

## **CHAPTER – IV**

### **EDUCATIONAL SCENARIO OF DARJEELING TERAI**

The annexation of Darjeeling Terai by the British in 1850 coincided with the opening of modern western education system in India i.e 1854. The records, both official and private, throw little light on the progress of education in Terai region of the district of Darjeeling. So due to the unavailability of sources of the region of Terai regarding education, therefore, the study is based on the sources available of Darjeeling district as a whole, as no separate exclusive educational report regarding Terai region during colonial period. Available records indicate that till the arrival of the Christian Missionaries no serious effort was made to educate local, indigenous people by the Government. Yet the Missionaries brought with them the science of education, the art of printing and the doctrine of the Bible.

#### **4:1 EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF DARJEELING TERAI DURING THE SECOND HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURY**

After the establishment of political authority in India in 1858, the British turned their attention towards the growth of modernization and westernization by introducing western education system in India. By the Charter Act of 1813 the Company was allowed to introduce western education and the Act provided Rs.1 lakh for the establishment of elementary schools and English education in India. This sum was to be sanctioned annually to promote education. The greatest importance of the 1813 Act was that the Company for the first time acknowledge state responsibility for promotion of education in India. The Act also allowed the Christian Missionaries to enter into India without any restrictions but the advantages had taken principally by those who were came from the United Kingdom only. But the Charter Act of 1833 brought missions from other countries also on the scene; prominent among them were German and American missions. The Educational Despatch of 1854,<sup>1</sup> generally considered as the ‘Magna Carta’ of English Education in India, formed a landmark in the history of modern education in India. It had contributed much to the organization and stabilization of the Indian education system followed a period of the rapid westernization of the educational system. As such there were missionary, non-missionary and official educational efforts that played a part in the educational activities of India. It also outlined a comprehensive plan which laid down various suggestions on mass education i.e primary education on the one hand and higher education on the other. This formed the

Universities in Calcutta (January, 1857), Bombay (July, 1857) and Madras (September, 1857). But the growth of western education in Bengal was basically centred around Calcutta and its nearby areas, it did not affect the districts of Northern parts of Bengal i.e Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling, Dinajpur and Malda. It is noticeable that this Despatch rejected the 'Downward Filtration Theory'<sup>2</sup> and adopted a coordinate system of education from lowest level (primary level) to the highest stage (university stage). Nevertheless, when the British took over the district of Darjeeling, popular education was practically unknown. A few of better classes had private tutors for boys, a few who could read tried to hand on this accomplishment to their families and in Buddhist Monasteries novitiate monks taught to chant Tibetan texts. But of real general education there was none and no schools worthy of the name were in existence.<sup>3</sup>

Till the 1860 there was only one school in the district of Darjeeling, the Government English at Darjeeling hill attended by 33 students.<sup>4</sup> So, during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was no proper development of education system in Terai region of the district of Darjeeling. Even during the early part of 20<sup>th</sup> century the growth of educational institutions and system were very poor. The establishment of few elementary school during the latter half of 19<sup>th</sup> century in Siliguri, Bagdogra, Phansidewa and other parts of Terai was largely due to the initiative of the Scottish Church Missionaries. But the schools established by the Scottish Missionaries primarily consisted of the students from financially well established families like the *jotedars*. The cultivators of Terai, in general were very reluctant to send their children to these schools.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand the children from the tea gardens did not have the opportunity to study in these schools. Nevertheless, whatever their object might be, the Christian Missionaries were undoubtedly the pioneers in the field of education in the hill and the Terai region of Darjeeling district. The Missionaries were channelized the education in Darjeeling district in two direction i.e i) to spread elementary education among the illiterate and ignorant people in the hills and Terai as a means of ultimately winning them to Christianity and ii) to provide educational opportunities in the healthy, salubrious climate of Darjeeling to the European and Eurasian children who could not be sent to England.<sup>6</sup> But the initial difficulties of the Christian Missionaries were many; i.e i) differences in language, customs and mentalities ii) poor socio-economic condition was another great obstacle. For the poor agriculturists or tea plantation workers, with hand to mouth existence, education was a luxury they could hardly afford during this time,<sup>7</sup> iii) the nature of work in the plantation areas is such that no children

can hope to continue study in school. Moreover as the main teaching period of time in the schools coincides with the peak plucking season, most of the school going children were either withdrawn from the school permanently or remain absent for a long period, iv) girls were not sent to schools because a girl is useful to work at home in looking after younger brothers and sisters, v) geographical factors were no less important in influencing the growth and development of education. Lack of population concentration in one particular area made the choice of location of school difficult. Attendance in school, even when established became a problem; particularly during the month of monsoons when incessant rain was followed. This made communication very difficult in those days. Again the long cold winter months had its own disadvantages. Biting cold and inadequate clothing stood in the way of regular attendance to school by the children. Thus, one can well imagine the almost uphill task of the Missionaries to bring home to the people the benefits of even a rudimentary education.<sup>8</sup>

Till 1874 all the schools in Terai were managed by the Scottish Christian Missionaries.<sup>9</sup> In short it is better to be said that prior to the coming of the Scottish Missionaries nothing worth mentioning had been done to promote education among the people of the Darjeeling district. However, viewed merely from the educational aspect, their work in the Terai was marked with more success in the hills. In 1873 Reverend William Macfarlane, the then Superintendent of the Scottish Mission in Darjeeling, observed that “The boys in the Terai schools are far ahead of those in the hills, as regards the progress made in school. In fact, as regards education, the Terai seems to be very like the rest of Bengal”.<sup>10</sup> One of the reasons presumably for this developments was due to the interest taken in education by the principal *jotedars* in their neighbourhood areas of Terai. Though ‘The Report on Public Instruction of 1876-77’ pointed out “...the district belong to the same category in regard to education as backward parts of Chotanagpur.”<sup>11</sup> However the available records indicate that the first educational institution established in Terai region was Phansidewa M.E School in 1865 (Appendix-H). Though, the Hunter’s Statistical Account of Bengal states that there was a school in Bagdogra which in March 1873 had constituted 21 students and received Rs.14 from the Government.<sup>12</sup> But the Census Reports and District Gazetteers mentioned that very few people inhabited in Bagdogra and it was filled with dense forest and wild animals. In such a situation it’s difficult to get 21 students in this school if there was any. While on the other hand, the Settlement Officer of Darjeeling Terai mentioned about the establishment of Phansidewa school in 1865 and it was a only M.E

school at that time.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, the School Inspector visited in 13<sup>th</sup> June, 1936 has mentioned in 'Visitors' Book' of Phansidewa M.E School that the establishment of the school in Phansidewa was in 1865.<sup>14</sup> Thus it seems that the first school in Terai was established in Phansidewa in place of Bagdogra. But by the whom and which circumstances it was established, is still unknown. Till 1879 the school flourished and continued to impart education to the students of Terai but gradually the condition of the school started to deteriorate.<sup>15</sup> Babu Bhuban Chandra Sen was appointed as a Headmaster of this school during the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At that time the area of the school compound was 1.5 acre or 4.5 *bighas*. The school had two buildings, one of which had corrugate iron roof with *kutch*a floor and the other one was totally *kutch*a. Apart from this there were two boarding houses attached to the school, one for the Hindus and the other for the Mohammedans. The Hindu boarding had 6 boarders and the Mohammedan boarders were 10 in August, 1919.<sup>16</sup> In the early part of the thirties in 20<sup>th</sup> century the then S.D.O of Siliguri Khan Bahadur Munshi A.H.M. Abul Haq, Dr. Anathbhusan Dey, the then Assistant Surgeon of the Phansidewa Charitable Dispensary, five local *jotedars*, most prominent among them were Maulavi Md Tafil Hussain and Bhoj Narayan Choudhury were helped in a construction in the new building of school located at opposite to the previous building in Phansidewa *bazaar*. The then Headmaster was Ghanashyam Chakroborty. There are no reference of girls students at this time and the total number of teaching staff were 5 (among them 2 were Hindus and 3 were Muslims) with one Headmaster.<sup>17</sup> In 1929 two students were passed out M.E. Examination from this school. In 1930-31 there were 51 students in this school, apart from 14 Mohammedan students there were 37 Hindu students who were divided under following heads<sup>18</sup>:

Basak-01,  
Modak-04,  
Saha-06,  
Nath-09,  
Banik-01,  
Rajbanshi-09,  
Mahiswa Kaibarta-02,  
Malha-01,  
Hari-01,  
Muchi-01,  
Santal-02.

