Committee to him.\(^{242}\) Along with it he sent his resignation letter to the Committee. In the resignation letter he made several comments upon the proceedings of the Committee. Firstly, no charge was brought against him. Secondly, if any accusation was brought forward, he was not informed of it. Thirdly, he was not called up to face his accusers, if any such appeared. Fourthly, no witness was examined on either side. Fifthly, his conduct and character underwent scrutiny and no opportunity was afforded him of defending either.\(^{243}\) Lastly, he remarked:

---

240. Ibid.
242. Ibid., pp. 77-78.
243. Ibid., p. 79.
While a majority did not, as I have learned, consider me an unfit person to be connected with the College, it was resolved, notwithstanding, that I should be removed from it, so that unbiased, unexamined, and unheard, you resolved to dismiss me without even the mockery of a trial.244

In a reply to Derozio in a letter dated April 25, 1831 Wilson wrote: "I believe you are right ... There was no trial intended - there was no condemnation."245 Wilson informed Derozio of three charges brought against him by the Managers, viz., i) disbelief in God, ii) disrespect for parents, and iii) inculcation of the idea of intermarriage of brothers and sisters.246 With reference to the charges Wilson remarked:

These are the rumoured charges against you, and I should be very happy if I could say boldly they were false; or could produce your written and unqualified denial for the satisfaction of those whose good opinion is worth having.247

244. Ibid, pp. 79-80.
245. Ibid, pp. 80-81.
246. Ibid, p. 81.
247. Ibid.
In a lengthy reply to Wilson in a letter dated April 26, 1831, Derozio tried to counter the charges. He categorically denied the second and third charges. In his answer to the first charge he defended scepticism diplomatically. He ended with a remark:

That I should be called a sceptic and infidel is not surprising, as these names are always given to persons who think for themselves in religion; but I assure you, that the imputations which you say are alleged against me, I have learned for the first time from your letter, never having dreamed that sentiments so opposed to my own could have been ascribed to me.

He added:

I believe there was a determination on their (the Native Managers') part to get rid of me, not to satisfy popular clamour, but their own bigotry. Had my religion and morals been investigated by them, they could have no grounds to proceed against me. They therefore thought it most expedient to make no enquiry, but with anger and precipitation to remove me from the institution.

248. Ibid, pp. 82-89.
250. Ibid, pp. 82-84.
251. Ibid, p. 87.
It is noteworthy that Derozio accused the native Managers of displaying an intemperate spirit against him. As in his resignation-letter dated April 25, 1831 he acknowledge thanks to Sree Kissen Singh, Wilson and Hare for their part in the proceedings of the meeting of the Committee on Saturday, April 23, 1831, the shaft of his attack was obviously directed against the native Managers, particularly against the relatively conservative Managers like Radhakanta Deb and Ram Comul Sen.

Derozio was removed from the Hindu College without any hearing being given to him or without any reply to his lengthy letter against the charges. Radhakanta Deb in his letter to the Secretary to the Hindu College Committee dated April 27, 1831, wrote: "As to the excuses contained in Mr. Derozio's resignation, they are of no use and shall not be attended to when he was dismissed on the public feeling."

What Wilson wrote in connection with Derozio's dismissal is noteworthy. Wilson later "attributed the secession of so many pupils in 1830-31 to a partial and temporary distrust on the part of parents regarding the supposed interference with the religious opinions of the pupils heightened by the conduct of the late Mr. Derozio,

who had acquired a powerful ascendancy over the affections of the boys." It is noteworthy that in his annual report of the College for 1831-1832 Wilson put the blame squarely on agencies other than Derozio for rousing alarm in the Hindu society. According to him, until the close of the last year i.e. 1830 nothing like dissatisfaction or disapprobation against the College had been indicated or expressed. Since the beginning of the year 1831 an alarm was created in the Hindu society due to a number of factors - The measures of some missionary gentlemen, some rather intemperate discussions in the newspapers regarding the Hindu College and the declaration of some of the former pupils of the college to participate at a public dinner. In course of a week 160 boys were withdrawn and the decrease still continuing, the management found it necessary to adopt measures to allay the panic. The chief of these was the required resignation of an exceedingly zealous and able teacher, the late Mr. Derozio, to whose influence and instructions the disregard shown by the

Youngmen to the sentiments of their forefathers was generally ascribed. In consequence of this and other arrangements an alarm, which had threatened the very existence of the Institution, was suppressed. Yet the College did not recover its full complement of pay scholars because several of native newspapers still viewed the college education with some distrust. Thus Wilson chiefly blamed the missionaries and native newspapers for rousing alarm in the Hindu society.

