

# CHAPTER - ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

The Barak Valley forms the southern part of the state of Assam. Before the partition and independence of India it was a larger part of Surma Valley. The state of Assam is composed of three physical divisions, namely, the Brahmaputra valley, the Barak valley and the hill range. The two Valley's derived their names from the respective main rivers, the Brahmaputra and the Barak following through east to west in the valley's. The hill region formed by the Karbi Anglong and the North Cachar hills district and the state of Meghalaya in the north; the state of Manipur in the east; the state of Mizoram in the south and the state of Tripura and the Sylhet district of Bangladesh in the west. The plain tract covering Cachar and Hailakandi districts of Barak Valley were earlier known as 'Cachar plains'. It is surrounded on the three sides by hills and only on the lower side it is exposed to Karimganj district which till 1947 was integrally included in Sylhet district without any natural barrier. In fact, the tract is a geographical extension of Sylhet. As it is inhabited by the Indo-Aryan population, the settlements in Cachar plains caused in the early times by the immigrant peasants from Bengal in their North Eastern march to the farthest limit of the Indo-Gangetic plains, in search of agricultural land. In fact, the divided between India and Bangladesh the Cachar-Sylhet region is a single valley formed by the Barak river. In the British period it is called the Surma Valley after a branch of the river, which flanked Sylhet town, and the undivided Valley was the homeland of a common dialect group of Bengali.

Education is one of the important part of human life, without education human life is meaningless. Our education system has changed from time to time. Education system in Cachar was similar that of education system of Bengal because Bengal was the main centre of education during the colonial period. The western education was originated from Bengal.

In Cachar and Karimganj Western education was introduced after the coming of British in Cachar. But its history remained unknown, but Bengal's history of education is known to all. This is one of big problem in reconstructing the history of Barak Valley. So if a proper research work is done on education system of Barak Valley, it will be very helpful to reconstruct the history of Barak Valley.

With the introduction of Western education in Barak Valley there also came a change in the existing system of education. The western education demolished the old education system (study in *Tol*) and established a number of schools in Barak Valley. The Christian Missionaries played a commendable role in this field. There came a new kind of education system and educational institutions like primary schools, basic schools, secondary schools and collegiate educations. So in my research work I would like to study on the how and why it was introduced, changes it brought in the existing system, how much it benefited the people of the valley, and what was the trend of educational development among the different backward communities of Barak Valley as we find a number of schools were opened in tea garden areas.

The first English school at Silchar was founded by the Welsh Presbyterian Mission in 1863 and was taken over by the Government in 1868. Besides the Government institution at Silchar, there was one Government aided high school at Hailakandi in 1904. It is a matter of regret that due to political dominance of Sylhet over Surma Valley, till the partition of India, education development in higher

education and technical training in Cachar did not take place considerably as most of the institutions were established at Sylhet. After the independence, Cachar progressed in a steady pace on the path of education and made notable achievement. Number of primary schools in Silchar and Hailakandi subdivisions increased to 786 in 1960 while it was 248 in 1900 for whole district. Karimganj subdivision, which was part of Sylhet (now in Bangladesh) alone, had 404 primary Schools in 1960.

Since the reform of Sir George Campbell in 1872, by which the benefit of the grant-in-aid rules was extended to the village schools or *Pathshalas*, Sylhet has manifested a greater improvement than any other areas of Assam. Between 31<sup>st</sup> March 1872 and 31 March 1873, the numbers of school increased just sevenfold, having augmented by the addition of 116 new *Pathshalas* with 3174 pupils. And this improvement was effected without any sensible addition to the total amount of grant-in-aid contributed by the Government. In 1856-57 the total number of schools in Sylhet district was 3, attended by 267 pupils. But in 1874-75 the total number of schools in Sylhet was 225, attended by 7025 pupils. The *Zila* School at Sylhet town is described as the most flourishing institution of its kind in the province and it was attended by 330 pupils, of whom 86 were Musalmans. To promote Muhammadan education, this school receives an annual grant from the Mohsin endowment. Not only these there were also 13 Middle English Schools with 602 pupils, 13 middle vernacular schools with 676 pupils were also getting some Government endowment. There were also some Gurus which were entirely educated by the Government. So in my research work I would like to study the establishment of schools and colleges in the present three district of Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi which forms Barak Valley and before partition it was known as Surma Valley.

After the introduction of Western education there came a changed in the society of Bengal and most of the part of India. The position of women also improved as they got the opportunity for study. Not only these, a numbers of lower class people also began to study, it is also a landmark in the history of education. In Barak Valley also a numbers of women also went to school and a number of schools for girls were established. So the study will cover all these aspects.

## **1.2 Review of Literature**

To give due justice to a topic under the study, it is indispensable to refer some of the original and outstanding historical works on the relevant topic published so far. Various erudite scholars and historian contributed a lot in throwing light on the history of western education in India and states like Assam. Some of them are noted below.

Archana Chakravarty's *History of Education in Assam 1826-1919*, (1989) described the nature and progress of education in Assam from the commencement of East India Company's rule in 1826 to the grant of diarchy in 1919. The book provides the background wherein the silent features of the indigenous system of education as provided under the former Government has been indicated. It also describes how the new system built in Assam on the ruins of the old attempted to conciliate the ex-official aristocracy. The progress of vernacular education and the experiments in secondary and higher education through the medium of English have been analysed. And the reorientation and progress of education at all stages that is primary, secondary, collegiate and vocational have also been discussed in the book.

Amlan Baruah and S.B Roy Choudhury's (ed.) *Assam State Gazetteer vol.1* (1999) laid down some important lines of the history of Assam and annexation of

Assam by the British. They also stressed on the background of Assam's history and British administrative system after the annexation. They opines that Anandaram Dhekial Phukan tried to encouraged Western education because he realised that without the knowledge of modern scientific applications and better mode of living which cannot be acquired without Western education. He laid stress on the necessity of raising the standard of education. But the concrete steps were taken by the Christian missionaries by setting up school and colleges both boys and girls in different parts of Assam.

Bipan Chandra's book *History of Modern India*(2009) noted that Western education is mainly originated from Bengal. According to him, it was the turning point in the history of education in India.

B.B Hazarika and S.B. Roy Choudhury's edition *Assam District Gazetteers, Cachar district* (1991) arranged nicely every single event and chronicle of Assam in general and in particular Cachar. They also nicely arranged the background history of education of Assam and Cachar. According to their work a different type of education was prevailed in Assam (study in *Tols, Madrasah* etc.) before the coming of British in Assam. Christian missionaries took the initiative to spread Western education in Assam. They also mentioned the new education system which was developed by the British (study in lower primary schools, primary schools, middle schools and college education etc.) many schools n colleges were set up in Barak Valley and others part of Assam.

Edward Gait's *A History of Assam* (2006) laid down the complete picture of Assam's history. According to him before the coming of British in Assam, the education system in Assam was totally different from that of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>

century. In his book he also clearly mentioned the annexation of Assam and Cachar by the British.

H.K. Barpujari in his book *The Comprehensive History of Assam* (Vol.3 and 4) (2007) throws light on the introduction of Western education in Assam. He also opined that education was confined in Assam under the former government to the priestly classes, scribes and a few others connected with the government. According to him, before the introduction of Western education in Assam many people were sent to Bengal by the kings to get higher education. He also noted that the Christian Missionaries played an important role in the spread of education amongst the backward tribes and hill areas in north-east India. In his work on the part of the introduction of western education, he mainly stressed on the emergence of the new educational system and set up of school and colleges in respective parts of Assam. He again throws light on the impact of Western education in the society of Assam.

H.K. Barpujari, S.K. Barpujari and A.C. Bhuyan's (ed.) *Political History of Assam* (1977) throws light on the political power changes that is the change from the powerful monarchy of Assam to the British rule. They nicely arranged the time period of the respective kings of Assam and British officers also. From this book we can easily know the education system of Assam before the introduction of English education in Assam. They also mentioned the role of Christian missionary and British officers in the development of new education system in Assam.

H.K. Barpujari in his book *Assam in the Days of the Company (1826-1858)* (1980) laid down some important aspect of the introduction of English education in Assam. He also mentioned the role of Christian missionaries and British government in the introduction of English medium school in Assam. Not only these, he throws light on the promotion of indigenous education by the respective English officers in

Assam. According to him by 1884 the Christian missionaries set up a numbers of schools in tribal and hill areas in Assam and with the exception of the missionary institutions and the few indigenous schools sponsored by the public where teachers were mostly Assamese, both Hindus and Muslims, instruction was imparted in all government village schools in Bengali on elementary reading, writing and arithmetic.

The 1817 publication of John Mill's *History of British India* (1817) proved to be a defining text in the theories of how education policies should be formed. He dismissed cultural history on the basis that it was not primary motivated by reason and therefore was illogical. In his work, reflecting on Missionary accounts of Hindu society Mill condemned Indian behaviour as immoral in comparison to European codes of conduct. In *History of British India* Mill discredited Indian culture and language even as its assumption of moral superiority authorise and justified of process of the British in India.

Lakshmi Subramanian's in her book *History of India, 1707-1857* (2010) throws light on the British rule from battle of Plassey to the great Revolt of 1857 India. But one of the chapter of this book "Economic development and Social change under Company rule" Lakshmi Subramanian laid down some splendid lines on western education in Bengal. According to Lakshmi Subramanian "It is also important to remember that not all utilitarians were in favour of Western education; many of them like, James Mill, were in favour of vernacular education just as there was among the indigenous population a growing demand of Western education." Not only these Lakshmi Subramanian again stress on the Charter Acts, impact of Western education on Indian society, setup of schools and colleges and the literally works done by the prominent scholars of nineteenth century Bengal.

Meena Sharma Barkatari in her book *British Administration in North-East India (1826-74)* (2011) highlights the education system of Assam before the coming of British and also after the introduction of English education in Assam. She mainly stressed on the activities of the English officers like David Scott, in the field of the spread and development of indigenous and English medium schools in Assam. She also laid down some important views of prominent scholars regarding the introduction of English education in Assam. According to her the British government tried to spend money in three field of education like, revival and improvement of literature, encouragement of the learned natives of India and introduction and promotion of knowledge of science among the inhabitants of the British territories in India.

