

WEST BENGAL DISTRICT GAZETTEERS



MĀLDĀ

By
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of the Indian Administrative Service

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interest they took in the publication of the book but for which this book would not have seen the light of day.

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CHAPTER I
GENERAL

(a) INTRODUCTORY

The district of Māldā is included within the Jalpāiguri Division and is the southernmost of the northern Bengal districts. It is bounded on the south-west by the river Padmā, on the north by the district of West Dinājpur in West Bengal and the district of Purneā in Bihar. On the other side of the river Padmā are situated the district of Sāntāl Parganās in Bihar and the district of Murshidābād in West Bengal. On the east, it is partly bounded by the district of West Dinājpur and the district of Rājshāhi in East Pakistan. The district is situated between the latitudes 25°32'08" and 24°40'20" in the northern hemisphere, and is situated entirely to the north of the Tropic of Cancer. The easternmost extremity of the district is marked by 88°28'10" of longitude and its westernmost extremity by 87°45'50" of longitude. The area of the district according to the Surveyor-General of India is 1436 square miles. The headquarters town of the district is Englishbazar which is popularly known as Māldā and is situated at 25°0'14" North Latitude and 88°11'20" East Longitude. The Census of 1961 disclosed a population of 1,221,923 persons at the sunrise of March 1, 1961, in the district.

Origin of the name of the district.

The name Māldā was formerly applied to the town which is now known as Old Māldā. The present headquarters of the district has originated from the factory which was built by the East India Company to carry on trade, mainly in silk and cotton textiles. The town which sprang up around the factory came to be known as Englezavad. Englezavad was converted to Englishbazar in course of time, and being the headquarters of the district it came to be known as Māldā in the beginning of the present century. The word Māldā is not of Sanskrit origin but of Arabic, and, therefore, it is safe to conclude that the name Māldā came into existence after the Muslim conquest of Bengal. The first mention of the name Māldā is found in the Āin-i-Ākbari of Abul Fazl written during the reign of Emperor Akbar but the name must have been in existence before the Mughal conquest because there is no mention in the Āin-i-Ākbari that this particular name was conferred on the town of Old Māldā after the Mughal conquest. The word Māl in Arabic means wealth, and the name Māldā probably signifies that during the Muslim period it was an important centre of trade through which great wealth changed hands. There is a story that an old woman of Māldā was so rich that she bought up the entire stock of mercury of a merchant. Thus, her wealth (māl) was considerable.

In ancient times the district was situated in the country of Pundravardhana. In the fifth century B.C. Pānini mentions a city named Gauḍapura in eastern India, and it would not be unreasonable to identify this Gauḍapura with the city of Gauḍa, the ruins of which are now situated partly in the district of Māldā and partly in the district of Rājshāhi in East Pakistan. Pundravardhana, and with it Gauḍa, formed a part of the Maurya Empire. In the Gupta age, Pundravardhana was a *bhukti* or administrative division of the Empire. Sasānka, who ruled over Bengal at the same time at which Harsavardhana flourished, was known as the Lord of Gauḍa. The kingdom of which Sasānka was the king appears to have disintegrated after his death, because the noted Chinese traveller, Hiuen Tsang, who visited Bengal immediately after his death, noted the existence of four kingdoms in Bengal. One of these kingdoms was that of Pundravardhana, and the district of Māldā, judging from its geographical situation, must have been included in it. It is difficult to trace the history of the district during the years intervening between the death of Sasānka and the rise of Gopāla. Gopāla was a man of Varendri, a tract of country situated between the Ganges and the Karatoyā. During the reign of the Pāla kings the city of Gauḍa attained great splendour. This position of Gauḍa was maintained during the reign of the Senas. In fact, the Pāla and the Sena kings bore the title of Gauḍeswara. The fortunes of Gauḍa were temporarily eclipsed after the conquest of Bengal by Muhammad Bakhtyār Khalji as he made Devkoṭ—the modern Bāngarh in the district of West Dinājpur—his headquarters. The fortunes of Gauḍa were restored during the reign of Ghiyās-ud-din Iwāz Khalji who re-transferred the capital to Gauḍa. Gauḍa continued to be the capital city of Bengal, except for some brief intervals; even during the reign of Muslim Sultāns, some of whom have been referred to as Gauḍeswara in Bengali poems. The city was plundered by Sher Shāh during his war with Māhmud Shāh, the last independent Sultān of Bengal, and it never recovered its former glory after he went away. It is true that after Humāyun drove out Sher Shāh from Bengal he made Gauḍa his headquarters for some time, but the city was again abandoned immediately after he left Bengal. The city was re-occupied during the Governorship of Muni'm Khān, but that occupation ended in disaster as a severe epidemic broke out which killed off the residents by the hundreds. Gauḍa ceased to be a capital from that time, its place being taken first by Tāndā, which was situated 15 miles south-east from the town of Māldā, and then by Rājmahal. It is not possible to ascertain the administrative details relating to the district during the Mughal period except the fact that there was a Quāzi appointed by Akbar stationed at Gauḍa and that the Sarkār of Jinnatābād which formed a major portion of the district was one of the Sarkārs in the *Subah* of Bengal. It is also known that during the reign of Aurangzeb and the viceroyalty of Shāistā Khān, the district of Māldā formed a part of the *jāgir* of Shāistā Khān. A *krori* or revenue official was also stationed at Old Māldā. The district was probably controlled from Rājmahal.

The district of Māldā came into existence under the British informally only in 1813, although the East India Company obtained the *Diwāni* of the *Subah* of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa from Emperor Shāh Ālam in 1765. During the intervening period the district had been parcelled out between the districts of Dinājpur (old), Rājshāhi, Murshidābād and Purneā. The posting of a Joint Magistrate and Deputy Collector in 1813 was necessitated by the heavy incidence of crimes in certain thanas of the districts of Purneā, Dinājpur and Rājshāhi. The thanas which were then placed in charge of the Joint Magistrate and Deputy Collector were (1) Sibganj, (2) Kāliāchak, (3) Bholāhāt, (4) Gurguribāh of the Purneā district, the thanas of (5) Māldā and (6) Bāmangōlā of the district of Dinājpur (old), and the thanas of (7) Rohunpur and (8) Chuppe of the district of Rājshāhi. The newly formed district was included in the Bhāgalpore Division. A treasury was established at Māldā in 1832, from which year the separate existence of the district is usually dated but it was only in 1859 that a Magistrate and Collector was placed in charge of the district. In 1875 the district boundaries were notified. 65 villages from Murshidābād and 237 villages from Dinājpur were transferred to this district. In 1879 the district was transferred from the Judgeship of Dinājpur to that of Rājshāhi. Up to 1876 the district formed part of the Rājshāhi Division of the undivided Province of Bengal and between 1876 and 1905 the district formed part of the Bhāgalpur Division which was then in Bengal. In 1905 the district was transferred from Bhāgalpur Division to Rājshāhi Division on the formation of the Provinces of Eastern Bengal and Bihar. In 1912, when the partition of Bengal was annulled, it was included in the Rājshāhi Division till August, 1947. On the 15th August, 1947, the fate of the district was undecided, it having not been clearly indicated by Sir Cyril Radcliffe whether the district would go to Pakistan or would remain in India. On the 17th August, 1947, when the details of the award of Sir Cyril Radcliffe were published, it was found that the district would be partitioned, the thanas of Sibganj, Nawābganj, Bholāhāt, Nāchōl and Gomostāpur being transferred to Pakistan. The district as it exists today came into existence as a result of a notification issued by the Government in September, 1947. A slight modification in the award of Sir Radcliffe was made at one point by the Bagge Tribunal in 1950.

The district does not contain any outlying sub-division. The Sadar sub-division is conterminous with the district. The district is divided into the Police Stations of (1) Englishbazar, (2) Kāliāchak, (3) Māldā, (4) Habibpur, (5) Ratuā, (6) Mānikchak, (7) Kharbā, (8) Harishchandrapur, (9) Gājōl and (10) Bāmangōlā.

(b) TOPOGRAPHY

The river Mahānandā, flowing north and south roughly divides the district into two equal parts, corresponding by local tradition

to the old boundary line of the Rāhr and Barendra. To this day the country to the east of the Mahānandā is called the *bāring*. Its characteristic feature is the relatively high land of the red clay soil of the old alluvium. West of the Mahānandā the country is again divided into two well defined parts by the Kālindri river flowing west and east from the Ganges. North of the Kālindri the distinguishing natural feature is the *tāl* land, the name applied to the land which floods deeply as the rivers rise, and drains by meandering streams into swamps or into the Kālindri. There are extensive tracts of this land covered, where not cultivated, with tall grass in Ratuā thana. South of the Kālindri lies the most fertile and populous portion of the district. It is seamed throughout by old courses of the Ganges, upon the banks of one of which the city of Gaur once stood. The most striking natural feature is the continuous line of islands and accretions formed in the bed of the Ganges by its ever changing currents and known as the *diārā*, the long open stretches of which contrast with the patch-work-like effect of the miles of small embanked mulberry fields characteristic of the higher lands of this portion of the district.

There are no hills in the district, unless a few elevated tracts in the *bāring* may be so described. Parts of these high lands have an elevation from 50 to 100 feet (15.3 to 30.5 metres) above the level of the Ganges, and, being frequently intersected by deep water-channels, simulate the appearance of small hills.

Apart from these undulations the country is a low-lying plain covered with a succession of village sites with their adjacent fields and swampy tracts.

The distinctive feature of the countryside is furnished by the numerous mango groves dotted throughout the district. In fact, this district can be located from the air by these mango groves.

The district slopes generally from the north to the south. The highest elevation of the district above sea-level is 39.7 metres at the place where the health centre at Pānduā in the Police Station of Gājōl is situated. Elevations ranging between 30 and 39 metres above sea-level are found in the Police Stations of Bāmangōlā and Habibpur where it is a little over 38 metres. The other places of the district varies in elevation between 23.54 metres and 38 metres at Kālīāchak. The slope is gradual as is proved by the meandering course taken by the rivers flowing through the district.

(c) RIVER SYSTEM AND WATER RESOURCES

The principal rivers of the district, enumerating from the east, are the Punarbhavā, the Tāngan, the Mahānandā, the Kālindri and the Ganges. In fact, the Ganges which forms the south-western boundary of the district, receives the waters of all the other rivers.

The Punarbhavā leaves the district of West Dinājpur and forms for a few miles the boundary between the Police Station of Tapan in the district of West Dinājpur and the Police Station of Bāmangōlā

in the district of Māldā. Further south it acts as the eastern boundary of the district with the districts of Dinājpur and Rājshāhi in East Pakistan. At places the Punarbhavā throws out side-channels, two of the more important being those thrown out at *mauzās* Mahādevpur (J.L. No. 141) and Khuṭādaha (J.L. No. 142) in the Police Station of Bāmangōlā. These two side channels join together and the combined stream is known as the Hariā river along some portion of its length. It is a tributary of the Mahānandā which it joins in Pakistan. Its length in the district is nearly 40 miles (64.4 km.). Floods in the river are usually associated with floods in the Mahānandā.

The Tāngan enters the district at the point where the Police Stations of Gājōl and Bāmangōlā meet. It acts as the boundary between the two Police Stations of Gājōl and Bāmangōlā. Further south it acts as the boundary between the Police Stations of Habibpur and Māldā till the village of Āiho (J.L. No. 247) in the Police Station of Habibpur is reached, where it joins the Mahānandā. A branch of it named Marā-Tāngan flows several miles through the Police Station of Gājōl and joins the parent river near the headquarters of the Police Station of Bāmangōlā. In the Police Station of Māldā there is a similar old branch of the river which is locally known as the Chunā Khāli Khāl which takes off from the main river off the *mauzā* of Pather Haito (J.L. No. 182 in Police Station Habibpur) and after traversing a few miles through the Police Station of Māldā rejoins the main stream a little above the Bulbulchandī ferry. The length of the river Tāngan in the district is nearly 40 miles (64.4 km.). Floods in this river are also associated with floods in the Mahānandā.

The Mahānandā enters the district also from the north. It acts as the boundary between the Police Station of Itāhār in the district of West Dinājpur and that of Kharbā in the district of Māldā. The actual entry is made at the trijunction point of the Police Stations of Kharbā, Ratuā and Gājōl. It acts as the boundary between the Police Stations of Ratuā and Gājōl and flows along the towns of Englishbāzār and Old Māldā, keeping the town of Old Māldā slightly to the north until it is joined by the Tāngan at Āiho. Further down its course it acts as the boundary between the Police Station of Bholāhāt in East Pakistan and the Police Station of Habibpur in the district of Māldā. It ultimately joins the Ganges through East Pakistan. The length of this river in the district is 55 miles (88.6 km.). The maximum discharge observed in the flood season in 1938 in this river amounted to 1,53,329 cusecs, and in the dry season in 1959 it was 663 cusecs at Englishbazar.

The Kālindri is taken as an offshoot of the eastern branch of the Ganges but actually it is a branch of the river Mahānandā, which by the name of Phulhār, passes through the district of Purneā, enters the district of Māldā near Mihāghāt (J.L. No. 162 in P.S. Harishchandrapur) from where it is known as the Kālindri. It is flowing mainly in the south-eastern direction to its junction with the Mahānandā opposite the town of Old Māldā. A reference is found in the *Rāmācharita* by Sandhyākara Nandi, of the river

Main rivers and tributaries

The Punarbhava.

The Tāngan.

The Mahananda.

The Kalindri.

Kālindri in which it has been stated that Madanapāla defeated his enemy on the bank of the Kālindri river. The enemy referred to was probably none other than Vijaya Sena of the Sena dynasty. Buchanan Hamilton, writing in 1810, considered that the portion of the river lying within the district was merely a branch of the Ganges. Mr. M. O. Carter in his Settlement Report has thus described the course of the Kālindri in the district of Māldā as it existed in 1935:

"The Kalindri has always been connected with the Ganges by a navigable channel, down which the flood water of the Ganges passes. When the main channel of the Ganges is under the Rajmahal bank, as at present, the channel to the east of Bhutni diara becomes shallow, and large sandy chars form on that side of the river. Consequently when the level of the Ganges drops at the end of the rainy season, its water is prevented by sand bars from flowing into the mouth of the channel. The Kalindri thus empties itself into the Mahananda, and in the hot weather its bed is nothing more than a series of pools. It seems probable that when Buchanan Hamilton wrote, the position of the Ganges was substantially the same as it is now. When the Collector's report, on which Hunter's account is based, was written in 1870, the Ganges Diara Survey had recently been carried out. At that time the river had deserted the Rajmahal channel and followed the eastern course round Bhutni diara, cutting away the eastern side of the island as it stands to-day. The result must certainly have been that a much larger volume of water came down the Kalindri.

"The channel of the Kalindri takes off from the Ganges a few miles above Rajmahal, and the river flows almost due east as far as Ratua. From there it takes a sharp bend to the south, and then again turns and flows along a winding course in a mainly south-eastern direction, until it falls into the Mahananda opposite Old Malda. In the north it receives as its tributaries the Kalkos, Kankar, Kos and Baromasia, four small streams which drain the tal area after the rainy season, and dry up during the hot weather. The Kalindri has altered its course considerably, the present bed being in places at some distance from the position of the river at the time of the revenue survey. One result of the changes in its course has been the erosion on more than one occasion of the English Bazar-Mathurapur Road. The river has gradually pushed its way further south and rendered successive road diversions necessary. Where erosion is taking place, the bank is high and steep and composed of red clay or sandy soil, while on the opposite bank low shelving accretions have formed. The total length of the river is 53 miles. It is navigable during the rainy season only and fordable in the hot weather.

"The cessation of the river's flow in the cold weather, and the presence of the stagnant pools left behind in its bed, undoubtedly affect the health of the villagers who live along

The Ganges.

Beels and tanks.

its banks. Mosquitoes breed in the pools and bring malaria into the thickly wooded and in some places jungly villages. Proposals have been made to increase the flow of water down the Kalindri by excavating the mouth of the channel up to the main stream of the Ganges."

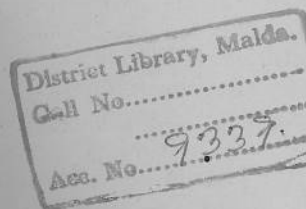
The Ganges forms the south-western boundary of the district. There is a big island or *char* in its bed near the point where it first touches the district. This island is 15 miles (24.2 km.) in length and is known as the Bhutni *diārā*. The river flows in two channels, north and south of this island, the main channel being on the Rājmahal side. The course of the Ganges has changed considerably down the ages. When Gauḍa was a flourishing city, its waters probably washed the walls of that city but now the ruins of Gauḍa are miles away from the Ganges. A part of the old bed is situated between the Police Stations of Kālīāchak and Englishbazar and drains a considerable area of the *char* land in the Police Station Kālīāchak. It is known by the name of the Bhāgirathi.

Beels are like huge lakes and are frequently brought into existence by a river abandoning its existing bed and flowing along a new channel. The old bed at some places acts as reservoirs of water and gives rise to long stretches of water area. The *beels* of the Māldā district have thus been described by Mr. M. O. Carter in his Settlement Report of 1928-35:

→ "The beels throughout the district are the direct or indirect result of fluvial action, and are not due to earth subsidence, as is the case in Rangpur and other districts. The direct results of fluvial action may be seen in the Tangan and Purnabhaha valleys, which contain a chain of beels stretching northwards to the border of Dinajpur district. From the appearance of these valleys, it can be surmised that they were originally courses of very much larger rivers than the present streams. The old rivers have left behind them a series of natural depressions which retain the water when it recedes at the beginning of the cold weather from the valleys. Boro paddy is grown round the edges of some of the shallower beels, but many of them are too deep to admit of cultivation. The largest is Beel Ahora in the Tangan valley, covering an area of nearly two square miles.

"The same direct river action is found in the diara where the beels are depressions left by the Ganges as it has found successive new courses to the west.

"There is also a chain of beels situated in the low-lying marshy tract between the Mahananda river and the main road from English Bazar to Gaur. This has been caused by what may be described as indirect river action. A silt-bearing river tends to build up its banks gradually by depositing silt on them, with the result that the strip along the river bank is often of a higher level than the interior. When this process has been going on for centuries, the effect is that the land lying between two rivers is formed like a shallow basin, and its level remains low unless it is regularly flooded by the rivers



and receives a deposit of silt. Now at the period when Gaur flourished, there can be no doubt that a considerable stream of the Ganges flowed southwards along the city's western walls. Consequently the level of the land along this old bank of the river is high; and it is probable that any flooding of the countryside further east was prevented by the ramparts of Gaur, and further north by the main road, which then ran northwards to Pandua. The Mahananda on the east is a river which brings down some silt during the rains, but not during the rest of the year, and it rarely overflows its banks. The process of building has therefore gradually persisted along the bank, but the country in the interior has not received any deposit of silt. The result is a shallow low-lying basin containing a series of beels."

The district is also dotted with numerous tanks, large and small. According to the Collector there are approximately 29,500 tanks in the district. In respect of 10,664 such tanks, the people have the right of easement for irrigating their fields. Clearly, these tanks, from which water for irrigation is taken, are comparatively large.

(d) GEOLOGY

The district is situated on the western part of the alluvium filled gap between the Rājmahal hills on the west and the Gāro hills on the east. The entire area is covered by alluvium which, however, is of two different ages displaying different physical and physiographic characteristics.

East of the Mahānandā which bisects the district roughly along a north-south line are found older (Pleistocene) alluvium forming the *bārind*. This is flanked on the west by the more recent flood plains of the Mahānandā and the Ganges.

In the north is the alluvial fan surface of the Himalayan foothills, the piedmont alluvial plain, formed by the streams descending from the mountains.

The recent alluvium found in the western part of the district is typically dark, loosely compacted and has a high water content and variable but appreciable quantities of organic material.

The Pleistocene deposits can be readily distinguished from the recent alluvium. They generally stand above monsoonal floods and are drained by relatively few streams which have developed distinctive meandering courses. Local relief is also much greater. They consist of well oxidised massive argillaceous beds typically reddish brown or tan and mottled and sometimes weathering yellowish. Kānkar and pisolitic ferruginous concretions are plentifully distributed throughout this formation.

Formations similar to the Pleistocene of the *bārind* are also found west of the Mahānandā up to the Kālandri underlying part of the *tāl* depressions showing that the present surface of the district is the result of partial denudation of the old alluvium of northern Bengal

between which and the Rājmahal hills the Ganges and other Himalayan rivers forced their way southwards.

The thickness of the alluvium is not known in detail; little drilling has been carried out down to the basement rock.

One drill hole recently made for ground-water investigation, near Mandilpur, touched granite at a depth of about 210 metres, indicating that the Archaean granite complex forms the basement of at least a part of the Rājmahal gap.

The alluvium is seen to consist of silt, sand, gravel and clay.

Aquifer tests showed rather poor water yield at Kaṅsā and Nityānandapur and fairly good discharge at Mandilpur.

Due to the Great Earthquake of 12th June, 1897, with its epicentre on the Shillong plateau, cracks up to a mile length and up to a few feet in width opened all over low-lying lands. Spoutings of sand and water were observed.

During the 1934 Bihar-Nepal Earthquake, the district experienced earthquake intensity of about VII (Mercalli Scale), that is, with phenomenon of cracks in buildings and development rarely of sand vents in alluvium.

(e) FLORA AND FAUNA

Pemberton in the course of his revenue survey in the middle of the nineteenth century came across extensive stretches of jungles and marshes which were the abode of various wild animals including rhinoceros and different species of birds. He noticed the mango, the plantain, the banana, the custard apple, the mulberry, the marsh melon, the water melon, the lime, the citron, the tar fruit, the leechie, the peach, the gooseberry, the *bail* or wood apple, the kirnee, the pomegranate, the tamarind, the betelnut and the cocoanut among the fruits available in the district. He obviously forgot to mention the jackfruit because of its commonness. Among the jungle trees he mentioned the mango, the cocoanut, the palm, the cotton, the aloe, the willow palm, the date-palm, the *pepul*, the *bābool*, the jack tree, the acacia, the wild plum, the burgut, the bamboo, the tamarisk, the *hyjal*, the saul, the *sissoo*, the *sagoun* or teak, the *muhooā* and the toon. He mentioned that reeds, that is, *nal-khāgrās* were utilised for the making of charcoal. This charcoal made from reeds was in common use by the blacksmiths of Māldā. He also noticed the *sholā* plant. Among wild animals he mentioned the rhinoceros, the tiger, the leopard, the tiger cat, the inchneumon, the otter, the monkey, the jackal, the porcupine, the hare, the sambur, the *bara siṅgha* deer, the spotted deer, the antelope, the hog deer, the wild buffalo, the fox, the wolf, the pole cat, the civet cat, the wild cat, the *kuṭāss* etc. Hogs were plentiful. Among reptiles he noticed the boa constrictor or python, the *gohsaup* (a snake-eating lizard which sometimes grew to the length of five and half feet), the cobra, the *korāit*, the *dhamnā*, water snakes of various kinds, the blood-sucker, the chameleon and lizards of various kinds, the gheekorain (resembles a snake in its motion, but has two short legs in front), the alligator, the crocodile etc. Among wild birds he noticed the wild

goose, forty varieties of the wild duck, the florican, the snipe, the cormorant, the heron, the sparrow, the peacock, the golden oriel, the green parrot, the pelican, the partridge (black and grey), jungle cock and hen, tern of various kinds, the ring-necked paroquets, the kite, the goshawk, the falcon, the adjutant, the swallow, the bulbul, the cerleu (grey and black), the peewit, the *koel*, the blue and green pigeon, the rock pigeon, the ring dove, the king fisher, the woodpecker, the rook, the jackdaw, the mina, the plover, the ortalan, the hoopoo, the robin, the sand martin, the jay, the quail, the button quail, the golden plover, the widgeon, the horned owl, the white owl, the common owl, the kyrah, the water crow, the night crow, the paddy bird (four kinds), the brahminee duck, the sirus, the ground dove, the common dove, the hornbill, the spoonbill, a variety of honey birds, the tailor bird, the starling, the gull, the water wagtail, the sand lark, the byer etc.

Mr Carter, writing in 1935, described the flora and fauna of the then undivided district of Māldā in the following manner:

"Among the fruit-bearing trees, the most common is the mango, for which the district is famous. The orchards are distributed all over the part of the district west of the Mahananda river, with the exception of a strip along the Ganges. Jack fruit trees are fairly common, and plantain trees are commonly grown but the fruit is not of particularly good quality. The lichi and custard apple are also found but not in any number. Among the trees of economic value the most common is the date-palm. It is grown generally along the sides of roads or on ails and is tapped during the cold weather for its juice, from which gur is produced. The supari (areca nut) is not so common, and the cocoanut palm, so commonly found in most Bengal districts and so useful to the settlement staff, is conspicuous by its absence. The lack of any saline element in the soil seems to be the reason why the cocoanut palm will not produce any fruit.

"Bamboo clumps are commonly found in almost all villages, and amongst other trees mention may be made of the nim and tamarind, and in the diara area of the babul and the boir or plum tree. In the Barind, trees are scanty, especially in the north, where, apart from the village sites, there are only occasional nim, pakur or simul trees and patches of sal wood. In the south, however, there are date palms and tal trees in some numbers.

"Malda used to be famous for its big game. Today there is practically none, though as far as small game is concerned the district has still several attractions to offer, which are not to be found in most other districts. Hunter observes, 'The ruins of Gaur and Pandua are the favourite haunt not only of tigers, but of every other beast, bird and reptile which frequents the isolated jungles of Bengal. The Katal (Barind) also which is estimated to cover about 150 square miles in this district, particularly that portion between the Tangan and Purnabhaha (Punarbhavā—*Ed.*) rivers, is almost entirely given

up to wild animals. The jungle is too dense in many cases to admit even the passage of an elephant and consequently the larger beasts of prey breed almost undisturbed.' Among the list of big game he mentions tiger, leopard, wolf (rare), ox, rhinoceros (very rare), wild hog, wild buffalo, large swamp deer, hog deer and spotted deer. The description is that of the sportsman's paradise. Nowadays the jungle has been almost entirely cleared, and the construction of railways has cut off most of the large game and confined it to the jungles under the Himalayas. The only big game now to be found in the district is the leopard, which resides chiefly in the jungles along both banks of the lower reaches of the Kalindri, in the belt of jungle between English Bazar and Muchia on the east of the Mahananda and in the jungles around Gaur. Wild pig exist in the scrub jungle of the Purnabhaha valley, and the uncultivated portions in the south-west of Harishchandrapur police-station. Deer are practically unknown, though the District Gazetteer includes hog deer in the list of wild animals. There have been stray cases of deer coming into the district, but they are invariably hunted down by the Santals. Nilgai also occasionally come into the district from Purnea.

"Among game birds, both Hunter and the District Gazetteer give lists in which some of the birds mentioned are never found, and some so rarely that their inclusion is not justified. Peafowl, which occur in both lists, are unknown. The same is the case with merganser, while the pink-beaked goose which is mentioned in the Gazetteer is extremely rare. The mallard and pink-headed duck have been shot in the district, but they are also extremely rare now, and I have never been fortunate enough to see one.

"The following game birds now exist. Among geese, the bar-headed goose is found in some numbers on the chars along the Ganges, which are his feeding grounds in the early morning. The greylag also visits the north-west part of the district, but is rarer than the bar-headed. Among duck, the most commonly found is the gadwall and then the pintail. Spot bill are not common. The widgeon rarely comes as far east, and I have only seen a few. Pochard are to be had on every duck beel, the most usual varieties being the common and the white eye. The black-tufted pochard is less common, and I have found it principally in the northern part of the Tangan valley. The red-crested pochard is also not commonly found. The common teal and the gargeny or blue-winged teal are found in large numbers. Of the ducks which are not generally considered fit for the table the shoveller is fairly common, and the ruddy sheldrake or Bramhiny visits the chars of the Ganges and the upper reaches of the Kalindri.

"One bird which is omitted by Hunter and the District Gazetteer is the nokta or comb duck, which is found in some numbers on certain beels. It is a large bird, weighing up to

six pounds, and contrary to the general belief, is quite eatable, at any rate in Malda district where it feeds on winter paddy. The male is distinguished from the female by the fleshy knob at the base of the beak.

"Snipe are found in the marshy areas which dry up during the cold weather, and often on higher ground near swamps. There are four varieties—the pintail, fantail, the jack snipe and the painted snipe.

"Golden plover are common, and great flights of the smaller silver plover can often be seen wheeling over marshy areas. The shamkhol, generally known as the beefsteak bird, is commonly found on beels, as are the stilt, redshank and other waders. Whistling teal and cotton teal abound in the beels and large tanks.

"Coming to the land birds, the most outstanding bird is the florican. This is unfortunately very uncommon nowadays, for in the past its beautiful plumage and its rarity have singled it out as the particular object of the sportsman. The female has been protected for a number of years and the male for the last few years. It prefers high grassy country with patches of cultivation, particularly mustard, such as is found near the south of the Purnea border. I have also seen one in the Tangan valley, but it is unusual for floricans to habitate in that type of country. Partridges are found in some numbers in the Tangan and Purnabhava valleys, and to a lesser degree near the Purnea border. There are two varieties—the black and the swamp. Green pigeon and button quail are fairly common, but grey quail less so. Jungle fowl are rather rare, but a few can be found in the jungles along the southern bank of the Kalindri near its junction with the Mahananda, and around the ruins of Gaur.

"Among amphibious reptiles, the snub-nosed crocodile is found in large numbers in the Tangan and Purnabhava rivers and in the beels lying adjacent to them. It also haunts many of the large tanks which are scattered all over the district. It is not comparable in size with the crocodile of the Sundarbans, the average length being not more than nine or ten feet; but its presence is remarkable in tanks which often lie miles from any other water. The gharial, the long-nosed fish-eating crocodile, is found commonly in the Ganges. The poisonous reptiles found in the district are the cobra and the Russell's viper. Occasional pythons have also been found. During the last few years, the comparatively high price of crocodile skin has resulted in the wholesale slaughter of crocodiles. Various methods are employed for catching and killing them. The Santal method is to locate the hole in the bank of the river or tank by which the crocodile enters his den. This is then fenced in with bamboo stakes and the crocodile is dug out. The Muhammadans fish for him with a hollow bamboo 10 to 15 feet in length, at each end of which is fastened a rope with a baited hook. As soon as the bait

is swallowed, and the crocodile hooked, he makes for the bottom and tries to shake it off; but by dragging down one end of the bamboo, the other end is elevated above the surface and shows his position. Eventually he collapses from exhaustion and is hauled in. A third method, generally employed by up-countrymen, is harpooning. As soon as a crocodile is hit, he tends to roll over on his side, and the rope attached to the harpoon begins to entwine him. The more he struggles, the more he becomes enmeshed until he can be dragged to the shore and killed."

Mr. Carter's description perhaps holds good even today.

The district contains a large number of *beels* and tanks and is also traversed by a number of rivers. Various kinds of fishes are accordingly available in the district such as:

1. Dasaytis (Pastinaches) or Sankar ; 2. Gadusia chapra (Ham) or Karti ; 3. Hilsa ilisha (Ham) or Elish ; 4. Sardinella fimbriata (Cuv. & Val.) or Khoirā ; 5. Corica Soborna (Ham Buch) or Subarna Kharikā ; 6. Raconda russellina (Gray) or phesā ; 7. Engraulis telara (Ham. Buch) or Phesā or telgāgrā ; 8. Notopterus notopterus (Pallas) or Pholoi ; 9. N. Chitala (Ham) or Chital ; 10. Galaxis indicus (Day) or Chunā mäch ; 11. Amphipnous cuchia (Ham. Buch) or Kuchiā ; 12. Anguilla bengalensis (Gray & Hardew) or Bāim ; 13. Esomus danricas (Ham) or Danrika ; 14. Rasbora elenga (Ham) or Elengā ; 15. Amblypharingdon mola (Ham) or Mouralā ; 16. Barbus Sarana (Ham) or Saral punti ; 17. B. chrysopoma (Cuv. & Val) or Sarna punti ; 18. B. (Tor) putitora (Ham) or Mahāsol ; 19. B. Tetrapogon (Mc. Clell) or Tit punti ; 20. B. (Cyclocheilichthys) apogon (Cuv. & Val) or Punti ; 21. B. conchionius (Ham) or Kānchan punti ; 22. B. (Puntius) ticto (Ham) or Titā punti ; 23. B. (Puntius) stigma (Cuv. & Val) or Punti ; 24. B. titius (Ham) or Punti ; 25. Catla catla or Kātal ; 26. Cirrhina mrigala (Ham) or Mrigal ; 27. C. reba (Ham) or Bāṭā ; 28. Crossocheilus latia (Ham) or Cālā bāṭā ; 29. Labeo nandina (Ham) or Nādin ; 30. L. fimbriatus (Bloch) or Nadin ; 31. L. calbasu (Ham. Buch) or Kālbas ; 32. L. goinus (Ham. Buch) or Ghainnā ; 33. L. rohita (Ham. Buch) or Rui ; 34. L. bata (Ham) or Bhāngan bāṭā ; 35. Clarius batrachus (Linn) or Māgur ; 36. Heteropneustis fossilis (Bloch) or Singh ; 37. Callichrous bimaculatus (Bloch) or Kānee Pābdā ; 38. C. pabda (Ham) or Pābdā ; 39. Ailia coilia (Ham. Buch) or Bāspātā ; 40. Wallago attu (Bloch) or Boāl ; 41. Chaca chaca (Ham) or Chegā ; 42. Eutropichthys vacha (Ham) or Bāchā ; 43. Pseudentropius murius (Ham) or Gāruā ; 44. P. atherinoides or Bātāsi ; 45. Silondia silonia (Ham) or Sillōng ; 46. Pangasius pangasius (Ham) or Pāngās ; 47. Mystus seenghla (Sykes) or Āirh ; 48. M. aor (Ham. Buch) or Āirh ; 49. M. menoda (Ham) or Āirh ; 50. M. corsula (Ham) or Golsā teṅgrā ; 51. M. teṅgra (Ham) or Bazari teṅgrā ; 52. M. vitatus (Bloch) or Teṅgrā ; 53. Rita rita (Ham) or Ritā ; 54. Bagarius bagarius (Ham) or Bāghā Āirh ; 55. Belone cancila or Kānkle ; 56. Cypsilurus

poecilopterus (Cuv.) or Ural mäch ; 57. Ophicephalus striatus (Bloch) or Sôl ; 58. O. marulius (Ham) or Sâl, gazâl ; 59. O. stewartiplayfair or Dudu chaᅅg ; 60. O. Punctatus (Bloch) or Laᅇa ; 61. O. gachua (Ham) or Chaᅅg ; 62. O. amphibius (McClell) or Boro chaᅅg ; 63. Anabas testudineus (Bloch) or Kôî ; 64. Colisa chuna (Ham) or Chunâ khôlse ; 65 C. fascaatus (Bl. Schn) or Kholisâ ; 66. C. lalius (Ham. Buch) or Lâl kholisâ ; 67. Nandus nandus (Cuv. & Val) or Bhedâ ; 68. Glossogobius giuris (Ham. Buch) or Bele ; 69. Mastacembalus pancalus (Ham) or Pânkâl ; 70. M. armatus (Lacep) or Bâm ; 71. Macrognathus aculatus (Bloch) or Târâ bâim ; 72. Tetradon patoka (Ham. Buch) or Paᅇkâ ; 73. Ambassis nama or Chândâ ; 74. Ambassis ranga or Râᅅgâ chândâ.

Forests.

The area covered by reserved forests in the district of Mâldâ is only 400.63 acres. Of these, the Hâlnâ Reserved Forest is an unbroken patch of 351 acres. There are also protected forests, protected under the Indian Forests Act, 1927, fifteen in number, covering a total area of about 1,337.98 acres. The smallest of such protected forests measures 4.7 acres in area while the largest measures 263.84 acres. The largest protected forest is locally known as the Kariâli Protected Forests. There are also some area of inferior Unclassed State Forests. The total area under such Unclassed State Forests is 1,958.78 acres and is spread over 13 unclassified forests. The largest of such forest patches covers an area of 549 acres and is locally known as the Sâhârol Forest. These forests may again be classified as (1) moist deciduous riverain forests, (2) dry deciduous *sâl* forests, (3) moist deciduous *hijal* forests and (4) dry deciduous miscellaneous forests. In category 3 *hijal* is the only species that comes up on the fringes of the forest along with substantial number of *Randia Uliginosa*. These areas are completely submerged during every monsoon and *hijal* forms the monoclimate climax. Teak does not occur naturally in the forests of this district. *Simul* does well in poor soil of partly eroded area. The Forest Department has succeeded in artificial regeneration of *sâl* along with teak, *sissoo*, *simul* and *mahuâ*. The Forests Department has also succeeded in afforesting waterlogged *beel* areas with *kadam*, eucalyptus and *sissoo*.

(f) CLIMATE

The climate of this district is characterized by a hot and oppressive summer season, plentiful rain and moisture in the air throughout the year. The year may be divided into four seasons. The cold season starts by about the middle of November and continues till the end of February. The period from March to May is the hot season. The south-west monsoon season commences by about the first week of June and continues till the end of September. October and the first half of November constitute the post-monsoon season.

Rainfall.

Records of rainfall in the district are available for three stations for periods ranging from 75 to 92 years. The average annual rainfall in the district is 1,540.3 mm (60.64"). The rainfall generally increases from the south-west to the north-west. The rainfall during the south-west monsoon season constitutes 78 per cent of the annual total. August is the month with the heaviest rainfall. The variation in the rainfall from year to year is not large. During the fifty year period 1901-1950, the highest annual rainfall was 137 per cent of the normal, which occurred in 1922. The lowest annual rainfall was in 1908 when it amounted to 59 per cent of the normal. In the same fifty-year period the rainfall was less than 80 per cent of the normal in eight years and two of them were consecutive. The rainfall in the district was between 1,300 mm and 1,800 mm (51.18" and 70.87") in 29 years out of fifty.

On an average there are 67 rainy days (i.e. days with rainfall of 2.5 mm—10 cents—or more) in a year. This number varies from 65 at Gâjôl to 70 at Mâldâ.

The heaviest rainfall in 24 hours recorded at any station in the district was 393.7 mm (15.50") at Gâjôl on September 26, 1893.

Temperature

The only meteorological observatory in the district is at Mâldâ. The records of this observatory may be taken as representative of the conditions in the district in general. From about the beginning of March temperatures begin to rise rapidly. Although the day temperatures reach the maximum in April or May, night temperatures continue to rise even in the monsoon season. In April the mean daily maximum temperature is 35.8°C (96.5°F) and the mean daily minimum is 21.8°C (71.2°F). The heat during the summer is oppressive as the moisture in the air is high. With the arrival of the monsoon early in June the day temperatures decrease by two or three degrees but the night temperatures continue to rise. On account of increased humidity and high night temperatures oppressive weather is experienced even in the monsoon season particularly in between the rains. With the withdrawal of the south-west monsoon by about the first week of October both day and night temperatures drop steadily. The cold season commences after the middle of November and the night temperatures drop more rapidly than the day temperatures. January is the coldest month with the mean daily minimum temperature at 10.3°C (50.5°F) and the mean daily maximum temperature at 23.8°C (74.9°F). In the cold season, in association with passing western disturbances spells of cold weather are experienced and the minimum temperature may go down to some four or five degrees above the freezing point of water. The highest maximum temperature recorded at Mâldâ was 45°C (113°F) on May 27, 1958 and the lowest minimum temperature was 3.9°C (39.0°F) on February 3, 1905.

Humidity.

Relative humidities are high throughout the year. But during early part of summer they are comparatively less being about 50 to 60 per cent in the mornings and 30 to 40 per cent in the afternoons.

Cloudiness.

Skies are moderately clouded in May and heavily clouded to overcast in the southeast monsoon season. There is some moderate clouding in October. In the rest of the year skies are mainly clear or lightly clouded.

Winds.

Winds are generally moderate with some increase in speed in the late summer and monsoon season. In the monsoon season winds blow mostly from directions between south and east. In October winds are variable in direction. In November they are from directions between west and north-east. In December and January winds are from west to north. Southerlies and southwesterlies appear in March and in the next month winds are variable in direction. In May winds are mostly from directions between north-east and south.

Special weather phenomena.

Storms and depressions from the Bay of Bengal in May and the post-monsoon months often reach the district and its neighbourhood and cause widespread heavy rain and high winds. Depressions which originate at the head of the Bay of Bengal during the monsoon season also affect the district and heavy rains occur. In the hot weather months of March to May thunderstorms occur generally in the afternoons, accompanied often with heavy rain with hail on some occasions and severe squalls coming usually from the north-west. These phenomena, called Nor'westers or locally known as 'kālbaīsākhi' are often violent and cause sharp drop in temperature. Rainfall during the monsoon season is often associated with thunder. A few thunderstorms occur in October. Occasional fog occurs in the cold season.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY

(a) ANCIENT PERIOD

Tradition and legends.

It is related in the Aitareya-Brāhmana that Andhras, Puṇḍras, Sabaras, Pulindas and Mutibas were the descendants of Visvāmītra through those of his sons who had been cursed by him. In the *Mahābhārata* and the *Harivamśa* the Puṇḍras, Aṅgas, Vaṅgas, Suhmas and Kaliṅgas are mentioned as descendants of the blind sage Dirghatamas Mamateya born of the queen of king Bali. The Puṇḍras were treated as outcastes in ancient times, but in the *Mahābhārata* itself the river Karatoyā has been mentioned as being of special sanctity.

It appears from the descriptions given in the Sabhāparvan of the *Mahābhārata* that the Puṇḍras lived in a tract of land which was situated to the east of Aṅga and the Kaushiki marshes, to the north of which lived the kirātas or the hill tribes; to the south-east the Vaṅgas and the Suhmas with Tāmraliptis in the south-west. The eastern boundary was the Karatoyā river. It is probable that the country of the Puṇḍras was situated between the Ganges and the Mahānandā on the one side and the Karatoyā on the other. The district of Māldā, therefore, formed a part of Puṇḍravardhana or the country of the Puṇḍras in ancient times.

Pānini who flourished in the fifth century B.C., mentions a city named Gauḍapura situated in Eastern India. There are strong reasons for identifying this Gauḍapura with the city of Gauḍa, the ruins of which are situated in the Māldā district.

Maurya rule.

Kauṭilya in his *Arthashāstra* associates a particular type of silver with the country of Gauḍa. Gauḍa and Puṇḍravardhana formed parts of the Maurya Empire as would appear from the inscription on a seal discovered amidst the ruins of Mahāsthāngarh situated in Bogrā district in Pakistan.* Moreover, while kingdoms of the extreme south like Chola, Chera etc. have been mentioned in the inscriptions of Asoka as frontier kingdoms, no part of Bengal has been mentioned as such. Hiuen Tsang saw many Asokan stupas at Puṇḍravardhana, Samatāṭa, Tāmralipti and Karnasuvāna.

The history of Bengal from the fall of the Mauryas to the rise of the Guptas is practically unknown.

Parāsara, the noted astronomer, writing in the first century A.D. mentioned a country named Gauḍa situated in Eastern India. It is rather curious that he also mentioned the Puṇḍras separately in the same region. Varāhamihira in his *Brihat-Saṁhitā* repeats this tradition of Gauḍakas and Puṇḍrakas residing in Eastern India.

* See page 20 of the West Dinājpur District Gazetteer.

It is evident from the inscriptions discovered in the district of undivided Dinājpur and other parts of North Bengal that North Bengal formed a part of the Gupta Empire during the reigns of Kumāragupta I, Budhagupta and their successors. The eastern boundary of the Gupta Empire as described in the Allāhābād Pillar Inscription of Samudragupta makes it abundantly clear that the whole of North Bengal as far east as Kāmarupa formed a part of Samudragupta's empire. As there is no mention of any conquest of Gauḍa or Puṇḍravardhana by Samudragupta, it is safe to assume that at the beginning of his reign Gauḍa and Puṇḍravardhana formed parts of his empire. This region perhaps formed a part of the Gupta Empire since its inception. Gupta rule continued over North Bengal till at least the middle of the sixth century A.D.*

Vātsyāyana in his *Kāmasūtra* mentions both Vaṅga and Gauḍa thereby showing Gauḍa as a separate entity apart from Vaṅga. Dandin mentions a particular style of writing poetry prevalent in Gauḍa, and Bharata in his treatise on dance has mentioned a peculiar hair style of the residents of Gauḍa.

Yasodharman.

Yasodharman of Mandāsor led his army right up to the bank of the Brahmaputra river in the course of his campaigns but his conquest of North Bengal did not have any lasting effect. Isāna-varman, the Maukhari King is claimed to have compelled the Gauḍas, who lived near the sea, to remain within their territory (Haraha inscription of Suryavarman).

As Isāna-varman was on the throne in 554 A.D. it is reasonable to conclude that the limits of Gauḍa extended up to the sea coast at that time.

Sasanka.

Gauḍa attained eminence as a kingdom during the reign of Sasāṅka who has been described as Gauḍa-adhipa in Bāna's *Harsha-charita*. In the *Harsha-charita* the ruler of Gauḍa has not been mentioned by name but the *Ārya-manjusri-mulakalpa* mentions a battle between Harsha-vardhana and one king Soma. This king Soma was obviously king Sasāṅka. Sasāṅka started his life as a Mahāsāmanta under a Gupta emperor who may possibly be identified with Mahāsenagupta of Magadha. As the power of the Guptas waned that of Sasāṅka increased and ultimately he established himself as an independent king in Eastern India. During his reign the limits of Gauḍa were not confined within the district of Māldā but extended in the south-west to the border of Orissa (Kongoda). The capital city of Gauḍa kingdom at that time was Karnasuvarna. Sasāṅka had to defend his kingdom against the attacks from Harsha-vardhana and his ally Bhāskara-varman of Kāmarupa, but it is likely that he retained his kingdom. He died some time between 619 and 637 A.D.

Gauḍa seems to have been an independent kingdom after the reign of Sasāṅka. His death was followed by a period of anarchy which has been described in the *Ārya-manjusri-mulakalpa* as follows:

"After the death of Soma the Gauḍa political system (*Gauḍa-*

* See pages 20 and 21 of the West Dinājpur District Gazetteer.

tantra) was reduced to mutual distrust, raised weapons and mutual jealousy—one (king) for a week; another for a month; then a republican constitution (?)—such will be the daily (condition) of the country on the bank of the Ganges where houses were built on the ruins of monasteries. Thereafter Soma's (Sasāṅka's) son Mānava will last for 8 months 5 (½?) days."

It seems likely that Bhāskara-varman the King of Kāmarupa conquered Karnasuvarna after the death of Sasāṅka. Hiuen Tsang, when he visited India during the reign of Harsha, found Bengal divided into the four kingdoms of Puṇḍravardhana, Karnasuvarna, Samataṭa and Tāmralipti. The district of Māldā obviously formed a part of the kingdom of Puṇḍravardhana. But the names of the kings were not mentioned by Hiuen Tsang and therefore cannot be known. According to Dr. R. C. Majumdar, Bengal was conquered by a Shaila king in 725 A.D. who was the great grandfather of Jayavardhana.

In A.D. 671 we find Ādityasena as the king of Magadha. His kingdom probably included Gauḍa. Yasovarman of Kanauj defeated and killed the king of Gauḍa some time between 725 and 735 A.D. It is generally agreed that the Lord of Gauḍa also ruled over Magadha at that time. Yasovarman in his turn was defeated by Lalitāditya of Kashmir. According to Kalhana's *Rājatarāṅgini*, Jayāpīḍa, the grandson of Lalitāditya defeated the five Gauḍa chiefs after having married the daughter of the king of Puṇḍravardhana.

In a Kāṭmandu inscription of approximately 748 A.D. it is mentioned that the then king of Nepal, King Jayadeva married the daughter of Sri Harshadeva, the Lord of Gauḍa, Aṅga, Kaliṅga and other lands.

Matsyanyaya.

These successive political upheavals brought about what was known as *Mātsyanyāya* in Bengal. During this period the strong oppressed the weak and there was no king to command the allegiance of the petty chieftains. This state of political anarchy ultimately became unbearable to the people and the chieftains elected Gopāla, a man of Varendri to rule over them. Varendri was the tract of country lying between the Ganges and Karatoyā.

Election of Gopala.

The election of Gopāla to the throne of Gauḍa is probably unique in the history of India.

Pala Dynasty.

Gopāla established the Pāla dynasty in Bengal. The table at page 20 gives the names and regnal years of the kings of the Pāla dynasty which ruled over Bengal.

At the time Gopāla was elected to the throne of Gauḍa, the Gurjara-Pratihāras of Rājputānā had already established themselves as powerful kings in Western India. King Vatsarāja of this dynasty attacked his eastern neighbour, the king of Vaṅga and defeated him with his vassal, the king of Gauḍa. It is reasonable to identify this king of Vaṅga with Gopāla as under him Bengal began to attain stability and had not yet become a great power.

Dharmapala—The Tripartite Struggle.

Gopāla was succeeded by his son Dharmapāla who not only established the Pāla power firmly in Bengal but also made his power felt outside its borders. In his westward advance, he came

Name of King	Approximate Year of Accession
1. Gopāla I	750 A.D.
2. Dharmapāla	770 "
3. Devapāla	810 "
4. Vighrahapāla I or Surapāla I	850 "
5. Nārayanapāla	854 "
6. Rājyapāla	908 "
7. Gopāla II	940 "
8. Vighrahapāla II	960 "
9. Mahipāla I	988 "
10. Nayapāla	1038 "
11. Vighrahapāla III	1055 "
12. Mahipāla II	1070 "
13. Surapāla II	1075 "
14. Rāmapāla	1077 "
15. Kumārapāla	1120 "
16. Gopāla III	1125 "
17. Madanapāla	1140 "
18. Govindapāla	1155 "

into conflict with Vatsarāja, the Pratihāra king. Vatsarāja defeated Dharmapāla in a battle that apparently took place somewhere in the tract of country between the Ganges and the Yamunā but Vatsarāja in his turn was defeated by the Rāshtrakūṭa king Dhruva. Dharmapāla's position was not, therefore, seriously undermined. In fact, he pushed his conquests westward, defeated Indrarāja of Kanauj and conferred that kingdom on his own nominee Chakrāyudha in the presence of the kings of Bhoja, Matsya, Madra, Kuru, Yadu, Yavana, Avanti, Gandhāra and Kira, who acknowledged him as their overlord.

The kingdoms of Gandhāra, Madra and Kuru were situated respectively in the western, central and eastern Punjab. Kira corresponded to the Kāngra district in north-eastern Punjab. Matsya corresponds to the Ālwār state and Avanti was Mālwā. The exact locations of the kingdoms of Bhoja, Yadu and Yavana cannot be ascertained accurately but it would not be unreasonable to equate Yadu with Mathurā and Dvārakā, Yavana with an Arab principality in the Indus valley and Bhoja with parts of Berār.

Dharmapāla's success was, however, rather shortlived. Vatsarāja's son Nāgabhaṭa II drove Chakrāyudha from the throne and finally defeated Dharmapāla in a battle near Monghyr. Dharmapāla was saved from complete extinction by the intervention of the Rāshtrakūṭa king Govinda III, who inflicted a crushing defeat on Nāgabhaṭa II. Govinda III returned to his kingdom in the Deccan, thereby enabling Dharmapāla to retain his kingdom.

Dharmapāla married a Rāshtrakūṭa princess and out of this union was born Devapāla who was as great a warrior as his father. During his reign he retrieved the ground lost by his father and extended the boundaries of his kingdom as far as the Himalayas in the north and the Vindhya-chala in the south. The eastern and the western boundaries of his kingdom were formed by the eastern and western seas. Devapāla was able to extend the boundaries of his kingdom because of the lucky circumstance that Nāgabhaṭa's son Rāmabhadra was not worthy of his father. Rāmabhadra's son Bhoja also had to spend the first few years of his reign in his attempt to consolidate his position by

vanquishing his relatives. By the time Bhoja established himself on the throne of his father, Devapāla was at the height of his power. Devapāla's alliance with the Rāshtrakūṭas was at that time very much of a working partnership. Bhoja, therefore, could not make headway against Devapāla. But after his death he attacked Bengal. Bhoja ruled from Kanauj and his kingdom is said to have stretched up to the eastern ocean in the east.

The Pāla kingdom ceased to play an important part in the politics of North India after the death of Devapāla. The dynasty seems to have continued to hold sway over Bengal proper. By the time of Mahipāla I, the southern boundary of the kingdom had contracted and was probably formed by the river Ajaya. Mahipāla I was defeated by Rājendracholadeva of the Chola kingdom in the eleventh century A.D. Mahipāla I, however, quickly recovered from his reverses and he extended his rule up to Gaya, Patna and Mazaffarpur in Bihar. Mahipāla I, on ascending the throne, had to free his kingdom of Kāmbojas who had succeeded in establishing their sway over parts of Varendri and Burdwan.

The Pāla dynasty was probably supplanted by the Kāmbojas during the reign of Vighrahapāla II. It is idle to conjecture about their identity but this much is known that they had names similar to those of the kings of the Pāla dynasty.

Mahipāla I was succeeded by Nayapāla about whom nothing much is known. During his reign also the Pāla kingdom included portions of Bihar. He was succeeded by his son Vighrahapāla III, who engaged in warfare with the Kalachuris. Vighrahapāla III defeated Karna, the Kalachuri King and married his daughter Yauvanasri. At about this time a Chālukya invasion was led by Vikramāditya, the son of Someshvara I, against Gauḍa and Kāmarupa. There was probably no permanent conquest as we find Pāla kings ruling in North Bengal even after this date, but this invasion from Karnāṭaka probably left some colonies of Karnāṭaka Kshatriyas in Bengal at the time of his reign.

The fortunes of the Pālas suffered a temporary eclipse during the reign of Mahipāla II when Divya, the chief of the Kaivartas, led a successful rebellion against the king. Mahipāla was defeated and slain. The Pāla power was restored by Rāmapāla who with the aid of his allies and vassals overthrew Bhima, the nephew of Divya. It appears from an account of the preparations for this war against Bhima recorded in the *Rāmacharita* of Sandhyākara Nandi, the court poet of Madanapāla, that at this time a number of semi-independent chiefs were ruling in different parts of western Bengal. Rāmapāla was succeeded by his son, Kumārapāla during whose reign Prāgyiṭish and Kāmarupa were annexed to Bengal by his general, Baidyadeva. The glory of the Pālas was however definitely on the wane and this conquest of Assam might be compared with the last flicker of a candle before it goes out. Kumārapāla was succeeded by his son Gopāla III who was succeeded by his uncle, Madanapāla. It was during the reign of Madanapāla that Vijayasena of Rāḍha claimed to have attacked the king of Gauḍa.

Although the district of Māldā undoubtedly formed a part of

Dharmapala's
domination of
Northern India.

Devapala.

Mahipala I.

Vighrahapala III.

Mahipala II and
the Kaivarta
rebellion.

Restoration
by Rama-
pala.

Kumarapala.

Vijayasena's
invasion.

the Pāla kingdom, only two inscriptions of the Pāla kings have so far come to light within the district. The first inscription was the one which was discovered by Mr. U. C. Batabyal, I.C.S., the then District Magistrate in November 1893 at the village of Khalimpur near Gauḍa. The inscription was actually discovered by a Mohammedan cultivator while ploughing a paddy field and was purchased by Mr. Batabyal from the widow of the cultivator. This inscription was issued in the reign of Dharmapāladeva but the places referred to in it are not situated in the district of Māldā. The second inscription that was discovered was issued in the reign of Gopāladeva II. It was found in the village of Jazilpārā in Police Station Gājōl in November 1935. This inscription relates to Kuddālakhāta-vishaya in Pundravardhana-bhukti.

While it is not unlikely that Māldā was included in Pundravardhana-bhukti, it would be more profitable to examine the Pāla inscriptions in general to have an idea of the state of the kingdom during the reign of the Pāla kings instead of confining the analysis to only those copper-plates which were found either within the district or undoubtedly refer to the district.

The Pāla kings were known as Lords of Gauḍa. It is likely that the capital of the Gauḍa country was situated in the Māldā District in the neighbourhood of the place now known as Gauḍa. The Pāla kings were all Buddhists but that did not prevent them from having Brahmin ministers. It was during their reign that the celebrated Buddhist monastery at Nālandā and Vikramasilā, Jagaddala and Devikoṭ attained fame. Devikoṭ was situated where the ruins of Bāngarh lie while Jagaddala-Vihāra was situated in Varendri. Their belief in Buddhism did not stand in the way of their making gifts of lands to learned Brahmins. The copper-plate inscription of Gopāla II throws a peculiar light on this practice as it is found that Gopāla II donated land to a Brahmin for the glorification of Buddha. His ancestors while making gifts of lands to Brahmins never mentioned that the gifts were made for the glorification of Buddhism.

The Office of the Prime Minister appears to have been hereditary. The Prime Minister of Dharmapāla was Garga, whose son Darbhapāni became the Prime Minister of the next king Devapāla. Devapāla had an unusually long life and Darbhapāni was succeeded in his Prime Ministership by his grandson Kedāramisra. This family provided the Pāla kings with Prime Ministers up to the reign of Nārāyanapāla. This hereditary principle was followed in appointing Prime Ministers even by the succeeding Pāla kings as is evident from the appointment of Baidyadeva as the Prime Minister of Kumārapāla I.

Gopāla was raised to the throne of Gauḍa by the Chieftains, who in their turn derived their power from the people. Dharmapāla was fully aware of this fact and in his inscription the consent of the people has been sought to the grant of land. By the time of Devapāla, the dynasty had become firmly established on the throne of Gauḍa and the kings no longer thought it necessary to admit that their power was derived from the people and in the royal

The state of the kingdom during Pala reign.

Buddhism—Religious tolerance.

Popular consent.

Elaborate bureaucracy.

Administrative division and local officials.

Land records.

Land system.

Land taxes.

edicts, instead of the phrase “*Matamastubhabatām*” (may this receive your consent) the phrase “*Biditamastubhabatām*” (may it be known to you) began to be used. The number of officials was large. The officials mentioned in the inscription of Dharmapāla are *rājarājanyaka*, *rājaputra*, *rājāmātya*, *senāpati*, *vishayapati*, *bhogapati*, *shashṭhādihkrita*, *dandashakti*, *dandapāshika*, *chauroddharanika*, *dauhsādhasādhanika*, *duta*, *khola*, *gamāgamika*, *abhītvaramāna*, *hastyādhyaksha*, *aswādhyaksha*, *gabādhyaksha*, *mahishādhyaksha*, *ajābikādhyaksha*, *nāvādhyaksha*, *balādhyaksha*, *tarika*, *shaulkika*, *gaulmika*, *tadāyuktaka* and *vinīyuktaka*. Some changes in this hierarchy of officials are noticeable in the reign of Mahipāla I when officials designated as *bhogapati*, *shashṭhādihkrita*, *dandashakti*, *khola*, *balādhyaksha* are conspicuous by their absence while officials alike *mahā-sāndhivigrahika*, *mahākshapaṭalika*, *mahādandanāyaka*, *kumārāmātya*, *rājasthāniya-uparika*, *dāshāparādhika*, *dandika*, *kshetrapa*, *prāntapāla*, *koṭṭapāla*, *ushṭrādhyaksha*, *antarāṅga*, *parīshanika* and *grāmapati* are mentioned for the first time. In the inscription of Vighrapāla III found at Āmgāchhi, the only new official named is the *aṅgaraksha*. In the Manahali inscription of Madanapāla two new officials have been named, viz. *mahāsāmanta* and *saunika*.

The country was divided into *bhuktis* which may be compared with Commissioner's Divisions of the present time. A *bhukti* was divided into mandalas and vishayas. It is not clear whether a mandala was situated within a vishaya or a vishaya within a mandala as both instances have been found, but as a general rule either mandalas or vishayas formed parts of *bhuktis*. The Vishayapati was in charge of a vishaya and officials like Jyeshṭhya-kāyastha, Mahāmahottara, Mahottara and Dasagrāmika possibly assisted him in the administration of the vishaya. A Dasagrāmika probably was in charge of ten villages while a Grāmapati was probably in charge of one village only. The kingdom apparently consisted of two parts one of which was directly administered and the other which was administered by some Mahāsāmantas or Rājanyakas who may be best described as feudatory chiefs.

The Pāla kings had a well organized navy. Their armed forces included soldiers mounted on elephants, cavalrymen and soldiers mounted on camels. The Mahāsēnāpati was in charge of the armed forces and the Mahāsāndhivigrahika was the Minister in charge of peace and war.

It is noticed that the boundaries of villages given away by the kings have been meticulously described. This naturally leads to the inference that accurate records were maintained about the land. The king could donate villages and the result of such gifts was that the donee acquired the right to collect taxes recoverable from the village. The donee therefore became a rent-receiver or a zemindar. The fact that the kings could donate the villages without paying compensation to any one would go to show that either those villages formed parts of Crown lands or that intermediaries as a class did not exist.

The kings' dues from land consisted of four kinds of taxes, *bhāga*.

bhoga, kara, hiranya. *Bhāga* was one-sixth of the share of the produce to which the emperor was entitled while *kara* was the tax payable in money. It is not possible to state with definiteness what *bhoga* and *hiranya* stood for.

Bengal enjoyed peace and good government under the Pālas for a number of years. As a result arts and architecture flourished. The Bādal pillar inscription gives a detailed account of the intellectual attainments of the Prime Ministers of the Pāla kings. Devapāla's Minister, Darbhapāni and his grandson, Kedāramisra are said to have mastered the four Vedas. Kedāramisra's son, Guravamisra, was proficient in the Vedas, the *Āgamas*, *Nīti* and *Jyotisha*. The kings themselves were patrons of learning and granted land for the maintenance of Brahmins who engaged themselves in the study of the Vedas, the Vedāntas, Mimāṃsā, Vyākaraṇa and Tarka. It is mentioned in the colophon to the *Hari-Charita Kāvya* of Chaturbhujā that the Varendra Brahmins of Dharmapāla's reign were experts in Sruti, Smṛiti, Puṛāna, Vyākaraṇa and Kāvya. The famous poet, Abhinanda who composed the *Rāmacharita* was probably the court poet of a Pāla king. This Pāla king has been sought to be identified by some with King Devapāla. Abhinanda was considered during his life time to be almost as great a poet as Kālidāsa and extracts from his poems were quoted by other poets of his time in their works.

The Pāla kings being themselves devoted Buddhists, many books on Buddha's teaching came to be written in this period. Harihadra, the famous Buddhist ecclesiastic, wrote his commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*. This was also the period in which Buddhist religious books were translated into Tibetan. Vibhuti-chandra, Dānasila, Mokshākaragupta and Subhākaragupta all belonging to the Jagaddala-*Vihāra* in Varendri must have taken part in the preparation of Tibetan translations of Buddhist religious texts as their names were well known in Tibet. The next writer of note during the reign of the Pāla kings was Sandhyākara Nandi. In his book, the *Rāmacharita*, that Sandhyākara Nandi composed in the reign of Madanapāla, he has described the exploits of Rāmapāla of the Pāla dynasty. His poem is unique in the sense that every word in it is susceptible of two meanings, one of which can be applied as a recital of the story of Rāmachandra and the other to the history of King Rāmapāla. Sandhyākara Nandi belonged to Puṇḍravardhana in Varendri. It is indeed from his book that it was possible to piece together the events leading to the Kaiivarta rebellion, the usurpation of Pāla kingdom by Divya and his successor, Bhima and the recovery of the kingdom by Rāmapāla.

Chakrapāni-datta, the well known commentator on Charaka and Susruta, belonged to Bengal. His father Nārāyana was an officer in the court of the king of Gauḍa. The king of Gauḍa referred to was probably Nārāyanapāla. Chakrapāni-datta's commentary on Charaka was called *Āyurveda dipikā* or *Charaka-tātparya dipikā* while the commentary on Susruta was called *Bhānumati*. In his *Sabdachandrikā* he has given a list of vegetable

and mineral substances and compounds and his *Drabya gunasamgraha* deals with dietetics.

No temple or building of the Pāla period is in existence now. The ruins of Gauḍa and the ancient monuments at Pānduā and other places of the district however bear testimony to the fact that previous to the Muslim conquest, there were a large number of temples and Buddhist monasteries in the district. In the Chhoto Sonā Masjid standing amidst the ruins of Gauḍa, there are obviously stones from a Hindu temple. Three pieces of stone were found in that mosque, in one of which was found the representation of Vishnu in the Varāha incarnation. The other contained the figure of Sivāni and the third contained the figures of Brāhmani and Bhavāni. From the fact that a lotus is carved on two stones within the Bara Sonā Masjid, it is safe to assume that this mosque was also built with stones from some Hindu temples. The Eklākhy Mosque and the Ādinā Mosque of Pānduā show unmistakable traces of having been constructed with stones from Hindu temples. Other instances of similar uses of stones from Hindu temples or Buddhist monasteries in the construction of mosques and other Muslim monuments are too numerous to require repetition here.

It is not possible to say how many of these temples and Buddhist monasteries had been constructed by the Pāla kings and how many by the Sena kings but as the Senas ruled in North Bengal for a comparatively short period, the majority of the temples and monasteries may be considered as having been constructed during the Pāla period. The stones used in the construction of these temples and monasteries were a kind of black basalt and must have been brought from outside the geographical limits of Bengal.

Examples of sculpture of the Pāla period have been unearthed in a few places in the district of Māldā. Their number is not large but in the neighbouring district of Dinājpur and Rājshāhi of undivided Bengal, numerous statues and icons were found. The stone image of Avalokitesvara, which may perhaps be correctly designated as Shaḍakshari Lokesvara was found at Rānipur. The central figure is that of a four-handed Avalokitesvara seated in the *Vajra-paryāṅka āsana* with its front hands in the *anjali* pose, the back right and left hands holding respectively a rosary and a lotus. The image is tastefully decorated with a *jāta-mukuta* and usual ornaments, and has the miniature figure of Manidhara on its right and that of Shaḍakshari Mahāvidyā on its left. This image is assigned by scholars to the 11th century A.D. Two other Buddhist images were discovered in Māldā, one of which is a *Sthirachakra* image of the Manjusri type and the other that of Prajnāpāramitā. The image of Prajnāpāramitā being very rare deserves detailed description. Prajnāpāramitā is shown seated in *padmāsana* in deep tranquility of wisdom, both of her hands placed against her breast, the right in the *vyākhyāna*, and the left in the *jnāna-mudrā* holding the book *Ashṭasaharikā Prajnāpāramitā*.

The Pāla dynasty was supplanted in North Bengal by Vijayasena of the Sena dynasty in the 12th century A.D. In the Deopārā inscription of Vijayasena the Senas have been described as born

in the family of the Moon, the earliest male person in the family having been one Virasena. They were Brahmakshatriyas by caste and hailed from Karnāṭa in the Deccan. The family appears to have initially settled down in Rāḍh on arrival in Bengal as in the Naihāṭi copper-plate inscription of Vallālasena the ancestors of the Sena kings have been described as princes of Rāḍh. The first king of that dynasty was Sāmantasena who apparently rendered military help to the ruler of Karnāṭa when that country was attacked by enemies. Sāmantasena in his old age lived in a hermitage on the banks of the Ganges. Sāmantasena's son was Hemantasena. His queen was Yasodevi. From them was born Vijayasena who raised the status of the Senas from that of local chiefs of Rāḍh to that of the king of Gauḍa. Vijayasena is said to have defeated the king of Gauḍa who can be no other than the last Pāla king, Madanapāla, and the kings of Kāmarupa and Kaliṅga. He also conquered Nānyadeva of Mithilā or Nepal. Vijayasena married Vilāsadevi, a princess of the Sura family. This Sura family may be reasonably identified with the family of King Ranasura mentioned in Rājendra Chola's Tirumalai inscription or Lakshmi-sura of Aparā-Mandāra mentioned in the *Rāmacharita* of Sandhyā-kara Nandi. This marriage must have had its political side as it undoubtedly strengthened Vijayasena's position in Rāḍh. Vallālasena was the son of Vijayasena and Vilāsadevi. The name of Vallālasena is associated in the present day with the system of Kulinism. Vallālasena, although he does not appear to have engaged in extensive warfares, succeeded in maintaining the boundaries of the kingdom inherited from his father. Vallālasena's son was Lakshmanasena who in his Mādhānagar copper-plate claimed to have, as a crown prince, defeated the kings of Gauḍa, Kaliṅga and Benares. It is curious that almost the same countries were claimed to have been conquered by Vijayasena, Lakshmanasena's grandfather. It is therefore to be assumed that either Lakshmanasena had to conquer these countries afresh or, as is more likely, he accompanied the armies of his grandfather, Vijayasena, when he went about defeating the kings of these countries. At any rate, during the reign of Lakshmanasena, the western boundary of Bengal extended as far as Benares, the eastern being on the bank of the Brahmaputra. In the south his kingdom stretched to the sea including Kaliṅga. It is rather paradoxical that the rule of the Senas in North Bengal came to an end during the reign of Lakshmanasena, one of the great kings of the Sena dynasty. It was in 1201 A.D. that Muhammad Bakhtyār Khalji defeated Lakshmanasena by a surprise attack while he was at Nadia. By 1203 A.D. Bakhtyār Khalji had pushed up to North Bengal thereby bringing to a close the reign of the Sena dynasty in North Bengal.

The Sena kings were devout Hindus and under them Hinduism got a new lease of life. Vijayasena was a worshipper of Siva in the Ardhanāriswara form and he constructed a magnificent temple for the worship of this God. Lakshmanasena, on the other hand, was a worshipper of Vishnu in the Nṛishimhāvātāra form. All the Sena kings gave land and gifts to Brahmanas for encouraging the

Vijayasena.

Vallālasena.

Brahminical revival under the Senas.

study of the Shāstras. Due to the munificence of Vijayasena, the Brahmanas, versed in the Vedas, became the possessors of so much wealth that their wives had to be trained by the wives of the townspeople to recognize pearls, pieces of emerald, silver coins, jewels and gold from seeds of cotton, leaves of *sāka*, bottle-gourd flowers, the developed seeds of pomegranates and the blooming flowers of the creepers of pumpkin-gourd. Vijayasena's grandson Lakshmanasena claimed in his Anulī Copper-Plate that he gave away to Brahmanas myriads of excellent villages consisting of land excessively growing paddy and beautifully interspersed with gardens. As is to be expected, this lavish patronage of Brahmins resulted in the composition of a number of religious books. Among such books may be mentioned the *Hāralatā* and *Pitri-dayitā* of Aniruddha Bhaṭṭa who was the guru of Vallālasena. Vallālasena is himself said to have written a number of books among which the *Dānasāgara* may be mentioned. Aniruddha was a *Dharmādhyaksha* under the Sena kings. His book, the *Hāralatā*, deals with the observance of rights consequent upon birth and death, and his second book, *Pitri-dayitā* deals with rights and observances connected with Srādh and funeral ceremonies. It also includes the treatment of general duties like mouth washing, teeth-cleaning, ablution, daily prayers and related subjects. The *Dānasāgara* of Vallālasena is an extensive digest of matters relating to gifts. Another book written by Vallālasena is *Adbhutasāgara* which deals with omens and portents. Halāyudha who lived in the reign of Lakshmanasena wrote the *Brāhmana-sarvasva*, *Mimāṃsā-sarvasva*, *Vaishnava-sarvasva* and the *Pandit-sarvasva*. All these books deal purely with the ritualistic side of religion. The court poet of Lakshmanasena was Dhoyi, who wrote the *Pavana-duta* in imitation of Kālidāsa's *Meghaduta*. Umāpatidhara, who composed the Deopārā "*Prasasti*" of Vijayasena was an accomplished poet.

Like the Pālas, the Senas also had an elaborate administrative machinery for governing their extensive kingdom. From certain references made in their inscriptions it is clear that their administrative system was based on the polity of Kauṭilya. The designations of most of the officers of the Senas were similar to those of the Pālas with some important additions. Thus in no Pāla record mention has been made of the *rājñi*, *rānaka*, *purohita*, *mahā-dharmādhyaksha*, *mahā-mudrādhikṛita*, *brihat-uparika*, *mahā-bhogika*, *mahā-pilupati* and *mahā-ganastha*. The queen obviously occupied an important place in the administration along with the high priest.

Their land revenue administration appears to have been more accurate than that of the Pālas in as much as the incomes from lands donated have been mentioned. The area of each village or part of it, which forms the subject matter of the gifts, has also been given with great accuracy. The standard of measure was the *nala* or reed but the length of it was not uniform. The revenues receivable from the villages have been mentioned in *kapardaka-purāna*, which was a copper-coin. It may be reasonably inferred from this that either the rate of land revenue was not very high or

Literature.

Sena Administration.

Land Revenue Administration.

Administrative
Division.

that precious metals like gold and silver were scarce. The country was divided into *bhuktis*. A *bhukti* may be compared with the Commissioner's Division of the present day. A *bhukti* was divided into *vishayas* or *mandalas* and a *mandala* into *bithis*. In some cases a *bithi* which was a collection of villages was divided into *chaturakas* and *pāṭakas*. There are also instances in which the name of the village has been mentioned immediately after the name of the *bhukti*. Gauḍa which came to be known as Lakshmanāvati during the reign of Lakshmanasena, was one of the capitals of the Sena kings. It appears that the Sena kings were in the habit of moving from place to place within their kingdom and among such halting places, mention may be made of Nadiā and Vikrampur. Vikrampur which is now in Pakistan came to be a capital of the Senas after the eclipse of their power in north and west Bengal.

Sena Capitals.

(b) MEDIAEVAL PERIOD

Muslim conquest.

Muhammad Bakhtyār Khalji was an adventurer who came to the Court of Delhi in quest of service while Sultān Qutb-ud-din Aibak was reigning there. He had no luck there, and after a short spell of service under the *Sipāh-sālār* of Badāyun he entered the service of Mālik Husāmuddin, Governor of Oudh. This was in 1197 A.D. Mālik Husāmuddin made Muhammad Bakhtyār Khalji *jāgirdār* of two parganās in the south-eastern corner of the modern Mirzāpur District in Uttar Pradesh. From this vantage point Muhammad Bakhtyār Khalji engaged in plundering expeditions in the territories of the neighbouring Hindu chiefs and in 1199 A.D. he attacked and destroyed the Odandapura-vihāra and made himself master of Trainkuṭi. In 1200 A.D. he was busy in consolidating his hold over Patha-vihāra and in 1201 A.D. he led a sudden attack against Lakshmanasena while he was encamped at Nadiā. For this purpose, Muhammad Bakhtyār Khalji apparently used the unfrequented route passing through the forests of Jhārkand. His attack was a complete surprise to Lakshmanasena who was not at all prepared to meet it. Lakshmanasena managed to effect his own escape but the victory went to Muhammad Bakhtyār Khalji. Muhammad Bakhtyār Khalji did not stay long in Nadiā but dashed to North Bengal as Gaur* was then the capital of the Sena kings. Before 1203 A.D. he completed the conquest of Varendra. Muhammad Bakhtyār Khalji did not, however, establish his capital at Gaur but pushed ahead to Devkoṭ which is now in West Dinājpur District. In 1206 A.D. Muhammad Bākhtyār Khalji started from Devkoṭ at the head of a grand army for the conquest of Tibet. Before leaving for this campaign he sent an army under the brothers Muhammad Shirān and Ahmad Shirān towards Lakhnor or Nagar in the Birbhum District. He probably took this action to keep his rear safe but his main expedition to Tibet itself

* As is the usual practice, Gauḍa is spelt as Gaur, wherever the name occurs in connection with mediaeval history.

was a failure. His army could not withstand the hardship of the journey through the trackless jungles of the Himalayas and after a battle on the sixteenth day of the march, Muhammad Bakhtyār Khalji had to beat a retreat. He arrived at Devkoṭ, suffering from fever and there he was murdered by 'Alī Mardān Khalji. This happened in 1206 A.D.