A study of the proceeding of the Hindu College Committee reveals interesting points. The Managerial order of 1829 suggests that the Managers saw the spectre of atheism among the Hindu College students. The order ran to the following effect: "The students of Hindu College are liable to lose all religious principles whatever. [and] it is resolved that Mr. D'Anslem (the headmaster) be requested to communicate with the teachers and check as far as possible all disquisitions tending to unsettle the belief

of the boys in the great principles of Natural Religion."

The Managers did not like to see English education of the College a threat to Hindu religion and tradition. In orders, February, 1830 they passed further strictly forbidding the teachers from having any communication with their pupils on religious subjects and especially on the religion of the Hindoos.

The Committee of the College at its emergent meeting on April 23, 1831 endorsed in one way or other almost all the rules and regulations of the aforesaid memorandum. As regards its proposal for the expulsion of those students from the college, who were notable for bad habits and practices, the Committee did not think it necessary to lay down any new rule because it had already the power of dismissing any boy from the College. With respect to its recommendation for the removal of the students from the Institution, who were hostile to Hinduism and established customs of the country, it was resolved that parents could at any time withdraw their children from the college, if they had any reason to think that the college

259. Ibid.
education was the cause of hostility to Hinduism in them. The Committee adopted the proposal that the boys should be admitted into the college after the probe into their character. It also agreed with the view (as expressed in the memorandum) that in future a preference should be given to European teachers whenever procurable, but after the investigation of their moral and religious character. The Committee also considered other proposals. It desired the students not to remain in the College after class hours. But it felt that the Managers had not the power nor the right to enforce the prohibition upon the students; the conduct of the boys in this respect must be left to the regulations of their friends and relations. It desired that the students should learn Bengali, Sanskrit and Persian languages. One may contend that the above resolutions reflected not merely concern for the preservative of Hindu religion and cultivation of oriental learning but also the spirit of Hindu guardians or parents to check or to punish deviations from traditional customs and practices.

Finally, the Managers were not willing to tolerate the spread of Christianity among the Hindu College students. As noted before, they passed an order in 1830 meant to prohibit the students from attending Duff's lectures on
Christianity. They did not want the connection of any missionary with the teaching staff of the Hindu College in 1831 and even in 1832 and 1833. When in later years European members of the Council of Education exercised great control over the Hindu College and when the Hindu Managers like Radhakanta Deb and Prosunno Coomar Tagore failed to adopt effective measures against the rise of Christianity

261. One may note the objections of the Managing Committee to the appointment of Rev. W. Proctor as a Professor in the proposed course in Political Economy and Law in October, 1831, or to that of Rev. James Adamson as the Principal teacher in the College in May, 1833.


With respect to the proposal for the appointment of Rev. William Adam as a Lecturer in Economics, Radhakanta Deb wrote a letter to Wilson on January 19, 1832 in the following words: "For my part I cannot entrust the morals and education of those I regard, to such as one that was once a Missionary, then a Vedantic or a Disciple of Rammohun and lastly a Unitarian" - Bagal, J.C. "Radhakanta Deb", Sahitya Sadhak Charitmaliks (Vol. 2), No. 20, p. 13.

