CHAPTER II

CLASSICAL EDUCATION IN BENGAL (1813-59)

1. Sanskrit Education in the early 19th Century:

The Hindu classical learning had a great cultural tradition from the days of Taxhila, Kashi, Ujjain, Nalanda, Vikramshila and Nadia. But in the beginning of the 19th century the ToIs, as the centres of learning for the Hindus, languished in a state of sustained neglect in Bengal, as in other provinces under British rule. The word ToI is a word of non-Sanskrit origin, and is in use only in Bengal, where ToIs are also called Chaupadi or Chaubadi, from Sanskrit 'Chattuspathi', a place for teaching of the Four Vedas.1

Mahamahopadhyay Mabesh Chandra Nayaratna, Principal, Sanskrit College, in his Report on the ToIs of Bengal, referred to Nadia, Bikrampur, Bakia-Chandradwip, Tribeni, Bhatpara and Khanakul-Krishnagar as the isolated centres of Sanskrit learning.2 The special branch of study for which Bengal had been famous all over India is the Nyaya philosophy, and the chief seat of its studies in Bengal has been Nadia.

The decline of Sanskrit learning was palpable even in the early 19th century, though some old centres of learning still flourished as at Vikrampur, Tribeni and Khanakul-Krishnagar. Dr. Francis Buchanan gave us some significant clues on the state of Sanskrit education in the several
districts of Bengal and Bihar which he surveyed during the years 1807 to 1814. Buchanan found no Tols in 15 Thanas of Dinajpur, while 7 Thanas had 16 schools of Sanskrit learning. In Rangpur he mentioned 34 Odhyapaks who “confined themselves almost entirely to grammar and a little smattering of law, and only 3 men instruct Hindu philosophy. Bed is (Vedas) known only to 1 person from Varanasi and is not taught.” In 1801 Hamilton noted the existence of 190 Tols in the 24 Parganas teaching Hindu law, grammar and metaphysics. In the district of Hooghly he found about 150 Smriti Tols, each containing from 5 to 20 scholars. He was struck by the absence of any Smriti Tol in the districts of Midnapur and Burdwan where the casual need for such teacher could be met only by importing from Nadia. Only a few Tols existed in Dacca which died out by 1835 when Adam made his enquiry.

The picture of over-all decay of Sanskrit learning in the early 19th century was heightened by the stagnation of the Tols of Nadia, the chief centre of Sanskrit education in Bengal. Under the patronage of the Sena Kings of Bengal, Hindu learning flourished in their capital, Nadia, as it did in their other capital, Bikrampur. The fame of Nadia is further enhanced by its association with Chaitanya Deb, the renowned religious reformer of the 16th century. The great Oriental scholars such as Sir William Jones, Dr. Carey and
Dr. H. H. Wilson visited Nadia as pilgrims to this shrine of learning. The Tols of Nadia, originally brought into being by royal initiative and long maintained by royal patronage, came to be preserved by Hindu Zamindars after the Muslim conquest of Bengal. Grants of rent-free lands and money-gifts by Hindu zamindars and other wealthy persons had been diminishing in Nadia, and as a result, Tols of Nadia had been facing a great economic crisis. Grants of rent-free land had in the 19th century very much gone out of fashion. Money contributions to scholars had also practically ceased to exist. In these circumstances the Pandits were compelled to depend on regular gifts called "Vidayas" received from wealthy people at the time of marriage, śraddh ceremony, commemoration of temples and tanks and return from pilgrimages.

The decline of Nadia as a centre of classical Sanskrit learning appears from the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Tols</th>
<th>No. of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1816</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>380^8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1818</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>747^9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1829</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>500-600^10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Less than 150^11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>99^12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The remarkable point in connection with the figures in these five successive reports was the steady decline of the number
of Tols and volume of students in the chief centre of Sanskrit learning in Bengal. (Mr. Ward's figure is so extraordinarily large as compared with the figure of two years back of the Committee of Superintendent's Report that it may be laid aside as inaccurate. Even then Professor Wilson's Report indicates an increase in the number of students on the figure of 1816. But since then the number of Tols and students had steadily declined, the rate of which was not slackened even in the closing decade of the 19th Century.

The downward trend of indigenous learning which was clearly indicated in the case of Nadia, the principal seat of Sanskrit learning in Bengal, was also reflected in other districts. The decline of indigenous classical education has been studied with unusual care and sympathy by William Adam in 1835-8. He surveyed the districts of Murshidabad, Rajshahi, Birbhum and Burdwan where conditions were more or less normal when he actually carried out his educational investigations. Buchanan's survey of the frontier districts of Dinajpur, Rangpur, Purnea, Bhagalpur etc. which had been deeply convulsed by the Famine of 1770, cannot be relied upon as a correct index of the normal state of things. Moreover, Adam's Reports may be accepted as a more reliable source of information on the actual state of indigenous education prevailing in Bengal than the rambling heterogeneous
survey of Buchanan in which education was only one of the many subjects covered.

In his First Report\textsuperscript{14} in July 1835 Adam computed a total of 1800 Tols for the province of Bengal, on an average of 100 for every district, and the total number of teachers and pupils at 12,600. In his Second Report\textsuperscript{15} on 23 December 1835, Adam noted in the single thana of Natore 4 schools of indigenous Sanskrit learning endowed by Rani Bhavani, besides 38 non-endowed schools taught by 39 Pandits. All these schools had an average of more than 10 students in each. Buchanan and Adam both\textsuperscript{16} paid glowing tribute to the intellectual and moral elevation of the teachers. Buchanan, who was no ardent classicist, observed, "the Brahmans, generally speaking, have an intelligence and acuteness far beyond other Hindus. I am further inclined to think that they are subject to many fewer vices and that those persons will be found to approach nearest their good qualities, who are admitted even to the porch of science."\textsuperscript{17} Adam noted with admiration about the Pandits of Natore that "the modesty of their character does not consist in abjectness to a supposed or official superior but is equally shown to each other."\textsuperscript{18} In his Third Report Adam mentions 24 Tols with 153 pupils in the district of Murshidabad, 56 Tols with 393 pupils in Birbhum and 190 Tols with 1,358 pupils in the district of Burdwan.\textsuperscript{19}
Several factors were responsible for this steady decline of classical Sanskrit learning in the 19th century. First was, of course, the drying up of economic support to the old learning. It was by means of gifts of rent-free land and of money that such studies were fostered in the past, and such gifts flowed freely from wealthy patrons to the teachers and pupils of the Hindu Shastras. This practice had been changing of late, and so donations had been becoming meagre and meagre in volume. Secondly, the attractions of new learning in the shape of lucrative profession had cast a spell on the new generation of Pandits. The old custom of a Pandit's sons pursuing the calling of his father, which made them grow up to be Pandits unless they lacked the mental power to do so, was losing its hold upon the country, and they accordingly were being trained up for new professions that promised better prospects from a worldly point of view.

