

## ● Rammohan Roy



Rammohan Roy was born in a well to do Bengali zamindar family, in the village of Radhanagar in Hoogly, Bengal. He was the only son of Ramakanta Roy and Tarini devi. Educated in Patna, he took lessons in Arabian, Persian, English and Sanskrit at a very tender age. His genius began to radiate, when

at the age of 16 he wrote a book on deity- worshipping. The book created furore among the god-fearing people as he held high the concept of believing in one single source of power, contrary to the Hindu belief of worshipping 33 crores of gods and goddesses. He had to leave his family as his father took the issue quite seriously. He then traveled around the country to learn about the socio-economic state and the different customs prevailing in the society then. When he returned home after his father's death, he took up a job in the Rangpoor collectorate. He rose up to the post of deputy collector before he left his job to settle in Kolkata in 1816. He was

40 then. While he was in Kolkata, he led a movement to free the society from its evil customs. At that time the society was infested with curses such as child marriages, polygamy by the priestly class, burning of widows in the funeral pyre of their dead husbands and untouchability and racism. Raja Rammohan single handedly abolished the evil practice of "Sati daho" (burning of widows in the funeral pyre of their dead husbands). He was also a protagonist behind the spread of the English education in India. He foresaw that the western culture was needed to get rid of the malpractices, which then had taken roots in the Bengali society. Raja Rammohan Roy founded the 'Atmiya Sava', which later became the 'Brahmho Samaj' for people who thought that there should be one god and also disregarded deity worship. He was highly criticized for each of his deeds but it did no harm to his colossal confidence and he continued working for the betterment of the society.

In April 1831, he left for England to work on the 'Reform Bill', which would help his countrymen in many fold ways. It was here, at the age of 56, the British Parliament gave him the title 'Raja'. But majority of his works were left unfinished as on 27th Sept, he succumbed to a cerebral attack.

His untimely death was a severe blow to the developing India. Later on his legacy was successfully taken up by the likes of Vidyasagar, Vivekananda and Sister Nibedita among others.