The Commercial crisis as reported by James Prouse in his annual report of the College might account for the inability of many parents to pay monthly fees of their sons and diminution of pay scholars - James Prouse's report dated February 26, 1833, GCPI (Copy Book Of Letters), Vol. 12, 1833, pp. 171-172; but it was not the sole cause. The apprehension regarding the spread of Christianity as suggested by the above letters was as lately one of the causes of the diminution of scholars.
among some teachers or students, Radhakanta and Prosunno Coomer Tagore resigned from the College Committee.262

One can, therefore, say that the Managers of the Hindu College, particularly Radnakanta Deb and Ram Comul Sen, were greatly worried over the preservation of Hindu religion and tradition from the inroads of a number of English educated youths on one hand and of the Christian Missionaries on the other hand. They were no longer ready to tolerate the attack of the English-educated youths upon Hindu traditions. Derozio's students and disciples grew

262. In the teeth of the opposition of European members of the Council of Education the Hindu Managers failed to remove Kylash Chunder Bose, a teacher of the Hindu College, who embraced Christianity in 1846. But the Hindu Managers expelled Guru Charan Singh, a student of the College, who was converted to Christianity at the close of 1849. Thereafter a wrangling took place between Hindu members like Radhakanta Deb and Dinkwater Bathune, the President of the Council of Education, over the power of the Committee according to the College rule. Ultimately Radhakanta Deb and Prosunno Coomar Tagore resigned from the College Committee - Bagal, J.C., "Radhakanta Deb", Sahitya Sadhak Chintamale (Vol. 2), No. 20, pp. 15 - 17.
critical of Hindu customs, traditions and observances. He taught his students to test tradition or socio-religious topics, including God-head, Hindu traditions and even Christianity in the light of reason and liberalism. The Hindu Managers, whether Radhakanta Deb or even a Moderate like Prosunno Coomar Tagore, were not ready for the radical type of social change that Derozio stood for. They saw in his teachings a threat to Hindu religion and tradition. The Hindu society was also not exposed to any fundamental change so far as socio-economic relationship was concerned. Most of the Hindus were conservative at heart. There was a hue and cry among a number of Hindu parents and guardians about Hindu religion in danger.

A number of factors increased alarm among the Hindus regarding the Hindu College education. These were:

1) outcry of some of Derozio's pupils against Hinduism or the recklessness of some in their adolescent excitement for reform;
2) the calculated propaganda of some designing missionaries like Alexander Duff (frustrated in his initial proselytizing efforts) about the rise of atheism or scepticism among a number of students;
3) the gleeful note of the Christian organs like the Calcutta Christian Observer about the violent temper of
the editors of the *Enquirer* and the *Jnananveshan* against Hindu religion; 4) the intemperate discussions or reports of some Bengali newspapers against the Hindu College education; 5) the continual association of some pupils with Duff and apprehension regarding the christianization of the Hindu youths which did not die down even in 1833. 263 All these factors for which Derozio could not be blamed increased the apprehension of the Hindus and the Hindu College Committee regarding the benefits of College education leading to the dismissal of Derozio in April, 1831. Derozio thus fell a prey to repulsion against liberalism, reported rumours, or propagandas, and false allegations. He was made a scapegoat of the situation. He was misjudged and misunderstood.

263. A guardian wrote a letter to the editor of *Samachar Chundrika* in 1833 that he had withdrawn his son from the Hindu College (while he was in his fourth form) lest he turned an atheist and came into contact with a Missionary.


This was done not only in Calcutta but also in Burdwan. A Brahmin Pandit of Burdwan kept his son concealed in a jungle with a view to saving him from the missionary influence. - Chakrabarty, Ramakanta & Chatterjee, Bhaskar, *Freedom Movement in Burdwan*, pp. 7-8.
He was a modernizer and reformer of the country. He was a patriot in the sense of a modernizer of the country along the line of rationalism and liberalism. His ideal of reason and liberalism is ever to be a thrust to the country's progress towards modernity, whether it was accepted in his time or not, or whether it took deep root into the mind of his pupils and disciples or not.

XI Young Bengal And Political & Economic Ideas

In the light of available materials we cannot say with certainty that Derozio's patriotic verses written out of romantic flavour inspired prominent members of Young Bengal. A writer observes that Kashi Prasad Ghose wrote patriotic verses (particularly "the Veena or the Indian Lute" in his book, Shair And Other Poems" published in 1830) in imitation of Derozio's poems, "To India - My Native Land" and "the Harp Of India". As noted before, Kashi Prasad Ghose was not a "Derozian", nor a member of Young Bengal. Ghose's patriotic spirit stemmed from a living and intense appreciation of India's cultural heritage out of which he was opposed to Mill's indictment of Indian history and civilization.