To arrest the decline in traditional Sanskrit learning, fitful expedients and occasional help from individuals and Government were made. Government aid to Tols would obviously suggest itself as the most effective means of imparting vitality to them. Nadia as the chief centre of Sanskrit learning in Bengal deserved systematic help from the Government. Government assistance to the Nadia tols was mainly in the form of subsistence allowance to pupils which has been
confirmed by the Reports of Dr. Wilson (1829), Mr. Adam (1835-8) and Professor E.B. Cowell (1867). This allowance has come down from times antecedent to the English conquest of the country. In 1784 the Committee of Revenue testified that the Raja of Nadia used to grant an allowance to the students of Sanskrit Tols around Nadia, and gave an annual grant of Rs.1200 from the treasury of Nadia to the students. The Board of Revenue directed the Collector of Nadia on 18 May, 1787 to continue the payment under the head of "pension". In 1829 the authority of the continuance of the allowance to the students of Nadia Tols was questioned by the Collector of Nadia. Dr. H.H. Wilson, the Secretary of the General Committee of Public Instruction, visited the Tols of Nadia and ascertained the legal validity of the allowance of Rs.100 a month to the Tols and, on the strength of his recommendation, the Government, in a letter dated 3 August 1830, sanctioned the restoration of the "pension" to the Tols.

The regeneration of traditional Sanskrit learning was planned in a more comprehensive manner by Governor-General Lord Minto in 1811 and accepted by the members of his Council.

In this Minute Minto expressed his deep concern over the decline of Classical learning in India and proposed to establish two new colleges, one at Nuddea in Bengal and
another at Tirhoot in Behar "for the restoration of Hindoo
Science and Literature"; and two more at Bhagalpur and
Jounpore for Muslims. In accordance with Minto's Minute,
Sanskrit Colleges at Nadia and Tirhoot were contemplated
with the following scale of the establishment at Nadia:

Two Pandits, each at Rs.100 per month,
and at Rs.60 per month ... per annum - 9,600

Library ... ... do - 1,576
Prizes & honorary dresses ... do - 1,700

Total per annum -12,876

The execution of this scheme in Nadia was entrusted to the
Committee of Superintendence, composed of senior members of
the Board of Revenue, with the Magistrate and the Collector of
the district, to whom instructions were sent; but no effective
action had been taken on the Government's intention from
March 1811 to May 1815.26 In answer to the Government's
query, the Committee of Superintendence stated the major
hurdles which would stand in the way of realization of the
objects contemplated.27 On 21 August, 1821, the Governor-
General-in-Council tried to set up the proposed colleges for
the advancement of Sanskrit learning in Nadia and Tirhoot,
but it proved fruitless.28

In July 1821 Dr. H.H. Wilson, in a long Report to the
Government, suggested the advisability of establishing a central college of Sanskrit learning at Calcutta under efficient European management, instead of two provincial colleges at Nadia and Tirhoot. The Government adopted his views, and in August 1821, Messrs. W.B. Martin, W.B. Dayley, J.C.C. Sutherland, and H.H. Wilson, were appointed a Committee for the superintendence of a Sanskrit college to be established in Calcutta. In the Resolution of Government passed on the occasion, the object of the Institution was thus described:

"The Committee will bear in mind that the immediate object of the Institution is the cultivation of Hindu literature. Yet it is in the judgment of His Lordship in Council, a purpose of much deeper interest to seek every practicable means of effecting the gradual diffusion of European knowledge." The Committee appointed by the Government to set up a Sanskrit College in Calcutta proposed that the course of study should be divided into two departments. In the junior department, Grammar, General Literature and the elements of Mathematics formed the subjects of instruction. The studies of the senior department comprised higher branches of Grammar, Geometry and Algebra, Law and Logic. It was considered advisable that the period of study should be fixed at six years for each department. After the plan of the college was sketched out on paper, nothing further appears to have been done till October 1823, when the recently-
appointed General Committee of Public Instruction, to which the Special Committee of the proposed Sanskrit College had been united, recommended that the Resolution of Government passed two years before should be carried into effect. All the preliminary arrangements having been completed, the college was formally opened on January 1, 1824. 30

After the college was opened, Dr. Wilson, Secretary, General Committee, and Captain Price, Secretary of the college, recommended that the pupils should be generally of the Brahmin and Vaidya castes. Though no express mention was made of any restrictive rule, it appears from the annual reports that up to 1850, the privilege of studying in the college was confined to upper caste Brahmans and Vaidyas. Regarding the course of study, the college was from the first divided into two departments - Junior and Senior. In the Junior Department, Grammar, Literature and the Elements of Mathematics formed the course of study. The subjects of instruction in the Senior Department included Law and Logic. The period of study was usually fixed at 6 years for each Department. The full period of study was therefore 12 years, which was extended to 15 years in 1846. 31

The Oriental bias of the syllabus at Sanskrit College remained more or less undisturbed till 1851. Though some attempts were made previously to introduce English language
and Western medical knowledge in the college curriculum, they had had very little success. The Secretary of the College, Mr. A. Troyer, in his Report of 31 January 1835, defended the traditional course of study for the following reasons. Firstly, the command of the Sanskrit language as the "mother language" of a great number of Indian vernaculars, including Bengali, should be vigorously encouraged. Secondly, he praised the efficiency of the Hindu method of teaching Sanskrit Grammar, Philosophy and Hindu Law. The study of English had been left optional for the students of Sanskrit College. The compulsory study of English would have been considered as a threat to the privilege of cultivation of Sanskrit by the learned classes. 32

11. **Vidyasagar’s Scheme of Reorganization of Sanskrit College:**

The Sanskrit College was founded with the avowed intention of fulfilling two objectives, - "The cultivation of Hindu literature and the gradual diffusion of European knowledge." 33

The experiment to introduce Western Knowledge along with traditional Hindu learning in the early course of study in the Sanskrit college proved abortive. In May 1827 the General Committee of Public Instruction introduced an English
class into the college for teaching European science to the students. This arrangement, however, proved a failure, and the English class was abolished on 31 December 1835. In October 1842 the Council of Education restored the English class with no better results. The union of Western and Oriental studies under one roof and under one superintendence had been made by the famous scholar, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar during his tenure as Principal of the institution.

Iswar Chandra first joined the Sanskrit College as Assistant Secretary in the vacancy of Rammanikya Vidyalankar in April 1846. He began his work in the Sanskrit College with great zeal to make improvements in the condition of the college. He soon drew up an improved plan of studies which elicited unqualified praise from Major Marshall, the Secretary of the General Committee of Public Instruction, to be "well adapted to produce order, to save time, and to secure to each subject...the degree of attention which it deserves." The Secretary of the Sanskrit College, Russamoy Dutta, accepted some of the suggestions contained in Vidyasagar's Report but treated the Report as a whole to be unworthy of serious consideration. His sweeping reform proposals made Russamoy Dutta nervous and when some of his suggestions were disapproved, Vidyasagar resigned in protest on 3 May 1847.