P.H. Moore, in her minute *Twenty Years in Assam* (1982) laid down some splendid lines of Missionaries in Assam. She throws light on the role of Missionary in the introduction of English medium schools and colleges in Assam and north-east. She also noted the functions of English officers in administration system of British Assam. She mainly stressed on the set up of Churches in Assam. Not only these, she also mentions the adoption of Christian religion by the tribal people in hill and plain area of Assam.

Nemai Sadhan Bose in his book *Indian Awakening and Bengal* (1976) laid down the cultural history of Bengal and in India. In his work he mainly stressed on the Bengal renaissance and its outcomes. He also noted the background of education in Bengal. Not only these, he throws light on the history of literature and education in Bengal. According to him Western education first started in Bengal and slowly and gradually it was spread in others part of India by the Christian missionaries. He also noted some valuable lines of the history of education in India before the introduction of western education in Bengal.



R. Palme Dutt's in his work *India Today* (1992) opines that nationalism in India is one of the important result of Western education. As a result of the introduction of western education many Indian were westernised, and many highly educated social reformers also emerged. These social reformers brought changes in Indian society. After getting higher education in schools and colleges a nationalistic feeling was born among the Indian intellectuals.

Sekhar Bandyopadhyay in his book *From Plassey to Partition, a History of Modern India* (2008) noted that the real beginning of western education in India can therefore be dated from the Charter Act of 1813. According to him English education was introduced in India in the 18<sup>th</sup> century through the charity schools run in Calcutta, Madras and Bombay for the education of the European and Anglo-Indian children. The company supported these schools in various ways, but did not take any direct responsibility for the education of the indigenous population until 1813. In his work he also mentioned that with the result of the English education there was the emergence of new middle class people and nationalism.

Sunanda Datta and D. Datta's (ed.) *Cachar District Records Vol.1* (2007) noted that Cachar came under British rule very lately (middle of 19th century). In their work they presented a numbers of letters of British government regarding the annexation, ruling and introduction of western education in Barak Valley. In their work they nicely and managed the letters and chronicle of Cachar district.

Partha Chatterjee's edition *The Small Voice of History* (2009) which is one of Ranajit Guha's collected essays. Here, one of his essay "The authority of Vernacular pasts" Ranajit Guha says that a salient aspect of education had to do with the teaching and writing of history, and this helped further to make the discrimination between metropolitan and vernacular integral to Anglo Indian historiography. And again in

another essay “A construction of humanism in colonial India” he opined that *Bangla* was one of conceptualization somewhere around the last quarter of the nineteenth century. And *Bangla* was replaced by the newly emerged language English in the field of history writing. He also laid down some important views of Bankim Chandra on western culture and education and the changes in Indian literature and historiography.

W.W. Hunter’s account *A Statistical Account of Assam* (1982) which is published in two volumes, throws light on the number of statistical accounts of different districts of Assam. According to him in the year 1856-57 there was not a single school in the Cachar district. But in 1860 onwards there was the emergence of the school for both boys and girls. He also opined that from 1868 onwards a numbers of Christian missionary schools were converted into government institution, and government also granted some fund for the respective schools. In his work he nicely arranged the data and statistics in respective fields like medical, education, industry, agriculture, revenue system etc. Not only these, he nice arranged the data and statistics of Schools and colleges of Assam in colonial period.

### **1.3 Objectives of the study**

The main objectives of this research are:

1. To understand the background of introduction of Western education in India.
2. To study the education system in Cachar during Kachari rule.
3. To investigate the process of establishment of school and colleges in Barak Valley.
4. To understand the trend of educational development among different communities.
5. To study the impact of Western education on the society of Barak Valley.

## **1.4 Sources and Methodology**

Empirical method was employed for the work. Content analysis has been done and primary and secondary sources were used. Various articles published in dailies, periodicals magazines, seminar papers books and scholarly articles were also used. The main sources of the research work are based on various primary and secondary sources. The secondary sources are books, other sources shall be used in this research work are some periodical, dailies etc. Regarding primary sources like various records and data and statistics, which are kept in the Regional and National archives, Indian Council of historical Research Library, North Eastern Regional Centre, Guwahati, North Eastern Social Research Centre Library, Guwahati, National archive, New Delhi and Assam State Archive has been visited for the study.

## **1.5 Division of Chapters**

The study has been divided into six Chapters. Chapter I is introductory chapter which includes objectives, survey of literature, methodology etc. This chapter also includes historical background, contribution of British towards the introduction of western education in India as well as in Barak Valley. Chapter II throws light on the pre British Education system of India and Barak valley. Chapter III deals with the establishment of educational institutions in Barak valley. This chapter also discuss the rules and regulations introduced by the British Government for the smooth running of schools. Chapter IV deals with the role of Christian missionaries in spreading western education in Barak Valley. Chapter V throws light on the impact of western education in Barak Valley. Chapter VI is concluding chapter where all findings are summarized.

## 1.6 Historical Background

The British East India Company came in India in 1600. They were however the principal agent in disseminating western or modern education in India. They established a network of schools and colleges in India which turned out innumerable educated Indians versed in modern knowledge. The educational activities of the British East India Company can be divided into two phases that is the period from 1600 to 1766 and the period from 1765 to 1813. The educational activities from 1600 to 1766 were mainly confined to Madras Presidency by introducing charity schools for the Anglo-Indian children. And the second phase that is 1765-1813 is confined with Bengal and some parts of India. Three main agencies were responsible for the spread of western education in India and they were the foreign Christian missionaries, the British government and progressive Indians.

Early enterprises in the field of education commenced both by the missionaries and the East India Company were mostly confined to the presidencies of Madras and Bengal and a little work was done in the Bombay presidency. The introduction of western education in India was primarily motivated by the political-administrative and economic needs of Britain in India. It was not a mere accident that by the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, especially under Lord Dalhousie, important beginnings of the inauguration of modern education in India were made and it was by that time that the Britain brought under its rule a substantial portion of the Indian territories. It was also then that the industries products of Britain began to flow into India and though it was to Britain's advantage, the trade between India and Britain reached huge proportions.<sup>1</sup>

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1. A.R. Desai, *Social Background of Indian Nationalism*, Mumbai, 2010, P.129.

The British East India Company organised a huge, extensive, well-ramified state machinery to administer the conquered territory. A large number of educated individuals were required to staff this immense machinery of political rule and it was not possible to secure this supply of educated people from Britain itself. So, therefore, it became necessary to establish schools and colleges in India to turn out educated people who would staff the administrative apparatus of the British rule. They entrusted the key posts in this state machinery to the British and filled the subordinate posts with educated Indians. And for the expanding trade with India, also for the industries which she increasingly established in India, Britain needed clerks, managers, and agents who knew English. The political-administrative and economic necessity mainly urged the British government to establish schools and colleges in India, education which alone could meet the needs of modern nation was imparted and these educational institutions provided clerks for the government and commercial officers, lawyers, versed in the structure and processes of the new legal system, doctors trained in the modern medical science, technicians, and teachers.

There were other motives which encouraged some of the British statesmen to endorse the introduction of western education in India. These enlightened Britishers were convinced that the British culture was the best and the most liberal in the world and that if India, South Africa, and later on, the entire world, ‘anglicized’ culturally, it would pave the way for the social and political unification of the world.<sup>2</sup>

The British were inspired by an almost missionary zeal for spreading western education and culture. T.B. Macaulay belonged to this group of British statesmen headed by Cecil Rhodes. In his will, Rhodes “sketched his idea of the British Empire, and beyond its bounds of the great common wealth of people linked together by the

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2. A.R. Desai, *Op.cit*, P.130.

bond of English language and culture, serving the cause of peace among men.” His aim was “the extension of British rule throughout the world, the occupation by British settlers of the entire continent of Africa, the Holly Land, the Valley of the Euphrates... the whole of South Africa... the ultimate recovery of the United States of America as an integral part of the British Empire, the inauguration of a system of Colonial representation in the Imperial Parliament, which may tend to weld together the disjointed members of the empire, and, finally the foundation of so great a Power as to hereafter render wars impossible and promote the best interests of humanity.”<sup>3</sup> So, this was a programme of anglicizing the world and thereby achieving the empire and world political and social unity of peoples under the guidance and leadership of Great Britain.

A group of prominent Englishmen, Mountstuart Eliphinstone among them, also held that western or English education would make the Indian people gladly accept the British rule. It was also thought that the enlightenment due to education would reconcile the people to British rule and even engender a sense of attachment to it. Education in English as a medium, according to Mountstuart Eliphinstone, was a political.

The British East India Company was exposed to danger from the precarious foundation of their government, owing to the total separation between them and people, and the only means of ensuring its stability was to communicate their own principles and opinions by the diffusion of a rational education. The spirit of English literature, Trevelyan wrote in 1938 in his brochure on the education of the people of India, could not but be favourable to the English connection, forgetting that it is the

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3. *Ibid.*

literature of freedom and calculated to inspire a spirit of nationalism and independence.<sup>4</sup>

Thus the political and economic necessity of British capitalism in India, together with an almost fanatical belief in the role of Britain as the Messiah to civilize and unify the world by a world-scale dissemination of British culture, prompted the introduction of western education in India.

The beginning of the state system of education in India under the British rule may be traced back to the year 1813 when the East India Company was compelled by the force of circumstance to accept responsibility for the education of the Indians. The charter Act of 1813 did not specify the methods to secure the objects of ‘revival and improvement of literature’, the encouragement of learned natives of India’ and ‘the introduction and promotion of knowledge of science among the inhabitants of the British territories in India. The vagueness of Clause 43 of the Charter Act of 1813 intensified the Oriental Occidental Educational Controversy in India. Since the dawn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century there had emerged two groups among the officials of the company that is the Orientalists or Classicists who wanted the promotion of Indian education through the medium of Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian, whereas the other group was Anglicists or Occidentalists were in favour of developing western education in India through the medium of English. During this controversy Lord Macaulay came to India as a Law Member of the Governor General’s Executive Council. He was also appointed President of the General Committee on Public Instruction by William Bentinck. The government wanted the advice of Macaulay in the implication of Clause 43 of the Charter Act of 1813. Macaulay presented his lengthy minute to Lord

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4.*Ibid.*

William Bentinck in 1835. In the minute he advocated education of the upper classes in India and made a vigorous plan for spreading western learning through the medium of English. Lord Macaulay thought that it was possible through English education to bring about a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and intellect. This minute was accepted by Lord William Bentinck and it opened a new chapter in the educational history of India.