Inter-cine struggle
of the Muslims and
attempts at independ-
ence from Imperial
control.

Muhammad Bakhtyār Khalji had parcelled out the conquered country into a number of *jāgirs* which he conferred on Khalji Generals. After the murder of Muhammad Bakhtyār Khalji, Muhammad Shirān Khalji who had been sent to Lakhnor or Nagar in Birbhum, returned to Devkoṭ to punish 'Alī Mardān, the murderer, who however retreated to his own *jāgir* in the Ghorāghāṭ region. 'Alī Mardān was captured and imprisoned and the Khalji Amirs elected Muhammad Shirān ruler of Lakhnāvati in approximately 1207 A.D. This election of Muhammad Shirān as the ruler of the principality of Gaur was not accepted by the Sultān of Delhi, and the Governor of Oudh was ordered to proceed to Lakhnāvati for settling alleged disputes among the Khalji Amirs of Bengal. Husām-ud-din 'Iwaz who was the fief-holder of *Gankarah* (Sarkar Tāndā of later times) joined him. Muhammad Shirān retreated eastwards before the Governor of Oudh and the Governor of Oudh installed Husām-ud-din at Devkoṭ as the nominee of Delhi. The Sultān of Delhi, Qutb-ud-din Aibak, however, appointed the murderer of Muhammad Bakhtyār Khalji as his Viceroy at Lakhnāvati in approximately 1210 A.D. Husām-ud-din retired in favour of 'Alī Mardān Khalji who came to Bengal accompanied by a fairly large army of Turks. Sultān Qutb-ud-din Aibak died shortly thereafter and 'Alī Mardān seized the opportunity of declaring his independence and assumed the title of Sultān. 'Alī Mardān began to oppress the Khalji nobles and as a result they rose under Husām-ud-din 'Iwaz and killed him (1213 A.D.). At the time of his death the principality of Lakhnāvati extended as far south as the Ajay river. The Karatoyā formed the eastern boundary, the river Kosi the west and the northern boundary lay a little to the north of Devkoṭ.

Lakhnāvati
made Muslim
capital.

Ghiyās-ud-din 'Iwaz becoming the ruler of Lakhnāvati assumed the title of Sultān Ghiyās-ud-din 'Iwaz Khalji. He ruled from 1213 to 1227 A.D. When Vishnu the valiant minister and general of the Gaṅga Emperor Anaṅga-Bhima III of Orissa attacked the Rāḍh tract Ghiyās-ud-din 'Iwaz Khalji managed to ward off the attack and retained the southern frontier of Lakhnāvati at Lakhnor in Birbhum District. It was Ghiyās-ud-din 'Iwaz Khalji who transferred the seat of the government to the historic city of old Lakhnāvati. This transfer of the capital was made in 1220 A.D. Lakhnāvati under its Muslim conquerors went through the processes of destruction and construction according to the needs of the conquerors. Ghiyās-ud-din 'Iwaz Khalji built more than one Jāma' mosque. He also constructed a Grand Trunk Road connecting the two frontier towns of Devkoṭ and Lakhnor. Traces of this high way built by 'Iwaz were noticed even as late as 19th century by Buchanan Hamilton.

North Bengal and Bihar or Lakhnāwati virtually enjoyed independence under Sultān Ghiyās-ud-din 'Iwaz Khalji till 1225 A.D. In 1225 A.D. Sultān Sāmsuddin Iltutmish of Delhi attacked Bihar with a view to establish his sovereignty over Lakhnāwati. This attack ended in a treaty of peace according to which Ghiyās-ud-din 'Iwaz Khalji agreed to acknowledge the Sultān of Delhi as his overlord. Sultān Iltutmish appointed one Mālik Alā-ud-din Jāni Governor of Bihar and returned to Delhi, but no sooner had the Sultān returned there, than he was expelled from Bihar. At about this time Sultān Sāmsuddin Iltutmish had to send his elder son, Prince Nāsir-ud-din, to Oudh to put down a rebellion of Hindus there. Unfortunately for him, Sultān Ghiyās-ud-din 'Iwaz Khalji chose this particular moment to lead an expedition eastward against the country of "*Bang*" (Vaṅga) or Eastern Bengal. Prince Nāsir-ud-din took this opportunity to seize Lakhnāwati by a surprise movement. Ghiyās-ud-din 'Iwaz Khalji went back to the defence of his capital on hearing news of its occupation by Prince Nāsir-ud-din and he was defeated in 1227 A.D. He and his nobles were taken captive and beheaded. He was the first independent ruler of Bengal whose coins have been discovered.

The period from 1227 A.D. till the end of the rule of the Māmluk Sultāns of Delhi was one of political unrest in North India generally and in Lakhnāwati in particular. The hold of Delhi over Lakhnāwati during this period of approximately sixty years was far from strong. The throne of Lakhnāwati was also not secure for the occupier as he had frequently to ward off the attacks of his colleagues in Bihar, Oudh, Kanauj and Kārā-Mānikpur. The power of the Māmluk Sultāns of Lakhnāwati was also challenged during this period by the Raja of Orissa.

Prince Nāsir-ud-din who overthrew Sultān Ghiyās-ud-din 'Iwaz did not rule long over Lakhnāwati. He died after about a year and a half and immediately after his death the Māmluks of Delhi were expelled from the principality of Lakhnāwati by a partisan of 'Iwaz. His independence however proved to be very short and Lakhnāwati again passed under the control of Delhi. This was in the year 1231 A.D. Lakhnāwati then came to be ruled by the Governors appointed from Delhi. The death of Sultān Sāmsuddin Iltutmish in 1236 A.D. unleashed the forces of disorder in northern India and Lakhnāwati was also not unaffected. The last imperial governor Saif-ud-din died or was murdered and one Aor Khān Aibak made himself master of Lakhnāwati. Aor Khān was defeated and slain by Tughān Khān, Governor of Bihar, who thus became the Governor of Bengal and Bihar.

Mālik Izzuddin Tughral Tughān Khān ruled over Lakhnāwati between 1236 and 1245 A.D. He regularized his occupation of Lakhnāwati by obtaining a firman from Sultānā Raziyyā. His ambitions led him to explore the possibility of pushing the boundary of the western frontier and with this end in view in 1242 A.D. he sent his army and fleet up the Ganges up to the frontiers of Kārā. He sent an envoy with presents to the Imperial Court and then returned to Lakhnāwati. His dream of an East Indian Sultanate

Orissan advance.

was shattered by the attack of Rājā Narasimhadeva I of Orissa. In 1242 A.D., he advanced northwards along the tract of the country on the east of the river Bhāgirathi and in 1243 A.D. began to ravage the possessions of the Bengal Sultān on the Lakhnor side. The forces of Rājā Narasimhadeva I and of Tughral Tughān crossed swords at the frontier of the principality of Lakhnāwati near Lakhnor in Birbhum District. The army of Tughral Tughān Khān gained some initial success but ultimately had to retreat, being completely defeated by the Orissan army. The situation was so critical that on his return to Lakhnāwati Tughral Tughān sent envoys to Delhi for help. Before help from Delhi could arrive, the army of Orissa over-ran the whole of Rāḍha and in 1245 A.D. arrived before Lakhnāwati itself. The army of Delhi was however actually on its way to help Tughral Tughān. On receipt of this intelligence the Orissan army retreated. King Narasimhadeva, however, maintained his hold over Rāḍha. His dominions at this time, extended to the river Ganges which, according to one of his inscriptions "assumed the dark countenance of the Yamuna by the collyrium-stained tears of the Yavana women of Rāḍhā and Varendri (West and North Bengal)." The troubles of Tughral Tughān instead of being over, only increased and he was ousted by the Imperial forces in 1245 A.D.

The next Governor of note who sat on the throne of Lakhnāwati was Mālik Ikhtyāruddin Yuzbak, Governor of Oudh. Soon after he ascended the throne in 1251-52 A.D., after consolidating his position in Varendra he conducted a campaign in Rāḍhā between 1253 and 1255 A.D. for expelling the forces of the King of Orissa and he succeeded in attaining his objective after driving out the local feudatory of the Orissan King from Mādāran in the Bankura* district. He then rebelled against Delhi and proclaimed his independence assuming the title of Sultān Mughis-ud-din. He extended his sovereignty over Bihar and Oudh also. Not being content with his conquests, Sultān Mughis-ud-din embarked on an expedition against Kāmarupa which proved to be his undoing. Although he was initially successful, he was ultimately defeated and slain at the hands of the king of Kāmarupa.

Lakhnāwati reverted to her allegiance to Delhi after the death of Sultān Mughis-ud-din Yuzbak. One of the Yuzbak noblemen, Mālik 'Izzuddin Balban-i-Yuzbaki then occupied the throne of Lakhnāwati. He ruled for about two years in virtual independence and it was only towards the end of his career that he obtained formal recognition of his status from Delhi. In 1259 A.D. he went on an expedition to "*Bang*", leaving his capital practically unguarded. At that time the Governor of Kārā was Mālik Tājuddin Arslān Khān and coming to know of the defenceless state of Lakhnāwati he attacked Bengal, bringing his army along an unfrequented route. Mālik 'Izzuddin Yuzbak returned from "*Bang*" too late, after Lakhnāwati had already been seized by Mālik Tājuddin Arslān Khān, and in a battle he lost his life. Mālik Tājuddin Arslān Khān probably ruled over Bengal and Bihar as an

* Now in the Hooghly district.

independent Sultān and on his death his son, Muhammad Tātār Khān succeeded him. In 1266 A.D. he sent envoys to Delhi with congratulatory presents to Sultān Ghiyās-ud-din Balban. Muhammad Tātār Khān died perhaps two years after Balban's accession to the throne of Delhi and the direct rule of Delhi over Bengal was restored in 1272 A.D. by the appointment by Sultān Balban of Amin Khān, a Delhi noble, as Governor of Bengal with Tughral Khān as the Deputy Governor of Bengal. Although Tughral Khān was officially designated only as Deputy Governor it was he who ruled over Lakhnāwati, Amin Khān residing in Oudh. Tughral is said to have aided Ratna-Fa to secure the throne of Tippera from his elder brother Raja-Fa. He also pushed his conquest eastwards up to Loricol which was about 25 miles south of Dacca. Sultān Ghiyās-ud-din Balban was for some years pre-occupied in dealing with the Mongol invasion from the west. Tughral Khān availed himself of this opportunity and after defeating Amin Khān made himself the sole master of Bengal in 1275 A.D. Immediately after this he assumed the title of Sultān Mughis-ud-din and threw off his allegiance to Delhi. Sultān Ghiyās-ud-din Balban sent the first expedition against Sultān Mughis-ud-din in January 1278 A.D. under the Governor of Oudh. This expedition was defeated somewhere between Tirhut and Lakhnāwati. Another army was sent against him the following year but Sultān Mughis-ud-din defeated that army also. The defeat of two armies in succession left no other alternative before Balban than to lead the army in person against the Bengal Sultān. Balban gathered together a huge army and Sultān Mughis-ud-din was compelled to decide against any pitched battle with the Sultān. He had initially advanced with his war-boats up to the river Sarju but as the army of Delhi advanced eastwards, Mughis-ud-din retreated before it and ultimately he evacuated Lakhnāwati, the more respectable section of its civil population accompanying him. Sultān Mughis-ud-din retreated towards Orissa along the Lakhnor (in Birbhum) Road and Balban therefore became master of Lakhnāwati in 1280 A.D. without a fight. Balban appointed Hisām-ud-din, maternal grandfather of the historian Barani as the Sāhānā or Commander of Lakhnāwati and then himself proceeded in pursuit of Tughral Tughān Khān. In order to bring Tughral Tughān Khān more easily to his knees Balban entered into a pact with the Rāi of Sonārgāon who undertook to prevent the escape of Tughral either southward or eastward by land or water. Finding his flight eastwards and southwards blocked by the armies of the Rāi of Sonārgāon, Tughral took the road to Orissa. Somewhere along this road, he was surprised by a detachment of Balban's army and was killed. Balban appointed his son, Bughrā Khān as Governor of Lakhnāwati and left for Delhi in 1282.

Balban's assertion of Imperial authority.

Tughral's Popularity.

Sultān Mughis-ud-din Tughral was not only a great general but also popular with all classes of his subjects, Hindu and Muslim alike. It was because of the fact that he achieved so much popularity that he could withstand for such a length of time the armies of the Sultān of Delhi. His court at Lakhnāwati was in no way inferior to the court of Delhi in pomp and magnificence.

Bughrā Khān ruled over Bengal as an appointed Governor of the Sultān of Delhi for about six years i.e., till 1287 A.D. In 1287 A.D. Sultān Ghiyās-ud-din Balban died and his eldest son having predeceased him, the *Wazir* Nizām-ud-din raised Kaiqubād, the eldest son of Bughrā Khān to the throne of Delhi. Bughrā Khān on his part, observed the prescribed ceremonial mourning for his father and then assumed the title of Sultān Nāsir-ud-din Mahmud, thus declaring his independence. Father and son came to battle shortly after this but the warlike preparations ended in truce according to which Sultān Nāsir-ud-din Mahmud ruled over Bengal and Bihar virtually independently while Sultān Kaiqubād ruled over Delhi. In 1290 A.D. Sultān Kaiqubād lost his life and his son Kaimurs was placed on his throne and he was put to death by Arkāli Khān, son of Jalāl-ud-din Firuz Khalji. Sultān Nāsir-ud-din Mahmud became grief-stricken on hearing of the death of his son and grandson and abdicated the throne in favour of his son Rukn-ud-din Kaikaus. Rukn-ud-din Kaikaus ruled till 1301 A.D. He was succeeded by Sultān Shāms-ud-din Firuz Shāh who is supposed to have been a descendant of Sultān Nāsir-ud-din Mahmud but there is no strong reason in support of such a supposition. Shāms-ud-din Firuz Shāh reigned till 1322 A.D. but he was disturbed from time to time by the rebellion of his sons who apparently set themselves up as independent Sultāns either from Lakhnāwati or from Sonārgāon. Firuz Shāh is remembered for renaming Trībeni in Hooghly and Pānduā in Māldā district as Firuzābād after his own name. After Shāms-ud-din Firuz Shāh's death, one of his sons Bahādur Shāh surnamed *Bhurah* ruled over Lakhnāwati and Sonārgāon. Sultān Ghiyās-ud-din Tughluq Shāh was on the throne of Delhi in 1324 A.D. and he started on an expedition to conquer Tirhut and Bengal. Tirhut was easily conquered by him and while he was there, Nāsir-ud-din Ibrāhim, another son of late Shāms-ud-din Firuz Shāh of Bengal appeared before him and claimed to be the Sultān of Lakhnāwati. Nāsir-ud-din Ibrāhim offered to bring about the defeat of Bahādur Shāh and his captivity if Sultān Ghiyās-ud-din Tughluq Shāh helped him with his army. Sultān Ghiyās-ud-din Tughluq Shāh sent a force under one of his generals Bahrām Khān *alias* Tātār Khān with Nāsir-ud-din Ibrāhim for the conquest of Lakhnāwati. On the approach of the imperial forces, Bahādur came out of Lakhnāwati but he was defeated and retreated eastward towards his new capital Ghiyāspur in Mymensingh district. A detachment from the imperial army was sent in pursuit of Bahādur and overtook him while he was crossing a canal and captured him. Bahādur Shāh was taken to Lakhnāwati where Tughluq Shāh was with his forces at that time. Tughluq Shāh when he left for Delhi took Bahādur with him as a captive. Before he left Lakhnāwati he confirmed Sultān Nāsir-ud-din as Governor of Bengal and Bahrām Khān over Sonārgāon and Sātgāon.

The new Islamic culture.

The conquest of Bengal in 1201 A.D. by Muhammad Bakhtiyār Khalji introduced a new religion and culture into the country. The new rulers were believers in Islam and took vigorous measures for uprooting the existing Hindu and Buddhist religious places

and for the dissemination of the new religion. With this end in view they demolished Hindu temples, Buddhist monasteries and places of Hindu worship and constructed mosques at important places of the territories conquered by them. For the encouragement of Islamic studies they also established *maktabs* and *madrassahs*. Between 1286 and 1328 A.D., this process was accelerated by an active campaign of proselytising embarked upon by the holymen of Islam. They spread themselves throughout the country and preached the doctrines of Islam among the Hindus. They established *dargāhs* and *khānqāhs* deliberately on the sites of those places of Hindu and Buddhist worship which had been demolished by the previous Sultāns with a view to preventing the restoration of such places in the minds of the people as Hindu and Buddhist holy places. By association of ideas the people also came to regard these newly established *dargāhs* and *khānqāhs* with the same veneration with which they used to regard the Hindu and Buddhist places of religious worship which existed at those places before.

Sultān Ghiyās-ud-din Tughluq Shāh was killed by his son Muhammad Junā Khān in 1325 A.D. at the gates of Delhi. Junā Khān ascended the throne under the title of Muhammad Tughluq. He released the captive Sultān Ghiyās-ud-din Bahādur Shāh and sent him back to Sonārgāon to rule as a vassal king in cooperation with Bahrām Khān. He also appointed Izz-ud-din Yahyā as Governor of Sonārgāon and Qādar Khān as ruler of Lakhnāwati subordinate to Sultān Nāsir-ud-din. Sultān Nāsir-ud-din Ibrāhīm was later on summoned to Delhi to help Muhammad Tughluq in his wars and he died away from Bengal. Sultān Ghiyās-ud-din Bahādur Shāh ruled over Sonārgāon till 1328 A.D. in which year he attempted to re-establish his independence. He was defeated and slain by Bahrām Khān. Bengal after this came to be ruled by three Governors, one for Lakhnāwati, another for Sāt-gāon and another for Sonārgāon. The Governor of Lakhnāwati was Qādar Khān, Mālīk Izz-ud-din Yahyā was the Governor of Sāt-gāon and Bahrām Khān was the Governor of Sonārgāon. Bahrām Khān died in 1338 A.D. and Fakhr-ud-din became Governor in his stead. In the following year Fakhr-ud-din declared his independence and assumed the title of Sultān Fakhr-ud-din Mubārak Shāh. This was resented by Qādar Khān and others who set out against Fakhr-ud-din and defeated him and pushed him beyond the Meghnā. Qādar Khān was however deserted by his own army and was killed in a subsequent battle with Fakhr-ud-din.

With Qādar Khān's death the principality of Lakhnāwati passed into the hands of Āli Mubārak, general of Qādar Khān. Muhammad Tughluq was unable to intervene in the affairs of Bengal on account of his pre-occupation elsewhere and Āli Mubārak declared his independence and assumed the title of Alā-ud-din Āli Shāh in about 1339 A.D. Alā-ud-din Āli Shāh reigned till 1342 A.D. when he was succeeded by his foster brother Ilyās Shāh. In 1349 A.D. Fakhr-ud-din of Sonārgāon died and was succeeded by his son Ikhtiyār-ud-din Ghāzi Shāh. This Ghāzi Shāh was ousted in 1353 A.D. by Ilyās Shāh who united the three

Ilyas Shahi
Dynasty.

Sultan Firuz
Shah's invasion.

principalities of Sonārgāon, Sāt-gāon and Lakhnāwati under the throne of Lakhnāwati. Ilyās Shāh on ascending the throne of Lakhnāwati assumed the title of Shāms-ud-din Ilyās Shāh. He conquered Tirhut and led a successful expedition into Nepal. Towards the middle of the fourteenth century A.D. he led an expedition into Orissa up to the Chilka Lake and returned with immense booty including 44 elephants. These sweeping victories raised his prestige so high that Sultān Firuz Shāh of Delhi became apprehensive and after mobilising a huge army set out towards Bengal in order to vanquish Shāms-ud-din Ilyās Shāh. The progress of the Delhi army was challenged by the Bengal fleet and army at the confluences of the Ghogrā and the Ganges and the Gandak but the forces of Bengal had to give way before the Delhi army and retreated up to the Kusi river. Here the Bengal army made a determined stand and blocked the further advance of the Delhi army. Sultān Firuz Shāh however arranged to take his army to the other side of the river Kusi at a place where it was easily fordable. The Bengal army threatened with attack in their rear, retreated down the Ganges but the Delhi army headed straight for Pānduā in the Māldā district, which was then known as *Firuzābād* and which was then the capital of Bengal. Pānduā was undefended at that time and easily fell into the hands of Sultān Firuz Shāh. Sultān Firuz Shāh then pushed ahead eastwards to Ekdālā which is now in the West Dinājpur district. The Delhi army laid siege to Ekdālā but failing to carry the fortress by storm, Sultān Firuz Shāh brought the Bengal army out of the fortress by adopting a ruse and compelled it to give battle. The Bengal army was defeated but strangely enough, Shāms-ud-din Ilyās Shāh was allowed to remain on the throne of Bengal and Sultān Firuz Shāh returned to Delhi. This happened in 1354 A.D. and in subsequent years Shāms-ud-din Ilyās Shāh sent presents to the Emperor of Delhi.

Sultān Shāms-ud-din Ilyās Shāh was succeeded on the throne of Bengal by his son Sikandar Shāh in 1357 A.D. He tried to remain on friendly terms with the Sultān of Delhi but Firuz Tughluq resumed hostilities in 1359 A.D. Zāfar Khān, the son-in-law of Fakhr-ud-din of Sonārgāon came to the Imperial Court in 1357 A.D. and complained of the high-handedness of Shāms-ud-din Ilyās and begged the Sultān of Delhi to intercede on his behalf. This provided the Sultān of Delhi with the pretext to resume hostilities against Bengal. The fortress of Ekdālā was again besieged by the Delhi army but as on the previous occasion it could not be reduced. Hostilities between the Delhi Sultān and Sikandar Shāh of Bengal came to an end by negotiation, as a result of which a treaty of friendship was signed by the two and Firuz Shāh quitted Bengal.

“During the long period of peace that followed, Sultan Sikandar adorned his capital with many noble monuments of architecture, the ruins of only one of which can be seen to-day at Adina, in the neighbourhood of Firuzabad-Pandua. This sumptuous mosque, extending 507 ft. from north to south and 285 ft. from east to west, surpasses in sheer dimension any other building of its kind in India. The central

quadrangle inside this mosque forms a rectangle 400 ft. long by 150 ft. wide and is enclosed within ranges of pillared aisles, five feet deep on the western side and three on the remainder, consisting of 400 pillars in all. This vast open space offering accommodation to thousands of worshippers, appeared as the 'forum of some ancient classical city rather than a Muslim house of prayer.' According to *Riyāz-us-Salātin*, this mosque was begun in 1364 A.D. (766 A.H.) and was not completed in 1368 A.D. (770 A.H.) which is borne out by an inscription on the west side of its wall. This magnificent structure, equalling in size the Great Mosque of Damascus, was built by the spoliation of Hindu and Buddhist shrines. According to R. K. Chakravartty, a Buddhist stupa was dismantled to secure the necessary materials for its building, but the remains of Hindu images as well are visible today in every part of this mosque. A block with the carved head of a lion which is said to have formed part of a Hindu throne, is found attached to the steps leading to the pulpit; many mutilated figures of Hindu deities are found in the door-sills and prayer-niches all over the mosque. The four hundred pillars with their graceful fluted shafts and expanding lotus-capitals which produce such an imposing effect, were similarly transplanted from Hindu shrines and 'It is not improbable,' says Percy Brown, 'that the finest monuments of the Hindu capital of Lakhnawati were demolished in order to produce this one Muhammadan mosque.' A few other monuments such as the tomb and mosque of Ākhi Sirājuddin, the Kotwāli Darwāzā, standing at the southern entrance to the city of Gaur, and two other mosques, one built by Maulānā Ātā in 1363 A.D. (probably) at Gaṅgārāmpur in Dinājpur District, . . . were erected."*

The reign of Sikandar came to an end in 1389 A.D. when he was defeated and slain by his son Ghiyās-ud-din A'zam Shāh at a place called Goālpārā, in the neighbourhood of Pānduā. Ghiyās-ud-din A'zam Shāh reigned till about 1409 A.D. The only important event of his reign was the exchange of embassies with China. The Chinese Mission visited Bengal in 1406 A.D. and Mahuan, the interpreter attached to the Chinese embassy, left an account of the things which he had seen. According to him, the silk industry was well developed and he referred to the existence of mulberry trees and silk-worms in Bengal. Five varieties of cotton fabrics were noticed by him, one of which resembling gauze was used for making turbans. Tea was apparently unknown and it was the practice to entertain the guests with betel-nut. Wine was sold openly in the market and refreshments were available in hotels and restaurants. Small purchases were made with *cowri* shells while large scale transactions were carried out in silver coins. Bengal apparently had an extensive overseas trade at that time and ocean-going ships were made in Bengal. It is interesting to note that even in

Mahuan's account.
Bengal's flourishing
condition.

* Sarkar—History of Bengal, Vol. II, pages 112-13.

Mahuan's day the strolling musicians carried on their trade entertaining the people by sweet music.

Mahuan's account leaves much to be desired when compared with the account of Eastern Bengal left by Ibn Batutāh. Ibn Batutāh not only described the country but also gave the prices current at that time of a number of articles. Ibn Batutāh's account gives the impression that although there was an abundance of the necessaries of life the lot of the common people was not very happy. The Hindus were mulcted of half of their crops and had to pay taxes over and above that. Slavery was an accepted institution and slaves were bought and sold openly. In Ibn Batutāh's time prices in Bengal were the lowest he came across in his travels over the greater part of the world.

Ibn Batutāh visited Bēngal in 1345-46 A.D., a few years before Shāms-ud-din Ilyās Shāh ascended the throne and Mahuan's account reflected the changes that were brought about during the reign of the Ilyās Shāhi kings. After the return of Firuz Shāh of Delhi from Ekdālā in 1359 A.D. Bengal was left unmolested by the Delhi Sultāns or the Governors of neighbouring provinces. The long period of peace was remarkable for the internal political change it brought about. The systematic subjugation of the Hindus apparently ceased and they came to be regarded almost in the same footing as the Muslims. In their wars with Firuz Shāh of Delhi, both Shāms-ud-din Ilyās Shāh and his son Sikandar utilized the Hindu paiks in their army. By 1410 A.D., we find that the dynasty had been supplanted by Raja Ganesh, a local Hindu Chief. By the end of the 14th century A.D. Raja Ganesh became the most powerful noble in the court of the then Ilyās Shāhi king. After Saif-ud-din Hamza Shāh's death, Raja Ganesh ascended the throne and ruled as a Hindu king. Immediately after ascending the throne he had to contend with an attack from the Sultān of Jaunpur but a peace was negotiated possibly on the condition that Jadu, the eldest son of Ganesh, would be converted to Islam. After the Jaunpur army had left, Ganesh took his son into protective custody and ruled the country under the title of Danujamardanadeva. Ganesh tried to get his son readmitted into the fold of Hinduism by making him go through certain purificatory rites but it appears that Jadu's conversion had been genuine, and on Raja Ganesh's death he ascended the throne with the title of Jalāl-ud-din in 1418 A.D. Jalāl-ud-din is credited by tradition with having transferred the capital from Pānduā back again to Gaur. He was succeeded in 1431 A.D. by his son Ahmad Shāh who was murdered in 1442 A.D. The Eklākhi tomb of Pānduā contains the graves of Jalāl-ud-din, his wife and son.

The political vacuum created by the assassination of Ahmad Shāh was filled up by recalling a descendant of Shāms-ud-din Ilyās to the throne of Bengal. This descendant of Ilyās at that time was living in obscurity and earning his livelihood by agriculture. This descendant of Shāms-ud-din Ilyās Shāh ascended the throne of Bengal under the style of Nāsir-ud-din Abdul Muzaffar Mahmud. He erected a large number of mosques, *khānqāhs*, gates, bridges, tombs etc.

Ilyas Shahi peace,
—cordial Hindu-
Muslim relations.

The Hindu
interregnum
—Ganesh and
Jalal-ud-din.

The Ilyas Shahi
Restoration.

Orissan attacks.

He reigned till 1459 A.D. but his rule was obviously disturbed by attacks from Orissa. Orissa at that time was ruled by the Gaṅga King, Kapilendra Deva who in an inscription dated 1447 A.D. styled himself 'Gaureswara', and claimed victory over the Muslim ruler of Gaur. Nāsir-ud-din Mahmud did not however have to engage in warfare to defend his western frontier because the Sharqis of Jaunpur were then engaged in a terrible struggle with the Lodis of Delhi. He was succeeded by his son Rukn-ud-din Bārbak. In spite of the claims made by Kapilendra Deva it appears that the frontier of Bengal in the south was Mandāran in the modern Hooghly district for Bārbak sent his General, Ismāil, to chastise the vassal Raja of Mandāran. Bārbak Shāh then sent his general with an expeditionary force against the Raja of Kāmrup. The result of this expedition was that the eastern boundary of the kingdom was fixed at the river Karatoyā. The districts of Bihar, east of Monghyr and north of the Ganges were probably included in Bengal. Rukn-ud-din Bārbak showed great interest in Bengali literature. He was probably the ruler of Gaur to whom Mālādhār Basu refers in his *Sri Krishna Vijaya*. Rukn-ud-din Bārbak is said to have brought a large number of Abyssinian slaves and employed them in the army and in the palace. He probably wanted to create a body of men solely dependent on the throne and not having connections with the local people. Rukn-ud-din Bārbak was succeeded in 1474 A.D. by his son Shāms-ud-din Yusuf who ruled up to 1481 A.D. Shāms-ud-din was succeeded by Jalāl-ud-din Fath. He was murdered by the chief eunuch of the palace, Sultān Shāhzāda, in 1487 A.D.

Barbak Shah.

His patronage of literary efforts.

"With Fath, the Ilyās Shāhis finally disappeared from history. The dynasty deserved well of Bengal for with remarkable consistency it produced a succession of able rulers. They were tolerant, enlightened administrators and great builders. In shaping the economic and intellectual life of Bengali people for nearly a century and a half the Ilyās Shāhi kings played the leading part. Tolerance was their greatest asset. To have ruled over a people of an alien faith for eight generations was in itself a great achievement; to be reinstated on the throne after twenty-five years' exclusion by a local dynasty was an even greater one. It was a singular proof of their popularity—a popularity which rested on their past services. The dynasty had almost become an integral part of Bengal's political and social life and its passing boded ill for the country."

Tolerant and popular rule of the Ilyas Shahis.

Ala-ud-din Husain Shah.

Between 1487 and 1493 A.D. Gaur was ruled by no less than four Sultāns. These Sultāns were Abyssinians in origin and their reign may be considered as a period of anarchy during which lawlessness increased, culminating in the overthrow of the last Sultān, Shāms-ud-din Muzaffar in 1493 A.D. by his *Wāzir*, Sayyid Husain. Shāms-ud-din Muzaffar was a tyrant and the *Wāzir* had the support of the people when he defeated and killed him.

Sayyid Husain was an Arab who with his father Sayyid Ashraf had come to Bengal. Early in life he entered the service of the

Sultān of Gaur and by his efficiency and merit rose to be the *Wāzir* of the kingdom. Immediately after the assumption of power Sayyid Husain brought the soldiery who had begun to plunder the capital, under his control by inflicting severe punishment on the lawless elements amongst them. The palace-guards who had become insolent since the murder of Fath Shāh were next disbanded and dispersed. His next act was to banish the Abyssinians from the kingdom and to recall the old Muslim and Hindu nobles to his court. Sayyid Husain, on ascending the throne assumed the title of Alā-ud-din Husain Shāh. He removed the seat of Government to Ekdālā now in the district of West Dinājpur.

In 1494 A.D. the Sharqi-Lodi war reached a climax and the Sultān of Jaunpur was defeated and driven out of his kingdom by Sikandar Lodi of Delhi. The Sultān of Jaunpur sought asylum in Bhāgalpur which was included in the kingdom of Gaur. Alā-ud-din Husain Shāh not only allowed him to reside there but also helped him with money. His proceedings were naturally viewed with disfavour by Sikandar Lodi who made preparations for invading Bengal. Alā-ud-din Husain Shāh did not wait for the invasion to take place but sent an army under his son Dāniyāl to intercept the invaders. The two armies actually did not come to battle and peace was negotiated, as a result of which the western frontier of Bengal was made secure from attacks by the Delhi Sultān.

Peace with Delhi.

Conquest of Kamtapur.

Alā-ud-din Husain Shāh next focussed his attention on the eastern frontier of his kingdom. Nilāambar, the third Khen king of Kāmāpur had built a military road from his capital to his frontier fortress of Ghorāghāṭ on the Karatoyā. In 1498 A.D. Alā-ud-din Husain Shāh sent an army against the kingdom of Kāmāpur. The Khen capital was besieged for a number of years and ultimately Nilāambar, the king, was captured. Alā-ud-din Husain Shāh's son Dāniyāl was appointed Viceroy of the conquered territories and colonies of Afghāns were left in Kāmrup for consolidating the conquest.

Raid of Orissa.

Conquest of Tipperah.

His expedition against Orissa was however not crowned with any permanent acquisition of territory. It was merely a raid, which was successful due to the absence of Pratāprudra, the king, from his capital but the Bengal forces had to retreat to the frontier fortress of Mandāran when Pratāprudra returned to his capital. He was more successful in his war with Tipperah. The first three expeditions against Tipperah met with disaster but undaunted by reverses, Husain Shāh led the fourth expedition to Tipperah and succeeded in conquering and annexing a part of Tipperah to Bengal.

Operations against Arakan.

The Tipperah war was followed by or occurred at the same time as the operations against Arakan. The Sultān's forces were led by the crown-prince Nusrat. The expedition was apparently crowned with success as Joao de Silveiro, the Portuguese emissary recorded that in 1517 A.D. Chittagong was held by the king of Bengal.

Nusrat Shah.

Alā-ud-din Husain Shāh died in 1519 A.D. and he was succeeded by his son Nusrat Shāh. Nusrat Shāh ruled under the title of

Anti-Lodi
policy.

Attempts at denying
Mughal supremacy.

Nāsir-ud-din Abul Muzaffar Nusrat Shāh. Shortly after Nusrat's accession, the Lodi Empire of Delhi began to disintegrate. The Lohāni Afghāns of Bihar set up a virtually independent state. Nusrat Shāh allied himself with the rebel Afghāns, the Lohānis and the Farmulis and appropriated some part of the Lodi Empire to himself, when the country from Jaunpur to Patna came under the control of the Lohānis and Farmulis. Nusrat Shāh took the part of a spectator when Bābur defeated Ibrāhim Lodi at Pānipat in 1526 A.D. When Bābur sent an envoy to Nusrat Shāh's court to ascertain his attitude Nusrat Shāh detained the envoy for about a year without giving any specific answer. The affairs of the Lohāni State in Bihar were at this time in some disorder as the king Jalāl Khān was a mere boy and Nusrat Shāh tried to rally the Afghān forces by setting up one Mahmud Lodi at the head of the confederacy of Afghāns. Mahmud Lodi was allowed to seize the Lohāni kingdom but this naturally alienated the Lohānis. Nusrat, however, organized an attack against Bābur's forces, himself keeping in the background but due to lack of concert on the part of the allies, the attempt met with failure. This happened in 1529 A.D. One of the allies of Nusrat Shāh was Sher Khān.

Nusrat Shāh had now to deal directly with Bābur who demanded a free passage across the Ghogrā. The Bengal forces had therefore to match their strength against Bābur's forces at Ghogrā ferry, but due to the superior tactics adopted by Bābur, had to fall back. A few days later the envoy who had been sent by Bābur to Nusrat Shāh returned and brought letters from the "*Laskhar-Wazir* Husain Khān and the Shahzada of Monghyr" who agreed on behalf of Nusrat Shāh to the terms which had been suggested by Bābur. After Bābur's death in 1530 A.D. the Afghān confederacy was again revived with Mahmud Lodi, Bāyazid and the unwilling Sher Khān. After the initial success of Jaunpur, the confederacy was defeated at Dādrāh, mainly due to the defection of Sher Khān who accepted the vassalage of the Mughals for Chunār. Humāyun prepared to march against Bengal, and realising the gravity of the situation Nusrat Shāh sought the friendship of Bahādur Shāh of Gujrat. Before the alliance with Gujrat could be finalized Nusrat Shāh died. He died at the hands of an assassin, one of his own slaves whom he had punished while paying a visit to his father's tomb at Gaur.

Nusrat was succeeded by his son Alā-ud-din Firuz. He was deposed and ultimately killed by his uncle who ascended the throne in 1533 A.D. under the title of Ghiyās-ud-din Mahmud. His accession was challenged by some of the nobles, one of whom was the Governor of Hājipur who allied himself with the Deputy Governor of Bihar. Mahmud Shāh despatched a force ostensibly against these chiefs but actually against Sher Khān who was not friendly to the Lohānis with whom Mahmud was in alliance. The general sent by Mahmud Shāh was defeated and killed by Sher Khān. Mahmud Shāh now openly allied himself with Jalāl Khān Lohāni and in 1534 A.D. he sent a powerful army under the command of Ibrāhim Khān against Sher Khān. Jalāl Khān

Sher Khan's
conquest of
Gaur.

Husain Shah's
greatness.

Lohāni accompanied the army. A battle was fought between this army and the army of Sher Khān at a place called Surajgarh which was bounded on three sides by the Gaṅgā, the Kiul and the Kharagpur hills. The Bengal army was defeated and routed, its general Ibrāhim Khān was slain and Jalāl Khān fled back to Ghiyās-ud-din Mahmud Shāh. Although the battle of Surajgarh did not result in any appreciable loss of territory to the Bengal Sultān, henceforth the Sultān of Bengal and Sher Khān remained enemies. Taking advantage of Humāyun's pre-occupation in Gujrat, Sher Khān approached Gaur in 1536 A.D. Initially Sher Khān wanted to storm the pass at Teliāgarhi, but failing to do so he made a detour through Jhārkhand and suddenly appeared before Gaur. Ghiyās-ud-din Mahmud bought Sher Khān off by paying him 13 lacs of gold. As a result of this, Ghiyās-ud-din Mahmud lost all territories west of Rājmahal which passed under the control of Sher Khān. Sher Khān was now determined to conquer Bengal, and the next year he even led an army against Bengal. Sher Khān's progress was, however, delayed by Humāyun's action in laying siege to the fort of Chunār, but Sher Khān managed to detain Humāyun at Chunār while he completed the conquest of Gaur. Ghiyās-ud-din Mahmud fled and threw himself at the mercy of Humāyun who agreed to come to his help. On his arrival before Gaur, Humāyun was, however, confronted with an empty city, Sher Khān having already departed with his forces and the accumulated riches of the city on the approach of Humāyun. Ghiyās-ud-din Mahmud died shortly after this.

With the death of Ghiyās-ud-din Mahmud, the dynasty founded by Alā-ud-din Husain Shāh came to an end.

"Alā-ud-din Husain Shāh was unquestionably the best, if not the greatest, of the medieval rulers of Bengal. With the true insight of a statesman, he realised that the Ilyās Shāhi dynasty, whom he supplanted, represented Bengal's hopes and aspirations and had almost become a national institution. With these aspirations he identified himself so wholeheartedly that his alien origin was forgotten and his Hindu subjects compared him to the incarnation of Krishna. By recalling the old aristocracy to power and position he showed that though a new dynasty had come to power, the old traditions were to continue. His courtesy and affable temper, his modesty and unflinching kindness won the hearts of his people who in gratitude called him the 'Crown of kings' (*Nripati Tilak*) and 'Adornment of the universe' (*Jagat Bhushana*). To a country groaning under tyranny, encroached upon all sides, and rent by racial and religious factiousness he gave peace, justice and political glory which she had not witnessed since the days of Ilyās. Posterity remembers him not only for the material advantages he conferred on the people, but for his liberalism and catholicity of mind of which it is hard to find a parallel in Muslim India until the age of the great Akbar. In appointing Hindus to high offices he was of course only continuing the traditional practice of his predecessors,

but to put them in charge of highly confidential work was certainly something more than mere diplomatic expediency. His wazir (Gopināth Basu, entitled Purandar Khān), his private physician (Mukunda Dās), his chief of the body-guards (Kesava Chhatrī), master of the mint (Anup) were all Hindus ; the *Rājmalā* adds the name of Gaur Mallik, his general in charge of the second Tipperah expedition. The names of the two brothers Rup and Sanātan, one of whom held the highly important office of the private secretary (*Dabir-i-Khās*) are well-known. His literary appreciation was not confined to Arabic and Persian only, but was extended in an increasing degree to the vernacular literature. Most of the works produced in his reign have however perished, but among the Bengali writers Mālādhār Basu, Bipradās, Bijay Gupta (Chhoṭa Vidyāpati), and Jasorāj Khān mention his name with gratitude. Indeed his enthusiasm for Bengali literature was infectious and his Governor of Chittagong, Parāgal, has been immortalised by his patronage of Parameswar, the earliest translator of the *Mahābhārat*. A devout Muslim himself, he was yet free from that rank intolerance which mars the annals of many Muslim kings of Northern India. Some of the Vaishnava writers ascribe to him a belief in the incarnation of Chaitanya, to whom he undoubtedly showed great consideration. During the latter's visit to Gaur, Husain issued orders to all his officers to show respect to that *Sannyāsi* and to provide facilities for his journey.

"Husain was unlucky in not having had an Abul Fazl to record his sayings and glorify his actions, and no contemporary chronicle has survived. But the few facts known of his reign are sufficient clues to the greatness of a ruler who may well be compared with Akbar. Of all the Muslim sovereigns Bengal had had, he captured most the imagination of the people and 'the name of Husain Shāh, the good, is still remembered from the frontiers of Orissa to the Brahmaputra.' (Blochmann, *JASB*, 1873, 291)."

After the desertion of Sher Khān Humāyun occupied Gaur with his forces and stayed there. Humāyun was so much struck with the natural beauty of Gaur that he conferred upon it the name of Jinnatābād (the heavenly city). Sher Khān, however, was not idle and he came out of his retreat and his flying columns of cavalry began to harass the supply line of Humāyun. At this time Humāyun's brother Mirzā Hindal rebelled in Āgrā and it became necessary for Humāyun to leave Bengal. He appointed Jehāngir Quli Beg as Governor of Bengal and left for Āgrā.

When Humāyun with his forces reached Chausā situated on the eastern bank of the Karmanāsā, 4 miles west of Buxār, Sher Khān came up to prevent the further progress of Humāyun. Sher Khān stationed his troops at a distance of about 2 miles from Humāyun's camp. He at first prayed that he be allowed to hold Bengal as the vassal of the emperor, on which condition he would be prepared to call off hostilities. Humāyun's own position at that time being far

Humayun's
occupation
of Gaur.

Sher Khan defeats
Humayun at Buxar.

Sher Khan's
reconquest of
Bengal.

The battle of Bilgram.

Sher Khan's
welfare adminis-
tration.

from secure, he had no other alternative but to accept Sher Khān's proposal. As soon as the treaty was signed, Sher Khān raised the pretext that he had to chastise a local aboriginal tribe, the Cheros, as they contemplated an attack on his camp. He accordingly set out with his army in the direction in which the Cheros lived, but after marching for two days in that direction, he turned about and during the night retraced his way back towards the camp of Humāyun. Sher Khān then attacked Humāyun's camp with his forces at early dawn and taking advantage of the element of surprise, easily defeated the imperial forces. Emperor Humāyun himself managed to fly away to safety after crossing the river Ganges with the help of an inflated leather-bag of a water carrier. After this victory over the imperial forces, Sher Khān marched back to Bengal. The imperial viceroy Jehāngir Quli stood his ground against the attack of Sher Khān but ultimately he was treacherously slain by Sher Khān at an interview to which he had been invited. The murder of Jehāngir Quli was followed by the capitulation of the Mughal garrison in other parts of Bengal. Chittagong, which had till then held out, was the next to fall to Sher Khān's arms. The reconquest of Bengal by Sher Khān took place in 1539 A.D.

In the following year i.e., in 1540 A.D., Sher Khān decisively defeated Humāyun at the battle of Bilgrām. The effect of this victory was far reaching as Sher Khān became the undisputed master of India as a result of this battle. After his accession to the throne of Delhi, Sher Khān, now Sher Shāh, had again to busy himself in the affairs of Bengal in 1541 A.D. Khizir Khān Turk, who had been left as the Governor of Bengal, had married the daughter of Ghiyās-ud-din Mahmud Shāh, the late Sultān of Bengal, and gave himself royal airs by taking his seat on an elevated throne. Sher Shāh on hearing about this came to Gaur and compelled Khizir Khān to submit. Khizir Khān was deprived of his office and imprisoned. Bengal had in the past always asserted her independence of Delhi and with a view to put a stop to the reappearance of such rebellious spirit, Sher Shāh divided Bengal into a number of *Jāgirs* and vested the general superintendence over the province in a Muslim doctor of Law, Qāzi Fazilat. Sher Shāh is chiefly remembered in Bengal for the Grand Trunk Road which he built and which connected Sonārgāon in East Bengal up to the bank of the Indus in the Punjab. Bengal's dependence on Delhi remained till the death of Islām Shāh Sur, son of Sher Shāh, in 1553 A.D. The Afghan empire broke up after Islām Shāh Sur's death. Muhammad Khān of the Sur clan, who was the then Viceroy of Bengal, declared his independence under the title Shāms-ud-din Muhammad Shāh Ghāzi. He occupied Jaunpur and advanced towards Āgrā but was slain in an encounter with the imperial general Himu in 1555 A.D. After this victory, Muhammad Shāh Ādil, the Emperor of Delhi, appointed Shāhbāz Khān as the Governor of Bengal, but Shāhbāz Khān was defeated by the son of Shāms-ud-din Muhammad Shāh Ghāzi who ascended the throne of Bengal under the title Ghiyās-ud-din Bāhādur Shāh in 1556 A.D. Humāyun, after recovering the Punjab and Delhi from the Afghan

Sultān Sikandār Sur, died on the 26th January 1556 A.D., to be succeeded by Akbar. On the 5th of November, the same year, Muhammad Shāh Ādil's general, Himu, was defeated at the battle of Pānipat and slain. Muhammad Shāh Ādil himself was defeated and slain by Sultān Ghiyās-ud-din Bāhādur Shāh of Bengal near Surajgarh. This happened in 1557 A.D. The victorious Bengal Sultān then proceeded west towards Jaunpur but was defeated by Mughal general Khān-i-Zamān. He managed to regain his independence till his death in 1560 A.D. He was succeeded by his brother Jalāl Shāh or Jalāl-ud-din Sur. In 1563 A.D. this Jalāl Shāh died. His son was murdered and ultimately the throne of Bengal passed into the hands of Tāj Khān Karrāni. This happened in 1564 A.D. Tāj Khān Karrāni was one of the chief officers of Sher Shāh and was himself a Pathān. Tāj Khān died within a year of gaining the throne of Bengal and was succeeded by his brother Sulaimān Karrāni. Sulaimān Karrāni reigned for 8 years till 1572 A.D. In order to have a free hand, he carefully avoided giving the least offence to Akbar and his nearest officer whose *Jāgir* was situated at the western boundary of Bengal. He acknowledged Akbar as his suzerain but he enhanced his power by raiding Orissa and Cooch Behar. One of his generals, Kālāpāhār, even raided the temple of Jagannāth at Puri and returned with huge treasures. Sulaimān Karrāni died in October, 1572, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Bāyazid, who was murdered by Sulaimān's nephew. The murderer himself was killed by the *Wāzir* of Sulaimān and other loyal nobles who raised Sulaimān's younger son Dāud to the throne. Dāud proved himself incapable of governing. By his acts he alienated the wisest and the most powerful of his nobles as a result of which the Afghān power in Bengal became divided. The Afghān general, Gujār Khān, set up the son of Bāyazid in Bihar and Dāud sent the *Wāzir*, Ludi Khān, with an army against Bāyazid's son. At this time Muni'm Khān had been ordered by Akbar to take possession of Bihar. At his approach, Ludi Khān and the rebellious general of the Afghāns who had set up the son of Bāyazid as the Sultān of Bihar made up their quarrel and bought off Muni'm Khān with presents. In the meantime Dāud Khān murdered Ludi Khān's son-in-law as a result of which Ludi Khān became his enemy. Dāud Khān then treacherously caused Ludi Khān to be murdered. Thus while his very existence was threatened by the armies of Akbar, Dāud Khān was engaged in the rather dangerous game of fighting with his own friends and allies. The command of the imperial forces at this time was taken over by Akbar himself and he arrived before Patna. Dāud was defeated and made to flee from Patna. The Afghāns retreated in disorder from the advancing imperial army and on the 25th of September, 1574, Akbar's general, Muni'm Khān, entered Tāndā, which was then the capital of Bengal.

The following account left by Ralph Fitch gives an idea of the condition of Bengal after Akbar's conquest:

"From Patanaw I went to Tanda which is in the land of Gauren. It hath in times past bene a kingdom, but now is

subdued by Zelabdim Echebar. Great trade and traffique is here of cotton, and of cloth of cotton. The people goe naked with a litle cloth bound about their waste. It standeth in the countrey of Bengala. Here be many Tigers, wild Bufs, and great store of wilde foule: they are very great idolaters. Tanda standeth from the riuer Ganges a league, because in times past the riuer flowing over the bankes, in time of raine did drowne the countrey and many villages, and so they do remaine. And the old way which the riuer Ganges was woont to run, remaineth drie, which is the occasion that the citie doeth stand so farre from the water. From Agra down the riuer Iemena, and downe the riuer Ganges, I was fime moneths comming to Bengala, but it may be sailed in much shorter time."

The entry of Muni'm Khān into Tāndā, which was then the capital of Bengal, did not result in the annexation of the province to the empire of Delhi. Dāud Khān himself fled to Orissa by way of Sāt-gāon (Saptagrām) in the district of Hooghly and his captains scattered over the northeast and south of Bengal. Muni'm Khān's first task was the subjugation of Dāud Khān. With this end in view, Burdwan was made the headquarters of the advancing imperial army. The imperial forces met Dāud Khān's army in the battle field at Tukāroi situated 9 miles to the south-west of Dānton in the district of Midnapore. In the beginning of the battle, the imperial forces suffered a serious setback, but ultimately Dāud Khān's army was defeated and he himself had to seek refuge in Cuttack. Muni'm Khān followed him up to Cuttack and Dāud Khān finally submitted to the authority of Akbar. The second defeat of Dāud Khān did not result in the establishment of any orderly system of Government for Bengal for the Mughal garrison stationed at various strategic points within the province were surrounded by bands of hostile Afghāns. Muni'm Khān had to return northwards to recover Ghorāghāṭ which had again been occupied by Kālāpāhār and other Afghān chiefs. Muni'm Khān at this stage made the mistake of re-occupying the deserted town of Gaur and living there. Very soon an epidemic broke out in the city in which his officers and men died by the hundreds. The toll of death was so heavy that in sheer terror the surviving Mughal officers not only vacated Gaur but also Bengal, retreating up to Bhāgalpur on their way to Delhi. This happened towards the end of 1575 A.D. Husain Quli Beg, whose title was Khān-i-Jahān, was then appointed viceroy of Bengal. The new viceroy's first task was to persuade the imperial forces to turn back towards Bengal which had in the meantime been re-occupied by Dāud Khān. Teliāgarhi, which was the gateway to Bengal, was easily recovered and Dāud fell back on Rājmaḥal. Khān-i-Jahān did not dare to engage him with his own force and Akbar had to send another force from Bihar to aid him. In July, 1576 A.D. a battle was fought near Rājmaḥal in which the Afghans were completely defeated. Dāud Khān was taken prisoner and slain and two other Afghān generals were also killed in the battle. Khān-i-Jahān then

The Karranis.

Raids against Orissa and Cooch Behar.

Akbar's conquest of Bengal.

Ralph Fitch's account.

Fight against Daud.

Daud slain.

End of organized resistance.

Akbar's administrative reforms.

Man Singh's re-establishment of imperial authority.

pushed on to Sātgaon in Hooghly and crushed the Afghān forces roving about there. Ultimately Dāud's mother surrendered to Khān-i-Jahān and organized Afghān resistance came to an end. Khān-i-Jahān died in December, 1578 A.D. The next viceroy was Muzaffar Khān Turbati. At this time Akbar decided to impose some kind of uniform administration throughout the conquered territories. Along with the new viceroy he, therefore, sent from Delhi officers like the *Diwān*, the *Bakhsi*, the *Mir 'Adl*, the *Sadar*, the *Kotwāl*, the *Mir Bahar* and the *Waqā'navis*. The local imperial commanders had up till that time been engaged in amassing riches by plunder and extortion from the people and the attempt of these new imperial officers to call them to account provoked a mutiny of the local commanders. They rose in revolt and after defeating the Mughal viceroy, Muzāffar Khān, and putting him to death (in 1580 A.D.) at Tāndā, where he had taken refuge, they declared Akbar's brother Mirzā Hakim, who was the ruler of Kābul, to be the emperor of Hindustan and declared their allegiance to him. Bengal and with it Bihar were thus cut off from the empire of Akbar. This rebellion of the Bengal officers emboldened the local Afghān chieftains to raise their heads again. Bengal could not be properly reconquered again before 1594 A.D. when Mān Singh was appointed the viceroy. Mān Singh on his arrival in Bengal sent detachments in various directions to subdue the Afghān chiefs. He shifted the capital of Bengal from Tāndā to a new city founded by him which he called Ākbarnagar. This Ākbarnagar, situated in the Purneā district of Bihar, later on came to be known as Rājmahal. Mān Singh's time was spent in extending the imperial authority over East Bengal where Isā Khān and other local chieftains, Muslims as also Hindus, ruled in virtual independence. Isā Khān entered into an alliance with Raghudev, who was a cousin of the Raja of Cooch Behar, to attack Cooch Behar. The Raja of Cooch Behar sought Mān Singh's help and Mān Singh hastened to his aid. Isā Khān and his ally Raghudev fled away on the approach of Mān Singh, but Mān Singh lost two of his sons in this campaign, one in the battle field and another from disease. Mān Singh then obtained permission of Akbar to live in Ājmer and governed Bengal by deputy. His son, Jagat Singh was first appointed as his deputy, but Jagat Singh never reached Bengal, having died of heavy drinking near Āgrā. Then Jagat Singh's son, Mahā Singh, was sent to deputise for his grandfather. Taking advantage of the absence of Mān Singh, the Afghāns rose in revolt and recovered north Orissa. The rebels in Bengal even captured the Inspector-General of the provincial army. Mān Singh had to return to Bengal and effect the rescue of the Inspector-General of the provincial army after defeating the rebels. He then led his forces to East Bengal to subdue that portion of the province, but he was compelled to send back his grandson, Mahā Singh, towards Māldā on hearing that one Jalāl Khān of Bāz-Ghogrā had been looting Māldā and Ākrā. The rebel forces were stationed behind the Kālindri river but Mahā Singh forded the river on horseback with his forces and put the rebels to

Decline of the city of Gaur

flight. Mān Singh himself continued his campaign in East Bengal and reduced the local zemindars to obedience. He was recalled by Akbar at the beginning of 1605 A.D. and remained at Āgrā till the Emperor Akbar's death. Jehāngir on his accession to the throne appointed Mān Singh again as the viceroy of Bengal. This vicereignty was soon terminated and he was replaced by the emperor's foster brother, Qutb-ud-din Khān Kokā.

The city of Gaur never properly recovered from the devastation wrought by Sher Shāh. It experienced a short renewal of life when Humāyun came to occupy it, but the change in the course of the Ganges really sealed its fate. Muni'm Khān's re-occupation of Gaur did nothing to restore its fallen fortunes as a severe epidemic broke out and caused the death of innumerable persons leading to the final evacuation of the city. Both under the Hindus and Muslims Gaur enjoyed the status of a metropolitan city. At one time it was known as Lakhnauti, apparently after Lakshman Sena of the Sena dynasty. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries it covered an area of approximately 20 square miles and was fortified with a rampart and a moat 150 feet wide. It was an important centre of trade and used to be visited by Arabs, Abyssinians, Afghans, Portuguese and Chinese.

Qutb-ud-din Khān Kokā was killed in a personal encounter with Sher Afghān at Burdwan in May, 1607 A.D. Sher Afghān was the *fauzdār* of Burdwan and husband of Mehr-un-nissā who subsequently became the consort of Jehāngir under the title of Nur Jahān. The next viceroy Jehāngir Quli Khān also died shortly after his arrival in Bengal. Islām Khān, the grandson of Shaikh Salim Chisti, the famous Muslim divine, was then appointed the Governor of Bengal in 1608 A.D. During his tenure of office he succeeded in reducing the local chieftains, Muslims as well as Hindus, to obedience. Among the local chieftains defeated by Islām Khān were Musā Khān of Sonārgāon and Pratāpāditya of Jessore. The district of Māldā came into prominence once during Islām Khān's vicereignty, and that was approximately in 1611 A.D. when 'Alī Akbar, a petty *Mansabdār* of Māldā suddenly rose in revolt. He was, however, quickly suppressed. Islām Khān had to spend most of his tenure of office in East Bengal campaigning against the rebellious local chieftains and for convenience of administration he shifted the capital of Bengal from Ākbarnagar or Rājmahal to Dacca. This was in 1612 A.D. Dacca at that time was known as Jehāngirnagar.

References to the district of Māldā are not available during the administrations of the succeeding viceroys up to prince Shujā who was appointed the viceroy of Bengal in 1639 A.D. He generally resided at Rājmahal. When Shāh Jahān fell ill in 1657 A.D., he nominated his eldest son Dārā as his successor but this nomination was challenged by his other sons Shujā, Murād and Aurangzeb. Shujā crowned himself as emperor at Rājmahal in November, 1657 A.D. and then started for Delhi with his army and flotilla of war boats. He had to encounter near Benaras a force sent by Dārā Shukoh under his son Sulaimān. In this

The fratricidal war over the Delhi empire.

encounter Shujā was defeated and compelled to beat a hasty retreat. He was pursued by Sulaimān up to Surajgarh where Sulaimān learnt of Aurangzeb's victory at Dharmāt. Sulaimān then made peace with Shujā and returned to Āgrā to join his father. In 1658 A.D. Shāh Shujā made another attempt to capture the throne of Delhi but he was stopped by Aurangzeb's general, Mir Jumlā, a little to the west of Allāhābād and completely defeated. Shujā fled eastwards pursued by a force sent by Aurangzeb nominally under his son, Prince Muhammad Sultān, but actually under Mir Jumlā. When Mir Jumlā reached the neighbourhood of Rājmahal, Shujā vacated it and shifted his headquarters to Tāndā which was four miles west of Gaur. Mir Jumlā occupied Rājmahal, but he could not come to grips with Shāh Shujā until another detachment under Dāud Khān, the Governor of Bihar, threatened Shujā from the Māldā side. Mir Jumlā in fact had to retreat towards Murshidābād before Shujā's army. Dāud Khān started from Patna and after defeating Shujā's admiral, Khawājā Mishki, crossed the Kosi and the Kālindri and marched towards Māldā. Shujā retreated towards Suti in Murshidābād district and was pursued by Mir Jumlā. There was a skirmish between the two forces after which Shujā retreated to the eastern bank of the Ganges. Mir Jumlā then re-occupied Rājmahal. Mir Jumlā then tried to surround Shujā's forces from the Māldā side. For this purpose Mir Jumlā crossed over to Samdah. Keeping Shujā occupied on the Samdah front, Mir Jumlā took the majority of his forces along a wide detour to the more vulnerable eastern bank of the Mahānandā and reached Māldā on the 2nd March 1660 A.D. He then forded that river at an ill-guarded point. This left Shujā no other alternative but to flee away to Tāndā and thence to Dacca. Shujā ultimately had to quit Bengal and retreat into Ārākān. Aurangzeb then appointed Mir Jumlā as Governor of Bengal with a Mansab of 7,000. Mir Jumlā shifted the capital from Rājmahal to Dacca in order to be better able to carry on the war against the kingdoms of Cooch Behar and Assam. He conquered both Cooch Behar and Assam but died of disease contracted during the Assam campaign in 1663 A.D.

Shāistā Khān was appointed Governor in 1664 A.D. His first viceroyalty came to an end in 1678 A.D. when he was replaced by Prince Muhammad A'zam Shāh, the son of Aurangzeb. After about one year Shāistā Khān was again appointed Subahdar of Bengal. He acted as Subahdar of Bengal till 1688 A.D. when he was succeeded by Khān-i-Jahān Bāhādur. It was during the second term of Shāistā Khān's viceroyalty, to be precise in 1680 A.D., that the English established a centre of business at Māldā in a hired house of brick. It appears from the diary of Streynsham Master, who was in charge of the East India Company's factory at Cossimbazar in Murshidābād district, that one Richard Edwards was sent in October, 1676 to Māldā for ascertaining the prospects of trade at that place. Edwards sent a report in December, 1676 A.D. about the market prices of goods

English factory
at Malda.

generally available at Māldā and the persons who dealt in those commodities and the means of transport adopted for movement of the commodities. Along with the report he also sent samples of those commodities together with the prices paid for each of such commodities. His report was obviously considered to be favourable by the authorities of the East India Company, because the investigations of Edwards were followed by the establishment of a factory at Māldā in 1680 A.D. It appears from the diary kept by the factors at Māldā that Māldā during the viceroyalty of Shāistā Khān had been farmed out to one Haranārāyan. We also learn that Māldā formed a part of the personal *jāgir* of Shāistā Khān.

Khān-i-Jahān Bahādur was recalled in 1689 A.D. because of the many high-handed actions committed by him and Ibrāhīm Khān was appointed in his place. Ibrāhīm Khān was already an old man when he was appointed as the Subahdar of Bengal and he failed miserably to put down the rebellion of Shovā Singh, a *zamindār* of Chetoābardā in the Ghāṭāl sub-division of the Midnapore district. Shovā Singh began plundering his neighbouring *zamindārs* in the middle of 1695 A.D. In 1696 A.D. he followed up his initial successes by defeating Rājā Krishna Rām of Burdwan. Rājā Krishna Rām was killed in battle and his wife and daughter became Shovā Singh's prisoners. Shovā Singh was joined by Rahim Khān, the leader of the Orissa Afghans, and the allies pushed eastwards as far as the town of Hooghly. Shovā Singh was killed by the daughter of Rājā Krishna Rām when he attempted to violate her and the command of the rebel army passed into the hands of Rahim Khān. Rahim Khān attacked Nadiā and proceeded to the town of Murshidābād, which he plundered. He even occupied Rājmahal and Māldā. The Emperor dismissed Ibrāhīm Khān for his ineptitude and appointed his own grandson, 'Āzim-ud-din as viceroy of Bengal. Pending the arrival of prince 'Āzim-ud-din in Bengal, Zabardāst Khān, the son of Ibrāhīm Khān, was ordered to subdue the rebels. Zabardāst Khān succeeded in his task and drove out the rebels from Rājmahal, Māldā, Murshidābād and Burdwan back into the jungles of the Ghāṭāl sub-division of Midnapore district. Prince 'Āzim-ud-din now arrived and treated Zabardāst Khān so coldly that he resigned his command and left Bengal with his father, Ibrāhīm Khān. The manner in which the final defeat of the rebels was brought about does not concern the district of Māldā.

Nothing of importance seems to have occurred in the district of Māldā after the occupation of the town of Māldā by the rebel forces under Rahim Khān towards the end of the seventeenth century till the commencement of the British administration in 1765 A.D. Prince 'Āzim-ud-din, later known as 'Āzim-ush-shān, took charge as Subahdar in 1697 A.D. and continued in that capacity till 1712 A.D. There was an interregnum of about five years after 'Āzim-ush-shān during which a number of persons were appointed as subahdars in succession. In 1717 A.D. Murshid Quli Khān was appointed as Subahdar in Bengal in addition to his duties as *Diwān*. Murshid Quli Khān had been acting as *Diwān* of Bengal

since 1700 A.D. with occasional breaks. Murshid Quli Khān was succeeded in 1727 A.D. by his son-in-law Shujā-ud-din or Shujā-ud-daulāh Āsād Jung. Shujā-ud-din died in March, 1739 A.D. and his son Sarfarāz ascended the throne of Bengal. Sarfarāz was ousted and killed by Ālivardi Khān, an officer of the late Shujā-ud-din, who was then acting as Deputy Governor of Bihar. This took place in 1740 A.D. Ālivardi Khān was succeeded by his grandson Sirāj-ud-daulāh in April, 1756 A.D. After the battle of Plassey on the 23rd June 1757, the supreme power in Bengal passed into the hands of the British, but the district of Māldā came under their direct administration only in 1765 A.D. when the East India Company obtained the *Diwāni* of Bengal from the Emperor of Delhi.

Gaur.

Under the Mughals Gaur and with it the tract of the country which now constitutes the district of Māldā enjoyed a prominent position till 1575 A.D. when Gaur had to be abandoned by the Mughal garrison on account of pestilence. It formed the major portion of the *sarkār* of Jinnatābād and perhaps a part of the *sarkār* of Udambar during the reign of Akbar, but no information is available about the details of the administration of the district at this time. There is, however, a reference in the *Āin-i-Ākbari* to the appointment of one Quāzi Yakūb as the district *quāzi* at Gaur. Tāndā, which was situated in the undivided district of Māldā, was a mint town during Akbar's reign for the minting of silver and copper coins. Although Rājmahal, which is now in the Purnea district, became the capital of the *Subāh* of Bengal after Mān Singh came as the Mughal viceroy in Bengal, it is reasonable to assume that the district of Māldā occupied an important position from the administrative point of view as is evidenced by the fact that it formed the personal *jāgir* of Shāistā Khān. The shifting of the capital to Dacca in 1612 A.D. naturally left Māldā in comparative obscurity. When Manrique visited Gaur during the viceroyalty of Prince Shujā in about 1640 A.D. he found it in a state of ruin. He narrated the story of the discovery of some treasure consisting of gold coins and precious gems amidst the ruins of Gaur during Shujā's viceroyalty and how that discovery led Shujā to order the excavation of the ruins to search for hidden treasures. Manrique has made the interesting observation that most of the Mughal soldiers used bows and arrows and were not at all familiar with the use of firearms like pistols and muskets.

The Mughals no doubt maintained peace in Bengal and broke the isolation in which Bengal had been living from the rest of India, but it is debatable how far that peace and that contact with the rest of India resulted in peace and prosperity for the people of the province. The Mughals followed a systematic policy of exterminating the semi-independent Bengali Hindu and Muslim chieftains and this policy was in the fullest operation during the viceroyalty of Islām Khān Chisti. Every Bengali who wanted to live with some dignity and prestige had to come up against the might of the administration which was run almost exclusively, till the time of Murshid Quli Khān, with the help of Muslims and Hindus of

western India and even Persians. Every Mughal viceroy and his subordinate officers only wanted to get as rich as possible within the shortest time and in the process squeezed the people dry. The Bengali language, which had received patronage from the Pāthān sultāns, lost official patronage due to the policy initiated by Todar Mal of keeping all revenue records in Persian. Persons who had anything to do with land had therefore perforce to learn Persian. The only example of the Bengali literature of the period that we have are the *Maṅgal Kāvya*s, some of which were composed undoubtedly during the reign of the Pāthān sultāns. The best known of such *Maṅgal Kāvya*s, composed by Kavikaṅkan Mukundarām, was written at the time when Mān Singh became the Viceroy of Bengal, that is, just at the time when the Mughal Power was being established in Bengal.

One of the beneficial aspects of the Mughal rule was that it freed the people of Bengal of the depredation committed by the Magh and Portuguese pirates. This period also witnessed the arrival of the English and the French in Bengal, resulting in an unprecedented increase in the foreign trade. The foreign merchants paid for the merchandise in silver or gold, but most of the gold went into the pockets of the viceroy and his officers. From the time of Murshid Quli Khān, a further burden was cast on Bengal in that the wars of Aurangzeb in the Deccan had to be financed out of the revenues of Bengal. Murshid Quli Khān's administrative reforms were primarily directed towards increasing the revenue. The methods adopted by him for realising the revenue would be deemed horrible by any human standard.

(c) MODERN PERIOD

The British administrative system in Bengal was formed out of the Mughal administrative system, which in its turn owed much to the Hindu ideas on state craft.

The British connection with the district of Māldā began with the establishment of a factory there in 1680 A.D. This factory was subordinate to the main establishment at Hooghly. The Dutch had opened a factory at Māldā before the British. The establishment of the British factory at Māldā was preceded in 1676 A.D. by the visit of one Richard Edwards, a servant of the East India Company. The Worshipful Matthias Vincent, the Chief for the Hon'ble East India Company's affairs of the Bay of Bengal, arrived at Māldā in April, 1680 A.D., accompanied by Edward Littleton, Chief of Cossimbazar, Fytche Nedham, designated chief of the factory, proposed to be opened at Māldā, and others. In order to introduce Mr. Nedham to the local officers, Mr. Littleton took Mr. Nedham with him on his visit to the *Faujdar* and the *Krori* of Māldā. The *Krori* was the local revenue official while the *Faujdar* was the local administrative head. This visit of the Chief of the Hon'ble East India Company's affairs of the Bay of Bengal to Māldā led to the establishment of a factory there. The trade

was carried on in cloths of various qualities called Chāndenyēs, Orungshyēs or Soozies, Elāches, Chārconnaēs, Seersuccers, Nehāl-lewārs, Mundeells, Mulmulls and Tānzib.* In December, 1680 A.D. 15 *bighās* of land were purchased on the other side of the river, at a distance of about two miles from the old Māldā town on behalf of the East India Company from the local *zamindār* Rājārāi Chaudhuri for Rs. 300. The plot of land was situated by the river in the village called Mucdumpore. It was here that a new factory was built, retaining the factory at the hired house at old Māldā town. The Chief of the factory, Mr. Nedham, with his staff shifted to the new factory premises sometime in August, 1681 A.D. and attempted to carry on the business from the two factories, but he met with opposition from the *Krori* of Māldā whose jurisdiction extended up to the Māldā side of the river bank. The dispute between the Māldā *Krori* and the chief of the English factory used to be compromised from time to time during which some business was carried on. This new site of the factory was called Englezāvād by the British and came to be known later as Englishbazar.

The Company's trade at Māldā received a setback along with their trade at other places in 1680 A.D. The East India Company had initially received a firman from the emperor Shāh Jahān permitting them to trade in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, and the contents of the firman had been elucidated by a *nishān* granted by Shāh Shujā when he was the viceroy of Bengal. According to this firman and the *nishān*, the English were given the right to trade in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, free of all custom duties, on payment of a lump sum of Rs. 3,000 per year. They were also required to pay 3½ per cent duty on all specie brought by them to this country and converted into coins at the Government mint at Rājmahal. After Aurangzeb ascended the throne of Delhi, the privileges enjoyed by the East India Company were challenged by the Provincial Viceroy Shāistā Khān and his officers. With a view to straighten out the difficulties in the way of their trade, the Company sent Mr. William Hedges (later Sir William Hedges), one of the directors, as its representative to the court of Shāistā Khān. Mr. Hedges' attempts to secure for his Company the rights which it had so long been enjoying bore no fruit largely because of the obstructive attitude taken by Shāistā Khān and his officers.

The only thing that can be said in support of Shāistā Khān and his officers is that at about this time the English merchants in their individual capacities had been carrying on trade and demanding the same privileges as their Company had been enjoying. In

* The meanings of the names of the cloths are given below:

Chāndenyēs	white drugget piece-goods.
Orungshyēs	silk cloth piece-goods.
Elāches	silk cloths with a wavy pattern running lengthwise.
Chārconnaēs	Chequered muslin piece-goods.
Seersuccers	turbans.
Nehāl-lewārs	bed-covers.
Mundeells	towels (loin cloths).
Mulmulls	muslins of various qualities.
Tānzibs	fine muslin piece-goods.

addition, a number of merchants, who have been referred to as interlopers in contemporary chronicles, made their appearance in Bengal and offered better terms to the Viceroy. It should be stated here that Mr. Hedges was opposed to the entry of the interlopers as also to the carrying on of free trade by the servants of the East India Company. In fact, he was of the opinion that no servant of the Company should be allowed to trade. Mr. Hedges wanted to send a representation through Shāistā Khān to the Emperor Aurangzeb requesting for a confirmation of the privileges already being enjoyed by the Company, but he was apparently unsuccessful. He left Shāistā Khān's court a disappointed man, and in his letters to the East India Company recommended that the English should demonstrate their supremacy in naval power by declaring war against the Mughal government and then secure for themselves the right to trade in the Bay of Bengal on reasonable terms.

At this time, the principal factory of the English was situated at Hooghly and it was here that they prepared for the war with the Mughal government. The immediate cause of the commencement of hostilities was provided by an incident at Hooghly in which three English soldiers of the Hooghly factory got involved in a brawl in the bazar. The officer in command of the soldiers went to their rescue. He was opposed by the Mughal *faujdar* who opened fire on the English ships from his artillery, the English retaliated, and the *faujdar* fled away in disguise. Shāistā Khān on hearing of this incident, sent reinforcements in the face of which the English left Hooghly with all their property and sailed down the river and halted at Sutānuṭi (centre of the coastline of modern Calcutta).

