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Dr. Bhupendra Singh
Professor, Department of
History, Meerut College,
Meerut, Uttar Pradesh, India

Nandan Das
Research Scholar, Department
of History, Meerut College,
Meerut, Uttar Pradesh, India

Cultural distinctiveness & some aspects of education in Midnapore in the nineteenth century

Bhupendra Singh and Nandan Das

Abstract

India has had a rich tradition of traditional learning both among the Hindus and Muhammadans, dating back to the ages. In the medieval period, right after the invasion of the Turks, there flourished, as a causation and a continuance of traditional academicism, maktabas and madrasahs in different parts of Bengal. Gradually, while on one hand, maktabas emerged as centres of elementary learning, the madrasahs came to be, for higher learning. Often mentioned as having been centres of Indigenous elementary institutes, these maktabas were essentially what are now known as 'primary schools'. However, at the same time, these elementary institutes, besides their general academics, carried forward a religious character imbibed. Oftentimes situated adjacent to the mosques, that the syllabuses had also been formulated as a result of religious assimilation in academics, is not very surprising. This paper attempts to analyse the condition of the maktab learning and the state of the Muhammadans in Midnapore during the 19th and 20th centuries in colonial Bengal. An analysis of the condition of the maktabas and their modifications, since the period preceding the British rule until Independence, has also been undertaken, through what has been observed in primary sources such as Government reports, archival data, and census records.

Keywords: Bengal, Maktab, Muhammadan, Midnapore, education, government

Introduction

In the period preceding the British rule on the Indian soil, Midnapore had its own indigenous vernacular system of learning which was of quite some significance during the era they were mostly prevalent in, and of course, the continuance through which they were extolled in the one that came after, i.e., with the introduction of the British hegemony in Bengal. In Bengal, the pre-British era primarily saw two types of education system that continued into the colonial times-the first, a type of primary education, better classified as indigenous elementary schools, which included pathshalas and maktabas, and the second, that is for higher education, oftentimes likened to 'indigenous colleges', like schools and madrasahs. The majority of the Muhammadan education continued to take place in maktabas and madrasahs during the colonial times, even though it was the Turks who founded, and thus, were the first progenitors of such madrasahs in Bengal. In the same way the churches of Mediaeval Europe acted as centres of religious education in and around the region that came under their jurisdiction, Muhammadan learning in India was promoted through mosques established to attain a similar objective in and around the designated centres of learning. These educational institutes being situated adjacent to the mosques, that the syllabus should have had a profound impact of religious ideals in its formulation is in nature a spontaneity. Despite accepting English education in the colonial era, the institutions continued to maintain and assimilate their religious attributes in academia.

Cultural distinctiveness

In Midnapore, daily life generally moves slowly as a sort of homage to the city's mofussil provincial core. The majority of Midnaporeans are kind and relaxed back. In the hottest months of the year, it's common for stores to open late and close in the afternoon. Additionally, businesses may close for sporting events like the World Cup of football and cricket. There are several tea shops, paan booths, and mishtir dokaan (sweet stores) in abundance. This location is where you may get "Khirayer Gogjaa," one of Bengal's most famous candies. Bengali gossip, or adda, is common and well-liked.

Corresponding Author:
Dr. Bhupendra Singh
Professor, Department of
History, Meerut College,
Meerut, Uttar Pradesh, India

Although not as Oriya-centric as the dialects of Contai and Dantan, the local dialect of Bengali differs from the standard pronunciation used in Kolkata and does share a few minor similarities with Oriya. Speech is quite casual, and the West Bengal dialects *talebossho*, *murdhenoshho*, and *dontesho* are often pronounced differently.

Although they now adhere to the rituals and caste system of mainstream Hinduism, a sizeable portion of the population of the undivided district is descended from Vaishnavites, the followers of Shri Chaitanya. Many people left Odisha and came together to create the distinctive Bengali culture. Actually, it would be more accurate to describe the culture as a hybrid of Bengali and Oriya since the region was formerly a part of Odisha. The town is home to many Hindi speakers as well as Marwari and Bhojpuri speakers. Many of the town's Muslims use words from Bengali, Hindi, Urdu, and Bhojpuri in their pidgin dialect.