R.C. Majumdar's contention that the practical effect of Derozio's teachings was to imbue the mind of his students with the French Revolutionary ideal is not based on any concrete evidence. As we have noted, Derozio did not teach them the revolutionary ideal of France, so far as its political and economic bearings are concerned. Besides, there is no definite evidence to prove that any disciple of Derozio attended the July Revolution celebration in the Town Hall in 1830 or hoisted the tricolour flag of the Revolution on the Ochterlony's Monument or pined in heart for a French-type of revolution in 1843, sometime after the death of Derozio.

Sumit Sarkar observes: "Instances of a bolder anti-colonial stance are not entirely lacking, though ... the examples cited by Gautam Chattopadhyay are not always indisputably of 'Derozian' origin." Gautam Chattopadhyay refers to a letter of a youth to the Reformer in 1831, dreaming of independence like the American, and to a vivid pen-picture drawn up by Kylash Chunder Dutt in 1835.


of an armed struggle against the British for freedom, a century after his time.267

R.C. Majumdar's later observation was that the effect of Derozio's teaching was the spread and development of patriotic and anti-English ideas among the younger generation of Bengalis.268 It is open to question whether educated Bengalis of Derozio's time were anti-establishment. An Article named "Political Faith Of Educated Hindus" in the Reformer of 1831 (written by an educated youth)


268. R.C. Majumdar credited (in 1972) Derozio with teaching patriotic and anti-English ideas among the younger generation of Bengalis through his pupils at the Hindu College. He observes: "We can clearly trace the spread and development of those ideas from generation to generation of students and young men in a continuous process of development." - Majumdar, R.C., On Ramohun Roy, pp. 48 - 49.
contends that the impulse of the educated youths was not anti-British. 269

The Enquirer in an issue of 1831 made a protest against the discriminatory treatment meted out to Europeans and Indians at the gates of Government House in Calcutta. 270

Instances of bold protest in sharp language against the shameful system of racial discrimination were not, however,

269. "... If our voice is the voice of the native population, particularly of the enlightened portion of them, our representations of the feelings of this class should be looked upon as more true and correct than what the English editors can give from their actual intercourse with the natives ... If we were to be asked what Government we should prefer, English or any other? we would one and all reply English by all means - ay even in preference to a native Government. But it is a truism which need not be urged that no human institution is perfect and they should admit of improvement. we accordingly take the liberty of pointing out the defects which we perceive in the existing institutions of the country with a sincere desire for improvement which is attended to only strengthen the amicable bonds of that union which flows from the happiness of the subject and the permanent security of the Ruler ..." - "Political Faith Of Educated Hindoos", Printed in the Reformer reprinted in the India Gazette, Monday, July 4, 1831.

270. The Enquirer, June 9, 1831.
lacking. Krishna Mohun Banerjea, the editor of the *Enquirer*, was not at heart anti-British and had faith in British liberalism - a faith held up to by Rammohun. In a letter to Lord William Bentinck dated November 23, 1831 Krishna Mohun ended with the following note:

... Wishing with all my heart that your Lordship may continue to administer in India and thereby shed those benefits upon the Hindoos which your late Suttee-abolition act (7-Regulation) and other acts of its nature are calculated to do ... and declaring that in these expressions I but echo the sentiments of all my friends and of all those who are capable of appreciating merit.

It is noteworthy that the scheme of colonization (or European settlement in the interior of the country) was favoured by Rammohun Roy and his disciples. The *Parthenon*

---

271. Many letters and articles were published in the periodicals and newspapers of thirties against this shameful system of discrimination. A letter-writer in the *Reformer* of 1831 made an interesting observation in this connection:

This at once shows that the order (of discrimination) is founded upon no other ground than on invidious distinction between the conquered natives and the more favoured conquerors.