It is also mentioned in this Report that though Phansidewa was a Muslim populated area but most of the Muslim students were come from the eastern part of the river Mahananda i.e Siliguri. This figure indicates the ignorance of local people regarding importance of education. A very few *jotedars* from Phansidewa *bandar* give some financial help to the school in time to time though there were more than 200 *jotedars* who inhabited in Phansidewa area. In the year 1930 a Rajbanshi student from this school received monthly Rs. 4 as a 'Grade I' scholarship for four years.<sup>19</sup> Babu Kanteswar Roy, a *jotedar* of Hawdabhita and Mlv. Musarat Ahmed of Jalpaiguri had constructed the new Hindu and Muslim hostels respectively. Babu Anantalal Saha of Phansidewa had made some contribution for the development of school library.<sup>20</sup>

The following table will exhibit the student strength of Phansidewa M.E. school for the year 1910-1962

**TABLE NO 4:1**  
**DISTRUBTION OF STUDENTS STRENGTH OF PHANSIDEWA M.E SCHOOL FROM**  
**1910-1962**

Year	No. Of Pupils	Hindus	Muslims
1910	59	-----	-----
1911	62	--	-----
1918	84	44	40
1919	76	46	30
1920	68	46	22
1930	51	37	14
1931	65	41	24
1932	72	41	31
1933	69	41	28
1935	96	-----	-----
1936	105	61	44
1938	104	-----	-----
1947	73	36	37
1949	200	-----	-----
1950	135	93	42
1951	209	-----	-----
1962	152	-----	-----

[Source: 'Visitors Book', Phansidewa M.E School, Phansidewa, District: Darjeeling]

The Census Report of 1872 speaks of this educational backwardness of the district of Darjeeling. In 1872 the total population of the district was 94,172 persons. The proportion of children of both sexes was 32 per cent of the total district population. Yet only 548 pupils mainly boys and a few girls were attending the 19 schools run by the Scottish

Mission in 1871-72. The percentage of children attending schools was incredibly low, about 1.9 percent only. In 1876-77, the then Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling observed that “Education in Darjeeling is backward and struggling. The people of Terai are hopelessly indifferent and we have scarcely been able to get beyond primary schools and *pathsalas* in that part of the district.”<sup>21</sup> At the end of the year 1872-73 there were altogether 29 schools in the district, namely, 1 H.E. school, 3 M.E. schools, 23 lower primary schools, 1 normal school and 1 girls school. Though, in 1870-71 it was only 19 in number.<sup>22</sup> But how many number it was established in Terai is not known. In 1871-71 the Scottish Church Missionaries had established some primary schools in Terai. Among these, four schools were established in Phansidewa, Kharibari, Heatmoori and Devigang in Terai. Here, the *jotedars* Sham Lal Laha, Bhogodutt Dass, Rasiklal Sarkar and Jay Bahadur Singh in the four respective places were in-charge of management of these schools. These schools were in a satisfactory condition, but not so every school in the Terai. The school at Matigara was particularly in an unsatisfactory condition. At Naxalbari, none of the *jotedars* were willing to undertake any responsibility or management of the schools.<sup>23</sup> Mr. Macfarlane states that “... as regards education, the Terai seems to be very like the rest of the plains of Bengal.”<sup>24</sup> But within few years things were reverse and the educational progress in the hills of the district was more marked than in the Terai region or plain portion of the district.

Till 1874 all the primary schools in the Terai were managed by the Scottish Mission as states earlier. Between 1870-1874 the schools had considerably increased in number from 1 to 24. But due to financial difficulties in running these schools the Scottish Missionaries handed over these school to the Government.<sup>25</sup> The reason to give up the control of these schools presumably was religious or it is better to be said that their main target i.e. proselytization could not be fulfilled in the plains. As the people, in the Terai, in contrast with those in the hills, refused Bible teaching, it was difficult to get the children in the hills to schools, but once they were in school they did not object to the Bible teaching. But on the other hand in the Terai it was just reverse. There were no difficulty in getting the children to school, but both the teachers and parents objected to Bible teaching.<sup>26</sup> The Church of Scotland Mission openly accepted this in following manner: “Had our object been purely educational we should never have given up these schools, but are here not primarily or principally for education but for Christian Missionary purpose and for that reason it was advisable to give up these schools.” this was in 1874. Later in 1895 when a

proposal was given by the Scottish Missions to resume the management of primary education in Terai it was not immediately granted by Government.<sup>27</sup>

Nevertheless, after 1874 education in Terai became the responsibility of the Government. In 1879 a Sub-Inspector was appointed for the inspection of the Terai school.<sup>28</sup> So this was the first steps had taken by the Colonial Government to promote education among the pupils of Terai .As a result , in 1878-1879 the Terai had 10 schools with 166 students ,in 1880 it had increased to 14 schools with 217 pupils, of these 13 were aided by the Government.<sup>29</sup> Apart from average income Rs.9-50 per month these schools received aid from the primary grant allotted to the district which amounted Rs. 5 per month and from a local source called the 2 percent improvement fund .Later the 1 *anna* cess fund was instituted to which the *jotedars* had to contribute on account of education. However, these proved inadequate for the remuneration of the Gurus .The first class schools with an attendance of 18 boys or more were to receive Rs.8 per months, while the second grade schools with less than 18 attendance were to received Rs. 6 per month. The Deputy Commissioner of the district suggested the introduction of the chief Guru system with the payment of rewards to teachers for success at periodic examination. If a class men fit to make chief Gurus could be found, their appointment in some way could have removed the existing defects. Further the Deputy Commissioner's remarked that no school could exist unless the Government supported entirely the Guru was quite significant. He also states that there was not much difficulty in getting a few students when a school was established but it was difficult to maintain the Guru by private sources. In 1881-82 the total district primary grant was Rs 1200, out of which Rs.420 were allowed to the Terai schools. These schools were managed by the special agency of a Sub-Inspector while the Deputy Inspector of Jalpaiguri was charged with their supervision.<sup>30</sup> It may be note that till independence of India in 1947 the control of education in the district of Darjeeling was exercised by the Inspector of Schools of the Rajshahi Division whose office was at Jalpaiguri .He controlled and inspected the high schools of the district directly. Under him and directly responsible for primary and lower secondary education as the District Inspector of Schools .In course of time, for primary education, the later was assisted by two Sub-Inspector at Darjeeling and at Kurseong , one Assistant Sub-Inspector at Kalimpong and an Inspecting *Pandit* for the Terai region of the district.<sup>31</sup>

The number of primary schools continued to increase in Terai , in 1886-87 there were 27 and in 1887-88 there were 31 in number. During 1880-82 the marked decrease in

the payment of local fees could be noticed. It came down from Rs.136 to Rs.93 and then to Rs.12 only per annum. The main reason for this that the *jotedars* were declined to pay 1 *anna* educational cess. Despite this progress the educational condition in Terai was in a backward state. The reasons for this backwardness were the scattered state of population, their indifferent to the benefits of education and the lack of supervision.<sup>32</sup>In 1880-81 only three *pathsalas* in Terai were sent candidates, how many had appeared is not known but only 2 students obtained scholarship .In 1884-85, 25 schools presented 191 students of whom 172 passed, among them 2 were girl.<sup>33</sup>Between 1880-1890 the slow growth of education in the district as well as in Terai continues ,in this decade there had been an addition of 22 schools and only 612 students .The total population of Darjeeling in 1881 was 155645 persons .The figures of 1887-88 show that only 10 percent of the school going age were at school.<sup>34</sup>During the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century primary schools were established at Naxalbari (1893), Khaprail(1893) , Panighata( 1897) , and Siliguri (1900) . Bhola Singh and Emma Mark were the in charge of Naxalbari (in Patanjhar) and Siliguri schools respectively.<sup>35</sup>Till the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century there were only 26 schools with 49 pupils in Terai of which the only higher educational institution was Phansidewa M.E. School.<sup>36</sup> During this period the then Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling Mr.Greer expressed deep concern at the backward and unsatisfactory condition of the state of education in the Terai and sanctioned Rs. 500 for the construction of a new school building at Siliguri <sup>37</sup>to improve the situation. In this connection he wrote a letter to the Inspector of Schools, Rajshahi and Burdwan circle proposed the establishment of a middle vernacular school at Siliguri. Being treated a special case the Deputy Commissioner expressed the hope that the joint supervision of the Inspector and Deputy Commissioner would improve matters .The proposal gained support of Dr. Martin, the then Inspector of Schools of Jalpaiguri , on the ground that grant-in-aid M.E. school had been tried in Siliguri but had failed for want of local support.<sup>38</sup>However, despite this educational backwardness in Terai Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri were the two progressive educational areas in Bengal.<sup>39</sup>The Census Report of 1891 revealed that in Darjeeling district out of per 10,000 population 202 Hindu males were ‘Learning’ and 1179 were ‘Literate’<sup>40</sup> and in case of Hindu women it was 11 and 27 respectively. Mohammedan were far ahead in case of education in the district of Darjeeling till the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century. Among them per 10,000 Mohammedan people 208 males were “Learning” and 1287 were “Literate” and in case of women it was 34 and 75 respectively.<sup>41</sup> The Census Report also states that educational progress in Darjeeling district i.e per 10000 population among the Muslims was the highest in place in respect of whole of Bengal

district i.e Northern ,Eastern and Western Bengal.<sup>42</sup> The main reason behind this was the scanty Muslim population of Darjeeling district including the immigrant Muslims who were came from the advanced tracts of the province.<sup>43</sup> However the Census Reports of 1901 indicates that till the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the “Literate” persons of per 1000 males was 119 in the district , though it was 114 in 1891 and 64 in 1881.In case of per1000 females it was 4 in 1881,5 in 1891 and14 in 1901.<sup>44</sup> This statistics indicates that there is no such progressive advance in the case of female education in the district.