The factory of Māldā naturally suffered from this outbreak of hostilities and the factory building was probably damaged though not to the extent claimed by the English. It appears that the English assessed the damage caused to the Māldā factory at Rs. 1,50,000 but this claim was summarily rejected by Shāistā Khān. The hostilities continued till 1689 when Ibrāhim Khān, the then Subahdar, invited the English at Madras to send one of their representatives for negotiation. Peace was finally concluded in 1690 when Job Charnock returned to Sutānuṭi. There are reasons for believing that the trading activities of the Māldā factory were also revived at this time. Till the battle of Plassey the trade of the English at the Māldā factory was subjected occasionally to oppression by the officers of the Nawāb who attempted to extort more than the just dues from the Company's *Gomostās* or agents. After the battle of Plassey, however, the situation changed, and the oppressed became the oppressors. The battle of Plassey only opened the path for the Company's agents or *Gomostās* at the Māldā factory to satisfy their greed, but the administration of the area, which was mainly included in the district of Dinājpur, remained under the Nawāb of Murshidābād. In 1765, the East India Company obtained from the Emperor of Delhi the right to collect the revenues of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa in lieu of an annual payment of twenty-six lakhs of rupees and the assignment

to the Emperor of a certain tract of country surrounding and including the town of Allāhābād. In the same year, the Company entered into a treaty with Najm-ud-daulah, the son of Mir Jāfar, by which Najm-ud-daulah agreed to the appointment of the nominee of the Company as his deputy in the administration of justice. Muhammad Rezā Khān was also appointed as *Nāib-Diwān* by the Company to represent its interests. A Resident was appointed at Murshidābād to supervise the collection of revenue. This arrangement did not lay the East India Company under any obligation to maintain law and order in the country but enabled them to collect the surplus revenue, after paying the annual royalty to the Emperor of Delhi and Rs. 53,86,131 to the Nawāb of Bengal for the support of the Nizāmat, without, however, being called upon to maintain a hierarchy of revenue officials. This dual system of government in theory enabled the East India Company to take shelter behind the Nawāb in relation to other European nations in Bengal and also satisfied the objections of the ministers of the British Crown who were not willing at that time for the Crown to assume sovereignty over the conquered territory. In July, 1768, the East India Company seems to have made an experiment to collect the revenue from the district of Dinājpur directly through their own agents. One Broja Mohan Mitra was appointed *Aumil* or Collector of Revenue on a fixed salary in sharp contrast to the existing practice of farming out revenues of other districts among the *Aumils*. He apparently could not give satisfaction to his employers. When Verelst became the Governor of the Supreme Council at Calcutta, a new system was introduced. Under this system English Supervisors or supervisors were appointed to supervise the collection of revenue and to acquaint themselves with the conditions of the districts under their charge on all aspects. The move was ostensibly made to ensure that the ryots were not unduly oppressed by heavy exactions nor the assessment lowered artificially to the detriment of the Company's interest. The Supervisors had to work under the supervision of the Resident at Murshidābād. In 1770, a Comptrolling Council of Revenue was established at Murshidābād and another at Patna for supervising the collection of revenues of Bengal and Bihar respectively. In 1771, the East India Company declared its intention to stand forth as the *Diwān* and to collect the revenue through its own agency. The Court of Directors was probably influenced in taking this decision by the great famine of 1770 which resulted in an enormous loss of lives almost throughout the whole of Bengal. Muhammad Rezā Khān was removed from his office of *Nāib-Diwān* by a proclamation issued on May 11, 1772, in Calcutta. In the same proclamation, the charge of the office of *Diwān* was vested on the Chief and the Comptrolling Council of Revenue at Murshidābād. In 1772, Warren Hastings arrived in Bengal as Governor and President of the Council at Fort William. In order to carry out the mandate of the Court of Directors, he decided to constitute a Committee of Circuit with himself as the President and four members of the Council to visit the principal districts and to form

a settlement for five years. The Supervisors were to be styled as Collectors and were to be assisted in the discharge of their duties by Indian *Diwāns*. These *Diwāns* were to act as checks on the Collectors. The Committee of Circuit visited Dinājpur in January, 1773. It seems that the Committee of Circuit took a peculiar decision in regard to certain areas surrounding the town of Māldā. The Commercial Resident of the Māldā Factory was entrusted with the duty of collecting the revenue from the surrounding areas and was expected to meet the Company's investments at Māldā from the revenue so collected. In regard to the administration of justice, the Collector was to preside over the *Mofussil Diwāni Adālat* which had jurisdiction over all disputes concerning property, real or personal, all cases of inheritance, marriage and caste, all claims of debt, disputed accounts, contracts etc. Claims to *zamindāris* were, however, reserved for decision by the President and the Council. Criminal justice was to be administered by the *Faujdāri Adālat*, presided over by a *Quāzi*, who was probably designated as the *Dārogā* of the *Adālat*. The system of jurisprudence was Muhammadan and the Collector, as the local agent of the Company, was expected to see that justice was done. The decisions of the *Mofussil Diwāni Adālat*s were subject to appeal and revision before the *Diwāni Sadar Adālat* located at Calcutta while those of the *Faujdāri Adālat*s were similarly subject to appeal and revision before the *Nizāmat Adālat* at Calcutta. This *Adālat* was to be presided over by an officer of the Nawāb, designated as *Dārogā* of the *Adālat*. Sentences of death required confirmation by the Nawāb.

The Comptrolling Council was replaced by the Board of Revenue with the Governor as the President and all the members of his Council as members in 1772. In 1773, the Court of Directors ordered that the English Collectors should be withdrawn. The reasons for this decision were given by the Court of Directors in the following words:

“As the sending our junior servants into the provinces as Supervisors has not been attended with the wished for success, but has enabled them to monopolize the whole trade of the country, we, therefore, direct that they may be withdrawn as soon as possible, and we leave it to you to substitute some other plan of making yourselves acquainted with the exact value of every district, and for giving relief to the inhabitants, till we shall be able to send your compleat regulations for conducting this hand of our affairs which we have now under consideration.”

The Governor and the Council, therefore, decided that each district was to be in charge of either a *Diwān* or an *Aumil* except such as had been let entire to the *zamindārs* or responsible farmers, who, in such cases were invested with that authority. The Committee of Revenue was to be formed at the Presidency consisting of two members of the Board and three senior servants below the Council, to meet daily, form resolutions and orders for current business of the districts and to report on such extraordinary

occurrences, claims and proposals, as might require the orders of the superior Council, which were to be laid before the Council in their Revenue Department. The *Diwān* was to correspond with the President of the Committee and the *Rāy Rāyān*. If it was felt necessary to ascertain facts by local investigations, occasional Commissioners or Inspectors were to be deputed for such purposes. The immediate superintendence over the revenue collection in the districts, however, was to be vested in five Provincial Councils, the headquarters of one of which was to be located at Dinājpur. This Provincial Council at Dinājpur had authority over the district of Dinājpur and several other districts. As Māldā at that time was part of the district of Dinājpur, the revenue administration was naturally carried on under the superintendence of the Provincial Council of Dinājpur. Each Provincial Council was required to appoint a *Nāib* for a district remote from its (Council's) headquarters. This *Nāib* was to hold the court of *Diwāni Adālat*. Appeals from the decisions of the *Nāib* lay with the Provincial Council and from the decisions of that court to the Sadar *Diwāni Adālat*. In regard to administration of criminal justice, the Sadar *Nizāmat Adālat* was removed to Murshidābād and was placed in charge of Muhammad Rezā Khān in his new capacity of *Nāib-Subāh*. This took place in 1775 A.D. It may be recalled that Muhammad Rezā Khān's conduct during the famine of 1770 had formed the subject of an enquiry by the Government, as a result of which he was acquitted.

From 1st August 1774 A.D., the designation of the chief representative of the E.I. Company in Bengal was changed to Governor General. He was to be assisted in the discharge of his duties by a council of 4 members.

In 1780 the system of administration of civil justice was revised according to which *Moffussil Diwāni Adālat*s were established at a number of places in Bengal and Bihar. Each of these *Adālat*s was to be presided over by a covenanted servant of the East India Company. The district of Māldā was included in the jurisdiction of the Sadar *Diwāni Adālat* of Tājpur which also exercised jurisdiction over the district of Dinājpur, part of the district of Purnea and part of the district of Rājshāhi east of the Ganges.

In 1781 the Provincial Councils of Revenue were abolished. The superintendence over revenue collection was centralized with the Committee of Revenue located at Calcutta. In 1786 this Committee of Revenue gave place to the Board of Revenue.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, North Bengal, including the district of Māldā, suffered from the plundering raids of the Sanyasis and the Fakirs. The origin of the sanyasis can be traced to some of the Dashnāmi sects like Puri, Giri and Paravata of Hindus founded by the great Saṅkarāchārya. In course of time, those amongst the Dashnāmi sects, mostly Giris, who had been mendicants, took up the profession of arms in self-defence against the attacks from Muslims. With the passage of time these sections of the mendicants forgot their origins and converted themselves into full-fledged soldiers of fortune. Almost each of these Dashnāmi

sects had a section which were termed Nāgās from the fact that members of those sections did not wear any clothings. It became the practice for them, particularly in the 18th century, to hire themselves out by whole tribes to local chieftains for being used in the warfare that those chieftains might have with their neighbours. Apart from acting as irregular armies under local chieftains, large bodies of these Sanyasis became free-booters, and with the ostensible object of moving from one place of pilgrimage to another, used to move in large numbers from one part of the country to another, pillaging the helpless villagers in their way. Their activities were thus described by Warren Hastings in 1773:

“He cannot learn that they have any fixed abode, but that they chiefly frequent the countries lying at the foot of the chain of mountains which separate Hindustan from Tibbet, wandering continually from the Gogra river in the Domain of the Vizier (Oudh) to the Burrampooter and from this line occasionally penetrating into Euracpoor [Gorakhpur?], Butsea [Bettiah], Tirroot, Purnea, and Rungpur, he finds that except one sect among them called Hunjooghees who never mix with the hordes which infest their more civilized neighbours, they neither marry nor have families, but recruit their members by the stoutest of the children which they steal from the countries through which they pass, that some among them carry on trade in Diamonds, Coral and other articles of great price and small compass and often travel with great wealth—some subsist by gratuitous alms and the others the far greater by plunder: that the various sects of them travel at fixed periods on religious pilgrimages to the Burrumpooter, Byjenath [Baidyanath] and Ganga Saugore, besides those who in all dry months of the year pass through the provinces on their way to Juggernath (Puri); that individuals of them are at all times scattered about the villages and capital towns of the provinces and where the bigotry of the inhabitants afford them an access to their homes and every right of hospitality, which they are suspected of abusing in the most treacherous manner by reuniting with the Corps whenever they enter the country and giving information of the most substantial inhabitants and of the places where their wealth is deposited; that they are continually seen on the roads armed with swords, lances, matchlocks and generally loaded with heavy bundles. The castes of Ramanondo and Goorea are excepted as they are not vagabonds nor plunderers but have fixed place of abode. . . .”

These sanyasis had spies stationed over various parts of the country to give them intelligence as to the places where large booty could be expected without much trouble. It is, however, necessary to point out that these nomadic sanyasis were distinct and separate from the sanyasis of the same order who dwelt in the *maths*. Some of these resident sanyasis acquired valuable properties in Bengal, principally by money-lending. Some of the sanyasis of the Giri sect acquired landed properties in the district of Māldā.

The plundering sanyasis then used to pass through the districts

of Jalpāiguri, Dinājpur and Māldā on their way to the pilgrimage at Mahāsthāngarh and onwards to the bank of the Brahmaputra. No specific account is available regarding their depredations in the district of Māldā, but in North Bengal districts in general their depredations assumed such proportions that the Government had to organize special expeditions to put them down.

The fakirs, who are also mentioned in contemporary chronicles, sometimes along with the sanyasis, or at a period of time later than that in which the sanyasis carried on their depredations, were the plundering holy men of Islam. They were divided into several classes among which mention may be made of the Madaris and *Burhānas*. These fakirs also moved in bands, fully armed, from one place of pilgrimage to another, sometimes plundering whole villages. The mosques at Pānduā and Akkilpur in the district of Māldā were among their places of pilgrimage. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the most notorious band of fakirs were led by one Majnu Shāh. The depredations of the fakirs were also put down by the Government. Majnu Shāh died in 1787 at Mākhanpur in the district of Kanpur.

Details of the East India Company's commercial activities at Māldā are lacking until 1780 in which year Charles Grant was appointed as the Commercial Resident at Māldā. Prior to his appointment as Commercial Resident at Māldā, Charles Grant acted for six years as the Secretary of the Board of Trade which came into existence as a result of the Regulating Act of 1773.

"In the 1780's the procurement of goods for export was still the primary concern of the Company, and the Commercial Resident had the key role in the long chain of activities that produced the annual Investment. The chain began in London when the Court of Directors decided on the total values of goods needed and specified the quantities they could sell of each article. The Directors' order, accompanied by observations of the quality of goods that had been delivered the previous year, was then sent to Bengal where the Council revised the value in light of local knowledge of the revenues available. On the basis of current prices, the Board of Trade allocated funds to the different Commercial Residents and gave them authorization to draw on the Revenue Treasury of the District for the money they needed. The Commercial Resident then began the actual work of buying the materials for the Investment. Indian agents travelled through the surrounding countryside, first giving advances to the weavers and other workmen who supplied goods to the Company, then later returning to collect the finished products which were deposited in local warehouses in 'aurungs', or subordinate factories. Finally, the goods were all brought into the central factory, where they were graded and priced by the Resident and his assistants. At Malda, Grant usually had six or seven Company servants to help him in grading the raw silk and cotton piece goods which formed the bulk of the Malda Investment. The Resident then sent

the goods to Calcutta where a final grading took place under the supervision of the Export Warehouse Keeper before they were shipped to England." (Ainslie Thomas Embree—Charles Grant and British Rule in India. London, 1962).

Before the system came into operation, the East India Company used to procure the goods meant for export outside India through Indian merchants. This system was given up by the middle of the eighteenth century and the system of procuring goods directly through the Commercial Residents was introduced. Under the previous system, the Commercial Residents used to make advances to the Indian contractors who in turn made advances to the weavers while under the new system, the Commercial Residents with the help of their assistants, who were known as *gomastās*, gave advances to the weavers themselves and not through the intermediary of contractors. The introduction of this new system thus made it impossible for any Indian merchant to make money out of the Company's commercial transactions.

When Charles Grant arrived in Māldā in 1780, both the systems were in operation. While the bulk of the Company's purchases was procured through the agency system, raw silk was even then procured under the contract system with this modification that the Resident himself was allowed to submit his quotation. In addition the Resident was free to engage in his own private trade. It is curious that Grant's bid for supplying a portion of the raw silk and the entire quantity of cotton piece-goods was accepted although his bid was not the lowest. This arrangement was of great financial advantage to Grant, who from having been in debt speedily became a wealthy man. Grant stayed at Māldā for six years. In 1783 he started an indigo plantation and factory at Guāmālti near Gaur. During this stay, Grant had frequently to take up the cause of the weavers against the alleged oppression of the agents of the *zamin-dārs* or of the Collector. In fact, the controversy between Grant and the Collector of Dinājpur about the alleged oppression of the weavers at the hands of revenue collectors has been likened to the rivalry of the English landlord and squire with the captain of industry at the beginning of the industrial revolution in England. Grant was not actuated by any humanitarian consideration when he took up cudgels on behalf of the weavers but was principally actuated by the motive of gain. He found that the weavers very often deserted their looms due to highhandedness on the part of the revenue collectors thereby causing loss to the commercial transactions of the Company.

During Grant's time the Company's Investment through the Māldā factory amounted to £50,000 annually. With the invention of machines in England the Indian cotton and silk textiles were gradually ousted from the markets of England and Europe. Another reason which operated adversely against the quality of the Indian products was the virtual monopoly enjoyed by the East India Company as a purchaser of these goods, usually at prices fixed by their Commercial Residents. In the absence of competitive buying, the Indian manufacturers apparently lost the incentive to maintain

the quality of the products, not to speak of improving it. By the Charter Act of 1833 the East India Company's trading activities came to a close in India. The Māldā Commercial Residency was abolished in 1836.

After the *diwāni* or fiscal administration of Bengal had been granted to the Company, a fortified commercial residency was built in 1771 at English Bazar by Mr. George Henchman. This building is now used as the District Collectorate.

By the end of the 18th century there were a number of European indigo-planters in the district, besides the commercial resident and his assistants. Amongst the planters may be mentioned Mr. Creighton of Guāmālti, from whose drawings the ruins of Gaur were restored. The first systematic exploration of the site of Gaur was made by Mr. Creighton in 1801.

In 1810 Dr. Buchanan Hamilton visited the district and wrote an account of the ruins of Gaur and Pānduā, so far as they were accessible.

The district of Māldā came into existence in 1813 with the *thānās* of Seebgunge (Shibganj), Kulleā Chuk (Kāliāchak), Bholāhāt and Gurgureebāh belonging to the district of Purneā, the *thānās* of Māldā and Bāmangōlā of Dinājpur and the *thānās* of Rohunpoor and Chupppe of the district of Rājshāhi. The newly formed district was included in the Bhāgalpur Division and was placed under the charge of a Joint Magistrate and Deputy Collector. Mr. Braddon was the first Joint Magistrate and Deputy Collector. In 1832 a Treasury was established and from 1859 the district was placed under the charge of a Magistrate and Collector. The district boundary was first notified in 1875. In 1879 the district was transferred from the judgeship of Dinājpur to that of Rājshāhi. The district must have been transferred to the Rājshāhi Division some time after 1813 and remained part of that Division till 1876. After 1876 it was transferred again to the Bhāgalpur Division, in which Division it remained till 1905. In 1905 the district was transferred from the Bhāgalpur Division to the Rājshāhi Division on the formation of the province of Eastern Bengal and Assam. In 1912, when the Partition of Bengal was annulled, it was included in the Rājshāhi Division and remained within that Division till August, 1947. The existing district was brought into being in pursuance of the award of Sir Cyril Radcliffe in August, 1947.

In 1794 William Carey, the famous Baptist missionary, resided in the village of Madnābāti in the modern police station of Bāmangōlā, in charge of an indigo-factory owned by Mr. George Udney. Mr. Carey prepared the first Bengali translation of the Bible while living at Madnābāti. Mr. Carey left Māldā in 1799 and resided in Serampore in the district of Hooghly.

The district remained practically unaffected during the rising by the Santāls and the rebellion of 1857.

The people of Māldā expressed their objection clearly through numerous meetings to the inclusion of the district in province of Eastern Bengal and Assam, which was to be newly created. In fact, the Lt. Governor Sir Andrew Fraser thought it necessary to

enlist the support of the people to the proposed measure, and for this purpose he delivered a speech at Māldā in which he tried to convince the people of the various advantages which might accrue to them from the proposed transfer of the district to the new province and also of the necessity of the creation of the new province. But the people of Māldā did not accept the arguments of the Lt. Governor and did not lag behind the residents of other parts of Bengal in registering their protest against the Partition of Bengal and the formation of new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam. The programme drawn up by the contemporary leaders of Bengal for registering protest against the partition of the province included the boycott of British goods and of British institutions including schools. The District Magistrate of Māldā deemed it expedient to issue a circular in 1905 directing the students not to take part in political agitations. The agitators against the Partition were drawn from Hindus and Muslims alike, and one Shri Nur Bakhsh presided at a few anti-Partition meetings. These meetings were held to enlist support for the programme of agitation drawn up by leaders like Shri Bepin Chandra Pal. National Schools were established in Māldā as in other places. In the unpublished secret reports of the Government there is a reference to the Māldā Ādarsha Jātiya Vidyālaya which had a roll-strength of 92 and in which instruction was imparted up to Class V. There were seven teachers in the school. The school was partly financed by Shri Bepin Behari Bose, pleader, who was the Chairman of the Municipality. Similar schools were established in other parts of the district. This period also saw the growth of various societies in Bengal, the principal aim of which was to inculcate love of the motherland among Indians and to select suitable persons for taking active part in the Swadeshi movement. Among such societies, mention may be made of the Anusilan Samiti and the Brati Samiti, both of which had branches at Māldā. It appears from a book by Shri Trailokyanath Chakravarti that Shri Kangshagopal Agarwala, Shri Mahendra De, Shri Dakshina Lahiri and others were the representatives of the Anusilan Samiti at Māldā. Shri Swadesh Pakrashi in his book *Agniyuger Kathā* claims that he was an accused in the Rājā Bāzār Bomb Case. According to him, he evaded the police in connection with that case and after changing his name shifted his field of activity to Māldā. Here he recruited some of the students of the local National School for the terrorist movement. The members of this movement at Māldā were not, however, required to take any active part in the terrorist movement except collecting firearms and keeping them concealed in suitable places. These terrorist activities related to the period of the First World War.

The Khilāfat Movement left the district practically undisturbed.

An Ordinance was passed in 1924 authorizing the Government to detain without trial persons suspected of terrorist activities. The Governor General Lord Lytton while on a tour in North Bengal defended the provisions of the Ordinance at a speech delivered by him at Māldā in that year. This year also saw the rise of a movement among the tenants of not paying rent to the landlords. This

movement probably had its origin in the crop failures and the resulting high prices of commodities that prevailed at that time. Leaders of the Swarāj movement supported the tenants in their stand. In 1926, a movement was started amongst the Santāls which attained rather serious proportions. It appears that Shri Kashiswar Chakravarti, a pleader of Dinājpur, initiated a movement amongst the Santāls of Māldā with a view to assimilate them inside the Hindu fold. Shri Kashiswar Chakravarti was known as the *guru* of the Santāls and his principal disciple appears to have been Jitu Santal. The movement initially had a religious bias, as already commented upon, and the first major trouble occurred over the decision of the Santāls to perform a *Kālī Pujā* at Māldā. The District Magistrate prohibited under Section 144 Cr. P.C. the performance of the *pujā* and directed Shri Kashiswar Chakravarti to refrain from entering the district. Ultimately the *pujā* was performed on the 8th May 1927, without any untoward incident. About three thousand Santāls participated in the *pujā*. The Government, however, had started a case under Section 110 Cr. P.C. against Jitu Santal and his assistant Arjun Santal. Both Jitu and Arjun were at first bound down to keep the peace for two years but the Sessions Judge reversed the order of the Magistrate on appeal. Jitu Santal began to collect money from the Santāls and persuaded them to believe that the British Raj had come to an end and that he would thenceforth act as the leader of the Santāls. The activities of Jitu Santal culminated in an incident during which the police had to open fire on the Santāls. This happened in 1932. It appears that on the 3rd December a large number of Santāls had taken possession of the Ādinā Mosque, one of the protected monuments in Pānduā, and converted it into a place of Hindu worship. They refused to allow any Muhammadan to go there. The Muhammadans objected and there was a possibility of the breach of peace, but due to the intervention of the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police, the Santāls vacated the place. On the 14th December, however, they again took possession of the mosque, going there in large numbers, and defied the police. In the conflict that ensued a constable was killed by an arrow and three Santāls were killed as a result of the firing by the police.

The people of the district took part in the "Quit India" Movement of August, 1942. The leading part in this Movement was taken by Sri Subodh Kumar Misra of Piplā, P.S. Harishchandrapur. He moved from village to village inspiring the people to emulate the example set by the people of other parts of India. His efforts were successful and there were a series of cases involving dislocation of the railway and the telegraph. Post-offices and railway station offices were also set on fire. Sri Misra was arrested on the 4th September 1942, but he was set at liberty by a crowd which had collected at the spot. He was ultimately brought to trial and sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for 6½ years on different counts. Sri Misra was assisted in his work by Sri Bibhuti Bhusan Chakraborty, also of Piplā.

CHAPTER III

PEOPLE

(a) POPULATION

Total Population—
Males and Females—
Sex ratio.

The Census of 1961 disclosed a population of 12,21,923 in the district at the sunrise of March 1, 1961. 6,21,990 of this population were males and 5,99,933 were females. The sex ratio, that is, the number of females per one thousand males was, therefore, 965. 11,71,138 persons out of the total population of 12,21,923 dwelt in villages and only 50,785 persons resided in the two towns of Old Māldā and English Bazar or Māldā. The sex ratio in the rural areas of the district as a whole was 969 and in the urban areas it was 873. The urban population formed only 4.2 per cent of the total population in 1961 as compared with 3.8 per cent in 1951. The rural-urban ratio has changed only slightly in spite of an increase of 44.4 per cent noticed in the urban population. This is because in absolute terms, the increase of population in the rural sector has been much more than that in the urban sector. The number of towns has not increased since 1951. The slow progress in urbanization appears to be entirely due to non-establishment of organized modern industries in the district. The town of Old Māldā has shown an increase only of 8.6 per cent in the population while the population of the town of English Bazar or Māldā has increased by 49.7 per cent. Thus the town of English Bazar or Māldā has prospered while that of Old Māldā has remained stagnant. The percentage increase in the population for the district as a whole has been 30.3 in the decade 1951-61. The density of population per square mile is 878.

The variation of population since 1901 is given in the Table in the appendix to this chapter.

The Police Station of Kālīāchak is the most populous in the district. It contains 23.2 per cent of the population of the district. Next in importance comes the police station of Ratuā which contributes 12.4 per cent of the population of the district. The police station of Kharbā comes next, containing 11.2 per cent of the district's population. The police station of Harishchandrapur contains almost an equal population and contributes 11.2 per cent to the population of the district. The police station of English Bazar contains 10.8 per cent of the population of the district. The police station of Mānikchak contains 8.1 per cent, that of Gājōl 7.7 per cent, that of Habibpur 7.2 per cent, that of Māldā 4.3 per cent and that of Bāmangōlā 3.9 per cent. Except for the police stations of Māldā and English Bazar, the populations in the police stations are entirely rural. The town of English Bazar or Māldā is situated in the police station of English Bazar and the town of Old Māldā

is situated in the police station of Māldā. In the former police station, the urban population forms 34.9 per cent of the total population while in the latter police station the urban population forms 9.3 per cent of the total population. The town of English Bazar or Māldā being the headquarters town of the district naturally attracts a greater number of immigrants than the town of Old Māldā. The table below gives (1) the number of persons per square mile and (2) the number of females per thousand males in respect of all the police stations of the district. It may be mentioned here that the population densities have been worked out on the basis of the area figures of police stations calculated from the Jurisdiction Lists prepared by the Director of Land Records & Surveys, West Bengal.

Name of Police Station	No. of persons per square mile	No. of females per thousand males
English Bazar	1,335	921
Kāliāchak	1,370	987
Māldā	600	939
Habibpur	571	947
Ratuā	988	968
Mānikchak	808	992
Kharbā	967	951
Harishchandrapur	912	964
Gājōl	477	971
Bāmangōlā	601	977

The Census of 1951 disclosed 60,198 displaced persons in the district of whom 30,918 were males and 29,280 were females. The Census of 1961 disclosed 64,474 persons who were born in Pakistan. At the 1961 Census, displaced persons as such were not enumerated. This figure as also the figure of displaced persons ascertained in the 1951 Census vary rather significantly on the low side from those supplied by the District Magistrate on the basis of registers maintained by him, but there is no reason to suppose that the returns in the Censuses were erroneous or that people born in Pakistan intentionally gave the name of some other place as their place of birth.

Of the 64,474 persons born in Pakistan who were enumerated in the district, only 30,806 persons came into the district during the ten years preceding March 1, 1961. 12,667 immigrants from Bihar have also settled in the district during the same period. The next considerable number of immigrants came from the other districts of West Bengal; their number is 9,397. Details of immigrants into the district during the decade 1951-61 will be available from the table at page 83 given in the appendix to this chapter.

(b) LANGUAGE

The languages Bengali, Sāntāli, Khoṭṭā, Hindi, Urdu, Orāon, Oriyā, Pāhāriā and Mundāri between them account for almost the entire population of the district. Bengali is spoken by 10,21,446 persons, that is, by 83.6 per cent of the population of the district.

Santali.
Khotta.
Hindi.
Urdu.
Kurukh/Oraon
Oriya.
Paharia.
Mundari.
Bilingual.

Sāntāli is the mother tongue of 87,847 persons, that is, of 7.19 per cent of the population. The persons whose mother tongue is Khoṭṭā form 4.1 per cent of the population. The persons whose mother tongue is Hindi constitute 2.5 per cent of the population. The persons who have Urdu as the mother tongue form 1.7 per cent of the population. There are 4,247 persons whose mother tongue is Orāon, 2,021 persons whose mother tongue is Oriyā, 1,507 persons whose mother tongue is Pāhāriā and 1,022 persons whose mother tongue is Mundāri.

Of the total number of persons having Bengali as the mother tongue, only 37,072 are bilingual. Of them 11,657 persons also know English, 9,337 persons also know Khoṭṭā, 8,571 persons also know Urdu, 4,043 also know Hindi and 1,719 also know Sāntāli.

Among the persons having Sāntāli as their mother tongue, 30,154 also know some languages other than Sāntāli, but as many as 30,126 such persons have Bengali as the subsidiary language.

17,803 persons having Khoṭṭā as their mother tongue are bilingual. As many as 17,451 such persons have Bengali as the subsidiary language.

8,301 persons whose mother tongue is Hindi are bilingual. As many as 7,943 of them have Bengali as the subsidiary language.

Among the Urdu speakers, 6,364 persons are bilingual. 5,917 of them also know Bengali.

Bengali is either spoken or understood by 10,85,894 persons or 88.9 per cent of the population of the district.

The Bengali spoken in the *bāriṅd* area of the district closely resembles the northern Bengali dialect spoken in the district of Dinājpur (old). Khoṭṭā is a dialect which came into existence as a result of the mixture of the Bengali and Hindi languages. This dialect is spoken mainly in the areas adjoining and near to the border with Bihar. Maithili Brahmans, who are found in large numbers in areas like Ārāidāngā, Milki, Amriti, Baṅgitōlā etc., are adopting Bengali as their mother tongue in place of Maithili. In fact, the number of Bengali speakers among these Maithili Brahmans would be quite considerable. Sāntāli and Mundāri are dialects of the Kherwāri language. It is not known whether these dialects have any local peculiarities or not.

(c) RELIGION, CASTE AND SOCIAL LIFE

Of the population of 12,21,923 recorded during the 1961 Census, 6,55,415 were Hindus, 5,64,331 were Muslims, 2,040 were Christians, 85 were Jains, 47 were Sikhs and 5 were Buddhists. The Hindus thus formed 53.6 per cent and the Muslims 46.2 per cent of the population. Among Hindus there were 950 females per every thousand males while among Muslims there were 981 females per every thousand males in 1961. It is, therefore, likely that during the next ten years the rate of growth of Hindus will be less than the rate of growth of Muslims.

The number of Hindus clearly indicates that tribal people like Sāntāls, Orāons, Mundās etc., consider themselves to be Hindus.

Bengali-knowing persons.

Dialects.

Religions.
Hindus, Muslims and others.

Sex ratio, religionwise.

Tribals and Hinduism.

Growth of population.

Immigration & Emigration.

Bengali.

Under such circumstances, it would be futile to attempt a classification of the Hindus by sects like Shaivas, Vaishnavas etc. In fact, the last attempt to classify the Hindus by sects, made during the 1931 Census, failed. Mr Porter, the then Superintendent of Census Operations, Bengal, remarked, "Apart from the difficulty of discovering a word in Bengali which should convey the meaning of the English word 'sect' in the absence of any clearly defined term in general popular use, the majority of Hindus, even when the intention of the question was made clear to them, were unable to give a definite answer to it. Ingenious supervisors and enumerators suggested such criteria as eating or abstaining from meat and fish on the assumption that a man might be taken as a Sakta who ate flesh and as a Vaishnava if he abstained particularly if he ate also no fish. But this criterion brought them up against persons, who, whilst professing Vaishnavism, admitted the eating of flesh; and beyond the criteria at first suggested no other of any assistance were devised. Even an appeal to personal preference generally yielded no result, since the individual questioned professed an equal devotion to all the gods of the Hindu pantheon known to him and ordinarily worshipped in Bengal, and Hindus in the province are not ordinarily kept to the pitch of sectarian bigotry by exclusively sectarian priests. As a result the return of Hindu sects is extremely unsatisfactory and incomplete."

Caste as such was not recorded generally at the 1961 Census. It is, therefore, not possible to give a caste-wise break-up of the Hindu population. Mr. Carter, who was the Settlement Officer between 1928-35 remarked, that the most outstanding feature, was the very small proportion of upper caste Hindus. According to him, Brahmans numbered a little over 10,000, the number of Kāyasthas was 3,822 and the number of Vaidyas was 671. He also noticed the existence of castes like Goālā, Sadgope, Tānti, Tiyar, Māhishya, Kāmār, Kolu-Teli, Vaishnava and Nāpit. It has to be borne in mind that Mr. Carter's figures relate to the undivided district of Māldā.

Although caste generally was not recorded, the name of the caste or tribe to which a member of one of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes belonged was ascertained during the 1961 Census. It is found from the Census table that altogether 47 Scheduled Castes and 11 Scheduled Tribes were recorded in the district. 11,379 persons claimed merely to belong to one of the Scheduled Castes without giving the name of the caste. Similarly 3,935 persons claimed merely that they belonged to one of the Scheduled Tribes. Each of the Scheduled Castes of Bāgdi, Bhuiyā, Bind, Bhuimāli, Muchi, Dhobā, Dom, Dosādh, Gonnri, Hāri, Jaliā-Kaibarta, Mālo, Keoṭ, Koch, Lohār, Māl, Māllāh, Mushāhar, Namasudra, Nuniyā, Pōd, Poliyā, Rājbanishi, Sunri, Turi and Tiyar contributed more than one thousand persons each to the population. There were 38,443 Rājbanishis, 12,750 Tiyars, 12,290 Binds, 10,448 Namasudras, 7,116 Muchis, 6,346 Hāris and 6,008 Poliyās. The numbers of Dhobās, Mālos, Keoṭ, Mushāhars and Pōds were between 4,000 and 5,000.

Scheduled Castes
and Tribes.

Among the Scheduled Tribes, the Kōrās, the Māhālis, the Mālpāhāriyās, the Mundās, the Orāons and the Sāntāls each contributed more than one thousand persons to the population. The Sāntāls numbered 84,207, the Orāons 4,783, the Kōrās 2,478, the Mundās 1,533, the Māhālis 1,327 and the Mālpāhāriyās 1,182.

The total number of persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes was 1,63,433 and the total number of persons belonging to the Scheduled Tribes was 99,522. The persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes thus formed 13.4 per cent of the population and the persons belonging to the Scheduled Tribes 8.1 per cent. The Scheduled Castes and Tribes between them, therefore, accounted for 21.5 per cent of the population.

The manners and customs prevalent in the present day among the upper caste Hindus and the Scheduled Castes and Tribes in the district are not known with any degree of accuracy. Mr. Carter in his Settlement Report on the district has left accounts of the Rājbanishis, the Poliyās, the Deshis, the Koches, the Goālās, the Mandals, the Telis, the Binds, the Mushāhars and a few other castes. In regard to tribes, he has left an account of the Sāntāls only. Descriptions of the manners and customs of the Sāntāl tribe and the above-named castes are accordingly reproduced below from his report.

Manners and customs.

The Santals.

"The Santals proper are divided into twelve castes—Murmu, Kisku, Hemrom, Hasda, Soren, Mardi, Tudu, Besra, Baske, Chore, Bedea and Paurea. Their legend is that the first two human beings who were created were Pilchu Haram and Pilchi Budhi. They had seven sons and seven daughters. The sons were given the first seven names of the castes mentioned above, and married the seven daughters. Seven castes thus arose, and later five others were added, though it is not known how. It is interesting to note that each caste is exogamous, and a Murmu, for example, cannot marry the daughter of a Murmu.

"The Santal community invariably build their houses in a group together. This is known as the Santalpara, and is always at some distance from the Rajbangshi group of houses, which is called the Bangalpara. The houses are well constructed, with solid walls of clay. They are kept scrupulously clean, and the Santals are very fond of growing hibiscus shrubs in front of them, the red flowers of which are worn by the women in their hair on festive occasions.

"The social system is under the direction of village headmen, called Majhis. Their houses are identifiable by a mound of earth outside it, in the centre of which is fixed a wooden post, known as the Manjithan. On ceremonial occasions, the post is painted with Vermilion in places, and sacrifices are offered to the spirits of departed chieftains. Each Majhi also keeps a hut, generally unfenced, for village meetings. His office is normally hereditary, but if the successor of a Majhi is reduced to straitened circumstances, or incurs the displeasure of his co-villagers, he is replaced by another. The ordinary duties

of the Majhi are the control over his people and their punishment by fines or other means for breaches of social customs. When there are disputes between different villages, the Majhis of three or five villages sit together as a tribunal. When a family leaves the village in a year of scarcity to make a living elsewhere, their immovable property remains in the custody of the Majhi.

"The social unity among Santals is remarkable. Inter-marriage with any non-Santal is strictly forbidden; and the disregard of a Majhi's commands, or the commission of a serious social offence, brings the whole Santal community down upon the offender. On a market day the branch of a tree is held up and this attracts the entire Santal community present at the market. The incident is then briefly related, and all are directed to be present on a given day. On the day fixed the whole community appears, and when judgment has been passed on the offender, his house is ransacked and defiled, and a branch is planted in it as a sign that he has been excommunicated. Until he has paid the penalty, and the ban has been lifted, nobody dares to have anything to do with him.

"In matters which are regarded as tribal secrets, there is a masonic reticence among Santals through which it is impossible to break. I made repeated efforts, but without success, to find out the name of the plant from which poison for arrowheads is extracted; but everyone professed ignorance.

"Santal customs are interesting. The first ceremony observed is the Nasta, which takes place on the third or fifth day after birth. The men are shaved and bathed at noon, and when they have assembled the father names the child in their presence. The first is named after his grandfather and the first daughter after the grandmother. After the child has been named, the midwife goes round the assembly, sprinkling a solution of flour and water on the breasts of all present and repeating the name of the child. Rice which has been boiled with the dust of nim leaves is then served to the guests, after being offered first to the Hafram or deceased ancestors.

"The next ceremony is the Sekhi, which is the name for the branding marks on the wrists of all Santal men. The branding is done with a piece of burning rag, when the child is five or six years old. The girls are not branded, but are tattooed on the breast and on one of the arms. After marriage the other arm is tattooed, but if a woman loses a child before the second arm has been tattooed, it remains as it is. The idea is that in such cases the child would not be able to recognise the mother in the after life.

"There are several systems of marriage. The negotiation may be carried out through a Ghatak or match-maker; but this is an imitation of Bengali society and not a tribal custom. It is however less costly as the dowry is smaller. Generally marriages are arranged by mutual selection, or the young man carries off the girl, and takes her to live with him. In such

cases the bride's father approaches the Majhi of the bridegroom's village and demands a dowry. If this is paid, and the girl is willing to stay with the young man, the marriage is concluded: otherwise a penalty is realised from him and the girl returns to her father's house without any social stigma.

"Divorce is adjudicated by the village Majhis. If they decide that there should be a divorce, the termination of the marriage is indicated by the tearing across of a leaf or 'bitlaha'. The co-respondent is required to pay double the wife's dowry to the husband as compensation.

"The Santals cremate or bury their dead according to their convenience. There is no hard and fast rule in the matter, but they prefer cremation when fuel is available. Great respect is shown to the dead and almost the whole village attends the cremation or burial.

"Of the Santal festivities the most important is the Bandna. This is a kind of harvest festival which takes place after the winter paddy has been reaped. There is no fixed date for it; but the village headmen arrange the day on which the festivities are to commence. On the first day sacrifices are made to Jahar at the place of worship outside the village. A few fowls and an egg are offered in sacrifice. The cattle are washed and made to walk over the place of worship. If one of them tramples on the sacrificial egg, it is considered an auspicious omen for its owner. Then for three days there commences a continuous round of festivity in which everyone joins, irrespective of age. The elders indulge in heavy drinking while the young men and girls amuse themselves as young folk will. The whole period is one of unrestrained abandon, and all restrictions are thrown off. On the last day a feast is arranged in which the whole village participates.

"The Sakrat festival is generally held about a fortnight (fortnight.—*Ed.*) after the Bandna. Its special feature is dancing with lathis. On the second day, a contest in archery is held. A plantain tree is set up at a distance, and the first competitor who hits it, is carried shoulder high by the Jog Majhi or joint headman and receives the homage of the spectators.

"The Fagua is a counterpart of the Doljatra festival. On the appointed day the villagers go to the place of worship and offer sacrifices. On the way back to the village they sprinkle each other with water, but it is considered highly objectionable to use coloured water.

"The Chata and Karam pujas seem to be akin to the Maypole dance. In the former an umbrella is tied to the end of a pole which has been embedded on the ground. In the latter a branch is cut from the jungle and planted in a pathway. The younger folk dance round it from evening until dawn. The branch is then uprooted and immersed in a neighbouring tank with great ceremony.

"The Charak festival (festival.—*Ed.*) takes place in April on a moonlit night and is attended chiefly by the younger folk. Normally no Santal will stay out of his house after dusk for fear of ghosts, but on this occasion they come to the festival up till midnight. Singing and dancing are its chief features, and incidentally it provides an opportunity for clandestine meetings.

"In character the Santals are naturally simple and straightforward, though contact with some of their less honest neighbours tend to make them suspicious and crafty. They are very superstitious and in some matters extremely credulous. The Satyam Sibam sect, for example, was under the leadership of one Jitu Santal, whose wildest pronouncements were accepted by his followers as gospel truth. The Air Survey Company's aeroplane, when photographing over Habibpur thana, was reported to be an incarnation of Krishna. Another dictum of Jitu was that the payment of rent to landlords had been prohibited, and the only payment required was a basketful of paddy to himself. As not infrequently happens with these movements the Satyam Sibam sect tended to get mixed up with politics, and though it made no outward demonstration during the civil disobedience movement, it was always a potential source of trouble. The culminating point came when Jitu and a number of his followers proclaimed their 'independence', and occupied the great mosque at Adina. Eventually an engagement took place in which one constable was killed by a poisoned arrow, Jitu was shot dead, and several other Santals were wounded. All this would never have taken place if the Santals were not so astonishingly credulous, and if Jitu's activities could have been limited . . .

"In spite of their simplicity, however, the Santals can be very reticent, as has been mentioned before, in certain matters affecting their tribal customs. There seems to be a kind of masonic bond or secret understanding between them, so that however simple they may appear, there are some things which can never be learned from them.

"They are independent by nature and resent being put under any restriction. They will only work when it pleases them to do so. No Santal could ever lose his independence so far as to live by begging: he would prefer starvation. They are a cheerful, happy-go-lucky people, and there is probably none other that takes so little 'thought for the morrow.' Their life is full of festivities, and they enjoy drinking and music. All over the Barind one hears the music of their bamboo pipes, especially towards sunset. On the other hand, they are lazy and improvident. If they get good winter crops, they are prepared to spend the next six months in idling and merry-making. The women are very much harder workers than the men. In addition to the household work, they do most of the transplanting of paddy seedlings—a backbreaking job—and much of the reaping and threshing.

"The Rajbangshis are numerically the next largest community. They claim to be descended from the same origin as the Cooch Behar family. Whether that is true or not their appearance and features—the high cheek bone, broad nose and slightly slanting eye—are strongly suggestive of Mongolian origin, and not Dravidian, as has been suggested. Their claim to Kshatriya status is very old, but it is only within comparatively recent times that attempts have been made to advance their social status. The movement owes its origin to Rai Sahib Panchanan Barman, the Rajbangshi leader of Rangpur. A number of the more well-to-do Rajbangshis have taken the sacred thread and adopted the title of Singh, Singha Ray or Sarkar. The movement is handicapped however by the fact that the more backward Rajbangshis have not come into line, and the allied castes of Palis and Koches, who are even more backward, are not admitted by the Rajbangshis to have an equal social status.

"Locally the Rajbangshis are known as Bangals, and the part of the village in which they reside, as the Bangalpara. The name is derived from their indigenous origin, as distinguished from the Santals and others who are immigrants. Little is known of their earlier history. They may go back as far as the time when the kingdom of Kamrup covered northern Bengal, and it is not improbable that after the capital of Gaur was abandoned in the latter part of the 16th century they settled in the outlying country.

"The two most noteworthy of their customs are the Mahat system and the marriage system. In every village there is a headman known as the Mahat. He is elected and is distinct from the Mandal appointed by the landlord. Petty disputes are referred to and decided by him. Over each group of twentytwo Mahats there is a Raja, to whom any one can appeal if dissatisfied with the decision of the Mahat. Serious cases are often referred directly to him. The Raja has a Dewan whose duty is to make arrangements for trials and to inform the people through an intermediary known as the Barik. He secures the attendance of the villagers on the date fixed, and the case of either party is explained to the Raja by functionaries known as Kahats. All these posts are honorary and are filled by election, but as a matter of practice they have become hereditary. Their holders have a high social status and are given places of honour at social gatherings.

"Among the majority of the Rajbangshis, the nika system or widow marriage is common. Sometimes a marriage is formally contracted but no moral stigma attaches to cohabitation. In formal marriages the cost is higher, because the bridegroom has to pay a dowry to the bride's father and give a marriage feast. In other cases a man may simply take a widow to live with him, a form of marriage known as 'kahin', or a widow may retain her deceased husbands' (husband's.—*Ed.*) home

and property and take a man to live with her. This is known as 'dangua'. Judged by orthodox standards, morality is lax among the Rajbangshis. Cases even occur in which wives are exchanged, or where an influential man arranges to purchase the wife of another.

"In character they are timid. Unlike the Santals, they will not stand up for what they consider to be their rights. On the other hand they are more intelligent than the Santals and more thrifty. They are fairly good cultivators, and, unlike the Santals, work regularly. They make rather a speciality of cultivating vegetables and tobacco.

"The Palis, Deshis and Koches are ethnically allied to the Rajbangshis. Dr. Buchanon Hamilton, writing early in the 19th century, considered that though they were distinguishable castes, they came from the same origin. Their claim to Kshatriya status is not admitted by the Rajbangshis who consider themselves a superior caste.

"Among the Palis there are two sub-divisions—the Babu Palis and the Sadhu Palis. The former are akin to the Rajbangshis in manners and customs, but the latter unlike the Babu Palis are vegetarians. A movement has been started to raise their social status. They approached the pandits of Nabadwip, who obligingly quoted chapter and verse to prove that the Sadhu Palis are Kshatriyas. Since then they have taken the sacred thread and proclaimed themselves as such. They have given up widow re-marriage, and are trying to follow the manners of higher caste Hindus.

"The Deshis call themselves Gaur Deshis. It is not unlikely that after the abandonment of the capital of Gaur they settled in the surrounding country and continued to call themselves inhabitants of Gaur. Their customs and habits are akin to those of the Rajbangshis.

"The Koches may be described as the most backward of all the castes which are of Mongolian origin. They are worshippers of Shiva and their religious ceremonies include observances which are unknown among other Hindu castes and which may be a survival of earlier times. For example, they kill pigeons on the sacrificial altar and drink the blood. Polygamy is practised, as in Hindu society, but polyandry also exists, and a woman can inherit the property of more than one husband, if there are no children.

"The other Hindu castes or castes of semi-aboriginal origin within the district, are so many and so varied that it is not possible to give an account of each. Reference has only been made to those castes whose customs contain any interesting or noteworthy features.

"Of the indigenous Hindus the weavers—Tanti and Ganesh—are one of the most populous communities. Many of them have taken to agriculture owing to the decline of the weaving industry. The Ganesh caste is slowly decreasing in numbers, largely owing to its own custom that the marriage dowry has

Other Hindu castes.

to be paid by the bridegroom, instead of to him, as in Hindu society. Many cases occur in which the bridegrooms are unable to save enough money for the dowry until they have reached middle age: and marriages between men of 50 and girls of 12 or 13 are not uncommon. Naturally the proportion of young widows in this caste is high, and as widow re-marriage is forbidden, it is probable that the caste will slowly disappear.

"The milkmen, Goalas and Gopes are another fairly large community. The Gopes are divided into four classes—Majrote, Kishnota, Maghaia and Kanoje. There is no inter-marriage or eating together between these subdivisions. In other respects they follow Hindu customs, but widow marriage is practised in all classes.

"The same division into sub-castes is found among the Mandals and Telis also. The Mandals are divided as follows:—

"I—Nagar Mandals—again subdivided into (1) Deb Nagar, (2) Kanhai Nagar, (3) Palas (Paras) Nagar and (4) Bholahatia Nagar.

"II—Chasi Mandals.

"III—Gangot Mandals.

"IV—Chasat Mandals.

"Similarly the Telis are sub-divided into Maghaia, Tihatu, Barkapia and Bhatia Telis.

"There is no intermarriage between the sub-castes of the Nagars or Telis. The first three Teli sub-castes can dine at each other's houses, but even this is not permitted among the Nagar Mandals. Marriage is generally contracted as in the higher castes, and a dowry has to be paid for the bride in all cases. This varies according to the circumstances of the contracting parties, but the Telis have fixed the limits at Rs. 39 and Rs. 45. The Tirhatia Telis allow widow marriage. Sradh ceremonies are carried out according to Hindu rites, but whereas the Telis observe a period of 13 days for mourning, the Mandals observe one month.

* * *

"The Binds are another caste who are found in the west of the district. They number nearly eleven thousand and are hardly found in any other district of Bengal. They are a non-Aryan caste, originating from Bihar and have always been reputed to have criminal tendencies.

"Among the castes of semi-aboriginal origin, the Mushahars are found in larger numbers in Malda than in any other district. They come from the Santal Parganas, and are employed mainly as earth cutters and day labourers. They claim to be worshippers of Ram Chandra and observe Hindu festivals such as the Dasara, Saraswati and Kali Pujas. Their own important festival is the 'Bouparav' which is held in the month of Magh. Sacrifices are offered and much merry-making takes place."

So far as the Muslims are concerned, Mr. Carter gives the following account:

"Among the Muhammadan agriculturists, the most remarkable people are those known as the Shersabadiyas, or more generally as the Baidyas. The name is derived from Shersabad Pargana of Murshidabad district, from which they were forced to emigrate owing to the erosion of the Ganges. There are several theories about their origin. One is that they were originally Mahrattas, who came to Bengal with the Mahratta invaders. It is said that a number of them were made prisoners and forced to accept Islam. Their appearance however is unlike that of the typical Mahratta, and it seems more likely that they are descendants of the army of Sher Shah, one of the Afghan kings. Whatever their origin may be, it is certainly not Bengali. They are for most part big men, of fine physique, with full black beards (unlike the rather straggly beards one generally sees) and with deepest (deep set.—*Ed.*) eyes.

"They are very good agriculturists and will spend much time and labour on the reclamation of land which the ordinary cultivator would not attempt to clear. Most of the Tal area in Ratua and Harischandrapur thanas was brought under cultivation by them, and more recently they have taken up the 'dubas' or valleys of the Tangan and Purnabhaha rivers. In cultivating methods they are superior in every respect to their neighbours. They seem to understand better the nature and properties of the soil, and how to get the best results from it. Generally they make their plots very long and rectangular in shape, so that no time is wasted in continually turning the plough. Even when they acquire land by purchase, they convert the fields to the shape they prefer. They are extremely industrious. They rise very early in the morning and are at work before dawn, probably two hours before the average cultivator appears. Their ploughing is finished a couple of hours or so before midday, and they spend the rest of the day doing odd jobs, repairing their agricultural implements, and so forth. They never waste time in talk, but are busy from morning till night. They are resourceful and have the ability to turn their hand to different trades. Good carpenters, blacksmiths and oilmen are to be found among them, and some of the best boatmen came from their ranks. When there is little agricultural work to be done, some of them trade as middlemen, and make a little profit by buying paddy or gram in the villages and selling it in the local markets. They are businesslike, regular in their payments, and punctilious in keeping their promises and contracts. In consequence they are trusted by the money-lenders and can carry on business without much capital.

"In social matters their unity is remarkable. In most villages 'daladali' or party faction, is a regular feature of local politics, but there is very little among the Shersabadiyas. They obey

the orders of their village headmen with almost military precision, and it is extremely difficult to get any information from them against one of their own sect. This naturally increases the difficulties of an investigating officer.

"In religious matters they are pious and orthodox. Marriage with any other Muhammadan sect is prohibited, which is one reason why their social unity and fine physique have been preserved.

"They have much common sense and quickly realise what is to their advantage. They saw the value of settlement operations at once, and there was no class which was so punctilious in appearance. They were always present with the right papers when wanted, and possession of land being their main interest in life, they were always very attentive to the settlement staff. They are generally very regular in their payment of rent, chaukidari tax and dues to money-lenders.

"Another peculiar Muhammadan sect, who live in the Mirataluk area, and along the western bank of the Mahananda towards the south of the district, are known as Nadegustis. They are said to have been Hindus of Nadia district, who were converted to Islam centuries ago, and migrated to the Natore subdivision of Rajshahi district. Being unable to get land there, they came to Malda district 70 or 80 years ago, hearing from travellers to Gaur and Pandua that there was land available for settlement.

"Since then, they have increased in numbers, and are spreading over a wide area. They still retain some of their Hindu customs; for example, they wear new cloths, and apply a pigment of rice powder (alipana) to the walls of the house on festive occasions. They also respect Hindu gods. In the month of Baisakh, hundreds of them go to Daldali village, and offer puja to the goddess *Burima*. Like the Shersabadiyas, they do not allow marriage with any other Muhammadan sect.

"Through the district there is practically no communal feeling. The only area in which there has been friction consists of a few villages near Kaliachak. Apart from this, the two communities live in harmony and respect each other's religions and customs. Several cases were noticed in which debottar lands, the income of which is devoted to the worship of a particular Hindu deity, had passed by purchase to Muhammadans. Similarly pirottar lands which are devoted to Muhammadan saints had come into the possession of Hindus. In both cases the present owners arrange to carry out the necessary ceremonies, the Muhammadans by engaging Hindu priests and Hindus by engaging Muhammadan Mollas."

(d) SOCIAL LIFE—OTHER ASPECTS

Marital status.

40.8 per cent of the males and 42.9 per cent of the females are married. 2.1 per cent of the males are widowers and 11.8 per cent

of the females are widows. 1,980 males and 3,389 females are either divorced or are living separated from their partners. 56.7 per cent of the males and 44.6 per cent of the females never married. Of the 56.7 per cent of the total male population who never married, as much as 45.2 per cent are boys and belong to the age-group 0-14 years. Out of the remaining 11.5 per cent, as many as 9.3 per cent belong to the age-group 15-24 years. This means that 2.2 per cent of the male population who are unmarried belong to the ages 25 years and more. It may be stated here that boys in the age-group 0-14 years form 45.5 per cent of the main population, youngmen in the age-group 15-24 years form another 15 per cent and men who are 25 years of age or more form 39.5 per cent of the total male population. If it is assumed that youngmen below the age of 25 should not marry, then it is seen that even amongst those who may marry, 5.6 per cent have not married. 99.4 per cent of the boys in the age-group 0-14 years are unmarried.

Of the 44.6 per cent women who have not married, as many as 43.0 per cent are girls belonging to the age-group 0-14 years. Another 1.3 per cent are young women belonging to the age-group 15-24 years. Only 0.3 per cent of the total females, who are not married, are 25 years old or are older. This figure may be compared with the corresponding figure of 2.2 per cent for males. For facility of comparison it may be stated here that girls in the age-group 0-14 years form 45.9 per cent of the total female population, those belonging to the age-group 15-24 years form another 16.2 per cent and those who are 25 years old or more form 37.9 per cent. If it is assumed that girls and young women who are 15 or more years old may be expected to be married, then it is seen that approximately 3 per cent of the females belonging to marriageable age are unmarried.

Of the 40.8 per cent of the males who are married, 0.3 per cent only belong to the age-group 0-14 years. 5.6 per cent belong to the age-group 15-24 years and 34.9 per cent are 25 years of age or above. The 0.3 per cent of the married males in the age-group 0-14 years form 0.59 per cent of the male population in that age-group. The 5.6 per cent of the married males in the age-group 15-24 years form 37.3 per cent of the young men in that age-group. The 34.9 per cent of the married men in the age-group 25 years or more form 88.4 per cent of the total number of men in that age-group.

Of the 42.9 per cent of the female population who are married, 2.8 per cent belong to the age-group 0-14 years. An overwhelming majority of the girls in this age-group really belong to the narrower age-group of 10-14 years. 14.4 per cent (out of the 42.9 per cent of the female population who are married) belong to the age-group 15-24 years and 25.7 per cent are 25 years old or are older. Married females in the age-group 0-14 years form 6.1 per cent of the girls belonging to that age-group. Similarly, young married women in the age-group 15-24 years form 88.9 per cent of the women in that age-group. Married women in the age-group

25 or more years similarly form 67.9 per cent of the women in that age-group.

The above figures mean that only a negligible number of boys in the age-group 0-14 years are either widowers or divorcees or are living separated from their wives or are of unclassified status. 61.9 per cent of the young men in the age-group 15-24 years never married and 37.3 per cent are married. Only 0.8 per cent of the young men in this age-group are, therefore, either widowers or divorcees or are living separated from their wives or are of unclassified status. Among men who are 25 years old or are older, 5.6 per cent have not married and 88.4 per cent are married. 6 per cent of the men in this age-group are thus either widowers or divorcees or are living separated from their wives or are of unclassified status.

93.8 per cent of the girls in the age-group 0-14 years never married and 6.1 per cent are married. 0.1 per cent of the girls in this age-group are either widows or have been divorced by their husbands or are living separated from their husbands or are of unclassified status. 8.2 per cent of the females in the next higher age-group of 15-24 years never married and 88.9 per cent are married. 2.9 per cent of the females in this age-group are thus either widows or have been divorced by their husbands or are living separated from them or are of unclassified status. In the next higher age-group of women who are 25 or more years old 0.6 per cent never married and 67.9 per cent are married. Thus 31.5 per cent of the women in this age-group are either widows or have been divorced by their husbands or are living separated from their husbands or are of unclassified status.

In 1951 the table on age and marital status was not prepared for the entire population but for two separate samples. One sample related to the population other than the displaced population and the second sample related to the displaced population. On an analysis of the first table relating to the non-displaced sample population it is seen that in 1951, 49.2 per cent of the males were unmarried, 47.9 per cent were married and 2.8 per cent were either widowers or divorcees or were living separated from their wives. Of the boys in the age-group 0-14 years 98 per cent were unmarried and only 2 per cent were married. An insignificant number were either widowers or divorcees or were living separated from their wives. In the next higher age-group of 15-24 years 48.6 per cent were unmarried and 50.4 per cent were married. 1 per cent of the males in this age-group were thus either widowers or divorcees or were living separated from their wives. The unmarried formed 4.4 per cent of the males who were either 25 years old or were older. Married men in this age-group formed 89.5 per cent. 6.1 per cent of the men in this age-group were thus either widowers or divorcees or were living separated from their wives.

In 1951, 34.1 per cent of the females were unmarried, 52 per cent were married and 13.9 per cent were either widows or divorced women or were living separated from their husbands. Of the girls of the age-group 0-14 years 81.6 per cent were unmarried and

18 per cent were married. Only 0.4 per cent of the girls in this age-group were either widows or divorcees or were living separated from their husbands. In the next higher age-group of 15-24 years, unmarried females formed 6.1 per cent of the young women in that age-group and 90 per cent were married. 3.9 per cent of the young women in this age-group were thus either widows or divorcees or were living separated from their husbands. Among women who were 25 years old or were older 1.2 per cent were unmarried and 67.5 per cent were married. 31.3 per cent of the women in this age-group were thus either widows or had been divorced by their husbands or had been living separated from them.

A comparison of the two sets of figures, one for 1951 and the other for 1961, shows that the proportion of married women among females has gone down. This is mainly due to an increase in the number of girls in the age-group 0-14 years as also to a proportionate decrease in the number of married girls in that age-group during the decade. In 1951, 81.6 per cent of the girls in this age-group remained unmarried while in 1961 the percentage rose to 93.8. The age at marriage has thus increased. This phenomenon is also to be found in the next higher age-group of 15-24 years. In 1951 only 6.1 per cent of the young women in that age-group were unmarried while in 1961 as many as 8.2 per cent were unmarried. It is only among women who are 25 years old or are older that this tendency has been reversed, there being now only 0.6 per cent unmarried women in this age-group as compared with 1.2 per cent in 1951. So far as males are concerned, the proportion of those who are unmarried has increased in all the age-groups during the decade 1951-61.

Women are generally economically dependent on the men. Only 11.5 per cent of the total number of women were returned as workers at the 1961 Census. In the rural areas this rate of participation was slightly higher, being 11.7 per cent while in the urban areas it was as low as 5.4 per cent. The activities of women are thus mostly confined within the home.

Inter-caste marriages are not very often found and civil marriages are rather the exception than the rule. Prostitution to some extent undoubtedly exists in the two towns of the district but not to any appreciable extent. In the rural areas prostitution is either absent or carried on surreptitiously. People are temperate in their habits and drunkenness is not found.

Dwellings.

The dwelling in the rural area consists of a number of huts round a courtyard, and in the town of compact brick structure. The walls of the hut in the rural areas are made equally of bamboo or of mud. The roofs are generally constructed of straw.

Melas.

A number of *melās* or religious fairs are held in the district which provide entertainment to the people at different seasons in the year. The principal *melās* are held at (1) Amriti, (2) Dhāoyail, (3) Jaharatalā, (4) Mādhāipur, (5) Pānduā, (6) Rāmkeli and (7) Sādullāpur.

The *melā* at Amriti is held every year in the month of February

on the occasion of the Hindu festival *Sivarātri*. Amriti is a place 7 miles (11.27 km.) away from the town of English Bazar or Māldā on the Māldā-Rājmahal Road. The *melā* lasts for three days. The attendance at the *melā* is very heavy, being in the neighbourhood of five thousand per day.

The *melā* at Dhāoyail is held on the full moon day in the month of *Māgh* in the Bengali year. The duration of the *melā* is fourteen days. Dhāoyail is situated in police station Gājōl. This *melā* is also well attended, the number of persons frequenting it being approximately four thousand per day.

Jaharatalā is situated towards the north-east of the eastern wall of the ruins of Gauḍa. There is an ancient temple of the goddess *Kāli* here. Persons visit this temple in large numbers on every Tuesday and Saturday in the Bengali month of *Baisākh*.

Mādhāipur is another place which draws devotees due to the existence of a *Kāli* temple there. Here also devotees visit the shrine of *Kāli* on every Tuesday and Saturday in the Bengali month of *Baisākh*.

The most celebrated *melā* is held at Rāmkeli amidst the ruins of Gauḍa near the Great Golden Mosque. This *melā* is held to commemorate the visit of Lord Chaitanya who came to Gauḍa during the reign of Sultan Alā-ud-din Husain Shāh. Large numbers of Vaishnavas hailing from different districts of Bengal visit this *melā*. The *melā* is held in the month of *Jyaisṭha* and lasts for about ten days.

Five *melās* are held at Sādullāpur which is a place situated at a distance of about 6 miles (9.66 km.) from English Bazar or Māldā, on the bank of the river Bhagirathi.* All these *melās* are held in connection with bathing in the Ganges on days which are deemed to be particularly auspicious. The first such *melā* is held on the full moon day of the month of *Māgh* in the Bengali year and lasts for two days. The next one is held in the month of *Paush* and lasts for only one day. The third one is held on the full moon day of *Bhādra* and lasts for one day. The fourth one is also held in the month of *Bhādra* on the day of *Bhādra Saṁkrānti* and lasts for one day. The fifth *melā* is held on the occasion of *Gāṅgā Dashaharā* (in June-July) and lasts for two days.

A *melā* is also held at Pānduā which is a holy place for the Muslims. The tomb of the famous saint Shāh Jalāl Tabrizi, who came from Tabriz in Persia, is situated here, and the shrine is maintained by the Bāis Hāzāri Wakf Estate. The *melā* is held to commemorate the death of this saint, and a large number of devoted Muslims, even from outside the borders of the district, attend it. The *melā* is held in the month of *Razab*. Another fair is held at Pānduā on the occasion of *Sabebarāt*.

The *melās* in the district of Māldā are not only gatherings of religious minded people but are also places where manufactured articles required by the rural population are brought for sale. The *jātrā*, the *ālkāp* and the *gambhirā* provide outlets for the dramatical

* See Chapter I, Section (c)—River System and Water Resources—the Ganges.

and poetical talents of the people of the district. The *gambhirā* is a form of cultural or recreational activity which is peculiar to this district, and it will be discussed in greater detail in the appropriate chapter.

TABLES
AREA AND POPULATION, URBAN AND RURAL
Area—1436 sq. miles (3719.24 sq. kms.)

Police Stations	POPULATION (1961 Census Figures)			
	Urban Rural Total	Persons	Males	Females
English Bazar	U	45,900	24,495	21,405
	R	85,477	43,891	41,586
	T	1,31,377	68,386	62,991
Kaliachak	U	—	—	—
	R	2,83,635	1,42,760	1,40,875
	T	2,83,635	1,42,760	1,40,875
Maldā	U	4,885	2,615	2,270
	R	47,590	24,447	23,143
	T	52,475	27,062	25,413
Habibpur	U	—	—	—
	R	87,494	44,929	42,565
	T	87,494	44,929	42,565
Ratuā	U	—	—	—
	R	1,51,899	77,182	74,717
	T	1,51,899	77,182	74,717
Manikchak	U	—	—	—
	R	98,610	49,496	49,114
	T	98,610	49,496	49,114
Kharbā	U	—	—	—
	R	1,37,441	70,448	66,993
	T	1,37,441	70,448	66,993
Harishchandrapur	U	—	—	—
	R	1,36,682	69,585	67,097
	T	1,36,682	69,585	67,097
Gājōl	U	—	—	—
	R	94,505	47,959	46,546
	T	94,505	47,959	46,546
Bāmongōlā	U	—	—	—
	R	47,805	24,183	23,622
	T	47,805	24,183	23,622
TOTAL	U	50,785	27,110	23,675
	R	11,71,138	5,94,880	5,76,258
	T	12,21,923	6,21,990	5,99,933

Source: Deputy Superintendent of Census Operations, West Bengal.

POPULATION ACCORDING TO MAJOR MOTHER-TONGUES

(1961 Census Figures)

Police stations	Bengali	Hindi	Urdu	Santali	Mundari	Kurukh/ Orāon	Khoirhā/ Khotiā	Oriyā	Pahāriā
English Bazar	98,140	6,412	3,919	234	3	8	19,915	1,944	584
Kaliachak	2,48,351	1,821	7,859	12	—	7	25,539	2	1
Maldā (Old)	38,318	2,892	150	10,140	51	8	267	53	278
Habibpur	46,112	5,626	6	34,781	145	1	658	1	35
Ratuā	1,49,083	1,783	427	1	1	250	11	—	15
Manikchak	87,566	1,453	7,308	—	—	—	2,260	—	—
Kharbā	1,30,058	1,946	321	1,637	510	2,801	81	—	—
Harishchandrapur	1,27,947	5,450	543	1,661	285	510	134	21	40
Gājōl	61,965	2,056	523	27,729	27	202	796	—	554
Bāmongōlā	33,906	1,532	13	11,652	—	460	163	—	—
TOTAL:	10,21,446	30,971	21,069	87,847	1,022	4,247	49,824	2,021	1,507

Source: Office of the Superintendent of Census Operations, West Bengal.



POPULATION ACCORDING TO RELIGIONS

(1961 Census Figures)

Hindus	..	..	..	..	..	6,55,415
Muslims	..	..	..	..	..	5,64,331
Persons professing other religions	..	..	..	..	..	2,177
TOTAL POPULATION						12,21,923

Source : Office of the Superintendent of Census Operations, West Bengal.

TABLES

POPULATION AND ITS VARIATION SINCE 1901

Total Rural Urban	Year	Population	Decade variation	Percentage decade variation
Total	1901	6,03,649	..	..
	1911	6,98,547	+ 94,898	+ 15.72
	1921	6,86,174	- 12,373	- 1.77
	1931	7,20,440	+ 34,266	+ 4.99
	1941	8,44,315	+ 1,23,875	+ 17.19
	1951	9,37,580	+ 93,265	+ 11.05
	1961	12,21,923	+ 2,84,343	+ 30.33
Rural	1901	5,86,239	..	..
	1911	6,80,475	+ 94,236	+ 16.07
	1921	6,68,972	- 11,503	- 1.69
	1931	7,00,754	+ 31,782	+ 4.75
	1941	8,17,137	+ 1,16,383	+ 16.61
	1951	9,02,419	+ 85,282	+ 10.44
	1961	11,71,138	+ 2,68,719	+ 29.78
Urban	1901	17,410	..	..
	1911	18,072	+ 662	+ 3.80
	1921	17,202	- 870	- 4.81
	1931	19,686	+ 2,484	+ 14.44
	1941	27,178	+ 7,492	+ 38.06
	1951	35,161	+ 7,983	+ 29.37
	1961	50,785	+ 15,624	+ 44.44

Source : Office of the Superintendent of Census Operations, West Bengal.

MIGRATION

Place of birth

Country/State where born	Persons	Males	Females
Total population	Total 12,21,923	6,21,990	5,99,933
	Rural 11,71,138	5,94,880	5,76,258
	Urban 50,785	27,110	23,675
A. Born in India	Total 11,52,910	5,86,483	5,66,427
	Rural 11,12,065	5,65,000	5,47,065
	Urban 40,845	21,483	19,362
I. Within the State of enumeration	Total 11,21,883	5,72,762	5,49,121
	Rural 10,85,211	5,53,409	5,31,802
	Urban 36,672	19,353	17,319
(a) Born in place of enumeration	Total 8,66,635	5,09,428	3,57,207
	Rural 8,37,237	4,93,960	3,43,277
	Urban 29,398	15,468	13,930
(b) Born elsewhere in the District of enumeration	Total 2,35,568	55,130	1,80,438
	Rural 2,31,259	52,760	1,78,499
	Urban 4,309	2,370	1,939
(c) Born in other districts of the State	Total 19,680	8,204	11,476
	Rural 16,715	6,689	10,026
	Urban 2,965	1,515	1,450
II. States in India beyond the State of enumeration	Total 31,027	13,721	17,306
	Rural 26,854	11,591	15,263
	Urban 4,173	2,130	2,043
Some selected States	Total 27,079	11,496	15,583
1. Bihar	Total 24,367	9,885	14,482
	Urban 2,712	1,611	1,101
2. Uttar Pradesh	Total 2,467	1,182	1,285
	Rural 1,674	1,124	550
	Urban 793	58	735
3. Orissa	Total 333	296	37
	Rural 175	162	13
	Urban 158	134	24
4. Rajasthan	Total 305	168	137
	Rural 267	158	109
	Urban 38	10	28
5. Assam	Total 260	114	146
	Rural 170	95	75
	Urban 90	19	71
B. Countries in Asia beyond India (including U.S.S.R.)	Total 64,685	33,476	31,209
	Rural 54,747	27,851	26,896
	Urban 9,938	5,625	4,313
Some selected countries in Asia beyond India	Total 64,474	33,305	31,169
1. Pakistan	Total 54,598	27,741	26,857
	Rural 9,876	5,564	4,312
2. Nepal	Total 206	168	38
	Rural 144	107	37
	Urban 62	61	1
C. Countries beyond Asia (Europe only)	Total 14	4	10
	Rural 12	2	10
	Urban 2	2	..
D. Unclassifiable	Total 4,314	2,027	2,287
	Rural 4,314	2,027	2,287
	Urban ..	..	..
Total Migrants	Total 1,19,720	57,432	62,288
	Rural 1,02,642	48,160	54,482
	Urban 17,078	9,272	7,806

Source : Office of the Superintendent of Census Operations, West Bengal.

CHAPTER IV

AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION

Land utilization.

In 1958-59 the net area sown amounted to 6,40,000 acres. This amounted to 69.6 per cent of the total area of the district. In 1947-48 the net area sown amounted to 7,29,900 acres, i.e. the net area sown amounted to 79.4 per cent of the total area of the district. These figures show a considerable diminution in the net area sown, since 1947-48, the reasons for which are not known. In 1953-54, the net area sown amounted to 7,21,600 acres or 78.5 per cent of the total area of the district. In that year the current fallows accounted for 32,200 acres, the area not available for cultivation was, 87,000 acres and 50,100 acres consisted of other uncultivated lands excluding current fallows. According to the District Agriculture Officer, Māldā, the extent of cultivable waste is not appreciable, having been in the neighbourhood of 12,000 acres in 1957-58. Not much appears to have been accomplished to reclaim even this small area of cultivable waste land. The area under forest being inconsiderable there is no scope for the clearing of forests and of bringing virgin land under the plough.

Natural Divisions.

The area of the district may be divided into three zones, viz. (1) the *bārind*, (2) the *tāl* and (3) the *diārā*. The *bārind* lies to the east of the Mahānandā river and is characterized by undulating ground which forms a part of the tract which stretches into West Dinājpur and Rājshāhi.

“The country is high, open and undulating, seamed with small water-courses in the valleys, and practically devoid of shade except for the village sites and small patches of sal forest here and there in Habibpur police-station. . . . The ground is baked hard as iron, drinking water is scarce, . . . and as one moves across the country, the eye is met by a seemingly endless series of terraced slopes, devoid of any crop, and quivering under the heat of the sun. In autumn the same country is a green expanse of winter rice.”

The *tāl* region is situated to the west of the Mahānandā river. The *tāl* region covers approximately Harishchandrapur and Ratua police stations between the Mahānandā in the north and the Kālındri in the south.

“It is a low-lying area, subject to inundation with the rise of the rivers. The water comes in from the Ganges by the Kālındri in the south and from the Mahananda in the north. The Mahananda often rises rapidly, and failing to find an outlet through the silted-up channels leading from it, overflows the country to its south. The result is that crops on a lower level cannot keep pace with the rise of water and are often flooded out. . . .

“The *Tal* is almost entirely under cultivation. In Kharba police-station and the northern part of the *Tal*, the principal crops are jute and paddy. Mango gardens, which are not to be found in the Barind, now become fairly common, and there are several very large orchards . . . Further south in Ratua police-station *aus* paddy and rabi crops are chiefly grown. The country here is mainly open until one comes to the bank of the Kālındri which is fringed with thickly populated villages and mango gardens. The whole area is intersected with khals, which drain the flood water into the Kālındri river and into various beels. The khals dry up during the hot weather, but until then communication is rendered difficult.”

The *tāl* area slopes gradually towards the south and west till it merges with the *diārā* region.

“South of the lower reaches of the Kālındri lies the most thickly populated part of the district. A belt of densely wooded villages and mango gardens stretches along the southern bank of the Kālındri and the western bank of the Mahananda. In the northern portion of this belt there was formerly a good deal of mulberry cultivation, but the lands are now given over to mango. . . . Between the main road leading from English Bazar to the ruins of Gaur and the belt of villages along the Mahananda, the country is low-lying and marshy. The soil is dark, consisting chiefly of clay, and producing *aman* paddy, and on the edges of the beels *boro* paddy. . . .

“ . . . The principal features of this central portion of the district are the mango groves, the mulberry lands and the tanks. Mango gardens are to be found in every village, and are particularly thick along the Kālındri and Mahananda rivers. Viewed from the air, it is hardly possible to get a glimpse of the earth, except where the trees are young and undeveloped.”

The Diara.

“The diara consists of a strip roughly eight miles in width along the western and southern sides of the district. Its formation is the result of centuries of fluvial action by the Ganges, the old channels of which can still be traced, beginning from the present course of the Bhagirathi river beside Gaur, and extending westwards by successive stages. . . . Mango gardens are common and some mulberry is grown. The soil is of a light variety, with a sandy appearance.”

Further west towards the Ganges the soil becomes sandier. The principal crops in the *diārā* region are *aus* paddy, wheat, barley, oats and mustard. Sugarcane is also grown in some areas.

Soil.

“The natural division of the district into two halves separated by the Mahananda river, serves to distinguish the two principal varieties of soil. East of the Mahananda, the soil of the Barind is the red soil of old alluvial formation, which is found in the neighbouring districts of Dinājpur and Rājshahi and other Bengal districts. It is composed of stiff clay, containing iron and lime, and becomes extremely hard

in the cold weather. Even a heavy shower will not do more than make it slippery on the surface. It produces winter rice and a variety of rabi crops.