### **1.7 Early Educational works under the East India Company**

Western education was introduced in India in the 18<sup>th</sup> century through the charity schools run in Calcutta, Madras for the education of the European and Anglo-Indian children. Early enterprises in the field of education commenced both by the missionaries and the East India company were mostly confined to the presidencies of Madras and Bengal.<sup>5</sup> And a little work was done on Bombay Presidency. The British East India Company supported these schools in various ways but did not take any direct responsibility for the education of the indigenous population until 1813. The Protestant missionaries started working from the Danish station in Madras from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, and towards the end of the century, Srirampur Danish settlement near Calcutta became the main centre of missionary. Apart from establishing schools for boys and girls they also translated bible into Indian languages. Dr. William Carey, Ward and Joshua Marshman were remarkable in this field and their main aim was to conversion of Indians into Christianity. As a means to reach that end they were anxious to undertake educational enterprises within the Company's territories.

As early in 1614, steps were taken for the recruitment of the native Indians for the propagation of the Gospel among their countrymen and for imparting to these missionaries such education, at the Company's expense as would enable them to carry

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5. J.M. Sen, *History of Elementary Education in India*, New Delhi, 2002, P.38.



out effectively the purposes for which desire by all possible means to spread Christianity among the Indian people and allowed missionaries to embark on their ships. As the result of these the evangelical zeal found support in contemporary England where the Church was experiencing the revival of a deep religious fervour and in 1698, when the British East India Company's Charter was renewed, the famous missionary clause was inserted in it by British Parliament. According to the clause the British East India Company had to take a chaplain in every ship of 500 tons and more and the company's ministers were required to learn the Portuguese language which was then commonly understood by the inferior servants at the factories, and they also to apply themselves to learn the native language of the country where they shall reside. That would enable the Ministers to instruct the Gentoos that shall be the servants or slaves of the Company or of their agents in the Protestant religion. This Charter also directed the British East India company to maintain schools, wherever necessary, in all their garrison and their respective factories, and the first part of this instruction obviously at least implies that the British East India Company was expected to spread the Gospel amongst all the Hindu employees of the Company, if not among the people as a whole.

If we regard the proselytizing activities of the missionary as the beginning of the educational enterprise under the British East India Company it will be wrong concept because it is wrong to equate the education of Indians with their conversion to Christianity. The Charter Act of 1698 may be said to have laid the foundation, not of the Indian people, but of the education of the European and Anglo-Indian Children who lived in the possessions of the British East India Company and in accordance with the Charter, Chaplains were appointed in all presidency towns that is in Madras, Bombay and Bengal. They regarded it as their pious duty to look after the education

of the Christian children and, in particular, after the welfare and education of the Anglo-Indian children born of the Company's soldiers and their wives. <sup>6</sup>And these children were generally neglected but the Chaplains were very anxious to claim them from the Christian fold and tried to educate them properly. With this object in view, the Chaplains collected subscriptions and established Charity Schools. The name of the schools were borrowed from England and indicated that those schools were supported by charity and were primarily meant for poor children or orphan. In this way charity schools were established in India in 18<sup>th</sup> century and in the year immediately following 1698, the Chaplains of the British East India Company seem to have followed the provisions of the Charter literally and conduct schools in Portuguese which was then the *lingua franca* at the factories of the Company. But the attempt never became popular; it was soon given up and English was adopted as the medium of instruction.<sup>7</sup> The British East India Company assisted the charity schools in various ways. For instance, it (a) sanctioned recurring grants for maintenance; (b) permitted lotteries in their support; (c) give non-recurring grants for buildings or sites; (d) allowed their officers to collect funds or act as school accountants or other office-bearers; (e) occasionally repaired the school buildings; and (f) accepted the funds of the schools as deposit at comparatively higher rates of interest.<sup>8</sup>But it must be admitted that these charity schools were maintained by subscriptions and donations rather than by the grants sanctioned by the British East India Company.

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6. JP. Naik and Syed Narullah, *A students' History of Education in India, 1800-1973*, New Delhi, 2011, P.34.

7. *Ibid.* P.35.

8. *Ibid.*

### 1.7.1 Madras Presidency

The English East India Company when they arrived in India started their most important colony in Madras. The earliest record that one could trace regarding the educational work of the English settlers, chronicles the fact that in 1677 Ralph Ord came out to India as a school master for a salary of L50 (pound) per annum and he was a protestant and besides teaching his own religion he taught the elements of English. In 1687 the Court of Directors asked the governor of Madras to form a Municipality for the towns of Madras presidency and in their letter of the 28<sup>th</sup> September of the same year they made the following suggestions regarding the administration of education by the municipal authorities, “the court of Aldermen may, by virtues of the powers granted by our intended charter assess and *levy a rate upon the inhabitants for the building of one or more free school or schools* for teaching the English language to Gentoos or Moors or other Indian children and for salaries to the school-masters, and by degrees for many other good works. Their constitution being so framed that our president and council shall always influence their debates and resolutions.”<sup>9</sup> After the received of that letter Governor Yale formed a Municipal Corporation and asked them to levy a rate for educational purposes and they levied a rate but had not done anything in the way of providing schools or in drawing up any scheme of education.

Till the end of the seventeenth century more than one company had been carrying on trade in India with Charter from the British government and in the early year of the eighteenth century they amalgamated and formed the ‘United Company of Merchants Trading to the East Indies’, and for the purpose of this amalgamation the authorities in England had to give the companies a new Charter. For the instruction of

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9.J.M. Sen, *Op.cit*, P.39.

the children of the company servants the court of Directors asked the Company to provide schoolmasters in all their garrisons and factories.”<sup>10</sup> But the Company did nothing to help in that direction. In the mean time, in 1698, the Danish missionaries under the leadership of Ziezenbalg wanted to open a mission centre at Tranquebar and the Danish missionaries desired to work hand in hand with the British Christian society for promoting Christian knowledge. In 1711, S.P.C.K’s (Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge) authorities approached the Court of Directors in England to provide and maintain Charity schools at Madras presidency through the agency of Danish missionaries. With responding the approach the Court of Directors sent their application to the Governor of Madras presidency and in 1713 the Madras presidency government gave the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (S.P.C.K) and the Danish missionaries’ permission to open schools in Madras presidency and the government also promised to give them financial grant.

With the increase in the number of company’s servants, the British local authorities also realised their responsibility in the making of provision for educating the children so, they therefore founded the St. Marry’s Charity School for Protestant children. In 1717 with the permission of the government the Danish missionaries open two charity schools in the city of Madras one for the Portuguese and other for the Tamil children and in the same year the company also started a school for Indian children at Cuddalore. And thus the Anglo-Vernacular system of schools maintain by the government in the Madras Presidency began. In the beginning the people of Madras did not like to join the mission schools. They preferred joining the government school but slowly they realised the benefits of education, and owing to the great personal influence of the missionary Schultze a number of students joined

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10. *Ibid*, P.40.

the mission school which was opened for the Tamils in 1726. In 1805 the London Missionary Society commenced its work in Madras by opening a school there and this society gradually started a number of schools in different parts of the Madras presidency. And their schools were efficient and popular but did not aim at academics distinctions.

### **1.7.2 Bengal Presidency**

After the battle of Plassey (1757), by defeating Nawab Siraj Uddaullah, the East India Company which assumed wider administrative powers, but were not specially interested themselves in the education of the people of Bengal and there were of course the indigenous schools in different parts of country. In those days there were mainly three types of educational institutions in Bengal: firstly, the *Tols* or institutions of Sanskrit learning; secondly the *Madrasas* where Arabic and Persian were taught and thirdly, *Pathsalas* and *Maktabs* or elementary schools. Actually the numbers of such institutions were about 80,000, but there were no dearth of primary schools in Bengal. The *Tols* were the centres of Hindu intellectuals and Hindu learning. The *Madrasas*, centres of Islamic education, were attended by Muslims as well as Hindus. The *Maktabs* laid emphasis on the teaching of the *Koran*, completely neglecting the study of arithmetic, the vernacular and of any other useful knowledge. At that time there was no state system of education in England and no one thought of introducing any in India as everybody believed that education could be spread without state organisation.<sup>11</sup>

Though the Britishers had come to India long ago, there had been no cultural contact between the Indians and the Englishmen until the last quarter of the eighteenth

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11. *Ibid*, P.49.

century. Knowledge of a few English words was enough to earn for a man the distinction of a scholar in that language. In 1781, Warren Hastings, the first Governor General, founded the Calcutta Madrasah at the special request of distinguished *Muhammadan* gentlemen. The main and special object of the institution was to qualify the sons of *Muhammadan* gentlemen for responsible and lucrative offices in the state. In 1792 at Benares, Mr. Jonathan Duncan, founded Benares Sanskrit College and this institution was maintained from the very beginning by the Government, Lord Cornwallis, who was the then Governor General of Bengal sanctioned Rs 20,000 per annum for its maintenance. “This college was designed to cultivate the laws, literature, and religion of the Hindus, to accomplish the same purpose for the Hindus as the *Madrasah* for the *Muhammadans*, and specially to supply qualified Hindu Assistants to European judges.”<sup>12</sup> In 1789 the Calcutta Free school society was established for the education of the children of the European residents in Bengal. The Governor –General became the patron of the society and the civil servants of the East India Company agreed to pay a rateable contribution for the maintenance of the schools started by the Christian society. On the 6<sup>th</sup> March 1811, the Governor General Lord Minto, wrote a minute recording the decay of learning in India and proposing additional expenditure for starting two more Sanskrit Colleges, one at Nuddea, present day Nabadwip, in the district of Nadia in Bengal and other at Bhour, presently in the district of Tirhoot in Behar and also two more Muhammadan Colleges at Bhagalpur and Jaunpur, where Persian and Arabic literature formerly flourished. The people of Bengal, especially in the cities of Bengal came in contact daily with Englishmen in office or in trade, and were anxious to receive western education for the purpose of livelihood and they began to think that the oriental learning would not

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12. *Ibid.* P.50.

help them in their pursuit of trade and commerce and in earning a decent living but the Court of Directors in England sanctioned Lord Minto's proposals. The reason being that "Orthodox English education was then dominated, amongst as completely as Indian, by reverence for classics, and by dogmatic theology. To substitute one set of classics for another might well seem futile; to attempt to substitute one system of dogma for another appeared to all but those who were touched by missionary zeal for the Christian faith, at once dangerous and hopeless."<sup>13</sup>

The Christian missionaries were pioneers in the field of education in Bengal. Their main object was propagation of Christianity and conversion of the native population. As a means to reach that end they were anxious to undertake educational enterprises within the Company's territories. Towards the end of the eighteenth century Carey, Marshman and Ward of the Baptist Mission Society reached India. As a means to reach that end they were anxious to undertake educational enterprises within the Company's territories. Missionary activities were not permitted within the company's jurisdiction for fear of possible adverse consequences. But towards the end of the eighteenth century numerous missionary groups were becoming very vocal and powerful in England and they were agitating for the universal dissemination of Christianity in India. Missionaries and their supporters and many humanitarians soon began to exert pressure on the company to encouraged and promote modern secular westernised education in India. While the humanitarians, including many Indians, believed that modern knowledge would be the best remedy for the social economic and political ills of the country.

