CHAPTER IV

FOUNDATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA

1. **Proposal for Establishment of a University at Calcutta**

In 1851, it was announced by the Government of India that for employment in public service preference would be given to those who had received English education and literacy would be taken into account even in the appointment of the lowest offices. The Council of Education which had replaced the General Committee of Public Instruction in 1852, as the official agency for educational administration,

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1. Sir Edward Ryan who succeeded Macaulay as president of the General Committee of Public Instruction in 1839 left India in 1842. By a resolution of the Governor-General in Council, 10th January, 1842, a Council of Education was set up in the place of the General Committee of Public Instruction "for purposes of reference and advice upon all matters of important administration and correspondence maintaining in a great degree its accustomed care of the institutions at the Presidency and not as a committee charged with the functions of executive management", while the general and financial responsibilities of the General Committee now abolished were taken directly by the Government. The Council of Education was in control of education from 1842 to 1855 when Departments of Public Instruction were established under the instructions of the Despatch of 1854. In Bengal, the University of Calcutta and the Education Department became the successors of the General Committee of Public Instruction and the Council of Education.

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was accordingly directed to prepare annually according to a proforma supplied by the Government, a list of eligible candidates on the basis of examinations to be conducted by the Council, and to send it to the authorities concerned. The students of institutions controlled, or recognised, by the Government, including missionary and other private colleges, were entitled to take these examinations. The successful candidates were to be arranged in the list in order of merit.¹ Indians hailed the announcement and missionaries welcomed it, not merely as an official endorsement of the missionary policy of encouraging English education, but also as the first public recognition of missionary institutions in connection with employment in the service of the State.

Following the official instruction the Council of Education made departmental rules and began to conduct since 1845 annual examinations to select candidates for employment in different offices of the Government, and thus, the first Public Services Examination was instituted. But the plan of the examination provoked a bitter controversy. The missionaries led by Duff objected to the whole scheme including the subjects prescribed for the examination and the manner in which it was conducted, and questioned even the honesty and

¹. Lord Hardinge's Resolution, 10th October, 1844.
competence of the officers in charge of it. It was alleged that the course of study set for the public examinations took into consideration the syllabus adopted in the Hindu College only, and the examiners were all administrators not competent to conduct academic tests. The missionaries as well as the authorities of the Oriental institutions complained that this system of examination was not in keeping with the letter and the spirit of Hardinge's resolution. It was laid down that the minimum standard of qualification should be equivalent to that for securing a senior English scholarship, whereas the original intention was that the annual returns should include a large number of candidates of different degree of merit. Duff's chief ground of complaint, however, was that only secular texts used in Government colleges were exclusively chosen as the course of examination virtually debarring students of missionary institutions from taking the public examinations. This, in the view of the missionaries, amounted to a challenge to the work and efficiency of their colleges.

The Council of Education, however, defended the system of examination and though it was carefully explained that the insertion of a name in the list of successful candidates did not mean a sure pledge of employment, a place in the examination returns came to be regarded as a substitute for a university degree. In nine years only a handful of 'cer-
tified students were appointed by the Government, and that also in the subordinate rank, and when vacancies occurred they were filled very often without any reference to the Council's register, and by 1853, Hardinge's resolution virtually became a dead letter. The failure of Hardinge's scheme was partly due to the refusal of the Court of Directors to accord their sanction to it. The pleadings of the Council of Education, however, could not mollify the opposition of the missionaries and others who completely disassociated themselves from the public examinations of the Council, since they failed to serve their interests.

The meet the opposition of the missionaries and others the Council of Education sent a proposal for the foundation of a "central university" at Calcutta, on the model of the University of London, to the Government. 1

While forwarding the proposal on 25th October, 1845, Dr. F. J. Mouat, Secretary of the Council of Education, justified the necessity of establishing a university in Calcutta, saying,

"The present advanced state of education in the Bengal Presidency, with the large and annually increasing number

of highly educated populace, both in public and private institutions, renders it not only expedient and advisable, but a matter of strict justice and necessity, to confer upon them some mark of distinction, by which they may be recognised as persons of liberal education and enlightened minds, capable, from the literary and scientific training they have undergone, of entering at once upon the active duties of life, of commencing the practical pursuit of the learned professions, including in the description the business of instructing the rising generation; of holding the higher offices under Government open to natives, after due official qualification; or of taking the rank in society accorded in Europe to all members and graduates of the Universities.

This objective could be realised, according to Dr. Mouat, by "the establishment of a central university, armed with the powers of granting degrees in arts, science, law, medicine and civil engineering, incorporated by a special Act of the Legislative Council of India, and endowed with the privileges enjoyed by all chartered universities in Great Britain and Ireland", and after a careful study of the laws and constitution of the universities of Oxford, Cambridge and the recently established University of London, the Secretary maintained that "the latter alone appears adapted to the wants of the native community".¹

¹ Dr. Mouat's proposal of 25th October, 1845.
Indian students had shown keen interest in the pursuit of higher education and the standard of their academic attainments was almost as high as that of the students of the British universities, and justice and the needs of educational progress demanded that wider opportunities should be provided for the fuller intellectual development of Indian youths. That the time for the foundation of a university at Calcutta had come "is fully proved", according to the Secretary of the Council, by the standard of excellence attained in the senior scholarship examinations of the Council of Education and the creditable skill and proficiency exhibited by the graduates of the Medical College, whose examinations, in extent and difficulty, are much greater than those of any of the Colleges of Surgeons in Great Britain, and in a purely professional point of view, nearly on a par with those required from the medical graduates of most British Universities".\(^1\) It was pointed out that the senior scholarship examinations conducted by the Council were "fully equal in extent to the Bachelor's examination of Oxford, Cambridge and Dublin; and much more so than that of the Bachelier-es-Lettres of the Sorbonne in Paris".\(^2\)