Since many residents of Mumbai enjoy walking, a number of parks have sprouted up recently as a form of entertainment. Gopegarh Heritage Park, which was established in 2001, is a great place for families and kids to picnic. At the admission office, reservations may be made for the picnic area and the boating amenities. Sukumar Sengupta Smriti Uddan, also known as Police Line Park, is the most well-known park in the area and is located close to the Central Bus Station. Sishu Uddan and Khudiram Park are more parks. In the chilly morning and evening hours, many people may be seen strolling along the river.

The Aurora, Mahua, and Hari Cinema Hall are just a few of the town's notable theatres. But only Hari Cinema Hall is still in operation as Aurora and Mahua have since closed. The Zilla Parishad Hall, Vivekandanda Hall (located within Midnapore College), and Vidyasagar Hall are a few halls that are run by both the government and the commercial sector. Numerous cultural events, such as plays, concerts, poetry readings, and dance performances, frequently take place here. Some of these serve as locations for the numerous "Melas" or canivals that are held annually on nearby grounds like the Midnapore College-collegiate ground, Church School ground (for the Christmas fair), and the river ground (for significant political gatherings).

The bank of the Kangsabati River, also known by the names Kasai and Cossye, is an excellent place for sightseeing, fishing, and picnics throughout the Christmas and New Year's holidays. Unfortunately, new homes, brick kilns, and communities are eroding the bank.



Fig 1: Rangamati Sarbajanin Durga Puja

The many religious practises and celebrations in Midnapur. Each year, a variety of festivals, many of which are religious in nature, are hosted in Midnapore. For Bengali Muslims in West Bengal and Bangladesh, the urs of the revered saint Hazrat Maulana Syed Shah Murshed Ali Alquadri Al Jilani, son of Hazrat Syed Shah Mehr Ali Alquadri Al Baghdadi, is a significant event. This occurs annually next to the Jora masjid (twin mosques). Fireworks are also sent off in celebration of Milad-un-Nabi. During the month of Ramadan, which concludes in celebration at Eid ul-Fitr, many pious Muslims observe fasts. Additionally, Eid ul-Adha, also known as Bakhri-Eid, is observed locally. In honour of Husayn ibn Ali, processions fill the streets during the commemoration of Muharram while staging pretend stick wars.

Rathayatra is observed in Asharh, a Bengali month that approximately corresponds to mid-September, along with the rest of Bengal and Odisha. Near the neighbourhood Jagannath temple, a fair is held. A fair held on the grounds of Nirmal Hriday Ashram is popular during the Christmas season. On this special day, the church is accessible to everyone, and members of all communities pack the prayer hall to see the stunning paintings depicting Jesus' life. With clay models, the resident students reenact the birth of Jesus. In addition, popular Bengali celebrations like Kali Puja, Saraswati Puja, and Durga Puja are held. Local clubs and groups have been competing with one another in recent years to construct the greatest Durga Puja pandals (temporary enclosures made of bamboo and fabric), mandaps (idols), and murtis (idols), often spending hundreds of thousands of dollars each club. The Pujas held recently by Keranitola, Burdge Town, Chottobazaar, Raja Bazaar, Bidhan Nagar, Ashok Nagar, and Judge's Court have received great praise. Sitala, Jagaddhatri, Holi, Janmashtami, Manasa, Kartika, and Ganesh are some other popular Pujas that are performed often but are not as widely observed.

In the city, Vishwakarma Puja is very well-liked. In contrast to Kolkata, kites are not flown in celebration of Vishwakarma Puja. People in Midnapur fly kites to commemorate "Baraam Puja," the day of a tribal deity, out of reverence for their tribal heritage. This occurs on Poush Sankranti, the final day of the Bengali month of Poush. On Poush Sankranti, a fair is also held in addition to kite flying. It has a rustic feel and is distinguished by the trade of domestic products and handicrafts. Spades, knives, and other iron tools are among the traded commodities. Combs and other objects made of buffalo horn, baskets (jhuri and dhama), and plates for husking (kula) made of bamboo and cane are other traded goods. Another Puja that is uncommon elsewhere is Bheema Puja.