#### **4:2 EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF DARJEELING TERAI DURING THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY**

In the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there were 40 primary schools in Terai with an attendance of 660 boys, the percentage of those of school-going was therefore approximately 11 percent .The Census statistics of 1901 shows that when in Terai only 1 person in 35 could read and write and in the rest of the district 1 person in every 12 could do so.<sup>45</sup>In 1901 the total population of Darjeeling Terai were 70,466 souls (Male:39,037 and Female:31,429), among them 1747 Hindus ( Male:1694 and Female:53),317 Mohammedans (Male:310 and Female:07) and 21 Buddhist (Male: 21 and Feamble:00) were registered as literates. The percentage of literate person among the Hindus, Muslims and Buddhist ,the three principal religion of the Terai was therefore 2.9 percent , 4.3 percent , and 3.3 percent respectively.<sup>46</sup>Even education in Siliguri *thana* areas did not develop very much .The Census Report of 1901 revelled the total population of Siliguri urban areas were 784 persons .<sup>47</sup>The settlers were mostly the employers of Railway, businessmen and traders both the Bengalis and non-Bengalis and the indigenous Rajbanshis . The non-Rajbanshis mostly came from the eastern and southern part of Bengal. The climate of northern Bengal was unhealthy and damp and it was difficult to the migrants to adjust in the new climate. Yet, they migrated to the region for employment and job necessity. After settling in this region they looked for educational institution. May before this reason a Government-aided M.E school was established Siliguri in 1898, was known Siliguri M.E School near modern Kanchanjanga Kirangoan (Stadium). Mr. Kshitish Chandra Bhattacharjee was the first Headmaster of Siliguri M.E.School.<sup>48</sup> The Terai Jotedars Association were sanctioned a scholarship of Rs 6 a month tenable for two years at the Jalpaiguri Zilla School by the students of the M.E.School at Siliguri.<sup>49</sup> In 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1918 the school was upgraded to H.E school under the initiative of the *jotedar* of Siliguri Rai Saheb S.N.Bhattacharjee and Mr.H.M.Farrokh , the then S.D.O of Siliguri , Babu D.N.Dasgupta, a medical practitioner

and many others .Apart from “Kshatriya Samity” of Siliguri ,”Terai-Jotedars Association” and “Terai Tea-garden Managers Association” made some big donation for its improvement .Within two years of its establishment the school was provisionally recognised to the Calcutta University with effect from 1920 and the provincial recognition having its term extended from time to time continued up to the year 1934.<sup>50</sup> Babu Karuna Kumar Sarkar was the first Headmaster of Siliguri H.E School .Till 1946 Siliguri Boys High School was the only prominent H.E school in Terai which got its high school status in 1957.<sup>51</sup> In 1907 a very few positive step was taken by the Colonial Government in the direction of improving education system in Terai. The construction of Guru Training Schools at Bagdogra and Phansidewa at an estimated cost of Rs 4050 each was some of them.<sup>52</sup> Another instance when the Colonial Government extended help to spread education among the masses in Darjeeling Terai was sanctioned the allotment of Rs. 2400 for the construction of two upper primary and one lower primary school in Matigara and Dumriguri in 1908. Fully aware of the backwardness of the Terai people generally and specially in education, the then Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling expressed his concern to the Commissioner of Bhagalpur Division as to how far their efforts would be successful. Instead of relying on the people for funds he suggested the payment of the additional amount to be made from the saving of the D.I.F on understand that any amount paid by the local men would go to recoup that fund.<sup>53</sup>

The third Middle English school was established in Terai was Kharibari M. E. School, though the exact date is unavailable due to absence of any contemporary official documents. However, the Settlement Officer of Darjeeling Terai states that till the end of the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there were only one H.E school, two M.E schools ,five upper primary schools ,thirty six lower primary day schools for girls and six *maktabs* for Mohammedan boys in Darjeeling Terai.<sup>54</sup> But now one question may arise that he referred one High English School i.e Siliguri H.E school and among two M.E school one is Phansidewa M.E school but what will be the another one ? Siliguri Bengali Girl’s school (later known as Jyotsnamayee Girl’s High School) was established in the year 1929 and it got the affiliation of M. E. School in the year 1940 and the others school were established much later .So in this connection it may presume that the missing school is Kharibari M. E. School which was established in 1909 but the number of pupils studying in the school is unavailable in any sources. Nikhilchandra Bhattacharjee, the then Assistant Surgeon of the Kharibari Charitable Dispensary was the real founder of this school.<sup>55</sup> However, according to Badrinarayan Sinha, who had studied in this school for six years, in the later part of

thirties in the 20<sup>th</sup> century says that the total students of the school were 40 in number .It may be note that he was the first graduate in the Terai region among the Rajbanshi community and had received his B.A degree from the Ananda Chandra College of Jalpaiguri in 1955.<sup>56</sup>In January, 1945 the school was upgraded to H.E school and received a X class high school status in 1949. Medical practitioner like Dr. Chandi Charan Banerjee and *jotedars* of Kharibari like Babu Nirad Bihari Ray Sarkar , Babu Tilok Chandra Ray Sarkar, Barun Kumar Bhaumik, Amrita Lal Ray Sarkar, Brajogopal Singha, Balendranath Ray Sarkar, Hargobind Nath, Meghnath Ray and many others worked for patronizing and took played an active role for the development of the school. <sup>57</sup>It has also to be mentioned that Santi Ray Sinha was the first Post Graduate Rajbanshi women of Terai who had received her M.A degree (in Sanskrit) from Calcutta University in the year 1961.<sup>58</sup> Further in the latter part of thirties of 20<sup>th</sup> century the education loving people of Siliguri realized the necessity of a Bengali Girl's School, and for that reasons, 30<sup>th</sup> July 1929 in the ground of Anandamayee Kalibari , the then a centre of cultural activities of Siliguri an important assembly was called. From the decision of this meeting the establishment of Siliguri Bengali Primary School was passed. It was decided that due to unavailability of place, scarcity of money; the school is to be started from the *kachari* room of the house of Haripada Majumder who was the member of this school committee and also the contemporary renowned *jotedar* of Siliguri .A governing body was formed under the president ship of Mr. F. O.Ben, the then S. D. O. Of Siliguri and Prodyot Kumar Basu as secretary with other members like Dr. Debendranath Dasgupta, a medical practitioner, and *jotedars* like Birendranath Ray Sarkar, Digendranath Ray Sarkar, Haripada Majumder, Jorge Mabart, Karnabhadur Sardar with many others. Though this school was a girl's school yet the start of this school was with both boys and girls. The number of pupils was also so poor, some of them were Rabi Dasgupta, Jagonnath Sarkar , Kanak Basu, Usha Ray etc .After some years the *zamindar* named Narsingha Roy donated his land in Babupara when the school at present located. In 1940 this school got Government affiliation as Middle English Girls School and gradually in 1952 it turn into Junior High School and in 1956 it was a High School and in 1963 it converted into Higher Secondary multipurpose school. The school was named after the wife of the tea planter Shri Tarapada Bandhopadhyay as he had donated huge sum of money for the development of this school.<sup>59</sup> Though the first girls school of the district was established in Darjeeling hill, more than twenty years before the establishment of any girls school in Terai, on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1908 named Maharani Girl' School , also known as Maharni Balika Vidyalaya.<sup>60</sup>

The Survey and Settlement Operation of Darjeeling Terai in 1919-1925 states that there were one high school, 2 M.E schools, 5 upper primary schools, 36 lower primary schools, 18 lower primary night schools for boys, 2 lower primary day schools for girls and 6 *maktabs* for Mohammedan boys during the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The total number was therefore 70 which was not an exact figure.<sup>61</sup> The Census Reports revealed that at the end of the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the total number of "Literate"<sup>62</sup> persons in Terai region of Darjeeling district were 4319 in number or 5.70 percent. Of these 4059 males and 260 females, in other words for every female who is able to read and write was therefore 15 males. In Terai the percentage of male and female persons was therefore 9.75 and .77 respectively. The persons who were able to read and write in English in Terai were 884 in number, among them 864 male and 20 females. The total number of literate person in Siliguri *thana* areas was 8.85 percent, the percentage of male and female literate person was therefore 14.28 and 1.58 respectively. In the case of Phansidewa *thana* it was 4.06 percent, among them males were 7.31 percent and female were 0.42 percent.<sup>63</sup> In respect of education the Hindu dominated Kharibari *thana* was more progressive than two other rural areas of Terai i.e Phansidewa and Naxalbari. Though in Kharibari it was altogether falls 5.76 percent, among them 10.14 percent male and 0.47 percent female in Kharibari. It may be noted that during this period the total population of Kharibari mainly consisted of the Bengalis Hindus (8092 persons out of 8977 persons), more than 90 percent of the total population, while the picture of the rest of the plains portion of the district was quite same except in Phansidewa *thana*. The literacy rate of Naxalbari police station was quite low than any other police station in the Terai, it was altogether 3.52 percent, among them 6.24 percent males and 0.32 percent females.<sup>64</sup> The main reason behind this was the ignorance of tea garden labourers regarding education and it was covered with densely jungles which is recently under cultivation of tea. The following table no 4:2 will exhibit the real picture of education in Terai at the end of the second decade of 20<sup>th</sup> century.