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1. Dr. Mouat's proposal.
2. Ibid.,
The Council of Education suggested an outline plan for the proposed University of Calcutta. It was to consist of a Chancellor, a Vice-Chancellor and Fellows. The Governor-General of India was to be the Chancellor and Visitor of the University. The Faculties of the University would be Arts, Law, Science, Civil Engineering, and Medicine and Surgery. The Faculty of Arts was to consist of the Secretary of the Government of India (Home Department), Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Secretary to the College of Fort William and the members of the Council of Education. The Faculty of Law would be composed of the Judges of the Supreme Court, the Judges of the Sadar Divani Adalat, the Advocate-General, the Registrar of the Sadar Divani Adalat and the Remembrancer of Legal Affairs. The members of the Faculty of Science and Civil Engineering would be the Chief Engineer, the Superintendent of Government machinery, the Secretary to the Military Board and the Civil Architect. The Physician-General, the Inspector-General of Her Majesty's Hospital, the Surgeon to the General Hospital, the Secretary to the Medical Board and the Apothecary-General would be the members of the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery.

1. Members of the Council of Education: F. Millett; James Alexander; C.C. Egerton; Rassomay Dutta; Prasanno Coomar Tagore; Dr. F.J. Mouat - Secretary.
The Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor and the members of the Faculties were to form a corporate body to be known as the University of Calcutta and to constitute the Senate for its government. They would have the power to make bye-laws and regulations, grant degrees and manage the affairs of the University. While six members would make a quorum in a meeting, the opinion of the majority would decide every issue and in the case of equal division on any question the chairman would have a casting vote.

The Council of Education laid down regulations also for examinations. There were to be two degrees, a bachelor's degree and a master's degree, in arts and science, and a special examination for honours. In Law also, there would be two grades, and an examination for honours. Law graduates would be eligible for practice at the Supreme and Sadar Courts, to act as vakils and attorneys and would be qualified for appointment as "munsiffs". There would be only one examination for the graduate degree in Medicine, and one examination for diploma in Surgery, and a special examination for honours. Only one degree would be given in Civil Engineering. The course of study in each case was to be prepared by the Senate. Candidates who had passed the Matriculation examination, which was of the same standard as the Junior Scholarship examination
of the Council of Education, alone would be eligible for a degree or diploma examination. Students from European or Anglo-Indian schools would have the option of answering questions on translation from Greek and Latin, instead of Indian languages. Every candidate would be required to pay an examination fee of rupees five, which had to be refunded to him, if he happened to fail in the examination. This practice of refund of examination fee was, however, later abolished. No candidate was to be permitted to take the examination until he had completed his fifteenth year. The degree examination to be conducted by examiners appointed from among the members of the Senate, or by persons nominated by the Senate, was to be held once every year. The examination could be taken by candidates of institutions recognised by the University. The names of successful candidates were to be published annually in the Government Gazette and also in the reports of the Education Department.

The plan of the Calcutta University thus set out by the Council of Education, when carried into effect," would remove most of the objections urged against the existing system of examination of candidates for public employment, without lowering the standard of information required; would in a few years produce a body of native public servants, superior in character, attainments and efficiency
Besides overcoming the opposition of missionaries and others to the system of public examination conducted by the Council of Education, and bringing about progressive improvement in character and efficiency of public servants employed on the basis of the results of this examination, the University would become a lasting source of educational, social and cultural influences, which would contribute to the development of the people. It would provide great opportunities for raising the standard of education rendering the literary honours of those who received this education a source of emolument as well as of social distinction. By encouraging the cultivation of arts and sciences it would call into existence a body of Indian architects, engineers, surveyors and educated landholders, "whose influence would rapidly and certainly diffuse a taste for the more refined and intellectual pleasures and pursuits of the West; to the gradual extinction of enervating and degrading superstitions of the East." It was expected that the increased facilities of intercourse by means of rail-roads and other communications throughout the country would cause these Western influences "to radiate from the centre of

1. Dr. Mouat's proposal.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
civilisation, with a velocity and effect heretofore unknown in India, and, in fact, would be attended with all the advantages that have been recorded in history to have followed a judicious, enlightened, extended and sound system of education, encouraged by suitable rewards and distinctions".¹

Further, in the opinion of Dr. Mouat, the University would "raise the character and importance of the whole Education Department in public estimation, and ultimately place the educated natives of this great empire upon a level with those of the Western world".² Thus the implementation of the university plan would usher in "one of the most important eras in history of education in India".³

The Council of Education assured that their plan of the Calcutta University involved no immediate financial obligations of the Government, as the fee income received from the students "would be more than sufficient to defray every expense attendant upon the university".⁴

The proposal for the institution of a university at Calcutta was communicated to the Court of Directors with the recommendations of the Government of India, and in

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1. Dr. Mouat's proposal.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
1846 Henry Seton of the Governor-General's Council wrote to Hobhouse, president of the Board of Control, requesting him to sanction the plan, but Hobhouse showed little interest, and the proposal was eventually rejected by the Court of Directors. They informed the Council of Education that they did not consider it possible "at present to sanction the Institution of University in Calcutta," since time was not propitious for the establishment of a university anywhere in India, the proposal of the Council of Education was rather premature and the Directors "declined to accede to it." The plan itself was also defective as the constitution of the Senate of the proposed university was not sufficiently representative to include the varied interests of society, the Directors pointed out.

Inspite of the rejection of the Court of Directors, the demand for a university at Calcutta was not given up and the movement went on unabated. Lord Dalhousie, when he came as the Governor-General (1848-56), began to take keen interest in the promotion of education. He wanted to make Presidency College the nucleus of a university at Calcutta.