Some elements of Midnapore's education in the nineteenth century

By way of informal social structure and the flow of ideas, education expanded gradually and covertly. The Midnipur district had a public education system prior to the arrival of the British, although its level of instruction fluctuated. Without a doubt, the standard was extremely low by today's standards. The Pathshala educational philosophy was rigorously utilitarian, and learning the Maktab without comprehending it was like to performing a pointless ritual. The primary focus of education was the memorization of sutras and dharas. Although limited, this secular and

practical education nevertheless addressed many shortcomings of village life. The course material was read. Writing letters, basic maths, bookkeeping, and scripts. Accounts pertaining to trade and/or agriculture were covered in class. The few textbooks that were available were insufficient. Specifically, Radhakrishna's love poems, etc. This period's Hindu and Muslim educational systems may be contrasted to demonstrate that there was no relationship between pathshala and toll. However, madrasahs and khatabs had a connection. While Maktab education was influenced by religion, Pathshala education was secular. But for a very long time, all of these indigenous educational systems served the needs of Bengal and India.

The 19th century saw the birth of the current educational system in India and Bengal. The indigenous educational system, which predominated up until the 18th century when the country was ruled by England, eventually gave way to the current educational system.

The British-approved educational system assumed a permanent seat in India and Bengal when the East India Company's control of the government was passed to the Empress of England in 1858. The British, however, had long since sought to establish English instruction in this nation. At initially, just a few Bengalis spoke and communicated in English for business purposes. For ordinary people to manage zamindari operations or get employment, a strong command of English is necessary. They learnt English by their own efforts, with aid from certain eras or English-experienced persons, and in some practical methods, according to historian Rameshchandra Majumder. They advanced significantly.

In England, liberalism experienced a period of turmoil in the 18th century. During this time, speeches by Burke and others like him helped shape public opinion against slavery and oppression. The poor's education was the focus of a movement. Even while the government did not see public education as a duty, religious congregations and other charitable organisations were increasingly organising public education. The Indian policies of British corporations were impacted by all of these developments. The personification of this influence was Charles Grant (1746-1823). Later, without any opposition or debate, western education gained a permanent position in India. To teach English, certain universities and schools were founded. Midnipur's "English Academy" was founded there in 1835. In more recent times, a few landowners and rich people stepped up to help build an English school in Midnipur. With only 18 pupils, Midnipur Collegiate School was founded in November 1834. The institution was turned up to the government in September 1835. The school fund had 2000 rupees at the moment. Ekton was this school's principal in 1834. The kids were given a monthly stipend of four annas, or 25 paise in today's money. This month's price was raised to one rupee in 1850. There is now a Collegiate School. The school was founded with donations of 1500 rupees from the Maharaja of Burdwan and a sizeable sum from the Raja of Mahishadal. There were pupils from Europe and Bengali descent in the school. The Puradastur English School, according to Lord Meckle, the education secretary. It was a nineteenth-century school. It became known as Higher Class School in the 1970s.

Although the government is in charge of managing the school, parents are primarily responsible for covering its costs. For instance, monthly student collections were £493

and yearly government funds were £269. 10s, OD. Only the children of affluent families may enrol their children at this school due to its lengthy semesters. There were 246 pupils enrolled at this institution during the 1871-1872 academic year. But only 192 students were present on average each day. It is astonishing that a daily average absence of more than fifty pupils indicates the significance that government schools at the time placed on student attendance.