In November 1850 the Sanskrit College lost Pandit
Madan Mohan Tarkalankar\textsuperscript{38} who resigned the chair of Sahitya on his appointment as Provincial Pandit of the Murshidabad Circle. Iswar Chandra was induced to accept the post by Dr. Mouat\textsuperscript{39} on the understanding that the Council of Education would soon vest him with the executive powers of Principal.\textsuperscript{40} Immediately after taking the chair of Sahitya, Vidyasagar was directed (5 December 1850) by the Council of Education to draw up a report on the existing state of Sanskrit College and to suggest measures for making the institution more efficient and useful. Vidyasagar accordingly framed, as "the results of a long and anxious consideration of the subject", a detailed report, which advocated many changes in the system of the institution, and on 16 December 1850 submitted it to the Council of Education with the hope "that the college would become a seat of pure and profound Sanskrit learning, and at the same time a nursery of improved vernacular literature."\textsuperscript{41}

The Council of Education needed just the kind of man as Vidyasagar with his independent spirit, strong determination and his equal command over the Sanskrit and English languages in their task of re-organizing the Sanskrit College. The last obstacle to the accomplishment of this plan was removed by the resignation in December 1850 of Nassamoy Dutta, the secretary of the College, as will be seen from the following letter of Dr. Mouat to the Bengal Government:
"It was the wish of the Council at the same time to have reorganized the Sanskrit College and to have placed it on exactly the same footing as the Madrasa, but a difficulty arose from the tenure of the office of Secretary by Babu Rassomoy Dutt. The office of Secretary has been held for the last ten years by Babu Rassomoy Dutt, who has discharged its duties as efficiently as could be expected from an officer un-acquainted with, or, at all events, possessing only a limited knowledge of Sanskrit; whose whole day was occupied in the performance of arduous and responsible duties in another office, and who could seldom or never have been present in the institution during its working hours, or been able to rectify abuses likely in such circumstances to occur."  

The Government of Bengal sanctioned the Council's proposal (22 Jan, 1851). The offices of Secretary and Assistant Secretary were abolished, and Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar was made Principal of the College from 22 January 1851. The history of the Sanskrit College for the years 1851 to 1854 is virtually the history of the reorganization effected in it by Vidyasagar, who had to work hard in order to elevate this centre of traditional Hindu learning in the public recognition, and to place it on a more efficient footing. This reorganization had many facets, including administrative, academic and financial.
The Council of Education seemed to have vested him with great powers to remodel, reform and simplify classical Sanskrit education. The suggestions contained in the report submitted by Vidyasagar were approved by the Council and ordered to be adopted in the next session, October 1851 to September 1852. 45

The first problem which attracted the notice of Vidyasagar was administrative, which concerned the laxity of discipline in the College. To ensure regularity of attendance, he put a stop to students leaving their classes on trivial excuses and strict attention was paid to maintain proper discipline in the class-room. In the second place, the privilege of study in the Sanskrit College had been originally limited to Brahmin and Vishwa students only, but in December 1854, he threw its door open to the respectable Hindus of all classes without any restriction. In January 1852 Vidyasagar brought the claims of the qualified passed students of the Sanskrit College before the Council of Education in the hope that Government would consider them equally with those of the scholars of the Madrasa and Hindu College. 46 The subject was beyond the jurisdiction of the Council, 47 yet in view of the great sincerity of the Principal in promoting the interests of the students of the institution, the Council referred it to the Government. The Government gave a favourable reply 48 and the claims of the
qualified students were henceforth considered for public employment on an equal footing with those of the students of other institutions. In the third place, Sanskrit College, from its foundation in 1824, was a free institution and, as such, was subject to many abuses. Vidyasagar intended to abolish some of the evils arising out of indiscriminate admission and irregular attendance in the institution. To guard against these practices and to exclude reluctant pupils from the benefits of reading free of charge, Vidyasagar introduced an admission or re-admission fee of Rupees 2 in August 1852. This measure was adopted to pave the way for the introduction of the compulsory fee system, which came into force on 16 June 1854.

A classical scholar par excellence Iswar Chandra combined a modern critical spirit with a deep appreciation of the classical Sanskrit literature. The report of 16 December 1850 and his 'Notes on the Sanskrit College' of 12 April 1852 crystallised his considered opinion on the role of Sanskrit in the scheme of classical education in Bengal. In the 'Notes on the Sanskrit College' (12 April 1852), he had suggested certain changes of the course of study in the light of three main objectives - (1) a real Sanskrit education; (2) encouragement to Vernacular literature, and (3) a business-like course of English study. Vidyasagar's humanist outlook was clearly illustrated in his emphasis on the study of English,
Bengali and Sanskrit in the re-modelled syllabus of the Sanskrit College envisaging new importance for the study of Western philosophy and mathematics. Secondly, he played down the study of elaborate grammar in the pursuit of Sanskrit literature. Thirdly, the great importance which Vidyasagar attached to the moral development of an educated person underlined his humanist outlook. Fourthly, his implacable opposition to idealist philosophy of the Hindus as being a hindrance to life in the modern world, revealed his humanist outlook in no uncertain ways.

On joining the Sanskrit College as Professor of literature in 1850, Vidyasagar found that grammar was being made unnecessarily difficult in the Junior Department, arithmetic was being treated as an adjunct to Jyotish class reserved for the seniors, courses in general literature and Rhetoric were in no better shape. All these necessitated a thorough workmanlike revision of the syllabus. He submitted soon a detailed report on the working syllabus of the college together with suggestions for reform.

An improved course of study was introduced by Vidyasagar in the Sanskrit College in November 1851. In his long report of 16 December 1850 to the Council of Education, Vidyasagar vigorously put forward the case for simplification of the method of studying Sanskrit. Prior to
November 1854, Bopadev's 'Mugdhabodh' had been used as a text-book for grammar. Young learners had to begin their study of Sanskrit with this difficult grammar written in Sanskrit and, being unable to comprehend its contents fully, they merely learnt by rote what their instructor said. Thus, when they proceeded to study the Sanskrit classics in the Literature Class they were not so well-grounded in the language as expected. Vidyasagar fully realised the students' difficulty, and compiled an outline of Sanskrit Grammar with Bengali commentaries (Vyakarana Kaumudi) along with easy selections from Sanskrit Prose and Verse. The works of Kalidasa, Kavya Prakasha and Dasarupaka as valuable guide of Rhetoric were specially recommended. In the class for Law and Philosophy, the syllabus was radically changed. He cut out from the syllabus all scholastic dead-wood like Ashtavinshati Tattwas by Raghunandana, Anumana Chintamani by Gangesh, Khandana by Sriharsha, Tattwa Viveka by Udayanacharya; streamlined courses of Law and Philosophy for the instruction of the students in the Senior Department. He recommended the change of the Nyaya Class into Darsana (Philosophy) where European philosophy would be introduced. Mature in age and equipped with necessary linguistic apparatus by eight years of schooling in English, the students of the Senior Department would be able to compare Eastern and
Western systems and to arrive at truth by their own rational faculties. Vidyasagar also put a lot of emphasis on acquiring a fair idea of English literature and science. The Mathematics class was also entirely remodelled in the light of modern Western knowledge. But the most striking feature of the proposed reform of syllabus was its amalgamation of traditional Sanskrit study with modern Western knowledge. The remodelled system proved a great success, and a student of ordinary ability did not require more than three years to complete the course.

The English class had been introduced in the Sanskrit college long before Vidyasagar’s assumption of the office of Principal but with indifferent results. The main idea behind Vidyasagar’s reorganization of the English class was to initiate Western knowledge along with traditional Sanskrit education. In the letter to the Council of Education dated 16 July 1853, he represented the need of strengthening the staff of the English department and claimed the benefit of the orders of the Court of Directors in their Despatch No.1 of 1841 dated 20 January 1841.

