



Appendix

Appendix: 1

Report of the State Education in Bengal (Rajshahi and Rangpur District)

Section XVI

The District of Rajshahy [Rajshahi]

Population: - In 1801 the number of inhabitants was estimated in round numbers at 1,500,000 in the proportion of two Hindoos [Hindus] to one Mahomedan. From the beginning of July to the end of November the district is nearly submerged.

Indigenous Elementary Schools:- I do not find in any publication or authority the slightest reference to the state of elementary education in this district, although it is not to be supposed that the inhabitants are entirely indifferent to the instruction of their children.

Elementary School not Indigenous:- In a letter published in one of the monthly journals dated September 1834 from *Rampore Bauleah*, I find mention made of a school at that station under the superintendence of an English gentleman; but no account is given of it except by saying that it was succeeding beyond expectation.

Indigenous School of Learning:- There is no doubt that in this district there are several schools of Hindoo [Hindu] learning, but I find no mention of any of them except two which are supported by an allowance from Government. In June 1813, the Collector of Rajshahy [Rajshahi] forwarded to the Revenue Board a petition from Kassessur Bachusputy, Govindram Sirhat, and Hurrām Surma Buttacharjee, stating that their father had received from Rani Bhowannee an allowance of 90 rupees per annum for the support of a college, which allowance on the decease of their father had been continued to their elder brother till his decease; and that since the date of that event they had kept up the establishment, and, therefore, prayed that the allowance might be continued to them.

The collector corroborated the averments in this petition, observing that Kassessur discharged the duties of one college in the town of Nattore [Natore], and that his two brothers had established another in the Mofussil.

The Revenue Board, in forwarding the collector's letter and the petition to Government, observed that the pension had been conferred by the authority of Government on the late Chundar Sikar Turkanshes for his life, on a representation from the collector that he had no other means of subsistence, and was attended by many students; was the only capable teacher in Nattore [Natore], and that the continuance of his pension might be deemed a public benefit.

The Revenue Board further submitted that, as it appeared the brothers maintained the institutions of their father in full efficiency, the pension might be continued to them and their heirs in perpetuity, on the condition of their continuing to uphold these establishments under the supervision of the local agents of the British Government. The Bengal Government fully acquiesced in this suggestion, and sanctioned the payment of the allowance of 90 rupees per annum on the condition stated by the Revenue Board.

SECTION XVII.

The District of Rangpur.

Population:- This is one of these districts on which Dr. Buchanan reported, but that copy of his reports which has been retained in India is defective on this district. Only one volume remains on Rangpur out of three or four of which the report on this district originally consisted, and the missing volumes contained the chapter which, in conformity with the arrangement he adopted in his reports on other districts, he most probably devoted to education. Hamilton apparently had an opportunity of inspecting the original Buchanan reports at the India House which, it is believed, are complete.

In 1809 Dr. Buchanan estimated the population at 2,735,000 persons, of whom 1,536,000 were Mahomedans, 1,194,350 were Hindoos [Hindus], and the remainder 4,650 are called infidels, by which term it is probably meant that, without embracing either the Hindoo [Hindu] or Mahomedan faith, they retain the aboriginal superstitions of the country. The principal sect among the Hindoos [Hindus] is that of the worshippers of the female deities. The whole number of Brahmans in 1809 was estimated at about 6,000 families, or one forty third of the whole Hindoo [Hindu] population. The proportion of the Mahomedan to the Hindoo [Hindu] population is about ten to nine, and the faith of the former is stated to be daily gaining ground: but the adherents of the tworeligious are on the most friendly terms.

