

Service Examination in 1870. In 1869 he won the State Scholarship of £200 a year tenable for 3 years, and the Gilchrist Scholarship of £100 a year tenable for 5 years in England, having stood first in the respective competitive examinations.

"Sri Borooah continued his Sanskrit studies even after he had entered Government Service, and his monumental work, the Sanskrit Dictionary, besides other Sanskrit works on Grammar, will for all time remain as standing evidence of his genius and industry in the philological line. It was in his contemplation to take in hand a Comprehensive Dictionary of all the Dialects of Bengal when his career was cut short by an all-too-early and sudden death.

"He never married. Being wedded to literature alone, he devoted to it all his talents, all his capacity for work, all his energy and all his leisure. But let it not be supposed that he never meant to marry. For even so early as at the age of 24, on his return from England he was said to have shown to a friend the portrait of what he called his "intended bride." But literature, his second love, seems to have displaced all other ties from his mind. This singleness of purpose was the great characteristic of Borooah. The industry and application which it demanded made him lead a too sedentary life. He sought little recreation, relief, change and variety. He burnt his candle at both ends, and had naturally to pay the inevitable penalty. His life was a meteoric flash and blaze, which burnt up the substance in its lightning course, dazzling mankind for a moment, and disappearing for ever from view.

"From the above it may perhaps appear to many that this great man was a mere machine, that cannot be credited as having a soul and human sympathy, a mere word-making and figure-calculating machine. But it is not so. His work in the cause of learned humanity is the best proof of his human feeling. His solitude was only the necessary condition of his work. He did not live as an ascetic away from mankind. He lived and worked among men, with men, and came in daily contact with them while discharging his official duties. At home in his private work, he was constantly in company of learned Pandits, and in correspondence with Indian and European scholars. He had a few intimate friends too, though they must necessarily be few, for he did not seek cheap popularity by playing to the gallery, or by showing himself all over the shop, or by making speeches at the slightest provocation. As Emerson said,—“It is easy in the world to live after the world’s opinion: it is easy in solitude to live after your own, but the great man is he, who, in midst of the crowd, keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude,”—and I think Sri Anundoram Borooah was just such a great man.

"Sri Borooah was an Assamese by birth. He has been an exemplar to Assamese youths for the last half century, and even as such he has done great good to Assam. But it would be too provincial to call him Assamese and claim him for the little region of Assam. He really belonged to the region of literature. He is claimed by all scholars as belonging to their own class. He is claimed by all India as the enricher of her literature. He is claimed by Bengal, where he did his life-work. He is even claimed by the little town of Berhampur, where he possessed a local habitation, and where he intended to live and work after retirement from service. After satisfying all these claims, the little village of North Gauhati, where he had his parental home, will not have left much for her share. Nevertheless he was first an Assamese, and next all else, and it is an Assamese gentleman at last that has now first undertaken to write his biography, in spite of all the claims of all the scholars from London to Berhampur.

"Thanking you, Sri Bhuyan, for your courtesy in referring to me for any information I could possibly give you towards the compilation of your biography, and regretting very much that, not having ever come in personal contact with its subject, my contribution is necessarily poor and futile."