In his detailed letter Vidyasagar convincingly put forward the plea that when the College was founded in 1824 the Government made a grant of Rs.24,000 per annum for the maintenance of the institution. Governor-General Auckland, in his
Minute of 24 November 1839, settled the issue of appropriation of funds for exclusive Oriental education and partially slashed it down. With a view to improve and extend the new system of combined English and Sanskrit education in the college, Vidyasagar prayed for restoration of Rs.24,000 as was assigned originally in 1824.

The Council was satisfied that the outlay proposed by Vidyasagar would be most beneficial in encouraging the combined study of English and Sanskrit and secured the sanction of the Govt. of Bengal. Vidyasagar now made English a compulsory subject and the study of mathematics through Sanskrit was changed in favour of English. After Vidyasagar had effected the above improvements in the English department of the Sanskrit College, the Council of Education wanted to secure "the opinion of (Dr. J.R. Ballantyne) the most able Sanskrit scholar in India regarding the measures now in progress, and those contemplated hereafter." Ballantyne admitted, in his Report, the appreciable difference between the Benares Sanskrit College and Calcutta Sanskrit College on the ground that the Bengalees who were in a majority in the latter had a "general desire for acquisition of English." In spite of this, he recommended that similar system and syllabus be introduced in the two premier seats of Sanskrit learning in India.
With a view to bridging the chasm between Sanskrit and English learning, Dr. Ballantyne proposed certain books for study which would fulfil his fundamental aim of reconciliation of Western and Eastern learning. One such books was 'Synopsis of Sciences' in English, which brought out the parallelisms between the Nyaya system and the European system. He also used a brief introduction of Mill's great work on logic in order to make it more suitable for the beginners. Further, included in his course of study the Sankhya and Vedanta systems with necessary English translation and notes. Bishop Berkeley's Inquiry was included in the syllabus because it largely reflected and confirmed the conclusions of the Sankhya and Vedanta systems. In conclusion, he confidently asserted that creation of a band of Anglo-Sanskrit scholars who would be qualified to interpret the mind of Europe to that of India, was the great end of the Sanskrit College.

On 29 August 1853 the Council of Education sent the above report of Dr. Ballantyne to Vidyasagar requesting him to comment upon the same. Vidyasagar differed from Dr. Ballantyne's plan of study and made several comments on the same. He specially differed from Dr. Ballantyne's recommendation of three text books on the Vedanta, Nyaya and Sankhya printed with English versions and notes. He also particularly disliked to introduce Berkeley's Inquiry
as a class-book which would "beget more mischief than advantage." According to him, the Vedanta and Sankhya were "false systems of philosophy" and he would not augment the evil by introducing Berkeley. Sankhya and Vedanta he would retain only to be refuted by the empiricist English philosophy, but Berkeley would increase the misplaced reverence for the Indian brand of idealism.

In conclusion, Vidyasagar emphatically denied the thesis of Dr. Bellantyne that the Anglo-Sanskrit system of education as prescribed in the Sanskrit College was aimed to train up a band of scholars qualified to interpret Western learning to India. Vidyasagar very trenchantly put the issue in the following words: "We do not require to get them reconciled because we do not require their assistance in any shape. We need not fear the opposition of a body declining in their reputation. Their voice is gradually becoming more and more feeble. There is little chance of their regaining their former ascendancy. To whatever part of Bengal is the influence of education extending, there the learned of the country are losing their ground. The natives of Bengal appear to be very eager to receive the benefit of education." 63

The Council of Education considered the report of Vidyasagar on 14 September 1853 and asked the Principal
of Sanskrit College to be in communication with Dr. Ballantyne to exchange ideas between the heads of the institutions of Benaras and Calcutta. Vidyasagar was rather indignant at the order of the Council to seek Ballantyne's opinion in the internal affairs of Sanskrit College. He would not deviate an inch from what he thought right and he wrote to Dr. Mouat on 5 October 1853: "to enable me to carry out this great - this darling object of my wishes I must (excuse the strong word) to a considerable degree be left unfettered so far as I can approve of Dr. Ballantyne's abstract and treatises - such, for instance, as his excellent edition of the Novum Organum in English, I will avail myself of them most readily and cheerfully. But if compelled to adopt all his compilations without any reference to my own humble judgement as to their utility and value or to their adaptation to the peculiar wants of the institution over which I have the honour to preside, my occupation is gone."

This letter, it appeared, had the desired effect and Vidyasagar was allowed to pursue his plan of reorganisation of the teaching at the college. That the Council were satisfied with the working of the new schemes made by Vidyasagar was evident from the following passage in the report of the D.P.I. (who succeeded the Council of Education in January, 1855) for May 1855 to April 1856:
"The course of instruction at the Sanskrit College adapted, as it has of late been, to modern ideas and to utility, is being successfully carried on and administered by its able Principal, Pandit Iswarchandra Sharma, and is producing results, the effects of which upon the education of the lowest classes cannot be overrated."

Henry Woodrow, Inspector of Schools, in 1859 paid a glowing tribute to the remarkable progress of Sanskrit College under stewardship of Iswarchandra in the following words: "The Pandits of that college then despised European Science and Literature as utterly as the Madrassa Moulvies do now. Yet during these last fifteen years they have awoke from the slumber of hundreds or thousands of years, and now again are appearing as the interpreters of their countrymen."

iii. Islamic Learning in the Early 19th Century:

The Madrasa, as a seat of traditional Islamic learning, was often attached to mosques like the Cathedral schools of medieval Europe. Under the Muslim rule in Bengal, high government officers and persons of scholastic distinction or religious merit were generally granted Jagirs, Altangha, A'ima and Madad-i-Ma'ash, by the state in lieu of
their salaries and stipends in cash. The Muslims, like
the Hindus, viewed education as an act of piety and grace.
The recitation of the Koran and the study of the rituals
of Islam formed the core of traditional Islamic learning.
Throughout the 18th and early 19th centuries in Bengal, the
decline of Islamic learning was both sharp and spectacular.
Dr. Francis Buchanan (1807-14), in his Reports, and
W. Adam, in their Report on vernacular education (1835-1838),
vividly portrayed the all-around degeneration of Islamic
learning.

The Reports of Buchanan and Adam indicate a consider­
able number of educational institutions (at that time in
decaying condition) maintained by rent-free grants. Although
Adam had no means of ascertaining with accuracy the extent
of property so endowed in Bengal, nevertheless he was
convinced, from Reports most common, that it was considerable. He mentioned the Madresa of Qasbah-Bagha in the Rajshahi
district of Bengal, where as many as 42 villages constituted
one endowment for charitable and educational purposes. At
Qasbah-Bagha all the pupils received, besides instruction,
lodging, clothing, food, oil and stationery including what
was necessary for copying manuscripts to be used as text­
books. Even the well-known Madresa of Qasbah-Bagha lost
practically all its vitality and importance.

During the years 1807 to 1814, Buchanan surveyed some
districts of Bengal and Bihar under the orders of the government. The results of his investigations were edited and published under government authority by R.M. Martin in 1838 in 3 volumes. During the administration of Lord Bentinck, W. Adam also drew up three Reports (1835-8) on indigenous education in Bengal and Bihar - the first Report (1835) is based on Buchanan's papers and other government records; the second Report (1836) is a detailed account of the Natore Sub-division of Rajshahi district in Bengal based on first-hand information obtained by his close observations and enquiry; and the third Report (1838) deals with five representative districts of the two provinces, based on the information collected under his personal and careful supervision.