TABLE NO 4:2

## EDUCATIONAL STATISTICS OF DARJEELING TERAJ IN 1921

Sub-Division	Police Station	Total Population			Number of Literate Persons			
					Literate		Literate in English	
		Total	Male	Female	Males	Females	Males	Females
Siliguri Sub-Division (Terai)	-----	75,787	41619	34168	4059	260	864	20
	Siliguri	25,094	14384	10710	2054	169	571	17
	Naxalbari	21707	11752	9955	734	32	142	----
	Phnsidewa	20009	10575	9434	773	40	116	02
	Kharibari	8977	4908	4069	498	19	35	01

[Source: *Census of India, 1921, Bengal*, Vol-V, Part II, W.H Thomson, Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1923, pp.482-483.]

Most probably in 1933 a primary school, named Dumriguri Primary School was established in Gosainpur near Bagdogra with 30 pupils. The number of pupils increased from 30 to 37 in 1934, 47 in 1936 and 50 in 1941. Some of the names of the students who studied in this school during those period were Tarinee Prasad Roy, Bipin Chandra Roy, Priyonath Roy, Jaganaath Roy and many others. The then D.I.S of Jalpaiguri under Rajshahi Division in February 1944 after an inspection converted this school into Dumriguri M.E school. The President of the Governing body of this school was the then S.D.O of Siliguri and Secretary was Moulavi Rahimuddian Ahmed. In 1947 Gyanendra Mohan Saha was appointed as the Headmaster of this school. Due to the partition of India in 1947 and the reorganization of the boundary between India and East Pakistan the number of students began to decrease in this school. In 1950 under the initiative and leadership of Jalahari Sarkar and with cooperation of Shri Narasingha, Rajonikanta Singha, Ramdulal Singha, Kali Prasad Singha and others the school was shifted to the Atharkhai region in Shivmandir. It is to be notated that the Dumriguri Basic School was already located in Shibmandir where the new school was shifted. In September, 1957 the son of Shri Narasingha, a renowned *jotedar* of Tarabari Shri Prahlad Singha had donated 6 *bighas* and 1 *bighas* of land for Dumriguri Basic School and Dumriguri M.E. school respectively. In 1963 the Dumriguri M.E school was upgraded as a Class 4 Junior High School and in 1966 it was upgraded as a

High School .To recognise the contribution of Shri Narasingha towards the development of this school the Managing Committee of this school with the permission of the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education renamed the school as Narasingha Vidyapith from July 1973.<sup>65</sup>

The sixth school which was established in later part of the thirties in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was upgraded as a Naxalbari M.E school from January 1944.<sup>66</sup> Some of the students who studied in this school during the early part were Nur Nahar Begam , Indulal Hauqe , Khargo Mohan Singha , Ambikabala Devi and many others .It must be note that during this period Naxalbari was mainly inhabited by 500 families like Bengalis, Biharies, Nepalies, *Adivasies*, the indigenous Rajbansis and others.The local people namely Nand Prasad, Atul Biswas, Sakalram Tirky, Fatickchand Biswas, Jiten Singha and others were very enthusiastic to provide some educational facility for their children though they themselves were not very much educated .In latter part of the thirties they started a *pathsala* for imparting basic education to the students of Naxalbari. The *pathsala* was started in the house of Nandprasad. The *pathsala* continued for some years and then it was shifted to a place near located Naxalbari Police Station. The school was renamed after Nandprasad who had contributed Rs. 1000 and provided the space for the *pathsala* in its initial stage. A well known timber merchant of Naxalbari, Altuf Hussian who was an original inhabitant of Gorukpur, Siwmangal Sing, Brojan Bose and many others who helped in the construction of this school. The land which the school has located at present belongs to Gafur Mian, a policeman who did not have a family settlement. In 1947-48 the Naxalbari M.E school was upgraded as a Class 4 Junior High School and in 1953 it was upgraded as a High School. Under the patronage of Sakalram Tirky and Lalmohan Saha of Jalpaiguri two hostels for the students was constructed.<sup>67</sup>On the eve of the independence of India in 1947 some of the prominent personality of Siliguri namely Abonindranath Bhattacharjee, Bijay Chandra Ghosh, Dr.Gopal Chandra Dutta, Dr.Brojendra Kr Basu Roy Choudhury, tea planter Satish Chandra Kar, Jogodish Chandra Bhattacharjee, the members of Mitro Sanmalinee, a centre of cultural activities of Siliguri, the T.T.P.A and the *jotedars* of Naxalbari-Khoribari areas had taken initiative to start a girls school near Siliguri Boys High School, it was located as the same place where District Additional Library is been located at present. It may be note that the District Additional Library was formerly known as Harosunder Library, in the name of famous *jotedar* Harosunder Majumder. Under the leadership and initiative of Bimala

Kanta Lahiri, the the S.D.O of Siliguri the girls school was shifted from the former place to a new location near present Siliguri College.<sup>68</sup>

A.J.Dash says that in pre-independence period there were 70 primary schools for boys, 4 for girls,13 *maktabs*, three boys Middle English schools, one girls Middle English schools, one Junior Madrasah and one High school for boys in Terai.<sup>69</sup> But the above discussion shows that there were four boys M.E schools in Terai instead of three as mentioned by Dash. The number of pupils receiving instruction in the Terai as on 31<sup>st</sup> March 1944 was as follows :

**TABLE NO 4:3**  
**PUPILS RECEIVED EDUCATION IN TERAI IN 1944**

In Terai	Boys	Girls
In Primary Schools and <i>Maktabs</i>	1272	220
In Secondary schools :	----	-----
H.E schools for Boys	316	00
M.E schools for Boys	230	24
M.E schools for Girls	24	61
Junior Madrasah for Boys	57	17

[Source: *Bengal District Gazetteers: Darjeeling*, A. J. Dash, Government Press, Alipore, Calcutta, 1947,p.269.]

According to the Census Report of 1941 there were 52915 persons “Literate” in the district in all the ages. Among them the numbers of the Hindus were 26794, Muslims were 1772, Christians were 2537, and the Tribes were 16458 in number.<sup>70</sup> But how many of them were stayed in Terai is not known as there is no exclusive statement regarding any Sub-Division of the district. Though the number of school going children were 37.5 percent and 8.2 percent of males and females pupils respectively in Terai according to Census Report of 1941.On the other hand it was 73.7 percent and 28.0 percent in the hill areas of the district of Darjeeling.<sup>71</sup> This figure shows that about hundred years of colonial rule in Terai it remained a backward tract in regarding education.

#### **4:2:1 EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN TEA AREAS OF DARJEELING TERAI DURING THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY**

It is a general believe that the education of the people living in poor socio-economic conditions gets surely hampered or emasculated. The people do not evince favourable response or keenness to education as poor economy does not afford leisure time to seek knowledge other than what they basically need for living life. However, it was from the very beginning of the tea plantation in Terai, that the tea workers in Terai did not receive education for various reasons as stated earlier. In short, it can be said that since 1862, when the first tea garden was established in New Champtra near Khaprail in Terai to thirties in 20<sup>th</sup> century the children of the workers of tea gardens in Terai did not have any education. The most discouraging factor, as observed and experienced by the early educational workers, was the vehement opposition from the planters themselves to the opening of schools in the gardens even for imparting mere elements of reading and writing.<sup>72</sup> The dedication of the Church of Scotland to the cause of promoting education in the Terai areas of Darjeeling was a fact that was fully recognised by the colonial Government. Though whatever education had been imparted or was now being imparted in the Terai was almost entirely the work of the Scottish Missionaries till the end of the third quarter of 20<sup>th</sup> century but it was the Roman Catholics who were entitled to the greatest credit to promote education in the tea garden areas of Terai. Though there were some schools in Terai but generally the worker's children were not admitted there due to their low financial status. In 20<sup>th</sup> June, 1906 there was a conference held at Darjeeling to promote education among the tea gardens in Terai. Mr.G.W. Steward, the then Secretary, Terai Planters Association was a representative in that occasion.<sup>73</sup> During the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century under the initiative of there were some school established in the tea garden areas of Terai. Mr. Macfarlane was the pioneer in this field.<sup>74</sup> Due to this kind of initiative taken by the Scottish Missionaries and some tea planters, during the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Terai out of 26 tea estates, 5 had schools on them and 7 had school near them ; but how near was not clear from that report.<sup>75</sup> The following table will exhibit the number of children of school going age on the plantation areas of Darjeeling Terai during early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the number of them that were receiving or had already received education in different tea estates:

**TABLE NO 4:4****PUPILS WHO HAD ALREADY RECEIVED OR RECEIVING INSTRUCTION IN TERAJ TEA GARDEN AREAS IN THE FIRST DECADE OF THE 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY**