3. Ibid., para 34.
In 1852 C.H. Cameron, once the president of the Council of Education, submitted a memorandum to the British Parliament wherein he strongly supported the cause of establishing universities in India, pleading that "it seemed to me the clear duty of Great Britain to India to establish universities as many in number as the vernacular languages which may be found deserving of cultivation... By the establishment of such universities, it seemed to be possible, almost certain, that we might call forth much more effectively than Rome could call forth, with its Romanising system... whatever there may be of moral and intellectual excellence, of aesthetic and scientific capacity in the vast and various population of our Indian Empire... the University of Calcutta was...... only the beginning of a much larger project, requiring for its completion the establishment of a University at Agra, at Madras, at Bombay and at Colombo".1

Some of the witnesses, both official and non-official, who appeared before the Parliamentary Committee reviewing Indian affairs prior to the renewal of East India Company's charter in 1853, supported the proposal of Cameron and pleaded for the foundation of universities

in India. These witnesses who had first-hand knowledge of the educational problems of India included such eminent persons as Lord Hardinge, Dr. Alexander Duff, John Clerke Marshman, Sir Charles Edward Trevelyan, Sir Edward Ryan and Dr. H. H. Wilson. They endorsed the views of Cameron that one university should be established in each of the capital cities of Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and Agra, and suggested that the University of London should be the model of these universities. Their function should be not to teach any subject, but to examine and grant degree to those who had been taught in other institutions. Trevelyan suggested even the names of subjects for examinations and recommended that best students should be employed in government service. Some members of the Parliamentary Select Committee, including Lord Ellenborough, president of the Board of Control, were not fully convinced that Indians would prefer university degrees to the traditional marks of social distinction, such as 'Bahadur' and 'Rajah'.

2. Sanction for Establishment of One University Each at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras

The movement for creating universities in India gathered momentum and the authorities in England had at last to take a decision. Sir Charles Wood, president of
the Board of Control, did not get much assistance in the matter from his colleagues at home, whose knowledge of the Indian situation was limited. In August 1853 Wood wrote to Lord Dalhousie that he would be obliged to receive from the Governor-General a detailed report on the educational needs of the Indian people, since none in England could enlighten him on the subject and he had also a little time to examine the question himself. In reply Dalhousie informed Wood that materials on the subject were available in the library of the Indian Board, and recommended Charles E. Trevelyan, a "Pundit on education" who could help the president in the matter. This was not the only difficulty of Charles Wood; he had his misgivings about the results of extension of higher education in India. He was inclined to think that highly educated Indians would be a discontented class of people if they failed to get employment and it was not possible for Government to provide all of them jobs. Though he reluctantly accepted the idea of establishing universities in India, he wanted them to be promoted by private agencies, since he was against wasting public funds for the education of the future opponents and detractors of British rule. Nearly ten years after the rejection of the first proposal of the Council of Education for the institution
of a university at Calcutta, the Court of Directors reviewed the whole position and came to the conclusion that time had come for the foundation of universities in India and observed:

"The rapid spread of a liberal education among the natives of India since that time, the high attainments shown by the native candidates for Government scholarships, and by native students in private institutions, the success of the medical colleges, and the requirements of an increasing European and Anglo-Indian population, have led us to the conclusion that the time is now arrived for the establishment of universities in India, which may encourage a regular and liberal course of education by conferring academic degrees as evidences of attainments in the different branches of art and science, and by adding marks of honour for those who may desire to compete for honorary distinction."

The plan of the Calcutta University submitted by the Council of Education, which adopted the London University as its model, supplied the guidelines for the organisation of universities in India. The Court of Directors accepted these guidelines. Accordingly an Indian University would consist of a Chancellor and a Vice-Chancellor, who were to be eminent persons "who have shown interest in the cause of

education besides the Fellows, and all of them together with the members of the Council of Education at Calcutta and of the Board of Education at Bombay, and some additional members to be nominated by Government, would constitute the Senate of the University in each of these presidencies. The additional members should be so selected as to represent the different systems of education imparted in the affiliated institutions and to include persons of "all religious persuasions" who commanded confidence of the local communities. The Senate would manage all the funds of the University and frame regulations for its administration, subject to the approval of the Government, and for the conduct of examinations in the different branches of art and science, by examiners selected from the Senate or nominated by it.

The main function of the universities will be to confer degrees upon such persons as, having been entered as candidates according to the rules which may be fixed in this respect, and having produced from any of the 'affiliated colleges' which will be enumerated on the foundation of universities, or be from time to time added to them by

1. Despatch of 19th July, 1854, para 33.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., para 34.
Government, certificates of conduct, and of having pursued a regular course of study for a given time, shall have also passed at the universities such an examination as may be required of them. The colleges affiliated to the universities would provide "sufficiently high order of instruction in different branches of art and science", and present candidates after a given time in the university examinations. The Directors recommended "to dispense with the attendance required at the London University for the Matriculation Examination, and to substitute some mode of entrance examination which may secure a certain amount of knowledge in the candidates for degrees without making their attendance at the universities necessary, previous to the final examination". Thus a system of university examinations to which candidates could be admitted without attending classes, was to be introduced. The schemes of instruction in the Anglo-Vernacular colleges should provide for a thorough cultivation of the vernacular languages, and, in the Oriental Colleges, for sufficient scope for teaching of English and vernacular languages, so as to render the studies of each most available for that general diffusion.

1. Despatch of 1854, para 27.
2. Ibid., para 37; Appendix B.
3. Ibid., para 27.
of European knowledge which is the main object of education in India".¹

No subject of university examinations was to be connected with any religious belief, and the management of the affiliated colleges was to consist "of persons of every variety of religious persuasion".² As institutions under different denominations were affiliated to the University of London, so in India, institutions managed by Christians, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsees, Buddhists, Jains, or any other religious denomination, might be affiliated to the universities, "if they are found to afford the requisite course of study, and can be depended upon for the certificates of conduct which will be required".³

All classes of the affiliated institutions were to be taken into account when detailed regulations for the examinations for degrees would be framed. The Directors warned that the examination should not be "as difficult as that for the senior Government scholarships and the standard required should be such as to command respect without discouraging the efforts of deserving students".⁴ If the

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1. Despatch of 1854, para 38.
2. Ibid., para 28.
3. Ibid., para 28.
4. Ibid., para 29.
standard of examination was made too high, it might discourage many a capable youth to take advantage of it, and eventually "would be a great obstacle to the success of the universities", but the examination for honours degree should indeed have a higher standard as in the London University, "as will afford a guarantee for high ability and valuable attainments".¹