The reports of Dr. Buchanan amply demonstrate that education among the Muslims, in the districts of Bengal which he surveyed, was in a progressive state of decay. While giving an account of Dinaipur and Malda, Buchanan stated that the number of Maktabs (elementary Arabic schools) was very few. Moreover, the instruction in the few schools that existed was defective and without taste, and there was practically no school where Arabic or the sciences of Mohammedans were taught. In the district of Dinaipur the state of Muslim education was very unsatisfactory. Of the 22
police sub-divisions in Dinajpur, 13 contained between them
119 elementary Bengali schools and 9 Persian ones, while
9 sub-divisions had no elementary schools whatsoever.77
Buchanan was of the opinion that education was most sadly
needed by Mohammedans who constituted the bulk of the
people.78 He concluded that the instruction of the Muslim
youths in Mohammedan science and literature was much more
urgently pressing than of the Hindus.79

In Rangpur, another district with a predominantly
Muslim population,80 Buchanan found education more neglected
than in Dinajpur. There was "no such thing" as a "public
school of any kind." Very few understood Arabic and "by far
the greater part of the Akhnus" (Teachers) understood
neither Persian nor Arabic, though they had been employed
to teach the Muslims to read the Koran. Any explanation
of the text was far above their level and there was,
according to Buchanan, strong ground to suspect that among
the Qazis there were some who "read without understanding."81
William Adam corroborated the view of Buchanan and held
that "in fourteen out of nineteen sub-divisions there was
no elementary schools whatsoever, and that in the remaining
five there were ten Bengali schools and two Persian ones
for elementary instruction." The condition of the Muslims
in the field of education was so desperate that they "having
no wise man of their own” consulted those of the Hindus. 82

In the district of Mymensingh, where according to the estimate of 1801 there were 5 Muslims to 2 Hindus, Buchanan found no regular seminaries for Muslims as against the Hindus who had some fifty schools of Hindu learning. In Chittagong, where the proportion of Muslims to Hindus was estimated in 1801 to be 3 Muslims to 2 Hindus, there was at least mention about one endowed Muslim institution in 1827; Adam was of the opinion that there might have been others. 83 The state of education of the Muslims in Bakarganj, another Muslim majority district, was not encouraging at all, and in 1823 the Collector reported that no endowment for the purpose of education existed in that district. 84 In the district of Dacca, Adam found to his great surprise “not the remotest reference in Government records to Mohammedan schools in a district remarkable for a large proportion of Muslim inhabitants.” Buchanan, however, states that throughout the district there were many Hindu schools in which the Bengali language was taught. Though domestic education might have been resorted to, Adam inferred that, on the whole, popular education was “at a very low ebb.” 85

The Second Report of Adam is the result of a very thorough enquiry made by him in 1836. It gives a detailed
account of the state of education in Natore, the most advanced thana of Rajshahi district, overwhelmingly Muslim in population, which gives a clear indication of the sad state of education of the Muslims. In a thana of 485 villages, containing a population of 656,558 Hindus and 1,296,401 Muslims, the comparative position of the two communities was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hindu</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Indigenous Elementary Schools</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Indigenous schools of higher learning</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Families in which children received occasional instruction in reading and writing from parents or friends</td>
<td>1,277</td>
<td>311</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This disparity is explained by Adam as having been caused by the poverty of the Muslims who formed unfortunately "the humblest grade of native society... who were regarded by themselves as well as by others, both in respect of condition and capacity as quite beyond the reach of the simplest forms of literary attainments." Such was the condition of these people that "you may", says Adam, "as well talk to them of scaling the heavens as of instructing their children" as both were the then circumstances "equally difficult and presumptuous." The only public school of
Islamic learning in the whole district of Rajshahi, as far as Adam could trace, was situated at Qasbah Bagha in the thana of Bilmeriya. It was an endowed institution several hundred years old. The Police sub-division of Natore was taken by Adam as decidedly in advance of the rest.

The state of traditional Islamic learning in the five districts of Bengal and Bihar was covered in the Third Report of Adam (1833). The following Table gives an idea of the Persian and Arabic schools - the number of scholars.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Persian Schools</th>
<th>Arabic Schools</th>
<th>Hindu Schools</th>
<th>Muslim Schools</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murshidabad</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burdwan</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birbhum</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tirhoot</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Behar</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>619</td>
<td>1,486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>694</strong></td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,096</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,558</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,654</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The striking fact which emerges from the survey of Adam is that even in Persian and Arabic schools Hindu scholars outnumbered Muslims by 4 to 3 - and if Hindus attending
Sanskrit schools are added, Hindu students number 4,651 and Muslims only 1,558. In the field of Vernacular education, the Muslims appeared to have lagged behind the Hindus even more remarkably - there being 22,951 Hindu scholars to only 1,260 Muslims.

**TABLE NO. II**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Bengali Schools</th>
<th>Hindi Schools</th>
<th>Hindu Schools</th>
<th>Muslim Schools</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murshidabad</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>998</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burdwan</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12,403</td>
<td>769</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13,190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dirbhum</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6,125</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6,383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tirhoot</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Bihar</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>2,918</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,090</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reasons for this wide disparity in the number of Muslim and Hindu scholars in Vernacular schools were economic backwardness of the Muslims and the decline of traditional Islamic learning which revolved round the Madrasas. Moreover, in comparison with the Hindus, "the greater degradation and ignorance of lower classes of Musalmans" explained the educational backwardness of the Muslims. A small number of
upper class Muslims cultivated Persian language and Islamic studies through Arabic which was "foreign and unknown, and consequently unfit for being employed as the medium of instruction for the people." The lower class of Muslims, who felt no urge for Persian, remained outside the charmed circle of Muslim traditional learning.

The dim light of Muslim learning was kept alive by the continued use of Persian as official language till 1837 in judicial and revenue administration. The practical need of cultivating the Persian language afforded an artificial prop to the tottering Madrasa educational system. The early English government under Robert Clive and his successors did not substantially alter the constitution of country courts and native law beyond adapting them to the needs of British rule. Warren Hastings set up in each district a civil and criminal court under a British Officer called District Collector. He established at Calcutta a "High Court" called Sadar Dewani Adalat and the Sadar Nizamat Adalat was also temporarily transferred from Murshidabad to Calcutta. The Regulation VII of 1793 vested in the Sadar Dewani Adalat exclusive authority to appoint Wākīls (Pleaders) from amongst the students of the Calcutta Madrasa or any other candidates trained in the study of Muhammadan law. "The Naib-Nazim or principal officer of the Native Courts of Criminal Law was also instructed that whenever vacancies should arise in the
Fouzdari Courts, they should be filled from the students of the Madrasa, upon the production of certificates from their superior." 95

By sweeping away the old structure of administration, Governor-General Cornwallis and his successors had edged Muslims out of the revenue-collecting system. Already the reduction of the armies of the Nawab of Bengal threw out of employment a large number of Muslims. The Fouzdars of the Mughal period were supplanted by European Magistrates in 1781. The Judges of the Criminal Courts, who before 1790 had been exclusively Muslim were, as a class, abolished by Cornwallis. The Muhammadan Qazis and Muftis were, of course, retained, but the introduction of trial by jury in 1832 and the substitution of Persian as official language by English in 1837 greatly reduced their importance. 96

The working of the Permanent Settlement gradually destroyed most of the old Muslim aristocracy. The Resumption proceedings after 1828 accelerated their decay. The Resumption proceedings "impoveryished... many families.... But a larger number of families became poor by the substitution of English by Persian. It was not merely that the Muhammadans lost the monopoly of the Courts and several branches of the Executive Service, the old system of education was also rendered useless, and this
proved disastrous from a pecuniary point of view."