“West of the Mahananda the soil is a light loam called do-ash. It is a later alluvial formation, and consists of an admixture of clay and sand. On the eastern side the proportion of clay is greater, but the further west one goes towards the Ganges, the greater becomes the proportion of sand. Along the Ganges itself, the chars and other areas which are liable to inundation, are often covered with a thin deposit of silt over the sand, locally known as Chama. The do-ash type of soil is the most fertile in the district, and produces jute, aus paddy and a large variety of rabi crops and vegetables. It is also the most suitable for mango gardens.

“A third kind of soil is found in the low-lying areas, beels and valleys. This is a dark loam called matial (*mātiāl*.—Ed.). In the Tangan and Purnabhaha valleys this soil is also found, but it has a greater admixture of clay. It is fertile and produces chiefly aman or boro paddy, according to the level of the land, and rabi crops.”*

(a) AGRICULTURE

Major Crops.

Among the principal crops of the district mention may be made of *āman* or winter paddy, *āus* or autumn paddy and *bôrô* or summer paddy, barley, wheat, maize, pulses, mustard, jute, mesta and sugarcane. In 1959-60, 3,02,600 acres were under *āman* paddy, 1,46,700 acres under *āus* paddy, 27,000 acres under *bôrô* or summer paddy, 62,000 acres under barley, 8,100 acres under wheat, 35,500 acres under maize and approximately 1,89,000 acres under various kinds of pulses, of which the greatest area (more than 1,09,000 acres) was under *māshkalāi*, 37,800 acres under mustard, 58,100 acres under jute, 15,200 acres under mesta and 8,800 acres under sugarcane. Some amount of linseed is also cultivated; 7,700 acres being put under linseed during 1959-60. In addition, small quantities of potato, tobacco, ginger, pepper and *til* are also grown.

Modes of cultivation.

“Aman paddy falls into two classes—the species which is transplanted, known as haimantik, and that which is broadcast, known as aghani. Haimantik paddy is sown in a seedling bed, generally after the showers in May. The quantity of seed required is 20 seers per acre. The fields which are to receive the paddy are ploughed up, normally five times throughout June, and when the rains have set in, the ails are repaired to hold as much water as possible and the transplantation commences. Weeding is not strictly necessary. The crop is harvested in late November or in December.

“The normal outturn is 18 maunds per acre, but in the Barind it is difficult to give any accurate figure because the outturn varies considerably, as does the value of land, according to

Yield of major crops.

* M. O. Carter—Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the District of Malda, 1928-35, pp. 2-5.

the level. The valleys lying between the undulations are naturally the most productive, as plenty of rain water accumulates, and they are the least likely to suffer from the effects of drought. The lowest level is locally known as kandar, and is capable of producing 20 maunds in specially good localities, and on an average 18 maunds per acre.

“The slopes, which are known as ‘arkandar,’ are liable to get a less adequate supply of water and are accordingly less valuable. Their outturn would be 14 or 15 maunds per acre. The highest land is the least valuable, and is often affected by drought which, if it does not ruin the crop, leaves it stunted. The average outturn in the danga, or high land, cannot be taken at more than 10 maunds per acre.

“For the cultivation of aghani or broadcast paddy, the method of preparing the land is the same, with the exception that ails are not necessary to retain the water. In the north west of the district the paddy-growing land is classified according to the species of paddy grown. Thus, land sown (sown—Ed.) with transplanted paddy is known as ‘ropa’ from the word meaning to plant, and that sown broadcast is called ‘meda’.

“For aus cultivation the fields are ploughed up and harrowed five or six times during February and March, when the early showers have moistened the soil. The seed, about 24 seers per acre, is shown (sown—Ed.) broadcast in the early part of April and the ground is again ploughed and harrowed. Ordinarily there is one weeding. The crop is harvested in September and the average outturn may be taken at 12 maunds per acre.

“The seed for boro paddy is sown in October in soft clayish soil generally situated near the edge of a beel. When the seedlings are nearly a foot high they are transplanted into a similar, but rather larger, plot. Meanwhile the land which is to receive them is ploughed three or four times, and churned up with the water covering it. In January the seedlings are finally transplanted, and the crop is harvested towards the end of April or in May. The yield is higher than that of any other kind of paddy, but the grain is coarser. The average outturn is 24 maunds per acre.”*

Paddy.

The principal varieties of *āman* paddy cultivated in the district are *Sonākuri*, *Brinful*, *Indrasāl*, *Kāñjial*, *Kalam* (*choṭṭa*), *Māri*, *Cheṅgā*, *Kārticksāl*, *Mahipāl*, *Muṅgi*, *Jhulan*, *Tilakful*, *Bāsful*, *Khāsā*, *Kālokhāsā*, *Nawābkhāsā* and *Chiniātap*. The district is not self-sufficient in rice.

Mango.

The *fazli* mango of Māldā is noted throughout India. The variety known as *lahgrā* is also grown here to an appreciable extent. The following account about production of mango in the district is reproduced from the Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the District of Māldā (1928-1935) of M. O. Carter:

* *ibid.*, pp. 33-34.

“The mango is another product for which Malda is famous. It is extensively grown over the whole district, with the exception of the Barind tract where the red alluvium is not suitable for its cultivation, and the diara strip along the Ganges, where the proportion of sand in the soil is excessive. English Bazar is by far the largest and best mango-growing thana. The area covered by mango gardens is 15 square miles, or one-sixth of the total area of the thana. It is followed by thanas Ratua, Sibganj, Kaliachak, Kharba, Malda, Harishchandrapur, Gomastapur* and Bholahat* in that order. The most thickly-grown area lies along the banks of the Mahananda and Kalindri rivers. Seen from the air, it presents an unbroken expanse of foliage, with occasional open fields, studded with rows of dots, where new orchards have been planted. The trees are planted on fairly high ground, above the flood level, in soil which is generally a light and rather sandy loam. The fruit has an excellent flavour, and is free from the taste of turpentine so often found in mangoes of an inferior species. Probably the flavour is due to the soil, which is lacking in saline properties. The cocoanut palm for example, which requires a certain amount of salt in the soil, is hardly to be found in the mango-growing part of the district, and the few trees that do exist bear no fruit.

“In the north-west of the district there are several large mango gardens belonging to the Chanchal, Harishchandrapur and Bhaluka zamindars. The gardens, which cover several hundred acres, are held khas, and in a good year bring a large income to their owners. It is rather interesting to note that in the time of the Nizams of Bengal and afterwards, the zamindars were deprived of this source of income. Writing of Nawab Jafar Ali Khan, the author of Riyaz-us-Salatin observes that the Nizam employed a Superintendent of mango-supplies who was posted in the Chaklah of Akbarnagar (in the west of Malda district) ‘and he, counting the mangoes of the khas trees, entered them in the accounts, and showed their collection and disposal; and the watchmen and carriers, levying the expenses of carriage from the zamindars (a rather unkind imposition) sent the sweet and delicious mangoes from Malda, Kotwali, Husainpur, Akbarnagar and other places. And the zamindars had no power to cut down the khas mango trees: on the contrary, the mangoes of all the gardens of the aforesaid Chaklah were attached. And this practice was more rigorously observed in the times of previous Nizams of Bengal. Even at present (1788) when the administration of Bengal is virtually in the hands of the Christian English, and only the nominal Nizamat rests with Nawab Mubarak-ud-daulah, son of Nawab Jafar Ali Khan, in the mango season the Superintendent of the khas mangoes

* Now in East Pakistan.

proceeds to Malda on behalf of the aforesaid Nawab Mubarak-ud-daulah, attaches the mangoes of the khas trees, and sends them to the Nawab, and the zamindars do not go near the khas mango trees. But the Superintendent no longer obtains the carriage expenses from the zamindars, nor does he enjoy his former prestige and respect.’

“The planting of a mango garden requires initially a certain amount of labour, and attention—in fact there is a saying in the district that the nurture of young mango plants is as difficult as that of children. The ground is first ploughed up thoroughly, and sometimes has to be drained by excavating ditches round it. It then has to be fenced to prevent damage by cattle. Transplantation takes place in July, when the rainfall is at its heaviest, and each plant has to be separately fenced with a circular wall of bamboo matting. The plants are arranged in straight rows at intervals of about 10 yards. During the first year they require regular watering and constant attention, and up till the sixth year, when the young trees begin to bear fruit, the ground has to be regularly weeded or dug up to keep it clear of undergrowth. During the first few years it is possible to grow crops on the same land; but thereafter cultivation has to be stopped, in order that the trees may receive the full benefit of the soil. The initial cost of planting a mango garden is between Rs. 40 and Rs. 50 per acre. The rent for mango gardens, where separate rates prevail, is generally Rs. 6 per acre, which is distinctly higher than the average rate of rent for paddy land.

“There are in the main two varieties of mango—the guti or ordinary mango grown from seed, and the kalam, which is grown from graftings. The latter is a superior quality, and fetches a higher price.

“The earliest mangoes are the Gopalbhog and Brindaban—a small but fine flavoured fruit. Then come the Lengra, Khirshapati, Kissonbhog and other species. The last but one and largest is the Fazli, and the last is the Aswini which, though rather inferior in flavour, generally commands a higher price, because it is the only available mango at that season.

“The mango trade is one of the most important in the district, and one which has an important economic effect on the district. As soon as the trees have blossomed, speculation begins. The price varies according to the class of mango and the effect of the weather on the crop, for hail and heavy rain are most injurious to the formation of the fruit. When the price of a garden is finally fixed, the purchaser may re-sell it at a profit to another dealer, and in this way it may change hands three or four times before the fruit is actually picked. This is done with long bamboo poles to the end of which nets are attached. Almost the entire crop is then exported, chiefly to Calcutta and Eastern Bengal. The railway platforms at this season are crowded with baskets filled with mangoes, and the Mahananda and Kalindri rivers are lined

with boats, some of 500 maunds burthen, waiting to take the crop to Eastern Bengal. Most of the dealers are merchants from East Bengal; and there are also middlemen, who do a brokery business, and receive a commission from the dealers and the owners of gardens.

“A good year brings prosperity to a large section of the population. The owners of gardens make a handsome profit when prices are good, because once the trees have started bearing fruit, the cost of maintenance is negligible. The poor people also benefit, because there is an unwritten law that windfalls are the property of the first comer. Every storm or gale brings them out to collect what they can. Even in the middle of the night one sees lanterns flickering in the mango gardens. In this way they manage to lay in a considerable stock whether they own trees or not, and as mangoes comprise half of their diet for about two months in the year, a good season is of no small importance to them. They can also make a small income by selling various preparations such as ‘amchur,’ which consists of slices of green mango dried in the sun, and ‘amsatwa’. This is a preparation which is exported in large quantities as far as the Punjab and Madras. It is made from the juice of ripe fruit, which has been pressed, spread out and solidified by the application of a drying agent. The process by which the juice is dried is a trade secret of the people who manufacture amsatwa. Its price varies from 4 annas to Rs. 2-8 a pound. ConDIMENTS and pickles of various kinds are also made from green mangoes; and the export of grafts from good trees is another source of income. The price of these varies from 6 annas to a rupee each.”

In 1958, 44,000 acres of land were devoted to the mango plantations, on 27,515 acres of which the grafted varieties of trees were raised. The remaining areas are devoted to the production of *guṭi* mangoes i.e., mangoes obtained from the trees which are raised from seeds. Among various varieties of mango produced in the district, the most important is the variety known as Fazli. The other varieties are the Bômbâi, the Laṅgrâ, the Āswini, the Kālāpāhār, and as has already been mentioned by Carter, the Gopālbhōg, the Brindāban, the Khirsāpati and the Kissonbhōg.

At present there is practically no market for the Māldā mango in East Pakistan and the exploration of alternative markets is the main problem now facing the trade. An air field was constructed a few years ago near the town of Māldā, primarily for air-lifting mango from Māldā to Calcutta but due to reasons which are not clear at the moment, full advantage of the means provided for the transshipment of mango by air has not yet been taken by persons in the mango trade.

Recently a co-operative society has been set up at Māldā for preparing various edible products from mango. The experience gained by this society shows that there is a growing market for the mango products, if properly packed.

For the improvement of agriculture, an agricultural farm near the district headquarters and 9 farms in the remaining 9 police stations of the district have been established. In each of the thana agricultural farms improved varieties of paddy seeds are produced for distribution among the cultivators residing within the police station. As it is not possible for one thana agricultural farm to supply improved paddy seeds to all the cultivators in the police station who might be in need of the same, arrangements have also been made to increase the production of improved seeds through selected cultivators. These cultivators are given small quantities of superior quality of seeds on the understanding that they would cultivate the required area of land and sow it with such seeds and then distribute the resulting paddy as seed to other cultivators.

In the district agricultural farm there is a seed multiplication branch which is in charge of a farm manager who is under the control and supervision of the Deputy Director of Agriculture. The multiplication of superior varieties of paddy seeds is carried on by this branch while in the other branch of the agricultural farm, researches in agricultural technique relating to the production of various crops are conducted. Before any new crop is introduced into the district, it is first tried out in the district agricultural farm.

Apart from supplying superior qualities of seeds, mostly paddy, jute and mesta, the Department of Agriculture has also been trying to initiate the local cultivators to the improved agricultural techniques. For this purpose demonstration plots are selected in a large number of villages, with the consent of the owners of those plots of land. In these plots of land are cultivated jute, paddy or mesta under the direct supervision and guidance of the staff of the Agriculture Department for demonstrating to the cultivators the advantages to be gained from the adoption of improved agricultural techniques.

Improved agricultural technique consists of the use of superior quality of seed, the use of proper fertilizer and manures in the light of the properties of the soil being cultivated and adequate irrigation. The use of improved types of agricultural implements also falls under the category of improved agricultural technique. The Department of Agriculture has been trying to introduce implements like the Mould Board Ploughs, Wheel Hoes, Seed Drill etc., but the impact of such improved implements on the agriculture of the district has not yet begun to be felt. The cultivators even now use the traditional implements like the plough made of *bāblā* wood with an iron share.

The Department of Agriculture sold 7,981 maunds (2,978.5 quintals) of ammonium sulphate, 604 mds. (225.4 quintals) of fertilizer mixture and 3,450 cubic feet of town compost during 1959-60.

Plant protector equipments like hand dusters, sprayers, power sprayers and power dusters are stored in every Block and Agricultural Inspectors' office and insecticides are also distributed among cultivators from these offices.

(b) DRAINAGE, EMBANKMENT AND IRRIGATION

Drainage scheme.

Since the attainment of Independence 7 drainage schemes have been executed by the Department of Irrigation. These are (1) Mallikpārā dārā scheme in police station Kharbā, the object of which is to help cultivation and to improve sanitary condition by flushing an area of about 25 square miles (64.8 sq. km.); (2) Construction of a regulator over Gaurhand dārā in connection with the Bôaliā *beel* scheme in police station Kharbā, the object of which is to save the *Bhādoi* crop from early submersion and to retain water to a certain depth for helping *rabi* and *bôrô* cultivation; (3) Toffidārā scheme in police station Kāliāchak which provides for the construction of a regulator over Toffidārā to save *Bhādoi* crop from early flood of the river Pāglā; (4) Kānchan *beel bundh* scheme in police station Gājôl which provides for the construction of a regulator and the re-modelling of the Kānchan *beel bundh* to save 3,000 bighās (approximately 1,000 acres) of land from early flood of the river Chirāmati and to regulate the water of the *beel* according to requirements; (5) a regulator over Kālāpāhār *bundh* in police station Ratuā, the object of which is to save the *Bhādoi* crop from early submersion and to retain water up to a certain depth for helping *rabi* and *bôrô* cultivation; (6) Lykol *khāl* sluice in police station Ratuā which provides for the construction of a regulator over the Lykol *khāl* for preventing early submersion; (7) Bātizorā irrigation scheme in police station Gājôl which supplies irrigation water for *rabi* and *bôrô* cultivation. The other schemes are embankment schemes, viz. (1) *bundh* on the left bank of the river Mahānandā at Sāhāpur for flood protection, which has been constructed to protect buildings and houses on the bank of the river Mahānandā at that place and to check erosion; (2) Mahānandā embankment at English Bazar meant for the protection of the town of English Bazar or Māldā; and (3) *bundh* in the Sambalpur Union in police station Ratuā for protecting low-lying areas by the construction of a circuit embankment and regulators. The area to be benefitted from the last mentioned scheme is approximately 11,000 acres. There are also a few other flushing and drainage schemes, viz. (1) Hālnā Meherpur scheme in police station Māldā, (2) Rāmpur-Kaliāganj channel scheme in police station Harishchandrapur, (3) Bāramāshiā river scheme in police station Kharbā and (4) Baishnabnagar Chaksiddhi scheme in police station Kāliāchak. All these schemes have been implemented for the prevention of water-logging in the respective areas. The details of all the schemes executed by the Department of Irrigation in the district since the attainment of independence are given in the appendix to this Chapter.

Other flushing and drainage schemes.

Minor irrigation schemes.

Improvement of tanks.

The Department of Agriculture aims to introduce irrigation with river water obtained by means of pumps and deep tube-wells. That Department has also been executing minor irrigation schemes such as the construction of *bundhs* or small reservoirs of water. The extension of irrigation benefits from tanks or *bundhs* falls properly within the jurisdiction of the Tanks Improvement Department. During the First Five Year Plan period 571 tanks were re-excavated

under the Bengal Tanks Improvement Act and during the Second Five Year Plan period 284 tanks were so re-excavated. The total expenditure for re-excavation of tanks during the First Plan period amounted to Rs. 13,62,813 and during the Second Plan period to Rs. 5,14,203. Prior to the First Five Year Plan, 181 tanks had been improved at a cost of Rs. 4,03,260. The total area benefited by these 1,036 improved tanks is 21,778 acres.

Indigenous methods of irrigation.

“There are two methods of irrigation, which are locally known as ‘sechan’ and ‘melan’. Sechan consists of raising the water, when the land to be irrigated is on a higher level than the water of the tank. For this a ‘jant’ is employed, consisting of a hollowed out tree trunk fastened to bamboo posts which are embedded in the tank. The water is raised, and sluiced down a narrow channel into the first field. When this field has received its full capacity, a cut is made in the ail, and the water is allowed to flow into the next field. The process is continued until all the fields have been irrigated within a convenient radius of the tank.

“Melan is the reverse case, when the level of the water is higher than that of the land to be irrigated. A narrow cut is made in the bank of the tank, generally at one corner, through which the water runs until a sufficient supply has been obtained. The channel is then filled in with enough earth to stop the flow. As might be expected, sechan is the form of irrigation in general use during the earlier summer months, and melan when the rains have set in and the tanks are full of water.”*

A few small irrigation schemes were executed during 1959-60 by the Tribal Welfare Department.

(c) ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND FISHERIES

Live-stock.

The cattle census of 1956 revealed that there were 4,54,722 heads of cattle and 49,666 buffaloes giving a total of 5,04,388 for the bovine population. In addition, there were 2,47,567 goats and 20,358 sheep. But there was no private dairy farm in the district. Almost every farmer keeps a few cows or buffaloes and either the whole or surplus milk is sold to the wholesale dealers in milk who convert a portion of it into casein for sale to sweetmeat shops; the rest being sold as milk and curd. Similarly there is no farm in the district in which goats or sheep are reared, and the total number of goats and sheep found in the district are the properties of a portion of the population of the district. There are also a few horses (4,691) and pigs (16,681). Among fodder crops mention may be made of jowar, maize and *kalāi*.

Measures for cattle improvement.

The cattle found in the district are usually of a larger size than those found in other parts of West Bengal, but the Government has undertaken to still further improve the quality of cattle. Under

* *ibid.*, p. 34.

this scheme 91 bulls belonging to superior breed were being maintained by the Government in the district on 31.3.61. On the same date there were also 3 artificial insemination centres with 18 sub-centres for artificially impregnating cows. Another part of this scheme consists of castration of scrub-bulls. Certain areas were selected during the First and Second Plan periods for intensive cattle development work. These areas are comprised of the police stations of Mānikchak, Kāliāchak and English Bazar. In these areas the results so far achieved have been found to be encouraging, there having been a noticeable increase in the milk yield per improved cow obtained as a result of cross-breeding.

Poultry and poultry improvement.

During the Live-stock Census of 1956, the numbers of fowls and ducks were ascertained at 3,81,240 and 36,598 respectively. With a view to improve the quality of the poultry, a poultry extension centre has been established by the Government at Māldā. Poultry birds of improved strain were distributed in large numbers at subsidized rates. During the Second Plan period the number of poultry birds of superior quality distributed amounted to 6,593. Much obviously still requires to be done in this direction.

Live-stock shows are organized every year in the areas where development programme has been initiated.

Veterinary Service.

Between 1953-54 and 1959-60 no disease could break out among the cattle or poultry in an epidemic form. The absence of any epidemic disease among the cattle or poultry appears to be due mainly to the inoculations given by the staff under the District Veterinary Officer, Māldā. These inoculations were carried out in the face of threatened epidemics. Such inoculations or vaccinations are carried out as a matter of routine among the bovine population and poultry in the district. In 1953-54, 1,53,586 heads of cattle were inoculated against rinderpest, while in 1959-60, 39,713 poultry birds were inoculated against *rānikhet* disease.

Fisheries.

The quantity of fish produced in a year is of the order of 6,60,000 maunds (2,46,312 quintals). The water area of the district also abounds in tortoise, and crustacea of which the principal varieties are shrimp, prawns and crabs. These are also consumed by all classes of people. In 1960, 17,739 maunds (6,620.2 quintals) of various kinds of fish valued at Rs. 12,41,730 were exported from the district to places like Siliguri, Jalpāiguri, Cooch Behār, Ālipur Duār, Kāṭihār and Māl Junction. These figures relate to the export by rail.

Fishery improvement.

The water surface is gradually decreasing due to the deposit of alluvium as also on account of the implementation of the various flushing and drainage schemes executed by the Department of Irrigation. The reclamation of *beels* for agriculture is another cause. With a view to increasing the annual output of fish, the Department of Fisheries has undertaken schemes for the improvement of partially derelict tanks. Between 1950 and 1955-56, such derelict tanks used to be improved under the scheme for the improvement of tank fisheries in the dry districts of West Bengal. Since 1957-58 this scheme has been somewhat modified under which medium term loans are granted for pisciculture in semi-

derelict tanks. Between 1950-51 and 1955-56, 119 persons received loans aggregating Rs. 38,800 for improving 145 tanks recovering a total water area of 108.54 acres. Under the medium term loans scheme, 96 persons received loans between 1957-58 and 1960-61. A total sum of Rs. 18,450 was spent for improving 70 tanks, the total water area of which was 51.30 acres. Under the union tank fishery development scheme loans were granted between 1949-50 and 1955-56 to 215 persons, totalling Rs. 60,913. The number of tanks improved was 367, the total water area being 395.91 acres. Under the short term loans scheme for augmenting fish production in culturable tanks, 66 persons received loans between 1956-57 and 1960-61 for augmenting fish production in 57 tanks having a total water area of 81.90 acres. The total amount disbursed by way of loans to the 66 persons was Rs. 8,650. Carp spawns are collected from the local rivers and exported to other parts of West Bengal in appreciable quantities.

(d) FORESTRY

Reserved Forests.

Forestry is not an important activity in the economy of the district. There is only one Reserved Forest at Hālnā measuring 351.01 acres. The protected forests amount to 1,037.98 acres in area, but they are scattered and are not to be found in one compact block. The Kālnā protected forest measures 122.70 acres in area, the Pāthar Mahādeb-bāṭi protected forest 149.04 acres, the Hālnā protected forest 31.25 acres, the Jāmālpur protected forest 124.49 acres, the Mazilkhān protected forest 20.62 acres, the Goālchaitā protected forest 50.25 acres, the Tālisān protected forest 4.70 acres, the Pātherbanpur protected forest 157.91 acres, the Anandapāther protected forest 45.28 acres, the Kariāli protected forest 263.84 acres, and the Mālancha and Kharunā protected forests measure 67.90 acres, making up the total of 1,037.98 acres. Besides the reserved and protected forests there are the unclassified State forests. These are the forests at Pāthar Sibrām (13.20 acres), Dolācholā Pātharkhairān (332.72 acres), Ādinā (70.17 acres), Sāhārōl (549.04 acres), Arāji Deoharāl (1.20 acres), Kariāli (2.00 acres), Kutub Sahar (46.18 acres), Kochākāndar (17.01 acres), Rājārāmpur (49.15 acres), Kālnā (23.29 acres), Rāngāmati (8.51 acres), Bhālukhōlā (1.72 acres), Pather Sibrām (84.73 acres), Sālukā (468.62 acres), Bālisimlā Sasindā (225.50 acres), Karchadāngā (3.71 acres), Garhar (54.00 acres) and Abhirāmpur (8.03 acres). The main forest produce of the district are timber, firewood and thatch. The principal produce is the thatch grass which fetches as much as Rs. 20,000 per year. The income from forest produce in 1957-58 was Rs. 33,943.39, that in 1958-59 was Rs. 29,767.54, that in 1959-60 was Rs. 23,687.06 and in 1960-61 the income from forest produce was Rs. 35,440.92. The income was, however, less than the expenditure incurred on afforestation and the maintenance and improvement of the existing forests.

Unclassified Forests.

Income from Forest Produce.

Afforestation measures.

During the first Five Year Plan period, 1,843 acres of waste lands were afforested at an approximate cost of Rs. 2,07,185. In the

Second Five Year Plan, 999 acres of waste lands were afforested at an approximate cost of Rs. 1,51,925. So far as soil conservation is concerned, afforestation, gully reclamation and rehabilitation of derelict coppice forests were done over an area of 497 acres at a cost of Rs. 32,255 during the Second Plan period. Afforestation in the district is mainly carried on in areas which are non-cultivable, i.e. either too low for *āman* paddy cultivation or too high for *āus* paddy. The technique for the afforestation of low-lying areas which get inundated during the monsoon consists in constructing big earthen mounds 4½ feet high with a base diameter of 9 feet at intervals of 24 feet or 36 feet, all over the area to be afforested and planting Eucalyptus, *Kadam*, *Sissoo*, *Simul* etc. on them. The planting of the saplings on the earthen mounds ensures that they would not be submerged during the rains. So far as high-lands are concerned, those are afforested by planting Teak along with *Kadam*, Eucalyptus, *Sissoo*, *Sāl* etc.

(e) STATE ASSISTANCE TO AGRICULTURE

Agricultural loans.

Agriculturists are given financial assistance in the shape of loans by the Collector. These loans are granted under (1) the Agriculturists' Loans Act and (2) the Land Improvement Loans Act. The loans under the Agriculturists' Loans Act are advanced under two different procedures, viz. the normal procedure under which loans are advanced separately to individuals and the procedure adopted in case of distress caused by drought and other natural calamities when loans are advanced to groups of cultivators jointly. Under the second method, although each cultivator receives his share of the money, all the members of the group who execute the loan bond remain jointly and severally responsible for the repayment of the loan. The loans advanced under the Agriculturists' Loans Act thus mainly help the cultivators tide over either the seasonal or calamitous financial stringency. In 1957-58, the total amount disbursed by way of agricultural loans was Rs. 27,54,940, the total number of beneficiaries being 1,11,144. In 1958-59, the total amount advanced was Rs. 27,36,670, the total number of beneficiaries being 1,16,838. In 1959-60, the amount disbursed as agricultural loans was only Rs. 1,19,345, the beneficiaries having been 4,467 in number. In 1960-61, the amount was Rs. 2,53,675, the number of beneficiaries being 15,531. In 1961-62, the total amount disbursed as agricultural loans was Rs. 8,27,908, the total number of beneficiaries having been 33,259.

Land improvement loans.

Land improvement loans are usually granted for bringing virgin lands under the plough. The total amount disbursed in the year 1957-58 was Rs. 660, the number of beneficiaries having been only 2. In 1958-59, the amount disbursed was Rs. 2,890 and the beneficiaries numbered 6. In 1959-60, the amount was Rs. 3,930 and the beneficiaries numbered again 6. In 1960-61, no amount was disbursed by way of land improvement loan. In 1961-62, Rs. 1,710 were disbursed by way of land improvement loans, the number of beneficiaries being 5.

Cattle purchase loans.

Besides these two loans, agriculturists are also advanced loans to purchase bullocks. In 1957-58, Rs. 2,91,690 were disbursed as cattle purchase loans, 2,089 persons benefiting from the expenditure. In 1958-59, the amount disbursed was Rs. 1,21,850, the number of beneficiaries having been 1,015. In 1959-60, the amount disbursed was Rs. 29,450 and the number of beneficiaries was 209. In 1960-61, the amount disbursed was Rs. 28,525 and the number of beneficiaries was 165. In 1961-62, the amount disbursed as cattle purchase loans was Rs. 60,000, the number of beneficiaries having been 360.

Loans for mango processing.

Mango is an important crop in the district and in 1958-59, Rs. 1,00,000 were advanced as loan to the Mango Processing Co-operative Society, Māldā. The same Society received a further instalment of Rs. 60,000 in 1959-60.

(f) FLOODS, DROUGHTS AND HAILSTORMS

Floods.

The chief natural calamities to which the district is exposed are flood, drought and hailstorms. But as the district is divided into two distinct regions, one of which is situated at a higher level than the other (the *bārind* and the *tāl*) floods cannot affect the entire district equally. In fact the *bārind* area usually remains free from floods. The years of high flood were 1875, 1885 and 1906. These floods resulted not from local rainfall but from an abnormal rise of the rivers, the most important of which is the Ganges. Most of the rivers and streams which flow through Māldā take their rise in the hills in the north and are therefore susceptible to sudden freshets caused by heavy rainfall in the hills or the melting of snow. In 1871, the Mahānandā, which rarely overflows its banks, spilled over its banks and flooded the surrounding countryside. Many cattle were drowned and damage was caused to the *bhādoi* or autumn paddy and to mulberry. The town of English Bazar was flooded. Generally, floods cause damage to the crops in the *tāl* and *diārā* areas i.e. in the lower portion of the police stations of Harishchandrapur and Kharbā. Besides causing damage to the paddy crop floods also damage the mulberry trees, the leaves of which become useless for feeding silk-worms. In 1885 relief measures had to be undertaken on account of the flood caused by the river Ganges. The areas affected were parts of Kāliāchak, Sibganj* and Nawābganj* police stations. During the flood of 1906, the crops were good in the *bārind* portion of the district although the *diārā* and *tāl* areas suffered. Floods also affected the district in the years 1918, 1922, 1935, 1936 and 1948.

Droughts and consequent famines.

The parts of the district which suffer from drought are the high lands of the *bārind* and parts of Kāliāchak and Kharbā thanas. No precise information is available of the extent to which the district suffered from drought and famine prior to 1874. But it appears from the life of Dr. Thomas, the first Bengal missionary, that in 1787 he and the East India Company's officers at English

* Now in East Pakistan.

Bazar bought children at 6 annas each to prevent their being sold into slavery by their famished parents. In the year 1865-66 there was a famine, and the price of common unhusked rice rose to Rs. 2-8 annas per maund. In 1873, the rainfall was 27.26 inches or half the normal, there being a total cessation of rainfall in September. As a consequence, half the *bhādoi* and *aghāni* and three-fourths of the high-land winter rice were destroyed. In May, 1874, the price of rice rose to 9 seers per rupee. Relief measures were undertaken. 3,946 tons of rice were stored in the district, of which 1,315 tons were distributed free, 1,253 tons were sold, 243 tons paid by way of wages to workers engaged in relief work and 907 tons were advanced as loan. Rs. 26,951 were distributed in cash as gratuitous relief, Rs. 1,06,762 were paid as wages on relief work and Rs. 48,450 were advanced as loan. The number of persons receiving gratuitous relief rose from 1,036 in the middle of April to 6,340 in the middle of May and 13,009 in the beginning of September and to 469 in the first week of October.

Relief works have become almost an annual feature in recent years. Thus between 1957 and 1961, relief operations were undertaken in the district every year. From the 1st of April to the 15th of November 1957, Rs. 8,27,231.25 were paid as wages in cash and 66,634 mds. 7 seers 8 chuttaks of wheat in kind. From 16.11.57 to 7.12.58, the expenditure on payment of wages for relief works amounted to Rs. 14,34,567.93 in cash and 3,41,791 mds. 24 seers of wheat. The expenditure on this account from 1-4-59 to 31-1-60 consisted of Rs. 12,269 in cash and 1,904 mds. 12 seers and 8 chuttaks of wheat. From 1.1.60 to 31.10.60, the amount spent on wages of workers employed on relief works consisted of Rs. 70,941 and 18,324 mds. of wheat. Between 1-4-61 and 31-12-61, the expenditure amounted to Rs. 83,000 and 23,000 mds. of wheat. The average daily attendance of workers was 8,854 during 1-4-57 to 15-11-57, 35,277 during 16-11-57 to 7-12-58, 406 during 1-4-59 to 31-1-60 and 738 during 1-1-60 to 31-10-60. The figure about the average daily attendance during 1-4-61 to 31-12-61 is not available.

The necessity of undertaking relief works almost every year naturally arose out of partial failures of crop but the growth of population and the abolition of the *zamindāry* system, perhaps have been acting as contributory causes to increase the financial distress of the rural people.

"It is rarely that there are two successive years of short rainfall in the *bārind* and the inhabitants of that part are in the habit of keeping stocks of grain: there has also been a steady increase of *boro* and *bhādoi* cultivation in the *bils*. The probabilities are, however, that as the inferior lands continue to be brought under cultivation with the increase of population, the liability to local scarcity will increase, and make it necessary, and profitable, to protect cultivation by irrigation from tanks, as the value of land increases.

"It may be mentioned that in the west of the district there is a local saying that Mālda can never starve as it lies between

the Rarh and the *bārind*. This means that it is not likely that both these portions of Bengal should experience a simultaneous failure of winter rice and both are easily accessible from the *diāra*.*

"Hail storms are common during the months of April and May and sometimes do considerable damage: two storms of exceptional severity were those of 1865 and 1907.

"That of 1907 occurred at 11-30 A.M. on April 1st. It struck the district from the Sonthal hills on a front of two miles southwards of Mānikchāk and extended to Bholāhāt, lasting for half-an-hour. Practically every leaf in its path was cut away: the wheat fields were totally destroyed, and the ears buried in the ground: the mulberry bushes and mango trees were stripped, and *katcha* houses unprotected by bamboo groves, unroofed and wrecked. Some 19 persons were killed, chiefly by falling houses, and numbers were wounded by the hailstones, necessitating the deputation of itinerant hospital assistants. Birds, monkeys and dogs were killed in large numbers, and the loss of human life would have been greater but for the fact that the storm came at the time of midday meal, when people had left the open fields."

Hailstorms cause severe damage to mango and thus not only affect a great number of the people of the district financially but also reduce their food supply.

TABLES
LAND UTILIZATION

		Year—1958-59
		(Thousand hectares)
<i>Total Area :</i>		
1.	Area under forest	0.7
2.	Area not available for cultivation	35.6
3.	Current fallows	48.2
4.	Net area sown	259.0
5.	Area sown more than once	72.9
<i>Area under crops</i>		
(Thousand hectares)		
6.	Total area under rice	147.2
7.	Rice— <i>Bhādoi</i> or <i>Aus</i>	36.3
8.	Rice— <i>Aman</i> or Winter	101.0
9.	Rice— <i>Bôró</i> or Summer	9.9
10.	Wheat	2.2
11.	Jowar .. .. .	..
12.	Maize	13.0
13.	<i>Bajrā</i>	0.1
14.	Barley	18.0
15.	Gram	23.1
16.	Other foodgrains	70.1
17.	Total foodgrains	273.7
18.	Sugarcane	2.3
19.	Rape & Mustard	14.1
20.	<i>Til</i> or Sesamum	0.1
21.	Linseed	2.3
22.	Jute	21.7

* The saying no longer holds good as even in a normal year, the district is short of food.—Editor.

Production of principal crops				Year—1958-59 (Thousand Metric Tons)
1. Rice	..	..	..	121.8
2. Rice— <i>Āus</i>	..	..	..	18.6
3. Rice— <i>Āman</i>	..	..	..	92.3
4. Rice— <i>Bôró</i>	..	..	..	10.9
5. Wheat	..	..	..	2.6
6. Jowar	..	..	..	..
7. Barley	..	..	..	14.7
8. Maize	..	..	..	7.2
9. <i>Bajrā</i>	..	..	..	0.1
10. Gram	..	..	..	15.2
11. Sugarcane	..	..	..	10.7
12. Rape & Mustard	..	..	..	4.9
13. <i>Til</i> or Sesamum	..	..	..	..
14. Linseed	..	..	..	0.7
15. Jute	..	..	..	90.3

IRRIGATION

1. Area irrigated by different sources

				Year—1958-59 Acres
Total	..	..	..	40,500
Govt. Canal	..	..	..	Nil
Private Canal	..	..	..	16,200
Tank	..	..	..	24,000
Well	..	..	..	Nil
Other sources	..	..	..	300

2. Crops irrigated

Rice	..	..	..	33,700
Wheat	..	..	..	4,100
Barley	..	..	..	1,000
Maize	..	..	..	800
Other cereals and pulses	..	..	..	500
Sugarcane	..	..	..	900
Other foodcrops	..	..	..	2,400

LIVE-STOCK POPULATION

				Year—1961(p)
Cattle				
Total	..	..	..	4,35,615
Cows	..	..	..	96,956
Bulls & bullocks	..	..	..	2,42,133
Young stock	..	..	..	96,526
Buffaloes				
Total	..	..	..	84,553
Cows	..	..	..	28,544
Bulls & bullocks	..	..	..	35,990
Young stock	..	..	..	20,019
Sheep	..	..	..	40,914
Goats	..	..	..	1,65,730
Horses & ponies	..	..	..	2,943
Pigs	..	..	..	12,243
				Year—1958-59
Poultry				
Fowls	..	..	..	2,91,143
Ducks	..	..	..	2,08,098

CHAPTER V

INDUSTRIES

(a) OLD-TIME INDUSTRIES

Ancient Period.

It has been mentioned in the *Arthasāstra* of Kauṭilya that the silk cloth manufactured in the Paundra country was black in colour and was as soft as the surface of a gem. The Paundra country was also famous during Kauṭilya's time for the production of the *Kshauma* cloth which was another variety of silk cloth but of a somewhat coarser texture than the *Dukula* cloth that used to be produced in Vaṅga. No information is available about the products of Pundravardhana or Gauḍa during the Hindu period. The next reference to the manufacture of Māldā is available in the "Āin-i-Akbari" in which it has been stated that in the Sarkār of Bārbakabād a fine cloth named Gaṅgājal used to be produced. T. Ray Chaudhuri in his book entitled "Bengal Under Akbar and Jehangir" has remarked that Mirzā Nāthan, the Imperial Admiral in Bengal during the viceroyalty of Shāistā Khān, bought a rare piece of cloth at Māldā for himself at a cost of Rs. 4,000. Later details about the various types of cloths produced in Māldā are available from Hedges' *Diary*. It appears that towards the end of the seventeenth century, the principal varieties of cloth in which trade was carried on by the British were known as Chāndenyes, Oruṅshyes or Soozies, Elāches, Chārconnaes, Seersuccers, Nehāl-lewars, Mundeels, Mulmulls and Tānzibs. The Chāndenyes were white drugget piece-goods, the Oruṅshyes were silk cloth piece-goods, the Elāches were silk cloths with a wavy pattern running lengthwise, the chārconnaes were chequered muslin piece-goods, the Seersuccers were turbans, the Mundeells were muslins of various qualities, and the Tānzibs were fine muslin piece-goods. The volume of manufacture was sufficient to provide business to the factories of the British, the Dutch and the French. In 1780 when Charles Grant was appointed as the Commercial Resident of Māldā, the district was famous both for raw silk and cotton piece-goods. During his time the annual investment of the East India Company through the Commercial Resident at Māldā amounted to £50,000.

Mediaeval Period.

Modern Period.

The manufacture of cotton and silk textiles in the district is thus being carried on from ancient times. The products of Māldā were highly prized in the European markets not only after the Dutch and the English opened their factories there in the seventeenth century but according to a local tradition recorded by Hunter, trading in cloths manufactured in Māldā prevailed with Russia even in the sixteenth century. In his statistical account of the district of Māldā, published in 1876, he mentioned the tradition,

Hunter's Account.

that one Shaikh Bhik set sail for Russia about three hundred years prior to that date, with three ships laden with silk cloths and that two of his ships were wrecked somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Persian Gulf. Hunter gives further interesting details about the history of the manufacture of silk in Māldā. According to him, a great impetus was given to the raising of silk worms and the manufacture of silk, by the arrival of a French gentleman in these parts about the year 1760. It is reasonable to assume that due to the insecurity that prevailed in the Province during the reigns of the last few Nawābs, silk manufacture along with other economic activities had received a setback and that with the restoration of some sense of security in the minds of the people after the battle of Plassey, it became possible for the Frenchman to revive the silk trade in Māldā. The very fact that he went to Māldā for reviving the manufacture of silk shows that at that time, Māldā was well-known as a centre of silk manufacture.

Buchanan's Account.

Dr. Buchanan Hamilton in 1810 recorded that the peculiarity of the cloths manufactured at Māldā was that silk and cotton were used in almost equal proportions in making the cloths. He gives the following description of the cloths manufactured in Māldā which he calls "Maldiki cloths". "The Maldiki cloths, consisting of silk warp and cotton woof woven very thin, are manufactured entirely in Maldeh, and the towns on the banks of Mohanonda for 12 miles below ; but some of these are in the Puraniya (Purnea—*Ed.*) district. The warp is generally disposed in stripes, and the woof is of one colour. The fabric is of two kinds ; one called Elachi, where both sides of the cloth are alike ; the other called Musru is like satin, one side being different from the other. Both kinds are of a great variety of patterns, which it would be needless to enumerate. The only general distinction in the patterns of both kinds are ; 1st, when one stripe is very narrow and the other very broad, the cloth is called Golbudun ; 2nd, when the spots and stripes are waved, the cloth is called Katar." Buchanan Hamilton recorded that at that time 4,000 looms were employed in manufacturing silk cloths. The raw materials, excepting some of the dyes used in dyeing were mainly the produce of the district of Māldā. According to him, the manufacture of silk cloths was on the decline at that time, there having been approximately 7,000 looms in the past, engaged in the manufacture of silk cloths. According to him, the manufacture of cloths made entirely of silk was confined to the immediate vicinity of the town of Māldā and was probably introduced into the district by Mr. Henchman who was the Commercial Resident for the East India Company at English Bazar.

Buchanan Hamilton also recorded the existence of about 120 houses of weavers at Māldā and in its immediate vicinity, who used to make thin muslin (*mulmull*). There was also one weaver at Māldā who used to weave *Jāmdāni* cloth. The total value of *mulmull* produced, including turbans, did not exceed Rs. 50,000. A substantial number of women was engaged in the town of Māldā during Buchanan Hamilton's survey in embroidering flowers on

cotton cloths. The cloths were supplied to these women by the businessmen who paid wages for the labour. These women were mostly Muslims and were known as *Buṭādārs*.

Another important industry about which an account has been left by Buchanan Hamilton is dyeing of thread, both cotton and silk, the following description of the process followed at that time for dyeing is taken from Buchanan Hamilton's account:

"The dyers of Maldeh are about 25 houses, and confine their operations to indigo and lac. The ser weight, by which all the operations are conducted, contains 92 s.w. or is nearly $2\frac{3}{10}$ lbs. avoirdupois (16,522 grains). The indigo vat is made thus:—Take 5 sers of indigo, break it into small bits, put it into an earthen tub or vat with five pots (about 60 sers) of alkaline ley, and stir them about for three hours. Then put this mixture into two pots, and add to each $\frac{3}{4}$ ser of Chakunda seed (*Cassia Tora* W.) boiled in $2\frac{1}{2}$ sers of water, and boil the mixture all night, that is to say a fire is kindled under the pots, and burns under them until the fuel is consumed, the people having gone to sleep at their usual time. In the morning, the fire having gone out, stir the decoction with a stick for $1\frac{1}{2}$ hour. This boiling and stirring must be performed four nights and mornings. The vat is then ready for dyeing. The thread, either silk or cotton, is kept 40 minutes in the pot. It is then wrung, dried in the sun, and washed. If the colour is not deep enough, it must get another dip in the other pot. The remaining colour is applied to other thread, the dye of which is completed by other vats.

"The alkaline ley is prepared as follows:—Take 20 sers of fresh burned roots and stems of the plantain tree. Put them into a large earthen pot, that has a hole in the bottom, over which a quantity of grass is laid. Through this filter slowly 60 sers of water, which forms the ley fit for use. Five sers of indigo should give a good full colour to 6 sers of cotton thread, or to $2\frac{1}{2}$ sers of silk. It costs 2 rs., being a kind very inferior to that prepared by Europeans, and is made in the form of balls by the natives of Rongpoor, and is generally much adulterated with clay. The good indigo, prepared by Europeans, is never employed by the tradesmen of Maldeh. The colour which they dye is very good. The same people often dye green with indigo ; but generally the weavers give them thread, which has previously been dyed yellow, either with turmeric, or with the bark of the Jak tree, as will hereafter be described. The latter green is fixed. That dyed with turmeric is perishable.

"For dyeing 1 ser of cotton thread blue, the dyer receives 12 annas, or $4\frac{1}{2}$ rs. for each vat. The materials may cost $2\frac{1}{2}$ rs. The labour occupies five days, in which the workman gains 2 rs. If he dyes the cotton green, and performs the whole steps of the operation, he receives $1\frac{1}{2}$ r. for each ser. The dyeing silk costs $1\frac{1}{2}$ r. a ser ; so that the artist, when he dyes

silk, has only a profit of $1\frac{1}{4}$ r. on his vat, but probably some circumstance was concealed, which renders both equally advantageous.

“It is to silk alone, that the dyers give a colour with lac. The manner, in which this is done, is as follows. Take 11 sers and 2 rs. weight ($\frac{1}{48}$ part of a ser) of stick lac. Having removed the sticks, it will weigh 10 sers. Grind this in a hand-mill, and sift it, grinding the larger pieces repeatedly, until the whole is reduced to powder. It is then put into a boiler, which is a strong vessel of earthenware, coated on the inside with melted shell lac, mixed with sand. To the powdered lac add 10 sers of water, in which $\frac{1}{96}$ part of a ser of sajimate (carbonate of soda) has been dissolved, tread the lac and water with the feet, and then boil them for three hours. The lac must then be put into a basket, and the water allowed to drain from it into the pot, and the infusion is then to be poured into another vessel. Five other similar infusions are to be made from the same lac, so that in all there are 60 sers of infusion. The lac exhausted of its colour is reserved for sale, and the infusion must be boiled down to 55 sers. To this add $\frac{1}{3}$ of a ser of Lodh bark powdered, and stir about the mixture. Next day the infusion is decanted, and there are 50 sers of clear dye fit for use. In the meantime an infusion of $4\frac{1}{2}$ sers of bruised Tamarinds in 20 sers of water has been prepared, and decanted. Boil 3 sers of silk in one-half of the dye, and in one-half of the infusion of tamarinds for $1\frac{1}{2}$ hour. Then wash it, and boil it for an equal length of time in the remainder, when the colour will be complete. The stick lac is brought from Asam by the way of Moorshedabad, and costs 11 or 12 rs. a *man*. The 11 sers of stick lac gives 7 sers of the lac separated from the colour, which sells at 9 rs. a *man*. The lac therefore costs in all 3 rs., and the seed lac sold brings 1 rupee 9 anas; so that the dye for 3 sers of silk costs 1 rupee 7 anas, besides tamarinds, Lodh, and soda; but these are trifles. The Lodh is brought from Rajmohal. The soda from Patna. I did not learn the price of dying a ser of silk; but this branch is more profitable than the dying with indigo; and is in fact the chief employment of the Maldeh dyers, who make high wages. One man and his wife can clear at least 12 rs. a month. Besides a house they require 100 rs. capital, if they dye with lac; 10 rs. are sufficient, if they dye only with indigo. They never buy thread to dye, and then sell it; but content themselves with dyeing what is brought at so much the ser. Whatever more remains to be said on the art of dyeing in this district, will be found in the next article.

“The cloth manufacture, that seems most peculiar to this district, is that woven of a mixture of silk and cotton, and from the chief place where it is made, this cloth is called Maldehi. As the thread is dyed before it is woven, I shall continue to detail the process of dyeing as that is performed

by the weavers, and their wives, and then proceed to give an account of the other parts of their art. And first I shall treat of the method used with silk. The first operation is to bleach it, and this is done in three ways. The operation is performed each time on from $\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 sers (80 s.w.), or from about 1 to 4 lbs. of silk; but I shall suppose the quantity to be one Calcutta ser or $2\frac{5}{1000}$ lbs., and all the other weights to be in proportion. For the first kind of bleaching, the silk is steeped the whole night in water. In the morning it is wrung, and dried in the sun. It is then boiled, with 1 ser of soap, in a sufficient quantity of water, for about 48 minutes. Then it is washed in clean cold water, and dried in the sun. The silk is of only a dingy white, but it is better than the others. The second quality of bleaching requires 10 or $\frac{1}{8}$ of a ser of soap, the process in other respects is the same. The third quality is not allowed soap; but is boiled with 2 sers of the fresh made ashes of the root and stem of the plantain tree. In each of these operations one-quarter of the silk, by weight, is lost. All the kinds are used as whites in cloth, and all may be dyed of every colour; but the colours dyed on the first are clearer and higher priced than those dyed on the second, and these on the second are again superior to the colours dyed on the third.

“In the following manner a fine bright but perishable yellow is given to silk by turmeric. For one skein of bleached silk, weighing 2 s.w. (359 grains nearly), take 5 s.w. of well cleared turmeric, and grind it upon a stone, adding a little water during the operation, until it is reduced to a pulp. Then add to this 20 s.w. of water, and filter the infusion. Soak the silk two or three days in this water. Then wash it, and put it into a solution of $\frac{1}{2}$ s.w. of alum in 20 s.w. of water. Then dry it, and the operation is finished. A good fixed yellow, although not so bright as that given by turmeric, is communicated to silk by the wood of the Jak tree (*Artocarpus integrifolia*). A skein of silk as before, is soaked a whole day in a solution of alum, and is then dried. It is then put into a decoction of Jak wood prepared in the following manner. Take 40 s.w. of chips of Jak wood, boil them all day, adding occasionally water so as to make a strong decoction, which is strained. In this the silk remains two days, it is then washed, and dried in the sun.

“Two colours are given with safflower (*Carthamus tinctorius*), and are called Kusom and Golabi. The Golabi is a fine rose-red, but is not a fixed colour. For one skein of silk take 10 s.w. of safflower, dry it and reduce it to powder; then add 1 s.w. of impure carbonate of soda (sajimati), and rub them with the hands for about 12 minutes. Then put them on a cloth strainer, and allow 40 s.w. of water to drain through them. In this water steep the silk a whole day, and wash it. Then put it into an infusion of tamarinds, which is prepared thus. Take 5 s.w. of ripe tamarinds freed from

the shell, and having rubbed them well with 20 s.w. of water, strain this for use. In this infusion the silk is kept between 48 and 72 minutes, and is then dried in the shade. The kusom colour is better fixed, but is not such a fine red; still, however, it is a beautiful colour. The only differences in the process are that 30 s.w. of safflower are used, and that $\frac{1}{4}$ s.w. of alum, and 1 s.w. of lime-juice are added to the infusion of tamarinds.

"Silk is dyed of a fixed red colour with Monjista (*Rubia monjista*). Soak a skein in water for four or five hours. Then keep it as long in a solution of alum. Then put it for an hour into a decoction of Monjista, which is thus prepared. Take 10 s.w. of Monjista, beat it to powder, and boil it for about five hours in 80 s.w. of water. Pour off the water, boil the Monjista in similar quantities of water three times, and keep all the four decoctions. The silk remains an hour in each. It is then washed, and dried in the sun. The red of Monjista by Jak wood is changed into what the natives call golden (Sonala); but in fact into a colour, which more resembles that of new copper. After the first immersion in alum the silk is soaked in the decoction of Jak wood for 120 minutes. It is then again soaked in an infusion of alum, and then is dyed with the Monjista; but 5 s.w. of this is sufficient.

"There are a great many colours given, in which a preparation of iron called Moski is employed. This is a Persian word signifying black, and all these dyes have probably been introduced by the Muhammedans. I shall first give an account of the manner in which Moski is prepared, and then detail the various colours in dyeing which it is used. Take 20 s.w. of wheat flour, 5 s.w. of extract of sugar-cane (Gur) 1 s.w. of boiled butter (Ghi), 240 s.w. of old iron, 400 s.w. of water. Let them stand in a pot 10 days in hot weather, and 16 days in cool. After being strained, the liquor is fit for use. If not strained, it will keep four or five months, without spoiling. The Moski contains an exacetate of iron; but it would require very accurate experiments fully to develop its other ingredients, and how far these may have any share in the operations of the dyer.

"There are three colours called Uda; one given by the Horitoki (*Myrobalanus Chebula Gaert.*); another by the Chamolloti (a *Caesalpinia* not described by Willdenow nor in the Encyclopédie); and the third by alum. The first kind is dyed thus. Take 10 or 12 Myrobalans, beat them, and infuse them in 20 s.w. of water for four or five hours. Then put a skein of silk, that has previously been dyed with lac, into this infusion of Myrobalans for from 120 to 144 minutes. Then wring it, and put it into 20 s.w. of Moski for a similar length of time. Then wash it in cold water, and dry it in the sun. This is a fixed dark red like Russian leather.

"The second kind of Uda is equally well fixed, and is darker than the former. I shall first describe the manner in which the infusion of Chamollotti is made. Take one-half s.w. of the dry pods separated from the seeds, powder them, and beat them well in a mortar with 20 s.w. of water, and strain the infusion for use. The pods of this plant, when green, contain a quantity of clear viscid liquor, that surrounds the seeds, that in the ripe fruit becomes dry, and that probably is the part in which its dyeing qualities reside. In order to dye Uda with this plant, put a skein of silk, that has previously been dyed with lac, into the above mentioned infusion for two hours. Then wring it, and put it into 20 s.w. of water mixed with 10 s.w. of Moski. Dry it in the sun, and in two hours, if the colour is not good, put it again into 20 s.w. of water and 10 s.w. of Moski. Then wash the silk in cold water and dry it in the sun.

"The third kind of Uda is equally well fixed, and is a clearer colour. Take a skein of silk, that has been dyed with Lac, put it for one hour into a solution of one-fourth s.w. of alum in 20 s.w. of water. Then put it into Moski as in the last mentioned process.

"Moski gives silk that has been dyed with Monjista, a fixed colour called (Tamrojyoti) or copper colour. The process is rather tedious. First the silk is put into the infusion of turmeric for 24 hours; then washed, and put into the solution of alum for 24 hours; then into a decoction of Jakwood, which is changed two or three times in the course of the third day. After this the silk is soaked for half a day in a solution of alum. In the remainder of the fourth day it is soaked in the decoction of Monjista. It is then washed, and kept for two or three hours in a mixed infusion of Myrobalanus and Chamolloti. It is then wrung and put into Moski for six hours.

"The dye called Filtusi, from a Persian word signifying Elephant colour, is a dirty black, but is well fixed. A skein of bleached silk is soaked six hours in a solution of alum, and is then wrung. Two decoctions, one of Jakwood the other of Monjista, are then prepared, as before described, 10 s.w. of each is mixed, and the silk is soaked in the mixture for an hour and a half. It is then washed, and put for an hour into the infusion of Chamolloti. It is then wrung, and put for two hours into Moski. Finally, it is washed and dried in the sun.

"Silk is dyed a lead-colour (Sisa) by Moski. The skein must have been bleached in the best manner, and soaked for an hour in a solution of alum. It is then wrung, put into the Moski, washed, and dried in the sun.

"The Polas Kungri, or bud of the *Butea frondosa*, is a colour that I have not seen. The object from whence its name is derived, is black with a tinge of green. The skein of silk is soaked for 24 hours in the infusion of turmeric, and wrung.

It is then put for two hours into a solution of alum, wrung again, and soaked a day in the decoction of Jakwood. It is then washed in cold water, wrung, and put for three hours in the infusion of Chamollotti. It is then wrung, and having been put into 40 s.w. of Moski, the pot is placed in the sun a whole day. It is finally washed, and dried in the sun. The colour is said to be fixed.

"The dye called Lobonggo, Kornophuli, or clove colour, is a fixed brown. The skein of silk is soaked three hours in the solution of alum, then wrung, and soaked for a whole day in the decoction of Jakwood. It is then wrung, and again soaked for three hours in the solution of alum. After being wrung it is soaked for a whole day in the decoction of Monjista, and during the course of the operation this is changed four times. It is then wrung, and put for two hours in the infusion of Chamollotti. Finally it is wrung, kept for a day in a pot of Moski, exposed to the sun, washed, and dried in the sun.

"The colour called Panduki, from the name of a flower is a well fixed lilac. The skein of silk must have been bleached in the best manner. Take $2\frac{1}{2}$ s.w. of the infusion of Lac brought from the dyers, add to this 10 s.w. of water, in which 1 s.w. of tamarinds have been infused for a short time. In this mixture wash the silk for three hours, wring it, wash it, and keep it for two hours in the infusion of Chamollotti. Then wring it, put it for half an hour in $2\frac{1}{2}$ s.w. of Moski, diluted with 30 s.w. of water, wash, and dry it in the sun.

"These are the colours given to silk thread. I shall now detail those which the weavers give to cotton, and which are three in number.

"The first, called Salu by the natives, is a well fixed light pomegranate colour. Take 20 s.w. of cotton thread soak it three days in cool water, wash it merely by rubbing it with hands, without beating, and dry it in the sun. Then take of dried Chamollotti pods, freed from seeds, 5 s.w., powder them well in a mortar, and rub them for an hour with a little water. Then add two sers of cool water, mix them, put the cotton into the mixture in the mortar, and knead it with the hand for an hour. Throw away the water, and dry the cotton, as impregnated with Chamollotti, in the sun. Dissolve $3\frac{1}{2}$ s.w. of alum in 40 s.w. of water, and add 1 s.w. of impure carbonate of soda, which has been dissolved in 10 s.w. of water, and then strained. In this solution put the thread, and rub it with the hands for an hour. Then wring, dry it in the sun, wash it well, and dry it again in the sun. Take 40 s.w. of dry Monjista, powder it with the Dhengki, and boil it in 5 sers of water to 4 sers. Then boil the thread in the decoction for half an hour, wring, and dry it. Then keep it half a day in 1 ser of water, holding in solution 3 s.w. of alum, and wring, and dry again. Then boil 20 s.w. of powdered Monjista in 4 sers of water to 30 sers, and in this

boil the cotton for a quarter of an hour. Finally wash and dry the thread.

"Thread thus dyed may be changed into what is called Uda, by the following operation. Take 20 s.w. of the dyed thread, put it in $7\frac{1}{2}$ s.w. of the infusion of Chamollotti, stir them with the hand for 24 minutes, then wring the thread, and put it for an hour into one ser of Moski mixed with half a ser of water. Finally wash the thread in cold water, and dry it in the sun. This makes a deep colour, and lighter shades may be obtained by using $\frac{3}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$ ser of Moski.

"The third colour, called Kusom, is not well fixed; but is a bright beautiful light red, like the pomegranate flower. For 20 s.w. of cotton thread take $1\frac{1}{2}$ ser of dry safflower, powder it on a cloth, and wash it, until the yellow colour is entirely separated. Then add by degrees 15 s.w. of impure carbonate of soda (Sajimati) and rub them together for an hour, until they become scarlet. Then put them on the strainer, and filter water slowly through them, until all the colour is carried away, and keep this infusion of safflower. At the same time put 60 s.w. of tamarinds, freed from the pod, into 2 sers of water, rub them and strain the infusion. Mix the infusions, and divide them into two equal parts. Put the thread into one part for an hour, then wring it, and put it in the remaining half of the infusions for three hours. Then wash, and dry in the shade."

Hunter's account
continued.

Hunter in his "Statistical Account of the District of Malda", which was published in 1876, noted that four principal kinds of silk fabric were then being manufactured in the town of Maldā. These four kinds of fabrics were known as (1) *Mazchhar*, or riplets of the river, (2) *Bulbulchasm*, or nightingales' eyes, (3) *Kalintarakshi*, or pigeons' eyes and (4) *Chānd tārā*, or moon and stars. The cloths were bought up by the *mahājans* on the spot and ultimately sold in Calcutta and Benares. Hunter noted that the industry of manufacturing silk cloths was not in a very flourishing state and that the Collector estimated the annual value of the manufacture at not more than Rs. 5,000 or Rs. 6,000. On the other hand, he noted that the manufacture of raw silk or silk thread was in a flourishing condition. At that time both Europeans and Indians were engaged in this industry. Among the European firms, the French firm of MM. Louis Poyen & Cie of Lyons had recently established a factory and had introduced steam power in working the filature. The European concerns between them were estimated to be producing 620 maunds or about 454 hundredweights of raw silk per annum valued at Rs. 6,20,000. The Indian merchants were estimated to be producing 1,500 maunds or 1,100 hundredweights of raw silk per year valued at Rs. 9,00,000. In addition, 25,000 maunds or 18,300 hundredweights of cocoons were being exported to Jaṅgipur in Murshidābād and to other places.

In 1873 there were upwards of 20 factories at work, belonging to some seven different concerns producing indigo. The outturn in 1872 or 1873 was about 4,000 maunds or nearly 3,000 hundred-

weights. The value was assessed at Rs. 8,00,000. About 1,100 maunds of indigo used to be produced in Kāliāchak police station alone.

Another article noticed by Hunter as one of the products of the district was brass-metal.

In the Report on the Survey of Cottage Industries in Bengal, published in 1929, some details have been given about the brass and bell-metal industries. 650 persons were found at work in the brass industry at various places within the old district of Māldā. There were 20 workers at English Bazar and 30 at Kāligām in Kharbā police station. Most of the workers were found at that time within the police station of Nawābganj which is now in East Pakistan. The police station of Nawābganj was also a big centre of bell-metal industry. Both the brass and bell-metal industries used to be financed by *mahājans* who advanced money and raw materials to the workers.

From the E-III table of the district of Māldā, published in the Report on the Housing and Establishment Tables of West Bengal and Sikkim, relating to the year 1960, it is seen that there are only 44 establishments producing brass and bell-metal articles. 39 out of these 44 establishments are situated in the town of English Bazar.

Mr. M. O. Carter in his Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the District of Māldā, which was published in 1939, noted the existence of the lac industry. He found that lac cultivation had declined very much after the World War of 1914-18 and was then in danger of total extinction. The lac growing area was a strip of land 6 or 7 miles broad and about 70 miles long following the bank of the Ganges. Commencing from the Ratuā Thana in the north it extended southwards through Mānikchak, Kāliāchak, Shibganj and Nawābganj thanas down to the junction of the Mahānandā with the Ganges. The soil in this *diārā* tract contains a large proportion of sand and produces great number of plum and *bābul* trees. The thanas of Shibganj and Nawābganj are now in Pakistan.

"The product itself is a resinous incrustation secreted by the lac insect (*laccipir lacca*). The method of cultivation is simple, and consists of infecting the plum tree at certain seasons with brood lac. There are two crops—the *Kartiki* and *Baisakhi*. For the former the trees are selected in the latter part of February: for the latter they are generally pruned in the second half of April, but in some places trees pruned in February are used, as they put out larger shoots.

"There are two methods of infection. The cultivator can either remove the branches when they are well-covered with the lac insects, allowing a number to remain for the self-infection of the next crop; or he may select the branches that are covered with the best crop, remove them, and cut them into pieces about fifteen inches long. These are tied in bundles to the main branches of other trees and allowed to remain there for about a fortnight. During this period the trees

become covered with lac insects, and the bundles are removed and scraped, unless they are required for further infection."

It appears to be rather strange that this industry did not find a place in Hunter's Statistical Account of the District of Māldā. But this omission may perhaps be explained when it is recalled that stiek-lac was a necessary ingredient for dyeing silk and cotton yarns in the beginning of the nineteenth century, as noticed by Buchanan Hamilton. It is reasonable to assume that the cultivation of lac was undertaken principally for the extraction of the colouring material, the resulting seed-lac being sold as a by-product. This fact probably explains why neither Buchanan Hamilton nor Hunter found it incumbent on them to give an account of the lac industry. The decline of the lac industry in the district of Māldā may therefore be traced principally to the discovery of synthetic dyes which made the use of lac dye unnecessary. The secondary reason is, of course, the discovery of various kinds of synthetic resins and the adulteration indulged in by the lac growers while preparing shellac.

The lac industry has now practically ceased to exist in the district.

Carter estimated that during 1928-35 the average annual outturn of cocoons was 36 lakh seers. According to him, about one-third of the cocoons produced was exported to other districts and the remaining two-thirds were locally reeled. He calculated that for every seer of silk yield 16 seers of cocoons were required, and on that basis he estimated the quantity of yarn produced in the undivided district of Māldā at 16,000 seers. The following account of silk rearing is taken from Mr. Carter's Settlement Report:

"The procedure in silk rearing is as follows. As soon as the eggs begin to hatch out, they are covered over with young and finely chopped mulberry leaf into which the young silk-worms climb. They are then removed to a clean tray, and kept separately from those which hatch out on the following day. It is essential to group worms of uniform size on each tray for the proper regulation of their diet. They are fed at intervals of 6 hours on chopped leaves during the first 4 to 6 days according to the season; and at the end of that period they lose their appetite completely and become torpid. This is the first moulting stage. During the next 24 hours they shed their skins and enter on the second stage. While moulting is in progress, feeding is stopped completely. When it is over, a cotton net, covered with young leaves, is placed over the silkworms, which crawl through the meshes and begin to feed on the leaves. These are changed at the end of every 24 hours. A net covered with fresh leaves is placed over them, on to which they climb, and the old leaves and litter are removed. After 3 to 5 days, according to the season, the second moult sets in. Thereafter the silkworms take on the colour and form which they preserve until the end of their larval life. They grow rapidly and eat more; and from this stage stems of mulberry plants with leaves on them are spread

on the net. Three meals a day, at intervals of 8 hours, are given. The same procedure is followed during the fourth and fifth periods. By the fifth period, the silkworms are eating a very large quantity of mulberry, and care has to be taken to see that a proper selection of leaves is made. The final period lasts from 5 to 7 days. The worms develop a golden and creamy appearance and begin to look round for a corner in which to start spinning.

"For this, a bamboo frame, about four feet square, called chandraki, is used. To it are fixed strips of plaited bamboo, an inch or two in depth, in the form of a continuous spiral. The worms are placed on this spiral, and commence to spin themselves into cocoons, a process which occupies two or three days. The cocoons which are required for reproduction are kept on a tray, and those from which the silk is to be reeled, are put out in the sun or dried by steam, in order to kill the chrysalis. This is necessary, because the silk thread is a continuous filament, and if the chrysalis is allowed to turn into a moth, it cuts its way out through the thread, thereby greatly impairing the value of the silk for reeling.

"The cocoons which have been retained for reproduction are kept for about a fortnight, after which the moths cut their way out, the males and females pair off (nature generally seems to provide an equal number) and the females lay their eggs. The average number of eggs is about 300. These hatch out after about a fortnight, and the cycle begins again. The maximum number of days for the whole process is 80, and the minimum 40, according to the season and temperature; so that on the average, six cycles can be completed in a year.

"Silkworms are liable to be attacked by various infectious diseases, some of which are hereditary. The result is not only that part of the crop may be destroyed, but the quality of silk produced from diseased worms appreciably deteriorates. Flacherie and grasserie are not diseases, which may set in without warning and are generally due to incorrect dieting, bad ventilation, overcrowding, or a sudden change of temperature. Pebrine is a parasitic disease, and muscardine a mould, or fungus, which lodges on the body and destroys the blood corpuscles.

"Another danger is fly pest. The fly attacks the silkworm and lays eggs on its body. These hatch out quickly and the maggot eats into the tissues of the silkworm and feeds on them. In the sericultural nurseries fly pest is guarded against by fitting the doors and windows with fine meshed wire-netting.

"The detection of disease in silkworms is one of the most valuable branches of sericultural work. As soon as the female moth begins to lay, the eggs of each moth are covered with a small tin cone, and thus segregated from each other. When the female dies, the body is pounded up, and the blood

examined under a microscope. If the moth is free from disease, the blood will appear as a liquid in which a number of minute circular corpuscles are moving about. The eggs are then allowed to hatch out. Any hereditary disease will however be immediately detected. For example if flacherie is present, the microscope will reveal a number of long stick-like objects, in addition to the corpuscles. The eggs from that moth have then to be destroyed."

(b) INDUSTRIES AND MANUFACTURES OF THE DISTRICT

In 1962-63, 68,93,084 lbs. (31,26,634.0 kg.) of cocoons valued at Rs. 1,18,01,450 were produced in the district. The quantity of raw silk produced was 3,92,887 lbs. (1,78,209.6 kg.), and that of silk thread produced was 4,00,000 lbs. (1,81,436.0 kg.). The district produces more than 80 per cent of the total silk thread produced in this State. About three lakhs of people are engaged in the silk industry in the district.

The State Government has a permanent establishment in the district for promoting sericulture, consisting of a seed farm at Piāsbāri, a Silk Reeling Institute at English Bazar, and an Extension Service with a number of demonstrators posted at different sericultural villages. The Reeling Institute demonstrates better methods of reeling silk, the Nursery supplies disease-free indigenous silk worm eggs to selected rearers (about twenty in number) who multiply the seeds and supply them to commercial rearers, the Extension Service popularizes and distributes disease-free seeds and assists the rearers in disinfecting rearing houses and equipments as preventive measures against outbreak of pebrine. Under the extension wing there are also aided grainages which purchase seed cocoons from selected rearers and supply disease-free silk worm eggs to commercial rearers.

The State Government has also a Silk Reelers' Organization consisting of a number of Master-Reelers, and three co-operative societies, to provide an assured market with a reasonable margin of profit for *charkhā* raw silk. This section has also introduced hand spinning of silkwaste, thus providing part-time work to a number of women in Māldā.

Besides these measures of assistance to sericulturists and *charkhā* reelers by the State Government, the Khādi Commission has a Silk Department to help the handloom silk weaving industry, which considerably helps the sericulturists of Māldā to get a fair return for their crop. As a result of these measures of assistance, the acreage under mulberry has substantially increased compared to the position immediately after the last World War. The demand for raw silk has also increased and the frequency of crop failure has been reduced.

In addition to these measures of assistance, the Government of India, on the recommendation of the Central Silk Board, has taken up a long-term programme for introducing the much needed changes in the raw silk industry to enable it to stand on its own legs

and compete with the international market in respect of quality and price. With a view to improving the quality of mulberry and raw silk and reduce cost of production, the existing nurseries were re-organized, three mulberry graft nurseries and a young silk rearing centre at Jālālpur were established, pumping sets were supplied for irrigation of mulberry fields, sericulture was introduced as a basic craft in two High Schools, training-cum-production in silk reeling was started at Peddie Silk Institute, and crude *charkhās* were partially replaced with domestic basins during the Second Five Year Plan period.

The schemes involved certain basic changes in outlook relating to sericulture, and as such the pace of development was bound to be slow. Firstly, the climate did not permit the rearing of high yielding races throughout the year. Secondly, there was a barrier of tradition which resisted any change in the existing socio-economic pattern of the industry. Besides, the measures of discipline which were essential for a technical development programme were naturally not as popular as measures of assistance. The net result of the schemes taken up during the Second Plan period were, therefore, attractive so far as improvement of quality and reduction of costs were concerned. At the end of the Second Plan period, the position was reviewed, and it was decided that steps should be taken to bridge the gap between the improved methods and equipment introduced in Government farms and factories and their actual utilization by the industry. It was also envisaged that there should be proper co-ordination between measures of assistance and measures of technical development, and that both these functions should devolve on the same implementing machinery. It was further decided that, by the beginning of the Third Plan, there should be co-ordination between supply of bivoltine silk worm eggs from stocks maintained at Kālampoṅg, and the introduction of standard reeling process under the scheme for "Replacement of Crude *Charkhās*" with domestic basins. As a corollary to these measures of quality control, regulation of the trade in cocoons and raw silk was also to be an important feature of the development programme under the Third Plan. The Third Plan schemes that have been under implementation include establishment of a State Filature at Madhughāt, a State grainage at Piāsbāri, an experimental station and a cold storage at Piāsbāri Nursery, introduction of a sericulture extension service, and stabilization of the raw silk market. The rate of progress in the implementation of the Third Plan schemes has been rather slow on account of the complex problems involved and also due to the setback caused by the state of emergency in the country. Nevertheless, some good groundwork has been done in the matter of producing international grade raw silk. During the last three years, 4,000 kilograms of standard raw silk has been produced and a reputation has been established in the market. The organizational method that would be most in conformity with the basic change envisaged has also been worked out in details through a number of field trials and experiments. What is certainly more important is that there is now a sense of participation in

the technical development programme among the sericulturists, reelers and merchants. It is expected that by the end of the Third Plan period about ten thousand kilograms of raw silk would be produced out of Japanese cocoons produced with local bivoltine seeds. The Government sericultural workers also expect to produce another twenty thousand kilograms of Category-II standard raw silk out of selected indigenous cocoons and cross-breeds of other combinations, through domestic basins. Whether these expectations will be fulfilled depends on their ability to harmonize the two aspects of Government sericultural activities in Māldā, viz. (1) the measures of assistance to protect the indigenous pattern of sericulture and reeling, and (2) the measures of discipline that have to be enforced for proper implementation of the technical development programme of the Third Plan.

It appears from Carter's Settlement Report that in the third decade of the present century the silk industry was mainly financed by Mārwaris. The reelers and weavers used to approach the merchants, who advanced money to purchase cocoons and yarns on the understanding that the products must be sold to them. When the accounts were made out, the merchants calculated the price of yarn at the minimum rate prevailing during the period of the loan and took the weight of $82\frac{1}{2}$ *tolās* per seer instead of 80 *tolās*. Consequently, there was a regular loss to the producer in value and weight, and by the time he had taken a similar advance he not infrequently found himself heavily indebted to the merchant. Mr. Peddie, who was then the Collector of the district, thereupon took the initiative in the matter of the establishment of Co-operative Societies for advancing loans to the workers engaged in the silk industry on more favourable terms. The Bengal Co-operative Silk Union Ltd. accordingly came into existence in 1927. The Union had a nominal capital of Rs. 1,00,000 divided into 1,000 shares of Rs. 100 each. This Union functioned through the Primary Co-operative Societies. During the years 1928-30, the Union purchased annually silk yarn and cloth to the value of about three quarters of one lakh rupees. The activities of the Union extended over almost all the silk districts of undivided Bengal.