It was recommended that universities would provide teaching at the advanced level in such subjects as Law, civil engineering, Indian vernaculars and classical languages, Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian, to start with, and university professorship in each of them should be instituted. The Court of Directors emphasised that instruction was to be entirely secular in the universities which were to observe "the principles of religious neutrality to which we have always adhered".²

Having thus indicated the broad outline of the constitution and function of the universities, subjects to be taught by them and the standard of examination to be followed, the Court of Directors asked the Government of India "that you take into consideration the institution of universities at Calcutta and Bombay, upon the

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¹. Despatch of 1854, para 29.
². Ibid., para 32.
general principles which we have now explained to you, and report to us upon the best method of procedure, with a view to their incorporation by Acts of the Legislative Council of India. 1 The Directors assured that they would be ready to sanction the creation of a university at Madras or any other part of India "where a sufficient number of institutions exist, from which properly qualified candidates for degrees could be supplied." 2 They indicated the line of action to be taken in the foundation of universities when they said that it was advisable "that the great centres of European Government and civilisation in India should possess universities similar in character to those which will now be founded as soon as the extension of a liberal education shows that their establishment would be of advantage to the native communities." 3

For quick implementation of the different schemes of educational development recommended in the Despatch of 1854, and for the efficient control and supervision of the whole system of education in all its grades, primary, secondary and higher, the Court of Directors

1. Despatch of 1854, para 33.
2. Ibid., para 35.
3. Ibid.
proposed that a Department of Education would be set up in each of the provinces, Bengal, Bombay, Madras, North-Western Provinces and the Punjab, with a member of the Civil Service as its head and a body of inspecting staff to assist him.\(^1\) The colleges affiliated to the universities, which would supply candidates for university degrees would be periodically visited by Government inspectors to help them preserve their standard of efficiency.\(^2\) They would also conduct or assist at, the examination of the students of schools and colleges, and by their advice help the management and the teaching staff of these institutions to conduct them efficiently.\(^3\) A system of scholarships would be introduced for the encouragement of the bright students of schools and colleges.\(^4\)

It was also proposed that a system of grant-in-aid would be initiated to stimulate voluntary efforts in the field of education, which had so far contributed a large share to the rapid growth of higher education leading to the establishment of universities,\(^5\) and it was visualised

\(^1\) Despatch of 1854, paras 18, 19, 20, 21.
\(^2\) Ibid., para 38.
\(^3\) Ibid., para 18.
\(^4\) Ibid., para 38.
\(^5\) Ibid., para 52.
that a time might come when private agencies alone could supply all the needs of higher education supported by State aid, leading eventually to the withdrawal of Government from this field of education.\(^1\)

In a letter written in July, 1854, Charles Wood requested Lord Dalhousie to supervise personally the implementation of the various schemes of education recommended in the Despatch of 1854, which, he hoped, would be popular in India. Wood informed that "Macaulay, Lord Glenelg, Bayley and Princep, Marshman, the Church missionaries, Berry, Mouat, Beadon and everybody we could think of here, as being an authority in the subject have been consulted and have cordially approved the scheme".\(^2\)

He appreciated the action of Dalhousie in bringing the Hindu College founded in Calcutta in 1817 by some prominent Hindus and Europeans for imparting English education, under the direct control of the Government, with the senior departments of the College renamed as Presidency College in 1853. This step taken by the Government-General harmonised very well with the university scheme. It was pointed out by Wood that the success of the scheme depended largely upon the efficiency and

\(^1\) Despatch of 1854, para 62.
\(^2\) "Hundred Years of the University of Calcutta", p. 52.
integrity of the persons entrusted with the task of working out the details of the whole plan.

3. Measures taken by Government of India for the Establishment of the University of Calcutta

When he received the Despatch of 1854, Lord Dalhousie recorded in a minute, 30th December, 1854, his views on the scheme of education recommended by the Directors, specially their proposal for the establishment of universities and took necessary steps for its implementation. To be in conformity with the model proposed, namely the London University charters, the Governor-General felt it necessary to name the persons who would compose the Senate of the Calcutta University, as "they are required as the first act of their authority to frame Rules without which the other parts of the system will to a great extent remain inoperative". If the Governor-General were to become the Chancellor of the University, the members of his Executive Council "may fitly be solicited to allow themselves to be nominated as Fellows". To them would be added, according to the instruction of the Despatch, the Indian and European members of the Council of Education, and to carry out the suggestion of the Directors, eighteen additional members

1. Dalhousie's Minute of 30th December, 1854.
2. Ibid.
3. Despatch of 1854, para 34.
to "represent the different systems of education" in the affiliated colleges and to include Indians of "all religious persuasions", were nominated as members of the Senate of the Calcutta University.¹

The Government of Bombay would be requested to send to the Governor-General a list of proposed members of the Senate of the University of Bombay.

Lord Dalhousie maintained that the office of the Chancellor of the Calcutta University should be held by the Governor-General "for the time being", and the members of his Council would render a service if they agreed to be nominated members of the Senate.

The question of affiliation of institutions would be dealt with by the Senate of each University. The rules for examinations, and honours course and for conferring of degrees were also to be made by each Senate. Lord Dalhousie was in favour of having two degrees in each of the subjects, viz., Literature, Mathematics, Science, Civil Engineering, Medicine, while he would prefer only one degree for Law. As in the London University each subject should provide honours, and those who would not take the honours course might take the second degree "to carry their education beyond the low standard" of the

¹. Appendix C.
first degree. A degree of low standard "which seems to be contemplated by the Hon'ble Court, would", in the opinion of the Governor-General, "be of little value". These degrees might "be analogous to the degrees of B.A. and M.A.", but it was "not recommended that these titles should be imported into India from the mother country", as "it would not be expedient to adopt in these Indian Universities the nomenclature which has from long usage become peculiar to the Universities of England". However, the Senates should consider this proposal; for having two degrees in each subject of instruction and take a final decision.