The Muslim aristocracy still clung to orthodox Muslim studies with a nostalgia and religious reverence. The sterility and decadence of Islamic education and the time-lag of the English education in the Muhammadan community were as much due to the want of patronage without as to the apathy of scholars within them. The widespread poverty of its members in a tottering social order, the pride of by-gone glory and exaggerated fear of the traditional faith being tainted with the heresy of the New Learning might have contributed to keep them away from English education.

iv. Reorganization of Calcutta Madrasa:

In tracing the achievements of the Muslim community in the field of education under British rule, it is necessary to keep the Calcutta Madrasa in the forefront of discussion, for it was the oldest government institution around which the education of the Muslims in Bengal grew up. The main object of establishing the Calcutta Madrasa (1781) was to provide a training ground for public services and for the legal profession at a time when Persian was the official language and fiscal and judicial administration were still
carried on in accordance with Muslim law. Since the establishment of British power in Bengal, it was urged by a section of the Muslim population to promote Islamic studies by a suitable measure. Mr. Fisher, searcher of the records at the East India House in London, held the view that "the original intention of the founder appears to have been to promote the study of the Arabic and Persian languages, and of the Mahommedan law with a view, more especially, to the production of well-qualified officers for the Courts of Justice." 99

The knowledge of Islamic studies that the Madrasa imparted was in no way related to the growing bulk and complexity of regulations which governed the working and constitution of the Company's Courts. Nor was its training relevant to the nature of the professional skill needed in the administration of justice according to the precision of Western principles and methods. The traditional course of study such as prescribed in the syllabus of the Madrasa - Theology, Astronomy, Geometry, Arithmetic, Logic, Rhetoric, Grammar and Philosophy - had, in fact, lost most of its utility in the new regime. Calcutta Madrasa under native management proved both costly and of limited usefulness. Charles Lushington 99A observed that "its ample resources were dissipated among the superior and subordinate drones of the establishment." 100 The most obvious means of improving
the Madrasa would be to introduce European knowledge in order
to supplement the obsolete literary studies.

The first attempt to introduce European knowledge
into the course of study, was contained in a Resolution of
Government dated July 1823, based upon the Madrassa Committee's
Annual Report. The Resolution was forwarded to the newly
formed General Committee of Public Instruction, which was
directed "to introduce European science into the Madrassa,
as far as practicable." In September, 1823, the issue of
introduction of Western science into Madrasa studies came
under the consideration of the General Committee. Mr. Hariston,
the President, placed on record the following observations
on the subject: "With reference to the general character
of Oriental literature and science, the bad taste pervading
the former and the erroneous notions which abound in every
department of the latter, so as to render scientific pursuits
as now accessible to the Madrasa students, barren of any
useful results, such measures be adopted as are calculated
to introduce among the students a taste for English literature
and science, as the only means of opening their eyes to the
faults of their own."101

The General Committee, which had the power of re-
commending expenditure to Government, hesitated and gave a
non-committal reply, hoping "to be able to introduce some
modifications of the existing plan which shall better consult the convenience and promote the progress of the students." 102

An English class was formed in the Madrasa towards the close of 1824, but the experiment proved only a short-lived success. In April 1826 the English Department was again introduced with more satisfactory result. 103 In 1833, the General Committee, being desirous of extending still further the study of English in the Madrasa, resolved as follows -

"It is to be clearly understood that the study of English is on no account to interfere with the established studies of the institution." 104

The English Department was, however, filled with unwilling pupils, who devoted too short a time to be able to make more than a very limited progress. In 1837, the number went up to 155, including 20 of the Arabic Department voluntarily learning English. The growing desire to acquire English is obvious but the standard of teaching was unfortunately low and attainments of the most proficient were merely elementary. 105

In 1840, the number of English scholars rose to 136 only to fall again to 88 in 1841. This sharp decline in number in one year was ascribed by the Committee to the "new
rules of rejecting pupils of certain age (more than 8 years), and not admitting youths of low caste, who merely joined the school to learn a little reading and writing to fit them for situations they expect to occupy."  

In 1843, except for 2 students of the English Department, none came up to the standard of Junior Scholarship. In addressing the students in that year, W.W. Bird regretted "that the Mahomedan students in general attached "but little importance to a knowledge of English." The periodical and surprise visits of the General Committee revealed again that of the institutions under them, only the English department of the Madrasa was in an unsatisfactory state. The unsatisfactory state of the English department had attracted the attention of the Deputy Governor of Bengal who felt that the present system had made "little progress in reconciling the higher orders of the Mahomedan people to the advantage of an English Education."  

The Council of Education, on receipt of this suggestion, directed Dr. Mouat to report on a scheme of reorganisation of the Madrasa. Mouat suggested that for efficient teaching, the school be divided into two divisions - the first to consist of the 18 most advanced boys and the second of the remaining 26, to be arranged into two classes according to their respective proficiency. This, he thought, would make it possible to dispense with one teacher and thus materially
reduced the expenditure of the department. The Madrasa again fell back to its degraded position and the report of Inspector Lodge, to the Government in 1845, revealed the chaotic condition of the English classes. The Council, on perusal of the Madrasa returns, submitted by Colonel Riley, Secretary of the Madrasa, became aware of many irregularities; for instance, many students were shown as absent for long periods without assigning proper reasons. The Council thought that without personal superintendence, constant watchful vigilance and direct supervision, it was quite impossible to prevent the Madrasa from deteriorating.

In 1847, it was found that the Arabic students of the Madrasa, for whom the English class was originally opened, hardly availed themselves of its advantages. Another class, called the Anglo-Arabic, therefore was formed for the students. Nothing, however, was done to improve the tone of the English department by the appointment of a qualified Headmaster. In 1850, important changes were introduced into the Madrasa with the appointment of Dr. Aloys Sprenger, a well-known Arabic scholar, as Principal. Dr. Sprenger, who had taken office in November 1850, was called upon by the Council of Education to report on the Institution in order to complete its re-organization in all departments. Dr. Sprenger submitted the required report in February 1852.
His scheme, in brief, was to cultivate Arabic and Persian as a philological pursuit; to teach the pupils first the elements of modern sciences and then the corresponding scholastic theories. He would teach Arabic and Persian as Greek and Latin were taught in Europe and would teach the sciences by modern text-books in English. He recommended the study of English and the amalgamation of the existing English and Anglo-Arabic departments to encourage the combined pursuit of English and Oriental studies. 

The Council of Education had adequate grounds for believing that the Muslims had begun to be impressed with the importance of these facts to the interest of their rising generation. There was a growing desire for English education amongst the higher and more respectable classes of the Muslim Community in Bengal. The failure of the English class at the Madrasa was due rather to the bad quality of instruction imparted there and to other defects of their system than to the general indisposition of the Muslims to the study. 