At present there are 12 Silk Co-operative Societies. Four of these societies are of silk reelers, 4 of rearers, 3 of silk-waste spinners and 1 of weavers. The Silk Reelers' Co-operative Societies are located at:

(i) Sujāpur, (ii) Jālālpur, (iii) Birāmpur, (iv) Selimpur.

Out of these societies, the Sujāpur Resham Kātuni Samabāya Saṅgha Ltd. is in the most flourishing condition. Its paid up share capital is Rs. 1,600. There are 60 members. The activity of the Society consists of (i) advancing temporary loan to artisan-members for rearing of cocoons, (ii) guaranteeing living wages to the artisan-members, (iii) utilizing the silk-waste, obtained as bye-product, for spun yarn and arrange for spare-time occupation of the family members of the artisans. The Society produces 3,200 kg. of raw silk annually valued at Rs. 3 lakhs. The 4 societies between them have 160 members.

The total subscribed share capital of the 4 Rearers' Co-operative Societies amounts to Rs. 4,500. They are located at Jālālpur, Bākharpur, Dariāpur and Mohodipur. The Societies give help to rearer-members by (i) advancing money in times of necessity, (ii) fixing the rate of cocoons on yield basis, (iii) giving reward to good rearers.

The 3 Silk waste Spinners' Co-operative Societies are located at: (a) Sujāpur for *maṭkā* spinners; (b) Rāmākrishna Colony, Māldā and (c) Āiho.

The latter two societies have been formed by refugee women, who were trained in silk waste spinning by the Industries Directorate. The paid up share capital of the societies is Rs. 1,200 and they have 240 members.

There is also a Co-operative Society of weavers organized with the refugee weavers from Shibganj area, now in Pakistan. It is located at Rāmākrishna Colony, has 30 weaver-members and a paid up share capital of Rs. 1,500.

The Census Department carried out a census of industrial establishments in 1960. It is seen from the E-III Table of Māldā published in the Report on the Housing and Establishment Tables of West Bengal & Sikkim that in 1960 there were 5,354 industrial establishments in the district. Out of these, 4,898 were situated in the rural areas and only 456 were situated in the urban areas. (1) The most numerous industry is cotton weaving in handloom which accounts for 2,482 establishments, (2) the food processing industry comes next with 1,017 establishments, (3) there are 333 establishments manufacturing sundry hardwares, (4) 221 establishments manufacturing gold and silver ornaments, (5) 179 establishments manufacturing pottery, (6) 153 establishments engaged in *biḍi* making, (7) 135 tailoring establishments, (8) 106 establishments manufacturing wooden furniture and fixtures, (9) 103 establishments engaged in spinning of silk (not in mills), (10) 74 establishments for repairing shoes, (11) 71 establishments for repairing bicycles and tricycles, (12) 64 establishments for manufacturing miscellaneous wooden products, (13) 58 establishments for manufacturing bamboo and cane products, (14) 52 establishments for manufacturing bricks and tiles, (15) 52 establishments engaged in manufacturing leather footwear and (16) 44 establishments in producing brass and bell-metal articles. The number of workers in each of these 16 industries is given in the table below from the B-IV table published by the Census Department. These 16 types of industries jointly account for as many as 5,144 establishments out of the 5,354 industrial establishments in the district.

Sl. No.	Name of Industry	No. of Workers
1.	Cotton Weaving in handlooms	5,743
2.	Food Processing Industry	6,992
3.	Manufacture of Sundry Hardwares	837
4.	Manufacture of Gold & Silver Ornaments	1,332
5.	Pottery	1,021
6.	<i>Biḍi</i> -making	4,494
7.	Tailoring	945

Sl. No.	Name of Industry	No. of Workers
8.	Wooden Furniture & Fixtures	607
9.	Spinning of Silk (not in mills)	4,482
10.	Shoe repairing	365
11.	Bicycle and tricycle repairing	143
12.	Manufacture of miscellaneous wooden products	622
13.	Bamboo and Cane	1,889
14.	Bricks and Tiles	1,678
15.	Leather Footwears	772
16.	Brass and Bell-metal	216

Location of Industries

The sixteen industries mentioned above are not evenly distributed throughout the district. The industry of cotton weaving in handlooms is to be found mainly in the police stations of Kālīāchak, English Bazar and Mānikchak. Most of the workers engaged in the food processing industry reside in the police stations of Kālīāchak, English Bazar, Ratuā, Harishchandrapur and Habibpur. More than one hundred workers in this industry are, however, to be found in the other police stations. The manufacture of sundry hardwares is an industry which is to be found in every police station of the district but here again the maximum number of workers is to be found in the police stations of Kālīāchak, English Bazar and Kharbā. Workers engaged in the manufacture of gold and silver ornaments are to be found mostly in the police stations of English Bazar, Kālīāchak, Ratuā and Mānikchak. The manufacture of earthenwares and earthen pottery is similarly localized in certain thanas. Most of the workers engaged in this industry are to be found in the police stations of Habibpur, Ratuā, Kālīāchak, Gājōl, Mānikchak and Harishchandrapur. *Biḍi* making is one of the very important industries of the district judging by the volume of employment. Most of the workers in this industry are to be found in Kālīāchak police station, there being also considerable numbers in the police stations of English Bazar, Kharbā and Māldā. Workers engaged in tailoring industry are mostly to be found in the police stations of English Bazar, Kālīāchak and Kharbā. The making of wooden furniture and fixtures is mostly carried on within the police stations of English Bazar, Kālīāchak and Mānikchak. The spinning of silk (not in mills) is carried on almost exclusively in the police station of Kālīāchak. The repairing of shoes is carried on mostly in English Bazar and Kālīāchak police stations. The industry of repairing bicycles and tricycles appears to be concentrated in the police stations of English Bazar, there being of course a few workers engaged in this industry in the other police stations. Most of the workers engaged in the manufacture of miscellaneous wooden products are to be found in the police stations of Kālīāchak and English Bazar. The important regions for the making of articles of bamboo, cane etc. are the police stations of Kālīāchak, Kharbā, Harishchandrapur and Gājōl, the most important region from the point of view of number of workers employed being Harishchandrapur police station. Brick and tile making is carried on mostly in the police stations of English Bazar, Kālīāchak, Māldā and Ratuā. The making of leather footwears is to be found mostly in the police stations of Kālīāchak,

Ratuā and Mānikchak. Brass and bell-metal industries are concentrated in the police station of English Bazar. It would thus appear that industrially the police stations of English Bazar and Kāliāchak are more advanced than the other police stations.

Employment in different industries.

The E-III Tables of the Census Department related only to those industries which could be assigned one or other of the Code Numbers in the Divisions 2 and 3 of the Standard Industrial Classification prepared by the Directorate-General of Employment and Training, Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India. As the rearing of silk-worms and production of cocoons and raw silk has been given the Code Number 045 in the O-Division, establishments engaged in the rearing of silk-worms and production of cocoons and raw silk were omitted from the E-III Tables prepared by the Census Department. It, however, appears from the economic Tables B-IV prepared after the 1961 Census that there are 22,118 persons engaged in the rearing of silk-worms and the production of cocoons and raw silk in Māldā district. Most of these workers are women. The industry is confined within the police stations of Kāliāchak and English Bazar. There are 20,222 workers in Kāliāchak police station employed in this industry while in English Bazar police station 1,554 workers are engaged in this industry. The police stations of Māldā, Habibpur, Ratuā and Mānikchak between them account for the balance of 342 workers. The number of persons given in the Census Table as engaged in the rearing of silk-worms and production of cocoons and raw silk relates to those persons only whose principal means of livelihood consists of the rearing of silk-worms and production of cocoons and raw silk. It is likely that there are persons whose principal means of livelihood are either cultivation or some other branch of economic activity but whose secondary means of livelihood lies in the rearing of silk-worms and production of cocoons and raw silk. The total number of 22,118 workers employed in this industry does not take into account this latter class of persons.

In the Report on the Survey of Cottage Industries in Bengal published in 1929, it was mentioned that only a very small quantity of silk produced in the district was consumed by the local silk weavers. It appears that at that time the bulk of the raw silk used to be exported to places outside the district as far off as Berhāmpore (Ganjām), Trichinôpôly, Sālem, Triplicane, Māsulipatnam, Travancôre, Secunderābād, Belgāum, Surāt, Sujānagar (Gurudāspur), Mōbārakpur (Āzimgarh), Bijnour, Amritsar, Anantapur, North Arcôt, Bāngālôre, Tānjore, Bhāndāra, Ākyāb, Kayts (Ceylon) and Benares. Even at the present day the picture has not altered very much, very little silk cloths being locally produced.

Handloom weaving.

As has already been remarked, handloom weaving of cotton textiles is the most important industry in the district. It appears from the B-IV Tables of the Census of 1961 that 5,743 persons are engaged in this industry. These workers are distributed as follows among the various police stations of the district:

Sl. No.	Name of Police Station	No. of Handloom Weavers
1.	English Bazar	537
2.	Kāliāchak	4,627
3.	Māldā	44
4.	Habibpur	2
5.	Ratuā	10
6.	Mānikchak	393
7.	Kharbā	22
8.	Harishchandrapur	8
9.	Gājōl	72
10.	Bāmangōlā	28

Weavers' Co-operative.

The Co-operative Department has been helping the weavers in various ways. During the ten years covering the first two Five Year Plan periods the Co-operative Department disbursed Rs. 4,700 by way of 50 per cent loan and 50 per cent subsidy to weavers for purchasing improved accessories for handloom.

There are 34 Weavers' Co-operative Societies. These Societies obtain yarn from the Apex Handloom Co-operative Society and supply the yarn so obtained to the weavers for weaving cloths. The weavers are paid wages which work out at Rs. 2 or Rs. 3 per day per person. The woven cloth is taken back by the society and sold. These societies get a rebate of 5 paise in the rupee on their retail sales. These 34 Weavers' Co-operative Societies are located as follows:

Sl. No.	Name of Police Station	No. of Weavers' Co-operatives
1.	English Bazar	7
2.	Kāliāchak	15
3.	Māldā	1
4.	Habibpur	2
5.	Ratuā	1
6.	Mānikchak	4
7.	Kharbā	1
8.	Harishchandrapur	1
9.	Gājōl	2
10.	Bāmangōlā	—

The total membership of these 34 Societies is 2,462. Their paid up capital is Rs. 31,765. The total sale amounted to Rs. 7,87,547 resulting in a profit of Rs. 85,753.

Industrial Training.

There are five training institutions in the district, viz. (1) Māldā Silpa Vidyāpiṭh, (2) Block Printing Centre, Māldā, (3) District Weaving School, Māldā, (4) Peripatetic Weaving School, Sāhāpur, Māldā, and (5) Training-cum-Production Centre for Jute Spinning and Weaving for the welfare of Scheduled Castes at Mājhrā in police station Gājōl. The first named institution is managed by the Additional Director of Industries (Training), West Bengal, through his local officer, i.e. the District Industrial Officer, Māldā. It is possible to take in 50 students per year in this institution for training in handloom weaving and tailoring. The successful candidates are awarded certificates on the completion of training. The trainees are awarded a stipend of Rs. 15 per month each. The Block

Printing Centre, Māldā is managed by the Joint Director of Industries, West Bengal, through the local officer of the Department, the District Industrial Officer. Its training capacity is 12 per year. The course lasts six months after the completion of which departmental certificates are awarded to the successful trainees. Instead of stipend, each trainee gets wages at the rate of Re. 1 per working day. The training capacity of the District Weaving School is 13 per year. The duration of the course is one year. Training is imparted in weaving and certificates are awarded to the successful trainees on completion of the training. The Government awards a stipend of Rs. 20 per month to each trainee which is supplemented by another stipend of Rs. 10 awarded by the District Board. The Peripatetic Weaving School, Sāhāpur, Māldā, takes in 13 students per year. The duration of the course is one year and the instruction is imparted in weaving. Every successful candidate is awarded a certificate on the completion of the course. Each Trainee gets a stipend of Rs. 20 per month from the Government. The Training-cum-Production Centre for Jute Spinning and Weaving for the welfare of Scheduled Castes at Mājhrā, Gājól, is managed by the Joint Director of Industries (Handloom), through the Block Development Officer, Gājól. Twenty students are taken in every year. The subjects taught are jute spinning and weaving. A certificate is awarded to the successful trainee on completion of the training. Each trainee gets a stipend of Rs. 20 per month from the Government.

CHAPTER VI

BANKING, TRADE AND COMMERCE

A. BANKING AND FINANCE

(a) HISTORY OF INDIGENOUS BANKING

Apart from the fact that the banker occupied a place of honour in the system of administration during the reign of the Gupta Emperors, no information is available about banking during the Hindu period. The situation during the reign of the early Muhammadan kings of Bengal in regard to banking is similarly a complete blank. According to Dr. Irfan Habib, there was an elaborate system of indigenous banking under the Mughals in the seventeenth century, but in the absence of any specific reference to the banking practices that prevailed in the district of Māldā it would perhaps not be appropriate to assume that the system of banking as described by Dr. Habib for Delhi, Burhānpur or Āhmedābād would also apply in the case of Māldā. There is, therefore, no other alternative but to begin a history of banking in the district of Māldā from the latter part of the eighteenth century when Māldā was a part of the Dinājpur District. In 1787-88, it was the practice to transmit sums of money on Government account from Dinājpur, which was the district headquarters, to Murshidābād and other places, by means of *hundis* issued by private bankers on other private bankers stationed at the places where the amounts were to be sent. The rate of discount was 3 per cent. These bankers were known as *shroffs*, and many of them hailed from other parts of India. The very fact that even the Collector of the district thought it safe to avail of the banking facilities provided by these private bankers, for despatching Government money from one place to another, would go to show that the system of banking was well established at the time. These bankers must have provided capital for trade in various commodities. It may be mentioned here that the leading banking house of the Jagat Seths during the reigns of the last few Nawābs of Bengal was authorized to mint coins on behalf of the monarch.

The eighteenth century.

Buchanan's account for 1810.

Dr. Buchanan Hamilton, who visited the district in 1810, mentioned that the private bankers resided entirely at the headquarters of the district, i.e. at Dinājpur. There were seven banking houses at that place, and they mostly belonged to the Osho-yal sect. At that time they were chiefly employed in lending money to the zemindars and in granting bills of exchange for money. They also engaged themselves in trade. These bankers, however, did not discount bills, only the house of Jagat Seths being employed in discounting bills. The interest charged by these bankers for

lending money was 1 per cent per month, an additional amount being exacted by way of *munāfā*, which was deducted from the principal at the time when it was advanced. Besides these bankers, there were the *pōtdārs* or money-changers who attended the markets to exchange cowries for silver. In the early hours of the market a *pōtdār* used to sell cowries for silver to the people in order to enable them to purchase goods, and in the evening while the market was about to close the various small traders used to bring their cowries to the *pōtdār* for exchanging them for silver again. It is rather strange that the same rate of exchange did not prevail in the morning and the evening. While giving cowries in exchange for silver in the early part of the day, the *pōtdār*, used to give 5,760 cowries for one rupee but in the evening while it became his turn to hand over silver in place of cowries, he used to demand 5,920 cowries for one rupee. Old rupees were liable to a discount but not the current coins or *siccā* rupees. Although the *siccā* rupees were not liable to any discount, the money-changers used to get over the difficulty by marking the *siccā* rupees with a stamp on the pretext that those marks would enable those who had received or who might receive the rupees to have them changed, if any other *pōtdār* refused them as bad money. But once a rupee became marked, it ceased to remain the current coin and became liable to *batta*. According to Dr. Buchanan Hamilton, most of these *pōtdārs* had capital not exceeding Rs. 15.

“Under the Great Mughals all rupees coined under the reigning king were considered as *siccās* and passed at their original value during his life. When a new king ascended the throne the rupees of the former reign became subject to a *batta* (discount) and were not received into the royal treasury. *Sicca rupees* were the only coins received in official payments. But there were mints at Dacca, Patna and Murshidabad. Individuals could procure the new *siccās* with facility, by sending their bullion or old coin to the mint or even disposing of them to shroffs in exchange for new *siccās* at current *batta*, which was seldom more than what was sufficient to indemnify the shroff for charges of the mint and to compensate him for his trouble.” (N. K. Sinha—Economic History of Bengal, Vol. I, Ch VIII, page 129).

Details about the currency circulating in the district of Dinājpur in the year 1787 may be had from the two letters of the Collector of Dinajpur that are reproduced below:

“I have received your letter of the 12th of June accompanying Copy of the 22^d Paragraph from the Honble the Court of Directors and desiring I will transmit the information and samples therein required viz^t—Specimens of every Specie of Silver and Copper Coinage current in Bengal with a concise History of each particularly specifying where coined—by whom, Weight, fineness, real and nominal Value, quantity supposed to be coined annually and as far as ascertainable what quantity are supposed to be in circulation, and how far such quantities are proportioned to the general wants—

Previous currency history (Mughal Period).

Currency during 1787.

“The Rupees (of which samples now accompany) are the Currency of this District, and are denominated Sonwaut,* Azeemabaddee or Patnye and French—The Sonwaut Rupee falls in its value and loses its original Name of Sicca, after a certain Number of Years have elapsed and which the Title of Sonwaat implies—This rupee was of the Coinage of Moorshedabad

“The Azeemabaddee or Patnye Rupee is of the same Weig [...] and fineness with the Sicca but of less current Value ——— This Rupee bears upon the face of it the Title under which it circulates and is of the Coinage of Azeemabad, or Patna

“The French Rupee is 2½ Ruty less in weight than the Sicca, or Azeemabaddee, but as far as I can judge is some what superior to them in fineness and is of foreign import

“They all vary and lose alike in current value, from deficiency in Weight, & defect in shape, and appearance and alloy, in proportion to the degree of the deficiency, or the defect, or of both—The first point is ascertainable upon a fixed principle,—The latter is enveloped in Mystery and only to be revealed by the interposition of Shroffs, all of whom differ in the rate to be fixed for the loss upon the rupee according to the judgements they form upon it—and their Decision is arbitrary and final

“The annual Revenue received from the District is the only standard by which any conclusion with respect to the quantity of each Specie in circulation can be drawn. The proportion paid to the Zemindar as Revenue is nearly 2/3^{as} Sunwaut and of the remaining 1/3^d, 3/4^{ths} French & 1/4 Azeemabaddee in forming of a more accurate Judgement of the actual quantity of the three species in circulation throughout the District Allowance must be made for the exchange or Shortage carried on in the Mufosil—The Quantities in circulation of each specie, are apparently proportioned to answer every emergency.—”

“I now reply to your circular Letter dated the 12th of October last desiring I will transmit an account of the different species of Rupees circulating throughout the District with the usual Bazar rates of Batta upon each specifying the variations &c^a

“In this District the currency is Sicca, Sonaut or Foolee Patnye and French Arcot Rupees† and the rate of Batta upon each

* “The Jagat Seths were responsible for the development of the custom according to which a new coined *sicca* rupee circulated at full *batta* for twelve months, then fell three per cent and had the denomination of *hirsauins* or *siccās* of various years. At the end of the second year they fell again by two per cent under the denomination of *sonaut*. At this stage they remained until they were recoined into *siccās*.” (N. K. Sinha—Economic History of Bengal, Vol. I, Chapter VIII).

† “The Arcot rupees were originally struck by the Nawab of Arcot but the English, the French and the Dutch also secured the privilege of coining in Madras, Pondicherry and Negapatam and English, French and Dutch Arcots also poured into Bengal.” (ibid.).

specie perpetually fluctuating—The cause of the variations of the different Rate originates from the quantity of each specie brought into circulation—If the Demand by Merchants Golhdars and others for the Produce of the District be great, and sudden, and the Demand for Revenue inconsiderable, the rates of Batta fall—The usual rate of Batta upon these specie being current cannot accurately be ascertained, it is regulated in proportion to the Demand or otherwise for each particular Specie, and which in a great degree depends upon the quantity in circulation of each—but rating the Sicca Rupees as the Standard, for fixing the Bazar rate of Batta the average difference upon the five Specie current, may be stated at between fourteen and fifteen Gundas in the Rupee.

“The relative proportions of the different Species in circulation throughout the Year from the verbal information of shroffs, and Merchants from whom I have made enquiries, may be rated as follows, about three parts in four Foolee or Sonaut Rupees, and of the remaining one fourth $\frac{3}{4}$ th French Arcots $\frac{1}{8}$ th Patnye and $\frac{1}{8}$ th Sicca

“In commercial Transactions the purchase of the Articles of Produce of this District, Grain, Silk, Cloth and Jaygree, is chiefly made in Foolee Sonnauts, and French Arcots and the Revenue is paid in the five different specie

“The circulation and Currency of these several species, subjects the Riaut and the Renter to some inconvenience, in as much, as that the rate of Batta upon each is arbitrary, and varies almost in every Village, but the benefit by this fluctuation in the rates of Batta is in favor of the commercial Body, who introduce these different sorts of Rupees in their Mercantile Transactions.—

“It does not appear that there is any want of Specie in the District, but it might be very desirable to introduce a general Sicca Currency as that is the standard for the Revenue Receipts.—”

Hunter in his Statistical Account of the District of Malda, published in 1876, gave the following account of banking activities in the district:

“The profits acquired by commerce are not hoarded, but are either employed as capital in the extension of trade and manufacture, or are invested in ornaments for the females. Even when capital is accumulated by the cultivators, it is seldom or never hoarded at the present day, but is employed in bringing further tracts of land under cultivation. The current rate of interest, when the borrower pledges some article of personal use, is from 3 to 6 *pie* per rupee a month, equivalent to from $18\frac{3}{4}$ to $37\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum, but in these loans it is held essential that the value of the article pawned should be double the amount advanced. In large transactions, when the lender is secured by a lien on moveable property, the rate of interest varies from 12 to 24 per cent. per annum. In similar transactions, when a mortgage is given upon houses

Hunter's account
of Banking (1876).

or lands, the rate of interest would not be more than 18 per cent. or less than 12 per cent. per annum. In the case of petty advances to cultivators, whether the lender has only personal security of the borrower, or takes in addition a lien upon the crops, the rate of interest is about the same, viz. from 6 *pie* to 1 *ánná* on the rupee per month, or from $37\frac{1}{2}$ to 75 per cent. per annum. Advances of this kind, however, are usually made only until the coming harvest; the advance is made in the shape of seed-grain, and the capital with the interest is also repaid in kind. A fair return on capital expended in the purchase of a landed estate is reckoned to be about 12 per cent. There are two banking establishments in the District,—one at Maldah, belonging to Rái Dhanpat Sinh Bahádur and Lakshmipat Sinh, and the other at English Bázár belonging to Pares Náth Sháh & Brothers. The business of money-lending, however, is chiefly conducted by the shopkeepers in every village, who combine their special trade with the advancing of petty loans.”

Banking Enquiry
Committee, 1929-30.

Shri Kaliprasanna Saha, a pleader of Māldā, stated in reply to the questionnaire circulated by the Bengal Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee in 1929-30, that the indigenous bankers in the district of Māldā mainly lent money. They also supplied capital in small doses and thus protected the ryots. They issued *hundis* and discounted *hundis* on a small scale. They financed trade, and some of them also received deposits. It is probable that at the present day also there are indigenous bankers in the district but their field of activity is rather restricted. Banking is now carried on by the State Bank of India, the United Bank of India and the Central Co-operative Bank at Māldā. Some amount of banking business is also carried on at the District Treasury where drafts can be obtained by private parties against deposits of money at the prescribed commission. The sale of Treasury Savings Certificates is also made against deposits.

(b) INDEBTEDNESS

The Bengal Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee in its report published in 1930, estimated the average debt of members of rural co-operative societies in the undivided district of Māldā at Rs. 110. The Committee considered the question as to whether generalization for the entire agricultural population was permissible from the figure obtained for members of rural co-operative societies and recorded the following:

“The problem now is to find out if these figures can be utilised to yield a proper estimate of agricultural indebtedness in the province. It is true that practically all the members of rural societies are agriculturists, but they form only a small proportion of the total agricultural population. The question naturally arises whether they form a fair sample of the whole body of agriculturists. At one end of the scale, there are people, who are so well off that they do not desire to incur

Banking Enquiry
Committee's Report,
1930.

the risk of unlimited liability by enlisting themselves as members. At the other end, there are persons, who are so poor that they are refused membership. It is therefore not unfair to assume that the co-operative population represent the median agricultural population. The average obtained for co-operators is, therefore, a reasonably accurate estimate of the average for the whole body of agriculturists."

In analysing the causes of indebtedness the Committee considered the expenses incurred over litigation and over social ceremonies like marriage but the conclusion reached was:

"While the figures cannot be taken as representative for the whole of Bengal, they nevertheless tend to show that litigation and social and religious ceremonies make but small contributions to the total indebtedness."

The Committee came to the rather paradoxical conclusion that the real cause for improvidence among agriculturists was poverty. In the opinion of the Committee, there was a kind of poverty which while not amounting to insolvency nevertheless made for precarious and uncertain living, and the Committee ascribed the real cause of indebtedness among agriculturists to this fact.

The All India Rural Credit Survey conducted by the Reserve Bank of India between December 1951 and March 1952, yielded some interesting results of a general nature, but as the district of Māldā was one of the districts selected in West Bengal for the sample survey, the figures for that district are obtainable separately. The average debt per family estimated in that report for West Bengal as a whole was Rs. 127, that for an average cultivator family was Rs. 164, and that for an average non-cultivator family was Rs. 75. These figures related to all the families in each class, whether indebted or not. The figures for indebted families were somewhat higher, the average debt for a cultivator family in West Bengal being estimated at Rs. 261. The average debt for a non-cultivator indebted family was estimated at Rs. 170, and the average debt for an indebted family, cultivators and non-cultivators being taken together, was Rs. 230. It was assessed that 55.1 per cent of all the families were indebted, the corresponding figures for cultivator families and non-cultivator families being 63 per cent and 44 per cent respectively.

In the district of Māldā the average debt per family for all families was estimated at Rs. 111, the average debt of a cultivator family was estimated at Rs. 144 while the average debt of a non-cultivator family was assessed at Rs. 78. The average debt per indebted family was Rs. 223 for all families, both cultivators and non-cultivators. The average debt for a cultivator family was Rs. 257 and the average debt for a non-cultivator family was Rs. 178. It was estimated that 50 per cent of all the families were indebted; among cultivators 56.1 per cent of the families were indebted while the figure for non-cultivator families was 43.9 per cent. There is perhaps nothing much to choose between the figures for the whole of West Bengal and those for Māldā so far as average indebtedness per family is concerned. The important point to note is that while

Rural Credit
Survey, 1951-52.

for the whole of West Bengal the proportion of indebted families has been calculated at 55.1 per cent, for the district of Māldā this proportion is 50 per cent. Similarly the proportion of indebted families among cultivators is 63 per cent for the whole of West Bengal while for Māldā it is only 56.1 per cent. In regard to non-cultivators, however, the picture is almost representative of the conditions prevailing in West Bengal generally. It has been stated in the All India Rural Credit Survey Report that for States like West Bengal, Mysore, Travancore-Cochin and Hyderabad, the levels of debt estimated were substantially lower than the actuals.

The findings recorded in the Report about the sources of credit are rather interesting. It appears that in the district of Māldā, taking all families, cultivator and non-cultivators together, the Government provided only 0.7 per cent and the co-operative societies only 0.6 per cent of the total borrowings per family. As much as 54.6 per cent of the total borrowings came from professional money-lenders. The next important source of credit was constituted of relatives who provided 34.6 per cent of the total borrowings. Traders and commission agents accounted for another 8.7 per cent, landlords another 0.6 per cent and others another 0.2 per cent of the total borrowings.

Taking cultivating families separately, it appears that the Government and the co-operative societies each provided only 0.9 per cent of the total borrowings. The professional money-lenders provided 61.2 per cent, the relatives 36.0 per cent, landlords 0.8 per cent, traders and commission agents 0.1 per cent and others 0.1 per cent.

For non-cultivating families the Government provided 0.2 per cent of the borrowings while the co-operative societies provided 0.1 per cent. The professional money-lenders provided 40.2 per cent, relatives 31.3 per cent, traders and commission agents 27.4 per cent, landlords 0.3 per cent and others 0.5 per cent of the total borrowings.

(c) CREDIT FACILITIES

Commercial banks.

There is a branch of the State Bank at Māldā. In addition, there is a Central Co-operative Bank, which has two branches, one at Chānchal and the other at Harishchandrapur. There is also a branch of the United Bank of India at Māldā. No figures are available to indicate the total amount advanced in a year by the State Bank or the United Bank of India. The Māldā District Central Co-operative Bank Ltd. came into existence on August 1, 1958, with the amalgamation and merger of (1) Māldā Central Co-operative Bank Ltd., (2) Harishchandrapur Central Co-operative Bank Ltd. and (3) Chānchalrāj Central Co-operative Bank Ltd. which existed as separate institutions before that date. The principal activities of the Bank are (a) financing other co-operative societies in the district and (b) carrying on general banking business as permissible under the Co-operative Societies Act of 1940. In 1958-59 this bank issued loans for agricultural purposes amounting to Rs. 71,490. In 1959-60 the amount rose to Rs. 3,36,535. On

Co-operative banks.

Co-operative
Credit Society.

the banking side, the bank collected cheques and bills on behalf of its constituents to the extent of Rs. 7,44,806 in 1958-59 and Rs. 9,94,170 in 1959-60. It also honoured cheques and bills amounting to Rs. 7,44,483 in 1958-59 and Rs. 9,83,573 in 1959-60.

There are as many as 719 co-operative credit societies of various types in the district. The details of these societies are given in the table below:

Type of societies	No. of societies	Member-ship	Paid up capital Govt. In-dividuals	Loans advanced during the year 1960-61	No. of godowns owned
			Rs.	Rs.	
1. Central Bank	1	618	1,98,315	3,26,120	—
2. Grain Bank	14	3,629	25,501	28,805	12
3. L.S. Credit	20	3,265	12,000-29,651	26,100	3
4. S.S. Credit	552	23,555	1,61,334	2,21,191	—
5. Service Co-op.	110	4,240	13,002	72,882	—
6. Employees Credit	2	90	357	1,736	—
7. M.P.S. dispensing Credit	19	2,305	24,791	1,110	—
8. L.M. Bank	1	171	6,640	18,200	—

Loans advanced by Government.

The Collector of the district, as is well known, advances every year various types of loans. These loans are: (a) loans granted under the Agriculturists' Loans Act, (b) loans granted under the Land Improvement Act, (c) Fertilizer Purchase Loans, (d) Artisan Loans, (e) Mulberry Loans, (f) loans for improvement of mango orchards and (g) loans for encouraging the raising of silk cocoons. Loans under the Agriculturists' Loans Act are advanced both on applications made by individuals and by groups of individuals. Loans are granted on group bonds, generally in times of distress, to help people to tide over a difficult period. This kind of loans thus indirectly helps cultivation because the loans are always advanced to agriculturists. Cattle purchase loans are also advanced under the Agriculturists' Loans Act, but the amount given to each individual is necessarily much more than that given as ordinary agricultural loan, because the amount advanced is intended to meet the purchase price of bullocks. The land improvement loans are given under the Land Improvement Act of 1883 for the purpose of enabling the applicants to bring about lasting improvements to their arable lands. Sometimes these loans are utilized to bring virgin lands under the plough. The fertilizer purchase loans are advanced to agriculturists to enable them to purchase chemical fertilizers. Artisan loans are granted to artisans in times of distress as a measure of relief. Mulberry loan, as its name implies, is advanced to enable the recipient to effect improvement in mulberry cultivation. Loans for the improvement of mango orchards are a special feature of this district as it abounds in mango orchards. The loan for helping the raising of silk cocoons is another loan which is special to this district. The total amount disbursed by the Collector by way of various kinds of loans during the year

1957-58 amounted to Rs. 34,09,740. This amount was distributed among 1,17,848 persons. In 1958-59 the total amount advanced by the Collector was Rs. 30,22,100 and was disbursed among 1,19,862 persons. In 1959-60 the total amount disbursed was Rs. 2,12,725, the number of recipients being 4,682. In 1960-61 the amount disbursed was Rs. 2,96,473 and the number of recipients 15,715.

Loans were also advanced to entrepreneurs under the Bengal State Aid to Industries Act, to enable them either to set up new industries or to expand existing ones. During 1959-60, the total sum disbursed by way of loans on this account was Rs. 4,670. The corresponding amounts for the years 1960-61 and 1961-62 were Rs. 2,625 and Rs. 29,000.

(d) LIFE INSURANCE AND NATIONAL SAVINGS

Life Insurance.

It appears from the data furnished by the Divisional Manager, Life Insurance Corporation of India, Jalpāiguri Division, that in 1957 the total sum assured on Life Insurance policies amounted to Rs. 50.81 lakhs. The number of policy holders was 2,212. This gave an average of Rs. 2,297 as the sum assured per policy holder. In 1958 the total sum assured was Rs. 50.85 lakhs and the number of policy holders was 1,924. This means that the average sum per policy holder was Rs. 2,591. In 1959 the sum assured was Rs. 54.77 lakhs, the number of policy holders being 2,222. This means that the average sum assured per policy holder was Rs. 2,465. The minimum amount for which a policy may be taken out being Rs. 1,000 it seems that a majority of the policy holders owned policies not exceeding Rs. 5,000. This conclusion is also supported by the figures relating to the first year premium income. In 1957 the first year premium income amounted to Rs. 2.60 lakhs, in 1958 it was Rs. 1.84 lakhs and in 1959 it was Rs. 2.05 lakhs.

Savings.

The National Savings Scheme was first introduced into the undivided district of Māldā in 1945. Under the scheme various Savings Certificates having different periods of maturity and different rates of interest have been sold. In 1959-60 the total sum collected by the National Savings Organization in the district was Rs. 4,87,000 out of which Post Office Savings Bank Deposits accounted for Rs. 4,04,000. In 1960-61 it rose to Rs. 8,57,000, the Postal Savings Bank Deposits accounting for Rs. 11,000.

B. TRADE AND COMMERCE

(a) COURSE OF TRADE: IMPORTS AND EXPORTS

Hunter's Account.

Hunter in his Statistical Account of the District of Māldā mentioned raw silk and cocoons, silk cloths, indigo, brass-metal work, rice and other kinds of grain and pulses, and fruits, especially mango, as the articles of export from the district. The chief silk mart was Āmāniganj hāṭ, now in East Pakistan, where buyers came from neighbouring districts of Murshidābād and Rājshāhi.

The value of transactions in silk in one *hāt* day was estimated at lying between Rs. 20,000 and Rs. 50,000. The cocoons and the raw silk from the filatures owned by the local residents were chiefly exported to Murshidābād while the European wound silk was sent straight to Calcutta on its way to France. The silk cloths found purchasers mostly at Calcutta and Benares. Indigo was exported direct to Calcutta. The trade in brass-metal work was mainly carried on at Nawābganj (now in East Pakistan) where the articles were manufactured. The important centres of commerce for foodstuff were English Bazar, Old Māldā, Rohunpur, Nawābganj and Hāiātpur(?). It was estimated that the surplus *āman* rice that was exported from the district was not less than 2,50,000 maunds. Some quantity of peas and mustards were also exported, but the value of such exports could not be assessed by Hunter. Most of the surplus rice which used to be exported were moved by boats along the rivers. The practice was for the boats to touch at certain recognized places known as *ārats* where there were facilities for weighing the goods. Mango used to be exported also by boat down the Mahānandā to Murshidābād. The articles imported consisted of cotton cloths, jute, coconuts, betel-nuts, paper, *ghee*, oil, *sāl* wood, gram, camphor, salt, *gur* or molasses, sugar, sulphur, copper and pewter, *kāshā*, ginger, turmeric, spices of all kinds and pepper. The exports exceeded the imports considerably in value, but instead of their being a steady accumulation of capital within the district, most of the profits used to be remitted away from the district by the traders who were people hailing from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

In 1926 a memorandum was prepared on the marketing of agricultural produce in Bengal in the office of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies, Bengal, from the reports of the District Officers for the information of the Royal Commission on Agriculture. It is rather unfortunate that in this memorandum the report of the District Officer of Māldā is not available, but it is possible to have some idea about the principal articles of export from a tabular statement about the district of Māldā given in that memorandum. It appears that *san* or hemp used to be exported to Chittagong and Calcutta. Vegetables like *paṭal*, brinjal and cucumber used to be exported to Rājshāhi and Murshidābād. Lac used to be exported to Dhuliān in the Murshidābād district, Tamarind and tree cotton (*simul tulā*) were exported to Calcutta. Jute, wheat, pulses and oilseeds used to be exported to Rājmahal and Calcutta, some amount of wheat, pulses and oilseeds being also exported to Dhuliān. Information about articles imported into the district appears to be rather scrappy.

Carter in his Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations (1928-35) in the district of Māldā observed that besides silk, mangoes and lac, the chief exports from the district were paddy, rice, pulses, jute, oilseeds and to a small extent, tobacco. The chief imports were salt, kerosene oil, cotton cloths and other piece-goods. Trade then flowed both along the railways and along the rivers by boats.

Agricultural export
in 1926.

Settlement Report
(1928-35).

Present day.

At the present day, Māldā has become an importer of rice from being an exporter of that commodity. The import of rice is made from the district of West Dinājpur. Mango is the principal article of export of the district. Before partition of the district, most of the mangoes used to be exported to Eastern Bengal. Even after partition, East Pakistan remained as the chief market for export of mango up till 1950 after which a new market has been found in Assam. At present the bulk of the export of mango is made to Assam, the rest going to Calcutta. According to the District Agricultural Marketing Officer, 50,000 maunds (18,660.0 quintals) of mangoes are exported annually from the district on an average. The main jute-growing areas are now in East Pakistan, but even then, by bringing new areas under jute cultivation, it has now become possible for the district to export 4,50,000 maunds (1,67,940.0 quintals) of jute on an average to Calcutta by road and rail. The figure about the quantity of jute exported has been estimated by the District Agricultural Marketing Officer. According to the same source, 1,00,000 maunds (37,320.0 quintals) of pulses and 1,100 maunds (410.5 quintals) of tobacco are also exported out of the district. Māldā provides raw silk and cocoons for the silk weavers of Murshidābād, Birbhum and Bānkurā. Almost the entire quantity of silk cocoons and raw silk produced in the district is exported.

During recent years, the Māldā Mango Processing Co-operative Society Ltd. has been exporting canned mangoes and mango products. This Society was established in 1958. Mango and other fruits are preserved chemically and various kinds of canned products are prepared, some of which are exported out of the district. Canned mango and various mango products have been successfully exported to Australia, Japan, Singapore and the United Kingdom. The value of export to Australia was Rs. 10,000 and that to the U.K. was Rs. 36,340. Orders are being received for greater quantities from all these countries and enquiries are also being received from other countries like West Germany and the U.S.S.R.

(b) TRADE CENTRES

Wholesale markets.

There are 15 wholesale markets in the district in which agricultural produce is bought and sold. The largest market dealing in rice and paddy is situated at English Bazar where the annual turnover is in the neighbourhood of 3,00,000 maunds (1,11,960.0 quintals). At this market, split pulses, cane *gur* and fish are also bought and sold, the annual turnover being 10,000 maunds (3,732.0 quintals) for fish. The market at Old Māldā deals almost exclusively in mango, the quantity of mango handled being 20,000 maunds (7,464.0 quintals) per year. There is another market within Māldā police station, at Bāliānawābganj *hāt*. At this market, the annual turnover in respect of jute amounts to 30,000 maunds (11,196.0 quintals) and in respect of mustard 10,000 maunds (3,732.0 quintals). The most important market dealing in jute is

the one at Samsi in police station Ratuā. The annual turnover in jute at this market amounts to 2,00,000 maunds (74,640.0 quintals). Pulses amounting to 35,000 maunds (13,062.0 quintals) are also bought and sold here. There are two more markets within the police station of Ratuā, one of which is the Ratanpur *hāt* and the other is the Bālupur *hāt*. At the Bālupur *hāt*, the annual turnover in jute amounts to 30,000 maunds (11,196.0 quintals), that in wheat amounts to 5,000 maunds (1,866.0 quintals), that in mustard amounts to 10,000 maunds (3,732.0 quintals) and that in pulses amounts to 20,000 maunds (7,464.0 quintals). The transactions at the Ratanpur *hāt* are somewhat more varied in that in addition to agricultural produce, cattle, poultry and eggs are also bought and sold here. At the Ratanpur *hāt*, the annual turnover in jute amounts to 75,000 maunds (27,990.0 quintals), that in mustard 15,000 maunds (5,598.0 quintals), that in other *rabi* crops 20,000 maunds (7,464.0 quintals) and that in wheat 5,000 maunds (1,866.0 quintals). In addition, 30,000 heads of cattle and large numbers of poultry and eggs are also bought and sold at this *hāt*.

The market next in importance to the Samsi *hāt* is the one at Bhālukhā in police station Harishchandrapur so far as trade in jute is concerned. The annual turnover of jute at this *hāt* amounts to 1,00,000 maunds (37,320.0 quintals), pulses accounting for another 40,000 maunds (14,928.0 quintals). There are two other markets within the police station of Harishchandrapur, one at Bārduāri and the other at Mehā *hāt*. At the market at Bārduāri the annual turnover in jute amounts to 50,000 maunds (18,660.0 quintals) and that in *rabi* pulses 20,000 maunds (7,464.0 quintals). At the Mehā *hāt* the annual turnover in jute amounts to 10,000 maunds (3,732.0 quintals), that in pulses amounts to 10,000 maunds (3,732.0 quintals) and that in mustard amounts to 5,000 maunds (1,866.0 quintals). The remaining markets are one at Gājōl in police station Gājōl, another at Bulbulchandi in police station Habibpur, another at Aihō *hāt* in police station Habibpur, Chānchal *hāt* in police station Kharbā, Gōsāir *hāt* in police station Kālīāchak and Pākuā *hāt* in police station Bāmangōlā. At the Gājōl *hāt* the main commodity dealt in is paddy, the annual turnover in which amounts to 30,000 maunds (11,196.0 quintals). At the Bulbulchandi *hāt* also it is mainly paddy again, and the annual turnover there is 15,000 maunds (5,598.0 quintals). At the Aihō *hāt* the annual turnover in paddy amounts to 15,000 maunds (5,598.0 quintals) and that in mustard amounts to 5,000 maunds (1,866.0 quintals). At the Chānchal *hāt* also, the principal commodity dealt in is paddy, the annual turnover in which amounts to 50,000 maunds (18,660.0 quintals). At Gōsāir *hāt* cattle and *gur* are the two articles dealt in, and the annual turnover in cattle amounts to 7,000 heads and that in *gur* 15,000 maunds (5,598.0 quintals). At the Pākuā *hāt* 10,000 heads of cattle, 20,000 maunds (7,464.0 quintals) of paddy and 25,000 poultry birds are bought and sold annually.

The wholesale markets mentioned in the preceding paragraph also act to some extent as centres of retail trade. In addition

Retail markets.

there are several retail markets, a list of which is given below along with the days of the week on which the markets sit.

Sl. No.	Name of retail market	Police Station	Days of the week on which the market sits
1	2	3	4
1.	Tulshihātā <i>hāt</i>	Harishchandrapur	Sunday
2.	Harishchandrapur <i>hāt</i>	Habibpur	Friday
3.	Kendpukur <i>hāt</i>	Ditto	Wednesday & Saturday
4.	Chānchal <i>hāt</i>	Kharbā	Wednesday
5.	Dighir <i>hāt</i>	Gājōl	Friday
6.	Mathurāpur <i>hāt</i>	Mānikchak	Saturday
7.	Nathinagar <i>hāt</i>	English Bazar	Monday & Friday
8.	Milki <i>hāt</i>	Ditto	Tuesday & Saturday
9.	Mohodipur <i>hāt</i>	Ditto	...
10.	Bābur <i>hāt</i>	Kālīāchak	Monday & Friday
11.	Sāhebganj <i>hāt</i>	Ditto	Sunday & Thursday

Melas.

Melās or religious fairs are held at a number of places in the district. At these *melās* people congregate not only to observe some religious ceremony but the traders also take the opportunity to carry on trade in various commodities there. The most important *melā*, and probably the most largely attended, is the one that is held at Rāmkeli on the occasion of the *Jyaisṭha Samkrānti*. Vaishnavas from all over Bengal assemble at this *melā* at this period, but the business of the *melā* does not remain confined merely to religious observances. A large number of booths are set up by shopkeepers to sell finished articles like blankets, steel trunks, cooking utensils, furniture and mats and various other things. The traders come not only from different parts of West Bengal but also from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The *melā* lasts for about four or five days, and is daily attended by about 10,000 persons. Another *melā* is held at Pānduā in the month of December or January on the occasion of the observance of the *Urs* festival by the Muslims. Muslims from various places of the district as also from places in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh attend this *melā*. Another festival of the Muslims is also held at Pānduā in the month of March or April on the occasion of the *Sabe-barāt*. Another *melā* is held at Dhāwail in police station Gājōl on the occasion of the *Māghi-Purnimā*. The *melā* lasts for fourteen days. A *melā* is held at Amriti in police station English Bazar, seven miles (11.3 km.) off from the English Bazar town on the Māldā-Rājmahal Road, on the occasion of the *Sivarātri*. The duration of the *melā* is three days. At Sadullāpur a number of *melās* are held at different times of the year. Sadullāpur is a place which is holy to the Hindus. It is situated on the bank of the river Bhāgirathi in the south-west corner of the English Bazar police station. The first *melā* is held on the occasion of the *Gaṅgā-dasaharā* in June-July and lasts for two days. The second *melā* is held on the *Bhādra-Samkrānti* in September and lasts for one day. The third *melā* is held on the *Bhādra-Purnimā* day in August-September and lasts for one day. Another *melā* is held on the occasion of *Paush-*

Samkrānti in January and lasts for one day. The fifth *melā* is held on the occasion of *Māghi-Purnimā* in January-February and lasts for two days.

(c) CO-OPERATION IN TRADE

Co-operative
Marketing Society.

17 Co-operative Marketing Societies are now operating in the district, of which 5 are large-sized and 12 small-sized. The difference between the large-sized and small-sized societies consists in the size of financial assistance received from the Government. At present, only large-sized societies are being established. These societies have been established with a view to helping the members thereof in marketing their agricultural produce. Each of the large-sized co-operative marketing societies has been given a grant of Rs. 5,000 and a loan of Rs. 15,000 by the Government for the construction of storage godowns. The Government not only extends help to these societies in the shape of grants and loans but also intends to participate in the raising of share capital for each of these societies. The liability of the Government to subscribe to the share capital is to the extent of Rs. 25,000 or an amount equal to the paid up share capital, whichever is less. So far, two societies have benefited by this scheme. The total amount subscribed by the Government towards the share capital of these two societies is Rs. 35,115. The Co-operative Marketing Societies are supposed to advance money to their members against the agricultural produce deposited in the godowns of these societies, subject to adjustment after the disposal of the produce. The five large-sized co-operative marketing societies between them command a paid up share capital of Rs. 81,561 while the twelve small-sized co-operative marketing societies between them command a paid up share capital of Rs. 8,652. 960 individuals, 75 societies and the Government are members of the large-scale marketing societies while the total number of members of the small-scale societies is 500 (individuals).

(d) MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATIONS AND TRADE UNIONS

Merchants'
Associations.

There are two merchants' associations: (1) Māldā Mango Merchants' Association and (2) Māldā Merchants' Association. The first one looks to the interest of the mango traders only while the second one draws its membership from merchants dealing in all other commodities as well as rice millers. There is no consumer association in the district.

Labour Unions.

There are the following Labour Unions in the district:

1. All India Insurance Employees' Association, Jalpāiguri Division, Māldā Base Committee.
2. All India Life Insurance Employees' Association, Māldā Base Committee.
3. United Bank Employees' Association, Māldā.
4. State Bank Employees' Union, Māldā.
5. Biḍi Workers' Union.
6. Rickshaw Pullers' Union.

7. Dokān Karmachāri Samity.
8. Māldā Darjee (Tailors) Workers' Union.
9. Municipal Employees' Union, Class III & Class IV.
10. All India Posts and Telegraphs Workers' Union, Māldā.
11. Māldā Motion Pictures Workers' Union.

(e) WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

Traditional weights
& measures.

Different units of weights and measures were in use in different parts of the district prior to the enforcement of the Standards of Weights and Measures Act enacted by Parliament in 1956. While the grocers generally used seers of 80 *tolās*, agricultural produce used to be measured in seers of varying weights. At the Bāilupur *hāt*, seer of 107 *tolās* was used for weighing jute and paddy. At the Ratanpur *hāt*, jute was weighed against seers of 102 *tolās* while paddy and rice were weighed against seers of 101 *tolās*. Similarly, the seer was of 105 *tolās* in Kharbā and Harishchandrapur, 101 *tolās* in Ratuā, 100 *tolās* in Mānikchak, Māldā, Gājōl, Bāmangōlā and the rural area of English Bazar police stations; of 88 *tolās* in Habibpur police station and 80 *tolās* in Kālīāchak police station. Liquid substances were generally measured with bamboo or metallic containers corresponding to the weights of the prevailing system of weight in the locality. Tea was sold by the pound. It is with a view to put an end to these variations and consequential loss to the producers that the Standards of Weights and Measures Act was enacted by Parliament. For enforcing the provisions of this Act within the State, the State Government passed the West Bengal Standards of Weights and Measures (Enforcement) Act in 1958, and framed Rules thereunder in 1959. By these Acts and Rules, the metric system of weights and measures has become effective from October 1, 1960, throughout the State of West Bengal.

Introduction of
metric weights
& measures.

CHAPTER VII
COMMUNICATIONS

Buchanan Hamilton left the following account of the system of communication in the district of Māldā :

“In the topographical account of this district I have already explained, that it is everywhere intersected by rivers, which in the rainy season, and when travelling by land is nearly suspended, admit of large boats to every division, and of small ones to most villages. In the dry season the navigation is confined within very narrow limits, and the country, being everywhere dry, plain, and open, almost every part is accessible for loaded cattle, and few or no roads exist, at least for the conveyance of goods. The manner, in which these are transported, is of course adapted to such circumstances. Very little is exported or imported in the dry season, during which the produce of the country is collected in warehouses, that are situated on the banks of rivers ; and, when these swell, is loaded on boats, and sent to the places of its destination. The imports are made in the rainy season, and during the dry weather are distributed from the marts to the various market places. This is attended with so much inconvenience, from the slow returns of capital, that the smaller traders, who deal chiefly in the articles of import, use canoes and floats (*Mars*), which consist of two or three canoes connected by a platform of bamboos. Even in the dry season these can penetrate a considerable way, into the country, from the Mohanonda, Atreyi, and Korotoya, which at all seasons are navigable into this district for boats of 500 *mans* burthen. For rice, the great article of export, this would be too expensive a mode of conveyance, and indeed of little consequence ; as the merchants would in general avoid taking it to the Calcutta or Moorshedabad market, until the rice produced in the vicinity of these cities is consumed, which is not until after the commencement of the rainy season ; and, besides, the Bhagirathi, which is the channel of conveyance between this and Moorshedabad and Calcutta, is not navigable in the dry season. At that period the supply of goods, such as cotton, salt, betlenut, shells, and other articles of consumption, can only be procured from Bhogowangola, Kumarkhali, or Narayangunj, which of course become the marts for these articles.”

Buchanan Hamilton's account of the district refers to the second quarter of the nineteenth century, and an account of the communication system of the district is not available prior to that date. But as Gauḍa was the capital of Bengal at one time, it is only

Present means of
Communications.

Roads.

reasonable to assume that a fairly large number of roads converged on Gauḍa at that time. Sultān Ghiyās-ud-din 'Iwaz Khalji constructed a road connecting Devkoṭ, which is now in the district of West Dinājpur, with Lakhnor (Nagar) in the Birbhum district, through the city of Gauḍa which he had made his capital. The rivers which cut across this road had to be crossed by boats. M. O. Carter in his Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the District of Māldā (1928-35) mentions another Bādshāhi *ṣaḍak* running northwards to the western side of Harishchandrapur police station into the Purneā district.

Although Buchanan Hamilton stated that the principal means of communication was along the rivers, his statement which was repeated by Lambourn in the District Gazeteer of Māldā (published in 1918) would no longer apply in regard to the means of communication in the present district of Māldā. This is so because except Kālindri, all the other navigable rivers like the Mahānandā, the Tāngan and the Punarbhavā flow through East Pakistan before joining the Ganges. The principal means of communication is thus by road and rail. The National Highway No. 34, which runs from Calcutta to Siliguri, passes for a portion of its length through the district of Māldā. It enters the district at Khejuriāghāṭ and passes via Māldā (English Bazar) and Gājōl to Rāiganj in the district of West Dinājpur. The length of this National Highway within the district of Māldā is 67 miles (107.9 km.). The width of the hard crust of this road is 12 feet (3.66 metres). It is black-topped. The ruins of Gaur are situated at a distance of about 8 miles (12.9 km.) from a point on this road. The State Highways are three in number. The first one links English Bazar with Mānikchak. The length of this road is 20 miles (32.2 km.). The width of its hard crust is 12 feet (3.66 metres), which is black-topped. The second State Highway is the one from Māldā to Gājōl. The length of this road is 16 miles (25.8 km.), and it connects the police station of English Bazar. Adinā and Pānduā, the two places of historical interest, are situated on this road. The width of the crust of this road is also 12 feet (3.66 metres), and it is also black-topped. The third State Highway links Gājōl with Baniādpur in West Dinājpur. The length of this road is 20 miles (32.2 km.) between the two extreme points. The width of the crust is 12 feet (3.66 metres) and the road is black-topped.

The Major District Roads are four in number. The longest one measuring 33 miles (53.1 km.) in length connects Gājōl, Samsi, Chānchal and Harishchandrapur. It is black-topped, and the width of its hard crust is 12 feet (3.66 metres). The next important road of this class is the Gājōl-Bāmangōlā-Habibpur-Bulbulchandi Road. The length of this road is 26 miles (41.9 km.), and the width of the hard crust is 10 feet (3.05 metres). This is also black-topped. There is an unbridged gap over the Gājōl-Bāmangōlā section of this road where the Tāngan crosses it. The third major district road is the Mānikchak-Mathurāpur-Ratuā road, measuring 10 miles (16.1 km.) in length. This also is black-topped and the width of the hard crust is 10 feet (3.05 metres). There is another

road of this class connecting Samsi with Ratuā, 8 miles (12.9 km.) in length. This is also black-topped, and the width of the hard crust is 10 feet (3.05 metres).

There are seven roads which are classed as Other District Roads. Of these the English Bazar-Kôtwāli road and the Gaur-Mohodipur-National Highway 34 road are black-topped. The first one is $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles (7.3 km.) in length while the second one is $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles (15.3 km.) in length. The width of the hard crust of both these roads is 10 feet (3.05 metres). The Bahārāl-Ārāidāngā-Mediāghāṭ road (length 13 miles (20.9 km.), width of the hard crust 10 feet (3.05 metres)), the Mirzāpur-Baṅgshihāri road (length $10\frac{3}{4}$ miles (17.3 km.), width of the hard crust 9 feet (2.74 metres)) and the Chānchal-Kharbā-Churāmanghāṭ road with a link with Kālīgrām and Khārbā police stations (length 8 miles (12.9 km.), width of the hard crust 10 feet (3.05 metres)) are macadamised but not black-topped. The Golāp-ganj-Kālīāchak-Niāmatpur road (length 18 miles (29.0 km.)) and the Māldā-Bulbulchandi-Siṅgābād road (length 14 miles (22.54 km.)) are merely fair weather dirt roads.

Besides the roads mentioned above, the following village roads are also maintained by the Government:

(1) Kālībāri-Pākuriā road (length 2 miles (3.2 km.), width of the hard crust 8 feet (2.44 metres), black-topped); (2) Eklākhi to National Highway 34 ($5\frac{1}{2}$ miles/8.9 km. in length); (3) Kāgmāri-Baṅgitōlā-Panchānandapur road (length 9 miles/14.5 km.); and (4) link road to Harishchandrapur Health Centre (length 1 mile/1.61 km., black-topped, width of hard crust 10 feet/3.05 metres). The Eklākhi-National Highway 34 road and the Kāgmāri-Baṅgitōlā-Panchānandapur road are *kāchchā* roads, i.e. they are negotiable only in the fair weather.

In addition to the roads maintained by the Government, the Zilla Parishad maintains 8 major roads, 13 minor roads and 105 major and minor village roads. The total length of the 8 major roads maintained by the Zilla Parishad is 47 miles and 1 furlong approximately (76 km.), the total length of the minor roads maintained by the Zilla Parishad is 16 miles and 7 furlongs approximately (27.2 km.) and the total length of the major village roads maintained by the Zilla Parishad is 213 miles and 1 furlong (343 km.). Full details of these roads are given in an appendix to this Chapter.

The total mileage of the roads situated within the town of English Bazar or Māldā is 32.9 miles (53 km.) out of which 9 miles (14.5 km.) are unmetalled. The Municipality of old Māldā similarly maintains 6 miles (9.7 km.) of metalled roads.

The villagers carry the produce of the fields and the handicrafts produced by them to the markets in the traditional bullock-carts. But when commodities are removed over long distances, modern means of transport like lorries are utilized. So far as passenger traffic is concerned, the cycle-rickshaws form almost the sole means of conveyance within the towns of English Bazar and old Māldā. People also travel to and from nearby villages in cycle-rickshaws. A kind of horse-drawn vehicle which moves on two wheels is also

met with, but this type of vehicle is not very numerous. In 1959-60 there were 28 taxis plying within the district. Those who possess bicycles naturally move from one place to another on bicycles.

There are also public transports, both owned by the State and by private persons. The North Bengal State Transport Corporation, which is a Government undertaking, runs 17 buses on 4 roads which lies either wholly or partly within the district of Māldā. There are 8 buses on the Māldā-Milki-Mathurāpur-Mānikchak route, 2 on the Māldā-Kālīāchak-Khejuriāghāṭ route, 4 on the Māldā-Gājōl-Baniādpur-Gaṅgārāmpur-Patirām-Bālurghāṭ route and 3 on the Māldā-Gājōl-Baniādpur-Kālīāganj-Rāiganj route. The Corporation also runs buses once a week between Baniādpur and Gājōl for the benefit of passengers visiting the *hāṭs*.

The number of privately owned public buses is 29. These run along 23 routes of which 13 are only seasonal and are not open throughout the year. The total road mileage covered by the privately owned buses is 483 miles (777.6 km.). It is not possible to state the total road mileage covered by the State buses within the district except for one route, viz. the Māldā-Milki-Mathurāpur-Mānikchak route, along which the route mileage is 40 miles (64.4 km.). The district appears to be fairly well served by public buses.

The district is not well served by railways. There are three sections of the N.F. Railway within the district. One section originates at Kāthihār in Bihar and ends at Siṅhabād in the district of Māldā. The length of this route is 51.21 miles (82.5 km.). This was originally a metre gauge route and was converted into a broad gauge route and opened to traffic on October 11, 1961. The second section of the railway runs from Māldā (old Māldā) to Khejuriāghāṭ. The total length of this route is 26.70 miles (43 km.). The first 6.16 miles (9.9 km.) of this route was formerly metre gauge. This was converted into the broad gauge, and the new section from 6.16 miles (9.9 km.) to 26.70 miles (43 km.) at Khejuriāghāṭ and the old section which had been converted to broad gauge were opened to traffic on October 11, 1961. The third section runs from Mukuriā to Kumedpur. This is also broad gauge but the length is only 1.10 miles (1.8 km.). The date of opening of this section to traffic is July 12, 1959. The most convenient route for going to Māldā from Calcutta by rail is via Tinpāhār Junction and Rājmahalghāṭ. The train stops at Rājmahalghāṭ. The Ganges may be crossed here by means of a steam launch. On the other side is Mānikchakghāṭ from where buses are available to the town of Māldā.

The Rājmahal-Mānikchakghāṭ ferry is owned by the State Government who leases the ferry right to private persons. There are two steam launches in use. Another important ferry service is between Dhuliān in the district of Murshidābād and Khejuriāghāṭ in the district of Māldā. The Dhuliān-Khejuriāghāṭ ferry service carries heavier traffic in goods than the Rājmahal-Mānikchakghāṭ ferry service. In the Dhuliān-Khejuriāghāṭ ferry service two steam launches and two motor boats are in use. As compared with approximately 5,000 tons (5,080.3 metric tons) of goods handled

Railways.

Ferries.

annually at the Rājmahal-Mānikchakghāṭ ferry service 56,000 tons (56,898.8 metric tons) of goods approximately are handled annually at the Dhuliān-Khejuriāghāṭ ferry service. The pressure on the Dhuliān-Khejuriāghāṭ ferry service is greater because the distance between Calcutta and Māldā along this route is considerably shorter than that along the Rājmahal-Mānikchakghāṭ ferry. The other important ferry in the district is that over the Mahānandā which enables one to cross from English Bazar to old Māldā. This ferry is maintained by the Zilla Parishad which maintains in all 50 ferries. Details of the ferries maintained by the Zilla Parishad are given in an appendix to this Chapter.

There is an air field which is off the town of Māldā but it is not in use at present. This air field was constructed mainly to facilitate the export of mango out of the district.

Besides the Circuit House at Māldā, there are 11 Inspection Bungalows and Dak Bungalows within the district. Details about the Circuit House and the Inspection Bungalows and the Dak Bungalows are given in an appendix to this Chapter. There are no proper hotels at English Bazar.

In August, 1947, there were 1 Head Post Office at Māldā, 7 Sub Offices and 47 Extra Departmental Branch Offices within the district. All these Post Offices were placed under the administrative control of the Superintendent of Post Offices, Murshidabad, immediately after the partition of the old district in August, 1947. On the 7th March 1961, these Post Offices were placed under the administrative control of Māldā. During the First Five Year Plan period 80 and during the Second Five Year Plan period 31 post offices were opened in the district. There is a proposal to open 43 additional post offices during the Third Five Year Plan period. Out of this, 5 post offices were opened by October 31, 1962. There are at present 1 Head Post Office at Māldā, 12 Sub-Post Offices and 158 Branch Offices. The Sub-Post Offices are situated at (1) Māldā District School Board, (2) Mukdampur, (3) Mathurāpur, (4) Samsi, (5) Chānchal, (6) Harishchandrapur, (7) Gājōl, (8) Old Māldā, (9) Kāliāchak, (10) Fulbāri, (11) Bulbulchandi and (12) Kāligāōn. These twelve Sub-Post Offices are located in the different police stations as follows:

Māldā police station	1
Kāliāchak police station	1
Habīpur police station	1
Ratuā police station	1
Mānikchak police station	1
Kharbā police station	2
Harishchandrapur police station	1
Gājōl police station	1
English Bazar police station	3

There is no Sub-Post Office in the Bāmangōlā police station. Of the 158 branch offices, 8 are situated in Māldā police station, 40 in Kāliāchak police station, 8 in Habīpur police station, 18 in Ratuā police station, 16 in Mānikchak police station, 14 in Kharbā police station, 20 in Harishchandrapur police station, 6 in Bāmangōlā police station, 10 in Gājōl police station and 18 in English Bazar police station.

Postal and telegraph facilities are available at Māldā and the headquarters stations of Kāliāchak, Gājōl, Ratuā and Harishchandrapur police stations. The headquarters stations of Bāmangōlā and Kharbā are served by the Gājōl and Chānchal telegraph offices. There are no telegraph facilities at the headquarters stations of the other police stations.

The number of ordinary articles of the letter mails handled by all the post offices in the district in 1961 was 61,23,000 including those for delivery to the public from the post offices as well as for despatch to outwards mails. The number of Money Orders issued during the month of October, 1962, was 11,249, the total value being Rs. 4,71,536.43. The number of Money Orders paid during the same period was 9,621 valued at Rs. 5,98,869.49. During that month the number of registered letters booked was 2,647, that of registered parcels booked 692, that of insured letters booked 277 and that of insured parcels booked 46.

There are at present 3 Telephone Exchanges in the district, one at Māldā Sadar, the second at Harishchandrapur and the third at Samsi. The capacity of the Māldā Exchange is 200, and there are 200 direct connections and 11 extensions in that Exchange. The Harishchandrapur Exchange with a capacity of 50 telephones has got 41 connections and the one at Samsi with a capacity of 50 connections has got 21 connections. There are also public call offices at the post offices of (1) Māldā, (2) Gājōl, (3) Bulbulchandi, (4) Harishchandrapur, (5) Kāliāchak and (6) Samsi.

APPENDIX

(a) LIST OF FERRIES MAINTAINED BY THE ZILLA PARISHAD, MĀLDĀ

1. Sadar Station Road	Within English Bazar Municipality on one side and across the Mahānandā river.
2. Jhowghāṭṭā	On the eastern side of English Bazar town and across the Mahānandā river.
3. Nimasarāi	At the end of Rathbāri Nimasarāi road and lies at the meeting point of the Mahānandā and the Kālindri.
4. Noorpoor	End of Māthurāpur Noorpoorghāṭ road and across the Kālindri lying between Āriādāngā Pirganj road.
5. Mādiā	In the third mile of Māldā ferry ghat across the Kālindri.
6. Pirganj	Lying between Āriādāngā-Pirganj and Pirganj-Eklākhi road and across the Mahānandā river.
7. Pukhuriā	In the sixth mile of Kumārganj road and across the Morānadi.
8. Bōrkōle	Lying between Bālurpur-Bōrkōle road and Bōrkōleghāṭ-Ādinā road and across the Mahānandā.
9. Rāipur	Off the third mile across the Mahānandā river.
10. Bulbulchandi	In the first mile of Lāl Bulbulchandi road and across the Tāngan river.
11. Muchiā	At the end of Muchiā road and across the Tāngan.
12. Sārjōle	In the fourth mile of Samsi Ratuā road and across the Morānadi.
13. Bāliā Nawābganj	On Bāliā Nawābganjghāṭ road and across the Morānadi.

LIST OF FERRIES MAINTAINED BY THE ZILLA PARISHAD, MĀLDĀ—contd.

14. Budhiā	About two miles down from Bōrkōle and across the Mahānandā.
15. Kālīābād	Across the Mahānandā river.
16. Ālāl	In the eighth mile of Ālāl road and across the Mahānandā.
17. Bāmangōlā	In the tenth mile of Pākuāghāṭ road and across the Tāngan.
18. Lālāgōlā	In the first mile of Lālā Harishankarpur road and across the Tāngan.
19. Mirzātpur	In the first mile of Mirzātpur Lālbāthāni road and across the Kālandri.
20. Boirgāchi	Near the Eklākhī railway bridge and across the Mahānandā.
21. Ārāidāngā	In the first mile of Ārāidāngā Enāitpur road and across the Kālandri.
22. Chātore	Lying between Ālāl and Boirgāchi ferry and across the Mahānandā.
23. Bālupur	At the beginning of Bālupur-Bōrkōle road and across the Kālandri.
24. Debakīpur	Near Koywāli and across the Kālandri.
25. Sādullāpur	At the end of Sādullāpur road and across the Bhāgirathi river.
26. Debipur	In the third mile of Hāyātpur road and across the Bāromasiā.
27. Khānpur	At the end of Samshi Khānpur road and across the Mahānandā.
28. Dumrāil	Beginning of Tulshihāṭā road and across the Mahānandā.
29. Jagadishpur Tārāpur	About 1½ miles up Dumrāilghāṭ.
30. Goālpārā	About 6 miles up Khānpurghāṭ and across the Mahānandā.
31. Lāhiridārā	This ferry is a dead one.
32. Trimohini	End of Swarupganj road and across the Mahānandā.
33. Gobrāghāṭ	At the end of Hāyātpur Gobrāghāṭ road and across the Kānkar river.
34. Khuduā-dārā	In the sixth mile of Tulshihāṭā Hāyātpur road and across a dārā.
35. Ekbōrābād	In the fifth mile of Sādullāpur Panchānandapur road and across the Pāglā.
36. Bhāgalpur	This ferry crosses the Bhāgirathi near Kāgmāri.
37. Kāgmāri	In the fourth mile of Amrity Kāgmāri road and across the Bhāgirathi.
38. Mohodipur	In the first mile of Mohodipur Golāpganj and across the Bhāgirathi.
39. Āmāniganj	Off the fourth mile from the Mohodipur road and across the Bhāgirathi.
40. Belwāri	In the tenth mile of Kālīāchak Mohodipur road and across the Bhāgirathi.
41. Gossāipur	In the fourth mile of Milki Baṅgitōlā road and across the Bhāgirathi.
42. Trimohani	In the first mile of Kālīāchak Kīṭapur road and across the Pāglā.
43. Rājāpur Kharab	Between Boirgāchi and Pirganj and across the Mahānandā.
44. Rāngāmāṭiā	At the end of Nimasarāi-Rāngāmāṭiā road; this ferry is only for the rainy season.
45. Nāghariā	At the end of Amrity-Nāghariā road and across the Kālandri.
46. Itākjōlā	Across the Mahānandā.
47. Sutidārā	At the beginning of Sutidārā-Mādhāipur road.
48. Tulbāri	By the side of English Bazar town.
49. Ghogā	In the tenth mile. The ferry is kept during the rains on the Morā Mahānandā.
50. Ruhimāri-dārā	Across a dārā and only for the rainy season.