As regards provision of teaching in the universities by the institution of professorships of Law, Civil Engineering, the vernaculars and the classical languages of India, as contemplated in the Despatch, the Governor-General maintained that these professors either existed in the Hindu College at the time, or would be provided in the new Presidency Colleges, and "they should not be connected with the University in any nearer manner". "The University as it is proposed to be constituted," Lord Dalhousie observed", will be ill-suited for the superintendence of actual tuition, and according to the strict model of the London University, should be confined to the

1. Dalhousie's Minute of 1854.
function of examination and giving degrees."¹ A subse-
quently despatch from the Court of Directors provided that
the professorships should be attached to Presidency Col-
lege.² The same principle should govern the Bombay Uni-
versity too. But, in case the Senate of this University
chose to organise instruction under the direct supervis-
ion of the University, as there was no college at Bombay
like Presidency College at Calcutta to provide teaching,
"there is no very strong reason why their wish should not
be acceded to."³

The Despatch of 1854 asked the Government of India
to report "upon the best method of procedure" adopted by
them for the establishment of the proposed universities.⁴
But, what was suggested in another part of the Despatch⁵
indicated that the Government of India could take a line
of action in the matter without further reference to the
Home Authorities. Faced with these conflicting views,
Lord Dalhousie decided to seek clarification on the issue
which might cause misunderstanding. The relation of the
Governor-General with Charles Wood whom Dalhousie consi-
dered to be "fidgety and meddlesome", was not cordial,

¹. Dalhousie's Minute.
². Ibid.
³. Ibid.
⁴. Ibid., para 33.
⁵. Ibid., paras 20, 36.
and the Board of Control had, in his view, reduced itself to a "Board of Interference". So, the Governor-General did not take a risk. In reply to his communication on the controversial point of procedure the Court of Directors informed that the Government of India was authorised to take all necessary steps for the establishment of universities "without further reference to us." "We would only remark", they wrote, "that we approve your intention that the Universities at the different Presidencies, should be formed on the same general 'basis', leaving it to the Senates of the several Universities to form the detailed rules, with such variations as local circumstances may render advisable".

In conformity with the instructions of the Despatch of 1854 a University Committee was appointed by the Governor-General in Council with Sir James William Colvile, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and President of the Council of Education, as Chairman, to prepare the details of a scheme for the establishment of universities in the Presidency towns of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras.

1. "Hundred Years of the University of Calcutta", p.53.
2. Despatch of 27th June, 1855.
3. Ibid., paras 24-35.
The Committee consisted of the members of the Council of Education, of the gentlemen who would be nominated as members of the Senate of the Calcutta University and members of the Legislative Councils of Bombay and Madras. The Committee was asked to see that "the details of a scheme, in accordance with the outline sketched in the Despatch, should be settled with as little delay as possible, so that Bills for the incorporation of the Universities at Calcutta, Madras and Bombay may, at the proper time, be brought into the Legislative Council and that Draft Rules for Examinations, for the grant of Degrees, and for other cognate matters, may be ready for discussions and adoption by the Senates so soon as those Bills are passed into Law".¹

The University Committee set up five sub-committees to deal with one specific subject each: the first sub-committee was to prepare drafts of such bill or bills as might be necessary for the incorporation of the University; the second was to prepare draft rules for examinations, for grant of degrees and for other cognate matters, in the Faculty of Arts; the third, the fourth and the fifth sub-committees were to prepare similar draft rules etc.,

¹. Order of 26th January, 1855.
for the Faculty of Medicine, for the Faculty of Law and for the Faculty of Civil Engineering respectively. The first reports of these sub-committees were sent to the Governments of the several provinces, Bengal, Madras, Bombay and North-Western Provinces for their comments and observations. The local authorities connected with education also were asked to give their view on these reports.

When the opinions of the provincial governments and local authorities were received, these were printed and forwarded to the sub-committees to report on them. Accordingly these sub-committees having reviewed them submitted their second and final reports which were duly considered by the University Committee on the 9th of July, 1856. While the reports of the sub-committee on Arts and Civil Engineering were accepted entirely, the report of the Law sub-committee was adopted with the exception of one clause, and the report of the Medical sub-committee was endorsed with some modifications which were referred to a special sub-committee for revision.

According to the resolution of the University Committee adopted at its first sitting, the drafts of three bills broadly founded on the provisions of the Charter of the London University, for the incorporation of the proposed universities at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, were
prevented by a sub-committee appointed for the purpose. But, eventually the Committee decided "that this was a matter beyond their province, and that the appointment of the Senators, and the framing of Rules for their guidance, whether under the sanction of Law or otherwise, must rest, in the first instance at least, with the Governor-General in Council." Therefore the Committee did not deal with the constitution and government of the universities and confined themselves exclusively to the consideration of the system of Entrance, Degree and honours examinations in the several branches of training, Arts, Medicine, Law and Civil Engineering.

The Committee observed that, although the scheme submitted by them was for the University of Calcutta, it was applicable in all its essential features to universities which would be established in other presidency towns, and they recommended that "while the Senates of the several universities are allowed ample latitude for the adaptation of the scheme as it may finally be sanctioned to local circumstances, their proceedings should be subject to the control of a central authority, such as the Governor-General of India in Council, so that general uniformity may be observed; and that in the words of the Government, 'at each Presidency town the same degree of acquirement in

every branch of knowledge should entitle its possessor to the same kind of academical distinction and honour.' In order to maintain a common and uniform standard of academic attainments and administrative efficiency the Committee suggested that, while making allowance for local variations to suit local needs, all the universities should be brought under the control of a central authority, the Government of India.