<b>Name of the Tea Estate</b>	<b>Number of children of school going age</b>	<b>Receiving</b>	<b>Already Received</b>
<b>Deomani T.E</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>
<b>Hansqua T.E</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>
<b>Kamalapur T.E</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>
<b>Kristopur T.E</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>
<b>Lohagar T.E</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>
<b>Manjha T.E</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>
<b>Matiram T.E</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>---</b>
<b>Matigara T.E</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>---</b>
<b>New Champta T.E</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>
<b>Naxalbari T.E</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>
<b>Simulbari T.E</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>03</b>
<b>Bagdogra T.E</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>04</b>

[Source: Proceedings of the Lt. Governor of Bengal, General Department, File No:1E/1 5, Dated: August, 1906 (W.B.S.A)pp.90-91]

According to the Report on Public Instruction in Bengal for the year 1909-10, there was but little progress in respect of tea garden schools in the district of Darjeeling. The number of schools rose from 38 in the preceding year to 42 in 1909-10, but the number of pupils showed an increase of 15 only .The Report also marked that great deal remained to be done in regard to the extension of the education among the tea workers and suggested that it would be continued until the garden authorities induce to take a genuine and active interest in this field.<sup>76</sup> Generally the schools in the tea gardens gets Rs. 12 per month from the Government on the condition that the manager of the tea estate contribute Rs. 8 per month and provides a place and furniture .During next few years there was a fall in the number of pupils and decrease in the number of schools in Darjeeling district tea garden

areas. The reasons for it has been attributed to the general depression in the tea market .The planters of the district did not take much interest in the welfare activities of the tea garden areas like education , health etc as these were managed by the missionaries. Though later period it was transferred to the planter themselves.<sup>77</sup>

However, the Roman Catholic Missionaries were the prominent among the all to spread education in the tea areas of Terai region in the district of Darjeeling .The available record indicates that in 1902, Father Andre Grignard, the first Roman Catholic Father was paid a visit in Terai. In 7<sup>th</sup> June 1904, Louis Birsai, aged four years, son of Patras and Bikni in Saptiguri near Bidhannagar under Phansidewa police station was Baptised by Father L. Bodson in the house of Paulus Catechist. This was the first written record available of the work of the Roman Catholic Christian Missionaries in Terai. Father Bodson also Baptized some persons in Atal, Simulbari, Singhijhora and Tirrinanah tea estates.<sup>78</sup> But it was the early thirties of 20<sup>th</sup> century that systematic and organised work of the Roman Catholics were started in the Terai tea gardens. Though there works were mostly concentrated in European gardens like Phargumiah, Gangaram, Hansqua, Gayaganga, Singhijhora, Atal and many others. But it was not so easy for them to entered in the Indian gardens in Terai. Mr Yacob Beck, said that in Kamla T.E the missionaries were faced some difficulties and they were assaulted by some people because the manager of the said garden did not like the Christian Missionaries.<sup>79</sup> In this connection it may be note that first brick built or *pucca* church in Terai was made in Gayaganga in 1934, though the construction of the church was started earlier and first Catholic Father was appointed in Terai in June 1933. So, after the establishment of this church the Roman Catholic activist started to established schools, dispensary<sup>80</sup> and other welfare activities in Terai in the subsequent years. In the early thirties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Roman Catholic Church established a Primary School in Gayaganga<sup>81</sup> T.E. In January 1932 Father Dennis Truyen, a Roman Catholic wrote in a letter “ ...Gayaganga is my finest centre. The garden has built us a pretty brick chapel, which is also to serve as a school house, provided we can obtain a school master from Chota Nagpur.” Though one year ago he had mentioned in his dairy that “I have not been able to keep alive a single school in the Terai” Nevertheless, Yacob Beck came from Chotanagpur in the beginning of 1932 to teach in the Little Girja Line School which Father Truyen has left his legacy to the Terai. Mr.Yacob Beck continued his teaching in this school until his retirement in 1978.<sup>82</sup> In this school only the Catholic Christian workers children were used to go there for studies, though there number were very few .Perhaps the children of the sub-

staff in Terai tea garden areas were sent to this school, as they had received some preliminary education in the Chotanagpur areas. Therefore, they realised the importance of education.<sup>83</sup> When Father Bossaers, who had died in malaria in 1945 and another Roman Catholic had reached Gayaganga in Terai in January 1933 he had found three schools in Terai, one of them was the Chapel-School in Gayaganga T.E. There were then three masters namely Yacob Beck, Lucas and Pascal. In that mean time in 1935 Father Bossaers established another school near Bogivita <sup>84</sup> *jote* in Gayaganga T.E for educate the children of tea gardens. It was this little thatch house which began classes on 7<sup>th</sup> February 1935 can be considered as the ancestor of the modern St. Peter's High school. During the 40's of the 20<sup>th</sup> century this little thatch building served the whole Terai tea areas like a small light in the field of educational darkness. It got recognition as an Upper Primary School from the Government in 1941 and class VI in 1951. During this period all the students who have already finished class VI from this school bound to go Ranchi to continue their education. In January, 1963 it became a high school know as St. Peter's High School <sup>85</sup> which was the only Hindi medium school in Terai till the establishment of a Hindi high school in Siliguri in 1956. In the forties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the tea planters established some primary schools in the tea garden but the result was not satisfactory one. In 1963, Father William Bourke was the first fulltime headmaster of St. Peter's because when the school began the H.M was always the assistant parish priest, a man who was pulled in many different directions during the day.<sup>86</sup> In 1935 another school for girls was opened by the sisters of Roman Catholic community like Marie Hiltraud, Mery Charles, Mary Lutgardis and Gerard Majella. But "...that first year, our school was wiped out by kala-azar! We had no school building of course; so the first classes were held on the *verandah* of the convent. Our first pupils were four orphans, but by the end of the year, only one girl was left alive. Agnesia by name." had mentioned sister Gerard Majella.<sup>87</sup> Dash pointed out that during forties of 20<sup>th</sup> century "Few gardens run efficient schools of their own and some are without schools altogether."<sup>88</sup> In 1946 Rege observed that "There (in tea garden areas of Terai) has, however, been no virtual improvement in education."<sup>89</sup> Even the Halder Committee observed that "The equipments in school are meagre and tutors are also not sufficiently trained. The sentiments of working class are, however, not very much in favour of any education."<sup>90</sup> "The problem is a serious one, as soon as they are able to do anything useful, children are put to work on the garden to earn money and supplement the family resources instead of being sent to school" stated by Dash in his BDG of Darjeeling.<sup>91</sup> On the other hand the Colonial Government was indifferent to the need of improving the quality of education among the tea garden workers

in Darjeeling district. Thus it is better to be said that “Illiteracy under the British regime in Tea gardens belt in strict sense of the term was hundred percent. This was revealed when the National Government after Independence, undertook a survey work to determine the percentage of literacy in the working class on nationwide basis in 1948 that only 2 percent of the workers was found to be literate in moderate sense of the terms in the entire district of Darjeeling.”<sup>92</sup>

In the colonial period the growth of educational institutions was much higher in Jalpaiguri, Cooch Behar and even in the hill areas of Darjeeling while on the Terai areas of Darjeeling it was still occupied with dense forest and wild animals. When Jalpaiguri was established in 1869 the entire area of Darjeeling Terai including Siliguri was filled with jungle, even when Jalpaiguri was a flourishing colonial town in North Bengal, Siliguri had not yet developed a town. Moreover, in Jalpaiguri the tea planters played a very positive role in patronizing modern education but the tea planters of the Terai region did not take much initiative in promoting the growth of western education in their areas. Though there was some exception. On the other hand the British Government also were an important agent in spreading western education in the hills of Darjeeling while in the Terai they were not so active in disseminating modern education. In the case of princely states of Cooch Behar the *Maharajas* and even *Maharanies* had played a very progressive role which was not present in Terai areas of Darjeeling. When the Jenkins school (1857) was established in Cooch Behar, Siliguri was practically a jungle. Under the patronage and encouragement of Suniti Devi, the Queen of *Maharaja* Nipendranarayan a school for girls named Suniti Academy (1893) started in Cooch Behar. The growth and spread of education under the patronage of *Maharajas* and *Maharanies*, as it was in Cooch Behar was not in any other part of Bengal except Calcutta. But in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the change of the demographic structure as it has been discussed in detail in chapter II, it is noticed that there was a huge influx of tribal population from Chotanagpur region and Santal Parganas to workers as tea garden labourers, agriculturalist, and to clear the jungle for the construction of roads and the railway lines in Terai. These tribal populations were more interested in economic subsistence and growing their family than in providing education to their children. Generally this tribal population is found in the tea garden plantation areas of Terai where the educational development is very poor and even in the present time the condition has not improved drastically. The Scottish Missionaries have played the role of pioneer in the growth of education in tea garden areas of Terai but the contribution of the

Roman Catholic Missionaries is further more significant. The Roman Catholic Missionaries had come to Terai during the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and established St. Peter's and St. Merry high schools in 1930s. Though the establishment of schools, hospitals and other charitable works are part of their proselytizing activity but their urge in the uplifting the educational condition of the Terai which was covered with dense forest and wild animals is highly appreciable. The Gayaganga St. Peter's school established by the Roman Catholic Missionaries in fact, served as a banyan tree providing its shade and spreading its branches and roots all throughout the Terai region of the district of Darjeeling. The branches of the school were named Bhimbhar near Bidhannagar of Phansidewa(1963), Hatighisa near Naxalbari(1967), Pradhannagar near Siliguri (1970), St. Joseph High School near Matigara (1971) and many others. With the immigration of the tribal population who were earlier educated in the Missionaries school in the Santhal Parganas and Chotanagpur areas wanted to continued their education in such institutions when they came in Terai. The main reasons behind the success of the Roman Catholic Missionaries regarding imparting education in Terai was they were loved here because the people of the Terai recognised them as one of their own. Many similar tribal's were converted into Christianity with the growth of missionaries activities in this region but the activities of the missionaries were many times protested by the indigenous population either Hindus or Muslims or belonging to any other animist religion. There are many instances of such protest against the conversion activities of the missionaries which already have mentioned in earlier. Yet, in spite of their proselytizing and conversion in this region the contribution of Roman Catholic Missionaries and Scottish Missionaries cannot be ignored and under estimated.