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13. *Ibid.* P.54.

### 1.7.3 Bombay Presidency

As the presidencies of Bengal and Madras first came into possession of the English, all the educational activities of the East India Company, Prior to 1814, were carried out in those two presidencies but there were however several schools and colleges in Bombay presidency during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and these schools were mostly started by the Portuguese. The earliest of these was the Jesuits' college established in Chaul, in 1580.<sup>14</sup> And it is said that more than 300 students used to attend the college. In 1620 a college called the 'college of St. Anne' was founded at Bandora in Salsette. Another college was also founded at Monpacer, over the door which is an inscription in Portuguese with the arms of Portugal above it and it was purporting that the erection was made in 1623 by the order of Infant Don John II of Portugal. In 1674, when Dr. John Fryer visited the presidency of Bombay, he saw two colleges, one started by the Jesuits and the other by the Franciscans. The Marathas expelled the Portuguese in 1739, and with the suppression of the Catholic Orders the orphanages and colleges broke up but the works of the parish schools were carried on by the Indian Christians with the aid of private liberality. In the seventeenth century, in Bombay and smaller adjacent islands, these parochial elementary schools were started and it was maintained by the members of the Franciscan and Jesuit Orders. In 1719, the Rev. Richard Cobbe opened in Bombay a school for the education of the Protestant children and the school was located under the fort and it was supported by voluntary contributions until 1807, when it began to receive a grant from the Court of Directors. This school was originally called the 'Charity School' but later on it came to be known as the Bombay Education Society School and it continued within the fort 1825 when the government ordered the

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14. *Ibid.* P.60.



removal of the school from the fort to the present building at Byculla. In 1790 'Portuguese Eurasian School' also existed in Bombay presidency.

In 1808 the Court of Directors of the British East India Company issued a despatch declaring strict religious neutrality and refusing to lend authority to any attempt to propagate the Christian religion in any part of British India but in some missionary schools the order of the Court of Directors was not rigidly followed. As a result of these Mr. Carey, son of Rev. Dr. Carey of Serampur, was reprimanded by government for not adhering strictly to the policy of neutrality in a missionary school at Rajputana. A letter dated the 15<sup>th</sup> July, 1822, addressed to Sir D Ochterlony records – “His Excellency the Governor-General in Council has perceived with much regret the highly injudicious and objectionable course pursued by Mr. Carey in introducing the sacred books of scripture as school books in instructions of so recent a date and in such a state of society as that of Rajputana. Mr. Carey will receive injunctions through his father, the Reverend Doctor Carey, to discontinue the use in schools under his charge of the Christian Scriptures and all religious tracts calculated to excite alarm as to our motives in the minds of the Natives.”<sup>15</sup>

#### **1.7.4 Charles Grant's Plan**

Among the Britishers those who were able to retire to a successful life in England after a career in India, Charles Grant shines as a bright star. He was an ordinary officer of the East India Company and had come to India in 1773. Charles Grant is singled out here for a special mention because of his contributions to the development of modern Indian education system. Charles Grant's contribution to British rule in India has been investigated a few decades ago by Professor A.T. Embree. But educationist in India generally tends to overlook his role in the introduction of

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15. *Ibid.* P.62.

western education in India.<sup>16</sup> Charles Grant was the first Englishman, at least for decades before, Macaulay, to argue for the introduction of English education with a view to introducing Christianity in India.

Charles Grant came to India in 1767 and he was appalled at the degeneration of the Indian society following the disintegration of the great Mughal Empire in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. He saw that Indian religion has always been a very strong spiritual force which binds the people together but at the same time it had sunk into the grossest form of superstition. Every stone and every tree had acquired the importance of a deity and every phenomenon of nature was taken as a manifestation of the divine will.<sup>17</sup> In the Hindu society people had begun the practice of throwing children into the sea for propitiating the gods and some people also swinging the devotees in iron hooks during certain religious festivals. Not only these, the sati system or self – immolation of widows was widely prevalent and was looked upon as a sacred act. Caste system also played an important role in Indian Hindu society and in this system Brahmin and Kshatriya occupied the highest position. ‘Kulinism’, originally intended to maintain the purity of blood line of the higher classes, had degenerated into child marriage and polygamy.<sup>18</sup> In ‘Kulinism’ the higher caste had sunk to such lower castes and the women could not have been expected to have better fate. Women got married in very early age and instead of education they acquired *Pardah* which was gifted by the society. Some people criticized Grant on the point that he drew a very uncharitable picture of the Indian people in his essay as regard the corruption rampant in the land.<sup>19</sup>

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16. Suresh Chandra. Ghosh, *History of Education in India*, New Delhi, 2011, P.290.

17. *Ibid.* P.291.

18. *Ibid.*

19. S.P. Chaube, *History of Indian Education*, Agra, 2011, P.68.

Charles Grant felt that the abuses in the Indian society could be removed by the introduction of Christianity in Indian subcontinent, and in 1790 when he returned home; he worked for it with great vigour. In England he wrote an essay entitled ‘Observation’ which contains a description of the Indian people and pointed out the deplorable affairs in the field of education. As a remedy to all these evils, Grant suggested a “healing principle”, namely the supersession of the existing religion of the by Christianity through the dissemination of the science and literature of Europe, “a key which would at once open a world of new ideas” to them.<sup>20</sup> He also stated that the long intercourse between the Indians and the Europeans in Bengal rendered it feasible to use English as the medium of instruction. He felt that the knowledge of English language would immediately place the whole range of European knowledge within their reach, while translation of English books into the Indian languages would take a long time and would be less efficacious. He also urged the substitution of English for Persian as the official language because that would induce the Indians to learn English. He was also of the view that medium of instruction should be the Indian language along with English as well. Charles Grant urged the establishment of schools under teachers of good moral character and he also hoped that very soon the pupils taught in these schools would themselves become the teachers of English to their countryman. In conclusion, he triumphantly asserted, “the true cure of darkness is light”. The Hindus err because they are ignorant and their errors have never fairly laid before them.<sup>21</sup>

When Charles Grant’s manuscript containing his observation on Indian society was shown to Henry Dundas, President of the Board of Control set up in 1784 by Pitt’s India Act to supervise the activities of the Court of Directors, Henry Dundas

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20. *Ibid.* P.292.

21. *Ibid.* P.293.

asked his secretary, William Cabell to write a note on it. And Willam Cabell emphasized that the political advantages of the British East India Company could be derive from developing an education policy based on Charles Grant's observations. Cabell mentioned that a common language would draw the ruler and ruled into closer contact and introduction of western education would lead to the removal of many abuses from which people were suffering due to their false system of beliefs. However, when the subject was debated upon on the occasion of the renewal of the East India Company's Charter, the Attorney General and the Solicitor General grouped the clause into a Bill and explicitly stated that the real end sought was to send missionaries and school masters to India for the conversion of Indians into Christianity. And it was fully detrimental to the trading interest of the British East India Company, dominated by men with long experience in India who considered that any such move would result in political unrest in India. They condemned the Bill and through some of their connections in both of the houses of parliament manoeuvred to defeat it.<sup>22</sup> Thus was lost Charles Grant's unique opportunity to become a pioneer in the introduction of western education in India. But the description given in the Charls Grant's 'Observation' influenced the British parliament and it took upon itself the responsibility for education in India. His work was published in 1797.

Ultimately the British Parliament gradually accepted the suggestions given by Grant and the same were implemented. But this process took 40 years and in 1813 a charter was published.<sup>23</sup> The prestige of Grant as one who had known India at first hand, as an influential Director of the Company, and a member of parliament lent weight to the book and ultimately paved the way for the educational clauses of the

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22. *Ibid.* P.294.

23. S.P. Chaube, *Op.cit*, P.68.

Charter Act of 1813.<sup>24</sup> Charles Grant's suggestions regarding the organization of the education of the Indian people are of the great historical interest. It is very significant that by standing in 1792, he foresaw the future developments in Indian education so clearly. He suggested the adoption of English as the language of Government – a decision which was ultimately taken by Bentinck about forty years later.<sup>25</sup> His suggestion of the adoption of English as a medium of instruction – as educationally unsound but curiously prophetic proposal also seen in the Lord Macaulay's minute. Grant correctly diagnosed the eagerness of the Indian people to learn the western (English) language and rightly foretold that multitudes of the young would flock to the English schools and the Indian themselves would, in course of time, be teachers of English.