The following are the divisions of the population with regard to occupation:-

Persons who do not work...	...	343,000
Artificers	326,000
Cultivators	2,066,000
Total	2,735,000

The great farmers in Rangpur are mostly Brahmans, Kayasthas, and Mahomedans of some rank. Few especially of the older families ever visit each other, but live surrounded with dependents and flatterers, especially mendicant vagrants. Some families pretend to be of divine origin: others are descended from princes who have governed the country; but a great majority of those who possess the most valuable lands are new men who have purchased their estates at auction. Time in this district is measured by clepsydras or water clocks. Domestic slavery exists especially along the Northern Frontier, and female prostitution is in a remarkable manner systematised. Education generally is in a very low state, on which account almost every person employed in any high department of the revenue or police is a stranger. Few persons in the district are qualified for the occupation even of a common clerk or writer. Some of the strangers bring their families with them, but by far the greater number leave them in their native district, and consider themselves as undergoing a species of banishment. The small farmers are very timid and totally

illiterate. Five or six families commonly unite under one chief man, who settles the whole of their transactions with their landlords, and to whose guidance they entirely surrender themselves. Throughout the district the most opulent merchants and landholders have no better habitations than the huts constructed of straw mats precisely of the same form and appearance as those of the lowest peasantry, but in greater number and larger dimensions.

Rangpur has on its frontier Nepal, Bhootan [Bhutan], Cooch Behar, Assam, and the country of the Garrows from which it is separated, not by large rivers, lofty mountains, or any other natural landmark, but by imaginary and ill-defined boundaries.

Indigenous Elementary Schools:- In the absence of Dr. Buchanan's account of the state of education, the answers made by the canoongoes of the district to the circular inquiries of the General Committee in 1823 afford some information on which apparently dependence may be placed. The information thus given to the Committee was communicated in a singularly ill-digested form: but after comparing the various statements which it includes, it would appear that in fourteen out of nineteen subdivisions of the district there were no elementary schools whatever, and that, in the remaining five, there were ten Bengalee schools and two Persian ones for elementary instruction. In some of the sub-divisions having no common schools, parents, to supply the want of them, either employ teachers in their own houses in whose instructions the children of neighbouring families are allowed to participate, or themselves instruct their own children. The employment of a private tutor and still more parental instruction would appear to be very common. In some instances Hindoos [Hindu] are mentioned as teachers of Persian schools, and Mahomedans of Bengalee ones. In these schools the monthly payment for the instruction of one boy is from two to four and eight annas and even one rupee. The number of boys in one school did not exceed twelve, and there was sometimes as small a number as three taught by one master. In this district the boys are described as attending school from their seventh or eighth to their fifteen year. The canoongoes almost uniformly speak of the advantage which the district would derive from the encouragement given to education by Government.

Indigenous Schools of Learning:- Hamilton on the state of learning in this district says that a few Brahmans have acquired sufficient skill in astronomy to construct an almanac, and five or six Pundits instruct youth in a science named *Agam*, or magic, comprehending astrology and chiromancy. The latter is reckoned a higher science than the calculation of nativities, and is monopolised by the sacred order. The Mahomedans, he adds, having no wise men of their own, consult those of the Hindoos [Hindus]. This account of the state of learning is very unfavourable and is not quite correct. The Agama shastra does not merely teach astrology and chiromancy, but is also occupied with the ritual observances of modern Hindooism, and it is not the only branch of learning taught in the schools.

From the details furnished by the canoongoes, it appears that in nine sub-divisions of the district there are 41 schools of Sanskrit learning containing each from 5 to 25 scholars, who are taught grammar, general literature, rhetoric, logic, law, the mythological poems and astronomy, as well as the Agama shastra. The students often prosecute their studies till they are thirty-five and even forty years of age, and are almost invariably the sons of Brahmans. They are supported in various ways – first, by the liberality of those learned men who instruct them; secondly, by the presents they receive on occasions of invitation to religious festivals and domestic celebrations; thirdly, by their relations at home; and fourthly, by begging, recourse being had to one means when others fail. The instructors are enabled to assist their pupils, sometimes from their own independent means, sometimes from the occasional gifts they receive from others, and sometimes from the produce of small endowments. At least ten are stated to have small grants of land for the support of learning, one of these consisting of 25 beeghas of Brahmottur land, and another of 176 beeghas of Lakhiraj land. The quantity of land in the other cases is not mentioned, but it is not stated to be generally Brahmottur.