The fundamental aim of the reform of the Madrasa proposed by the Council was, while maintaining its distinctive character as an efficient seminary of Arabic instruction for the learned classes of the Muslim Community, to infuse into it the same spirit of progress and adaptation to the
wants of the changing time, which so distinctively characterized the reform of Sanskrit College under the superintendence of the enlightened scholar, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar. 117

The Council further urged that every facility should be provided for the cultivation of the highest Oriental learning, while the pupils might be induced to take up the study of English language to bring them into harmony with the highest scheme of general instruction then prevailing in the country. 118 The Government of Bengal accepted the reform proposal of the Council of Education on 21 October 1853. 119 In the Education Despatch of 1854 the Directors of the East India Company expressed satisfaction with "the increasing desire of the Mohammedan population of Bengal to acquire European knowledge." 120 They stated that the Oriental colleges in Bengal appeared to be in an unsatisfactory condition, that the scheme of study pursued there was under consideration by the Council of Education and that the colleges should be placed upon such a footing as might make them of greater practical utility. 121 The Despatch further emphasized the importance of Madrasa as a seat of learning which would supply a considerable number of educational establishments worthy of being affiliated to the University and occupying the highest place in the criterion of general instruction. It also recommended instruction in the English and vernacular languages
in the Madrasa so as to diffuse European knowledge. 122

The plan for remodelling the Madrasa was executed in July 1854. The Anglo-Persian department was staffed with more teachers and with some of the best that the Council had at their disposal and every step was taken to make it "worthy of the confidence of Mussulman gentlemen." In conformity with their wish, "no christian, Hindoos, or even Mussulmens of low parentage" were admitted to the department, but in consideration of their reduced circumstances, Muslims paid a fee which was only one quarter of that charged at the Hindu School and one half of that demanded at the Colingah school. The Council of Education was convinced that nothing else would induce Muslim gentlemen "to give their children the advantages of an English education." 123

The Education Report of 1855-56 found the Madrasa pupils to be orderly, regular in their attendance, and anxious to learn. 124 With an adequate and efficient staff of teachers and an efficient Headmaster, it was hoped that pupils educated under the new system would soon rival others of similar institutions in the metropolis. The Reports of the examiners in English, Persian and Urdu were highly satisfactory; in Bengali, too, the boys showed much progress though their pronunciation was defective. The number of students by 30 April, 1856, in the Anglo-Persian department
had risen to 111 and this number increased next year to 158. 125 Of 158 students in 1856-57, all read English and Persian, 68 read Urdu and 90 Bengali. 126 This increase in the number of students in the Bengali class indicated that the respectable class of Muslims in the City, to most of whom Bengali was not the mother tongue, 127 were slowly adjusting themselves to circumstances and adopting the vernacular of the Province, spurred on, doubtless, by the fact that knowledge of the language was a prerequisite for Government employment.

The Arabic department of the Madrasa, however, showed no improvement. Injudicious reforms caused a falling off in the number of its pupils as well as in their attainments....

The number of students fell from 173 in April 1854 128 to 59 in April 1856. The fall was ascribed to fee-paying system enforced in the department from July 1854. When the fee was subsequently reduced, the number steadily increased till in August 1856 it had risen to 107. 129

The main problem involved in any attempt to bring the Madrasa to the mainstream of new education in Bengal was to supersede the Oriental course of study by a scheme of Western education which went against the expressed purpose of the Institution. But in April 1858 Sir Fredrick Halliday, the Lt. Governor of Bengal, asked the Director of Public
Instruction for a special report on the Madrasa. He sought the Director's opinion after consulting the Principal of the Madrasa, William Nassau Lees on this subject. Principal Lees submitted an elaborate report in which he reviewed the general, educational and financial aspects of the question. In a subsequent memorandum, Principal Lees mentioned various obstacles in the way of reforms as urged by the Council of Education in 1853. Thereupon the Lieutenant Governor in a Minute strongly recommended the abolition of the Arabic Department of the Madrasa. The Government of India did not agree with this and advised the implementation of reforms suggested by the Council of Education in 1853. Mr. Azizul Haque suggests that "had the Madrasa in all its branches been incorporated with the University system, with such modifications as might have been needed for the purpose, the Musalmans would not perhaps have been so backward as they are today." 

The type of education the British had found when they arrived in India was almost entirely religious and it was cultivated by a small section of the population who were indifferent to the general needs of the people. The classical education of the Hindus was almost a sectarian affair, a monopoly of the Brahmin and vaisya castes. They devoted their life studying religious texts in Sanskrit...
which had little bearing on the complicated socio-economic problems of the early 19th century. This orthodox system of cultivating traditional knowledge by the Hindus was put under increasing pressure to accommodate new ideas and information available in Western knowledge.

The Government felt the same urge to enliven Muslim classical education which was mainly literary and conducted in Arabic and Persian language unknown to the ordinary Muslim folk. So Government made strenuous attempts to improve and reconcile Hindu and Muslim classical education with Western knowledge as the only possible alternative to their complete futility in the changing socio-economic requirements of a growing society.

The reform and regeneration of Islamic education in the Madrasa presented a formidable challenge as the Muslim community adopted a hostile attitude to the new Western learning. The meeting and mingling of Western cultural values with the traditional Muslim outlook was very fragile and fitful. The lack of appreciation of Western knowledge by the traditional scholars in Muslim society rendered the British experiment of reconciling the two cultural elements a difficult problem.

The Hindu traditional Pandits, on the other hand, were ready to welcome Western knowledge as a necessary element in reconstruction of the traditional course of study.
Unlike the Muslims, the Hindu Pandits made no conscious effort to oppose the cultivation of western knowledge and especially scholars like Iswarchandra Vidyasagar, Mrityunjay Vidyalankar, Madan Mohan Tarkalankar and Ramkamal Sen were pioneers in introducing Western knowledge on the traditional Hindu learning.


9. Mr. Ward's Report was quoted in Adam Report, the accuracy of the number of pupils as given by Mr. Ward questioned by Mr. Adam - (Adam's Report P.50).

10. Professor H.H. Wilson's Report, then Secretary of the General Committee of Public Instruction, was missing in the Bengal Office as well as in the Office of the Home Dept. of the Govt. of India (A summary of the Report contained in Adam's Report, P.51, 52).

11. Professor E.B. Cowell, in his Report to the Director of Public Instruction of the 17 Jan, 1867, P.3.


13. The investigations which Adam carried out were spread over three years, 1935-1938, during which period he submitted those separate Reports, dated 1st July 1835, 23 December 1835 and 28 April 1838. The First Report was based upon five earlier reports-
the Buchanan Reports, 1807-1814, Walter Hamilton's East India Gazetteer, 2 Vols, (2nd edn., 1828) the Records of the General Committee of Pub. Inst., 1823-35; contemporary Missionary Reports and Fisher's Memoir with a Supplement, dated 1827 and 1832. In his Second Report Adam surveyed the Nattore Police Sub-division of the Rajshahi District, while in his Third Report he recorded the results of his investigations spread over a period of 16 months and covering the district of Birbhum, Burdwan, Tirhoot and South Behar and twenty thanas of the district of Murshidabad.


17. &quot;Ibid.&quot; Ibid.

18. Adam's Report, P. 120.


23. Professor E.B. Cowell, Principal, Sanskrit College, 
   Report to the D.P.I., 17 Jan., 1867, P.8.

24. Minute by Lord Minto, dated 6 March 1811, (Selections 

25. Revenue Consultations, 6 March, 27 August, 18 June, 1811.

26. Revenue Consultations, 5 May, 1815.

27. Judicial (Civil) Consultations, Lower Provinces of Bengal, 
   29 Nov. 1816.


   P.79.