At the time, the Medinipur district had three additional higher-class schools, including one in Medinipur (city). The other two are in Mahishadal and Tamluk. The institution of higher learning in Medinipur. It serves as Medinipur Town School at the moment. Kartik Chandra Mitra, an electrical enthusiast, founded this institution on January 3rd, 1883, at the location of the current Hari cinema. Later, he donated the two-story house with the circular verandah that is now the school building. The Kartikchandra scholarship was given out annually to the student who scored highest among those who passed the admission test. To encourage kids to give and be kind, the school organised "Daritra Bhandare." On the day the school was founded, anta, khanj, and the destitute were given basu, winter clothing, and grains thanks to that money and the assistance of notable city inhabitants (Tara Januari). English was used as the teaching language at this institution. At first, the school did not get any funding from the government. Government funding for the school began in 1959, several years after it had first opened. Student fees were the school's primary source of funding. The remaining space was filled with gifts from rich residents and benefactors in the area. More low-income pupils attended these schools than at government English schools. When compared to government English schools, the quality of the teachers and the instruction was much lower. But this school played a unique part in the Swadeshi movement. Many of the students at this school gave their lives up too soon to break the country's chains of oppression. His outstanding examples are Mrgen Dutta, Anath Panja, Brajkishore Chakraborty, etc. The revolutionary Hemchandra Kanungo, the first bomber of the Agni period of Bengal and a follower of Sri Aurobindo, and Narendranath Das, the commander of the Bengal Volunteers Force, were among the valiant students who were initiated into the Agni Mantra and committed to serving the nation. Birendranath Das, Phani Das, Radharaman Chakraborty, Satishchandra Mallick, and others are practising society leaders.

Two higher English schools were built in the Tamluk subdivision in the second part of the 19th century. The tamluk. Mahishadal is where the other is. Raja Lachman Prasad Garna of Mahishadal founded both the English school and Mahishadal. Thus, Mahishadal Raj School became the name of this institution over time. The origin of the institution is the subject of a mythology. That is, during their time in Mahishadal, Lachman Prasad Garg's sister and sister-in-law had a son. Shivachandra (Mishra) was the name given to the infant. King Lachman Prasad cherished his new nephew, whom he lovingly referred to as Gurum. To help this Shivbabu or Gurumbabu get an education and receive an education in English, Lachman Prasad Garg founded an English school. The institution first held its sessions at Mahishadal Rajbari's Durga Mandapam. Later, the school was located on the banks of the Hijli Tivol Canal in a two-story brick structure. Relocated to the "Old Red School House." The only member of the Mahishadal royal

family at the time who received English education was Raja Lachman Prasad Gog. He had a specific interest for English education because of this. Raja Ramnath of Mahishadal's foster son Lachman Prasad had courage, altruism, and intelligence. He was the first to establish a high school for English in the Mahishadal area. He set up free housing and tuition for pupils travelling from outlying places so they could attend school for nothing. At the time, this school was the fourth in the Midnipur district. However, the first and only free educational facility. It was most likely the sole free English school throughout Bengal, not only in the Midnipur area. For the advancement of his father, Swapnayu Ishwar Prasad Garg, the son of Lachman Prasad, constructed and oversaw the upper English school. Built new residences and dorms. The Raj High School got formal recognition as a non-paying English High School in 1874, during Ishwar Prasad's rule. The school was most likely founded between 1868 and 1869. According to Hunter's account, there were no Mahishadal English School pupils in 1871-1872. The student failed to show up for the university admission test. The student did not have the necessary preparation time for this test since the school had only been open for two or three years.

Mahatma Hamilton founded Tamluk Higher Class School in 1852 AD with the assistance of the local British authority at the time. Earlier, this institution was known as English Bangla Vidyalaya. Hamilton often paid a visit to the school and spoke with the pupils to motivate them to learn. He once sent important national figures to Tamlu to help the school. The severe storm and flood in 1864 entirely destroyed the English school. However, thanks to Yadav Babu's extraordinary care and efforts, some money was raised from the local populace. The money raised was equivalent to the salary of the previous school inspector, H. L. Government money are used to help Mr. Harrison. For the school, a brick home was constructed. Because of this, Mr. Hamilton is credited with founding the High English School, although Jadav Babu really has that title. A variety of methods were used to raise money for this school's operation. Some techniques were new and unexpected. The students' monthly income was one of the school's primary sources of funding. The British Government would provide a grant up to the amount Maine Baba was able to collect from the pupils. The majority of the funds were collected from local residents' contributions. Being the second high English school in the district when it was founded, the school received government recognition and financial aid because it was founded by a Saheb. There were 76 pupils enrolled at this institution in 1871-1872. There were 50 persons present on average each day.