Some prominent Indian themselves were also responsible for the introduction of western education in India. Amongst them Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the pioneer of the progressive modern education in India. Raja Ram Mohan Roy hailed the English education as the key to the treasures of scientific and democratic thought of the modern west. He also declared that the perpetuation of the old system of education in India would only perpetuate superstition and authority. "If it had been intended to keep the British nation into ignorance of real knowledge, the Baconian philosophy would not have been allowed to displace the system of the schoolmen, which was the best calculated to perpetuate their ignorance. In the same manner, the Sanskrit system of education would be the best calculated to keep this country in darkness if that had been the policy of the British Legislature."

Subsequently, a numbers of organisations such as the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Ramkrishna Mission, the Aligarh Movement and individuals like

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24. J.P. Naik and Syed Nurullah, *Op.cit*, P.53.

25. *Ibid*.

Deshmukh, Chiplunkar, Agarkar, Maganbhai Karamchand, Karve, Tilak, Gokhale, Malaviya, Gandhi and others worked towards the establishment of educational institutions, both for men and women, imparting modern education throughout the country and It is true that they were critical of some aspects of that education, still they recognized its value, and with some changes, supported its spread among the people. Some of them also criticized its secular nature and, in the institutions they organised, added religious instruction like the Benares Hindu University organised by Pandit Malaviya and the Aligarh University organised by Syed Ahmed Khan were the outstanding instances of this movement. Some of them criticised the textbooks used in the government or missionary schools as promoting an attitude of deprecation of India's past or for being divorced from the realities of life, and prepared and substituted different textbooks which would kindle national self-respect among the Indians. However, almost all of them retained the essential core of modern education, its antiauthoritarian liberal note, its emphasis on individual liberty, its rejection of blind faith and stress on modern natural sciences.<sup>26</sup> And even the schools and colleges started by the Arya Samaj (Lala Lajpat Rai section), the militant foe of alien influences, accepted and taught modern education, only adding to its religious instruction, such as the teaching of the doctrine of the infallibility of the Vedas. This in fact, also contradicted the very spirit of the liberal education which they imparted, the keynote of which was to appraise things by experiment and reason.

### **1.7.5 The Charter Act of 1813**

State system of education under the British East India Company was introduced with the Charter Act of 1813. The education system under the government is called state system of education. After the introduction of Charter Act of 1813, the British

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26.A.R. Desai, *Op.cit*, P.132.

government took the responsibility of educating Indian masses. The Act also for the first time made an annual provision for a sum not less than one lakh of rupees for the promotion of learning. The new Act renewing the East India Company's privileges for a further period of twenty years was passed on 21 July 1813, a numbers of educational issues were discussed on this occasion. The two educational issues were:-

“Should missionaries be allowed to go to India and work in the territories of the company for education and proselytization of the Indian people?

Should the Company accepted responsibility for the education of the Indian people? If it should what should be the nature and scope of its educational activities?”<sup>27</sup>

On the first issue that is “should the missionaries be allowed to go to India and work in the territories of the British East India Company for education and proselytization of the Indian people,” J.A Richer observes that the 13<sup>th</sup> Resolution of the Charter Act was the one in which the whole missionary question was really involved. And in the British Parliament it was resolved that it was the duty of the Britain to promote the interest and happiness of the native inhabitants of the British dominions in India, and that measures ought to be adopted as may tend to the introduction among them a useful knowledge and moral improvement. That in furtherance of the above subjects sufficient facilities shall be afforded by law from persons to persons desirous of going to, or remaining in, India for the purpose of accomplishing those benevolent designs.<sup>28</sup> It meant that the missionaries were to be allowed to enter India and reside in India. In India they might preach, found churches and discharged all spiritual duties.

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<sup>27</sup>. *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup>. *Ibid.* P.56.

On the issue of should the British East India Company accept responsibility for the education of the Indian people, if it should, what should be the nature and scope of its educational activities? The principal opposition to acceptance of responsibility came from Directors. During that time in England education was not responsibility of state, so very naturally the East India Company was not prepared to accept the responsibility of education in India. And the Company was influenced more by financial than by philanthropic motives and resisted all attempts to increase obligations having a tendency to cut down the dividends. Not only these, the people of India themselves were most apathetic in the matter. They were oppressed by the anarchy that followed the decay of the great Mughal Empire and their one great need was the establishment of law and order and they hardly had the time or energy to ask for anything else from their rulers. So, the task of making the East India Company to accept the responsibility for the education of the Indian people was therefore, far from easy. But the opponents of the *mission clauses* felt an urgent need of creating a powerful and rival agency in Indian education to counteract the results of missionary enterprise.<sup>29</sup> The question of dissemination of education among native Indians were also taken up into consideration. A clause to this effect was introduced in Parliament by a former Advocate General in Calcutta and it was passed after a slight modification. So, they move and successfully carried through a resolution which subsequently became the 43<sup>rd</sup> section in the Charter Act of 1813. The Clause 43<sup>rd</sup> of Charter Act of 1813 empowered the Governor- General to appropriate a sum of not less than one lakh of rupees in each year out of the surplus territorial revenues for the revival and improvement of literature and the encouragement of the natives of India,

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<sup>29</sup>.*Ibid.*



and for the introduction and promotion of a knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British East India Company's territories in India.

The sponsors of the Clause 43<sup>rd</sup> of the Charter Act of 1813 were obviously influenced by the Oriental School of thought because they spoke of the revival and improvement of literature which referred to the Classical literatures in Sanskrit or Arabic and encouragement of the learned natives in India. And they were anxious to teach western science because the Indian people of that period were most ignorant and desired that attempts should be made to promote the knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories in India. It is also said that the supporters of this Clause were influenced by Orientalists in Calcutta who had been agitating for some time past for more funds for the maintenance of the Calcutta Madrasah and Benares Sanskrit College, and for the revival and improvement of Classical learning in India. In March 1811, Minto Governor General of India (1806-1813), had sent home a minute which definitely represented and endorsed the view of the Orientalists in India. In that minute, Minto spoke about the decay and neglect of Indian Classical learning and learned persons which could be traced to "the want of that encouragement which was formerly afforded to it by Princes, Chieftains and Opulent individuals under the native governments".<sup>30</sup> He also observed that a nation particularly distinguished for its love and successful cultivation of letters in other parts of the empire should have failed to extend its fostering care to the literature of the Hindus and to aid in opening to the learned in Europe the responsibilities of that literature. While it is clear from the debates in the House of Commons and the House of Lords that by 'sciences' it was meant western sciences, Clause 43<sup>rd</sup> was otherwise

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30. Suresh Chandra Ghosh, *Op.cit*, P.297.

quite vague.<sup>31</sup> Because it was not clear that what would be the maximum amount of expenditure on education and how to ascertain, in the absence of the proper financial machinery that is the surplus in the territorial revenues. And the Governor General was the administrative head of the Presidency of Fort William only, so, the whole of the grant was likely to be appropriated for Bengal alone. In spite of the vagueness, yet the Clause 43<sup>rd</sup> of Charter Act of 1813 is important because it laid down for the first time the dissemination of education among the people should be one of the tasks of the British Raj in India. It assumed more importance when one remembers in those days education was not a state responsibility even in England, and except in Scotland, no public money was spent on elementary education, which was left mostly to the Charity schools, the village domes, the private Sunday schools movement started by Robert Raikes and the personal efforts of individuals like Hannah More, “the bishop of Petticoat” as she was then known to her contemporaries.<sup>32</sup> The principal implication of this Clause was that the Company would create its own agency to spend this amount of a lakh of rupees and try to educate the people of India in a secular and conservative fashion as oppose to the proselytizing and revolutionary proposals of the missionaries.<sup>33</sup> The supporters of this Clause also believe that by fostering both Oriental and Occidental science, a reliable counterpoise and a protecting break water against the threatened deluge of missionary enterprise would be created. They were also little hoped that this section of the Act was laying the foundation of a state educational system in India which would fuse both the government and missionary schools into a common structure in due course.

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31. *Ibid.*

32. *Ibid.*

33. J.P. Naik and Syed Nurullah, *Op.cit*, P.57.

### 1.7.6 Macaulay's Minute

T. B Macaulay (1800 – 1859) was an English politician, historian essayist and he was known for his minute on education (1835) which was accepted by Lord William Bentinck, the Governor General of India from 1828 to 1835. Macaulay came to India as a Law member of the council of Governor General on 10<sup>th</sup> June 1834 and he was also appointed as the Chairman of the committee of Public Instructions of Bengal by Lord William Bentinck. Being the son of Zachary Macaulay, in the circle of the Clapham Evangelists, his interest in consolidating the British Empire by the propagation of English Laws and English culture began quite early in his life. The Charter Act of 1813 did not specify the methods to secure the object of the 'revival and improvement of literature', the encouragement of learned natives of India, and the introduction and promotion of knowledge of science among the inhabitants of British territories in India.<sup>34</sup>The vagueness of Clause 43 of Charter Act of 1813 resulted the oriental occidental educational controversy in India. Since the down of the 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the emergence of Orientalist and Anglicists among the official of the East India Company. The main controversial issues of the Orientalists or Classicists and the Anglicists or Occidentalists in India are.

First, the aim of education of the British policy was "whether it should be to educate the Indian high class people in the higher branches of learning or the masses in the elementary education".

Second, issue was on the type of knowledge that is whether to preserve and promote oriental learning or to introduce western knowledge culture and sciences in India.

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34. J.C. Aggarwal, *Landmarks in the History of Modern Indian Education*, New Delhi, 2010, P.1.

Third, question was on the medium of instruction, that is whether English or Persian and Sanskrit in Bengal, English or Indian languages in Bombay and Madras should become the medium of instruction. It may be recalled that at the time the presidencies/ provinces of Bengal, Bombay and Madras contained numerous areas which now form new states like Orissa, Bihar, Bengal, Tamilnadu etc.<sup>35</sup>

Fourth issue was on the agency of education that is whether the government should assume direct responsibility of educating the Indians or the indigenous system of the country to continue.

The fifth and the final question was on the missionaries that is whether the shores of India to be thrown open to missionaries of all parts of the world to promote education or to a few missionaries or not at all.