35. J. Kerr, Ibid.


37. Files for Letters Received (1844-47), Sanskrit College manuscript Record.

38. Madanmohan Tarkalankar (1817-53): a reputed Sanskrit scholar, Professor of Literature in Sanskrit College (1846), Judge-Pandit (1850) and Dy. Magistrate (1855). A champion of female education helped in the establishment of Bethune School, wrote article in the "Sarbaashakari" for it.


41. General Report on P.I. in the Lower Provinces of Bengal Presidency (1 October 1850 to 31 September 1851), P. 34-43.

42. Letter from F.J. Mouat, Secy. to the Council of Education, to J.P. Grant, Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal, at Fort William, 4 Jan, 1851 - Education Consultations 29 Jan, 1851, No. 3.

43. Edn. Consultation, 29 Jan, 1851, No. 4.
44. Letter from the Under Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal to Pandit Iswar Chandra Sharma, dt. 22 Jan, 1851 - Ed. Con. 29 Jan, 1851, No. 5.

45. Ed. Consultation, 29 Jan, 1851, No. 3.


47. Ed. Con. 15 April 1852, No. 2.

48. Ed. Con. 15 April 1852, No. 4.

49. Notes on the Sanskrit College, 12 April 1852.

50. A. Tripathi - Vidyasagar: Traditional Moderniser, (New Delhi, 1974), P. 33.


52. General Report on Public Instruction in the Lower Provinces of Bengal Presidency from 27 Jan to 30 April 1855, P. 29-30.

54. Principal, J.Kerr, author of Review of Public Instruction in the Bengal Presidency, Part II, P. 51-52, observed that the author has studied hard to make it unintelligible. Only a faint glimmering of light, breaks through the compressed sentences in which the work is written. It is a method adapted to the unworthy purpose of confining knowledge, to a few, instead of diffusing it among many.


58. Education Consultation, 22 September 1853, No.44.

59. Letter from F.J.Mouat, Secy. to the Council of Education, to C.Beadon, Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal, 21 May 1853 - General Dept. Consultation. 16 June 1853, No. 43.

60. Ibid.

61. Copies of Correspondence between the Council of Education and the Principal of the Sanskrit College, Benaras, 1853. P. 1-12 (State Archives, West Bengal).


64. Proceedings of the Council of Education, dated 14 September 1853, No. XXI.


67. General Report on Public Instruction in the Lower Provinces of the Bengal Presidency, for 1855-56, P.

68. General Woodrow, Henry (1823-76) Promoter of education, Fellow Cambridge University (1848-54) Inspector of Schools (1855-75), Principal, Presidency College (1875), D.P.I. (1876).


70. Fuzli Rubbi, 'Origin of Musalmans in Bengal', Cal,1895, P.66, Jagirs and Altamghas were generally granted to Civil and Military officers, and A'ima, Madad-i-Ma'ash to learned men, spiritual leaders and persons of noble descent. Jagirs were granted nominally for life but they very often took hereditary character. A'imasa and Madad-i-Ma'ash were granted in perpetuity to holy men or
scholars. Rent-free lands were often granted to keepers of shrines, mosques and other religious establishments.

71. Buchanan-Hamilton, Dr. Francis (1762-1829): Came in Bengal as Surgeon (1792), undertook "Statistical Survey" of several districts of Bengal (1807-14), took interest in everything from Sanskrit study to silk-worms, took additional name on succeeding his mother's property.

72. Adam, Third Report, P.174, also P. 216, in which he mentions institutions of a large number of places.


75. These volumes have been referred to in previous discussions as "Eastern India" in its abbreviated form.

76. Martin, 'Eastern India', Vol. II., P. 710.

77. Adam, First Report, P. 118.

78. Eastern India, Vol. II., P. 705.


80. Adam relying on Buchanan's figures put the proportion of Muslims to Hindus as 10 to 9. Adam, First Report, P. 102.

81. 'Eastern India', Vol. III., P. 499-504.
82. 'Eastern India', Vol. III., P. 505.

83. Adam, First Report, P. 86-88. In fact, information about the existence of a large number of private schools in a languishing state was supplied by the Collector of Chittagong when government had started vernacular schools of their own.


85. Adam, First Report, P. 81.

86. Adam, Second Report, P. Xiv. (Summary of Tables, columns 6,7,8).


88. Adam, Second Report, P. 37. This was confirmed under Regulation II of 1819 (P.38).

89. Adam, Second Report, P. 69.

90. The Table (No. I) has been prepared from facts and figures contained in Adam's Third Report, P. 63-76.

91. The Table No. II has drawn up from facts and figures contained in Adam's Third Report, P. 17,24,30 and 33.

92. Adam, Third Report, P. 76.

95. Parliamentary Papers relating to the affairs of India;
(Appendix I, Public, 1832), P. 396-7.


97. Report of the Director of Public Instruction (1871-2),
P.73, W.W.Hunter echoed the same feeling in the following observation: "Hundreds of ancient families were ruined and the educational system of the Musalmans, which was entirely maintained rent-free grants, received its death-blow" - 'The Indian Musalmans' (Reprint of 3rd Edition, London, 1876), Calcutta 1945. P. 177.

98. Thomas Fisher (1772-1836) entered the services of the East India Company as a clerk in the East India House in 1786. In 1826 the Committee of Correspondence of the Court of Directors of the East India Company desired information about "the extent to which aid had been afforded by the local Governments in India towards the establishment of native schools in that country." In pursuance
of this Fisher submitted his memoir on 7 February 1827 along with a "supplement to the foregoing memoir in 23 February 1832 containing further proceedings of the local Governments in India relative to native schools.

99A. Lushington, Charles (1785-1866): Chief Secy., Govt. of India-(1825).
106A. William Wilberforce Bird - arrived in India, 1803; Judge and Magistrate of Benares, 1814; Member Board of Revenue, 1829; Member of the Supreme Council, 1838; President of the Council of Education, 1842; Deputy Governor of Bengal, 1840, 1842; Acting Governor General June 15 to July 23 1844; Died 1857.


114. Selections from Records of Bengal Govt., No. XIV, Papers relating to the Presidency College, Appendix IV, P. XVI-XXIII.

115. Ibid.


119. Ibid, P. 112-118, (Letter from the Govt. of Bengal to the Council of Education, dated 21 October, 1853).

120. Ibid, P. 388 (Despatch of 19 July 1854, Para 82).

121. Ibid, P. 390 (Despatch of 1854, Para 90).

122. Ibid, P. 375 (Despatch of 1854, Para 38).


127. The examiner of the Bengali class, a Hindu, while
expressing his satisfaction at the result of examination in 1855-56, was inclined to credit them more "considering that they are all Mahomedans." G.R.P.I., 1855-56, App. A., P. 15-16.


130. Education Proceedings, 11 Nov. 1858, No. 25.

131. Education Proceedings, 11 Nov. 1858, No. 27.

132. Education Proceeding, 11 Nov. 1858, No. 28.

132A. Education Proceedings, July 1860, No. 11.

133. Azizul Haque, History and problems of Moslem Education in Bengal, Cal, 1917, P. 27.