(b) LIST OF ROADS UNDER MĀLDĀ ZILLA PARISHAD

No.	Name of Road	Length M-F-Yds.	Important rivers and channels crossed and the nature of bridges	Location of the bridge with reference to the starting point
(a) MAJOR ZILLA PARISHAD ROADS				
1	Rathbāri Nimasarāi road	..		
2	Amrity Nimasarāi road	5-0-0		
3	Sādullāpur road	2-2-0		
4	Kālīāchak Mohodipur road	9-2-0	One wooden bridge	In the second mile from Kālīāchak.
5	Mahammadpur road	4-2-188		
6	Tulshihāṭā Bhālūkā road	13-2-57	One unbridged khāl	In the sixth mile from Tulshihāṭā.
7	Kāligrām Kharbā road	5-3-217	Morā Mahānandā	In the second mile from Kāligrām.
8	Chānchal Swarupganj road	7-4-0	Shipur Dārā with 30' span slab bridge	In the second mile from Chānchal.
(b) MINOR ZILLA PARISHAD ROADS				
9	Ādinā Station Road	1-1-95		
10	Gaur Bundh Road	2-0-200		
11	Gayespur Road	1-6-43		
12	Jōte Road	0-7-216		
13	Post Office Road	0-0-87		
14	Sārgāchi Road	1-4-140		
15	Enāitpur Mathurāpur road	3-0-0		
16	Mathurāpur Nāzirpur road	2-0-0		
17	Nāzirpur Begumganj road	2-0-0		
18	Māldā Court Station Road	0-5-66		
19	Sāhāpurghāṭ Māldā Court Station Road	0-6-176		
20	Old Māldā Station Road	0-0-66		
21	Muchiā Station Road	0-5-36		
(c) MAJOR VILLAGE ROADS				
22	Kōtwāli Road	3-2-107		
23	Amrity Kāgmāri Road	3-3-105		
24	Mōthābāri Road	4-5-57		



No.	Name of Road	Length M-F-Yds.	Important rivers and channels crossed and the nature of bridges	Location of the bridge with re- ference to the starting point
25	Sādullāpur Mohodipur road	9-0-0	Āmāniganj <i>Khāl</i> without bridge	In the fourth mile from Sādullāpur.
26	Kāliāchak Mādiā Road	15-1-147	Bhāgirathi river unbridged	In the tenth mile from Kāliāchak.
27	Bhāgīān Road	8-7-161	River Pāglā with ferry and one unbridged <i>khāl</i>	River in the third mile and <i>khāl</i> in the first mile.
28	Kumārpur Road	3-2-175		
29	Kātlāpukur Road	3-7-190		
30	Kāliāchak Panchānandapur Road	8-7-81	One unbridged <i>khāl</i> at Thuṭiā	In the first mile from Kāliāchak.
31	Tulsihāṭṭā Wāri Hossainpur road	5-0-98	Tulsihāṭṭā <i>Dārā</i> bridge with 30' span	In the first mile from Tulsihāṭṭā
32	Sādullāpur Nimsarāi road	6-5-118		
33	Ārāidāngā Eklākshi Station Road	9-0-171		
34	Ārāidāngā Enāitpur Road	5-0-0		
35	Samsi Khānpur Road	7-0-159		
36	Bālupur Pānduā Road	10-4-157	On the Mahānandā river with ferry and the Kālindri river with ferry	Fifth mile from Bālupur and first mile from Bālupur.
37	Sādullāpur Panchānandapur Road	10-0-148	River Bhāgirathi with ferry and river Pāglā with ferry	In the first mile and the fifth mile from Sādullāpur.
38	Swarupganj Mathurāpur road	10-4-0	One <i>khāl</i> unbridged	In the second mile from Swarupganj.
39	Kushidā Road	6-2-129	One <i>khāl</i> at Khalilpur with wooden bridge	In the third mile from Kushidā.
40	Kāliāchak Kristāpur road	3-5-70		
41	Karchādāngā Bārādāngā road	5-1-0		
42	Dalilpur Noāpara road	5-3-18		
43	Rāniganj Road	12-4-0	One unbridged <i>khāl</i>	In the first mile from Māldā.
44	Jogdollā Road	7-4-175		
45	Nabinagore Gosāinhāṭ road	8-5-31	Pāglā river with ferry and one unbridged <i>khāl</i> at Tofi	In the first and fourth mile from Nabinagore.
46	Enāitpur Panchānandapur road	12-5-67		

No.	Name of Road	Length M-F-Yds.	Important rivers and channels crossed and the nature of bridges	Location of the bridge with re- ference to the starting point
47	Rāngāmāṭiā Āmli-dāngā Road	14-4-137	<i>Khāl</i> at Dokhāriā with pucca bridge	In the eleventh mile from Āmli-dāngā.
48	Golāpganj Road	11-2-13	The Bhāgirathi river with ferry	In the first mile from Mohodipur.
(d) MINOR VILLAGE ROADS				
49	Hāyātpur Gobrāghāṭ road	3-5-14	One unbridged <i>khāl</i> at Fatepur	In the second mile from Hāyātpur.
50	Tulshihāṭṭā Chaksātoon road	3-4-0		
51	Puriā Mathurāpur road	3-7-0		
52	Simuliā Road	4-0-0		
53	Mathurāpur Kamalpur road	2-5-45		
54	Nāzirpur Narattampur Road	5-4-0		
55	Mathurāpur Lālbāthāni road	2-2-75		
56	Muchiāghāṭ Bulbulchandi Station Road	3-2-0		
57	Ārāidāngā Mirdāpur Chāndpur road	2-1-45		
58	Mirdāpur Lālbāthāni road	5-3-73		
59	Ghōrāpir Sādullāpur road	4-1-73		
60	Nimtōlā Māniknagar road	1-4-85		
61	Swarupganj Rānikāmāt road	1-0-26		
62	Bāliā Nawābganjghāṭ road	0-6-64		
63	Third Mile Gaur Road to Jadupur Road	2-5-162		
64	Fulbāri Bhawānipur Road	3-3-102		
65	Jālālpur Mohodipur road	4-4-218		
66	Bāgbāri Tank Rānipukur Road	0-5-160		
67	Saidpur Ekbornā road	3-2-108		
68	Amrity Niāmatpur road	1-3-123		
69	Fourth Mile of Gaur Road to Third Mile of Mahammadpur Road	2-0-71		
70	Amrity Naghariā road	2-5-16		
71	Mohodipur Fatepur road	2-3-140		
72	Gōlā Road	1-6-67		

LIST OF ROADS UNDER MĀLDĀ ZILLA PARISHAD—*contd.*

No.	Name of Road	Length M-F-Yds.	Important rivers and channels crossed and the nature of bridges	Location of the bridge with re- ference to the starting point
73	Bhālukā Station Road	0-5-167		
74	Jaharatolā Road	1-3-197		
75	Rāmkeli Hābās-khānā road	0-6-47		
76	Belbāri Road	1-0-176		
77	Ranju <i>Beel</i> Sish-dāngā Road	2-7-0	Unbridged ghāt at Sishdāngā	In the third mile from Ranju <i>Beel</i> .
78	Eklākshi Pānchpārā road	2-5-7		
79	Pirganj Eklākshi road to Eklākshi Pānchpārā road	0-4-60		
80	Pirpur Amrity road	5-0-192		
81	Kamalpur Jātrā-dāngā road	3-1-187		
82	Mālatipur Kāligrām road	1-7-60		
83	Sutidārā Mādhaipur road	1-7-20		
84	Chātore Ferry Akkelpur road	3-4-0		
85	Singhabād Station Road	5-1-180		
86	Budhiā Pirganj road	4-1-193		
87	Binodepur Rāniganj road	5-4-179		
88	Begunbāri Sish-dāngā road	5-4-0		
89	Bulbulchandi Ferryghāt Road	2-3-170		
90	Milki Baṅgitōlā road	3-5-0	The Bhāgirathi river with ferry	In the fourth mile from Milki.
91	Hāyātpur Mālatipur road	9-3-147		
92	Kumārganj Station Pukuriā Road	6-1-0	The Marānadi with ferry	In the fourth mile from Kumārganj.
93	Miāhāt Daharā road	12-0-0		
94	Rāngāmātiā Nimasarāi road	2-1-55	The Marānadi with ferry	In the second mile from Hāyātpur.
95	Amrity Nimasarāi to N.H.	1-0-15		
96	Parānpur Bāilupur road	1-7-6		
97	Kushidā Simuliā road	2-6-15 •		
98	Chainpur Kapāichandi road	4-6-20		
99	Kumedpur Miāhāt road	5-6-146	The River Kānkan with ferry	

LIST OF ROADS UNDER MĀLDĀ ZILLA PARISHAD—*concl.*

No.	Name of Road	Length M-F-Yds.	Important rivers and channels crossed and the nature of bridges	Location of the bridge with re- ference to the starting point
100	Harishchandrapur Mahendrapur road	1-2-20		
101	Māniknagore Kari-āli road	7-2-30		
102	Kristapur Kum-bhirā Road	4-2-20	Unbridged <i>khāl</i>	In the second mile from Kristapur.
103	Jālālpur Māzumpur road	1-4-20		
104	Jālālpur Mothābāri road	3-1-20		
105	Lālā Harisaṅkarpur Road	4-0-25	The Tāngan river with ferry	In the first mile from Lālā.
106	Rahimpur Gājōl road	1-3-50		
107	Dahil Bardāngā road	7-2-55		
108	Chānchal Bhebā road	7-2-60		
109	Bomkā Durgāpur road	3-2-150		
110	Pānchānandapur Sāhebganj Bazar Road	5-0-0		
111	Pānchpārā Bādsāhi road	5-0-0	Three unbridged <i>khāls</i>	In the first and third mile from Pānchpārā.
112	Chātōrghāt Kumārganj road	1-4-0	The Mahānandā river with ferry	In the second mile from Kumārganj.
113	Narhāṭṭā Budhiā road	3-0-18		
114	Rāngāmātiā Pirpārā road	0-6-20		
115	Ādinā Station to N.H. road	1-0-20		
116	Ratuā Bhālukā to Ratuā Samsi road	0-4-33		
117	Debipurghāt Gōdāi-Mahārājpur road	3-6-20	The Kālindri river with ferry	In the first mile at Debipur.
118	Bāgdōgrā Bhutnihāt road	4-0-0		
119	Bhutnihāt Nāssā road	1-6-110		
120	Ihō ferry Singhabād road	5-2-160	One dry river unbridged	In the fifth mile from Ihō.
121	Bhālukā Station Moshāldaha Road	0-1-113		
122	Ihō Village Road	0-4-0		
123	Sālālpur Tulshi-hāṭṭā road	1-0-0		
124	Mādiā Baharāl road	8-0-0	The Mahānandā river with ferry	In the first mile from Mādiā.
125	Gobindapur Mālāhār road	2-0-0		
126	Samsi Sanchiā road	2-0-0		

(c) LIST OF DAK AND INSPECTION BUNGALOWS

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Piāsbāri Inspection Bungalow | In 9th mile of Gaur Road, i.e. 9 miles from Māldā town towards south. |
| 2. Kālīāchak Inspection Bungalow | In 14th mile of N.H.34, i.e. 14 miles from Māldā town towards south. |
| 3. Panchānandapur Inspection Bungalow | In 10th mile of Sādullāpur Panchānandapur road, i.e. 16 miles from Māldā town towards south-west. |
| 4. Ārāidāngā Inspection Bungalow | In 1st mile of Ārāidāngā Mirdādpur road, i.e. 19 miles from Māldā town towards west. |
| 5. Ratuā Inspection Bungalow | In 8th mile of Ratuā Samsi road, i.e. 26 miles from Māldā town towards west. |
| 6. Samsi Inspection Bungalow | In 1st mile of Samsi Chānchal road near Samsi railway station towards north from Māldā town. |
| 7. Chānchal Inspection Bungalow | In 8th mile of Samsi Chānchal road, i.e. 8½ miles from Samsi railway station towards north from Māldā town. |
| 8. Harishchandrapur Inspection Bungalow | In 1st mile of Harishchandrapur Railway Station Road. 1 mile from Harishchandrapur railway station towards north from Māldā town. |
| 9. Ādinā Inspection Bungalow | In 12th mile of N.H.34 from Māldā town towards north and 3 miles from Ādinā railway station. |
| 10. Gājōl Inspection Bungalow | In 16th mile of N.H.34, i.e. 16 miles from Māldā town towards north. |
| 11. Pākuāhāt Inspection Bungalow | In 14th mile of Bulbulchandi Lālā Road towards north-east from Māldā town. 14 miles from Bulbulchandi railway station. |

CHAPTER VIII

MISCELLANEOUS OCCUPATIONS

Of the total population of the district, 32.8 per cent are workers as defined for the purpose of the Census of 1961. This is somewhat lower than the percentage for the whole of West Bengal, the percentage of workers to the total population for West Bengal being 33.2. In the rural areas of Māldā, 33 per cent of the population are at work as compared with 32.7 per cent in the rural areas of West Bengal. In the urban areas of the district taken as a whole 27.4 per cent of the population are at work as compared with 34.7 per cent in the urban areas of West Bengal. Among males 53.4 per cent of the population are at work, the percentage of male workers to the total male population being 53.7 in the rural areas and 46.6 in the urban areas. Among females the workers form 11.5 per cent of the population. In the rural areas, female workers form 11.7 per cent of the total rural female population while in the urban areas the corresponding percentage is 5.4.

Out of the 4,00,729 workers returned at the Census of 1961, 49.8 per cent are cultivators, 14.4 per cent are agricultural labourers, 2.0 per cent are working in mining, quarrying, live-stock, forestry, fishing, hunting and plantations, orchards and allied activities, 12.8 per cent are engaged in household industries, 2 per cent are engaged in manufacturing, other than household industries, 0.6 per cent are engaged in construction, 3.6 per cent in trade and commerce, 1 per cent in transport, storage and communications and 13.8 per cent in other services. Thus as many as 64.2 per cent of the total workers are engaged either as cultivators or as agricultural labourers. The next important field of employment lies in the category of 'other services', household industries providing a close third. Occupational diversities are therefore to be looked for among the 35.8 per cent of the workers who work outside the agricultural sector.

There are 126 architects, engineers and surveyors of whom as many as 60 are civil engineers including overseers. There are 171 qualified physicians and surgeons practising the allopathic system of medicine of whom 85 reside in the two towns of English Bazar and Old Māldā. There are also 114 *āyurvedic* physicians, but only 25 of them are to be found in the urban areas. There are 85 homoeopathic physicians of whom 27 are to be found in the urban areas. There are 3,623 teachers of all categories, i.e. college teachers, teachers in secondary schools, middle and primary schools and teachers not otherwise classified. There are 105 legal practitioners and advisers of whom 100 reside in the urban areas. There are 219 administrators and executive officials of the State Government of whom 114 are stationed in the urban areas. *The corresponding

Important occupations in the district.

figures for the Central Government are 89 and 29 respectively. Clerical and related workers number 3,371. Sales workers number 13,934 of whom 12,200 are working proprietors in retail trade. Working proprietors in wholesale trade number only 360. There are 1,252 salesmen, shop assistants and related workers of whom 630 reside in the urban areas. The rivers, *beels* and tanks in the district provide employment for 2,976 fishermen. Road transport provides employment for 1,247 drivers of whom 321 are motor vehicles and motor cycle drivers, 354 are cycle rickshaw drivers and rickshaw pullers, 531 are drivers of animal drawn vehicles, 37 are *pālki, doli*-bearers, and 4 are tram car drivers.* Spinners, weavers, knitters, dyers and related workers number 11,330. There are 887 tailors, dress-makers and garment-makers of whom 299 reside in the urban areas.

The preceding paragraph illustrates some of the important occupations in the district. But the important point to note is that the number of workers in any of these occupations is not very great. The most important sector of the economy is the agricultural. In addition to the persons working as cultivators or agricultural labourers, there are 36,087 labourers, who have not been given any specific classification in the Census Table on occupations, and most of them manage to find a livelihood for some part of the year in the agricultural sector. The presence of these persons in the district, who have no fixed occupations and who form approximately 9 per cent of the total working force, reveals the inherent weakness of the economy of the district.

* As persons were enumerated at the places where they had been residing, 4 tram car drivers of Calcutta were included among the transport workers of Māldā.—*Editor*.

CHAPTER IX ECONOMIC TRENDS

Livelihood Pattern.

The Census of 1961 disclosed 4,00,729 persons at work in the district of Māldā. Of these, 3,31,968 were males and 68,761 were females. (1) 1,78,819 males and 20,835 females were found working as cultivators, (2) 46,015 males and 11,713 females were found working as agricultural labourers, (3) 7,795 males and 425 females were found working in mining, quarrying, live-stock, forestry, fishing, hunting and plantations, orchards and allied activities, (4) 23,169 males and 28,157 females were engaged in household industries, (5) 6,903 males and 929 females were engaged in manufacturing other than household industries, (6) 2,421 males and 20 females were engaged in construction, (7) 12,353 males and 1,872 females were engaged in trade and commerce, (8) 4,173 males and 12 females were in transport, storage and communications and (9) 50,320 males and 4,798 females were engaged in other services. This means that (1) 49.8 per cent of the workers were engaged as cultivators, (2) 14.4 per cent were engaged as agricultural labourers, (3) 2.1 per cent were engaged in mining, quarrying, live-stock, forestry, fishing, hunting and plantations, orchards and allied activities, (4) 12.8 per cent were engaged in household industries, (5) 2 per cent were engaged in manufacturing other than household industries, (6) 0.6 per cent were engaged in construction, (7) 3.5 per cent in trade and commerce, (8) 1 per cent in transport, storage and communications and (9) 13.8 per cent in other services. Instead of these nine categories, the workers may be grouped together into three major sectors. The workers in categories 1, 2 and 3, i.e. those working as cultivators, as agricultural labourers and in mining, quarrying, live-stock, forestry, fishing, hunting and plantations, orchards and allied activities, are engaged in activities the products of which provide the bases of activities in other sectors. These workers may, therefore, be considered as belonging to the primary sector of the economy. The secondary sector may be considered as composed of workers who manufacture and fabricate articles, raw materials of which come from the products turned out by the workers in the primary sector. The workers engaged in household industries, in manufacturing other than household industries and in construction together may be considered to form the secondary sector. The workers in the remaining categories of trade and commerce, transport, storage and communications and in other services are concerned mainly with the distribution of the commodities produced in the primary and secondary sectors and in providing services to the community and may be considered as composing the tertiary sector of the economy. The workers of Māldā district when grouped in accordance with these primary, secondary

and tertiary sectors of the economy are found to be 66.3 per cent in the primary sector, 15.4 per cent in the secondary sector and 18.3 in the tertiary sector. The proportion of workers in the primary sector would have actually increased but for the somewhat arbitrary classification of some workers in the primary sector as engaged in household industries.

In 1951 the percentage of agricultural workers to the total workers was 63.5 in the district of Māldā. In 1961 this percentage stood at 64.2, thus showing a shift towards agriculture. How far this shift towards agriculture has been justified may be ascertained by comparing the percentage increase in the number of workers in the agricultural sector with the percentage increase in the total cropped area. By total cropped area is meant area under all crops. Thus if three crops are raised from a particular acre of land in a year, that plot of land will be shown as equal to three acres in area for the purpose of calculating the total cropped area. In 1951 workers in the agricultural sector numbered 1,58,427 while in 1961 their number stood at 2,57,382. The workers in the agricultural sector have thus increased by 62.5 per cent during 1951-61. In 1949-50 the total cropped area stood at 7,97,500 acres. In 1960-61 the total cropped area stood at 9,03,715 acres. The total cropped area thus, on the other hand, has increased by only 13.3 per cent between 1949-50 and 1960-61. This means that there are now 62.5 per cent more workers in the agricultural sector than in 1951, not because the volume of work has increased but because for want of anything else to do sons of cultivators have to describe themselves as cultivators. The actual volume of work does not warrant the employment of 2,57,382 workers in the agricultural sector. In this connection it should also be borne in mind that there are a little more than thirty thousand persons who declared themselves to be general workers during the last Census for the want of fixed occupations. It is also to be borne in mind that the district is not self-sufficient in foodstuffs.

Standard of Living.

An idea of the general level of prices and cost of living may be had from the Tables on wholesale prices and index numbers of retail prices of some important commodities. These Tables of course relate exclusively to agricultural produce and to the extent give only a limited view of the cost of living. An idea of the standard of living would be available from the details of family budgets. Carter in his Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the District of Māldā (1928-1935) gave three examples of the family budget. He has himself, however, advised caution in drawing conclusions from the figures given by him. His account of family budgets is given below:

“Three examples have been given below, taken from different parts of the district. The income in all three examples is confined entirely to agricultural, horticultural and dairy produce. Cases where families have a supplementary income from trade or money-lending have been excluded as not being altogether typical:—

“TAFOR SHEIKH OF KHALANPUR, POLICE-STATION KHARBA.

Males	2.
Females	3.
Children	2.
Debts	Nil.
Area of holding	16½ acres.

INCOME.		EXPENDITURE.	
	Rs.		Rs.
Value of produce and fodder	630	Rent, interest and abwabs	70
Income from sale of fruit, fowls, eggs, milk and other products	170	Taxes	7
		Cost of food	426
		Clothing	80
		General household expenditure	15
		Cost of medicine and doctors	50
		Upkeep of cattle and implements	24
		Wages to agricultural labourers	150
		Litigation	Nil
		Luxury, etc.	32
Total	800	Total	854
		Deficit	54

“SHEIKH HINGAN OF BALARAMPUR, POLICE-STATION RATUA.

Males	3.
Females	3.
Children	5.
Debts	Rs. 2,000.
Area of holding	33 acres.

INCOME.		EXPENDITURE.	
	Rs.		Rs.
Value of produce and fodder from khas land	1,000	Rent, interest and abwabs	125
Rent received	225	Taxes	5
Income from sale of fruit, fowls, eggs, milk, vegetables and other produce	325	Cost of food	550
		Clothing	125
		General household expenditure	120
		Cost of medicine and doctor	15
		Upkeep of cattle and implement	60
		Wages to agricultural labourers	80
		Litigation	Nil
		Luxury	100
		Interest on debts	300
Total	1,550	Total	1,480
		Balance	70

"KANTOO SONTAL, VILLAGE DHANANJOY, POLICE-STATION HABIBPUR.

Males	3.
Females	3.
Children	2.
Debts	Rs. 25.
Area of holding	8.33 acres.

INCOME.		EXPENDITURE.	
	Rs.		Rs.
Value of produce and fodder	150	Rent, interest and abwabs	25-12-6
From sale of fruits, fowls, eggs, milk and other produce	10	Taxes (chaukidari)	1
		Cost of food	90
		Clothing	20
		General household expenditure	18
		Cost of medicine and doctor	4
		Upkeep of cattle and implements	5
		Wages to agricultural labour	5
		Litigation	10
		Luxury	Nil
Total	160	Total	178-12-6
		Deficit	18-12-6

"It will be noticed that the value of the produce in all these examples is distinctly low. This is due to the fact that when the enquiries were made in 1930 the price of paddy had fallen to Rs. 2-8 per maund. Since then it has fallen as low as Re. 1-8. In the third example the value is lower than that of the other examples because the outturn per acre in the Barind is, with the exception of the lowest-lying land, considerably smaller than that obtaining in the rest of the district. In respect of the income derived from the sale of mangoes and other fruit, from vegetables, milk and poultry, Malda is probably more fortunate than most districts.

"The first example actually shows a small deficit, but it is probable that the cost of food has been rather over-estimated. The price of rice purchased is shown in this case as Rs. 280. The average price of rice in 1930 was 8 seers 13 chittaks to the rupee; so that Rs. 280 represents about 2,500 seers or nearly 7 seers a day. This is a generous allowance for a family consisting of 5 adults and two children. Probably 5 seers a day would be nearer the mark. The figure for purchase of rice would then be about Rs. 200 and the deficit would disappear. In times of hardship, it would probably be further decreased; the expenditure on luxury would largely disappear; and the wages of agricultural labourers would be considerably curtailed.

"The second example is that of a family of fairly well-to-do jotedars. The budget shows a small annual surplus, in spite

of several items of expenditure which would be for the most part unessential in times of scarcity. The expenditure on luxury is high; the purchase of cattle might have been deferred and the erection of new huts substituted by repairs to the existing ones. So far as income and expenditure on necessities are concerned the family is fairly comfortably off. On the other hand debts have been incurred amounting to Rs. 2,000 on which the interest alone amounts to Rs. 300 annually.

"In both these examples the tenants are fortunate enough to have avoided any expenses on litigation, and they pay nothing for education.

"The third example has been included to illustrate the case of a typical Santal. His debts are small, and the annual deficit could probably be avoided in times of scarcity. Under the head luxury nothing is shown and the budget depends largely on the success of paddy, which is the principal crop grown in that area. Since Chapter VIIA of the Bengal Tenancy Act was brought into force in 1923, indebtedness has considerably decreased as the mahajans decline to advance money. On the other hand there is a remarkable difference between the cost of food in this case—Rs. 90 for a family of 6 adults and 2 children—and the first case—Rs. 426 for a family of 5 adults and 2 children. It is hardly possible that there could be such a wide divergence in the standard of living. Although the figures may be accepted as being approximately correct they make no allowance for various natural calamities which in some years render them far from accurate. Reference has already been made to these factors—the inundation which may follow a high rise of the Ganges in the west of the district; the flooding of the tal area in the north-west of the district, due to the sudden rise and overflow of the Mahananda; the hailstorms which may ruin the mango prospects; and the drought which may wither up the winter paddy on the high ground in the Barind. These calamities are unfortunately not uncommon, particularly in the tal area and the Barind. During two seasons, recovery of settlement costs was held up in part of the tal area, owing to the destruction of paddy and jute by heavy rain, and to the flooding of the Mahananda. In the Barind, on the other hand, a year of short rainfall, or a long break in the rains dries up the transplanted paddy seedlings, except in the low-lying valleys between the undulations. I have frequently seen large tracts of land, partly ploughed and abandoned for want of rain, or transplanted with seedlings which were withering away in dry soil."

Carter's examples relate exclusively to rural areas, but one fact emerges clearly from the three examples cited by him which is that the largest item of expenditure for every family is on food. This is also the case even in urban areas as would be revealed from the reports on the Family Budget Enquiries carried out by the State

Employment
condition.

Statistical Bureau in 1950-51 and 1955-56. In 1951, in the town of English Bazar, the expenditure on food was 70.29 per cent for the families which spent anything between Re. 1 and Rs. 100. For families whose monthly expenditure levels lay between Rs. 101 and Rs. 200, the expenditure on food was 65.92 per cent. For families whose monthly expenditure lay between Rs. 201 and Rs. 350 the expenditure on food amounted to 57.51 per cent. For families having monthly expenditure in the range of Rs. 351 and Rs. 700, the monthly expenditure on food amounted to 48.07 per cent of total expenditure. For families spending Rs. 701 and above, the monthly expenditure on food was 38.96 per cent. The proportion of expenditure on food thus tended to diminish with the increase in the monthly expenditure. The same phenomenon is also noticeable in the year 1955-56 although the absolute values differ. Full details of the expenditure of the families in English Bazar during 1950-51 and during 1955-56 would be available from the Tables published in the Appendix to this Chapter.

The Census of 1961 disclosed the existence of 2,257 job-seekers in the rural areas of the district, the number of job-seekers in the urban areas being 315. In the rural areas, 572 out of the 2,257 job-seekers were illiterates, 1,109 had passed Primary or junior basic examinations and only 225 had passed either the Matriculation examination or higher examinations. As many as 351 were found to be literates without having any educational levels. In the urban areas of the district taken as a whole, 80 out of the 315 persons were illiterates, 53 were literates without any educational standard, 126 had passed either Primary or junior basic examinations, 38 had passed the Matriculation or Higher Secondary examinations, 13 were holders of non-technical diplomas not equal to degrees and 5 held University degrees.

According to the report received from the Employment Officer, Māldā, it appears that in 1960, 3,755 persons were borne on the register of the Māldā Employment Exchange. In 1961, this number rose to 3,893. In 1960, 352 persons secured employment through the Employment Exchange. In 1961, the number of persons who secured employment through the Employment Exchange was 474.

APPENDIX
(a) TABLE SHOWING WHOLESALE PRICES
MĀLDĀ MARKET

Year & Month	Rice (coarse) (per md.)	Jute	Kaīāi (split) (per md.)	Sugar (per md.)	Molasses (per md.)	Āīfā (per md.)	Mustard seeds (per md.)	Mustard oil (per md.)	Salt (per md.)	Potato (per md.)
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1957 February	..	..	29.00	34.00	14.00	23.00	39.00	109.00	4.12	12.50
March	..	..	28.40	34.00	14.00	23.00	37.40	109.00	4.12	12.00
December	22.50	..	28.31	38.50	15.88	23.75	38.00	91.00	4.50	14.25
1958 February	23.12	..	27.00	38.50	16.25	23.00	34.00	72.75	4.50	8.00
March	23.55	..	27.00	38.50	16.40	23.00	33.40	75.00	4.50	7.70
December	21.97	..	24.62	39.50	18.00	21.88	32.00	78.00	3.75	17.12
1959 February	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
March	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
December	19.30	..	21.30	42.22	17.40	17.50	N.S.	80.20	4.50	19.20
1960 February	22.25	..	21.00	43.84	16.75	17.50	..	85.00	4.50	7.94
March	22.00	..	20.80	43.44	17.10	17.50	N.S.	85.00	4.50	8.45
December	..	..	25.75	42.00	16.00	17.50	..	97.00	5.00	14.25
1961 February	..	..	20.94	41.25	17.00	17.50	..	102.00	5.00	..
March	..	..	20.00	41.00	18.25	17.50	..	100.50	5.00	..
December	..	..	27.38	42.25	17.62	17.00	..	96.00	5.25	16.88

N.S. = No supply.
.. = Figures not available.

(b) TABLE SHOWING INDEX NUMBERS OF RETAIL PRICES
ENGLISH BAZAR TOWN
(Base : November, 1950=100)

Year & Month	Rice	Jute	Kalāi	Sugar	Molasses	Wheat products	Mustard seeds	Mustard oil	Salt	Potato
1957 February	56	..	80	102	104	96	..	104	63	42
March	58	..	86	100	108	95	..	94	63	36
December	62	..	97	113	67	88	..	90	74	53
1958 February	63	..	93	120	61	92	..	73	63	27
March	65	..	92	116	69	92	..	76	63	26
December	57	..	90	116	97	87	..	76	63	69
1959 February	55	..	89	116	97	82	..	78	63	28
March	56	..	89	123	97	77	..	79	63	30
December	60	..	91	127	89	81	..	77	63	99
1960 February	66	..	91	130	89	83	..	84	63	34
March	65	..	91	130	89	83	..	86	63	41
December	60	..	91	123	89	83	..	95	74	69
1961 February	58	..	90	127	89	83	..	102	74	30
March	58	..	90	127	89	83	..	98	79	30
December	63	..	98	123	67	81	..	95	63	84

.. = Figures not available.

(c) PERCENTAGE EXPENDITURE ON DIFFERENT GROUPS OF ITEMS OF CONSUMPTION BY DIFFERENT EXPENDITURE LEVELS

CENTRE—ENGLISH BAZAR
Year—1950-51

Sl. No. Groups of items of consumption	Monthly expenditure levels (in rupees)				
	1-100	101-200	201-350	351-700	701 and above
1. Food	70.29	65.92	57.51	48.07	38.96
2. Fuel and light	6.94	6.72	5.45	3.77	3.73
3. Clothing	6.93	5.53	5.15	6.09	4.77
4. House-rent	2.54	3.79	4.01	6.71	5.70
5. Miscellaneous	13.30	18.04	27.88	35.36	46.84
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

PERCENTAGE EXPENDITURE ON DIFFERENT ITEMS OF CONSUMPTION BY DIFFERENT EXPENDITURE LEVELS

CENTRE—ENGLISH BAZAR
Year—1950-51

Sl. No. Items of consumption	Monthly expenditure levels (in rupees)				
	1-100	101-200	201-350	351-700	701 and above
(A) Food					
1. Rice	48.14	42.10	37.31	26.65	19.52
2. Muri, Chirā	2.02	3.10	4.24	3.04	3.41
3. Wheat and wheat products	3.34	3.26	1.56	1.64	5.90
4. Other cereals and cereal products	0.82	0.10	0.26	0.23	0.40
5. Pulses	4.12	4.33	4.78	3.98	4.08
6. Edible oil	6.54	6.65	6.88	9.16	6.66
7. Vegetable ghee	0.02	0.21	0.39	0.21	1.54
8. Salt	0.71	0.59	0.46	0.43	0.29
9. Spices	3.61	3.66	3.78	2.62	3.38
10. Sugar	3.68	3.64	3.35	3.75	2.73
11. Gur	0.52	0.70	1.04	1.12	1.28
12. Milk	3.29	5.07	9.56	14.48	12.40
13. Butter and ghee	0.33	0.57	1.61	4.63	4.38
14. Other milk products	0.24	0.12	0.34	0.38	0.81
15. Potato	2.51	2.62	2.80	2.94	4.14
16. Onions	0.89	0.54	0.49	0.32	0.45
17. Other non-leafy vegetables	5.73	6.63	6.30	6.41	7.36
18. Leafy vegetables	1.50	1.63	1.52	1.59	1.30
19. Fish	6.95	8.15	7.62	9.32	8.80
20. Meat	1.51	1.49	1.15	1.46	2.85
21. Eggs	0.16	0.33	0.38	0.51	0.97
22. Fruits	0.86	1.31	1.00	2.36	2.67
23. Tea and Coffee	0.63	2.01	2.00	1.73	2.02
24. Other refreshment and sweets	1.01	0.40	1.14	0.98	2.56
25. Other food materials	0.87	0.79	0.04	0.06	0.10
Food sub-total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

PERCENTAGE EXPENDITURE ON DIFFERENT ITEMS OF CONSUMPTION
BY DIFFERENT EXPENDITURE LEVELS—*contd.*

CENTRE—ENGLISH BAZAR

Year—1950-51

Sl. No.	Items of consumption	Monthly expenditure levels (in rupees)				
		1-100	101-200	201-350	351-700	701 and above
(B) Clothing						
1.	Men's clothes	32.79	31.81	35.32	26.08	34.13
2.	Women's clothes	42.37	39.52	37.75	31.59	35.03
3.	Children's clothes	15.18	18.47	18.16	16.40	17.55
4.	Unclassified	9.66	10.20	8.77	25.93	13.29
Clothing sub-total		100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
(C) Fuel and light						
1.	Coal and coke	2.95	6.98	9.19	17.60	25.44
2.	Firewood	71.77	70.49	67.35	36.03	20.62
3.	Other fuels	2.55	0.64	1.00	1.71	11.19
4.	Matches	5.51	4.75	3.46	4.07	2.16
5.	Kerosene	17.00	14.88	9.63	12.42	13.54
6.	Electricity	0.20	2.12	9.37	27.25	26.58
7.	Candles	0.02	0.14	—	0.92	0.47
Fuel and light sub-total		100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
(D) Housing						
1.	House-rent	67.80	80.56	35.52	41.99	19.93
2.	Taxes	21.38	11.71	22.98	57.23	22.40
3.	House repairs	10.82	7.73	41.50	0.78	57.67
Housing sub-total		100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
(E) Miscellaneous						
1.	Pān, Jardā etc.	8.74	4.63	2.46	1.77	1.27
2.	Tobacco and cigarettes	22.75	9.88	5.55	2.51	2.65
3.	Washing soda	3.21	1.39	0.72	0.57	0.18
4.	Washing soap	6.22	5.80	2.95	1.24	0.82
5.	Footwear, Umbrella	5.17	6.64	3.49	11.05	1.86
6.	Bedding	1.53	1.31	1.25	6.04	1.06
7.	Furniture	—	—	0.50	0.12	0.64
8.	Utensils	0.79	0.31	0.77	0.57	0.44
9.	Toilet soap	2.62	2.33	1.14	1.00	0.56
10.	Cream, powder etc.	2.15	1.25	0.71	0.98	0.40
11.	Hair oil	6.87	4.64	2.51	2.04	1.21
12.	Shaving materials	0.25	0.68	0.29	0.32	0.13
13.	Other toilet goods	0.14	0.03	0.01	0.23	0.14
14.	Other miscellaneous purchases	0.05	0.10	—	—	0.88
15.	Barber	5.74	3.98	1.96	1.22	0.63
16.	Dhobi	1.42	3.40	3.20	2.97	1.80
17.	Cobbler	0.32	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.19
18.	Sweeper	0.13	0.48	0.82	0.74	0.36
19.	Servants	—	2.71	6.47	6.97	10.54
20.	Other services	—	—	0.21	0.52	2.14

PERCENTAGE EXPENDITURE ON DIFFERENT ITEMS OF CONSUMPTION
BY DIFFERENT EXPENDITURE LEVELS—*concl.*

CENTRE—ENGLISH BAZAR

Year—1950-51

Sl. No.	Items of consumption	Monthly expenditure levels (in rupees)				
		1-100	101-200	201-350	351-700	701 and above
(E) Miscellaneous—<i>contd.</i>						
21.	School & college fees	1.83	6.69	7.86	6.35	2.44
22.	Examination fees	0.48	0.70	0.60	0.33	0.19
23.	Private tutor	—	1.31	2.77	5.96	4.13
24.	Music lessons	—	—	0.02	0.77	0.58
25.	Newspapers	0.03	0.14	1.94	1.40	0.87
26.	Books	0.86	3.44	2.63	3.91	1.57
27.	Other educational expenses	0.44	1.22	1.12	5.02	2.96
28.	Conveyances	—	0.14	0.89	1.03	2.02
29.	Medical expenses	10.01	12.08	9.06	12.84	5.49
30.	Social expenses	0.86	3.05	0.99	0.54	9.52
31.	Religious expenses	4.75	5.16	6.28	1.51	3.32
32.	Amusement	5.44	4.24	2.86	1.51	1.50
33.	Travelling expenses	1.49	0.27	2.45	4.28	3.52
34.	Help and donations	0.05	0.07	1.07	1.16	1.90
35.	Purchase of assets	1.55	3.68	9.31	0.07	7.91
36.	Loans advanced	—	—	—	—	1.15
37.	Other miscellaneous expenses	0.82	1.39	0.14	0.41	4.36
38.	Remittances	—	0.65	0.55	1.18	4.06
39.	Loans repaid	2.43	—	3.38	—	3.55
40.	Litigations	0.72	0.54	3.05	—	3.37
41.	Insurance and Provident Fund	0.14	5.33	7.68	10.53	7.69
Miscellaneous sub-total		100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

(d) PERCENTAGE EXPENDITURE ON DIFFERENT GROUPS OF
ITEMS OF CONSUMPTION BY DIFFERENT EXPENDITURE LEVELS

CENTRE—ENGLISH BAZAR

Year—1955-56

Sl. No.	Groups of items of consumption	Monthly expenditure levels (in rupees)				
		1-100	101-200	201-350	351-700	701 and above
1.	Food	64.34	57.43	54.50	47.23	39.12
2.	Clothing	8.85	8.28	8.77	7.91	7.80
3.	Fuel and light	8.45	6.77	5.46	4.62	3.70
4.	Housing	4.45	5.04	5.08	7.75	7.30
5.	Miscellaneous	13.91	22.48	26.19	32.49	42.08
Total		100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

PERCENTAGE EXPENDITURE ON DIFFERENT ITEMS OF
CONSUMPTION BY DIFFERENT EXPENDITURE LEVELS

CENTRE—ENGLISH BAZAR

Year—1955-56

Sl. No.	Items of consumption	Monthly expenditure levels (in rupees)				
		1-100	101-200	201-350	351-700	701 and above
(A) Food						
1.	Rice	49.17	44.52	42.05	26.03	20.85
2.	<i>Muri, Chirā</i>	3.00	3.69	3.30	2.53	2.63
3.	Wheat and wheat products	1.84	1.69	1.29	4.38	3.59
4.	Other cereals and cereal products	0.59	0.37	0.30	0.59	0.72
5.	Pulses	4.41	4.01	3.07	3.26	2.51
6.	Edible oil	5.41	5.46	5.49	4.89	4.24
7.	Salt	0.56	0.52	0.39	0.30	0.30
8.	Spices	3.70	2.99	2.43	2.80	2.67
9.	Sugar	1.78	2.03	2.59	3.78	3.92
10.	<i>Gur</i>	1.36	0.96	0.91	0.59	0.54
11.	Milk	4.77	6.48	9.99	13.84	13.84
12.	Butter and <i>ghee</i>	1.24	2.18	3.05	5.08	8.96
13.	Other milk products	0.28	0.40	0.58	0.57	0.87
14.	Vegetable <i>ghee</i>	0.07	0.31	0.42	0.95	0.84
15.	Potato	2.87	2.28	1.94	3.17	3.27
16.	Onions	0.62	0.69	0.43	0.43	0.36
17.	Other non-leafy vegetables	5.31	3.63	3.66	4.30	3.96
18.	Leafy vegetables	1.48	1.20	1.00	1.16	0.94
19.	Fish	6.20	7.74	6.85	9.21	9.47
20.	Meat	0.90	1.41	1.38	3.31	3.55
21.	Eggs	0.19	0.38	0.35	0.95	1.43
22.	Fruits	1.77	2.18	3.03	1.82	3.65
23.	Tea and coffee	1.52	3.44	4.16	3.73	3.38
24.	Prepared sweets	0.61	0.99	0.86	1.60	2.23
25.	Other refreshments	0.35	0.45	0.48	0.73	1.28
Food sub-total		100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
(B) Clothing						
Clothes: Cotton						
1.	Men's clothes	38.78	42.01	37.81	35.90	30.48
2.	Women's clothes	39.65	35.90	36.22	30.74	28.35
3.	Children's clothes	19.23	14.81	15.56	14.17	12.15
4.	Unclassified	1.29	1.34	2.02	1.84	1.58
Clothes: Cotton sub-total		98.95	94.06	91.61	82.65	72.56
Clothes: Wool						
1.	Men's clothes	0.95	2.14	4.49	6.92	9.60
2.	Women's clothes	—	0.44	0.95	2.38	4.63
3.	Children's clothes	—	0.38	1.28	2.65	4.51
4.	Unclassified	—	—	—	0.24	0.17
Clothes: Wool sub-total		0.95	2.96	6.72	12.19	18.91

PERCENTAGE EXPENDITURE ON DIFFERENT ITEMS OF CONSUMPTION
BY DIFFERENT EXPENDITURE LEVELS—*contd.*

CENTRE—ENGLISH BAZAR

Year—1955-56

Sl. No.	Items of consumption	Monthly expenditure levels (in rupees)				
		1-100	101-200	201-350	351-700	701 and above
(B) Clothing.—<i>contd.</i>						
Clothes: Silk						
1.	Men's clothes	—	0.38	—	0.16	0.88
2.	Women's clothes	—	2.12	0.94	2.16	2.17
3.	Children's clothes	—	—	—	0.20	1.04
4.	Unclassified	—	—	—	—	0.85
Clothes: Silk sub-total		—	2.50	0.94	2.52	4.94
Clothes: Artificial silk						
1.	Men's clothes	—	—	—	0.14	0.14
2.	Women's clothes	0.10	0.48	0.38	1.91	2.29
3.	Children's clothes	—	—	0.35	0.54	0.97
4.	Unclassified	—	—	—	0.05	0.19
Clothes: Artificial silk sub-total		0.10	0.48	0.73	2.64	3.59
Clothing sub-total		100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
(C) Fuel and light						
1.	Coal and coke	21.98	23.74	30.89	41.36	34.60
2.	Fire wood	41.72	39.99	31.90	7.95	9.45
3.	Electricity	1.53	1.41	5.51	26.96	41.07
4.	Coal gas	—	—	—	—	—
5.	Kerosene oil	24.08	24.46	19.67	10.38	5.39
6.	Candles	—	0.07	0.21	0.10	0.10
7.	Matches	4.52	3.89	3.44	2.68	2.06
8.	Other fuels	6.17	6.44	8.38	10.57	7.33
Fuel and light sub-total		100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
(D) Housing						
1.	House rent and/or taxes	84.96	72.99	75.83	58.39	50.11
2.	House repairs	15.04	27.01	24.17	41.61	49.89
Housing sub-total		100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
(E) Miscellaneous						
1.	<i>Pān, supāri</i> etc.	8.29	4.70	2.81	2.48	1.65
2.	Cigar, cigarettes and tobacco	0.54	1.25	2.10	3.05	2.78
3.	<i>Biḍi</i>	11.98	6.21	2.63	1.01	0.35
4.	<i>Tāmāk</i>	1.47	1.12	0.98	0.28	0.12

PERCENTAGE EXPENDITURE ON DIFFERENT ITEMS OF CONSUMPTION
BY DIFFERENT EXPENDITURE LEVELS—*concl'd.*

CENTRE—ENGLISH BAZAR

Year—1955-56

Sl. No.	Items of consumption	Monthly expenditure levels (in rupees)				
		1-100	101-200	201-350	351-700	701 and above
<i>(E) Miscellaneous—cont'd.</i>						
5.	Raw tobacco	0.13	0.40	0.12	0.06	0.10
6.	Washing soda	3.08	1.37	1.00	0.41	0.19
7.	Washing soap	3.65	2.14	1.56	1.81	1.08
8.	Foot wear	4.15	3.40	3.33	3.30	1.90
9.	Umbrella	0.22	0.34	0.21	0.40	0.19
10.	Bedding, furniture and utensils	1.81	3.44	3.07	2.81	2.14
11.	Toilet soap	1.71	1.59	1.08	1.06	0.64
12.	Cream, powder etc.	0.62	1.02	0.67	0.77	0.69
13.	Cocoonut oil	6.41	3.96	2.24	1.46	0.75
14.	Other hair oils	0.10	0.48	0.63	0.57	0.54
15.	Shaving requisites	0.33	0.19	0.19	0.26	0.18
16.	Other toilet goods	0.14	0.43	0.10	0.25	0.23
17.	Other miscellaneous purchases	1.30	0.96	1.14	0.89	0.64
18.	Barber	5.32	3.22	2.04	1.36	0.75
19.	Dhobi	3.08	3.09	2.55	3.01	2.44
20.	Cobbler	0.50	0.41	0.34	0.39	0.22
21.	Sweeper	0.29	0.50	0.55	0.74	0.58
22.	Servants	0.31	7.87	9.70	10.86	10.10
23.	Other services	0.23	—	—	0.77	0.30
24.	School and college fees	4.58	5.57	11.09	7.74	4.71
25.	Examination fees	0.30	0.70	1.19	1.70	0.59
26.	Private tutor	0.79	2.17	5.95	5.95	6.02
27.	Music lessons	—	—	—	0.27	0.71
28.	Newspapers	—	0.72	0.69	1.72	1.14
29.	Books	2.36	3.96	4.11	3.47	2.71
30.	Other educational expenses	0.68	0.62	1.25	1.39	1.81
31.	Conveyances (own vehicles)	—	—	—	1.42	2.37
32.	Conveyances (hired vehicles)	0.15	0.31	0.82	2.95	3.47
33.	Medical expenses	18.23	12.22	18.33	9.68	7.19
34.	Amusements (cinema)	5.22	4.88	2.75	2.60	2.13
35.	Amusements (others)	0.12	0.73	0.17	0.53	0.40
36.	Travelling expenses other than conveyance	3.67	4.01	1.45	3.72	3.02
37.	Social and religious expenses	0.64	7.49	9.48	9.11	11.26
38.	Other miscellaneous expenses	7.60	8.53	3.68	9.75	23.91
<i>Miscellaneous sub-total</i>		100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

CHAPTER X

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

(a) OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE AND COLLECTOR

The District Magistrate and Collector is at the head of the administration of the district. As the chief Magistrate of the district he exercises supervision over the work of the other Magistrates stationed in the district, in exercise of the powers vested in him under the Criminal Procedure Code. He is, however, not entitled to hear appeals generally against the judgements of the subordinate Magistrates. He can only hear appeals under section 515 Cr. P.C. against orders passed by Magistrates under section 514 Cr. P.C. Appeals against judgements of Magistrates are heard by the Sessions Judge.

It is the District Magistrate who appoints Prosecutors to conduct important State cases and in cases triable by the Court of Sessions. In terms of the Police Regulation of Bengal, 1943, the District Magistrate is in overall control of the criminal administration of the district and as such he exercises supervisory powers over the Superintendent of Police.

The Collector is the Chief Revenue Officer of the district but he is assisted in the discharge of his duties as Chief Revenue Officer by an Additional District Magistrate who is in immediate charge of the Revenue Administration of the district.

There is no outlying sub-division in the district of Maldā. The sanctioned strength of officers at the headquarters station consists of 5 officers of the West Bengal Civil Service and 5 officers of the West Bengal Junior Civil Service. The Sub-divisional Magistrate (Sadar Sub-division), who is one of the officers of the West Bengal Civil Service is stationed at the headquarters of the district. He is in charge of the Sadar sub-division which is conterminous with the district.

The District Magistrate and Collector administers quite a number of special laws such as the Arms Act, Motor Vehicles Act, the Land Acquisition Act etc. He also exercises certain powers under the Bengal Municipal Act, 1932 but the Municipalities being self-governing institutions, the powers exercised by the District Magistrate in regard to them are strictly limited. The District Magistrate is, however, empowered to inspect the office of the Commissioners of a municipality, to suspend the execution of the resolutions of the Commissioners in certain cases and to recommend the supersession of the Commissioners if they are found to be incompetent to discharge the duties laid upon them under the Bengal Municipal Act, 1932.

Until lately the District Magistrate and Collector was also the

Chairman of the District Development Council. As Chairman of the District Development Council he used to help in the formulation of the plans for the development of the district in all its aspects. Members of the Legislature, State as well as Central, whose constituencies are situated within the district, were members of this District Development Council, along with some others. With the establishment of the Zilla Parishad the District Development Council has been abolished, and its functions taken over by that body. The District Magistrate is not directly involved in the work of the Zilla Parishad but he has been given some powers of control over them in the West Bengal Zilla Parishads Act, 1963 and the West Bengal Panchāyats Act, 1957 and the rules framed thereunder. Thus the District Magistrate is empowered to:

- (a) call for and inspect any document which may be in the possession of the Zilla Parishad ;
- (b) require the Zilla Parishad to furnish such information as he may think necessary ;
- (c) inspect the office of the Zilla Parishad or any institution maintained by or under the control of the Zilla Parishad.

There are 15 Development Blocks in the district. Each of the Blocks is in charge of a Block Development Officer. Previously the Block Development Officers who are borne on the cadre of the West Bengal Junior Civil Service under the Home Department and who used to be controlled by the Community Development Department through the District Magistrate, are now under the control of the Agriculture Department ; the Department of Community Development having merged with the Agriculture Department.

(b) EXCISE DEPARTMENT

The Collector is the head of the Excise Department in the district. He is assisted by a Superintendent of Excise posted at Māldā. The Superintendent of Excise is assisted by 4 Sub-Inspectors of Excise, one of whom is in charge of the District Excise Warehouse at Old Māldā. The three other Sub-Inspectors are in charge of the three circles in the district, each consisting of a number of police stations. The Sadar Circle consists of the English Bazar, the Mānikchak and the Kāliāchak police stations ; the *Bārind* Circle consists of the Habibpur, the Māldā, the Gājōl and the Bāmangōlā police stations ; and the Samsi Circle consists of the police stations of Ratuā, Kharbā and Harishchandrapur. The headquarters of the Sadar Circle is at English Bazar, that of the *Bārind* Circle is at Āihô and that of the Samsi Circle at Samsi. Besides these officers there is a Patrol Party stationed at English Bazar under a Petty Officer of Excise. The Patrol Party consists of 3 Excise Peons. There are altogether 16 Excise Peons of whom 3 are attached to the office of the Superintendent of Excise, 2 to the Sadar Circle Excise office, 3 to the *Bārind* Circle office, 2 to the Samsi Circle Excise office and 3 to the Excise Warehouse at Old Māldā, besides the 3 who form the Patrol Party. Consumption of opium only is restricted due to the rationing of the drug. At

present opium is issued only on medical advice. Country spirit, toddy, *gānjā* and *bhāng* are the intoxicants that are commonly consumed by the people. Foreign liquor is consumed by only a few. *Pachāi* or rice-beer is allowed to be brewed in private houses for domestic consumption only at an annual licence fee of Rs. 1.50. Such licences for home-brewing of *pachāi* is usually granted to Sāntāls and other tribal people.

CHAPTER XI

REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

(a) LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION—HISTORY

It may be recalled that the district of Māldā was created in 1813 with parts of the Dinājpur, Purneā and Rājshāhi districts. It is, therefore, not possible to give a coherent account of the history of the land revenue administration in the district. Nevertheless, it might not be out of place to mention in this chapter some important facts. Abul Fazl in his *Āin-i-Ākbari*, while describing the *Subah* of Bengal mentions Jinnatābād, i.e. Lakhnāwati or Gauḍa as an ancient city. There was a *sarkār* of the same name in the *Subah* of Bengal. The present district of Māldā contains a major portion of this *sarkār* of Jinnatābād. Māldā was one of the *mahāls* in the *sarkār* of Jinnatābād or Lakhnāwati. The revenue of this *sarkār* of Jinnatābād, which consisted of 66 *mahāls*, was fixed at 1,88,46,967 *dāms*. A *dām* was a copper coin in use during the reign of Akbar. At the time the English commercial factory was opened at Māldā. A *krori* was stationed at Māldā. A *krori* was a revenue official who was in charge of the collection of revenue amounting to one crore of *dāms*. During the viceroyalty of Shāistā Khān, Māldā was included in his personal *jāgir*. Māldā came under the British administration with the acquisition of *Diwāni* by the East India Company in 1765 A.D. As the district of Māldā did not exist as a separate entity at that time, it would not be profitable to recount here the details of the revenue administration that prevailed between 1765 and 1793 the year in which the Permanent Settlement came into existence. One rather peculiar arrangement that was adopted by the Committee of Circuit in regard to Māldā may, however, be recorded here. It appears that certain areas contiguous to Māldā were formed into a unit of revenue collection and was put in charge of the Commercial Resident at Māldā, because a number of weavers and other dependants of the factory resided in such areas. It was felt that this arrangement would not only contribute to promote the success of the investment but also would provide a fund for such investment.

As has already been remarked, the district was constituted in 1813 with parts of the Dinājpur, Purneā and Rājshāhi districts. This area was put under the charge of a Joint Magistrate and Deputy Collector. The thanas of Tulshihātā and Kharbā were added afterwards. The powers of the Joint Magistrate and Deputy Collector were of an anomalous character, and hence originated the confusion which for a long time overhung the criminal, revenue and civil jurisdiction of Māldā. He seems at first to have been to a certain extent under the control of the Collector, both of

Purneā and Dinājpur, all communications from the Board of Revenue being transmitted to him through one or other of their treasuries. In his capacity of Joint Magistrate, on the other hand, he was practically independent. In 1832 a treasury was for the first time established at English Bazar, and from that year the independence of the district is dated. In 1859 a Magistrate and Collector was appointed. In 1875 the district boundaries were notified. By the same notification of 1875, 65 villages from Murshidābād and 237 villages from Dinājpur were transferred to the district of Māldā. In 1896 Tulshihātā and Mānikchak, which were outposts subordinate to the thanas of Kharbā and Ratuā respectively, were converted into police stations. In 1904 the police outpost at Bāmangōlā was converted into a police station. In 1914 the boundaries of the English Bazar police station were notified. After the partition of the district the boundaries of this police station were again notified in 1947. The name of the police station Tulshihātā was changed to that of Harishchandrapur in 1915 by the shifting of the headquarters of the police station from Tulshihātā to Harishchandrapur. It is rather curious that M. O. Carter in his Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the District of Māldā (1928-1935) remarked: "A Joint Magistrate and Deputy Collector was appointed and placed in charge of a number of thanas, which correspond nearly to the district as it stands to-day, with the exception of Kharba and Harishchandrapur police-stations. These were added to the district in 1896." Carter's statement that Harishchandrapur and Kharbā were added to the district in 1896 clearly gives a wrong description of facts. In the same notification of 1875 by which the boundaries of Māldā district were notified, the boundaries of constituent thanas were also notified. These thanas were "(1) Khurbā, (2) Dabeepore, (3) Gāzōle, (4) Māldā, (5) Angrāzābād, (6) Kālēāchuk, (7) Gomostāpore, (8) Sheebgunge and (9) Nowābgunge." From Lambourn's District Gazetteer of Māldā it appears that the district was divided, in 1918, into ten police stations with four outposts, viz. (1) English Bazar (Kotwāli) with beat house at Bhōlāhāt, (2) Ratuā with outpost at Mānikchak, (3) Kālīāchak, (4) Sibganj, (5) Nawābganj, (6) Gomastāpur, (7) Old Māldā with outpost at Habibpur, (8) Gājōl with outpost at Bāmangōlā, (9) Kharbā and (10) Tulshihātā. It has already been stated that Mānikchak and Tulshihātā police stations were converted from outposts in 1896, and so, Lambourn's account, in so far as it relates to Mānikchak, would appear to be incorrect, but it is found from Notification No. 4403-J dated the 8th September 1904, that the 'outpost' of Mānikchak was again converted into a police station. The position appears to be rather ambiguous. Carter in his Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the District of Māldā (1928-1935) has stated that the district was at that time divided into the following fifteen police stations: (1) Harishchandrapur, (2) Kharbā, (3) Gājōl, (4) Bāmangōlā, (5) Habibpur, (6) Old Māldā, (7) English Bazar, (8) Ratuā, (9) Mānikchak, (10) Kālīāchak, (11) Sibganj, (12) Bhōlāhāt, (13) Gomastāpur, (14) Nāchole and (15) Nawābganj. A few

mauzās from the police stations of Porshā and Tapan in the district of Dinājpur were transferred to the Bāmangōlā police station in 1941. The district was partitioned in 1947, and after the partition and at the present day it consists of the following police stations: (1) English Bazar with a town outpost, (2) Kālīāchak, (3) Māldā with an outpost in the town of Old Māldā, (4) Habibpur, (5) Bāmangōlā, (6) Ratuā, (7) Mānikchak, (8) Kharbā, (9) Harishchandrapur and (10) Gājōl.

Position in late
nineteenth and early
twentieth century.

In 1873 the land revenue demand from the permanently settled estates in the district was Rs. 3,15,444 payable by 560 estates, and in 1912 the demand was Rs. 4,00,658 payable by 618 estates. The difference in demand was mainly due partly to changes in jurisdiction and partly to the transfer of the collection of estates to the district owing to changes in the course of the Ganges. At about the time the last District Gazetteer was written, the incidence of land revenue in permanently settled estates was 0-5-5 pies per acre while in estates managed by the Government as proprietor the incidence of rent was Rs. 1-9-0 p. per acre. Taking this latter figure as the average rental for the district, Lambourn in his Gazetteer calculated the rent of superior landlords at Rs. 18½ lakhs. This meant that the land revenue was 21.7 per cent of the annual rental of the district. From the cess valuation the gross rental at that time amounted to Rs. 15,71,036. If this latter figure is accepted as the annual rental of the district prevailing at that time, then the land revenue is found to have been 25.9 per cent of the annual rental. M.O. Carter in his Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the District of Māldā (1928-1935) gives the number of permanently settled estates in the district as 626, the total annual revenue being Rs. 3,83,694-14-9½ pies. This gave an incidence of land revenue equal to 0-6-3 pies per acre. There were at that time 105 temporarily settled private estates yielding a total revenue of Rs. 33,583-12-8 pies. In this case the incidence of land revenue was Rs. 1-1-2 pies. Taking the area of the district as equal to 1,986 square miles as given in the Settlement Report of Carter and multiplying that area by this rate of Rs. 1-1-2 pies per acre, it is found that the annual rental of the district was Rs. 13,63,720. The land revenue from permanently settled estates is thus found to have been equal to 28.1 per cent of the annual rental of the district in 1928-35. In 1953-54, immediately before the West Bengal Estate Acquisition Act came into force, the total current demand on account of land revenue from the permanently settled estates amounted to Rs. 3,13,950 in the district of Māldā as it emerged in August, 1947, after the partition. The area of the district being 1,436 square miles or 9,19,040 acres, the incidence of land revenue per acre in the permanently settled estates is found to be 5 as. 3 pies. In the year which followed the abolition of the *zamindāry* system, the total amount collected by way of rent was Rs. 15,67,903. Allowing for payment of rent for the same plot of land by more than one person in some cases, the total rent may be taken as equal to Rs. 15,00,000. It is seen that the incidence of land

revenue remained almost the same in 1953-54 as it was in 1912. In 1953-54, the total demand from temporarily settled estates amounted to Rs. 71,746. If this is added to Rs. 3,13,950 which was the current demand on account of land revenue from all permanently settled estates, then the total demand on account of land revenue in 1953-54 from all estates is found to be equal to Rs. 3,85,696. To this has to be added the demand on account of (1) temporarily settled private estates under *khās* management and (2) Government estates under *khās* management. The current demand on this account in 1953-54 was Rs. 53,848. The total current demand on account of land revenue in the district in 1953-54 is thus found to have been Rs. 4,39,544. This amount was equal to 29.3 per cent of the total rental of the district. The proportion of the Government demand to the total rental thus appears to have remained more or less stationary since 1928-35.

Hunter's Account.

Hunter in his Statistical Account of Māldā, published in 1876, noticed four classes of land tenures, viz. (1) estates paying rent direct to Government, (2) intermediate tenures, (3) cultivating and miscellaneous tenures and (4) rent-free tenures. The holders of estates paying rent direct to Government were the *zamindārs*. By intermediate tenures Hunter meant all those rights which interposed between the superior *zamindār* and the actual cultivator. Sub-tenures created before the Permanent Settlement such as *istimrāri* or *mukarrāri tāluks* did not exist in the district. The number of *patnis* was considerable. The peculiarity of this tenure was that though it was held at a fixed rent and was inheritable, it was liable at any moment to be destroyed by the sale of the superior estate on default of the *zamindār* in satisfying the Government demand. The *patnidār* might create any number of subordinate tenures under himself with rights similar to his own, but they all were required to be formed within his own estate. Hunter recorded only one such *dār patni* in Māldā. Another form of tenure was the *izārā* or farm which was a terminable lease. *Dār izārās* or subleases were not known in the district. Of *izārās*, the most common kind was that called *miādi*. This lease was for a term of years varying from 1 to 50 and was commonly offered by the larger *zamindārs* and by the absentee landlords to save them the expenditure and trouble of making collections themselves. The properties of indigo-planters were often held by the same form of lease for years which was locally termed *thōk*. Another kind of *izārā* was *dāisudi* which was substantially a mortgage of the land to the tenant who retained it until the rent satisfied the capital and interest of the loan. Hunter remarked that *dāisudis* were of rare occurrence in Māldā. *Istimrāri jots* or permanent hereditary and transferable leases were also found but *mukarrāri jots* were much more common.

Jot or *rāyati jot* which was the name of the common tenure of cultivators was either with or without the right of occupancy. The terms were subject to annual arrangements and together with the area of the holding were embodied in *pāṭṭās* or leases given to the cultivators and *kabuliāts* or counterpartṣ kept by the landlords.

The rights thus created were of a transferable character and conferred on the tenants the right of occupancy after twelve years' continuous occupation. *Thikā* or summary or *miādi jot* was a similar tenure granted for a term of years and was more a subject of contract and less a matter of usage than the former. It also was transferable and was common in the more fertile parts of the district. The *hāl hāsīlā* was an extremely common form of holding chiefly in the less advanced tract in the north and especially in the Chānchal estate. The peculiarity of this tenure was that the cultivator only paid rent for such lands as he might have cultivated during the year and the rate was proportional to the kinds of crop that he raised. There was no written agreement, but the tenant was recognized to have a sort of claim to continuance. No right of occupancy accrued to the tenant of such lands. It appears that the source of this tenure did not lie in the grasping disposition of the *zamindārs* but in the vitality of the old Hindu village system. It was probably a relic of the days when the entire lands of the village were annually divided afresh among all the villagers. The entire village under the authority of the headman acted in concert. The land to the east of the village was cultivated for one or two seasons while the land to the west was used for the grazing of the cattle. After the lapse of two years, the land to the west was brought under cultivation while that to the east lay fallow and so on alternatively. According to Hunter, this was the simplest form of tenure but for its proper working two requisites were necessary. The village community must retain its traditional influence over its members and there must be abundance of spare land. But Hunter noted that even at that time, the *hāl hāsīlā* tenure was losing its primitive character on account of pressure of population. He was of the opinion that this form of tenure was likely to become a mere matter of contract between landlord and tenant. *Khāmār* and *nij jot* were two forms of holding so resembling each other that they were both regarded as in a special sense the private property of the *zamindār*. Neither of them were assessed before the Decennial Settlement. *Khāmār* was properly applied to lands which were originally waste but had been reclaimed. They were then either retained by the *zamindār* or let out at a grain rent and from this latter practice the name was derived. *Nij jot* which must be carefully distinguished from *nij tāluk* was the name of the home farm of the *zamindār* and was cultivated by himself for his own benefit. *Chākṛān* or service tenure was granted to the washerman, the barber, the gardener etc. in part payment of their services. These tenures had also their place at one time in the village system when these persons were the common servants of the villagers but at the time when Hunter compiled his account of the district, they were created by all the various tenure-holders in the district in favour of their own personal attendants. The *chākṛān* lands were thus rent-free in the sense that their occupiers did not pay rent but such lands were no longer excluded from the Government assessment.

Ādhi, *trikuṭi* and *phārāni* were the names of sub-tenures created

by cultivators themselves, who for various reasons, wanted a certain portion of their holdings to be taken off their hands. In the *ādhi*, as is implied by the name, the produce was shared in equal proportion between the two parties. The owner of the land, i.e. the cultivator had to provide seed and all other expenses of cultivation and the husbandman merely supplied his labour. The *trikuṭi* was similar to the *ādhi*, the difference being that in this system two-thirds of the crop were assigned to the owner of the land and only one-third to the actual tiller of the soil. In the *phārāni*, the husbandman agreed to pay to his landlord a definite number of maunds for each bighā independently of the actual produce he might reap. *Jal-kar* was a lease of fishery, and in Hunter's time a considerable proportion of the revenue of *zamindāris* was derived from this source. *Bānjār* was a lease of land that had been suffered to run waste for the cutting of trees and underwood for fuel. *Fal-kar* was a lease of garden land.

Among rent-free tenures Hunter found the following classes: (i) those created by the paramount authority of the country, (ii) those created by a subordinate government, and (iii) those created by Muhammadan and Hindu landholders. Of the first class there were two examples in the district, one of a Delhi Emperor and the other of the English. *Taraf* Pirigpur, near Gauḍa, in parganā Shershāhābād, with an area of more than 15,000 bighās or 5,000 acres was conferred by the Emperor Aurangzib on his priest Sayyid Niāmatullā for charitable uses. This was known as *bādshāhi āltāmgā* or an imperial grant under red or purple seal. The other case was a plot of land in *mauzā* Mohanpur within parganā Shikārpur containing about 3,380 bighās or 1,127 acres which was assigned in the time of Lord Cornwallis for an invalid sepoy establishment. The lands were in the possession of a merchant of English Bazar at the time Hunter wrote his account. In class (ii) there were three estates in the district which were created by Nawāb-Nāzims of Bengal and were all of considerable extent. The parganā *Bāishāzāri* was conferred in 1709 A.D. on the manager of the monument of Pir Mukdām Shāh. Parganā *Shāthāzāri* was granted in 1648 for the support of persons studying religious books and for alms to the poor. These tenures were called *ausāt madatmāsh* or subordinate grant for charitable purposes. One such *jāgir* in the north-west of the district was said to have been granted by Nawāb Mir Jāfar to the *fakir* who betrayed Nawāb Sirāj-ud-daulāh after his escape from the Battle of Plassey. The class (iii) rent-free tenures were the types of ordinary *lākherāj* tenures which used to be encountered throughout West Bengal. The names of such *lākherāj* tenures in parganā Hātandā were (1) *debottar*, (2) *brahmottar*, (3) *bhāṭottar*, (4) *vishnottar*, (5) *ganakottar*, (6) *jogiāsan*, (7) *baidyottar*, (8) *ināmi*, (9) *mān-dāllan*, (10) *mahātrān*, (11) *aimā*, (12) *pirān* and (13) *fakirān*. *Debottar* grants were created for the service of deities, *brahmottar* grants for the support of Brahmans, *bhāṭottar* grants for the support of *bhāṭs* or heralds, *vishnottar* grants for the service of *Vishnu*, *ganakottar* grants for the support of astrologers, *jogiāsan* grants for

the seats of devotees, *baidyottar* grants for the support of physicians, *ināmi* grants were created by way of reward, *māndāllan* grants for the support of headmen, *mahātrān* grants for the support of men of rank, *aimā* grants for the support of Mussalmans, *pirān* grants for perpetuating the memory of Muhammedan saints and *fakirān* grants were created for the support of Muhammedan religious mendicants.

In 1953-54 there were 922 estates borne on the revenue roll of the Collector. In 1949-50 the number of estates was 972. Consequent on the partition of the district some of the estates fell partly in East Pakistan and partly in West Bengal and had to be dealt with under the Estates Partition Act XXXI of 1948, and this resulted in the creation of some new estates as well as in the abolition of some estates previously existing in the rent roll of the district. The number of estates in 1953-54 thus became 922. All intermediary rights in land ceased to exist from the 15th April 1955, in pursuance of the provisions of the West Bengal Estates Acquisition Act, and consequently, an elaborate machinery had to be set up to collect rent direct from the tenants. There is at present an Additional Collector at Māldā for supervising the collection of rent in both the district of Māldā and West Dinājpur. The district of Māldā has been divided into six Circles for the purpose of collection of rent from the tenants and for the implementation of the provisions of the West Bengal Estates Acquisition Act and the West Bengal Land Reforms Act. Each Circle is in charge of one Junior Land Reforms Officer who is assisted by a Circle Inspector. The territorial jurisdiction of the six Circles are as follows:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1. The Sadar Circle | The police stations of English Bazar, Māldā and Gājōl. |
| 2. The Mathurāpur Circle | The police stations of Mānikchak and Ratuā. |
| 3. The Bulbulchandi Circle | The police stations of Habibpur and Bāmangōlā. |
| 4. The Panchānandapur Circle | The police station of Kāliāchak. |
| 5. The Harishchandrapur Circle | The police station of Harishchandrapur. |
| 6. The Chānchal Circle | The police station of Kharbā. |

Each Circle is divided into Collection Blocks, each of which is in charge of a *Tahsildār*. There are 44 such Blocks in the Sadar circle, 40 in the Mathurāpur circle, 29 in the Bulbulchandi circle, 29 in the Panchānandapur circle, 31 in the Harishchandrapur circle and 24 in the Chānchal circle.

Not only have all intermediary rights in land been abolished by the West Bengal Estates Acquisition Act and the West Bengal Land Reforms Act but lands in excess of the ceiling prescribed in these Acts, which were in the occupation of the intermediaries or tenants became vested in the Government. Although it has not

yet been possible to take over possession of all the surplus vested lands, arrangements have been made to get such lands cultivated on a year to year basis at a fee of Rs. 10 per acre. In making such annual arrangements landless cultivators and cultivators having less than five acres of agricultural lands are preferred to others. Although the final publication of the record of rights took place in 1954, changes even now have to be effected in them on account of court decrees and orders of tribunals. As a consequence, the rent-roll for the district cannot be considered as final, and it is not possible to give an absolutely correct figure about the rental of the district.

The Table below gives the income from rent, P.W. Cess and Education Cess in the district from the years 1955-56 to 1959-60:

Year	Rent	P.W. Cess	Education Cess	Total
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1955-56	15,67,903	88,367	85,782	17,42,052
1956-57	13,86,900	73,184	74,316	15,34,400
1957-58	9,06,029	49,699	48,546	10,04,274
1958-59	15,52,162	84,591	83,472	17,20,225
1959-60	16,39,752	89,482	88,944	18,18,178

Agricultural labourers.

Agricultural labourers as a class are rather poor. They do not get full employment throughout the year in most years as a result of which test relief works have to be opened by the Government to provide them with work. Between 1955 and 1960, the wages of the agricultural labourer varied from Re. 1 to Rs. 1-4 as per day without food, although during some months in some years, the wages rose to Rs. 1-8 as per day. The year 1960 marked an increase in the wages of agricultural labour in that the lowest wage did not go below Rs. 1.25 i.e. Rs. 1-4 as. except for one week in November. The highest wage during 1960 was Rs. 1.68. The year 1962 showed a further rise in the wages of agricultural labour the rate of wages rising to even Rs. 2 per day without meals in the month of June.

(b) ADMINISTRATION OF OTHER SOURCES OF REVENUE

Agricultural Income-tax is realized under the provisions of the Bengal Agricultural Income-Tax Act of 1944 which is still in force with suitable adaptations. This Act provides for the assessment of Income-tax on agricultural income as defined in that Act. The amount realized is credited to State revenues. For the purpose of collection of Agricultural Income-tax, the districts of Māldā and West Dinājpur have been grouped together under the Māldā Range. The total assessment in 1957-58 under this Act for the two districts of Māldā and West Dinājpur amounted to Rs. 6,17,516.36 while the amount collected was Rs. 5,08,649.01, including miscellaneous receipts. In 1961-62, the total amount realized under this head was Rs. 4,17,573.54.

Agricultural Income-tax.

Tax on the sale of goods now-a-days provides the most important source of revenue for the State Government. This taxation on the sale of goods was introduced in Bengal in July, 1941, by the Bengal Finance (Sales Tax) Act of 1941 in order to make an addition to the State revenues. This Act with suitable adaptations is still in force. The West Bengal Sales Tax Act, 1954, provided for the imposition of a tax on the sale of cigarettes. These two Acts may thus be taken together so far as the collection of Sales Tax is concerned. In 1957-58, the total amount collected under the Bengal Finance (Sales Tax) Act and the West Bengal Sales Tax Act, 1954, was Rs. 4,27,879. The collections fell sharply in 1958-59 to Rs. 1,95,043. In 1959-60, the amount collected was still further reduced. From 1960-61, the amount collected started to increase. In that year Rs. 2,15,515 were collected and in 1961-62 the collections rose to Rs. 2,47,282.

The Bengal Motor Spirit Sales Taxation Act was enacted in 1941 to provide for the levy of a tax on the retail sale of motor spirits to further the construction of new roads in Bengal. This law is still in force after necessary adaptations. The amount collected under this Act in 1957-58 was Rs. 85,292. In 1961-62 a sum of Rs. 1,06,335 was collected under this Act.

The Central Sales Tax Act, 1956, provides for the levy of a tax on the sale of goods in the course of inter-State trade or commerce. Under this Act, each State Government acts as the representative of the Government of India in regard to the collection of taxes leviable under this Act and accruing within that particular State. The law provides that the proceeds (reduced by the cost of collections) in any financial year of any tax levied and collected under this Act in any State, on behalf of the Central Government, shall, except in so far as those proceeds represent proceeds attributable to Union Territories, be assigned to that State and shall be retained by it. The amount collected under this Act is not large and was Rs. 2,213 in 1957-58 and Rs. 1,968 in 1961-62.

The total amount collected on account of duty and licence fees on imported liquor, country spirits, *tāḍi*, *pachāi*, opium, hemp drugs and miscellaneous articles amounted to Rs. 4,37,275 in 1951-52. In 1962 the income from this source fell to Rs. 3,87,304.88.

Amusement-tax.

Collection of Amusement-tax rose from Rs. 59,832-11 as. in 1955 to Rs. 1,12,959.56 in 1962.

Stamps.

Stamp revenues from sale of judicial stamps rose from Rs. 1,68,765-4 as. in 1955 to Rs. 1,79,273.37 in 1962 and that from sale of non-judicial stamps from Rs. 2,21,591-5 as.-6 p. in 1955 to Rs. 3,83,681.77 in 1962.

Income-tax.

In 1957-58, 112 assesseees paid Rs. 1,41,000 by way of Income-tax. In 1958-59 the number of assesseees rose to 366 but the amount collected fell to Rs. 1,19,000. In 1959-60, 555 assesseees paid in all Rs. 2,40,000 as Income-tax. In 1961-62, 256 assesseees paid Rs. 3,18,000.

CHAPTER XII

LAW AND ORDER, AND JUSTICE

(a) INCIDENCE OF CRIME

The origin of the district is related to the incidence of various types of crimes in certain parts of the districts of Purneā, Dinājpur and Rājshāhi. According to the Superintendent of Police, Lower Provinces, the incidence of crimes in the district immediately before it came into existence in 1813 was as follows:

“PURNEAH.—The crime of gang robbery is of very rare occurrence in any other quarter of this district, but the number of burglaries reported to have been committed is enormous. These offences have mostly occurred in the south-eastern thanas of the district, and in the vicinity of Malda. The distance of the thana of Seebgunge from the station of Purnea is about 120 miles, and the thanas of Kulliachak, Bholahat, and Gurgureebah, which adjoin the former thana, are also so distant from the station, that it is scarcely possible for the Magistrate to exercise a sufficient control over the officers of the police.

“It appears, therefore, less a matter of surprise that burglaries and minor offences should prevail to the extent noticed, than that this part of the country which adjoins the two districts of this division, in which dacoity has prevailed, should have continued free from occurrence of that evil. I am of opinion that if in any part of the country an arrangement similar to that, which has been adopted at Monghyr, be necessary or expedient, it is particularly so in the vicinity of Malda, at which place the services of an able Assistant to the Magistrate, either of Dinajpur or Purnea, vested with the powers of Joint Magistrate, extending over the jurisdictions of thanas of Purnea above noticed also the thanas of Malda and Bamangola of Dinajpur and of Rohanpur and Chuppee of Rajsahae, would be productive of the greatest benefits to the police of those districts. Aware however of the objections which may exist to the adoption of this arrangement, it is merely suggested for the consideration of Government.”

In 1813, most of the cases related to burglaries and minor offences, but as the number of cases was rather large, the necessity of posting a Joint Magistrate at Māldā was felt.

In 1872, 1,016 cognizable cases were reported to the police of which 209 were discovered to be false and 150 cases were not

enquired into, leaving 657 cases as true. Among these cases, as many as 209 related to lurking house trespass and house-breaking with intent to commit offences, 68 cases related to simple lurking house trespass and house-breaking; ordinary theft accounted for 316 cases, dacoity accounted for 11 cases, rioting and unlawful assembly 10 cases, rape 12 cases and murder 6 cases. These figures relate to the district as it was in 1872.

Lambourn in his Gazetteer of the district of Māldā recorded that the most common forms of various crimes were burglary, theft, cattle-lifting and rioting over newly formed *chars*. According to him, dacoity on the Purneā border was not uncommon as also highway robbery in the *bārind* during the paddy-cutting season and the season of the fairs. He stated that the district was a common resort of wandering gypsies, known as Nāṭs or Kanjars, who were habitual thieves.

In 1960, the situation in regard to crimes in the district did not alter very much from what it was in 1813 or 1872 or 1918. In 1960, 351 cases of ordinary theft were reported to the police. There were 40 cases of cattle theft, 75 cases of receiving stolen properties, 188 cases of lurking house trespass or house-breaking, 8 cases of dacoity and preparation and assembly for dacoity, 19 cases of robbery, 95 cases of rioting or unlawful assembly, 34 cases of grievous hurt, 39 cases of other types of hurt and 17 cases of rape. There were 18 cases of murder, 7 of attempts to murder and 17 of culpable homicide not amounting to murder. The total number of cases reported to the police during 1960 was 1,090. From the return furnished by the District Magistrate it appears that during 1960, the Magistrates handled 1,666 cases of offences against property, 1,008 cases affecting the human body, 408 cases under the Food Adulteration Act, 297 cases relating to offences in regard to coins, stamps, measures etc., 224 cases involving offences relating to public health, 159 cases under the Anti-profiteering Act, 147 cases under the Bengal Excise Act and 100 cases under the Essential Commodities Act. Among the miscellaneous cases mention may be made of 168 cases under the Motor Vehicles Act and 286 cases under Municipal by-laws. During 1960, the Magistrates also handled other 942 cases. Among these 942 other cases handled by the Magistrates, 78 were under the Passport Act and presumably related to unlawful entry of Pakistan citizens into the district and overstay of the period stated in the *visās*.

(b) ORGANIZATION OF THE POLICE FORCE

At the end of 1872 the regular police in the district consisted of (1) the District Superintendent of Police, (2) 3 subordinate officers and (3) 230 foot police constables. According to Hunter's computation, the total strength of the regular police in the district amounted to one man to every 6.61 square miles or one man to every 2,468 of the population. Hunter has given separately the strength of the municipal police as 2 officers and 36 men making

The regular
police.

an average of one policeman to 476 of the municipal population. The rural police, according to Hunter, consisted of 1,892 men maintained by the villagers. The strength of this rural police amounted to one man to every 0.95 square mile of area or one man to every 357 of the population. Each village watchman had on an average the charge of 60 houses.