The Orientalists or Classicists wanted the promotion of Indian education through the medium of Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian, whereas the other group that is Anglicists or Occidentalists were in favour of developing western education in India through the medium of English. The East India Company's officer like H.T. Princep, who was the Education Secretary in Bengal was the supporter of the Oriental point of view. On the other hand there were also some prominent Indian like Raja Rammohon Roy supported the Anglicists who were in favour of English or western learning . Initially T.B Macaulay did not take part in the controversy but the government wanted the advice of the Macaulay on the implication of the Clause 43 of the Charter Act of 1813. It was only when the Orientalists as well as the Anglicists decided to approach Bentinck after their failure to come to a decision on the future education policy of the government (occasion by the question of converting the Calcutta Madrasah into an institution of western learning as well as recognizing the Agra college on the model of

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35. J.C. Aggarwal, *Modern Indian Education, History, Development and Problems*, Delhi, 2008, P.7.

the Hindu college in Calcutta) that he drew up a long and elaborate minute championing the cause of the English education in his usual characteristics prose marked by rhetoric and antithesis on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1835, at the suggestion of Bentinck.<sup>36</sup>

In the features of his minute T. B. Macaulay first laid down the actual meaning of the word 'literature' of charter Act of 1813. He argued that the word literature occurring under the Clause 43 of the Charter Act of 1813 could be interpreted to mean English literature, that the epithet of a 'learned native of India' could also be applied to a person versed in the philosophy of Locke or the poetry of Milton and that the object of the promoting knowledge of science could only be accomplished by the adoption of English as the medium of instructions. He said that the Act of Parliament can, by any art of construction, be made to bear the meaning which has been assign to it. He pointed out that the act of Parliament contains nothing about the particular languages or sciences which are to be studied. A sum is set apart "for the revival and promotion of literature and the encouragement of learned natives of India, and for the promotion of a knowledge of sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories."<sup>37</sup> If this interpretation was not accepted, Macaulay was willing to propose an Act rescinding Section 43 of Charter Act of 1813, Macaulay was against the continuance of institutions of Oriental learning and he suggested that these should be closed as they did not serve any useful propose. He also opined that the admirers of the oriental system of education conceived that the public faith is pledged to the vernacular languages and that to alter the appropriation of any fund which has hitherto been spent in encouraging the study of Arabic and Sanskrit and it would be downward spoliation.

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36.Suresh Chandra Ghosh, *Op.cit*,P.308.

37.J.C.Aggarwal, *Op.cit*, P.2.

On the subject of medium of instruction, Macaulay pointed out that all parties agreed that the dialects commonly spoken among the native of this part of India contain neither literary nor scientific information, and are moreover so poor and rude that until they are enriched from some other quarter, it will not be easy to translate any valuable work into them. It seems to be admitted on all sides, that the intellectual improvement of those classes of the people who have the means of pursuing higher studies can, at present, be effected only by means of some language not vernacular amongst them.<sup>38</sup> So the choice of medium of instruction was naturally left between English on one hand and Arabic and Sanskrit on the other.

T.B. Macaulay who admitted did not have only knowledge of either Sanskrit or Arabic but brushed aside the claims of these two languages that is Arabic and Sanskrit to be the medium of instruction by observing that a single shelf of a good European library was worth to whole native literature of India and Arabia. On the other side, the claims of English could hardly be necessary to recapitulate. Macaulay says, "It stands pre-eminent even among the languages of the west. It abounds with works imagination not inferior to the noblest which Greece has bequeathed to us, with models of every species of eloquence, with historical compositions, which, considered merely as narratives, have seldom been surpassed, and which, considered as vehicles of ethical and political institution, have never been equalled, with just and lively representations of human life and human nature; with the most profound speculations on metaphysics, morals, government, jurisprudence, and trade, with full and correct information respecting every experimental science which tends to preserve the health, to increase the comfort, on the expand the intellect of man. Whoever knows that language has ready to access to all the vast intellectual wealth, which all the wisest

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38. Suresh Chandra Ghosh, *Op.cit*, P.309.

nations of the earth have created and hoarded in the course of ninety generations. It may safely be said, that languages is of far greater value than all the literature which three hundred years ago was extend in all the languages of the world together.”<sup>39</sup> He also said that in India, English is the language spoken by ruling class and it is spoken by the higher class of the natives at the seats of the government. Not only this it is the also likely to become the language of commerce throughout the seas of the east and it is also the language of two European communities which were rising that time, the one in the south of Africa and other in Australia and that communities were every year becoming more important, and it is more closely connected with British Indian empire. Whether the British looked at the intrinsic value of their literature, or at the particular situation of India they shall see the strongest reasons to think that of all foreign tongues and the English tongue is that which would be the most useful to their native subjects. He referred to the alleged prejudices of the Indian people against English education and argued that it was the duty of England to teach Indians what was good for their health, and not what was palatable to their taste.<sup>40</sup> T.B. Macaulay further pointed out that the Indians themselves preferred the English education to their own as the crowding of the Hindu College and the Scottish Church College in Calcutta and the comparative desertion of the Sanskrit college and the Madrasah in the same city inspite of its stipends showed. He pointed out that while the committee of Public Instruction was finding it hard to dispose of the Oriental Publications, the English books of the Calcutta School Book Society were selling in thousands. “The question now before us” Macaulay observed, “is simply whether when it is in our own power to teach this language, we shall teach languages in which, by universal experience, there were no books on any subjects which deserve to be compared to our

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39. J.C. Aggarwal, *Op.cit*, P.5.

40. Suresh Chandra Ghosh, *Op.cit*,P.309.

own; whether, when we can teach European science, we shall teach systems, which by universal confession, wherever they differ from those of Europe, differ for the worse; and whether, when we can patronize school philosophy and true history we shall countenance, at the public expense, medical doctrines which would disgrace on English barrier, astronomy which would move laughter in girls at an English, astronomy which would move laughter in girls at an English boarding house, history abounding in kings thirty feet high and reigns thirty thousand years long, and geography made of seas treacle and seas of butter”.<sup>41</sup>

Thomas Babington Macaulay suggested that the British Government should not incur any heavy expenditure on the maintenance of Oriental Institutions of learning which could be use for the promotion of English education. He says, “What we spend on the Arabic and Sanskrit colleges is not mercy a dead loss to the cause of the truth; it is bounty-money paid to raise up champions of error”.<sup>42</sup> He says that it goes to form a nest not merely a helpless place-hunters, but of bigots prompted alike by passion and by interest to raise a cry against every useful scheme of education. If there should be any opposition among the native Indians to the change which he recommended that opposition will be the effect of their (British) own system and it will headed by persons supported by their (British) stipends and trained in their (British) colleges, the longer they preserved in their present course of that time, the more formidable would that opposition be, and it would be every year reinforced by recruits whom they were paying. He further added, “from the native society left to itself, we have no difficulties to apprehend; all the murmuring will come from that Oriental interest which we have, by artificial means, called into being, and nursed into

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41. *Ibid.*

42. J.C. Aggarwal, *Op.cit*, P.9.



strength.<sup>43</sup> He pointed out that if Sanskrit and Arabic were essential as the language of the law and religion of the people, government should start codifying Hindu and Muslim laws in English. He opines, “To sum I have said, I think it clear that we are not fettered by the Act of Parliament of 1813; that are not fettered by any pledge expressed or implied; that we are free to employ our funds as we choose; that we ought to employ them in teaching what is best worth knowing; that English is better worth knowing than Sanskrit or Arabic; that the natives are desirous to be taught English and are not desirous to be taught Sanskrit and Arabic; that neither as the languages of law; nor as the languages of religion; have the Sanskrit and Arabic any peculiar claim to our engagement; that it is possible to make natives of this country thoroughly good English scholars, and that to this end our ought to be directed”.<sup>44</sup> In one respect he agreed with his opponents and admitted that it was impossible to train the mass of the population. “In one point I fully agree with the gentlemen to whose general views I am opposed. I feel with them, that it is possible for us with our limited means, to attempt to educate the body of the people. We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects with terms of science borrowed from the western nomenclature, and to render them by degree fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of population.”<sup>45</sup>

Thomas Babington Macaulay would like to respect all existing interest and would like to deal even generously with all individuals who have had fair reason to expect a pecuniary provision. But he would like to strike at the root of bad system

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43. *Ibid.*

44. *Ibid.* P.11.

45. *Ibid.*

which was hitherto been fostered by British government. He would like at once stop the printing of Arabic and Sanskrit books and also would like to abolish the *Madrasah* and Sanskrit College at Calcutta. According to him Benares was the great seat of *Brahmanical* learning and Delhi of Arabic learning and if the British government retain the Sanskrit college at Benares and Mohomedan College at Delhi, they do enough and much more than enough in his opinion, for the eastern languages. He further added that if the Benares and Delhi colleges were retained, he would at least recommend that no stipends should be given to any students who may hereafter repair thither, but the people shall be left to make their own choice between that revival systems of education without being bribed by the British government to learn what the natives have no desires to know. The funds which would thus be placed at our disposal would enable us to give large encouragement to the Hindu College at Calcutta, and to establish in the principal cities throughout the presidencies of Fort William and Agra schools in which the English language might be well and thoroughly taught.<sup>46</sup> Macaulay loosened his last shaft at oriental education by declaring that “the present system stands not to accelerate the progress of truth but delay the natural death of expiring errors” and threatened to resign if his suggestions were not approved.

### **1.8 Lord William Bentinck’s contribution to the introduction of Western Education in British India**

Lord William Bentinck came to India as the Governor General in July 1828 and he was the firm believer in utilitarian principles. In December 1827 just on the eve of the departure from India, in a farewell dinner at Grote’s house he has said to James Mill, “I am going to British India but I shall not be Governor General. It is you that will be

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46. J.C. Aggarwal, *Op.cit*, P.12.

Governor General.”<sup>47</sup> Bentinck was a man of great energy, vigour and action, he utilized the long period of peace enjoyed by his government to tackle every problem that his administration face in India. He was also the person who made Sati illegal in 1829, and took steps to stop other social evils like Thugi and infanticide. Bentinck believed that it was English education alone which could cure Indian society of its various evils. In a letter to Matcalfe in September 1829 he described “the British language” [sic] as “the key of all improvement.”<sup>48</sup> Acting on his firm belief Bentinck took every step to wider the use of the English language in official work and also persuaded young native Indians to learn English by throwing open subordinate positions in revenue and judicial branches to the English educated young men though mainly as a measure of the economy. In a letter to the General Committee of Public Instruction on 26 June 1829 he observed: “it is the wish and admitted policy of the British Government to render its own language of public business throughout the country, and that it will omit the opportunity of giving every reasonable and practical degree of encouragement to the execution of their support.”<sup>49</sup> The General Committee of Public Instruction added English classes to the Benares Sanskrit College in 1830 and thereby proving for English classes in all important oriental institutions in Calcutta, Delhi and Benares, as a mark of respect to the wishes of the Governor General.