In their report the Committee gave the plan of a university with details of examinations and subjects to be taken in them. This scheme of a university "which the Committee deems suited to the present requirements of Calcutta, and which they believe may be made applicable without any alterations of moment, to the other Presidency towns", generally followed the pattern of the London University and the instructions of the Despatch of 1854. It was agreed by all authorities consulted that the familiar designations of B.A. and M.A. degrees should be retained, the first examination of Indian Universities was to be known as Entrance and not Matriculation, as in the London University, and while the London University

1. Report of the University Committee, para 25.
2. Ibid., para 10.
permitted a candidate to take the degree of Bachelor of Arts two years after the Matriculation examination, the B.A. degree of Indian Universities could be taken after three to four years of the Entrance examination. The Government of Madras was not in favour of the Entrance examination, but the rejection of this examination would not be in conformity with the guidelines supplied by the Court of Directors. It was proposed by the Committee that Entrance examination would be "held under proper checks, simultaneously", in several principal towns of a presidency.

The standard of the proposed Entrance examination of Indian Universities would differ little from that adopted in the London University Matriculation examination. In languages, history and geography, the range of study necessarily differed in its nature from that required at the London University, and was hardly equal to it either in extent or in difficulty. At London, a student to be eligible for the Matriculation examination had to be acquainted with Greek, Latin and a modern European language besides English. Here in India, it was proposed that a candidate to be eligible for the Entrance examination would be required to take two languages one of which must be English and the other might be his mother tongue. In Mathematics, three books of Euclid were proposed, instead of one; but the whole course of Natural Philosophy required
at London, except Mechanics, and the whole Chemistry course, were dispensed with, the Elements of Natural History was to be taken instead. There would be no honours level at the Entrance examination.

There would be two examinations at the B.A. level, one for ordinary degree, and the other for honours degree. The standard of B.A. examination differed considerably in nature from that adopted in the London University, but not greatly in extent or difficulty. In language group, instead of Greek and Latin and a modern European language, a candidate was required to pass in two languages of which English must be one and the other might be his mother tongue in which the examination was to test strictly and thoroughly the candidate's critical knowledge of his vernacular. In History and Geography, the test would be of a general character, but wider than in the London University. In Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, the range was substantially the same. Chemistry which was in the London University required at the Matriculation examination, was here proposed as a subject for the B.A. degree examination, and in the Natural Sciences, Physical Geography was added to Animal Physiology. In the B.A. examination some knowledge of Mental Philosophy was required in addition to Logic and Moral Philosophy.
The Court of Directors objected to this scheme of the B.A. examination, because, in their judgement, the standard was too high, though their view on this matter was not shared by the Government of India. The University Committee, however, justified this standard set by them saying that "a low standard encouraged mediocrity, a high standard genius".¹

The Committee did not prescribe the minimum standard for a candidate to be eligible for the B.A. degree, but left it to be defined by the Senate. They said, "The declared standard should be a maximum, such as to indicate in each branch, the highest amount of knowledge which a student of ordinary capacity, may be expected to acquire in a four years' course of study; while the minimum of competence entitling to a degree should be determined by the Examiners acting under the instructions of the Senate".²

For the B.A. honours examination, five subjects were proposed, viz., Language, History, Physical, Sciences and Mental and Moral Sciences. It differed from the London University scheme in assigning a separate branch to History including therein Political Philosophy and Political Economy, and in prescribing Mental and Moral Sciences as a sub-

¹. Report of the University Committee, para 17.
². Ibid.
ject for the B.A. honours examination, which, in the
London University, was reserved for the M.A. degree.
Mental and Moral Sciences would include four compulsory
subjects - Logic, Philosophy of Rhetoric, Natural Theo­
logy, Moral and Mental Philosophy, and one optional sub­
ject to be selected by every candidate from this group : 
Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences, Elements of Juris­
prudence, Philosophy of Education and Evidences of Reve­
aled Religion, as in Paley and Butler. The Committee 
had their doubts if Evidences of Revealed Religion, as a 
proposed optional subject for the B.A. honours examination 
would be in strict conformity with the instruction of the 
Court of Directors that no subject of examination would 
be connected with any religious belief.¹ They, however, 
justified their recommendation of this subject as intel­
lectually valid.²

It was not proposed to hold a separate examination 
for the Master's degree, but "that every student who 
passes the Honour Examination in any one or more branches, 
immediately after passing the B.A. Examination, should at 
once have the Degree of Master of Arts gratuitously con­
ferred upon him, and that students who may be able to pass

¹. Despatch of 1854, para 28.
². Report of the University Committee, para 18.
the Honour Examination in any branch, at any subsequent
time, should have the same Degree on payment of a fee". ¹

The scheme of medical examination suggested by the
Committee would be similar to that adopted in the London
University, "the main points of difference being that
candidates for the Licentiate's Degree may commence their
professional studies immediately on passing the Entrance
Examination, instead of waiting, as at London, two years
for the B.A. Degree, and that the course of study necessary
for the Licentiate's Degree is extended from four to five
years, in accordance with the practice of the Medical
Schools in India, and to compensate for the comparatively
early age at which Medical studies commence in this coun-
try". ² Two years of this medical course would be devoted
to theoretical and three years to practical studies, and
there would be two examinations, one at the end of the
theoretical course, and the other at the close of the prac-
tical training. There would be no honours course in medi-
cine.

For the degree of Doctor of Medicine, it was proposed
that the candidate was to obtain not only the degree of
Licentiate, but also the degree of Bachelor of Arts. "It
is thought desirable that to limit the grant of the Degree

¹. Report of the University Committee, para 19.
². Ibid., para 20.
to persons who have passed through the usual course of academical instruction, and may be supposed to possess a considerable amount of general as well as professional knowledge.¹

There would be but one degree in Law, namely, Bachelor of Laws, and this degree could be obtained by those students who had already passed the B.A. examination and been engaged in the study of law for three full years. The Government had to decide whether the possession of a degree in Law would qualify a candidate for admission to the Bar of Company's Courts, or to the Judicial Service of the Company.

It was proposed that the examination for the degree of Civil Engineering (M.C.E.) could be taken by candidates who had obtained the degree of B.A., and had since passed four years in the study and practice of the profession.