Local contractors provide financial support for the building. In addition, the tuition cost was gradually raised each year as the school's revenue rose. The school conserved money that was given at exorbitant interest rates to companies and even the monarch. The school used to maintain some kind of mortgage for this. Small business owners used to borrow money from the school with interest as well. Furthermore, the school made a profit by selling the stump paper at a higher price after purchasing it with school funds. A teacher or a member of the management committee was in charge of managing each of these projects. Since the absence of students would have increased the school's revenue, students were not questioned about their reasons for missing class. The then-directors' association's major goal was to

emphasise that increasing the school's financial standing did not always result in better student instruction. It is seen because of this. All Tamluk English School pupils failed the university entrance test in 1871-1872.

There were 523 students enrolled in the four English-language schools in the Medinipur district in the 1970s. They included 5 Christians, 27 Muslims, and 491 Hindu students. With 463 pupils, the middle class makes up the majority of the student body at the institution. In addition, there were 45 persons from lower class and 15 from upper middle class. The British founded Midnipur Collegiate School and Tamluk Hamilton School, although the native Bengalis played a significant role. Mahishadal Raj School and Midnipur Town Mool were both founded and run solely by Bengalis. The Hindu rulers and the Bengali people both benefited from the introduction of English education. This education, which at the time was based on rational thought and thinking in the European tradition, mental improvement through the application of various modern science departments, and new stimulation of knowledge, intelligence, and work force, was not introduced with the intention of producing clerical staff. Instead, it was intended to discuss the ideas and deeds of students who had been educated under the new system at the time. If you do, it will be pretty clear.

It may be mentioned in this context that until 1837 Persian was the language of the court. English language was not valued much in Midnipur district until the middle of the nineteenth century. In 1844 the Government took a proposal that preference should be given to persons who know English in appointment to government jobs. At court, as Persian gradually disappeared in Kachari, English began to take its place. Hindus are more interested in English education than Muslims. Wherever English schools are established in villages or towns. All those places continued to be considered advanced in the initiation of education. From the middle of this century, English education in the villages also increased spontaneously. Almost every zamindar in the district started opening an English school in his zamindari, essentially a symbol of nobility. The main reason for sending boys to English schools was to increase the family income. A university degree was considered very prestigious in those days. Any young man who passed the entrance then had a very high price in the marriage market. If you have a higher university degree, it doesn't matter." At that time, the value of Sanskrit was gradually decreasing. Although the Braptans still needed Sanskrit education for their livelihood. But gradually Bralgun children also started learning English along with Sanskrit. The influence of traditional education was gradually declining among the Muslims as well.

In the eighties of the nineteenth century, several more English high schools were established in Medinipur district. Notable among them are Kotai High School, Garbeta High School, Birsingh Bhagwati High School, Ghatal Vidyasagar High School etc. The first school (original in Anglo Vernacular) was born in Kanthi subdivision on 20th March 1857. Shambhuchandra Lahiri and some electronics enthusiasts and Suntagent G. W. Kanthi High School was first established as an Anglo-Bengal school with the help of Beli Saheb and in Beli Saheb's bungalow. Around 1860, Bankimchandra came to Kanthi as a Deputy Magistrate. Through his personal initiative, the school acquired several vacant government lands. The school started with two

departments-Vernacular and Anglo Vernacular. In the vernacular section mine was 2 annas monthly and in the Anglo-vernacular section 8 annas. At that time the minimum age for admission to any department was sixteen. However, most of the students pass secondary school at the age of sixteen. It was compulsory for the members of the school management association to visit the school in turn on a certain day of the week. The member who broke the rules was called to apologize. And their comments recorded in the record book were discussed in the next monthly session. Such responsibility and discipline within the governing body also rested on the faculty and student community of the school. The teacher was forced to resign for incompetence. Most of the teacher's leave was unpaid. There was also a system of punishing the student by wearing a hat".