Lord William Bentinck was so keen on introducing English education was because he considered it not only to be a ‘cure’ for the kind of social evils that he had to deal with at the very beginning of his administration in India but also a key to the improvement of the country. In this respect Bentinck fully shared with James Mill the

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47. *Ibid.* P.312.

48. *Ibid.*

49. *Ibid.*

view that Indian society was decadent and the key to its regeneration lay in the introduction of western knowledge and science. A gradual replacement of Persian by English in all official works as well as the introduction and spread of western language that is English in educational institutions in India were the twin objects that Lord William Bentinck kept before him from the very beginning of his term as the Governor General of India. Bentinck's official position did not allow him to support the evangelists in India directly but he was sympathetic to those missionaries who took utmost care in the use of English in their educational institutions. In 1830, he helped Alexander Duff, the Scottish missionary to set up his General Assembly's institution at Calcutta, which later grew to the still existing Scottish Church College. In February 1833 in a private interview given to Alexander Duff, he heartily approved the design of giving a higher education to a select view, in preference to the plan of giving a common education to the many. He told Duff that "if there was one opinion on which he was more decided than another it was the expediency of teaching English in all our higher seminaries, gradually substituting it throughout every department of government business, instead of the Persian which ought as soon as possible to be abolished."<sup>50</sup> In a letter to Macaulay on 1<sup>st</sup> June 1834, Lord William Bentinck explain that general education was his panacea for the regeneration of India.

### **1.8.1 Lord William Bentinck's resolution on 7 March, 1835**

Lord William Bentinck gave his "entire concurrence" to the sentiments expressed by T.B. Macaulay despite Prinsep's note of 15 February answering some of the observations made by T.B. Macaulay on oriental institutions and learning. He passed a resolution on 7 March 1835, regarding the educational system of native Indians. In that resolution Lord William Bentinck passed the following order.

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50. *Ibid.* P.313.

- a. His lordship is of opinion that the great object of the British government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science amongst the natives of India and that all the funds appropriated for the purposes of education would be the best employed in English education.
- b. But it is not the intention of his lordship in Council to abolish any college or school of native learning while the native population shall appear to be incline to avail themselves of the advantages it affords, and his lordship in council directs that all the existing professors and students at all the institutions under the superintendence of the committee shall continue to received their stipends.
- c. It has come to the knowledge of the Governor-General in Council that a large sum has been expended by the committee in the printing of oriental works. His lordship in Council directs that no portion of the funds shall hereafter be so employed.
- d. His Lordship in Council directs that all the funds which these reforms will have at the disposal of the committee be henceforth employed in imparting to the native population a knowledge of English literature and science, thorough the medium of English language.<sup>51</sup>

Lord William Bentinck thus took the most momentous decision in the history of India. His order of 7 March 1835 came as the climax to the two important official steps he had already taken earlier that is one was the decision to establish a Medical College at Calcutta to teach Medicine and Surgery according to the European system in English and it was more on the model visualised by Raja Rammohon Roy more

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<sup>51</sup>.*Ibid.*

than a decade ago. The second was the appointment of William Adam, the Baptist missionary, to report on the state of vernacular education in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.

Lord William Bentinck's order of 7 March 1835 not only opened Europe to India but India to Europe and signalled the advent of far reaching socio-economic and political changes in British India in a too distance future and as said earlier, it became a milestone in the history of British India. As a matter of fact his decision of 7 March 1835 contained within it the seeds of another development besides the promotion of Western education which he could have hardly foreseen at that moment. It was the development of vernacular languages which Bentinck's resolution did not mention and the Orientalists who lost the battle with the Anglicists soon began to argue that European education could best be filtered to the masses only through vernacular education and began to clamour for financial support for its promotion.<sup>52</sup> So in a sense Lord William Bentinck's resolution of 7 March 1835 while cutting at the financial roots for Oriental learning and it pave the way not only for the emergence of English as the most powerful language in British India but also for the development of vernacular languages which the missionaries had been popularising along with English their schools while propagating the Gospel among Indians since 1813.

In this way Western education was started in India. It was the contribution of Charles Grant, T.B. Macaulay, Lord William Bentinck and the mighty Indians like Raja Rammohon Roy which today we are learning speaking and studying English language in present India. There is no doubt that after Charter Act of 1813, Macaulay's Minute of 1834 and lord William Bentinck's resolution of 1835, the British government in India passed a numbers of educational resolutions and educational plans but the real foundation of western education in India is credited to

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<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*

Charles Grant, the charter Act of 1813, Macaulay's Minute of 1834 and Lord William Bentinck's resolution of 1835.

## **1.9 Down-ward Filtration theory of Education**

The British East India company thought that in order to run the administration peacefully and smoothly it was essential to make the Indian higher classes blind follower of the Britishers and they wanted achieve it through educating the masses. This theory meant "Education is to be filtered to the common people. Drop by drop, the education would go to the common public so that at due time it may take the form of a vast stream which remind water desert of the society for served a long time and high class of people would be educated and common people would gain influence from them."<sup>53</sup> Mathew observed that the Downward Filtration Theory implies diffusion of education among the masses from above. He again observed, "Drop by drop from the Himalayas of the Indian life useful information was to trickle downward forming in time a broad and stately stream to irrigate the thirsty plains."<sup>54</sup> Therefore Downward Filtration theory in education meant education or knowledge from the top to the bottom or in simpler words from the higher classes of society to the common masses, and the Christian missionaries were of the opinion that if higher castes Hindus could be converted through education, then the lower castes would automatically follow. "The improvements in education, however, which most effectually contribute to elevate the moral and intellectual condition of a people are those, which concern the education of the higher classes of the persons possessing the leisure and natural influence over minds of their countrymen. By raising the standard among these classes you would eventually produce a much greater and more

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53. J.C. Aggarwal, *Op.cit*, P.9.

54. Sadhana Goswami, and Phunu Das Sarma, *Development of Education in India*, Guwahati, 2012, P.45.

beneficial change in the ideals and feeling of the community that you can hope to produce by acting directly on the more numerous class.”<sup>55</sup>

The Directors of the company had written in their Despatch, dated 29 September 1830, to Madras government: “The improvements in education, however, which most effectually contribute to evaluate the moral and intellectual condition of a people are those, which concern the education of the higher classes of the persons possessing leisure and natural influence over minds of their countrymen. By raising the standard of education among these classes you would eventually produce a much greater and more beneficial change in the ideas and feelings of the community than you can hope to produce by acting directly on the more numerous class.”<sup>56</sup> On the other hand the British East India Company needed various types of employees to run the business and government and they wanted educated persons for this. So, they started the policy of educating higher classes of India but the Company did not have sufficient funds for educating the masses. So, they adopted the Downward Filtration theory, and the theory mainly emphasized on:-

- (a) Educated only the higher class masses in society and appoint them in higher posts of administration in the British government.
- (b) That English or western education developed the cultured of the social elite and the common masses would consider them as their role models and moreover the higher class people would influence the lower classes to be educated.
- (c) Educating the higher classes of Indian natives who would undertake the responsibility of educating the lower class native Indians.

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55. *Ibid.* P.46.

56. J.C. Aggarwal, *Op.cit*, P.9.



T.B Macaulay strongly supported the Downward Filtration theory and in his minute of 1835 he observed that the aim of education in India was to Anglicise the Indians through English education and to make black coloured Indians English in their way of living behaviour, thought, culture, traditions and morality and again on 31<sup>st</sup> July, 1837 he opined that the purpose of the Company was only to educate the elite group which would educate the general public later. The Committee of the Public Instruction in Bengal had also approved the same ideal and expressed its ideas in 1839, “Our efforts should be concentrated first on the education of the higher and middle class of people.”<sup>57</sup> Lord Auckland was also a staunch supporter of the Downward Filtration Theory and he said that the Government would not take the responsibility of educating the common masses and rejected Adam’s report regarding the same. He also said that the government should educate the higher class people so that the ‘filtered culture’ reached to the public. His approval marked the official acceptance of the theory and in 1839 the General Committee of Public Instruction (GCPI) again repeated that education would be imparted only to the higher classes who would be responsible for educating the common masses. And since then the downward filtration policy was followed up to 1870 and emphasis was laid on the education of the people of higher classes in the society.

The Downward Filtration Theory encouraged the missionaries to open several schools and colleges for educating the higher classes of the Indian society. They wanted to spread Christianity among the higher classes of people through western education who in turn would preach about the religion among the lower classes of people. The immediate aim of getting educated people to run the various jobs in the administration was fully achieved and this policy promoted western knowledge and

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57. *Ibid.*

science among the Indians, who broadened their outlook in life. And by contacting with western thought it helped to develop democratic and liberal ideas among the Indian masses. But the Downward Filtration Theory was an unplanned educational system and it was an urban system of education in a rural country, it created a gulf between the English educated upper and middle classes and the lower Indian masses. In the words of Gandhiji, “the present system of education does not meet the requirements of the country in any shape or form. English has created a permanent bar between the highly educated few and the uneducated many. The excessive importance given to English has cast upon the educated classes a burden which has maimed them mentally for life and made them strangers in their own land. Absence of vocational training has made the educated class almost unfit for productive work and harm the physically. Money spent on primary education is a waste of expenditure.”<sup>58</sup> In this way western education was introduced in India. After the Charls Grant Plans, Charter Act of 1813, Macaulay’s Minute, Downward Filtration Theory and Lord William Bentinck’s statements a numbers of educational plan as introduced in India by the British government and they were

### **1.10 Woods’s Despatch of 1854**

The Charter act of the British East India Company used to be renewed after every twenty years and it had been renewed in the year 1799, 1813 and 1833. Every charter Act was the component of certain changes, modification and development of in the policy of British Indian education and when the time of renewing the Charter act approached in the 1853, it felt the need to adopt some definite and stable educational policy of British India. As the result of this to enquire into the educational progress of

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58. *Ibid.* P.11.