The report of the University Committee thus prepared the details of a scheme of examinations and degrees for the proposed Calcutta University, and, except in some points, it received almost the unanimous approval of all the members of the Committee. On August 7th, 1856, the report was submitted to the Government and the Governor-

¹. Report of the University Committee, para 21.
General in Council, in a resolution of 12th December, 1856, accepted the report, recording therein their views and comments on the university scheme. It was noted in the resolution that the University Committee, at the commencement of their work, had drafts of bills for incorporation of universities prepared by a special sub-committee appointed by it. But the Committee eventually decided that the scheme of university organisation and administration should be prepared by the Government, and, therefore, they exclusively confined their attention to the academic plan of the university. They placed on record their sense of deep appreciation and gratefulness for the work of the University Committee which had been "admirably performed", and observed that they "had no hesitation in adopting, unreservedly, the scheme of the Committee, which, with a few exceptions, is strictly in accordance with the views expressed by the Hon'ble Court, in their Despatch of 19th July, 1854, and by the Government of India in the letter appointing the Committee". ¹

While the Governor-General in Council was in full agreement with the rules prescribed for the Entrance examination and the decision of the Committee to use the familiar titles of B.A. and M.A., they had different views

¹. Resolution of 12th December, 1856, para 5.
on the regulations laid down for the first degree examination. The Governor-General in Council was of the opinion that, instead of leaving the minimum condition for obtaining the first B.A. degree to be determined by the examiners acting under the instructions of the Senate, the Committee should have declared that "a thorough and perfect knowledge of some branches up to a certain point, or a complete mastery of certain recognised text-books, should be exhibited, not in itself sufficient to secure even a bare degree, but as a 'sine qua non' without which no degree should be granted".

Further the Government emphasised that there should be some such rule "as enjoining exactness and completeness of knowledge, and as indicating that, though the amount required is described as 'moderate', that which is known should be known thoroughly". The Governor-General in Council warned that "The habit of discursive reading, and acquisition thereby of superficial knowledge, are always dangerously seductive to students, and are too often encouraged by teachers, and the wide range of study to which even those who aim at the lowest Degree are

2. Ibid., para 11.
invited, may increase the danger". While the range of study should be as wide as defined by the Committee, students were to be encouraged to acquire a close and accurate knowledge of the different subjects taken by them for the degree examination. But "the standard of an ordinary Degree in Arts ought not to be and is not in the Committee's Scheme, fixed so high as to give any reasonable ground for such an objection". 

The decision of the Committee to include Evidences of Revealed Religion as in Paley and Butler in the Mental and Moral Sciences as an optional subject of the B.A. honours course, was 'cordially' approved. The Governor-General in Council highly appreciated the Committee's recommendation that the proceedings of the Senate of the several universities should be subject to the control of a central authority, such as the Governor-General in Council, so that a general uniformity could be enforced in university administration throughout the country. Though the courses of study in the several universities might differ to suit local needs, their academic standard should have some correspondence and uniformity. "For this purpose, and in order to preserve a

1. Resolution of 12th December, 1856, para 11.
2. Ibid., para 15.
3. Ibid., para 13.
general harmony of constitution, but with no desire to enforce rigorous uniformity in matters in which local considerations and the judgment of the Local Governments may beneficially have free scope, the official resolution pointed out that "it will be necessary that the proceedings of each Senate should be reported to the Government of India and that all Bye-Laws and Regulations passed by them should receive the sanction of the Governor-General in Council". 1

The draft of a bill for the incorporation of the University of Calcutta with suitable adaptations for the other Presidencies was "approved generally by the Governor-General in Council", and it was decided to place it in the hands of Sir James Colvile to pilot the Bill in the Legislative Council. 2

It was announced by the Governor-General in Council that the Governor-General of India would be "for the time being" the Chancellor of the Calcutta University, and that the Governors of Madras and Bombay "for the time being" would be respectively the Chancellors of the Universities of Madras and Bombay, and that the Lieutenant-Governors of Bengal and of the North-Western Provinces, 1. Resolution of 12th December, 1856, para 18.
2. Ibid., para 19.
the Chief Justice of Bengal, the Bishop of Calcutta and members of the Supreme Council of India, "all for the time being, shall be ex-officio Fellows of the University of Calcutta". ¹

His Lordship in Council was pleased to appoint Sir James William Colvile, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Judicature at Calcutta and former President of the Council of Education, the first Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta. Two-nine ordinary Fellows of the Calcutta University were named in the resolution. ³

It was decided that the Vice-Chancellor and Fellows of the Madras and Bombay Universities would be appointed by the Governor in Council of Madras and Bombay respectively. A list of the Vice-Chancellor and Fellows of each Senate of these two Universities would be furnished to the Government of India by the provincial governments for communication to the Legislative Council and for insertion in the Acts of Incorporation. ⁴

The Governor-General in Council laid down certain guidelines for the appointment of the Registrar of the

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1. Resolution of 12th December, 1856, para 20.
2. Ibid., para 21.
3. Resolution of 12th December, 1856, para 22. These names were stated in the body of the Calcutta University Act.
4. Ibid., para 23.
Calcutta University and the examiners for the different examinations. The newly nominated Senate of the University was directed to promulgate the various rules proposed by the University Committee and approved by the Government of India, and to adopt such other rules and take such other measures as might be necessary to give early and full effect to the university scheme.

The first meeting of the Senate of the Calcutta University was held on 3rd January, 1857, before the University Act was finally approved by the Government on 24th January, 1857. The Vice-Chancellor and twenty-two Fellows were present. Colonel W. Crappel, Professor of Jurisprudence in Presidency College, was appointed by the Senate, Registrar of the University for two years and he could be eligible for re-appointment. The Senate divided itself into four Faculties of Arts, Law, Medicine and Civil Engineering.¹

The Calcutta University Bill introduced in the Legislative Council by Sir Colvile was passed as Act II of 1857, which received the assent of the Governor-General on 24th January of the same year and became law. Thus the first modern university of India was founded in Calcutta under the auspices of the Government of India acting

¹ Appendix D.
under the instructions of the Court of Directors.\textsuperscript{1} The University of Calcutta started functioning from May, 1857, The Act incorporating the University contained fifteen sections and the preamble of the Act stated the objectives of the University as follows:

"Whereas, for the better encouragement of Her Majesty's subjects of all classes and denominations within the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal and other parts of India in the pursuit of a regular and liberal course of education, it has been determined to establish a University of Calcutta for the purpose of ascertaining by means of examination, the persons who have acquired proficiency in different branches of Literature, Science and Art, and of rewarding them by Academical Degree, as evidence of their respective attainment, and marks of honour proportioned thereto; and whereas for effecting the purposes aforesaid, it is expedient that such University should be incorporated ..."\textsuperscript{2}.