Shambhuchandra Lahiri was the founder president and Sukhancharan Chandra was the secretary. The expenses of the school were met by the subscription of the members of the Board of Directors, the donations of the local people and the salaries of the students. The school clerk had to be done by the head teacher. There were two gardeners in the school. Mine was 5 taka 8 annas. One of the school's two gardeners had only to go around collecting the subscriptions. Various prizes and scholarships were offered to attract students to the school. Around 1864, due to the decrease in the amount of local subscriptions, D.P.I. He ordered to close the Bengal division. And it was in this year that the school was promoted to Mill English Mis. But unfortunately, this year has been hit by strong sea storms.

This school in Chala suffered a lot of damage. The ruined school came up temporarily in a salt merchant's house. The local people extended their helping hands to repair the school. Government also grants Rs.75. An indication of how much masi was used in the Anglo-vernacular roots at that time is available from the August 7 report of this school. For example, in July 1864, Kanthi School received Rs 501 8 annas from subscription and Rs 36 from salary. And the salary calculation for that month is Headmaster (acting) 50 taka, second master 20 taka, scholar 20 taka, 2 servants 5 taka 8 annas. Continuity 2 Rs. Total cost 97 8 annas. In the cyclone of 1874, the school again suffered special damage. However, the school survives with the help of local people. In 1881 the school was converted into a Higher Class English School. This year, Chandramohan Purkaing, a student of the school, passed the second category in the entrance examination and won the scholarship. Since then the school has played a special role in promoting education in the Kanthi sub-district.

Garbeta High School was established on 2nd March 1988. Purnachandra Chatterjee was the first head scholar of this Surya. His monthly mine was Rs.15. Second master's monthly mine was 20 taka and third master's 17 taka. Ghatal Vidyasagar High School was established a few years before Garbeta High School. This school was established on 1st January 1882. The school was established to honor Vidyasagar and spread English education in the local area. The oldest girls' school in the district is Medinipur Mission High Girls' School. In 1865, a missionary Mrs. Batchelor, inspired by the ideals of human service, started teaching at her home with a few shepherd boys and a few woodcutter girls. The latent seed of this institution lay in his compassion for the poor, downtrodden, neglected people. Regular reading started in 1866 AD. This school was upgraded to

High School in 1900 AD".

From Hunter's account, there were six types of schools other than higher class schools in Medinipur district in the seventies of the nineteenth century. Namely (1) Middle Class English School (2) Middle Class Vernacular School, (3) Primary School, (4) Normal School, (5) Girls School and (6) Uninspected Indigenous School.

There was no government middle class English school in the entire Midnipur district. But there were some non-government and government-aided schools. About 16 Out of these 4 are good, 7 are fair, 4 are average and 1 is poor. This substandard school was located in Mahalapota. The school was in financial trouble. Two other schools namely Chhatraganj Needle Class English School and Kamra Middle Class Honglish School have very poor financial structure.

It is not that there was no opportunity for girls to study in Midnipur district in the nineteenth century. But it was very less than the requirement. There were 3 government girls' schools in the whole district. Medinipur city, Tamluk and Chandpur. The total number of female students was 72. Among them, 60 people belong to the middle class and 12 people belong to the lower class. The Baptist Mission had a special role in spreading education in this district. They set up a school for orphan girls in Medinipur city. (The establishment of the Medinipur Mission Girls' School has already been mentioned.) The members of the Baptist Mission began to educate 78 women in Medinipur town. A few show excellence in learning. A girl from this mission joins the Church of England causing some consternation. As a result the number of female students also decreased slightly. Previously, the number of teachers in girls' schools was determined in proportion to the number of students. Later this rule was changed and the government provided some financial grant in proportion to the number of female students who could at least write on palm leaves and read simple and simple sentences". The spirit of female education in the district increased during this time. In the letter of 1854 AD, special attention was given to female education. Iswarchandra Vidyasagar Mahashay was a pioneer in that regard, but his efforts were more applied in the field of primary education. The efforts of the missionaries were hindered at that time in spreading education. Because the government and the public did not trust the missionaries. After the Sepoy Mutiny, many English believed that the activities of the missionaries Dangerous. That is why the Maharani's Proclamation of 1858 AD emphasized religious neutrality, and since then stricter enforcement of the neutral policy in education also increased. Therefore, the government did not agree to go further than the system of keeping one Bible in every school library. As a result of the government aid policy, missionaries in the Indian education sector at that time. Instead the Indian effort gained the majority. But the result was not entirely good. Many aided private schools were not in good financial condition. Moreover, local public encouragement led to the establishment of schools that did not meet the conditions necessary to sustain government aid or approval. So much for lack of good teachers, inexperience and financial woe.