In one instance it is stated that the owner of the estate on which the school is situated gave the Pundit a yearly present of 32 rupees, and in another instance a monthly allowance of 5 or 8 rupees. In a third instance, the Pundit of the school lived on his patrimony, and at the same time acted as family priest to the zamindar.

Native Female Education:- In Rangpur it is considered highly improper to bestow any education on women, and no man would marry a girl who was known to be capable of reading; but as girls of rank are usually married about eight years of age, and continue to live with their families for four or five years afterwards, the husbands are sometimes deceived, and find on receiving their wives that, after marriage, they have acquired that sort of knowledge which is supposed to be most inauspicious to their husbands. Although this female erudition scarcely ever proceeds further than being able to indite a letter and to examine an account, yet it has been the means of rescuing many families from threatened destruction. The women of rank live much less dissipated lives than the men, and are generally better fitted for the management of their estates, on which account they are considered intolerable nuisances by the harpies who seek to prey on their husbands and to plunder their estates.

Source: *Report the State of Education in Bengal*, Published by the order of Government, Calcutta: Bengal Military Orphan Press, 1835, pp.68-73.

Appendix: 2

Rabindranath Tagore in Pabna Edward College and Rajshahi College

"আজ আমি এখানে যাহা পাইলাম,
তা হই আমার সর্বাপেক্ষা বড় জিনিষ
ইউরোপে সন্মান পাইয়াছি, কিন্তু আজ
সাহিত্যের মন্দিরে যে নির্মাল্য পাইলাম
তদাপেক্ষা বড় বোধ হয় সে সন্মান নাহে
... শস্য শ্যামল পদ্মা তীরে আমার যে
সৌভাগ্যের উদয় হইল, তাহা চিরদিন
মনে থাকিবে।"

The above speech was delivered by Rabindranath Tagore on the reception given by the students of Edward College, Pabna

The Conference venue was the then Pabna Institution (Now GCI), as the Edward College did not have her own Campus yet. Among the other participants were the Principal of Edward college Prof. Hemchandra Roy, Prof. Tarinicharan Choudhury (Chemistry), Historian Radharaman Saha, Gopal Chandra Lahiri, Editor of the *Bhadrabarsha*, Mr. Jaladhar Sen, Maharaja of Natore Jagadindra Roy, Shitlai Estate lord Jogendranath Maitra etc.

(Source: <http://www.pabna.net/rtipabna.htm>)

Rabindranath Tagore in Rajshahi College

"তবে ছেলেদের ভাগ্যে বাকি রইল কি। যদি কেবল বাংলা শিখিত তবে রামায়ণ মহাভারত পড়িতে পাইত, যদি কিছুই না শিখিত তবে খেলা করিবার অবসর থাকিত।... আর ইংরেজী শিখিতে গিয়া না হইল শেখা না হইল খেলা, প্রকৃতির সত্যরাজ্যে প্রবেশ করিবারও অবকাশ থাকিল না, সাহিত্যের কল্পনা রাজ্যে প্রবেশ করিবারও দ্বার রুদ্ধ রহিল।"

This lecture was delivered at the Rajshahi College by Great Poet Rabindra Nath Tagore, on the subject of Education when the Maharaja of Natore was on the chair. After the lecture a discussion was begun, in which the Collector Lokendra Palit, the Principal of the College Mr. Ahmed, Professor Kumidini Kanta Benerjea, Professor Syed Abdul Salek, Mr. Akshay Kumar Maitra, and Mr Pramatha Choudhury took part.

Source: *Oittijhey Rajshahi College Smarak Grantha* (A Collection of documents on Rajshahi college) Rajshahi College:2001, p.14.