British India, a selected Committee of House of Commons was set up in England. The most important witnesses were Trevelyan, Sir Erskine Perry, Marshman, Alexander Duff, H.H. Wilson, Cameron and Sir Frederick Halliday who gave their statements about Indian education.<sup>59</sup> They were already connected with the Indian education system and convinced the authorities the questions could not be postponed any longer. So their efforts resulted to the emanation of Woods Despatch of 1854, Sir Charles Wood was the president of Board of Control and the Despatch came to known after his name. It was a long document of a hundred paragraphs and deals with a number of important questions of educational importance in India.

Major directions, observations and recommendations of Woods Despatch were

- a. Object of education in India: the declared object was “not only to produce a higher degree of intellectual fitness but to raise the moral character and to supply with servants.”<sup>60</sup>
- b. Spread of European Knowledge: it was also declared that the function of education was to diffuse European knowledge, that were arts, science, philosophy and literature.
- c. Languages: English language and vernacular language of India would be the media for diffusion of European Knowledge.<sup>61</sup>
- d. Establishment of universities: Woods Despatch also directed to establish Universities at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras or in any parts of India. The universities should be established on the model of the London University, which was then an examining body.

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59.P.L. Rawat, *History of Indian Education*, Agra, 2014, P.167.

60.J.C Aggarwal, *Op.cit*, P.21

61.*Ibid.*

- e. Establishment of a network of graded schools all over India: woods despatch provided for the establishment of Middle and High Schools and below them the indigenous elementary schools.
- f. Grant-in-aid; the despatch also laid down the principles for grant-in-aid.
- g. Training of teachers: the scheme of training of teachers as prevalent in Great Britain was also put forwarded by the Despatch.
- h. Women education: Woods Despatch suggested for the education of women.

Some historians have described the Wood's Despatch as "The Magna Charta of Indian Education". Dalhousie observed that woods despatch contained a scheme of education for all India, far wider and more comprehensive than the local or supreme Government could have ever ventured to suggest. Prof. A.N. Basu has opined "The despatch is said to be the corner-stone of Indian education. It is said to have laid foundations of our present system of education."<sup>62</sup>

### **1.11 Indian Education Commission or Hunter Commission (1882)**

As the result of Wood's despatch of 1854, universities were established in 1857 by different areas of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras on the pattern of the London University and there were also a rapid growth of colleges. These universities considered that university examinations were designed for the male sex only but it was only in 1877 that Calcutta University threw the matriculation examination open to girls, and it was also followed by Madras University in 1881 and Bombay University in 1883. In the mean time government felt that they were much paying attention to higher education and neglecting primary education. The government also did not carry out the grant-in-aid policy as suggested by the woods despatch and the

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62. *Ibid.* P. 22.

Christian missionaries were also hit hard by such a policy as they were managing a number of English schools and colleges. In 1878, when the agitation of the missionaries did not bear fruit in India, they started an organisation in London which was known as the General Council of Education in India. As a result of the agitation raised by the Council in London, Lord Ripon appointed the first Indian Education Commission on February 3, 1882, with Sir William Hunter (Member of Viceroy's Executive Council) as Chairman and twenty others as members.<sup>63</sup> The commission was called as Hunter Commission after the name of its Chairman, Sir William Hunter.

It was the duty of the commission to enquire particularly into the matter in which effect had been given to the principles of the Wood's Despatch of 1854. The Commission had to suggest such measures as it may think desirable in order to the further carrying out of the policy therein laid down. It was also the desire of the Governor General-in-council that the Hunter Commission should specially bear in mind the great importance which the Government attaches to the subjects of primary education. The recommendations of the Hunter Commission in 1882 were in favour of primary education and the commission also made recommendations which were of far reaching consequences as far as primary education was concerned. The commission suggested:-

- a. Primary education should be entrusted to the newly created Municipal and District Boards.
- b. Definite funds for primary education should be set aside by the local bodies.

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63. *Ibid.* P. 19.

c. Primary education should be through vernaculars.<sup>64</sup>

Despite these important suggestions, very little could be done in the field of primary education and the recommendations, however, awakened people to the need for primary education.

About the Grant-in-aid, the commission suggested that grants to be paid without delay and a periodically increasing provision should be made in the educational budget of each province for the expansion of aided institutions. Variety in course of instruction in aided schools should be encouraged by grants for special subjects and greater latitude should be given to the managers of aided schools in fixing the course of instruction and the medium through which it was conveyed. The revised rules for grant-in-aid and any subsequent alternation made in them should not be merely published in the official gazettes, but translated into the Indian languages, and communicated to the press, to the managers of aided and private institutions and to all who are likely to help in any way in the spread of education.<sup>65</sup>

### **1.12 Hartong Committee**

In May 1928 the Simon Commission (an Indian Statutory Commission for inquiring into social, political and economic progress of India) appointed an Auxiliary Committee popularly known as the Hartong Committee. Sir Philip Hartong was its Chairman. He had served for several years in India as a member of the Calcutta University Commission and as Vice-Chancellor of the Dacca University. Hartong Committee submitted its report in September 1929, and concluded that the expansion in the field of education had been gained at the cost of quality and that the immediate need of the hour was to improve quality rather than strive to increase the number still

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<sup>64</sup>. *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup>. *Ibid.* P.22.

further. Hartong Committee condemned a policy of 'hasty expansion' and recommended 'consolidation and improvement'.

On the primary education system Hartong Committee recommended that a government policy of consolidation should be adopted in preference to one of diffusion. The minimum duration of the primary course should be of four years and the curriculum of primary schools should also be liberalized. School hours and school holidays should be adjusted to seasonal and local requirements and special attention should also be given to lowest class in primary schools. The standard of the general education of primary teachers should be raised; the training course should be sufficiently long; the training institutions for primary teachers should be adequately staffed and made more efficient; refresher course and conferences of primary teachers must be frequently arranged; and the remuneration and conditions of primary teachers should be such as will enable the profession to attract and retain men of good quality.<sup>66</sup> The committee also recommended that the inspecting staff of government should also be considerably strengthened.

### **1.13 Sargent Report**

It was the first comprehensive educational plan formulated by the Central Advisory Board of Education and it was also popularly known as the Sargent Report, after the name of John Sargent, Educational Adviser to the Government of India. The educational plan aimed at tackling the problems of education as a whole. The work on educational planning in India had started in 1938 when a National Planning Committee had been set up to take up educational restructure at the national level. But the Second World War interrupted the work. The Central Advisory Board of

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<sup>66</sup>.*Ibid.*

Education has also taken up the work in 1938 but the finalisation of the report of various Committees could be done only in 1943-44.<sup>67</sup>

Sargent Report recommended a system of universal, compulsory and free education for all boys and girls between the ages of six and fourteen. The character of the instruction to be provided by following the general lines down in the reports of the Central Advisory Boards. The medium of instruction should be the mother tongue of the students and certain elements of cultural subjects, which cannot be correlated with the basic craft, must be taught independently. Basic schools should be started only when suitable trained teachers were available and no teacher should receive less than Rs. 20 per mensem. The scheme of basic education should first be introduced in rural areas and English should not be introduced as an optional subject in basic schools. No external examinations need to be held and at the end of the basic school course leaving certificate based on an internal examination should also be given. Students wishing to join other schools at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> class should also be granted a leaving certificate. Suitable courses should be framed for girls attending 'senior basic' schools which should include such subjects as cookery, laundry work, needle work, home crafts, the care of children and first aid, the remainder of the instruction to be correlated with this course of domestic science in accordance with the general principles of the 'basic education' scheme.<sup>68</sup> The report also recommended that the promotion from class to class would be determined by the school though the results of the internal examinations should be subject to the supervisor's inspection.

The real foundation of the western education is credited to the Charter Act of 1813, Macaulay's Minute and Lord William Bentinck's Resolution of 1835. The educational plan which was introduced in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and in early 20<sup>th</sup> like Woods

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67. *Ibid.* P.58.

68. *Ibid.* P.62.



Despatch, Hunter Commission, Hartong Committee, Sargent Report etc has done the spreading job of western education.

### **1.14 Introduction of Western Education in Barak Valley**

Education in Barak valley as it was in the whole of Assam during the first part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was in very low ebb due to the confusion caused by local strifes, aggression of the Burmese and Manipuries and rivalries between the Kachari kings and local chiefs. When the British took over Cachar formally after death of Govinda Chandra in 1832, there was practically no educational institution in Cachar. Though there were some *Tols*, where *Brahmin* and *Kayastha Pundits* imparted informal education. Information on the condition of educational institutions as founded by the British in Cachar can be gathered from a letter written in June 1834, by T. Fisher, the superintendent of Cachar, to the Commissioner of Dacca Division. On the incorporation of Cachar into the administration Unit of Dacca Division of Bengal Presidency, Mr. T. Fisher, the first superintendent of Cachar, suggested that the schools be set up in Cachar following the model of Bengal Presidency. J.G. Burns proposed to set up schools at Silchar, Hailakandi and Katigora.<sup>69</sup> The *Amolas* started three schools at Silchar, Hailakandi and Katigora but these schools except the Silchar did not continue for long. It was the beginning of western education in Barak Valley and Cachar. In 1860-61, Silchar School was the only sole serving school of Cachar with only thirteenth students on roll and by 1870-71 the number of schools in Cachar increased to 5 of which one was Government English School with 163 students, 3 government vernacular schools with 71 students and 1 government aided vernacular school with 14 students. In 1863, the first English school was founded by Welsh Presbyterian Mission and it was taken over by the Government in 1868. The

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69. Bijoy Bhushan Hazarika. *Cachar District Gazetteers*, Guwahati, 1991, P.394.

introduction of English school by Welsh Presbyterian Mission, with the efforts of William Pryse was beginning of western form education system in Barak Valley. William Pryse is also known as the pioneer of western education in Barak Valley. In this way western education was introduced in Barak Valley.