#### **4:3 EDUCATIONAL GROWTH OF DARJEELING TERAJ IN POST INDEPENDENCE PERIOD**

Due to the partition after Independence of India Siliguri emerged as an educational centre of North Bengal. During the later part of forties and fifties following the partition of India and Bengal a large number of people deserted the west while East Pakistan now Bangladesh and come to various parts of the Indian dominion as refugees. Such displaced persons were also come in Siliguri town in large numbers. As a result of these population growth there was a need to the establishment of more educational institution in Terai, thus gradually there were the establishment of Terai Adarsha Vidyalaya(1949), later known as Terai Tarapada Adarsa Vidyalay as Tarapada Banerjee, a renowned tea planter of Terai had donated sum of Rs 40,000 for the development of this school,<sup>93</sup> Chittaranjan High school (1950) in Bagdogra, Nilmalini Vidyamandir (1955), Siliguri Hindi High school (1956), Bani

Mandir Railway High school (1956)<sup>94</sup>, Hakimpara Balika Vidyalay (1958), Queen's school(1959), the first English medium school in Terai was established by Capt. P.Jacobs , later known as Margaret (Sister Nivedita) English school (1961),<sup>95</sup> Krishnamaya Memorial Nepali High School(1960), the first Nepali medium high school in Terai which was established as a primary school in an unknown place near modern Sevok Road in Siliguri <sup>96</sup>, Dr.Rajandraprasad Girl's High school(1964) in Siliguri, Samsia High Madrasa (1965) for Mohammendan pupils near Desbandhupara in Siliguri and many others.

After the establishment of schools there was the necessity of the establishment of education for the higher level like colleges and University. So far the aspiring students had to either go to Calcutta or to the other districts of North Bengal like Cooch Behar (in A.B.N.Seal College) and Jalpaiguri (in A.C.College) for the higher education. The necessity was soon transformed into reality with the establishment of Siliguri College after Independence. In 1950 under the initiative and leadership of a law year, Abanindra Nath Bhattacharjee, a tea planter of Terai, Satish Chandra Kar, *jotedars* like Birendranath Roy Sarkar and many others were started the college in Siliguri Boy's High school compound. It was continued next two years until it was sited in 21*bighas* acquired land for the establishment of a college just behind of Siliguri Boys High school under the initiative of Refugee Relief and Rehabilitation Department of West Bengal. In 1956-57 it came under Government Sponsored College Scheme and it was upgraded to a degree college in Science. It may be note that it was take one century to established a college in Terai after the annexation of the Colonial Government of the plain areas of Darjeeling in 1850.Yet, during next few decades more colleges were established in Terai like Siliguri College of Commerce(1962), Siliguri Mahila Mahavidyalaya (1981) in Siliguri urban areas<sup>97</sup> and Kalipada Ghosh Tarai Mahavidyalaya (1988) and Siliguri B.Ed College(1989) in rural areas of Terai.<sup>98</sup>

The Census Reports of 1961 exhibits the real statistics in the progress of education of Darjeeling district as well as in the Terai region. On the result of 1961 Census Darjeeling district occupied the seventh place amongst the districts of West Bengal in terms of literacy. In the district of Darjeeling only 287 persons for every one thousand of its population have passed the literacy test in 1961<sup>99</sup> and on the other hand in West Bengal as a whole only 293 persons out of every thousands could do so. Though the people in the hill tracts of the district have come off with better literacy standard than Terai or plain areas, except the Siliguri police station. The police station of Darjeeling follows Siliguri very closely. The

growing urban influence around Siliguri has obviously played an important role in showing such a high figure of literate and educated persons in this police station. The women living in Siliguri *thana* seem to be much more advanced than those in other areas of the district as evident from the percentage of female literate of 34 per cent in this police station whereas it was only 26 per cent in Darjeeling *thana*. In Terai the percentage of literacy was 27.4 per cent, among them male and female persons was therefore 35.3 and 17.3 per cent respectively. Total number of literate person in Siliguri *thana* areas was 43.1 per cent, the percentage of male and female literate person was therefore 49.5 and 34.0 respectively. In the case of Phansidewa *thana* it was 13.6 per cent, among them males were 21.4 per cent and female were 4.4 per cent. In the case of Kharibari and Naxalbari *thanas* it was 16.1 per cent (Male: 25.5 and Female: 4.8 percent) and 14.6 per cent (Male: 26.7 and Female: 9.9 per cent) respectively. In this period the urban areas of Terai under Siliguri police had recorded 53.3 per cent literacy rate among them 57.8 per cent were males and 46.3 per cent were females.<sup>100</sup> Compulsory free primary education scheme has been introduced in Siliguri and Phansidewa areas of Terai from 1961-1962 and book grants, boarding charges, special stipends, examination fees have also been liberally granted to deserving pupils from the backward communities to promote education.<sup>101</sup> The schedule caste population inhabiting the district of Darjeeling comprise 13.19 per cent of its population and in Siliguri subdivision they were accounted for nearly 58.79 per cent (in Phansidewa : 18.95 per cent , Siliguri : 14.20 per cent, Kharibari : 13.02 per cent and Naxalbari : 12.62 per cent) of the district total scheduled caste population. Among them Rajbanshis were the most literate community in the district as well as in Terai. In the rural areas the percentage of literacy among them was 24.68 per cent while in the urban areas it was 22.56 per cent. Further, in the rural sector 31.67 per cent of the Rajbanshi males were literate without any educational level, about one-thirteenth of them have passed the primary or Junior Basic standard and only 0.57 per cent was Matriculates. They were followed by Namasudra , another scheduled caste community of Terai, every fifth Namasudra living in the villages of the district was literate but their men were more advanced in this respect, 32.34 per cent and females 8.98 per cent.<sup>102</sup> It may be note that in 1951 census 15,894 persons belong to Rajbanshi community and 667 persons belong to Namasudra community were enumerated in Darjeeling district almost entirely found in Terai.<sup>103</sup> In the case of scheduled tribe population, it was accounting for only 15.44 per cent of the total inhabitants of the Darjeeling district. Preponderance of scheduled caste population is observed in the Terai areas of the district where they accounted for 58.59 per cent (in Phansidewa : 23.03 per

cent, Naxalbari : 14.51 per cent, Siliguri : 12.72 per cent and Kharibari : 8.33 per cent) of the total tribal population of the district. Only 15.32 per cent scheduled caste population in the district have been able to pass the census enumeration test laid down for literacy. Oraon, the largest scheduled caste population in district were found 9.33 per cent literate in the rural areas of Terai.<sup>104</sup>

As an endeavour of spreading education in North Bengal and Terai region of the district of Darjeeling, one of the most revolutionary event was the establishment of University of North Bengal on 1<sup>st</sup> November, 1962 amidst Chinese invasion. Dr.B. C. Roy the then Chief Minister took a great initiative in establishing the University. One of the famous utterances of Dr.B.C.Roy was: “The entire area of North Bengal comprising the districts of Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Cooch Behar, Malda and West Dinajpur were vulnerable from political point of view. In addition to Pakistan, there were Bhutan, Sikkim and Nepal which bordered on Tibet and China. It was therefore strongly felt that this area should at once be developed socially, economically and from educational points of view without any loss of time.” Malda as an option was not at all unfavourable as their were vast empty stretches of land and most importantly it was much closer to the capital of West Bengal, Calcutta. On the other hand Jalpaiguri was a place of tea planters who had both, the capital as well as the zeal for knowledge. Moreover, last but not the least Cooch Behar, the city of the Royals of North Bengal would have provided an ideal environment for growth of modern education as it is very much of its cultural lineage. But instead of all these options Dr.B.C.Roy chosen a place which was 8 k.m away from Siliguri and not so far from Bagdogra named Atharkhai. Prof.B.N.Dasgupta took charge as the first Vice Chancellor of the University. On the November 2<sup>nd</sup> 1962 seven teachers who were recruited came to the low cost building for the opening ceremony but the Vice-Chancellor declared “the University is closed sine die” because of the Chinese aggression and it was temporally shifted to Siliguri College. When the University started classes in Siliguri there were only 45 students in six departments namely English, Economics, Political Science, Physics, Mathematics and Geography. In this connection it may be note that on 18<sup>th</sup> November 1968 a Medical College was started with 35 students within the N.B.U campus though in 1972 the college was shifted to Kawakhali now known as Susrat Nagar which it is presently located.<sup>105</sup>