At the present day, the district is divided into 2 Police Circles, the entire administration of police being headed by the Superintendent of Police. The A Circle consists of the English Bazar, the Māldā, the Kāliāchak, the Habibpur and the Bāmangōlā police stations while the B Circle consists of the Gājōl, the Kharbā, the Harishchandrapur, the Ratuā and the Mānikchak police stations. There is one town outpost under the English Bazar police station and another town outpost under the Māldā police station. There are 13 sanctioned border outposts along the border with Pakistan and 4 unsanctioned border outposts. The railway police is under the control of the Superintendent of Police, G.R.P., Sealdah, but the Superintendent of Police of Māldā is usually appointed as an Additional Superintendent of Police of the Railway Police, Sealdah, in order to enable him to exercise supervision over law and order over railway lands. The Superintendent of Police is assisted in his work by 2 Deputy Superintendents of Police and 6 Inspectors of Police. The strength of the staff attached to a police station varies according to the number of crimes required to be handled but the minimum strength in any of the police stations is 1 Sub-Inspector, 1 Assistant Sub-Inspector and 8 Constables.

The rural police consists of 752 chowkidārs and 181 dafādārs. These chowkidārs and dafādārs are appointed under the Bengal Village Self-Government Act and the West Bengal Panchāyat Act, 1957. There are 2,730 village resistance groups in the district. The members of these village resistance groups are usually neither chowkidārs nor dafādārs but are ordinary villagers, formed into groups at the instance of the Superintendent of Police for preventing the occurrence of offences like dacoity within the villages and for apprehension of the culprits should a dacoity take place. Each village resistance group is under a captain who is a resident of the village and a member of the group. There is a small number of special constables in the district.

There is an Anti-Corruption Squad attached to the district police. The sanctioned strength of the squad is 1 Inspector, 5 Sub-Inspectors, 1 Assistant Sub-Inspector and 8 Constables.

The district consists of only one sub-division, and the entire staff of the district police attached to the courts are stationed at Māldā. The staff consists of 1 Inspector, 3 Sub-Inspectors, 6 Assistant Sub-Inspectors, 1 Head Constable and 8 Constables.

There are 17 lock-ups managed by the police including the lock-up at the court. There are 2 lock-ups at the English Bazar police station, 2 at the Kāliāchak police station, 2 at the Harishchandrapur police station, 2 at the Ratuā police station, 2 at the Mānikchak police station and 2 at the Bāmangōlā police station. At the other police stations there is only one lock-up each. These lock-ups are

used for keeping in custody persons accused of cognizable offences till their production in court.

(c) JAILS AND LOCK-UPS

Location of jails and lock-ups.

The jail in Māldā is classed as a sub-jail and is located at English Bazar. The registered accommodation at the sub-jail is for 153 prisoners. There is no other jail within the district. The only jail in the district being a sub-jail, persons sentenced to undergo imprisonment for comparatively long periods are transferred to the Berhampore Central Jail in the district of Murshidābād. The daily average number of prisoners in the sub-jail was 233.97 in 1958, 234.16 in 1959 and 196.70 in 1960. It would thus appear that although the congestion in the jail has gone down in 1960 as compared with 1958, 43.70 prisoners on an average were in the jail in excess of the sanctioned strength per day throughout 1960. In the following Tables, the total number of convicts admitted into the sub-jail during 1960 has been shown classified firstly by age and sex, and secondly by period of imprisonment and sex. It would appear that most of the convicts were males and belonged to the age-group 22-40 years. Again, most of them have been sentenced to terms of imprisonment not exceeding one year. As has already been stated, convicts sentenced to undergo imprisonment for comparatively long periods are not kept at the sub-jail but are transferred to the Central Jail at Berhampore in the Murshidābād district. Convicts detained in the sub-jail are employed in gardening and other essential prison services. In 1960, 401 maunds and 6 chhataks of vegetables were grown on the land belonging to the sub-jail. These vegetables were estimated to be worth Rs. 7,391. Most of these vegetables were consumed by the prisoners themselves.

CLASSIFICATION OF CONVICTS ACCORDING TO AGE AND SEX

Age	No. of convicts	
	Male	Female
Under 16 years	—	—
16-21 „	50	1
22-30 „	188	2
31-40 „	138	—
41-60 „	93	2
Above 60 „	12	—
Total:	481	5

CLASSIFICATION OF CONVICTS ACCORDING TO PERIOD OF IMPRISONMENT

Period	No. of convicts	
	Male	Female
Not exceeding 1 month	243	2
1-3 months	104	1
3-6 „	40	—
Above 6 months to 1 year	20	1
1-2 years	21	—
2-5 „	19	—
5-10 „	27	1
Exceeding 10 years	7	—
Total:	481	5

Prison Organization.

All prisoners are allowed reasonable facilities for performing their religious rites. A school is run in the sub-jail for imparting education to illiterate prisoners. The teachers are drawn from among the literate prisoners. The Sub-jailor exercises supervision over the running of the school. Facilities are provided in the sub-jail for various indoor games. The prisoners are even allowed to stage dramas inside the sub-jail on festive occasions. Prisoners are allowed interviews with their relatives and also to write to them.

The Sub-Divisional Officer, Māldā, is the ex-officio Superintendent of the Jail. He is assisted in his work by a staff consisting of one Sub-jailor, one Clerk, one part-time Medical Officer and one Compounder in addition to the prescribed watch and ward staff. A number of non-officials have been appointed as visitors to the sub-jail and they pay visits to the sub-jail at regular intervals.

The expenditure in running the sub-jail amounted to Rs. 1,06,399 during 1960-61.

(d) ORGANIZATION OF CIVIL AND CRIMINAL COURTS

The Judgeship of West Dinājpur-Māldā came into existence in April, 1956, the West Dinājpur-Dārjeeling Judgeship having been split up under the Government of West Bengal, Judicial Department Notification No. 2222-J, dated the 28th March 1956. The Court of the District Judge of West Dinājpur-Māldā and Sessions Division of West Dinājpur-Māldā extends over the two districts of West Dinājpur and Māldā. The headquarters of the Judgeship is located at Māldā (English Bazar).

Prior to the partition of Bengal, the Rājshāhi-Māldā Judgeship extended over the whole of the undivided district of Māldā while

the Bālorghāt and Rāiganj sub-divisions of the present district of West Dinājpur lay within the Dinājpur-Dārjeeling Judgeship. After the partition of Bengal, a new Judgeship named West Dinājpur-Dārjeeling Judgeship extending over the four districts of Dārjeeling, Jalpāiguri, West Dinājpur and Māldā came into existence with its headquarters at Jalpāiguri. The Judgeship of West Dinājpur-Dārjeeling was split up into two Judgeships, namely West Dinājpur-Māldā and Jalpāiguri-Dārjeeling, in the year 1956 with their headquarters at Māldā and Jalpāiguri respectively under the Government of West Bengal, Judicial Department Notification No. 2222-J, dated the 28th March 1956, and they started functioning from April 1, 1956.

Under the Government of West Bengal, Judicial Department Notification No. 6848-J, dated the 2nd November 1956, the areas covered by the following police stations which had been ceded to West Bengal under the Bihar and West Bengal (Transfer of Territories) Act, 1956, were included within the local limits of the District Judgeship and Sessions Division of West Dinājpur-Māldā: (1) Islāmpur, (2) Goālpokhār, (3) Choprā and (4) Karandighi.

The Judgeship of West Dinājpur-Māldā started functioning on and from April 1, 1956, with the following courts:

(i) Court of the District and Sessions Judge, West Dinājpur-Māldā, with its headquarters at Māldā created under Government Order No. 2222-J, dated the 28th March 1956.

(ii) Court of the Subordinate Judge, West Dinājpur-Māldā, with its headquarters at Māldā (created under Government of West Bengal, Judicial Department Notification No. 2224-J, dated the 28th March 1956). The local limits of the jurisdiction of this Court at present comprises the executive districts of West Dinājpur and Māldā. Before the publication of the Notification, to which reference has been made, this Court was styled as the Court of the Subordinate Judge, Māldā, and at that time its jurisdiction did not extend beyond the boundaries of the district of Māldā. The Officer presiding over this Court is generally appointed an Assistant Sessions Judge.

(iii) The Courts of the Munsifs at Māldā: There are two such Courts presided over by two Munsifs. The local limits of the jurisdiction of the first Court of the Munsif of Māldā extends over the police stations of (1) English Bazar, (2) Māldā, (3) Mānikchak, (4) Ratuā and (5) Habibpur, while the jurisdiction of the second Court of the Munsif at Māldā extends over the police stations of (1) Harishchandrapur, (2) Kharbā, (3) Kāliāchak, (4) Gājōl and (5) Bāmangōlā.

It is not necessary here to mention the other courts that are subordinate to the Judgeship of West Dinājpur-Māldā, the territorial jurisdictions of which are situated in the district of West Dinājpur and outside the district of Māldā.

The Subordinate Judge and the Assistant Sessions Judge, West Dinājpur-Māldā, with headquarters at Māldā, also holds Circuit Court at Bālorghāt in the district of West Dinājpur for the trial of civil and criminal cases arising within the local limits of the juris-

diction of the district of West Dinājpur. The Munsifs are empowered to try under ordinary procedure original suits up to the value of Rs. 3,500 and arising within the local limits of their jurisdiction. They are also vested with the powers of a court of small causes for the trial of suits cognizable by such a court up to the value of Rs. 300 and arising within the local limits of their jurisdiction.

The details of the cases tried by the District and Sessions Judge, Māldā, the Subordinate Judge and the Assistant Sessions Judge, Māldā, and the Munsifs at Māldā, during the years 1956-57 to 1959-60 have been given in the appendix-(b) to this chapter.

So far as the Magistrate's Courts are concerned, there are at present 3 such Courts at Māldā. One Court is presided over by the seniormost Magistrate belonging to the State Civil Service and assigned to perform judicial duties exclusively in pursuance of the order of the Chief Secretary contained in his letter No. 289 G.A., dated the 22nd January 1958. This Magistrate is assisted by two other Magistrates. There is, of course, the Sub-Divisional Magistrate who is formally appointed by the Government in accordance with the Criminal Procedure Code, but he does not try criminal cases, having been allotted to the executive side. The Sub-Divisional Magistrate and such other Officers in the executive side who might possess judicial powers now only deal with cases under the preventive sections of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Cases under Section 110 of the Criminal Procedure Code are tried by the officers belonging to either the judicial or the executive side. This separation of the judiciary from the executive brought into existence by the order of the Chief Secretary lacks legal sanction and is merely an executive arrangement. All Magistrates are, therefore, under the immediate control of the District Magistrate. Details about the cases handled by the Magistrates are given in the appendix-(a) to this Chapter.

The members of the legal profession belong to two classes: (1) pleaders and (2) muktears. The pleaders' bar association was formed about the year 1866 with 3 members. In December, 1961, the members of the association numbered 66 only. While one cannot become a Law Graduate and a pleader without becoming a graduate of the University, one could be a muktear without being a graduate. The muktears' association consists of 35 members. They work generally in the Courts of Magistrates and some of them appear in criminal cases even before the Sessions Court. Those of the muktears who are qualified as Revenue Agents also practise before the Revenue Courts.

In civil cases, destitute persons may sue or be sued in *forma pauperis*, subject to permission being granted by the District Judge. In criminal cases, a person charged with the offence of murder is provided with a lawyer at the expense of the State if it appears to the Trying Court that the person concerned is unable to afford the expenses of defending himself. Legal assistance free of cost is also given to tribals both in civil and criminal cases.

APPENDIX

(a) DETAILS OF CASES HANDLED BY THE MAGISTRACY OF MĀLDĀ

Nature of cases handled	1957		1958		1959		1960	
	No. of cases	No. of convictions	No. of cases	No. of convictions	No. of cases	No. of convictions	No. of cases	No. of convictions
1. Offences against public tranquillity	39	23	58	151	60	38	59	122
2. Offences relating to public servants	2	1	112	76	56	15	57	31
3. Offences against public justice	4	2	23	78	6	—	—	31
4. Offences relating to coins, stamps, measures etc.	76	56	93	49	198	111	297	210
5. Offences relating to public health	44	34	59	67	10	10	224	140
6. Offences affecting human body	825	36	785	163	834	87	1,008	224
7. Offences against property	1,544	432	1,258	328	1,357	297	1,666	375
8. Offences relating to food	18	—	105	86	136	104	—	—
9. Security for keeping peace	62	—	47	—	91	9	42	4
10. Security for good behaviour	85	15	68	23	46	19	53	10
11. Arms Act	—	—	—	—	4	4	—	—
12. Anti-Profitteering Act	—	—	—	—	154	100	159	150
13. Amusement-Tax Act	3	—	5	1	1	—	—	—
14. Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act	34	14	85	19	49	18	67	40
15. Bengal Embankment Act	—	—	—	—	14	7	31	24
16. Cement Control Act	41	35	35	35	7	5	—	—
17. Cattle Tresspass Act	79	18	50	12	64	15	104	34
18. Child Marriage Restraints Act	6	—	2	—	6	—	3	3
19. Cruelty to Animals Act	20	115	21	87	52	52	6	4
20. D.B. By-laws	—	—	144	14	57	57	—	—
21. Bengal Excise Act	156	238	256	242	276	217	147	116
22. Essential Commodities Act	176	180	221	195	150	87	100	68
23. Ferries Act	7	—	4	5	3	3	—	—

DETAILS OF CASES HANDLED BY THE MAGISTRACY OF MĀLDĀ—contd.

Nature of cases handled	1957		1958		1959		1960	
	No. of cases	No. of convictions	No. of cases	No. of convictions	No. of cases	No. of convictions	No. of cases	No. of convictions
24. Electricity Act	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
25. Fisheries Act	2	—	—	—	1	1	1	4
26. Food Adulteration Act	39	19	77	75	205	94	408	300
27. Foreigners Act	—	—	—	—	4	1	11	2
28. Gambling Act	3	3	4	12	12	26	14	36
29. Land Reforms Act	—	—	—	—	2	1	1	—
30. M.V. Act	102	62	253	225	289	197	168	199
31. Municipal Act	51	1	—	—	151	30	145	41
32. Municipal By-law	5	7	106	75	206	155	286	273
33. Passport Act	68	92	73	101	60	61	78	103
34. Police Act	73	78	68	97	202	173	219	2
35. Railways Act	22	24	32	46	49	52	18	26
36. Registration Act	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
37. Tank Improvement Act	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
38. Brick Field By-laws	10	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
39. Other Acts	38	28	14	14	21	13	30	27
Total	3,634	1,515	4,058	2,276	4,833	2,059	5,405	2,600

(Number of convictions indicates total number of persons convicted).

(b) DETAILS OF CASES TRIED BY THE DISTRICT AND SESSIONS JUDGE, MĀLDĀ, THE SUBORDINATE JUDGE AND ASSISTANT SESSIONS JUDGE, MĀLDĀ, AND THE MUNSIFs AT MĀLDĀ DURING THE YEARS 1956-57 TO 1959-60

Name of Court	Nature of cases	1956-57	1957-58	1958-59	1959-60	
District and Sessions Judge, Māldā	Matrimonial suits	—	—	—	—	
	Title & O.C. "	5	9	11	22	
	Money "	—	—	—	—	
	S.C.C. "	—	—	—	—	
	Rent "	—	—	—	—	
	Miscellaneous cases	84	109	159	171	
	Regular appeals	81	71	72	71	
	Misc. appeals	264	383	158	629	
	Execution cases	4	1	1	3	
	Non-Judicial cases	—	—	13	—	
	Criminal appeals	47	59	68	74	
	Criminal revisions	14	14	15	15	
	Sessions cases	10	4	13	16	
	Special cases	1	1	2	5	
Additional District and Sessions Judge, Māldā	Matrimonial suits	—	—	—	—	
	Title & O.C. "	—	—	—	—	
	Money "	—	—	—	—	
	S.C.C. "	—	—	—	—	
	Rent "	—	—	—	—	
	Misc. cases	—	—	—	—	
	Regular appeals	—	—	—	—	
	Misc. appeals	—	—	—	—	
	Execution cases	—	—	—	—	
	Non-Judicial cases	—	—	—	—	
	Criminal appeals	—	—	—	—	
	Criminal revisions	—	—	—	2	
	Sessions cases	—	—	—	8	
	Subordinate Judge and Assistant Sessions Judge, Māldā	Matrimonial suits	—	—	—	—
Title & O.C. "		152	85	61	65	
Money "		30	46	16	15	
S.C.C. "		610	684	638	554	
Rent "		1	2	—	—	
Misc. Judicial cases		140	128	130	88	
Regular appeals		—	—	—	—	
Misc. appeals		—	—	—	—	
Execution cases		184	235	270	251	
Non-Judicial cases		—	—	—	—	
Criminal appeals		—	19	42	11	
Sessions cases		8	8	24	22	
Additional Subordinate Judge, Māldā		Title & O.C. suits	—	—	—	12
		Money "	—	—	—	17
	S.C.C. "	—	—	—	36	
	Regular "	—	—	—	13	
	Misc. appeals "	—	—	—	2	
	Munsif, 1st Court, Māldā	Matrimonial suits	—	—	—	—
Title "		186	187	149	277	
Money "		114	183	67	58	
S.C.C. "		—	—	—	—	
Rent "		1,596	2,232	252	46	
Misc. Judl. cases		115	155	155	176	
Regular appeals		—	—	—	—	
Misc. appeals		—	7	37	26	
Execution cases		785	704	789	845	
Non-Judl. cases		—	—	—	—	
Munsif, 2nd Court, Māldā		Matrimonial suits	—	—	—	—
	Title & O.C. "	190	177	144	232	
	Money "	68	70	52	49	
	S.C.C. "	210	159	120	299	
	Rent "	2,911	1,903	155	15	
	Misc. Judl. cases	143	105	158	164	
	Regular appeals	—	—	—	—	
	Misc. appeals	4	1	17	20	
	Execution cases	605	1,191	1,044	841	

CHAPTER XIII

OTHER DEPARTMENTS

(a) STATE GOVERNMENT

Registration Department.

The Collector is the ex-officio Registrar of the district. There is a District Sub-Registrar who is stationed at Māldā. There are Sub-Registrars at Kālīāchak, Ratuā and Chānchal. There is a Joint Sub-Registry office at Māldā in charge of a Sub-Registrar.

Irrigation Department.

The Executive Engineer of the Irrigation Department stationed at Māldā is in charge of the districts of Māldā and West Dinājpur. The two districts taken together comprise the Māldā Irrigation Division. It is divided into 4 sub-divisions, viz. (1) the Māldā Irrigation Sub-division, (2) the Māldā Investigation Sub-division, (3) the Rāiganj Irrigation Sub-division and (4) the Bālurghāt Irrigation Sub-division. Each Irrigation Sub-division is in charge of a Sub-divisional Officer.

Forest Department.

The Rāiganj and the Bālurghāt Irrigation Sub-divisions are situated in the district of West Dinājpur.

The Māldā Forest Division consists of the districts of Māldā and West Dinājpur and a small part of Dārjeeling district. The Divisional Forest Officer is stationed at Māldā. The Division is divided into four Forest Ranges, viz. (1) Bālurghāt, (2) Bhālukā Road, (3) Māldā and (4) Choprā, each under a Range Officer of the rank of Forest Ranger. The four Ranges are divided into twelve Beats, each in charge of a Deputy Ranger/Forester. The headquarters of these twelve Beats are at—

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| (1) Māldā | (2) Jāmālpur |
| (3) Rāiganj | (4) Dāngā |
| (5) Choprā | (6) Singābād |
| (7) Āyerā | (8) Garāel |
| (9) Kariāli | (10) Rājādighi |
| (11) Chitalghātā | (12) Debiganj |

Education Department.

The Department of Education is represented in the district by the District Inspector of Schools who is the Chief Education Officer of the district in regard to the education of boys up to the High school stage. He is also the ex-officio Secretary of the District School Board and supervises the work of other inspecting officers subordinate to him. He is required to inspect all High, Junior High, Basic and Primary schools and Primary Teachers' training institutions except Government High Schools in the district. He is assisted by 3 Assistant Inspectors of Schools, one of whom is attached to the District School Board. Out of the 2 remaining Assistant Inspectors of Schools, one is in charge of the Special Cadre schools and the other assists the District Inspector of Schools in a general

way. The district is divided into 9 Circles, each under a Sub-Inspector of Schools. The Sub-Inspectors of Schools are responsible for inspecting and reporting on the state of Primary schools in their respective Circles. There is another Sub-Inspector of Schools who looks after the Centrally Sponsored Schemes and is attached to the office of the District Inspector of Schools. Immediately after the attainment of Independence the staff of the Education Department in the district, in so far as it related to boys' education, consisted of 1 District Inspector of Schools, 1 Sub-divisional Inspector of Schools and 3 Sub-Inspectors of Schools. Of the 10 posts of Sub-Inspectors of Schools now existing, 5 belong to the General Cadre, 1 has been created by the Refugee Rehabilitation Department, 2 were sanctioned in connection with the Special Cadre schools and 1 post was sanctioned for Intensive area scheme. As has already been remarked, there is another post of Sub-Inspector of Schools for Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

In 1960-61, the expenditure on the office of the District Inspector of Schools amounted to Rs. 97,581.

Māldā is included within the territorial jurisdiction of the District Inspectress of Schools, Dārjeeling, Jalpāiguri, Māldā and West Dinājpur with headquarters at Jalpāiguri. The District Inspectress of Schools inspects girls' schools (at present mainly Secondary) at least once a year and also passes the grants-in-aid and other bills of these schools. She is assisted by a Sub-Inspector of Schools attached to her office, who is directed by her to inspect specified schools. This post of Sub-Inspector of schools is filled by a lady.

The District Social Education Officer is responsible for the spread of literacy among the adults and for fostering cultural and recreational activities. The District Social Education Officer works in collaboration with the Block Development Officers.

Prior to February, 1957, physical education and youth welfare activities were being looked after by the District Organizer of Physical Education, Māldā, who was attached to the office of the District Inspector of Schools. By Government Order No. 1760-Edcn. dated 15.2.57, the office of the District Officer for Physical Education and Youth Welfare was separated from that of the District Inspector of Schools. The staff of the office of the District Officer for Physical Education and Youth Welfare consists of 1 clerk-cum-typist and 2 peons. The Schemes for physical education, sports, games and recreational activities are implemented under the auspices of the District Youth Welfare Council, Māldā. This Council was first formed in 1938 in terms of Government Orders No. 6468(28) Edcn. dated 22.12.38. It was reconstituted under Government Order No. 11091 Edcn. dated 29.10.59.

The District Agricultural Officer is responsible for the development of agriculture in the district. He is assisted by the Sub-divisional Agricultural Officer in respect of Extension Work. In every Development Block there is an Agricultural Extension Officer and in non-Development Block areas there is an Agricultural Inspector in every police station. In non-Development Block areas there is an Agricultural Assistant in every Union designated as

Union Agricultural Assistant. In Development Block areas his counterpart is the Village Level Workers or *Grām Sevak*, who is a multi-purpose man. At the headquarters of each police station or Development Block is posted an Agricultural Demonstrator for assisting the Agricultural Inspector or the Agricultural Extension Officer in demonstrating to the local cultivators improved agricultural techniques. The Agricultural Store located at Māldā is in charge of an Agricultural Overseer. Fertilizers etc. meant for distribution amongst cultivators are stored in this agricultural store. Except at English Bazar, there is a thana seed farm in each police station and it is in charge of an Agricultural Demonstrator. The State Agricultural Farm at Māldā is divided into two wings. In one wing seed multiplication work is carried on in the charge of a manager and the other wing is the agricultural farm proper where experiments are carried out for the improvement of agricultural techniques. The latter wing is also in charge of a separate farm manager. The State Agricultural Farm itself is under the control and supervision of the District Agricultural Officer. The Manager in charge of the seed multiplication farm is, however, under the control and supervision of the Deputy Director of Agriculture. There is a Training Centre for Union Agricultural Assistants but the Headmaster in charge of the Centre is independent of the District Agricultural Officer.

The District Agricultural Marketing Officer mainly collects market intelligence in respect of agricultural commodities. He is also required to conduct market survey from time to time regarding acreage, production, value, prices, trade transactions, arrivals, despatches, destination of commodities exported etc. The schemes of Co-operative Societies for co-operative marketing are also implemented through him. The District Agricultural Marketing Officer is assisted by the Sub-divisional Agricultural Marketing Officer. Attempts are being made by the office of the District Agricultural Marketing Officer to grade some of the farm produce. With this end in view a section for the grading of eggs and another section for the grading of jute have been set up.

The District Live-stock Officer stationed at Māldā is in charge of the districts of Māldā and West Dinājpur. He is assisted by the Assistant Live-stock Officer, Māldā, so far as the work relating to the district of Māldā is concerned. The District Live-stock Officer is in charge of artificial insemination centres in the district and is responsible for bringing about an improvement in the quality of live-stock and poultry.

The organization of the Veterinary Department in the district consists of 1 District Veterinary Officer and a number of Veterinary Assistant Surgeons. There are 2 Itinerant Veterinary Assistant Surgeons, one of whom is posted at Māldā and the other at Āiho (Old Māldā). There are in addition 7 Veterinary Assistant Surgeons, one being posted at each of the Development Blocks of (1) Habibpur, (2) Gājōl, (3) Mānikchak, (4) Harishchandrapur, (5) Kharbā, (6) Ratuā I and (7) Ratuā II. The Itinerant Veterinary Assistant Surgeons posted at Māldā and Āiho are assisted by two

Animal Husbandry
and Veterinary
Services.

Veterinary Field Assistants each while there are 11 Veterinary Field Assistants in the seven Development Blocks. The State Veterinary Hospital at Rājmahal Road, Māldā town, is in the charge of one Veterinary Inspector. There is a veterinary dispensary in each Development Block. The total expenditure incurred on the office of the District Veterinary Officer during 1959-60 amounted to Rs. 27,652.77.

Fisheries Department.

The local officer of the Department of Fisheries is the District Fishery Officer whose office is situated at Māldā. He is assisted by two Assistant Fishery Officers, one of whom is stationed at Māldā and the other at Harishchandrapur. The Assistant Fishery Officer, Māldā, is in charge of the police stations of English Bazar, Habibpur, Bāmangōlā, Gājōl, Māldā and Kālīāchak while the Assistant Fishery Officer at Harishchandrapur is in charge of the police stations of Harishchandrapur, Kharbā, Ratuā and Mānikchak. There is a Fishery Sub-Overseer under the Assistant Fishery Officer, Māldā. The expenditure incurred on the office of the District Fishery Officer, Māldā, was Rs. 22,709.32 in 1960-61.

Cottage & Small-scale Industries Department.

The District Industrial Officer, Māldā, deals with applications under the Bengal State Aid to Industries Act and renders technical assistance to industries and supervises the working of technical training institutions. He is assisted by an Investigator and a Clerk. The annual expenditure in running his office is Rs. 12,858.44.

Public Works (Roads) Department.

The district is included within the jurisdiction of the Executive Engineer, Māldā Construction Division. The Division is divided into five sub-divisions. The headquarters of two of the sub-divisions, viz. (1) Māldā Construction Sub-division I and (2) Māldā Construction Sub-division II are at Māldā.

The Department is responsible for the construction of new plan scheme roads which, after completion, are ultimately handed over to the Public Works Department for maintenance.

Public Works Department.

The jurisdiction of the Executive Engineer, Māldā Division of the Public Works Department is conterminous with the administrative district of Māldā. The Division has one sub-division with headquarters at Māldā. The Department is responsible for construction and maintenance of Government buildings, maintenance of Government roads, construction of Government roads under non-Plan schemes and construction and maintenance of Border Outpost Roads, if any.

Publicity Department.

The Department of Publicity is represented in the district by the District Publicity Officer. The District Publicity Officer is assisted by two Sub-divisional Publicity Officers, one of whom is responsible for publicity work throughout the district in addition to being in charge of the District Information Centre. The other Sub-divisional Publicity Officer works exclusively among the tribals. The main duties of the Publicity Officer are (1) publicizing the policies and programmes of the Government, (2) disseminating information on various subjects among the people with the help of printed matter and audio-visual aids and (3) to collect information on the economic and social condition of the people. The District Publicity Officer works under the direct supervision of the District Magistrate. The

Publicity Department has installed 13 radio sets under the school broadcasting scheme and 78 radio sets under the rural broadcasting scheme to provide the people with the means of listening to various radio programmes.

Co-operation Department.

There is an Assistant Registrar of Co-operative Societies at Māldā. He is assisted by a District Auditor of Co-operative Societies and a Co-operative Development Officer. There are a number of Auditors and Inspectors working under the control of the Assistant Registrar.

Administration of Agricultural Income-tax.

Agricultural Income-tax of the district is collected by the Agricultural Income-tax Officer stationed at Māldā. This is an office under the State Government.

Administration of Commercial Taxes.

Officers of the Directorate of Commercial Taxes are entrusted with the task of levying Sales-tax under different statutes (State as well as Central), at varying rates for different classes of commodities. An Officer designated as Commercial Tax Officer having jurisdiction over both the districts of Māldā and West Dinājpur is stationed at Māldā. He is under the administrative control of the Assistant Commissioner of Commercial Taxes, Jalpāiguri Circle, Jalpāiguri, who is the appellate authority also. The expenditure on the office of the Commercial Tax Officer in 1961-62 amounted to Rs. 30,864.

(b) CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Administration of Income-tax.

The Income-tax Department is represented by the Income-tax Office located at Māldā. This office collects the income-tax for both the districts of West Dinājpur and Māldā. There are three Income-tax Officers stationed at Māldā. The expenditure on this office in 1961-62 was Rs. 73,570.

National Savings Organization.

The West Bengal Regional office of the National Savings Organization is represented in the district by the District Savings Organizer. He publicizes the different savings schemes of the organization, answers to public queries about them and recruits agents and supervises their work. There were 48 Agents on the 31st of March 1962 in the district. The Agents are paid a commission on the collections made by them.

Postal Department.

The administration of the entire Post and Telegraph system of the district has been placed under the disposal of the Superintendent of Post Offices, Māldā Division, with Headquarters at Māldā. This Officer is also in charge of the Post and Telegraph offices in the district of West Dinājpur. There is a Head Post Office at Māldā which is the controlling office in respect of the Post Offices in the district in all accounts matters. There is a Sub-Post Office in each of the police stations of Māldā, Kālīāchak, Habibpur, Ratuā, Mānikchak, Harishchandrapur and Gājōl. There are two Sub-Post Offices in Kharbā police station and 3 Sub-Post Offices in English Bazar police station. The Māldā Head Post Office is under the charge of a Head Postmaster. Nine Sub-Post Offices are in charge of 9 Sub-Postmasters, the remaining 3 being in charge of Extra-Departmental Sub-Postmasters. The 158 branch offices are in charge of so many Extra-Departmental Branch Postmasters.

CHAPTER XIV
LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

(a) DISTRICT BOARD

Local self-government in the district began with the establishment in 1887 of the District Board, in pursuance of the provisions of the Bengal Local Self-Government Act of 1885. According to Lambourn, the District Board established in 1887 was a continuation of the old ferry fund committee and education committee. At the time the last District Gazetteer was written, the District Magistrate was an *ex-officio* member of the District Board and its Chairman. There were three other *ex-officio* members, the rest out of the total of 13 members, being nominated by the Local Government. The income of the District Board was derived from the road cess realizable under the Cess Act of 1880. Under that Act a cess called the Road Cess and another called the Public Works Cess, are to be assessed on the annual value of lands, on the annual net profits of mines, quarries, tramways, railways and other immovable properties. For the purpose of levying of these cesses, the Collector on the order of the Board of Revenue, has to compute the annual value of all kinds of land and on the net profits from mines, quarries etc. Once this valuation has been made, it was for the District Board to fix the rate at which the road cess was to be levied on the annual value of the lands as assessed by the Collector. The amount realized by way of road cess constituted the principal income of the District Board. Besides the income from road cess the District Board derived also some income from tolls on bridges and from ferries.

The jurisdiction of the District Board extended throughout the district except the areas constituted into Municipalities. The duties and powers of a District Board as listed in the Bengal Local Self-Government Act of 1885 were rather wide. Thus the District Board was supposed to maintain pounds, to establish and maintain public charitable dispensaries or hospitals, to construct and maintain roads and to levy tolls on roads and bridges, to provide for sanitation, to supply drinking water, to control the use of public streams, channels, water courses, tanks, springs and wells which are not private property, to prohibit the use of unwholesome water, to arrange for vaccination, to take relief measures in case of distress, to construct and maintain staging bungalows and *sarāis* etc. Before replacement by the Zilla Parishad the principal duties of the District Board consisted of the maintenance of such roads as had not already been taken over by the Government, the maintenance of the staging bungalows, enforcing of sanitary measures in fairs and *melās*, administration of pounds and ferries and the maintenance of such

of the rural dispensaries which had not been taken over by the Government. In addition, the District Board exercised supervision over the work of the Union Boards constituted under the Bengal Village Self-Government Act of 1919 to the extent provided for in that Act. The budget estimate of the District Board for the year 1959-60, reproduced below, convey a fair idea about the activities of the District Board:

BUDGET ESTIMATE

BUDGET ESTIMATE (ABSTRACT) MĀLDĀ DISTRICT BOARD FUND
FOR THE YEAR 1959-60

Heads of Receipts	Proposed by local officer	Passed by Commissioner	Heads of Expenditure	Proposed by local officer	Passed by Commissioner
<i>Abstract of Receipts</i>			<i>Abstract of Expenditure</i>		
	Rs.			Rs.	
Opening Balance	22,636		18. General Administration		46,244
VI. Provincial Rates	1,40,000		19. Law and Justice		800
XVI-A. Law and Justice	17		20. Police		3,960
XVII. Police	43,388		22. Education		26,180
XX. Medical	2,751		24. Medical		28,138
XXV. Miscellaneous	16,835		29. Superannuation allowances and pensions		9,000
XXXII. Civil Works	1,14,449		24A. Public Health		5,700
Total income excluding Opening Balance	3,17,440		30. Stationery & Printing		4,000
Debts, Deposits and Advances	25,000		32. Miscellaneous		14,890
Total Receipts excluding Opening Balance	3,42,440		45. Civil Works		1,78,003
Opening Balance	22,636		Total Expenditure chargeable to current income		3,16,915
			Debts, Deposits and Advances		25,525
			Total Charges		3,42,440
			Closing Balance		22,636
			GRAND TOTAL	3,65,076	GRAND TOTAL: 3,65,076

The last District Board was a wholly elected body, the number of members being 16. The number of members was fixed by the Government. The election took place from among the restricted electorate as contemplated in the Bengal Local Self-Government Act of 1885. In 1951 there were 1,28,617 names in the electoral roll for the election of members to the District Board.

The District Board was replaced by the Zilla Parishad in 1964 by Notification No. 7052-Panch dated 8th December 1964. The

Zilla Parishad was established under the provisions of the West Bengal Zilla Parishads Act, 1963. The Zilla Parishad is an elected body and consists of—

- (a) Presidents of Anchalik Parishads of the blocks within the district ;
- (b) four Adhyakshas, one from each of four constituencies specified by the Government, to be elected by the Adhyakshas in each constituency from among themselves ;
- (c) members of—
 - (i) the House of the People or the Legislative Assembly of the State, elected thereto from a constituency comprising the district or any part thereof, not being a Minister,
 - (ii) the Council of States or the Legislative Council of the State, not being a Minister, having a place of residence in the district ;
- (d) a Chairman of a municipality or a Mayor of a municipal corporation in the district appointed by the State Government ;
- (e) President of the District School Board—*ex-officio* ;
- (f) two women having a place of residence in the district appointed by the State Government.

The Sub-divisional Magistrate and the District Panchāyat Officer are associate members of the Zilla Parishad without voting rights.

The Zilla Parishad has got power to—

- (a) (i) undertake schemes or adopt measures including the giving of financial assistance, relating to the development of agriculture, live-stock, industries, co-operative movement, rural credit, water-supply, irrigation, public health and sanitation including establishment of dispensaries and hospitals, communications, primary, secondary or adult education including welfare of students, social welfare and other objects of general public utility,
- (ii) undertake execution of any scheme, performance of any act, or management of any institution or organization entrusted to it by the State Government or any other authority,
- (iii) manage or maintain any work of public utility or any institution vested in it or under its control and management,
- (iv) make grants in aid of any school, public library, public institution or public welfare organization within the district,
- (v) contribute such sums as may be agreed upon towards cost of maintenance of any institution, situated outside the district, which are beneficial to, and habitually used by, the inhabitants of the district,
- (vi) establish scholarships or award stipends within the State for the furtherance of technical or other special forms of education,

- (vii) acquire and maintain village *hāṭs* and markets ;
 - (b) Make grants to the Anchalik Parishads ;
 - (c) contribute, with the approval of the State Government, such sum or sums as it may decide, towards the cost of water-supply or anti-epidemic measures undertaken by the commissioners of a municipality within the district ;
 - (d) adopt measures for the relief of distress ;
 - (e) coordinate and integrate the development plans and schemes prepared by Anchalik Parishads in the district ;
- and (f) examine and sanction the budget estimates of Anchalik Parishads in the district.

The Zilla Parishad exercises general supervision over Anchalik Parishads, Anchal Panchāyats and Grām Panchāyats in the district.

The income of the Zilla Parishad consists mainly of the proceeds of Road Cesses levied in the district. This has been augmented by a grant of 5 per cent of the land revenue collection of the district. The Government also gives augmentation grant which is used to give to the District Board. The budget of the Zilla Parishad for the year 1966-67 at page 196 will give an idea of the financial position and the nature of activities of the Zilla Parishad.

(b) UNION BOARDS AND PANCHAYATS

The District is divided into 15 N.E.S. Blocks in respect of each of which an Anchalik Parishad has been established. The members of an Anchalik Parishad consist of—

- (a) Pradhāns and Presidents of the Union Boards within the block—*ex-officio* ;
- (b) one Adhyaksha from the territorial limits of each Anchal Panchāyat elected by the Adhyakshas of that area from among themselves at such time and in such manner as may be prescribed ;
- (c) members of—
 - (i) the House of the People or the Legislative Assembly of the State, elected thereto from a constituency comprising the block or any part thereof, not being a Minister, and
 - (ii) the Council of States or the Legislative Council of the State, not being a Minister, having a place of residence in the block ;
- (d) (i) two women, and
(ii) two persons belonging to a backward community, having a place of residence in the block, appointed by the State Government ;
- (e) two persons who have knowledge of, or experience in, social work or rural development, having a place of residence within the block, co-opted by the members in such manner as may be prescribed.

The Block Development Officer is an associate member of the Anchalik Parishad.

BUDGET ESTIMATE

BUDGET ESTIMATE (ABSTRACT) MĀLDĀ ZILLA PARISHAD FUND FOR THE YEAR 1966-67

Heads of Receipts	Proposed by local officer	Passed by Govt.	Heads of Expenditure	Proposed by local officer	Passed by Govt.
	Abstract of Receipts			Abstract of Expenditure	
	Rs.			Rs.	
Opening Balance	1,49,095		1. Refunds & drawbacks		
I. Land Revenue	53,400		3. Land Revenue	91,670	
VI. Provincial Rates	1,50,000		8. Local Rates	500	
XII. Interest			13. Interest		
XVI-A. Law & Justice	2,000		18. General Administration		
XVII. Police	61,100		19. Law & Justice		
XIX. Education	1,000		20. Police		
XX. Medical	700		21. Rural Water Supply	28,000	
XXXXA. Public (Leprosy) Health			22. Education (Social)	71,400	
XXXXB. Receipts in aid of Super-annuation and Pensions			24. Medical	51,160	
XXXV. Miscellaneous	20,500		24A. Public Health (Leprosy)	2,000	
XXXVI. Rural Water-Supply	10,000		26. Scientific & other Minor Departments		
XXX. Irrigation & Minor Works	5,000		29. Superannuation allowances & pensions	12,500	
XXXXII. Civil Works	88,500		30. Stationery & Printing	2,000	
Total Income excluding Opening Balance	3,92,200		32. Miscellaneous	34,000	
Debits, Deposits and Advances	25,000		33. Famine Relief		
Total Receipts excluding Opening Balance	4,17,200		48. Agriculture & Irrigation	14,000	
Opening Balance	1,49,095		45. Civil Works	1,11,350	
			Total Expenditure chargeable to current income	4,18,580	
			Railway construction met from Borrowed funds		
			Debits, Deposits & Advances	27,500	
			Total charges	4,46,080	
			Closing Balance	1,40,215	
			Deposits		
			Actual Balance		
			GRAND TOTAL	5,66,295	

An Ānchalik Parishad has the power to—

- (a) (i) undertake schemes or adopt measures, including the giving of financial assistance relating to the development of agriculture, live-stock, cottage industries, co-operative movement, rural credit, water-supply, irrigation, public health and sanitation including establishment of dispensaries and hospitals, communications, primary or adult education including welfare of students, social welfare and other objects of general public utility,
- (ii) undertake execution of any scheme, performance of any act, or management of any institution or organization entrusted to it by the State Government or any other authority,
- (iii) manage or maintain any work of public utility or any institution vested in it or under its control and management, and
- (iv) make grants in aid of any school, public library, public institution or public welfare organization within the block ;
- (b) make grants to the Zilla Parishad or Anchal Panchāyats ;
- (c) contribute with the approval of the State Government such sum or sums as it may decide, towards the cost of water-supply or anti-epidemic measures undertaken by a municipality within the block ;
- (d) adopt measures for the relief of distress ;
- (e) co-ordinate and integrate the development plans and schemes prepared by Anchal Panchāyats in the blocks, if and when necessary.

The Block Development Officer is the Chief Executive Officer of the Ānchalik Parishad.

The self-governing institution below the Ānchalik Parishad is the Anchal Panchāyat. Previously the area under a police station used to be divided into a number of Union Boards, established under the Bengal Village Self-Government Act of 1919, for the purpose of self-government in the rural areas. Each Union Board used to consist of a number of villages under the Chowkidāry Act of 1870 and provision had been made in that Act for the appointment of rural police, namely Chowkidārs and Dafādārs and the payment of their salaries by means of a tax levied on the rural people. The Act of 1919 not only provided for the appointment of chowkidārs and dafādārs and the payment of their salaries out of a tax levied among the inhabitants of the Union Boards but also enabled every Union Board to improve the sanitation, conservancy and drainage of the area under its charge, to provide for proper water supply, to lay out and make new roads and bridges and to award stipends to students having place of residence in the Union and studying in any Middle or High English school or any other Secondary school and also provided for the setting up of Union Benches and Courts for the trial of petty offences and civil suits respectively arising within the territorial jurisdiction of a Union Board. The offences triable

by a Union Bench were those under Sections 24, 26 and 27 of the Cattle Trespass Act, 1871, those under enactments (other than the Indian Penal Code and the Bengal Village Self-Government Act) or any rules or by-laws made thereunder which were punishable with fine only up to a limit of twenty-five rupees, those under Section 34 of the Police Act, 1961, those under the Bengal Ferries Act, 1885 (except those under Sections 28 and 30) and those under Sections 160, 178, 179, 269, 277, 289, 290, 294, 323, 334, 341, 352, 358, 426, 447, 448, 504 and 510 and when the value of the property in the opinion of the Union Bench was not over twenty rupees, under Sections 379 and 411 of the Indian Penal Code. The Union Bench could take cognizance of these cases and could also try offences under the following Sections of the Indian Penal Code, viz. Sections 283, 428, 430, 506 and 509, and when the value of the property was not over twenty rupees, Section 403, if transferred to the Bench by the Magistrate. The Union Court similarly had jurisdiction to try the following classes of suits: (a) suits for money due on contract; (b) suits for the recovery of movable property or the value of such property; (c) suits for compensation for wrongfully taking or injuring movable property; and (d) suits for damages by cattle trespass when the value of the suits did not exceed two hundred rupees. The members of a Union Board were elected by a restricted electorate. Two or more members of a Union Board could be selected by the Government for appointment as the members of a Union Bench. In the same way, two or more members of a Union Board might constitute a Union Court.

The Union Boards have been replaced by Anchal Panchāyats established under the West Bengal Act I of 1957 (West Bengal Panchāyat Act). According to this Act, the Bengal Village Self-Government Act of 1919 shall be repealed in an area where a Grām Sabhā is constituted from the date of election of the first Pradhān of the Anchal Panchāyat in which the Grām Sabhā is situated. Every Grām Sabhā is to consist of all persons whose names are included in the electoral roll of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly for the time being in force pertaining to the area for which the Grām Sabhā has been constituted. Usually a Grām Sabhā is constituted with one or more villages. The members of a Grām Sabhā elect from among themselves such number of members, not being less than 9 or more than 15, as may be determined by the prescribed authority. These members so elected constitute the Grām Panchāyat. A number of contiguous Grām Sabhās are grouped together by the Government for constituting an Anchal Panchāyat. The Anchal Panchāyats are responsible for (a) the control and administration of the Anchal Panchāyat Fund established under this Act; (b) the imposition, assessment and collection of the taxes, rates, tolls or fees leviable under the Act; (c) the maintenance and control of dafādārs and chowkidārs within its jurisdiction and securing the due performance by the dafādārs and chowkidārs of the duties imposed on them under the Act; and (d) the proper constitution and administration of the Nyāya

Panchāyat. The Grām Sabhās, on the other hand, are to discharge the duties relating to sanitation, conservancy, drainage etc. as were supposed to be discharged by the Union Boards in the Bengal Village Self-Government Act of 1919, with certain additions. Every Anchal Panchāyat has a Secretary, who is an employee of the Anchal Panchāyat but the expenditure on whose salary is borne by the Government. Every Anchal Panchāyat, on being authorized by the Government by Notification to do so, is required to constitute a Nyāya Panchāyat consisting of 5 members to be called Vichāraks elected by it from amongst the members of the Grām Sabhās within its jurisdiction. These Nyāya Panchāyats have power to dispose of both civil suits and criminal cases. The jurisdiction of a Nyāya Panchāyat in regard to the trial of civil suits extends to the following classes of suits when the value of the suit does not exceed Rs. 100: (a) suits of money due on contracts; (b) suits for the recovery of movable property or the value of such property; (c) suits for compensation for wrongfully taking or injuring movable property; and (d) suits for damages by cattle trespass. The jurisdiction of the Nyāya Panchāyat to try the suits is exclusive and not concurrent with any other court. The jurisdiction of a Nyāya Panchāyat in criminal cases extends to the following classes of offences: (1) offences under Sections 26 and 27 of the Cattle-Trespass Act, 1871; (2) offences under enactments (other than the Indian Penal Code and the West Bengal Panchāyat Act of 1957) or any rules or by-laws made thereunder which are punishable with fine only up to a limit of twenty-five rupees; (3) offences under Section 34 of the Police Act, 1961; (4) offences under the Bengal Ferries Act, 1885, except those under Sections 28 and 30; and (5) offences under the following Sections of the Indian Penal Code, namely: Sections 160, 269, 277, 289, 290, 294, 323, 334, 341, 352, 358, 426, 447, 448, 504 and 510 and when the value of the property in the opinion of the Nyāya Panchāyat is not over twenty rupees, Sections 379 and 411. A Nyāya Panchāyat is also empowered to try offences under the following Sections of the Indian Penal Code, namely: Sections 283, 428, 430, 431, 506 and 509; and when the value of the property is not over twenty rupees, Section 403, if transferred to it by a Magistrate of competent jurisdiction. In regard to criminal cases also the jurisdiction of a Nyāya Panchāyat is exclusive and not concurrent.

Panchāyats have not hesitated to increase the rate of taxation as compared with that which prevailed in Union Boards, as a result of which they have been able to take more effective steps for the provision of drinking water and for the construction of culverts on village roads. The members of Union Boards used to be elected on a restricted franchise while the Grām Panchāyats are now elected on adult franchise. The difference in the mode of election has changed radically the leadership in the rural areas.

There are at present 827 Grām Panchāyats and 136 Anchal Panchāyats in the district. Nine Nyāya Panchāyats have been established in the district.

(c) MUNICIPALITIES

There are two municipalities in the district, one of which is the Old Māldā Municipality and the other is the English Bazar or Māldā Municipality. Both of them were constituted on the 1st April, 1869. The affairs of these two municipalities are conducted at present in accordance with the provisions of the Bengal Municipal Act of 1932. Self-Government in the town of English Bazar was rather in a languishing state as is apparent from the fact that the elected Commissioners of the Municipality had to be superseded three times by the Government for mismanaging the affairs of the municipality, since the attainment of Independence. The Commissioners were superseded the last time in May, 1960, and the affairs of the municipality are being looked after by an Administrator appointed by the Government. The municipal affairs are expected to be better looked after by the elected Commissioners in future as the elections will take place on the basis of adult franchise in place of the existing restricted franchise. Prior to supersession, there were the following Standing Committees to look after the various aspects of municipal administration :

- (1) The Finance Standing Committee ;
- (2) The Public Health and Sanitation Standing Committee ;
- (3) The Public Works Standing Committee ; and
- (4) The Lighting Standing Committee.

In addition, there was an Education Committee constituted under Section 456 of the Bengal Municipal Act of 1932 to sponsor and direct the policy relating to Primary education. All the Municipal Commissioners including the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman used to work in honorary capacities. The permanent staff of the municipality consists of (1) the Superintendent of Water Works, (2) the Sanitary Inspector, (3) the Overseer, (4) the Tax-Collector, (5) the Head Clerk-cum-Accountant and (6) the Licence-Inspector. The Head Clerk is the head of the ministerial staff and he is assisted in the discharge of his duties by a number of assistants. The Municipality maintains 23.911 miles (38.5 km.) of metalled and 9.028 miles (14.5 km.) of unmetalled roads within the municipal limits. The main arterial roads are tarmacadamised, the width of the crest being 12 feet (3.66 metres). For providing street lighting the municipality maintains 425 electric lights along some of the roads. So far as sanitation and conservancy services are concerned, the conservancy services are looked after by the Sanitary Inspector and his assistants. Conservancy Mazdoors collect night-soil from private privies and dump them into the trenching ground away from the town. They also clear the drains and keep the roads free of refuse. Conservancy services are completely mechanized, there being five motor vehicles which carry trailers containing night-soil and refuse etc. to the trenching ground. There is no underground sewerage ; there are only surface drains along the sides of roads but these open drains do not perform their functions satisfactorily possibly because of some defect in levelling. There are no public baths, urinals or privies.

The Municipality supplies drinking water through pipes and there is a scheme for the improvement of the water supply. Vaccination and inoculation are carried out by the municipal staff. There are three Primary schools maintained by the municipality. The income of the municipality is derived from rates on holdings, from the conservancy, water-supply and lighting rates as also from taxes on profession and trades and on animals and vehicles and from fees for the registration of carts. The holding rate is 7½ per cent of the annual value of the holding, the conservancy rate is 10 per cent of the annual value, the water rate is 4 per cent and the lighting rate 2 per cent of the annual value. The income of the municipality is not sufficient to meet its commitments and the Government gives financial assistance for the payment of dearness allowance and wages at minimum rates to the Municipal staff. This grant amounts to Rs. 75,000 per year. The budget for 1959-60, reproduced below, will give an idea of the financial condition of the Municipality :

<i>Receipts</i>		<i>Expenditure</i>	
	Rs.		Rs.
Opening Balance	53,222	(a) General Administration & collection charges	48,656
(a) Rates and Taxes	2,42,272	(b) Public safety	17,562
(b) Realization under special Acts	1,894	(c) Public Health & convenience	3,48,486
(c) Revenue derived from Municipal properties and powers apart from taxation	38,610	(d) Public Instructions	21,061
(d) Grants & contributions for general & special purposes	94,356	(e) Contribution for general purpose	19,127
(e) Miscellaneous	8,670	(f) Miscellaneous debts	1,01,629
(f) Extra-ordinary and debts	1,89,405	(g) Extra-ordinary and Closing Balance	71,908
	Rs. 6,28,429		Rs. 6,28,429

The population of English Bazar was 45,900 in 1961.

The Old Māldā Municipality was constituted on the 1st April 1869, with 12 members. At present the number of Commissioners is 9—all of whom are elected. The municipality is divided into three wards, and three Commissioners are elected from each ward. There are 6 miles (9.7 km.) of metalled and 10 miles (16.1 km.) of unmetalled roads within the municipal limits. There are two systems of street lighting, viz. (1) by means of kerosene lamps and (2) by means of electric lamps. At present street lighting is provided by 34 kerosene and 57 electric lamps. The municipality maintains several bathing ghāts on the Mahānandā which flows by the side of the town. There is, however, no conservancy service. A part-time vaccinator carries out vaccination and inoculation work. The municipality maintains 6 masonry-wells and 2 tube-wells for supplying drinking water to the residents of the town. There is one out-door dispensary maintained by the municipality. The municipality also runs three Primary schools. The income

of this municipality is derived from the holding rate and the lighting rate. Besides these, there are taxes on trades and professions, fees on cart registration and licence fees for offensive and dangerous trade and occupation and processes. The population of Old Māldā was 4,885 in 1961.

CHAPTER XV

EDUCATION AND CULTURE

(a) HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Ancient times.

It may be recalled that the city of Gauḍa was the capital of Bengal for many hundreds of years and must therefore have figured as an important centre of learning. Details of educational institutions of those early times are, however, not available, and it would be prudent to begin a historical account of education and culture in the district from 1810 A.D. when the district was painstakingly surveyed by Dr. Buchanan Hamilton.

According to Dr. Buchanan Hamilton, primary education used to be imparted to children in village *pāṭhsālās* maintained by teachers who were known as *gurus*. These *gurus* were not in receipt of any salary from the Government. In the towns of Dinājpur and Māldā the average number of scholars to each *guru* was about 20. The fees paid by the students varied from 4 annas to 8 annas a month but in the rural areas the rate of fee was considerably lower. Children used to be initiated to read and write at the age of five. They began with tracing letters on the floor with a pencil of steatite, and in five or six months they could read and write. They were then taught the rudiments of arithmetic and to keep accounts. Accounts and arithmetic were divided into two kinds, one for agricultural and the other for commercial affairs. The instruction used to be imparted entirely in the vernacular. Hindu children desirous of higher study had to attend *chatuspāṭhis* which were locally known as *choubaris*. These *chatuspāṭhis* used to be maintained by *adhyāpakas* who were drawn generally from the Brahman caste. Most of the *adhyāpakas* used to enjoy rent-free lands out of the income of which they were supposed to maintain themselves and to give instruction free of charge to pupils. The instruction in *chatuspāṭhis* used to be given entirely in Sanskrit. The students were taught grammar, poetry and law.

So far as Muslims were concerned, their children used to attend *pāṭhsālās* along with Hindu children. The number of *maktabs* or schools where Persian literature was taught, was very small. These *maktabs* were nearly as much frequented by Hindus as by Muslims, for the Persian language was considered to be a necessary accomplishment for every gentleman, and it was absolutely necessary to those who wished to acquire fortune in the courts of law. There was no school in which Arabic was taught.

Modern times.

It would thus be seen that although the district came under the administration of the East India Company as early as 1765 A.D., even by 1810 A.D. English education had not started. The first English school was started by the Government in 1860-61 and

English education may be taken to have been introduced in the district in that year. Prior to this, in 1856-57 Government had started two vernacular schools. In 1870-71, in the undivided district of Māldā, there were one English school and three vernacular schools maintained by the Government. Besides these schools, there were three English schools which used to receive aid and eleven vernacular schools which also used to receive aid. Primary education received an impetus under Sir George Campbell's scheme which was initiated in 1872. Under this scheme, every *guru* who maintained a *pāṭhsālā* was to receive financial assistance not exceeding Rs. 5 per month on the conditions that (1) instruction would be imparted entirely in the vernacular and that (2) the working of the *pāṭhsālā* would be open to inspection. Sir George Campbell's scheme no doubt demonstrated the very great importance which the Government attached to the spread of literacy in the rural areas, but it could not but be of limited benefit to the country because it left the subject of appointment of Primary school teachers and the establishment of schools untouched. The scheme aimed at merely encouraging the village school-masters and to induce others, for the sake of the aid of five rupees per month, to open *pāṭhsālās*. It must, of course, be noted here that institutions for training teachers of *pāṭhsālās* were set up under the scheme of Sir George Campbell.

In 1887, the District Board created under the Bengal Local Self-Government Act took over the local direction of Primary education superseding the old District Committee of Public Instruction.

In 1900, the number of Primary schools was 450 with 12,197 pupils and by 1910 the figures rose to 508 and 19,257 respectively.

The administrative arrangements for the imparting of primary education in rural areas that exist at the present day were brought into being with the enactment of the Bengal (Rural) Primary Education Act in 1930. Under this Act, there was to be a Central Primary Education Committee for the purpose of advising the State Government on all matters connected with primary education. There was to be a District School Board for each district which was to be charged with the task of maintaining all Primary schools under public management in the district except Primary schools maintained by the Union Boards under the control of the School Board. Details of the duties of the Board were specified in Section 23 of that Act from which it would appear that one of the duties of the District School Board was to appoint and fix and pay the salaries of teachers in Primary schools, subject to the conditions prescribed in the Act. For defraying the cost of primary education, all immovable property on which the road and public works cesses are assessed under the provisions of the Cess Act, 1880, were made liable to the payment of a Primary education cess. Incomes from trade, businesses and professions were also made liable to a Primary education tax. In Chapter V of that Act it was laid down that in addition to the sums which might be appropriated from the State revenues for purposes of Primary education, the State Government should every year provide a sum of twenty-three lakhs and

fifty thousand rupees for expenditure in Primary education in rural areas. The District School Board of Māldā was established on June 1, 1945.

So far as higher education is concerned, there is now 1 High school at Māldā wholly maintained by the Government. There are a number of privately managed schools some of which receive financial aid from the Government. The total number of High schools in the district is 35, out of which 20 are High schools and 15 Higher Secondary schools.

The only College in the district was established in 1944-45. It is privately managed but has been adopted under the Sponsored scheme for colleges.

(b) LITERACY AND EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

In 1951, the literates formed only 9.6 per cent of the population of the district. In 1961, the percentage of literates increased to 13.8, thus showing an increase of 4.2 per cent only during the decade 1951-1961. Literacy among males increased from 15.6 per cent in 1951 to 21.5 per cent in 1961. In 1951 only 4.3 per cent of the female population were literates while in 1961 the literates among females formed 5.8 per cent. In making this review, educated persons have also been classified as literates.

The rates of literacy in the district for the entire population as also for the males are the lowest among all the districts in West Bengal. So far as female literacy is concerned, the position of Māldā is better than that of West Dinājpur and Puruliā. The level of literacy in the district cannot therefore be called satisfactory.

There were 1,33,533 male and 35,010 female literates and educated persons in the district in 1961. Among the males, 69,564 persons were merely literates, i.e. without any educational standards, 56,541 had passed the Primary or junior basic examinations and only 7,428 had passed the Matriculation or higher examinations. Among females, 19,990 were literates without any educational standard, 14,329 had passed Primary or junior basic examinations and only 691 had passed the Matriculation or higher examinations. Further details about literate and educated persons are given in the appendix to this Chapter. The maximum number of persons who had passed the Matriculation or higher examinations were to be found in the police station of English Bazar, both among males as also females. In fact, out of 7,428 males who were found to have passed the Matriculation or higher examinations as many as 3,262 were enumerated within the police station of English Bazar. Similarly, out of the 691 females found to have passed the Matriculation or higher examinations as many as 543 were enumerated within that police station.

In the rural areas of the district there were 80,448 Scheduled Caste males as disclosed by the 1961 Census. 9,180 of them were merely literates without any educational standard, 4,951 had passed Primary or junior basic examinations and 285 had passed the Matriculation or higher examinations. Of the 78,948 Scheduled

Caste females, 1,367 were merely literates without any educational standard, 548 had passed Primary or junior basic examinations and 15 had passed the Matriculation or higher examinations. In the two towns of English Bazar and Old Māldā, Scheduled Caste males numbered 2,166 in 1961. 419 of them were merely literates without any educational standard, 141 had passed Primary or junior basic examinations, 18 had passed the Matriculation or Higher Secondary examinations and 4 had obtained a non-technical diploma not equal to a degree. So far as the Scheduled Tribes are concerned, 2,686 out of the 50,465 males enumerated in the rural areas were merely literates without any educational standard, 1,039 had passed Primary or junior basic examinations and 70 had passed the Matriculation or higher examinations. Among females, the position was somewhat worse, only 232 out of 48,954 having been found to be merely literates, 112 as having passed Primary or junior basic examinations and only 3 as having passed the Matriculation or higher examinations. In the two towns of Māldā and English Bazar there were only 76 males and 27 females belonging to the Scheduled Tribes. 4 among the males were merely literates, 3 had passed Primary or junior basic examinations, 2 had passed the Matriculation or Higher Secondary examinations and 1 had obtained a non-technical diploma not equal to a degree. 5 of the females were merely literates.*

(c) GENERAL EDUCATION

On the 31st March 1961, there were 892 Primary schools, 47 Junior Basic schools, 3 Senior Basic schools and 4 Senior Basic schools for girls in existence. The Junior Basic schools correspond approximately to the Primary schools and the Senior Basic schools to the Junior High schools, the main point of difference being in regard to the method of teaching. In the Basic schools knowledge is imparted not merely through books but through hand work. Besides these Primary and Basic schools there are also 50 Junior High schools for boys and 6 Junior High schools for girls, 20 High schools for boys, 13 Higher Secondary schools for boy and 2 Higher Secondary schools for girls. Co-education has been introduced in all Secondary schools for boys in the rural areas in order to provide educational facilities for girls. Details of location of the High schools would be found in the list of High schools given in the appendix to this Chapter. 10 of the High schools were established after Independence.

Brief histories of some of the more important High schools are given below:

The Māldā Zilla School was established in 1858. It was originally housed in the present bungalow of the Superintendent of Police, Māldā and was shifted to its present premises in 1897. It was raised to the status of a Higher Secondary school with courses in Science, Humanities and Commerce in the year 1957.

* For further details on the Welfare of Backward Classes and Tribes, Chapter XVII may be seen.—*Editor.*

The Barlow Girls' High school is named after Mr. Barlow, the then Commissioner of the Bhagalpur Division. It was first started in 1870 as a Primary school for girls. In 1929 it was raised to the status of a Middle English school. The school was recognized as a High school by the Calcutta University in the year 1938. It was upgraded to a Higher Secondary School with courses in Science and Humanities in 1957. The school owes much of its present development to the untiring zeal of the late Pari Lāl Niyogi and the late Rāi Bāhādur Panchānan Mazumdār.

The Chānchal Siddheswari Institution was established in August, 1888 as a High English school by Rājā Sarat Chandra Roy Choudhury Bāhādur of Chānchal in memory of his mother, Rāni Siddheswari Devi Choudhurāni. The entire capital and recurring costs for the school used to be borne by the Rāj Estate of Chānchal and grants are still regularly received from the Estate funds. The school was recognized by the Calcutta University in the year 1899. It was granted permission to teach Science in 1947. It was upgraded into a Higher Secondary school with Humanities, Science and Technical courses from 1959.

In 1950-51, there were 548 Primary including Junior Basic schools in the district. During the ten years 1951-61, the number of Primary including Junior Basic schools has gone up by 391. There were no Senior Basic schools in 1950-51. Of the M.E. schools, which may be compared with the Junior High schools of the present day, there were 42 in 1950-51. The number of such schools has increased by 14. As against 24 High schools in 1950-51 there were 35 High and Higher Secondary schools in 1961. In 1960-61, there were 11,092 students in the Higher Secondary and High schools, 4,229 students in the Junior High schools, 82 in the Senior Basic schools, 3,922 in the Junior Basic schools and 75,685 students in the Primary schools.

There is one college at Māldā, namely the Māldā College. Founded in 1944, the College used to teach only up to the Intermediate Standard. It was affiliated for the Degree Course in 1948. The Governing Body of the college was approved in October, 1951. The College received liberal grant from the Māldā Mango Improvement Committee amounting to Rs. 1 lakh and received a similar amount from the Government. It is a co-educational institution. Sri Panchānan Mazumdār and Sri Jyotirmohan Misra, both of whom died some years ago, were of great help in raising funds for the College in 1948.

(d) TECHNICAL EDUCATION

A polytechnic was sanctioned during the Second Five Year Plan for the district. According to the approved scheme, 120 students are to be admitted annually. The courses to be taught are Licentiate Diploma course in Civil Engineering, Licentiate Diploma course in Mechanical Engineering and Licentiate Diploma course in Electrical Engineering. 60 students will be educated in the L.C.E. course, 30 in the L.M.E. course and 30 in the L.E.E. course

Primary & Basic
and Secondary
schools.

Important schools.

College.

per year. The buildings for the institution have been completed.

Among professional schools, mention may be made of the Māldā Government Primary Training School in which training is given to teachers of Primary schools, Fulabati Modi Mahilā Silpa Vidyāpiṭh for girls and Bāchāmāri Silpa Vidyālaya, Māldā, for girls. There are 1 Senior *Madrasah* and 8 Junior *Madrasahs* in the district. The Senior *Madrasah* is located at Māldā or English Bazar. There is one Junior *Madrasah* at Sujāpur, another at Naikanda, another at Thahaghāṭi, another at Bhagabānpur, another at Fatākhani, another at Nayātuli, another at Dariāpur. The Bāṭnā Āliā *Madrasah* completes the list of Junior *Madrasahs*. There are also 10 *chatuspāṭhis* or *tōls*. These are (1) Biswanāth Chatuspāṭhi, Māldā, (2) Abhayā Chatuspāṭhi, Māldā, (3) Jyotirmoyee Chatuspāṭhi, Māldā, (4) Bināpāni Chatuspāṭhi, Māldā, (5) Kishorimohan Chatuspāṭhi, Māldā, (6) Chānchal Sibapada Chatuspāṭhi, Māldā, (7) Mothābari Chatuspāṭhi, Māldā, (8) Baṅshi Kumudini Chatuspāṭhi, (9) Ārāidāngā Nabin Chatuspāṭhi and (10) Naghariā Chatuspāṭhi. Besides these institutions which are under the control of the Education Department, there are a number of technical institutions under the control of the Directorate of Industries. The Māldā Silpa Vidyāpiṭh can accommodate 50 students; the course is for two years, and the subjects taught are tailoring and handloom weaving. The second institution is the Block Printing Centre, Māldā, where 12 students are trained per year. The subject taught is block printing on cloth. The duration of the course is six months. In the District Weaving School, Māldā, 13 students are trained per year. The subject taught is weaving and the training lasts for one year. Both boys and girls can avail themselves of the facilities extended by the District Weaving Schools. There is also a Peripatetic Weaving School with headquarters at Māldā. This institution also turns out 13 students per year. There is also a Training-cum-Production Centre for jute spinning and weaving for the welfare of the Scheduled Castes at Mājhrā in Gājōl police station. 20 students can be trained in a year in this institution. The subject taught is jute spinning and weaving.

(e) NATIONAL EDUCATION

An attempt was made in the beginning of this century under the auspices of the Jātiya Sikshā Samiti to introduce a system of education that would instil in the minds of those receiving the benefit of such education, a sincere love for the motherland and at the same time fully develop their mental, moral and physical qualities. A number of night schools and libraries were set up in this connection, but unfortunately none of these survived. Social education among adults has been started since the attainment of independence. The aims of the present social education policy are (1) to make illiterates literate; (2) to provide the neo-literates with opportunities for further education; and (3) to encourage and develop cultural and recreational activities. In 1949-50 there were 20 adult education centres in the district. By 1954-55 the number increased to 30. In 1960-61 the total expenditure on these 30

Adult Literacy and
Social Education.

adult education centres amounted to Rs. 11,808. An amount of Rs. 1,800 is also annually spent by the Government by way of grants for encouraging voluntary organizations to run night schools. There are also literacy centres sponsored by the Government on an annual expenditure of Rs. 1,920.

For implementing the second objective, i.e. for ensuring that neo-literates do not relapse into illiteracy, a number of social education centres and library centres have been started. In these social education and library centres post-literacy classes are held regularly. Small libraries containing suitable books for the neo-literates are also attached to these centres. The Government spends Rs. 13,200 per year for running 22 such centres in the district. Besides these organizations, there are two school-cum-community centres, one run by the Rāmākriṣṇa Mission and the other by the Vaṅga-Bāni (Nabadwip).

(f) CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

So far as cultural and recreational activities are concerned, financial assistance is given to institutions which stage local folk entertainment like *gambhirā* and *ālkāf*. The *gambhirā* is a form of folk entertainment peculiar to the district of Māldā. Songs are composed every year dealing with local subjects including the acts of the local administration and are sung to the accompaniment of dancing and instrumental music towards the end of the Bengali month of *Chaitra* in each year in connection with the *Gājan* festival.

Under the rural and school broadcasting scheme, the Publicity Department has arranged to instal 13 radio sets under the school broadcasting scheme and 78 sets under the rural broadcasting scheme. These radio sets, the cost of which is subsidized by the Government, provide a very useful means of communication with the world to the people of the district. By listening to the radio broadcasts they not only derive some agreeable recreation but at the same time are enabled to broaden their minds by listening to news broadcasts and lectures on various subjects transmitted by the different radio stations. The Folk Entertainment Centre of the department also sometimes stage dramatic performances etc. The films exhibited by the Department at various places in the district also act as sources of recreation and knowledge for a good number of the rural population. So far as cultural societies are concerned, special mention may be made of the Gambhirā Parishad, the Rabindra Parishad and the Rabindra Samsad.

(g) LIBRARIES AND MUSEUMS

In 1937, the library attached to the Māldā Club was separated and established in a separate building, due to the initiative of Shri B. R. Sen, the then District Magistrate. In 1957, this library was taken over by the Government, additional buildings were constructed and a full-fledged District Library was started. There are at present more than eleven thousand books in the library which

also subscribes to some 25 periodicals and journals. The annual membership fee is Rs. 3 and there are 470 members. There is a ladies' section in the library, the affairs of which are looked after by a lady library attendant. There is also a children's corner where children are given facilities for reading books according to their own choice from open shelf almirahs. Arrangements are being also made to open a special section known as text-book corner for the students. The library receives an annual maintenance grant of Rs. 15,000 from the Government. There are 37 smaller libraries which are affiliated with the District Library and receive books from it. Books are distributed through a motor van. A number of libraries have been opened in the rural areas with Government assistance. It is through these rural libraries that the member-libraries obtain their books from the District Library. Besides these libraries, there are a few public libraries among which mention may be made of Piplā Palli Maṅgal Samiti Library and the Rāmkrishna Mission Library.

There is a museum at Māldā which was established in 1937 as an adjunct to the Public Library. In 1958 it was shifted to its present building. The museum contains many stone images and coins discovered within the district. The copper grant of Gopāla-deva II found in the village Jajilpārā in Gājōl police station is one of the valued possessions of the museum. There is a library attached to the museum in which a number of manuscripts of old Sanskrit, Bengali, Arabic and Persian books are stored. The museum is maintained by annual donations of (1) Rs. 600 from the State Government, (2) Rs. 240 from the District Board, and (3) Rs. 60 from the English Bazar Municipality.

APPENDIX

(a) DETAILS ABOUT LITERATES AND EDUCATED PERSONS IN THE DISTRICT OF MĀLDĀ

Age Group	Literate (without educational standard)		Educational Standards			
			Primary or Junior Basic		Matriculation and above	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
All Ages	69,564	19,990	56,541	14,329	7,428	691
0-4	—	—	—	—	—	—
5-9	9,399	4,330	1,357	890	—	—
10-14	11,042	4,642	11,281	4,531	32	8
15-19	5,920	2,499	9,325	3,008	567	192
20-24	6,543	2,313	7,984	2,056	1,490	239
25-29	7,628	1,954	6,854	1,353	1,436	103
30-34	6,204	1,304	4,900	923	1,065	71
35-44	9,924	1,521	6,731	973	1,323	61
45-59	8,618	1,012	5,536	450	1,081	11
60 & above	4,251	411	2,547	139	430	6
Age not stated	35	4	26	6	4	—

(b) LIST OF HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE DISTRICT OF MĀLDĀ SHOWING THE YEARS OF ESTABLISHMENT

Sl. No.	Name of School	Year of Establishment
1.	Māldā Zilla School	1858
2.	Old Māldā K.C. High School	1859
3.	Arāidāngā D.B. Model Academy	1867
4.	Barlow Girls' High School	1870
5.	Mathurāpur B.S.S. High School	1885
6.	Chānchal S. Institution	1885
7.	Āiho High School	1900
8.	Akrurmoni Coronation Institution	1912
9.	Naghariā High School	1914
10.	Bāngitōlā High School	1915
11.	Parānpur High School	1916
12.	Golāpganj High School	1924
13.	Kharbā H.N.A. High School	1928
14.	Harishchandrapur High School	1935
15.	Panchānandapur Sukiā High School	1937
16.	Kāliāchak High School	1938
17.	Bāmāngōlā High School	1938
18.	Ratuā High School	1939
19.	Milki High School	1941
20.	Gājōl Hāzi Nākoo High School	1942
21.	Enāyetpur Ensān Ali High School	1944
22.	Vivekānanda Vidyāmandir	1944
23.	Kāligrām High School	1945
24.	Naimouzā High School	1945
25.	Jote-Ārāpur P.N. High School	1946
26.	Māldā Town High School	1948
27.	Kālindri High School	1949
28.	Bhalukā R.M.M.M. Vidyāpiṭh	1949
29.	Masaldaha Ganapatrāi High School	1949
30.	Mahārājnagar Kefātullā High School	1949
31.	Mothābāri High School	1949
32.	Kaṭāhadiārā High School	1950
33.	Umeshchandra Bāstuhārā High School	1951
34.	C.C. Girls' High School	1951
35.	Rāigrām High School	1953

CHAPTER XVI

MEDICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

(a) SURVEY OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND MEDICAL FACILITIES IN EARLY TIMES

It is not possible to give an accurate account of public health and medical facilities in early times in the absence of detailed information on this subject in books of general history or on medicine. But it is reasonable to assume that both the *Ayurvedic* and *Unāni* systems of medicine used to be practised more extensively than now in the early times. Dr. Buchanan Hamilton in his survey of the district of Dinājpur, in 1810, of which Māldā formed a part, mentioned cholera, small-pox and malaria and other fevers as the major diseases to which the population of the district was subject. He also mentioned prevalence of goitre and elephantiasis. He left a very interesting account of the method by which people were inoculated against small-pox at that time. According to him, "The inoculators are of both religions, and of all castes. One of them, a Hindu, gave the following account of his plan. Every year, so soon as the natural disease appears, which it usually does between the 10th of February and 12th of March, he begins to inoculate, and the season for inoculation continues until the 12th of May. Some years the spontaneous disease does not appear, and then he cannot operate, having no means of procuring matter. The inoculator in the course of his practice, remembers this having happened four times. When he has found a person under the natural disease, he opens the pustules with a rude iron bodkin, and collects the matter on some cotton wool. It will keep three days and no longer. He uses it by moistening the cotton in water, and rubbing it on the skin, and then in that part he makes 8 or 10 punctures with a needle. Afterwards he rubs the impregnated cotton upon the punctures. Children are not inoculated under three years of age, but generally before ten. . . . Very few indeed of those who are inoculated die, even in the worst seasons; for although the disease appears naturally almost every year, there are certain seasons once in ten or twelve, when it attacks more generally than others, and it then proves uncommonly fatal. In such seasons there dies perhaps one in a hundred of those who are inoculated."