After 1854 AD, although English was supported as the medium of secondary education, there was a plan to use regional languages. It recognized the need for two types of schools, Anglo-vernacular and English, and said that

although the standards of Anglo-vernacular schools were inherently low, efforts would be made to bridge the gap between the two types of schools. But there is no interest in the use of Bengali language in the country of Bengal. Before teaching the mother tongue well, from the beginning, teach English as a subject alongside it. Would have been In Anglo vernacular schools, subjects other than English were taught in the mother tongue and other subjects other than Bengali were taught in English from the seventh standard. Until 1861, there was an option to answer questions in Bengali language in the entrance examination on history, geography, mathematics etc. But after 1861 all questions were asked to be written in English. After that there was no way for the Anglo vernacular schools to defend themselves".

Until 1854 AD the system of primary education by the Company was strictly experimental. The letter of 1854 referred to "necessary and practical education suitable to every walk of life" and to the education of "those who lack the power of self-education". Mr. Thomson's approach was idealized by giving every province freedom to plan for primary education, and by judicious patronage of country schools, the primary education of the common people. It was ordered to be appropriated. By reducing the expenditure on higher and secondary education, there was an opportunity to focus more on primary education. But this education did not progress as expected as the government focus on higher and secondary education at work. After 1859, land tax fell from / % to 7%. In 1875, after the Bengal famine of 1873-74, the Famine Commission sat and its report opposed any new tax on land tax. Thus, the government of Bengal was forced to expand primary education through aid.

By the seventies of the nineteenth century there were several types of primary schools. Government primary schools, private primary schools and mission-run primary schools. There were also a few night primary schools. The medium of primary education was Bangla language, the school house and furniture etc. were as cheap and simple as possible. In rural and backward areas, school holidays and class timings were determined according to local needs. Some poor students had the opportunity to study without pay. There were four night primary schools in the district for those who worked all day for a living.

The American Baptist Mission is credited with spreading primary education in the tribal areas of Medinipur. They established 42 primary schools in Santal-dominated areas at the end of the 19th century. These primary schools were commonly known as Pathshalas. The main purpose of the schools was to teach boys good handwriting, to write and read documents and letters, to teach oral arithmetic and some principles. In all these schools, the lower class students were the majority. Out of a total of 5671 students, 4789 are Hindus, 193 are Muslims and 689 are Christians.

Some normal schools were opened to train primary school teachers. In those days, no one could become a teacher in any school without training in a normal school. In the 19th century there were two normal schools in Medinipur district. One is government, the other is partially government aided. The government used to spend twice as much in public schools as compared to private schools. Good education spread among the Santals at this time through the efforts of the American Baptist Mission. A Santal teacher exhibits special skills and expertise in training. Because of that he was promoted to the post of school inspector. It goes

without saying that no one would have failed by enrolling in a normal school. Every student received some form of government scholarship. In 1871-72, 50 out of 51 students in the District Normal School passed.

In 1872, Campbell allocated an annual aid of Rs. Seeing the great affection of the people of the country for the scholars of the ordinary Guru Mahashay class, he supported the education system by them and believed that the people of the village would give up the paternal work if they were more educated. Therefore, he declared that there was no need for higher education than a little education useful for the interests of common people such as shopkeepers and talukdars, wall carpenters, weavers, blacksmiths, sailors, fishermen etc. Thus the standard of education was lowered by the promise that those who could show practical merit would be provided with scholarships up to the university degree.

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