The growth of population in Terai from sixties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century followed by the seventies and eighties as already discussed in Chapter II, Siliguri transformed into an

educational hub of the adjoining districts of North Bengal. During this period under the Government initiative few Nepali and Hindi medium schools were established which gave a different dimension regarding the educational scenario of the area. From the later part of the eighties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century due to institutional and personal initiative various English medium schools and institutions were started which converted Siliguri into an educational centre of North Bengal. This kind of education in different medium like Bengali, English, Nepali, and Hindi is not much visible in any other parts of West Bengal. This gave a unique character to the district educational system. Recently in the Terai region with the growing interest among the tribal people regarding education through Hindi medium a college was established near Naxalbari, named Hatighisa Hindi College(2015), the second Hindi medium college in West Bengal after Government General Degree College (Hindi Medium) at Banarhat (2014).

**NOTES AND REFERENCES:**

1. Known as Wood's Despatch because it was drafted by Sir Charles Wood, the then President of the Board of Control, who later became the first Secretary of State for India.
2. This meant that the allocated funds for education would be spent to educate limited number of pupils from the upper and middle classes who were expected to assume the task of educating the masses and spreading modern ideas among them. Education and modern ideas were thus supposed to filter or radiate downward from upper classes to general people or masses. This 'Downward Filtration Theory' remained the British policy till the end of the British rule even though it was officially abandoned in 1854.
3. A. J. Dash, *Bengal District Gazetteers: Darjeeling*, Government Press, Alipore, Calcutta, 1947, p.265.
4. W.W. Hunter, *The Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol-IV, Trubner & Co, London, 1885 (Second Edition), p.138.
5. Babu Sasi Bhusan Dutta , *Final Report on The Darjeeling Terai Settlement*, Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1898, p.05.
6. Chhanda Chakraborty, 'Christian Missionaries and the Development of Education in Darjeeling and Terai Region in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century: The Story of Liaison between Evangelism and Imperialism' ,*Omnibus Of North Bengal*, Vol-I, Anita Bagchi (ed), B.R. Publishing Corporation, Delhi,2015,p.129.
7. Chhanda Chakraborty, "The Role Of The Christian Missionaries In Promoting Education Among The People Of Darjeeling District In The 19<sup>th</sup> Century", *Occasional Paper*, No-1,Department Of History, North Bengal University,1986,p.03.
8. *Ibid*.p.07.
9. L.S.S. O'.Malley, *Bengal District Gazetteers Darjeeling*, Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, Calcutta, 1907, p.176.
10. *Ibid*.p.175.

11. Chhanda Chakraborty, “The Role Of The Christian Missionaries In Promoting Education Among The People Of Darjeeling District In The 19<sup>th</sup> Century”, *Occasional Paper*, No-1,*Op.Cit.*,p.07.
12. W.W. Hunter, *A Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol- X, Trubner & Co, London, 1876, p.193.
13. Babu Sasi Bhusan Dutta, *Op.Cit.*, p.05.
14. ‘Visitors Book’, Phansidewa M.E School, Phansidewa, District : Darjeeling.
15. Annual Report of the Phansiewa M.E School Read on the 19<sup>th</sup> February 1930,School Record, Phansidewa M.E school.
16. Report of Ramesh Chandra Das, Assistant Inspector of Schools, Rajshahi Division, Jalpaiguri, Dated 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1919, Divisional Commisonarate Office of Jalpaiguri , Collector Avenue, Jalpaiguri.
17. Annual Report of the Phansidewa M.E School, Read on the 29<sup>th</sup> June 1932 at the Meeting held for the purpose of distribution of the prices for the year 1931,School Record, Phansidewa M.E school.
18. Annual Report of the Phansiewa M.E School Read on the 19<sup>th</sup> February 1930,School Record, Phansidewa M.E school.
19. ‘Visitors Book’, Phansidewa M.E School, Phansidewa, District : Darjeeling.
20. Note of Inspection of the Phansidewa H.E school made by B. Lahiri, Esq, M.A., B.C.S, Sub-Divisional Officer, Siliguri, Dated:30.03.47.
21. Chhanda Chakraborty, “The Role Of The Christian Missionaries In Promoting Education Among The People Of Darjeeling District In The 19<sup>th</sup> Century”, *Occasional Paper*, No-1,*Op.Cit.*,p.07.
22. W.W. Hunter, *A Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol- X, *Op.Cit.*, p.188.
23. *Ibid*.pp.193-194 and Chhanda Chakraborty, “The Role Of The Christian Missionaries In Promoting Education Among The People Of Darjeeling District In The 19<sup>th</sup> Century”, *Occasional Paper*, No-1,*Op.Cit.*,p.09.
24. W.W. Hunter, *A Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol- X, *Op.Cit.*, p.194.

25. Chhanda Chakraborty, *Development Of Education In Selected Districts Of West Bengal With Special Reference To The Nineteenth Century*, Unpublished Ph. D Thesis, N.B.U., 1988, p.45.
26. *Ibid.* pp.132-133.
27. *Ibid.* pp.133-134.
28. W.W. Hunter, *A Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol- X, *Op. Cit.*, p.195.
29. Report on Public Instructions 1878-79, p.6 and Proceedings(A) of Lt. Governor of Bengal, September 1887, General Deptt. Miscellaneous, File No.138, pp.1-4 (W.B.S.A).
30. Chhanda Chakraborty, *Development of Education In Selected District of West Bengal with Special Reference To the Nineteenth Century*, *Op. Cit.*, pp.46-50.
31. A. J. Dash, *Op.Cit.*, p.270.
32. Chhanda Chakraborty, *Development of Education in Selected District of West Bengal with Special Reference To the Nineteenth Century*, *Op. Cit.*, pp.47-49.
33. Report of Public Instructions, File No: 34,23<sup>rd</sup> December,1885, pp.18-22(W.B.S.A).
34. Chhanda Chakraborty, "The Role Of The Christian Missionaries In Promoting Education Among The People Of Darjeeling District In The 19<sup>th</sup> Century", *Occasional Paper*, No-1,*Op.Cit.*,p.15.
35. *Ibid.* pp.17-18.
36. Babu Sasi Bhusan Dutta, *Op.Cit.*, p.05.
37. *Ibid.* p.05.
38. Chhanda Chakraborty, *Development of Education in Selected District of West Bengal with Special Reference To the Nineteenth Century*, *Op. Cit.*, pp.49-50.
39. C. J. O'Donnell, *Census of India, 1891*, Vol-III, Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1893, p.215.
40. In 1881 and in 1891, the classification was adopted regarding education had divided into three classes i.e 'Learning', 'Literate' and 'Illiterate'. Those who were under instruction, either at home or at school or college, were entered as 'Learning'. Those who were not under instruction, but able both to read and write, were recorded as

‘Literate’ and the remainder of the population as ‘Illiterate’. It was found , however , that the return of the ‘Learning’ i.e children under instruction , was vitiated by the omission of children who had not long been at school , as they were entered as ‘Illiterate’ and also of more advanced students who were classed as ‘Literate’. There were thus, great discrepancies between the Census returns of the number of ‘Learning’ and the corresponding statistics of the Education Department. It was therefore decided in 1901 to confine the entry in the enumeration schedules to the two main categories of ‘Literate’ and ‘Illiterate’, the former being those who were able both to read and write and the latter those who did satisfy this standard. No other criterion was laid down and the standard to be adopted in deciding whether a person could read and write was left in the hands of the enumerators. For further details see, L.S.S.O’ Malley, *Census of India, 1911, Vol-V, Part-I, Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, Calcutta, 1913, pp.356-57.*

41. C. J. O’Donnell, *Census of India, 1891, Op. Cit.*, p.223.
42. *Ibid.* pp.223-224.
43. L.S.S.O’ Malley, *Census of India, 1911, Vol-V, Part-I, Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, Calcutta, 1913, p.359.*
44. E. A.Gait, *Census of India 1901, Vol- VI, Part - I, Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1902, p.307.*
45. L.S.S.O’ Malley, *Bengal District Gazetteers Darjeeling, Op.Cit.*, p.175.
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47. *Ibid.* p.40.
48. Report of the Siliguri H.E. School, On the occasion of The Silver Jubilee Celebration, held on the 8<sup>th</sup> May, 1943.
49. Proceeding (B) of Lt. Governor of Bengal, March, 1905, File No-57/1, pp.165-167 (W.B.S.A).
50. Report of the Siliguri H.E. School, On the occasion of The Silver Jubilee Celebration, held on the 8<sup>th</sup> May, 1943.