The Senate of the Calcutta University as constituted\textsuperscript{3} by the Act consisted of the Chancellor Vicount Canning who succeeded Lord Dalhousie as the Governor-General (1856-62), the Vice-Chancellor Sir James Colvile, Chief Justice of

\begin{itemize}
  \item The University of Bombay was incorporated by Act XXII of 1857, and the Madras University by Act XXVII of 1857, both on the model of the Calcutta University.
  \item Appendix E.
  \item Act of 1857, sec. 3.
\end{itemize}
Bengal, eight 'ex-officio' Fellows and thirty ordinary Fellows. The list of the ordinary Fellows was almost the same as recommended by the Governor-General in Council in their resolution of 12th December, 1856. Only the name of the Reverend William Stephenson of St. John's College was omitted and two more members were added, who were Alexander Grant and Henry Stewart Reid. The legal and medical professions, the Christian Church, Education, Military and Engineering services and all colleges situated in Calcutta, were represented in the first body of the Senate of the Calcutta University. The four Faculties of Arts, Law, Medicine and Civil Engineering constituted by the Act had as their Deans the Reverend Alexander Duff, Sir James Colvile, Dr. Alexander Grant and the Hon'ble General Law, respectively.

The Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor and the Fellows were 'constituted and declared' in the Act to be one "Body Politic and Corporate by the name of the University of Calcutta",¹ and they were to constitute the Senate which had the power to hold and to dispose of any property vested in it for the use of the University.² If the Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor or a Fellow left India for good, his

2. Ibid., sec. 2.
office was to fall vacant. The tenure of office of the Vice-Chancellor was two years, and in the case of a vacancy in the office of the Vice-Chancellor, the Governor-General in Council was to nominate a capable person from among the Fellows of the University.

In the original Act of Incorporation of any of the three Indian Universities the maximum number of Fellows was not defined, though it was laid down that the total number of Fellows exclusive of the Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor, must not be fewer than thirty. Fellowship came to be regarded as a symbol of official favour rather than a mark of academic recognition, and as the Fellows were appointed for life, the Senate became unwieldy for efficient work. The Senate was in charge of control and management of the affairs of the University. It could make or alter bye-laws and regulations and confer degrees. It had the power to appoint and dismiss examiners, officers and servants of the University. All questions were to be decided by the majority of members present in a meeting of the Senate, which would be presided over by the Chancellor, or, in his absence, by the

1. Act of 1857, sec. 3.
2. Ibid., sec. 5.
3. Ibid., sec. 8.
4. Ibid., sec. 11.
5. Ibid., sec. 10.
Vice-Chancellor, and in the absence of both, a chairman would be chosen by the Fellows present in the meeting. The Chairman of the Senate meeting would have one vote and a casting vote as well, in the case of a tie. The Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor and five Fellows present in a meeting would form the quorum. In case the Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor were both absent, six Fellows must be present in a meeting.¹

At least once a year, an examination for degrees was to be held by the University.² Examiners were to declare the level of proficiency of every successful candidate. A certificate with details of performance in the examination would be given to every candidate under the seal of the University and signed by the Chancellor or the Vice-Chancellor.³ The University would demand fee prescribed by it for admission to an examination and for the degree. All fees were to be kept in one General Fee Fund and the accounts of the University would be submitted once a year for scrutiny and audit to the Governor-General in Council.⁴

¹. Act of 1857, sec. 9.
². Ibid. sec. 13.
³. Ibid. sec. 14.
⁴. Ibid. sec. 15.
The executive authority of the University was vested in the Syndicate consisting of the Vice-Chancellor and some Fellows, which looked after day to day administration. The Act of Incorporation, however, did not provide for the establishment of a Syndicate, but invested the Senate with all powers of university administration. The Syndicate which came to be founded by virtue of the regulations made by the Senate, was entrusted with some special powers which had no statutory sanction in any of the University Acts. The Syndicate of the Calcutta University did not function till 1858 and till then a Provisional Committee acted in its place as the executive body of the University. It consisted of the Vice-Chancellor, Cecil Beadon, the Reverend Joseph Mullens, Lt.- Colonel Baker, A Grant and Ramaprasad Roy. The Provisional Committee was asked to make necessary arrangements to conduct the Entrance examination and to carry out other business of the University. It was to make rules for university administration, subject to the approval of the Senate.

In 1857 the Provisional Committee met twelve times and examined the recommendations originally made by University Committee about conducting different examinations and conferring degrees, and offered their own suggestions. The Senate in their meeting held on 6th June, 1857, accepted with slight modification, the suggestions of the Provisional Committee.
The regulations in Law were approved without change and those in Arts, Medicine and Civil Engineering were referred to their respective Faculties. At a special meeting of the Senate held on 5th September, 1857, all these regulations, as finalised by the Faculties, were approved and later confirmed by the Governor-General in Council.

Thus the University of Calcutta, like the Universities of Madras and Bombay, was founded by an Act of Indian Legislature, to carry out two main, almost exclusive, functions, namely, to hold examinations and to confer degrees and the governing bodies of the University set out to organise their work, as defined by the Act of Incorporation. By the end of 1857 different branches of university administration were set into operation and the first Entrance examination was held; regulations and guidelines for the work of administration were laid down and arrangements made for the publication of a University Calendar from the following year.