272. Letter of Krishna Mohun Banerjea to Bentinck dated November 23, 1831, Bentinck Papers (Film no. 2), Putj - 34.
run by a number of Derozio's students advocated colonization.\textsuperscript{273}

Some students of the Hindu College, however, pointed out the evils of colonization. A student read a paper, "On The Colonization Of India" in 1830 in the Hindoo Literary Society, identified by B.B. Majumdar with the Academic Association. B.B. Majumdar identifies the writer of the article with Duckinaranjan Mukhopadhyay but without "any definite proof."\textsuperscript{274} The writer began with the colonization of Asia Minor by the Greeks and then described the character of Roman colonies which were established to keep the conquered people under political subjection. He wrote that these were two colonies, namely colonies for sending away from the mother country an unusual increase of population and those established for keeping any vanquished nation in obedience. Speaking of the third sort of colonies i.e. colonies of Trade by the Phonecians in the ancient period, he wrote: "they also drove away the original inhabitants into the further part of the country and established own people".\textsuperscript{275} Taking up the colonial policy of modern states,

\textsuperscript{273} The \textit{Bengal Spectator}, September 1, 1842.

\textsuperscript{274} Majumdar, B.B., \textit{History Of Political Thought In India: From Rammohan To Dayananda}, pp. 93 - 94.

\textsuperscript{275} Ibid., pp. 94 - 95.
the writer observed with regard to the colonization of Ireland by the English: "The Irish being regarded as rebels were not given the price of land, which the English settler occupied."²⁷⁶ So far as the colonization of North America and South Wales was concerned the writer described its adverse effect on the native population in the following words: "No sooner did the benevolent inhabitants of Europe behold the sad condition of the natives than they immediately go to work to ameliorate and improve it. They introduced among them rum, gin, brandy and other comforts of life; and it is astonishing to see how the poor savages learnt to estimate these blessings."²⁷⁷ He then described the colonial policy of the Dutch and the Spaniards. Of the Spanish colonies he remarked that "they afforded a far greater example of oppression and cruelty".²⁷⁸ The array of arguments against colonization of different sorts, one may suggest, was to provide a handle to the opponents of colonization, even if one would take the term in broader sense. But colonization was a burning topic of the country. Any definite view on the colonization of India by the English or any hint at the evils of the English colonists in India would be more consistent with the spirit of criticism of colonization of different sorts as exhibited above.

²⁷⁶. Ibid., p. 95.
²⁷⁷. Ibid.
²⁷⁸. Ibid.
Young Bengal infrequently and insufficiently appreciated the real nature and consequences of British colonial rule in India. It is very interesting to note that Young Bengal or a number of intellectuals failed to evince any live or sustained interest in exposing the basic economic relationship between colonial Britain and colonized India, though some of them infrequently appreciated the virtues of the abstract concept of 'liberty'.

Neither Derozio nor his students should be considered as "revolutionaries". But they wanted change, the nature of which they could not always define with clarity and precision.

Young Bengal was an urban group primarily based in Calcutta. It had no influence on the contemporary rural culture of Bengal.

The view that Young Bengal wished to act in the capacity of 'cultural brokers' or as middlemen working in the interest of the metropolitan culture of England in colonial context is open to debate and challenge. But born and brought up in the ethos of British endeavour to set up a colonial or "imperial" framework and to engrain an interpretation upon Indian history and culture, Derozio and Young Bengal did not dare go beyond the vision of British Orientalist historiography in India. The bright vision of India's past as drawn up by the British Orientalists or a number of British writers, however cool, or uncouth,
was used by the later Indian nationalists in their struggle against the British rulers. But such move was as yet a far-off thought.

In fact, Young Bengal could not claim uniqueness in the political and economic sphere. They were not virtually anti-Establishment as R.C. Majumdar wants us to believe, nor was so their teacher, Derozio. Basically, Young Bengal did not differ from Rammohun Roy and his associates. The Parthenon's plea for cheap justice suggests their adherence to Rammohun's idea of constitutional agitation and amelioration of the condition of the people within the framework of the British rule as against revolutionary anti-British idea. It remains to be seen whether in the period after Derozio they held up to the line of any anti-British sentiment, thought and movements or to the idea of constitutional agitation for reform within the British empire as laid down by Rammohun Roy.

279. The Bengal Spectator, September 1, 1842.