51. Sobujer Katha, *Smaranika* (Bengali), Golden Jubilee Celebration, Siliguri Boys High School, Siliguri, 1969.
52. Proceeding (B) of Lt. Governor of Bengal, June, 1907, General Department, Education, File No-10/1 T, pp.144-149 (W.B.S.A).
53. Chhanda Chakraborty, *Development of Education In Selected District of West Bengal with Special Reference To the Nineteenth Century*, *Op.Cit.*, pp.50.
54. Babu Jogesh Chandra Mitra, Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operation in Darjeeling Terai 1919-1925, Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1927, p.19.
55. *Samotal*, Vol-14, Issue-24, by Monthly Newspaper, Atul Krishna Biswas (ed) Dadabhai Printing Press, Kharibari, Darjeeling, Dated: 31.12.92.
56. Interview with Badrinarayan Sinha, Age-94, ex-student of Kharibari M.E. School, Kharibari, Dated: 12.06.2011.
57. School Report, Kharibari High School, 1945-1951 and *Uttarbanga Sambad*, a daily newspaper, Siliguri, dated: 12.11.2007.
58. Interview with Santi Ray Sinha, Age-89, ex-students and teacher of Kharibari High School, Kharibari, Dated: 09.07.2011.
59. Mukulika, *Smaranika* (Bengali), Platinum Jubilee Celebration, Jyotsnamoyee Girls High School, Siliguri, 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2005.
60. It was established by a Bengali women named Hemlata Devi (Sarkar), daughter of Pandit Shivrath Shastri, one of the leaders of Brahma Samaj. In this establishment she was assisted by Suniti Devi, *Maharani* of Cooch Behar, one of the daughter of Keshav Chandra Sen, the leader of Sadharan Brahma Samaj, *Maharani* Sucharu Devi of Mayurbhanj, sister of Suniti Devi and also the *Maharani* of Burdwan. As a mark of honour to those *Maharanies* or Queens the school was named as Maharani Balika Vidyalaya. For more details see Anjashi Sarkar, *Voicing Contentious Silences Other Narratives on History and Society*, Abhijeet Publications, New Delhi, 2015, pp.52-60.
61. Babu Jogesh Chandra Mitra, *Op.Cit.*, 1927, p.19.
62. From 1911 a definite standard was adopted and an instructions were issued that only those should be returned as "Literate" who were able to write a letter to a friend and

- read the answer to it. For further information see W. H. Thompson, *Census of India, 1921*, Vol-V, Part I, Bengal, Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1923, pp.284-285.
63. W. H. Thompson, *Census of India, 1921*, Vol-V, Part II, Bengal, Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1923, pp.482-483
  64. *Ibid.* p. 483.
  65. Korak (Bengali), Annual Magazine of Shri Narasingha Vidyapith, *Astham Borso* (Eight's Year), 1992 and Admission Register of Dumriguri Primary School , Bagdogra , 1932-1942
  66. Memo No:Meb 1244(4) C Rajshahi dated 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 1944 , School Record Naxalbari M.E School, Naxalbari.
  67. Subarno Jayanti Bisash Sankha (1943-1993), in Bengali, Nandprasad High School, Naxalbari, 29<sup>th</sup> January, 1993 and Korak (Bengali), Annual Magazine of Nandprasad High School, 3<sup>rd</sup> Year (1987-88) and 5<sup>th</sup> Year (2008-2009). It may be noted that the name of the Annual Magazine of Shri Narasingha Vidyapith and Nandprasad High School is the same named Korak (Bengali).
  68. *Smaranika* (Bengali), Golden Jubilee Souvenir (1996-1997) , Siliguri Girls High School, Siliguri, 1997
  69. A. J. Dash, *Op.cit.*, p.269.
  70. R.A. Dutch, *Census of India, 1941*, Vol-IV, Government of India Press, Simla, 1942, p.36.
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  72. Dick B. Dewan, *Education in the Darjeeling Hills An Historical Survey : 1835-1995*, Sharda Enterprises, Kalimpong, 2008 (Reprint), pp.175-176. First Published in Indus Publishing Company, New Delhi , 1991.
  73. Chhanda Chakraborty, *Development of Education In Selected District of West Bengal with Special Reference To the Nineteenth Century*, *Op.Cit.*, p.97.
  74. L.S.S.O'. Malley, *Bengal District Gazetteers Darjeeling*, *Op.Cit.*, p.172.
  75. Chhanda Chakraborty, *Development of Education In Selected District of West Bengal with Special Reference To the Nineteenth Century*, *Op.Cit.*, p.93.

76. Dick B. Dewan , *Op.Cit.*, pp.177-178.
77. *Ibid.* pp.178-179
78. Gayaganga Golden Jubilee Souvenir (1933-1983), Gayaganga, The Ajanta Press, Siliguri, 1983, pp.28-31.
79. Interview with Father William Bourke, Age 92 Years, Ex. Headmaster and colleague of Mr. Yecob Beck, St. Peter's High School, Jisu Asharm, Matigra, Darjeeling, Date:11.09.14.
80. First dispensary was established in tea garden areas of Terai in Gayaganga in 1938. A. J. Dash, BDG of Darjeeling , Government Press, Alipore, Calcutta, 1947,p.278.
81. Gayaganga is derived from the name gaay means holy cow and Ganga i.e the name of the holy river of the Hindus .But some old inhabitants of this region said that these were the names of the first two workers of the tea garden when it was founded
82. Gayaganga Golden Jubilee Souvenir (1933-1983), *Op.Cit.*, pp.15-16.
83. Interview with Mr Pius Prachar, Age-91 Years, S/O Mr.Illias Lakra who had linked with Gayaganga Church and St.Peter's school is more than half a century.In 6<sup>th</sup> February 1926 he was born in Ranchi and after receiving some basic school education from St.Ignasias Gumla school in Ranchi he came in Terai in 1949.Gayaganga, Darjeeling, Date:11.10.14.
84. Bogivita: Bogi is a corruption of *bagincha* means grove or garden and vita or bhitta means a place sourended by walles. Bogivita is better to be said as Garden-Wall. Other vitas of Terai are Howdavita in Darjeeling Terai and Kankarvita in modern Nepal Terai.
85. Gayaganga Golden Jubilee Souvenir (1933-1983), *Op.Cit.*, p.16.
86. Interview with Father William Bourke, Age 92 Years, Ex. Headmaster, St. Peter's High School, Jisu Asharm, Matigra, Darjeeling, Date: 11.09.14.
87. Gayaganga Golden Jubilee Souvenir (1933-1983), *Op.Cit.*, p.07.
88. A. J. Dash, *Op.Cit.*, p.121.
89. D.V. Rege, *Report on the Enquiry into Conditions of Labour in Plantations in India*, Labour Investigation Committee, Simla, 1946, p.191.

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91. A. J. Dash, *Op.Cit.*, p.269.
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94. For details see Nabajyoti Chowdhury, *Growing Glory*, Nabajanma Prakashan, Siliguri, 2004, pp.48-51.
95. The Silver Book, Margaret (Sister Nivedita) English School, Pradhan Nagar, Siliguri, 1991 and Unpublished record regarding 'Margaret (Sister Nivedita) English school, Pradhan Nagar, Siliguri', collected from Dr. Manoj Laha, Ex. Headmaster, Margaret (Sister Nivedita) English school, Pradhan Nagar.
96. Daily Students Dairy, Krishna Maya Memorial Nepali High School, Siliguri.
97. *Uttarbanga Sangbad*, Daily News Paper(Bengali),Dated:01.11.2010,Siliguri.
98. Souvenir, Silver Jubilee, Siliguri B.Ed. College, August 2014, Kadamtala, Darjeeling.
99. In 1961 Census, the enumerator was instructed to record a person as illiterate if that person could neither read nor write or merely read but was unable to write in any language. A person who could both read and write with understands was treated as literate. The test for reading was ability to read any simple letter in print or in manuscript. The test for writing was ability to write a simple letter. If a person could both read and write and also had passed a written examination or examinations as proof of an educational standard attained, the highest examination passed by the person was recorded in the enumeration slip as literate. Further information see Bisweswar Roy, *Census 1961, District Census Hand Book: Darjeeling, Part-I*, Directorate Of Census Operations, West Bengal, 1961 p.51.
100. Bisweswar Roy, *Census 1961, District Census Hand Book: Darjeeling, Part-I*, Directorate Of Census Operations, West Bengal, 1961, pp.51-53.

101. *Ibid.* p.55 and p.71.
102. *Ibid.* pp. 64-67.
103. A. Mitra, *Census 1951, West Bengal , The Tribes and Castes of West Bengal* ,West Bengal Government Press, Alipore, 1953, pp.110-113.
104. Bisweswar Roy, *Census 1961, Op. Cit.*, pp. 69-71.
105. *Reflections*, Golden Jubilee Celebration 1962-2011, University of North Bengal, Raja Rammohunpur, Darjeeling, May 2011, pp.09-11 and *Uttarbango Sambad*, Daily Newspaper, Dated:16.05.2011, Siliguri.