Among minor diseases Dr. Buchanan Hamilton mentioned measles.

Hunter in his Statistical Account of Māldā stated that there were no diseases in Māldā of a strictly endemic type. According to him, outbreaks of malarial fever, cholera and small-pox recurred with regularity at certain seasons of the year but none of these continued with such persistence as to be properly classed as endemics.

Epidemic small-pox was comparatively rare. Malarial fever was always accompanied by cessation of rains and caused many deaths. There were two separate seasons for cholera, once during October, November and December and again during March, April and May. According to Hunter, cholera would sometimes suddenly appear and carry off a few persons and then disappear with equal suddenness. At other times it would drag on for months until the rains set in. Cholera was a very rare occurrence during the actual rainy season. Among native medical practitioners Hunter mentioned the *Kavirājas*, i.e. those who followed the *āyurvedic* system of medicine.

At the time Hunter compiled his Statistical Account of the district, there was only one dispensary situated at the civil station of English Bazar or Māldā. It had been established in 1861 and the entire hospital was rebuilt in 1872. The Government paid the salary of a resident Indian doctor and furnished without charge the supply of surgical instruments and Western medicines. The current expenses were more than satisfied by private subscription. In 1872, 77 indoor patients in all were treated of whom 50 were cured, 16 did not improve, 9 died and 2 remained in the hospital at the end of the year. The outdoor patients numbered 3,760 and the average daily attendance was 33.66 persons. The total number of operations was 108 of which 11 were classed as important and 97 as minor.

Lambourn in his Gazetteer of the district of Māldā, published in 1918, mentioned that there were 10 dispensaries in the district (undivided). All of these dispensaries with the exception of that at Chānchal, received subsidies from the District Board. In addition, the dispensaries at English Bazar, Old Māldā and Nawābganj also received subsidies from Municipalities concerned. The dispensary at Chānchal was a private one and was maintained by the Raja of Chānchal. This dispensary was in charge of a Medical Officer, and medical assistance was afforded to outlying parts of the Raja's estate by itinerant hospital assistants. It was at that time one of the best equipped dispensaries of the district. There were also rural dispensaries under the charge of sub-assistant surgeons at Harishchandrapur, Mathurāpur, Kansāṭ, Gomostāpur, Gājōl and Bāmangōlā. The total number of patients treated in 1910 at the public dispensaries was 54,880. The only dispensary in which indoor patients were treated was that at English Bazar. The accommodation was for 22 male and 6 female patients, the average daily number of patients being 12. There was a modern operating room, the gift of Mr. Hennessy of Mathurāpur. The number of indoor patients annually averaged 300. The total number of medical practitioners was 424, of whom 11 had diplomas including the lady doctor at the English Bazar dispensary. Quinine manufactured by Government used to be sold through the post offices.

(b) VITAL STATISTICS

Lambourn in his District Gazetteer of Māldā recorded that for the ten years from 1892 to 1901, the average annual rates per

Ayurvedic and
Unani systems of
medicine used in
early times.

mille for the whole district (undivided) were 38.3 for births and 33.7 for deaths. In the special report for vital statistics, for the period from January to December, 1962, published by the Directorate of Health Services, Government of West Bengal, the birth-rate in the rural area of the district has been estimated at 39.2 per *mille* and the death-rate at 10.0 per *mille*. These estimates were made on the basis of a special study conducted in a number of villages in the district, but these villages were not chosen as random samples. The method of estimating births and death-rates depended on the taking of two censuses during the year 1962, one in the first week of January and the second in the first week of July. The findings probably cannot be said to reflect the death-rate and the mortality-rate for the district as a whole with mathematical precision but for practical purposes these rates may be adopted in preference to the rates calculated on the basis of returns submitted by the chowkidārs. It would be seen that the birth-rate has remained almost the same as it was during the decade 1892-1901 but there has been a very remarkable fall in the death-rate. Fall in the death-rate has been due principally to the measures undertaken by the Government, since attainment of Independence, for eradicating malaria. Previously the largest number of deaths that occurred in the district was due to malaria.

(c) DISEASE COMMON TO THE DISTRICT

According to the Chief Medical Officer of Health, diseases like malaria, kala-azar and gastrointestinal diseases were formerly common. Malaria and kala-azar have been showing a marked decrease during the last few years and at present very few cases of malaria and kala-azar are reported. Diseases at present prevalent in order of frequency are (1) Helminthiasis (ascariasis and hookworm infections), (2) Pulmonary Tuberculosis, (3) Anaemia, (4) Amoebiasis, (5) Amoebic Hepatitis, (6) Chronic Tonsillitis, (7) Gastroenteritis, (8) Enteric fever, (9) Tetanus, (10) Peptic ulcer, (11) Rheumatic and Hypertensive heart diseases, and (12) Nephritis. Enteric fever is endemic in the district. Leprosy is fairly common among the tribals and so is tuberculosis. Filariasis and goitre are also fairly common.

From the Annual Report on the State of Health of West Bengal for the year 1959 published by the Directorate of Health Services, Government of West Bengal, it appears that out of a total of 8,289 registered deaths in the district, 3,914 were due to senility, 1,643 due to infant mortality, 300 due to diseases of respiratory system except pneumonia, bronchitis, tuberculosis etc., 269 due to malaria, 254 due to pneumonia, 250 due to unspecified forms of dysentery, 125 due to small-pox, 117 at child-birth, 98 due to scarlet fever and streptococcal sore throat, 97 due to other allergic endocrine system metabolic and nutritional diseases, 92 due to birth injuries post-natal asphyxia and atelectasis, 86 due to pulmonary T.B. and 83 due to typhoid fever.

(d) PUBLIC HOSPITALS AND DISPENSARIES: ORGANIZATION OF THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENTS ETC.

The biggest hospital in the district maintained by the Government is the Sadar Hospital at English Bazar or Māldā. The number of doctors attached to the hospital is 7 and the number of nurses is 16. There is accommodation for 83 indoor patients in the hospital. 3 doctors and 9 nurses are employed in the Harishchandrapur Primary Health Centre in which there are 50 beds. In the Bulbulchandi Primary Health Centre in police station Habibpur there are 1 doctor, 3 nurses and 20 beds. There are 2 more such Health Centres, one at Mānikchak and the other at Bāmangōlā. The Primary Health Centres at Hātimāri in police station Gājōl and Masaldābāzār in police station Harishchandrapur have accommodation for 10 indoor patients each. The staff is also the same and consists of 1 doctor and 2 nurses. The accommodation for indoor patients at the Kharbā Primary Health Centre and the Debipur Primary Health Centre in police station Ratuā is the same and consists of 10 beds, as in the case of the Primary Health Centres at Hātimāri and Masaldābāzār, but instead of 1 doctor and 2 nurses there are 2 doctors and 2 nurses in the Kharbā and Debipur Primary Health Centres. Besides these Primary Health Centres, there are 15 Union Health Centres and 1 subsidiary Health Centre. The staff consists of 1 doctor for each of these Health Centres but in the Health Centres at Bābupur (in police station Gājōl), Khempur (in police station Kharbā), Arāidāngā (in police station Ratuā), Kumbhirā (in police station Kāliāchak), Rishipur (in police station Habibpur), Kushidā (in police station Harishchandrapur), Hāmidpur (in police station Kāliāchak) and Ratuā there are no nurses nor are there any indoor beds. In the Union Health Centres at Bāhādurpur (in police station Habibpur), Baṅgitōlā (in police station Kāliāchak), Milki (in police station English Bazar), Sujāpur-Nāzirpur (in police station Kāliāchak), Golāpganj (in police station Kāliāchak), Pānduā (in police station Gājōl) and Uttar Noāpārā (in police station Bāmangōlā) there are 1 doctor, 2 nurses and 10 beds in each. At the Rānipur Union Health Centre (in police station Gājōl) the staff consists of 1 doctor and 1 nurse and there are only 4 indoor beds.

Among the 7 doctors attached to the Sadar Hospital, Māldā, there are specialists in Radiology, Venereal Diseases, Gynaecology, Chest Diseases, Surgery, Pathology and in the treatment of diseases of the eye. Among rural health centres, the Primary Health Centre at Harishchandrapur only has got a specialist in Gynaecology and Obstetrics. There are two leprosy clinics in the district, one located at Pākuāhāṭ under Bāmangōlā police station and the other at English Bazar Sadar. Trained doctors attend to the patients at these two leprosy clinics.

Maternity and child welfare services are conducted from two centres, viz. the Sadar Hospital and the Harishchandrapur Primary Health Centre. Qualified lady medical officers are posted at these hospitals who regularly give advice about family planning, ante-natal and post-natal care and child care. Contraceptive foam

tablets are also supplied from these clinics free of cost with a view to limit the growth of population. There are also 5 mobile medical units, the headquarters of which are situated at (1) Mahadipur in police station Kālīāchak, (2) Kānkribāndhā-Jhowbōnā in police station Kālīāchak, (3) Kendpukur in police station Habibpur, (4) Rānipurhāt in police station Gājōl and (5) Mothābāri in police station Kālīāchak. The doctors in charge of these mobile medical units render medical aid to the rural population by moving from place to place within their jurisdictions.

Prior to the 15th November 1958, nine charitable dispensaries used to be maintained by the District Board at various places in the district. Between 1958 and 1962, the Government took over the management of these dispensaries except those at Kālīāchak, Gājōl, Āihō, Bāmangōlā, Gagrā, Sīnghabād and Parānpur which are still being maintained by the District Board.

Previously the head of the Medical Department in the district was known by the designation of Civil Surgeon. In the year 1958 this designation was changed to that of Chief Medical Officer of Health. The Chief Medical Officer of Health looks after both the preventive and curative sides of medicine, but he has been relieved of all professional duties. So far as the preventive side is concerned, he is assisted in his work by the District Health Officer and the Sub-Divisional Health Officer. Prior to 1939, the preventive side was managed by the District Health Officer who used to work under the District Board, and in municipal areas by the municipal authorities. During the World War II, 1 Sub-Divisional Health Officer was deputed to work in the district from the armed forces in co-ordination with the municipal and district board staff. This military Sub-Divisional Health Officer was replaced by a civilian Sub-Divisional Health Officer in about 1946. The curative side is looked after by the District Medical Officer who is also the Superintendent of the District Hospital. The staff working in the outlying Primary and Union Health Centres, however, are controlled by the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

Vaccination against small-pox and inoculation against cholera and typhoid are given by the Sanitary Inspectors working under the District Health Officer and the Sub-Divisional Health Officer. In areas covered by the health centres, the Medical Officers of Health Centres and the Health Assistants also carry out the vaccination work. The lymph for vaccination is supplied by the Government's Vaccine Institute.

The Government of West Bengal agreed to participate in the scheme for the control of malaria by indoor spraying of residual insecticides under the National Malaria Control Programme sponsored by the Government of India and the United States Technical Co-operation Mission. 16 Malaria Control units were established in 1953-54 throughout West Bengal of which one was located in the district of Māldā. Before this control unit was started, the spleen-rate in the rural areas of the district was measured, from which it appeared that malaria was endemic throughout the district. The spraying of insecticides started late in the year 1953-54. From

the year 1954-55, two rounds of spraying were carried out each year in the dosage of 100 milligram DDT equivalent per square foot for the first round and 50 milligram DDT per square foot for the second round. The spraying season lasts for six months, the first round commencing in the middle of May and the second round commencing in the middle of August. From the year 1958-59, the control programme was expanded into one of malaria eradication. The malaria eradication programme was based on the following plan of operation:

- (i) Intensification of indoor residual spraying in both malarious areas as well as areas of low malaria incidence during the next three years to achieve interruption of transmission of malaria by anopheles mosquitoes and thereby reduce the number of malaria cases to a minimum level;
- (ii) Elimination of the residual malaria infection in man by radical treatment of parasite positive cases detected in the hospitals and dispensaries as well as by house to house visits by the malaria surveillance staff;
- (iii) The spraying operation to be withdrawn when the reservoir of residual infection detected by the surveillance operation reaches either zero or at least a level so low such as the occurrence of 0.5 malaria cases per thousand of population per year, so that the endemicity cannot be re-established;
- (iv) Surveillance operation being terminated after three years of absence of any new indigenous case after the spraying operation has been withdrawn.

The phase of maintenance may be considered to be perpetual for all practical purposes once malaria has been totally eradicated. The preventive side may then be looked after by the normal public health staff. The spraying programme was accordingly intensified in the district of Māldā from 1958-59. The case detection procedure was started in 1961-62. The success attained by the anti-malaria programme may be assessed from the spleen-rate, which is the percentage of the children between the ages 2 and 10 showing enlarged spleen, in the year immediately preceding the institution of control operation and in 1959-60 as given in the Table below:

Sl. No.	Name of police station	Prior to institution of control operations spleen-rate per cent	After control operations spleen-rate per cent (1959-1960)
1.	English Bazar	75.0/4.5	1.6/0.0
2.	Kālīāchak	100.0/20.0	7.6/0.0
3.	Mānikchak	63.3/24.0	2.5/0.0
4.	Ratūā	84.0/23.0	2.0/0.0
5.	Harishchandrapur	73.0/28.0	2.2/0.0
6.	Kharbā	65.2/11.0	2.9/0.0
7.	Old Māldā	100.0/36.0	2.8/0.0
8.	Habibpur	95.2/46.1	3.0/0.0
9.	Bāmangōlā	100.0/31.0	2.7/0.0
10.	Gājōl	99.4/3.4	3.6/0.0

In 1953, 75,149 malaria cases were treated in the hospitals. In 1954 this number fell to 49,145, in 1955 to 38,231, in 1956 to 20,392, in 1957 to 13,959 and in 1958 to 9,787.

The staff of the anti-malaria organization in the district is headed by a Gazetted Medical Officer of the West Bengal Health Service who is also the Drawing and Disbursing Officer for the staff under him. He is assisted by 3 Malaria Supervisors, who are non-Gazetted Medical Officers of the West Bengal Health Service. These Malaria Supervisors supervise the work of 12 Malaria Inspectors. Each Inspector is in charge of an area which on an average contains a population of about 80,000. There are a number of spray gangs working under each Malaria Inspector. There are 5 motor vehicles supplied by the United States Technical Co-operation Mission through the Government. They also supply the insecticides. The cost of operation of the scheme including maintenance of the staff amounts to Rs. 1.78 lakhs per year and is borne by the State Government.

The total expenditure in the district on the Health Services in 1959 was Rs. 5,12,301, exclusive of the expenditure on the malaria eradication programme.

There are 7 hospitals in the district besides those mentioned earlier, 5 of which are maintained by the Chānchal Rāj Estate and 2 of which are maintained by the Catholic Missionaries. Of the 5 hospitals maintained by the Chānchal Rāj Estate one is located at Chānchal in police station Kharbā, another at Sabbalpur in police station Ratuā, another at Srichāndpur in police station Harishchandrapur, another at Samsi in police station Ratuā and the fifth at Kōklāmāri in police station Ratuā. Of the 2 hospitals maintained by the Catholic Missionaries one is located at Old Māldā and the other at Ālampur in police station Gājōl. There is also a Homoeopathic hospital at Chānchal in police station Kharbā maintained by the Chānchal Rāj Estate.

Throughout the district there are a number of *kavirājas* practising the *āyurvedic* system of medicine but there is no *āyurvedic* hospital in the district. According to the Census of 1961, there were 616 persons in the district who could be classified under the occupational group 03 of Table B-V, consisting of physicians, surgeons and dentists.

(e) SANITATION

There is no underground drainage in any of the two municipal towns of English Bazar and Old Māldā. There are open surface drains. Night-soil is collected from house to house and dumped on the trenching ground. There are no sanitary arrangements in the rural areas. A start has been made for providing sanitary services in the rural areas with the construction of 220 dug-well latrines in police station Gājōl, 260 in police station Harishchandrapur and 417 in Kharbā police station.

Great progress, however, has been made in the matter of providing pure drinking water to the people. The Public Health Engineering Section of the Department of Health has been sinking a number of tube-wells each year since 1948-49. The total number of tube-wells sunk by the Public Health Engineering Section of

the Department of Health between 1948-49 and 1959-60, and which are still working, is 1,005. Quite a number of tube-wells are also being sunk by the Department of Tribal Welfare for the benefit of tribals. A certain number of tube-wells have also been sunk under the cost sharing scheme initiated by the Development Department. Under this scheme, beneficiaries and the Government share the cost of sinking of a tube-well.

CHAPTER XVII

OTHER SOCIAL SERVICES

ADVANCEMENT OF BACKWARD CLASSES AND TRIBES

Special Organization for welfare of backward classes and tribes.

Various schemes have been executed since the attainment of Independence by the Tribal Welfare Department of the State Government for the upliftment of the socio-economic conditions of life of the members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes residing in the district. These schemes have aimed at facilitating the spread of education among the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and extending to them special help in the fields of medical and public health ; agriculture and irrigation ; animal husbandry ; industry and crafts ; and communications. Some of the schemes have been undertaken to inculcate among them the spirit of co-operation while other schemes aim to give them guidance in the field of social welfare.

Educational advancement.

The schemes for the spread of education include non-recurring grants to schools situated in areas which have comparatively larger concentrations of members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, grants for the construction of hostels for tribal students, recurring grants to tribal and Scheduled Caste students to enable them to enjoy free tuition in schools, grants for the purchase of books and for the payment of examination fees.

Extension scheme of medical benefits.

For expanding the existing medical and public health facilities, especially in case of tribals, financial grants have been made to hospitals and dispensaries for the free supply of medicines to members of the Scheduled Tribes. A large number of reinforced concrete ring-wells and tube-wells have been sunk in areas predominantly inhabited by members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes entirely at the cost of Government for providing pure drinking water.

Special benefits in agricultural scheme.

Special facilities in the fields of agriculture and irrigation have taken the shape of water pumps run by diesel or petrol engine, and the excavation of tanks and the construction of *bundhs*. It is expected that the tribal people would be enabled to irrigate their fields better by pumping water from such tanks or *bundhs* or other nearby sources of water to their fields. Vegetable seeds have been distributed free, and since 1961-62 financial assistance is being granted to cultivators belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes for effecting improvements to their lands. Cultivators belonging to the Scheduled Castes have also received financial help for the purchase of bullocks and implements.

In the field of animal husbandry, special help has been extended to the tribals by supplying them with stud bulls for bringing about

Aid for setting up industries.

an improvement in the quality of their cattle. They are also assisted in the matter of raising poultry birds and in rearing pigs.

Two peripatetic training-cum-production centres of jute and woollen goods have been established in the district under Government management. Free training is imparted at these centres to persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the production of jute and woollen goods. In addition, a trainee receives a stipend of Rs. 20 per month during the period of training. The centres are at present located at Hātimāri in police station Gājōl and Kendpukur in police station Habibpur. In 1961-62 and in 1962-63 a large number of artisans belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have been given financial grants for setting up their own trades or industry. There is a centre for imparting training in bee-keeping at Kadubāri in police station Gājōl in which members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes receive training in bee-keeping. The trainees receive a stipend of Rs. 20 per month each while the training lasts.

Roads situated in predominantly tribal areas have been repaired and wooden bridges and culverts constructed on them at Government cost.

Establishment and maintenance of co-operative grain-golas.

24 *dharma-gōlās* have been opened for lending paddy to tribal cultivators in times of need. These *dharma-gōlās* are operated by co-operative societies, thus initiating the tribals to the benefits of co-operation. Incidentally, the provision of easy credit in the shape of paddy has protected many a tribal from the clutches of the money-lender. Certain other co-operative societies working among the members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have also received financial assistance.

Among schemes of social welfare, the construction of improved types of houses at the cost of the Government in a number of places like Ālampur and Pāhāriṣṭhā in Gājōl police station, Krishnapur and Gobindapur in English Bazar police station, Pāhārpur in Kharbā police station, Habibpur in Habibpur police station, Dōgāchhi in Bāmangōlā police station, Khejuriā-Mājhrā in Māldā police station, Wāri in Harishchandrapur police station etc. may be mentioned. Grants have been given to the municipalities of English Bazar and Old Māldā for the construction of quarters for the sweepers. In addition, grants have been given to members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes engaged in unclean occupation for the purchase of house sites. For eliminating the practice of carrying night-soil as head-loads, grants have been given to the municipalities of English Bazar and Old Māldā for the purchase of wheel-barrows. Three social welfare centres: one at Balarāmpur in Gājōl police station, another at Kendpukur in Habibpur police station and the third at Mudipukur in Bāmangōlā police station have been established. These social welfare centres are run directly by the Government. Each centre is under the charge of a social worker. A night school with two part-time teachers is attached to each of these centres. The tribal people are initiated to the improved methods of agriculture with the help of the kitchen gardens attached to the centres. Milk is distributed among infants, and patients from these

Other benefits.

centres. These centres also provide for recreational facilities in the shape of radio sets, newspapers, books and journals and implements for indoor and outdoor games. Non-official organizations like the Rāmākṛishna Mission and the Bhārat Sevāshram Saṅgha have been receiving financial assistance for spreading literacy among the tribals.

Free legal aid is provided to members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes who become involved in litigation.

Details of the expenditure incurred on the schemes for the welfare of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have been given on page 223 in the appendix to this Chapter.

APPENDIX

DETAILS OF THE EXPENDITURE INCURRED ON THE SCHEMES FOR THE WELFARE OF THE SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES

	1952-53	1953-54	1954-55	1955-56	1956-57	1957-58	1958-59	1959-60	1960-61	Total
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Education	40,200	43,980	25,190	1,840	50,200	21,435	20,902	40,448	74,193	3,18,388
Public Health	15,000	—	—	67,500	25,082	80,187	20,743	27,094	2,39,766	4,75,372
Medical	—	9,000	69,877	16,000	5,150	6,500	4,750	9,390	7,500	1,28,167
Agriculture & Animal Husbandry	47,734	10,500	16,750	2,000	15,911	17,141	1,43,070	21,503	4,145	2,78,754
Irrigation	—	—	4,822	11,113	—	—	—	—	77,447	93,382
Industry	—	—	—	1,92,100	8,282	4,250	—	7,000	—	2,11,632
Co-operation	10,000	—	10,450	42,350	31,070	12,933	13,460	26,500	30,000	1,76,763
Roads	—	—	—	—	75,000	10,000	3,326	10,000	22,308	1,20,634
Miscellaneous	7,903	4,120	—	42,210	61,300	92,800	1,04,754	83,945	1,40,364	5,37,396
TOTAL:	1,20,837	67,600	1,27,089	3,75,113	2,71,995	2,45,246	3,11,005	2,25,880	5,95,723	23,40,488

CHAPTER XVIII

PUBLIC LIFE AND VOLUNTARY SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

(a) REPRESENTATION OF THE DISTRICT IN THE STATE AND THE UNION LEGISLATURES

Representation in the Vidhan Sabha. Hold of the different parties. The three General Elections.

In the First General Elections in 1951-52, 9 members were returned to the Vidhān Sabhā. This number remained unchanged during the Second and the Third General Elections held in 1957 and 1962 respectively. The district is represented in the Lok Sabhā by one member returned from a Parliamentary Constituency comprised of 5 Assembly constituencies of this district and 2 neighbouring Assembly constituencies of the Murshidābād district and another member returned from a Parliamentary Constituency comprised of the remaining 4 Assembly Constituencies of this district together with 3 neighbouring Assembly Constituencies of the West Dinājpur district.

In the First General Elections there were 7 single-member constituencies and 1 double-member constituency in the district for elections to the Vidhān Sabhā or the State Legislative Assembly. In the Second General Elections there were 5 single-member constituencies and 2 double-member constituencies. In the Third General Elections held in 1962 all the constituencies were single-membered ; the number of constituencies being 9.

Members of the Legislative Council.

The district is included in the West Bengal North Graduates' Constituency which elects one member to the Legislative Council. It is similarly included in the West Bengal North Teachers' Constituency. A third constituency connected with the district, which returns a member to the West Bengal Legislative Council is the Māldā Local Authorities Constituency. The extent of this constituency is the same as the territorial area of the district. In 1962 one member was returned from this constituency to the West Bengal Legislative Council.

The First General Elections.

In the First General Elections to the Vidhān Sabhā held in 1951-52, the electorate consisted of 4,62,009 persons. The number of valid votes polled was 2,12,853 and 46.07 per cent of the total electorate. In the Second General Elections held in 1957, there were 5,22,012 electors and the number of valid votes polled was 3,17,416 and 60.8 per cent of the total number of electors. In the Third General Elections held in 1962, the electorate consisted of 6,05,139 persons. The number of valid votes polled was 3,07,506 and amounted to 50.8 per cent of the electorate.

In the election to the Lok Sabhā there were 3,54,919 electors in the First General Elections. 1,45,601 valid votes were polled which amounted to 41.02 per cent of the total electorate. In the Second General Elections the electorate consisted of 4,09,274 persons, the valid votes polled being 2,09,203 in number and forming 51.1 per

cent of the electorate. In the Third General Elections to Lok Sabhā there were 4,63,938 electors of whom 2,31,692 or 49.8 per cent cast valid votes in the election.

In the First General Elections to the Vidhān Sabhā the Congress Party contested all the 9 seats winning 6 of them and securing 1,06,238 votes, which amounted to 22.7 per cent of the total votes (electorate). The Communist Party of India contested 3 seats winning 1 and securing 26,554 votes or 5.7 per cent of the total votes (electorate). The Krishak Mazdoor Projā Party contested 4 seats, the Hindu Mahāsabhā 1 seat and the Revolutionary Socialist Party 1 seat but none of them secured any of the seats. There were 14 Independent candidates of whom 2 were elected. The number of votes cast for all the Independent candidates was 48,568 and amounted to 10.5 per cent of the electorate.

The Second General Elections.

In the Second General Elections, the Congress Party contested all the 9 seats, won 6 and secured 1,43,963 votes amounting to 27.5 per cent of the electorate. The Communist Party of India, the Projā Socialist Party and Jan Saṅgh contested 4, 1 and 1 seats respectively but failed to secure any. 15 Independent candidates stood for elections from various constituencies of whom 3 were elected. The total number of votes polled for all the Independent candidates was 1,09,526 and amounted to 20.9 per cent of the electorate.

The Third General Elections.

In the Third General Elections to the Vidhān Sabhā, the Congress Party contested all the seats, secured 5 and polled 1,34,723 votes amounting to 22.2 per cent of the total electorate. This time the Communist Party of India was more successful ; it set up 4 candidates and won 2 seats, securing 56,540 votes amounting to 9.3 per cent of the total electorate. The Jan Saṅgh and the Swatantra Party contested 2 seats each but failed to secure any. 16 Independent candidates stood for elections from various constituencies, 2 of whom were elected. The total votes polled for all the Independent candidates were 80,143 and amounted to 13.2 per cent of the total electorate.

Although in the elections to the Vidhān Sabhā the Congress Party has lost some ground to the Communist Party of India, the Lok Sabhā constituency has been represented by a nominee of this Party since the First General Elections. In the 1951-52 Elections, the number of votes polled in favour of the Congress candidate was 81,666 and amounted to 23 per cent of the total electorate. In the Second General Elections, this percentage was 23.7, comprised of 97,217 votes and in the Third General Elections it was 21.8, the number of votes having been 1,01,336. In the First General Elections, the seat was contested between a Congress and two Independent candidates ; in the Second General Elections between a Congress, a Hindu Mahāsabhā and three Independent candidates ; and in the Third General Elections the Congress Party and the Swatantra Party set up one candidate each and there was one Independent candidate.

In the Third General Elections held in 1962, the Māldā Parliamentary Constituency consisted of the Assembly Constituencies of

Ratuā, Mānikchak, English Bazar, Sujāpur and Kāliāchak in the district of Māldā, and Farākkā and Suti in the district of Murshidābād. The other Parliamentary Constituency, namely the Bāluṛghāṭ (ST) Parliamentary Constituency was comprised of the Assembly Constituencies of Habibpur, Māldā, Kharbā and Harishchandrapur in the district of Māldā and of Bāluṛghāṭ, Tapan and Itāhār in the district of West Dinājpur. In the Second General Elections the Māldā Parliamentary constituency was described as follows:

Māldā district (excluding Harishchandrapur, Kharbā, Gājōl, Bāmangōlā, Māldā and Habibpur police stations); and Farākkā, Shāmsgeranj and Suti police stations in Jaṅgipur sub-division of the Murshidābād district.

The other double-membered Parliamentary Constituency, namely the West Dinājpur Parliamentary Constituency was comprised of Harishchandrapur, Kharbā, Gājōl, Bāmangōlā, Māldā and Habibpur police stations of this district and the whole of the West Dinājpur district. One of the seats was reserved for a member of the Scheduled Tribes.

At the 1962 General Elections to the Vidhān Sabhā there were the following constituencies:

(1) Habibpur (ST) consisting of Habibpur and Bāmangōlā police stations, (2) Māldā consisting of Māldā and Gājōl police stations, (3) Kharbā consisting of Kharbā police station, (4) Harishchandrapur consisting of Harishchandrapur police station, (5) Ratuā (SC) consisting of Ratuā police station excluding Union No. 2, (6) Mānikchak consisting of Mānikchak police station and the Union No. 2 of Ratuā police station, (7) English Bazar consisting of English Bazar police station, (8) Sujāpur consisting of Union Nos. 1 to 7, 9 and 10 of Kāliāchak police station and (9) Kāliāchak consisting of Kāliāchak police station excluding Union Nos. 1 to 7, 9 and 10. The seat for the Habibpur constituency was reserved for a member of the Scheduled Tribes and that for the Ratuā constituency was reserved for a member of Scheduled Castes.

(b) NEWSPAPERS

Only four weekly newspapers are published in the district, viz. the *Gaurdut*, the *Māldā Samāchār*, the *Udayan* and the *Samkalpa*. None of these periodicals has got much of an influence over the people in the district. Newspapers such as *The Statesman*, the *Amrita Bāzār Patrikā* and the *Ānanda Bāzār Patrikā* which are published from Calcutta are in circulation in the district and influence public opinion. The *Gaurdut* which is one of the periodicals now being published in the district, is an old publication. In the nineteen twenties, some of the comments made in this paper found a place in the Government report on the Indian newspapers and periodicals in Bengal.

(c) VOLUNTARY SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

There are not many voluntary social service organizations in the district. There is a Roman Catholic Mission at Rouhtārā which

runs an orphanage. The inmates of this orphanage are all tribals and lost their parents during the Great Bengal Famine of 1943. The Rāmkrishna Mission has also been working among the tribals in the district. The Mission has centres at Chāgnādāngā in police station Bāmangōlā, Chitkōle in police station Gājōl and Nārāyanpur in police station Māldā. The Bhārat Sevāshram Saṅgha has also opened a social welfare centre at Ghāksol in police station Gājōl and another at Tājpur in police station Habibpur for the social upliftment of the backward classes. The Piplā Pally Samity of Harishchandrapur police station, which was established in 1926, has been carrying on social welfare work among the backward classes. This Samity has opened a social education centre in the tribal village of Wāri and another at Gāngnadiā for the *Harijans*.

There is a branch of the Indian Red Cross Society at Māldā. Red Cross work started in the district, probably in the year 1943-44, i.e. during the Second World War. The District Branch of the Society formally came into existence in the year 1949 with the constitution of the first Managing Committee with the District Magistrate as *Ex-officio* Chairman, Sri Satyabrata Chatterjee as Honorary Secretary and Sri Upendra Nāth Maitra as its Treasurer. The existing Managing Committee of the District Branch of the Indian Red Cross is constituted as follows:

- (1) Chairman of the Municipality of the District Headquarters or the Administrator or any other person appointed by the Government in case of supersession.
- (2) The Chairman of the District Board or the Administrator or any other person appointed by the Government in case of supersession, provided that wherever the District Magistrate/Deputy Commissioner happens to be the Chairman of the Municipality or the District Board or both, one of the members of such Body/Bodies as appointed by the Chairman of the Managing Committee of the District Branch concerned shall, in each case, be a member; provided further that wherever there is no Municipality or District Board or both, a member of the Society, as enrolled by the District Branch concerned and as appointed by the Managing Committee of that District Branch shall, in each case, be a member.
- (3) The District Inspector of Schools.
- (4) The President of the District Civil Bar Association.
- (5) Seven members of the Society ordinarily residing in the District to be nominated every year by the Managing Body of the Society.

The District Magistrate and the Chief Medical Officer of Health are *Ex-officio* Members, the former being the Chairman of the Committee.

In 1961, the District Branch of the Indian Red Cross Society ran 60 canteens from which 79,058 lbs. (35,859.9 kg.) of milk was distributed. The beneficiaries were 6,82,464 infants, 2,91,232 children in the age-group 1-14 years and 1,91,232 persons among whom were expectant and nursing mothers, T.B. patients and

Reserved seats.

Local Weeklies.

Calcutta Dailies in common circulation.

indigent persons. The Society also distributed medicines and garments. The Branch helped 104 students to purchase books and to pay examination fees. In 1961, there was one Life Member and 35 Annual Members of the Branch. The Branch raised Rs. 38,386.29 from various sources during the year.

CHAPTER XIX

PLACES OF INTEREST

English Bazar or Māldā—It is the headquarters town of the district. The name English Bazar is derived from its old name of Englezābād. The first factory of the East India Company was built at the town of Old Māldā in 1680 A.D. In December that year 15 *bighās* of land was purchased on the other side of the river, at a distance of about 2 miles (3.2 km.) from the town of Old Māldā, from the local zemindar, Rājā Rāi Chowdhury for three hundred rupees. The plot of land was situated by the river Mahānandā in the village of Mucdampore. A new factory was built on this plot of land. This new factory became the principal factory in the course of time and the settlement that sprang round it was given the name Englezābād by the English themselves. The town of English Bazar is now commonly known as Māldā and the real town of Māldā is now known as Old Māldā. In 1771, Mr. Thomas Henchman who was the Commercial Resident at Māldā erected a fort at English Bazar. The Magistrate's *kutchery* is now located in that fort. Portions of the town near the factory are known by names such as Lakrikhānā (wood yard), Murgikhānā (fowl yard) and similar names showing the original use to which the land was put.

Being the headquarters town of the district, it contains the District Judge's Court, the offices of the representatives of the various departments in the District and the Jail. A number of the houses in the town was built by the bricks taken from the ruins of Gauḍa and some of them are faced with curved stone obtained from the same source. The town of English Bazar was constituted into a Municipality in 1869. The population according to the Census of 1961 was 45,900. There is an embankment along the bank of the Mahānandā to prevent the flooding of the town.

Gauḍa—The ruins of the city of Gauḍa are situated on an old channel of the Ganges in 24° 52' N. and 88° 10' E., 10 miles (16.1 km.) south-west of English Bazar from which it is reached by a macadamised road. Gauḍa was the capital of Bengal for several centuries. A Gauḍapura has been mentioned by Pānini. The products of Gauḍa have been mentioned in the *Arthasāstra* of Kauṭilya. The country of Gauḍa was known to the author of *Kāmasutra*. Gauḍa first attained eminence as a city during the reign of the Pāla Emperors of Bengal. From the time of Devapāla and possibly from that of his father, Dharmapāla, the Pāla Emperors were known by the title of Gauḍeswara. The city of Gauḍa might have been the Gangia Regia mentioned by Ptolemy, as it is known that in ancient times the city of Gauḍa was on the river Ganges.

During the reign of Lakshmanasena, Gauḍa came also to be known by the alternative name Lakshmanāvati or Lakhnāvati. Gauḍa was the capital of Bengal during the reign of Sultān Ghiyās-ud-din 'Iwaz Khalji in 1220 A.D. In the reign of Shāms-ud-din Ilyās Shāh the capital was no longer at Gauḍa but at Pānduā. Sultān Jalāl-ud-din, the son of Rājā Ganesh is supposed to have re-transferred the capital to Gauḍa. Alā-ud-din Husain Shāh made Ekdālā the capital for some time but Gauḍa appears to have again become the capital of Bengal as we find Sher Shāh sacking the capital city of Gauḍa during the reign of Sultān Ghiyās-ud-din Māhmud. Sher Shāh not only plundered the city but also is supposed to have set fire to it. During the reign of the Karrāni Sultāns, the capital appears to have been shifted to Tāndā. Muni'm Khān, Ākbar's general, attempted to revive the city by staying in it with his forces but the damp unhealthy old buildings of the long deserted city brought about an epidemic of which his officers and men died in hundreds. Humāyun during his short occupation of the city of Gauḍa had renamed it Jinnatābād or the heavenly city.

The ruins of Gauḍa as are now extant are those which have till now withstood the ravages of time and the systematic spoliation over a number of years not only by private persons but even by the State. It appears from the Fifth Report that not only did the Nawābs of Murshidābād take away bricks of Gauḍa but they charged the zemindars the cost of carriage of the bricks. According to Grant, this impost or *ābwāb* amounted to eight thousand rupees a year. The ruins of Gauḍa went on suffering depredations, and even after the coming of the British, the undertakers in Calcutta used to bring down stones from the ruins of Gauḍa for ornamenting graves in Calcutta. The latest descriptions of the ruins of Gauḍa are those to be found in the book "Memoirs of Gaur and Pānduā" by Khān Sāhib M. 'Ābid 'Āli Khān, edited and revised by H. E. Stapleton in 1930. Descriptions of some of the old structures etc. amidst the ruins of Gauḍa are reproduced below from that book. For a complete description of the ruins, the reader is referred to that book.

"*The Fortifications of Gaur.*—The city of Gaur was completely surrounded by a high earthen rampart, the top of the wall or embankment being covered with buildings.* There were innumerable buildings within the town, which commanded a magnificent view of the Ganges on which it stood. On the eastern side there was a double embankment flanked by a deep moat about 150 feet in breadth. The principal street ran from north to south. The western part of the town was open, the Ganges being counted sufficient to prevent any inroad of the enemy from that side. There were openings in the north and south embankments for the egress and ingress of the citizens."

* "The buildings on the embankment have now disappeared and the wall is overgrown with dense jungle and trees."

"THE *Bārādwārī*, OR GREAT *Sona* (GOLDEN) MOSQUE, AT RĀMKELĪ

"[Erected by Sultān Nasrat Shah in 932 A.H. (1526 A.D.)]. "This mosque is a massive rectangular building of brick, faced with stone, 168 feet by 76 feet, with turrets at the corners. It is the largest of all the ancient monuments in Gaur. Immediately in front, to the east, is a courtyard 200 feet square, with arched gateways—each 38½ feet by 13½ feet—in the middle of the three sides. The eastern Entrance Gate has been carefully restored. . . . Inside the mosque are three long aisles divided by massive stone pillars with a corridor running along the whole length of the building. In front are eleven arched openings, each measuring five feet eleven inches in breadth. There are other openings at the north and south ends. The building was roofed by forty-four small hemispherical domes; of these eleven domes of the corridor still exist and were repaired under the direction of Lord Curzon. There are few carvings left. As is clear from the following inscription, it was built by Sultān Nasrat Shah in 932 A.H. (1526 A.D.). In Francklin's time the inscription appears to have been in its proper place, but it has now disappeared. The *Tughra* letters were about nine inches in length. As Cunningham notes, the vacant panel over the middle doorway from which the stone slab containing the inscription has been removed measures five feet two inches in length by two feet one inch in breadth.

"The following is a translation of the inscription recorded by Francklin:—"The Prophet (on whom be the blessing of Allāh and peace!) has said: "He who builds a mosque, for him Almighty Allāh will provide a house in Paradise." This *Jāmi'* Mosque was erected by the great and illustrious Sultān, son of the Sultān, Nāsirudduniyā waddīn Abūl Muzaffar Nasrat Shāh Sultān, son of Husain Shāh Sultān, son of Saiyid Ashraf al-Husainī—May Allāh perpetuate his kingdom and rule, and elevate his power and dignity!—in the year 932' (A.D. 1526).

"*Origin of the name 'Sona Masjid'.*—Cunningham mentions that Francklin was much puzzled over the popular name of *Sona Masjid* and started a strange theory that as it bears no marks whatever of gold, its name must have originated from the bulkiness of the materials used and the expense of its erection. Local people, however, do not call bulky things golden, but name them after the real or supposed amount of the cost, as in the case of the Eklākhī Mausoleum of Pandua, the Naulākhī Palace at Lahore, etc. The fact is that the domes were actually gilded, and so much of the surface was ornamented in this way that under the rays of the sun or moon it looked like a mosque built entirely of gold: hence the name *Sona Masjid*. It is true that no gilding is now visible, but there is a universal tradition amongst the people to this effect, and we know that the *Chhoti Sona Masjid* at Firūzpūr . . . must have received its name for the same

reason, as Creighton remarks that 'the remains of gilding upon it is still visible, and may account for the epithet of *Golden* given to this and the former edifice.' Some gilding in fact still remained on the Small Golden Mosque as late as 1879 when Gen. Cunningham made his tour.

"*Explanation of the name 'Bārādwārī'*.—The common name of the building is 'Bārādwārī', or, literally, a building of twelve doors; but as there are only eleven openings in front, considerable controversy has taken place as to its proper name. It seems to the writer that the name 'Bārādwārī', which ordinarily means an 'audience hall', was given to the mosque on account of its spacious court-yard in front of the mosque.

"*Ladies' Gallery*.—A raised platform for ladies was provided at the north corner of the mosque. Here the ladies used to come to the mosque through the small doors in the upper room on the north side. The remains of a sloped platform connecting the doors with the ground level are still to be seen there. Ladies' galleries are found in many mosques in Central India, Khandesh and elsewhere: but in the Mughal period the ladies' galleries were generally on the ground floor, and not raised on pillars or arches.

"*Old stone columns*.—The positions of the stone columns supporting the arches of the domes have all now been traced out and the tops of their bases plastered. The pulpit is also marked out. In the prayer niches of the west wall there were fine ornamental carvings: and, though the facing is gone, yet certain portions which still remain show the best workmanship of the period.

"*The 'Chabūtra'*.—On the south-east side . . . there exists a raised platform locally called '*Chabūtra*' by the local people. It is believed that the *Chabūtra* was used by the *Muazzin* for calling the Faithful to Prayer, but this does not seem very probable as the Call to Prayer is generally made from a high tower.

"*Archaeological notes*.—Traces of other buildings are to be seen on raised ground on the north and north-west sides. They are perhaps sites of *madrasahs* (schools) and rest-houses. If excavations were made, the foundations of buildings would probably be laid bare. There is a fine tank (600 feet by 300 feet) a short distance to the east of the eastern gate.

"Major Francklin makes the following remarks on this mosque:—

"The arches are pointed and may be defined to be Gothic, or more appropriately, the Saracenic style of architecture, introduced by the earlier conquerors of Hindoostan. They are of a similar nature with many of the mosques to be seen at old Delhi, erected by Patan Sovereigns of the dynasties of Lodie and of Ghore. The whole appearance of this building is strikingly grand and exhibits the superior taste and munificence of the prince who erected it.'

"In connection with the use of brick as the principal material for the buildings at Gaur and Pandua, as well as the curved rise so often observable in the roof line of these mosques, Fergusson remarks as follows:—

"Bengal is practically without stone, or any suitable material for forming either pillars or beams. Having nothing but brick, it was almost of necessity that they employed arches everywhere, and in every building that had any pretensions to permanency.'

"*The curvilinear form of roofs*: 'The Bengalis, taking advantage of the elasticity of the bamboo, universally employ in their dwellings a curvilinear form of roof, which has become so familiar to their eyes that they consider it beautiful.

"This curvilinear form found its way in the seventeenth century to Delhi and in the eighteenth to Lahore, and all the intermediate buildings, from, say, A.D. 1650, betray its presence to a greater or less extent. . . . While to the European eye this form always remains unpleasing, to the native eye—Hindu or Muhammadan—it is the most elegant of modern inventions.'

"*The Dākhlī Darwāzah, or Main Gate of the Fort*.—This is a large gateway about half a mile south-west from the Bārādwārī. It is called the *Dākhlī Darwāzah* as it was the principal 'Entrance Gate' to the Fort from the north. Another name is *Salāmī Darwāzah*, because salutes were fired from the adjacent ramparts. The date of its erection is not known for certain, but, as has just been observed, it was probably built in the first half of the 15th century. Later monarchs, e.g., Ruknuddīn Bārbak (1459-75), Husain Shah and even Nasrat Shah may have improved it. Near it, on the north, is a tank, and from the latter an *ābgīr* (aqueduct) comes out on the east side and goes south a long way. The gate is substantially built of small red bricks and shows signs of having been highly ornamented with embossed work.

"Creighton's view, taken from the outside, makes the sides of the towers much too sloping, as may be seen by comparing it with Ravenshaw's inside view. The building consists of a central passage 14 feet wide and $113\frac{1}{4}$ feet long, with a guard room on each side $74\frac{1}{2}$ feet long by $9\frac{1}{2}$ feet broad. The walls, which are $9\frac{3}{4}$ feet thick, are pierced by three doorways on each side of the passage, with one outer doorway on the inner side of the rampart.' Pieces of stone with large holes in them, fixed to the walls of the gateways, show how gigantic were the gates which were suspended from these stones. The wings of the gate were bolted by a huge iron bar or wooden pin as is seen from long holes running into the wall, one on each side of the passage. 'The piers between the doorways are made of brick faced with stone up to the spring of the arches, but all the rest of the building is made of brick. At each of the four corners there is a

twelve-sided tower, five storeys in height, crowned by a dome. The faces of the tower are panelled and ornamented with the usual chains and bells in relief. Creighton makes the height of the towers 53 feet, but this measurement did not include the domes which were all ruined before his time. The walls on both sides of the archway were ornamented in a similar manner with panels filled with chains and bells. The outer arch was 34 feet in height, above which the battle-mented wall rose 15 feet, making a total height of 49 feet.' (Cunningham . . .). The front width of the entire gate building is 73 feet 4 inches. The existing building was first constructed with ornamental facing work all round, but the base of the building on the east and west was later covered with earth and connected with the adjoining rampart walls. Traces of *pacca* steps for reaching the top of the embankment from inside are also found: and the rampart itself is strengthened by a skeleton of brickwork.

"*Note on an Inscription from the vicinity.*—An inscription, found a few years prior to 1911 near the *Dākhil Darwāzah*, records the erection of a gate by Nasrat Shah, but this may have been only the court-yard gate of some mosque or tomb. The text and the translation of the above inscription* are given below:—

"*Translation.*—'In the year 926 A.H. (23rd December 1519 to 11th December 1520 A.D.) the Sultān of the time and period, celebrated for justice and benevolence, the Sultān, son of the Sultān, Nāsirudduniyā waddīn, Abūl Muzaffar Nasrat Shāh the Sultān, son of Husain Shāh the Sultān, al-Husainī—May Allāh perpetuate his kingdom and rule!—built this gate.'"

"THE FIRŪZ, OR *Fīrozah*, MINĀR.

"[The Tower of Firūz Shah, or the 'Turquoise Tower.']
"This Minār is about a mile to the south of the *Bārādwārī* Mosque and outside the fort. The tower has no inscription to record the date of its erection; but Francklin found a fragment of an inscribed stone at Gūāmāltī bearing the name of a King Saifuddīn which, he seems to have believed, was originally attached to this tower. In this he was supported by Cunningham, owing to the fact that the size of the lettering as given by Francklin agrees with the height of the panel above the door of the Minār: but Cunningham identified the builder of the tower with Saifuddīn Hamzah Shah (1412 A.D.) instead of with Saifuddīn Firūz Shah (1486 A.D.). Fergusson, on architectural grounds, also preferred an earlier date than the end of the 15th century. In the neighbourhood, the tower is known by the name of 'Pīr Asā Mandīr' and 'Cherāgdānī', the former name being thought by Cunningham to be a corruption of Fīrozah, and that the name simply indicates that it was originally faced by blue tiles. Some say it was built for the purpose of calling the *Azān* for prayers, while

* Text not reproduced.—Editor.

others consider it was a watch-tower. To the writer it appears to be a Pillar of Victory, like the Qutb Minār of Delhi and similar towers at Koil, Daulatābād and elsewhere. "*Description.*—The tower is about 84 feet high and 62 feet in circumference. There is a spiral staircase of 73 steps leading up to the top chamber. Judging by old sketches and photographs, one would suppose that the top chamber of the tower was originally roofed with a dome. Francklin, while visiting Gaur in 1810, saw a broken dome. Daniells' illustration of this tower (drawn in 1795 A.D.), as well as Creighton's very beautiful coloured drawing, also indicate that the tower had a cupola. When, however, the repairs were carried out a few years ago the existence of the dome appeared to the Archaeological authorities too doubtful to warrant restoration, and the top was finished off with a flat roof.

"The tower is a polygon of twelve sides for three-fifths of its height and circular for the remaining two-fifths. It is supposed that the basement of the tower was originally faced with polished stones in the form of steps all round; but considering that the rough stonework at the base was originally below the ground and that the tower was built on a hillock, the Archaeological Department suggested strengthening the base with earthwork and turfing it over, so that it might look like a mound and this suggestion was carried out in 1911.

"*Old Visitors to the Tower.*—The following interesting note by Mr. Samuells, a former Collector, is quoted from the District Gazetteer of Māldah: 'Hedges, the Governor of the Company, in 1683 visited English Bāzār and Gaur and records the visit in his diary. He came up the Mahānandā from Lālgolā and anchored for the night at Baliaghāta at Rohanpūr. He visited Gaur with two English ladies. Fanny Parkes also visited Gaur. She was shown over by Mr. Chambers and she saw written in the Minār the names of Harwood 1771, S. Grey 1772, Creighton and others. She also found the initials M.V. 1683, and Mr. Beveridge supposes this was one of the ladies of Hedges' party. Mr. Creighton visited the tower several times and engraved his name with a knife with dates 1786, 1788, 1789, 1790, 1791.'

"Mr. Reuben Burrow visited this tower in 1787 and determined its situation to be in 24°53' North Latitude and 5 h 52'13" (e. 88°) East Longitude. The latitude was deduced from 29 meridian altitudes, and the longitude partly from distances and partly from watches.

"*Local Tradition.*—Tradition has it that when the tower was completed, the King went to see it. The mason in charge of the work boastfully declared that he could have built a much higher tower than that.

"The King: 'Why then did you not do so?'

"The Mason: 'I could not find sufficient materials.'

"The King: 'Why did you not ask for them?'

“As the mason made no reply, the King in a paroxysm of rage ordered him to be thrown down from the top of the tower which was immediately done; and thus the mason lost his life. On descending from the tower the Sultān ordered his favourite peon Hinga to go instantly to Morgāon. The peon dared not ask the King the object of his errand to Morgāon—so furious was the royal face. On reaching Morgāon he was deeply meditating as to why he had been sent there, and while moving here and there in an agitated mood he met with a Brahmin youth named Sanātan. This lad he accosted, saying the Sultān had sent him there, but with what object he did not know, as the Sultān had not informed him nor had he had the hardihood to ask the Sultān. Sanātan heard from Hinga everything that had transpired before Hinga’s departure from the royal presence and forthwith came to the conclusion that, under the circumstances which led to the sending of Hinga to Morgāon, possibly the Sultān had in mind the engaging of skilled masons who abounded in those quarters. Following this hint, Hinga took masons from Morgāon and presented himself to the King, who, by this time, was cool-headed enough to wonder how Hinga could know his purpose, seeing that nothing had been told him. On being asked by the Sultān to explain matters, Hinga disclosed the clue given him by Sanātan, whereupon the Sultān praised Sanātan and made him an officer of the Court at Gaur. With the help of the masons brought by Hinga the Sultān improved the tower still further.”

“THE *Bā’isgazī* WALL AND THE OLD PALACE OF THE KINGS OF GAUR.—In the interior of the Fort are still to be found remains of the Palace enclosure—a lofty brick wall, called *Bā’isgazī*, apparently because its height was 22 Bengali *gaz* (yards), or 42 feet. It is 15 feet broad at the base decreasing to nearly 9 feet at the top. The entire enclosure measured 700 yards in length from north to south and 250-300 yards in breadth. Photographs of the wall, taken in the ’sixties of the last century by Mr. J. H. Ravenshaw, may be seen at Plates 10 and 11 of his volume on *Gaur*. The wall was then covered with dense jungle and big trees, but now these have all been removed by the Public Works Department. It would be a good thing if the base of the decayed portions of the walls were exposed so as to give an idea of the whole structure.

“*Royal Palace*.—The Palace wall extended all round the royal residence. From the following inscription,* found at Gūāmālī by Francklin, which records the making of a water-course under the palace (as well as a Half-way Gate) by Ruknuddīn Bārbak Shah in 871 A.H. (1466 A.D.), Cunningham inferred that the Palace and *Dākhil* Gate had already been completed in the time of Bārbak Shah’s father, Nāsiruddīn Mahmūd Shah.

* Text not reproduced.—Editor.

“*Translation*.—‘Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of Grace and of Benefits, the Cherisher, who neither slumbers nor sleeps!

“‘Peace be on the chosen one of (the tribe of) Mudar, the most excellent of created beings, the Prophet, the Lord of Medīnah, viz., Muhammad, the last of the eminent Prophets, but for whom, the paths of Guidance and Truth would not have been manifested!

“‘Blessings also be on his descendants, who are the mines of piety, and upon his Companions, who are followers of Allāh both in secret and openly!

“‘Next (let us refer to) him who reposes on the mercy of the Most High, whose benevolence is such that even the cloud that gives profuse and incessant rain seems of no account; the Sultān, the Protector of the Universe, the Pillar of Religion, Eminent of Rank, our Sultān, Bārbak Shāh, son of the most famous and world renowned Saiyid, Sultān Mahmūd Shāh, the Model of Justice, can the Princes of the two ‘Irāqs, of Syria, and of Yemen, be considered equal to Bārbak Shāh? Truly there is no one in the Countries of Allāh who equals him in generosity and liberality. He is without an equal, (a Prince) whose marvellous and spotless habitation—to which wealth is attracted and through which sorrow is dissipated—resembles Paradise.

“‘(Behold) a Water-course, flowing under the palace, resembling *Salsabil** whose stream affords consolation to sorrowful *faqirs*. For those who love it, it binds (them) like a cord. Its gate is comfort and sweet basil for the soul.

“‘A Gateway which is on the stream bears his name. It is the Middle Gateway, leading to the luxurious interior (of the royal palace: and was erected) in the year 871. That was the beginning of its construction, the time of comfort for these days.

“‘I pray to Allāh for the continuance of his sovereignty as long as birds sing on the branches of any garden.

“(Persian). ‘In the reign of the Shah, Asylum of the World, Ruknudduniyā waddīn Abūl Muzaffar Sultān Bārbak Shāh—May Allāh perpetuate his power and dominion!—the Middle Gate was erected in the year 871’ (A.H.=1466 A.D.).

“The Palace was divided into three parts—the first part, to the north, being probably used for holding *Darbār*, the second for the private quarters of the King, and the third for the *Harem*. Each division had a tank in it: one of these being paved with stone. From the fact that the *Darbār* Court is smaller than the other two enclosures, it is evident that very few people had access to it. There were two more walls running east to west to divide off the other compartments of the Palace. A reproduction of the plan of both the Fort and Palace made by Creighton in 1801 can be seen in Plate 8 of Ravenshaw’s *Gaur*.”

* “A fountain in Paradise.”

“THE *Qadam Rasūl*, OR FOOT-PRINT OF THE PROPHET.

“[Date of construction of the building 937 A.H. (1531 A.D.):

Builder’s name Sultān Nasrat Shah.]

“This relic is contained in a one-domed square building, situated within the enclosure of the Fort, to the east of the Palace. The total dimensions are 63 feet 3 inches by 49 feet 10 inches, the main chamber being 25 feet by 15 feet and the walls 5 feet thick. There are verandahs on three sides, 9 feet wide. The front of the mosque is incorrectly given with a straight parapet in Creighton’s Plate No. XI, whereas it is slightly curved in the Bengali fashion, as may be seen in Ravenshaw’s photograph, Plate No. XII. In front there are three arched openings supported on massive stone pillars. The walls are of brick, very highly ornamented, the whole face being divided into panels by bands of moulding. . . . At each corner there is an octagonal tower of 1 foot 5 inches face. This is crowned by a single stone pillar or minaret, whose diameter is only 1 foot 5 inches, equal to one face of the tower’ (Cunningham . . .). The building is after the later Muhammadan style. It was erected by Sultān Nasrat Shah, the son of Sultān Husain Shah, in 937 A.H. (1513 A.D.), as is shown by the following *Tughra* inscription* in three lines over the doorway:—

“*Translation*.—‘Almighty Allāh says, “He who does a good deed, will be rewarded tenfold.” This pure dais and its stone on which is the Footprint of the Prophet—May Allāh bless him!—were erected by the Exalted and Generous Sultān, the Sultān and son of the Sultān, Nāsirudduniyā waddīn Abūl Muzaffar Nasrat Shah the Sultān, son of Husain Shah the Sultān, son of Saiyid Ashraf al-Husainī—May Allāh perpetuate his kingdom and rule, and elevate his power and dignity!—in the year 937 A.H.’ (1531 A.D.).

“Another inscription* which was found illegible in some places by Blochmann has since been read by Munshī Ilāhī Bakhsh and the writer as follows:—

“The following is the literal translation: ‘The Prophet—May the peace (of Allāh) be on him!—has said, “Whoever builds a mosque for Allāh, Allāh will build for him seventy palaces in Paradise.” This mosque was built in the reign of the Sultān, son of the Sultān, . . . Shamsudduniyā waddīn Abūl Muzaffar Yūsuf Shāh, the Sultān, son of Bārbak Shāh, the Sultān, son of Mahmūd Shāh the Sultān. This mosque (I say) was built by the great Khān, and exalted Khāqān, Mirsād Khān Atābak Rāyat A’lā (‘of the Exalted Banner’) on the 18th of the holy month of *Ramazān*, 885 A.H.’ (1480 A.D.).

“This inscription, which is now fixed inside the door of the enclosure on the left as one enters, probably does not belong to the *Qadam Rasūl*, but to the *Tānīpārā Masjid*; in which case it fixes the date of the latter building. . . .

* Text of inscription not reproduced.—*Editor*.

“*The Foot-print of the Prophet*.—Inside the building, under the dome, there is a small carved pedestal of black marble, intended to receive a stone representation of the foot-print of the Prophet Muhammad. This latter was formerly at Pandua in the *Chilla Khāna** of Shah Jalāluddīn Tabrizī. It was removed by Husain Shah to Gaur in a beautiful wooden box-table, formerly inlaid with gold and silver work, which is still preserved in this building.

“During the reign of Nawāb Sirājuddaula the foot-print of the Prophet was carried off to Murshidābād, but was restored to its place by Mīr Ja’far. It is now in the custody of two brothers, Zinnat Mulla and Farāz Mulla, of Mahdīpūr. They keep it in their house for safety, and when any visitor comes, they put it in its proper place inside the building. The reason is said to be that the foot-print was once stolen but was subsequently recovered by the police.

“It is said that the foot-print of the Prophet was first brought by a Saint called Makhdūm Jahāniyān Jahāngasht from Arabia. He brought also the *Jhanda* (heraldic device mounted on a staff) which is still preserved in the shrine of Hazrat Shah Jalāl at Pandua.

“*Archaeological notes*.—The ornamental stone capitals which are on the top of the corner turrets of the *Qadam Rasūl* building are of very good design. Such work is not to be seen in any other building at Gaur or Pandua.

“*Rest-house*.—In front of the *Qadam Rasūl* there lies a roofless building which is supposed to have been a rest-house for visitors. The architecture is of the Mughal period and the building may have been constructed by Shah Shujā’. The walls of the building are very thick, and it was once covered with a flat roof. There are three rooms in the building, the middle one being a big hall, while the side rooms are small in size, with one arched opening in each on the west side.

“*Burial ground*.—On the western side of the *Qadam Rasūl*, there are the remains of a building, the roof and some of the walls of which have fallen down. Inside this, there are tombs in a ruined state. It is probable that these are the tombs of princes and high officials of Husain Shah and Nasrat Shah. Even the raised platform in the *Qadam Rasūl* building on which is placed the foot-print of the Prophet is believed by many to be the tomb of Nasrat Shah himself, who died in 1532 A.D., though, more probably, he was buried near his father at Banglā-Kot. . . . There are several other tombs inside the compound of the main building.

“*Jalālī Tank*.—There is a N×S tank to the west of the *Qadam Rasūl* building which is known by the name of *Jalālī Dighī*. The story goes that Sultān (Jadu) Jalāluddīn (1418-31) excavated it.

“*The Mausoleum of Fath Khān*.—This is inside the enclosure

* “A place of seclusion where a Saint generally passes forty days in meditation.”

of the *Qadam Rasūl* and is a plain building shaped like a thatched shed.* Fath Khān was the son of Dilīr Khān. A tradition regarding him is to the following effect:—

“The Emperor Aurangzīb, suspecting that the local Saint Shah Ni‘matullāh was advising Sultān Shujā’ to wage war against him, sent an officer called Dilīr Khān to Gaur to cut his head off. The Saint, however, had not given such advice, nor had he ever intended to do so. When Dilīr Khān arrived at Gaur with his two sons, one of them (Fath Khān) vomited blood and died on the spot. This so alarmed Dilīr Khān that he only paid his respects to the Saint. On the matter being reported to Aurangzīb, the Emperor thereafter trusted the Saint.”

“THE CHĪKĀ MASJID

“A short distance to the south-west of the *Qadam Rasūl*, there lies a single-domed building commonly called by the local people *Chīkā Masjid* or the ‘Bat Mosque’. The building, prior to its being repaired, was filled with numerous bats, and one could hardly approach the entrance owing to the bad smell of the bats coming out from the inside. The door openings are now provided with wire-netted frames and the bats no longer take shelter inside. This building is not a mosque as there exists no sign of prayer niches in the west wall nor did any pulpit ever exist in the building. In the stones of the doors and lintels there appear Hindu idols in an obliterated condition. It appears that the old materials of some Hindu temple were used in the construction. As General Cunningham has pointed out, the building is very similar to the Eklākhī Tomb at Pandua. . . . ‘Both are square with towers at the corners and curved battlements. Each is covered by a single dome: each has four doors.’ The dimensions of the two buildings may be compared by means of the following figures:—

	“Inside dimen- sions				Walls Ft. In.	Outside dimensions			
	Ft.	In.	Ft.	In.		Ft.	In.	Ft.	In.
Eklākhī Tomb	48	6 × 48	6		13	0	74	6 × 74	6
Chīkā Mosque	42	0 × 42	0		14	9½	71	6 × 71	6

“From all these points of similarity in size and style, General Cunningham was inclined to regard this as the tomb of Mahmūd I—the immediate successor of (Jadu) Jalāluddīn’s son, Ahmad Shah,—and his successors: but it is hardly possible that all trace of their graves could have disappeared.

* “The room is 23 feet 9 inches by 13 feet, and the outer dimensions of the building are 30 feet 8 inches by 21 feet 5 inches.

“It seems to the author that the building is of the time of the Hindu Kings (possibly Rājā Kāns) and that it was used for a temple. An arrangement for hanging a chain and bell by an iron hook in the central part of the ceiling is still visible and the building itself lies north to south. There are door openings on three sides only. From all these facts it may be concluded that a Hindu god was worshipped here.”

The tradition of the local people that Husain Shah used the building for state prisoners and imprisoned his Minister Sanātan here also makes General Cunningham’s theory improbable.

“There are glazed tiles of various colours in the cornice all round and on the corner pillars. The floor of the building was much damaged by digging for the bat-guano accumulated on the floor which was used as a manure for the mulberry plantations in the vicinity. The practice has now been stopped and the floor levelled. The broken portions of the east wall have been restored and the dome has been made watertight.

“*Remains of an Office building.*—Attached to this building, there was another very large building on the west. The roof of the building has fallen down, but the stone pillars supporting the arches and domes have now been set up again in their place. Examination of the site suggests that other buildings existed on the west side, and it is said by the local people that Government offices were located there.”

“THE GUMTI GATE

“A little east of the *Chīkā Masjid* and to the south of the *Lukā Churi Gate* . . . there exists a small one-domed building, which is supposed to have served as one of the east gates of the Fort. The rampart walls still exist abutting the north and south sides of the building. The inner room is 25 feet square and the walls are 8 feet 8 inches thick. There are four arched openings, each measuring 5 feet wide. The outer dimensions of the building are 42 feet 8 inches by 42 feet 8 inches, with four ornamental corner pillars. The inscription of the building has disappeared, but it may have been the work of Husain Shah who is recorded to have built a gate of the Fort in 918 A.H. (1512 A.D.). The inscription on the gate—now to be found at the shrine of Shah Ni‘matullāh at Firūzpūr . . . , and published in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (1873, p. 295) by H. Blochmann is reproduced here, together with a translation.*

“*Translation.*—“This gate of the Fort was built during the reign of the Exalted and Liberal Sultān ‘Alāudduniyā waddīn Abūl Muzaffar Husain Shah, the Sultān, son of Saiyid Ashraf al-Husainī—May Allāh perpetuate his kingdom and his rule! —in the year 918’ (A.D. 1512).

“*Turrets.*—The ornamentation of the corner pillars is very similar to that on the *Lattan Masjid* . . . , i.e., with various kinds of coloured-enamel bricks. The lower portions were formerly buried under débris which have now been removed. In front of the gate there was a pavement of stone. On both sides of the doors on the east and west there were fluted columns of brickwork and the building is decorated with

* Text of inscription not reproduced.—*Editor.*

an ornamental cornice all round. It was a small gateway to the fort; and close by are traces of what was possibly a guard room. If there is any truth in the tradition that the so-called *Chikā Masjid* was a prison, the *Gumti* may have been the gate of the jail enclosure.*”

“THE *Lukā Churi*, OR EASTERN GATE OF THE FORT

“This is a large three-storied gate south-east of the *Qadam Rasūl*, and is supposed to have been the Royal entrance to the Fort. On each side of this gate there are guard rooms, and above them was a *Naqqar Khāna* (place for beating drums), the roof of which is an entire flat arch made of bricks. The gate is 65 feet long and 42 feet 4 inches broad. The main entrance way is only 10 feet wide. The architecture of this gate is of the later Mughal style and differs much in the construction of its arches from other buildings. The gate is said to have been built by Shah Shujā’ in about 1655 A.D. when, long after the desertion of the city of Gaur, he endeavoured to revive it. General Cunningham confuses this gate with the Gumti Gate.

“*Origin of the name Lukā Churi.*—*Lukā Churi* (hide and seek) is a kind of game which is also called *Chhippa-churi*. This name has probably been given by the local people who have lately settled at the vicinity of Gaur: but what connection it has with the gate is not known. The original name of the gate would have been *Shāh-i-Darwāzah* (King’s Gate) as the tradition is that Shāh Shujā’, when entering the Palace, generally used this gate, and that he built it.”

“THE CHĀMKATTI MASJID

“[Probable date of construction 880 A.H. (1475 A.D.)]

“This mosque lies to the east of the *Lukā Churi* Gate and on the west side of the present Nawābganj road. There are variously coloured enamelled bricks in this old building at the cornice. From its name it may have been built by a certain *Chāmkatti* class of Muhammadans, still residing in *Chālīsapārā* near Old Māldah. According to Creighton, these were devotees who, in religious frenzy, used to gash themselves with knives and were therefore called *Chāmkatti* (skin cutters).

“The building, though much damaged by the weather, must originally have been a very graceful and elegant structure. The roof of the verandah shows a peculiar form of vaulting, and in the main chamber several of the large enamelled medallions between the arches are still preserved. The dome

* “The *Gumti* Gate has recently—1930—been converted into a Museum, in which, among other exhibits, is preserved the inscription of Nasrat Shah, dated 926 A.H., commemorating the building of a Gate, . . . ”

of the building has recently been repaired and made watertight.

“*General Cunningham’s Description.*—“The building consists of a single room 23 feet 8 inches square with a large verandah on the east or entrance side, 9 feet 11 inches broad and an octagonal tower at each corner. The walls are of brick. The whole building is . . . 50 feet 4 inches long by 33 feet 8 inches broad. There are three doorways in front and one at each end of the verandah and three doorways on each side of the main room except the west, where there is the usual prayer niche. . . . The lines of battlements are slightly curved in the Bengali fashion and the whole is covered with a single dome. Its inscription slab is gone, but the panel in which it was fixed was 4 feet 6 inches which measurement may hereafter perhaps lead to its identification and discovery. I think, however, it may be the identical inscription of A.H. 880 preserved by Francklin, which, he says, was copied from a mosque “called Mahājantola adjoining the *Lattan Masjid* and of the same kind of architecture.” Now this description can apply only to the *Chāmkatti Masjid* which stands in the very middle of Mahājantola at about half a mile from the *Lattan Masjid*, with which it corresponds most exactly, both in ground plan, and in style of architecture.’ Hence in all probability this mosque was erected by Sultān Yūsuf Shah, son of Bārbak Shah, in 880 A.H. (1475 A.D.)”

“THE TĀNTĪPĀRĀ MASJID

“(Probable date of erection 1480 A.D.)

“*Description by General Cunningham.*—“This mosque is an oblong brick building of two aisles, divided by four stone pillars down the middle. It is 78 feet by 31 feet inside, and 91 feet by 44 feet outside, with an octagonal tower at each corner. The walls are 6½ feet thick, with five arched openings in front and two at each end. The outer faces are ornamented with large panels with projecting flowered borders, each panel being decorated with a pointed arch, under which is the usual bell-shaped ornament suspended from a long chain. The towers also are ornamented in the same style. The battlement in front has the favourite Bengal curve or rise on the centre, above which rise ten hemispherical domes.* . . . To my taste this mosque is the finest of all the buildings now remaining in Gaur. Its ornamentation is rich and effective, and the large decorated panels stand out in high relief against the plain walls. The whole building is of a uniform rich red colour that is much more pleasing . . . than the gaudy glazed tiles of the *Lattan Masjid*” (Report, pp. 61-62). *Tāntīpārā* means the quarter for the weaver class. The mosque, though probably built by Mirsād Khān . . ., is known locally as ‘Umar Qāzī’s Mosque and is also called by the people after

* “These all fell during the earthquake of 1885 A.D.”

the name of the weavers' quarter. In the northern corner of the mosque a *takht* (or raised platform—probably for the ladies) used to exist. It is likely that the face of the wall underneath the *takht* and immediately below the northernmost *mihrab* was broken, or, if there was a *mihrab* at all beneath the *takht*, it was certainly separated from the *mihrab* above. There were windows with trellis work in the north and south walls. No trace of this *jālī* work is now visible, and they remain open.

“Though not strictly in accordance with archaeological practice, it would be an interesting experiment if some rich and public spirited Muhammadan would offer to bear the cost of repairing the broken portion of the east wall and reproducing the ornamentation. Local masons can do the flower work on bricks with their chisels (a peculiar instrument which they have had handed down to them from ancient times). The present arrangement of putting plain brick facing is not at all pleasing.

“Creighton, while sketching this mosque, also indicated the existence of a very big building on the north-east side of it. It seems to have been an outhouse for travellers, or it may have been intended for a *Madrāsah*. It no longer exists.”

“THE LATTAN MASJID

“(Possibly constructed in 1475 by Sultān Yūsuf Shah)

“This fine mosque lies a few yards east of the Nawābganj Road near the 11th milestone. It was once entirely covered with enamelled brickwork, but now the greater portion of the facing is gone. The worn-out portions have been restored with old bricks. According to Creighton, an inscription found in the vicinity showed that it was built by Sultān Yūsuf Shah in 880 A.H. (1475 A.D.); but he may have been referring to the Mahājantola inscription which Cunningham has assigned to the Chāmkatti mosque. As, however, the two mosques are identical in plan, they may very well have been erected by the same King. The floor of the mosque was formerly damaged by certain persons who caused holes to be dug in various places while searching for hidden treasure, but the damage has now been repaired. The interior of this mosque is in good condition, and the door and windows have been closed by wire netting to prevent bats from entering.

“*General Cunningham's description.*—“The ground plan of the Lattan Masjid is exactly the same as that of the Chāmkatti Mosque. Both are square rooms covered by a single dome, with a verandah or corridor in front. The main room of the Lattan is 34 feet square and the corridor is 34 feet long by 11 feet wide. The two side walls of the mosque and the front wall of the verandah are each $8\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick but the front and back walls of the main room are 10 feet 7 inches. The whole building is therefore only $72\frac{1}{2}$ feet long and 51

feet broad outside. The corridor has three arched openings in front, and one at each end, the middle arch being 6 feet 11 inches span, the side arches 5 feet 5 inches, and end arches 4 feet $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The mosque itself has three openings in the front and sides, of the same dimensions as those of the corridor front. The back wall has three niches corresponding to the doors on the other three sides. The square (of the main room) is changed into an octagonal form by arches springing from black stone pillars, 17 inches thick, which seem to be of Hindu workmanship. Above the octagon is a very flat vault, over which rises the hemispherical dome.”

“As already observed, ‘the whole surface of the masjid, both inside and outside, was once covered with glazed tiles* in various patterns of four colours, green, yellow, blue and white, the pattern being formed of hexagons touching at the angles, with triangular pieces, alternately white and blue, in the interstices . . . Francklin has given an enthusiastic description of the beauty of this mosque, which he thinks is not surpassed for ‘elegance of style, lightness of construction, or tasteful decoration, in any part of upper Hindustan.’ Cunningham agrees as to the pleasing appearance of the building, but states that ‘lightness of construction is just the point in which the Muhammadan architecture of Bengal fails. . . . For graceful outline, beauty of ornament, and stateliness of appearance, I greatly prefer the old Minār, the Tāntipārā Mosque, and the Dākhil Gateway’ (Report, pp. 62-65).

“*Note on the name ‘Lattan’.*—There is a local tradition that the mosque was built by a dancing girl who, being a favourite of some King, acquired much wealth and built the beautiful mosque with all the money she had, as a meritorious work. She concealed her name and put the King's name in the inscription tablet. The original meaning of the word is a ‘Tumbler pigeon.’ It may therefore be that the dancing girl received her name *Lattan* from her acrobatic dancing.

“On this subject, the late Dr. Bloch wrote as follows:—

“I may mention in passing that the modern name of this mosque, *Laṭan Masjid*, generally has been explained as “the Dancing Girl's Mosque” and that the word *Laṭan* has been taken as a corruption of the Bengali word for “dancing girl,” *Naṭin*,—the Sanskrit *naṭī*. I am quite willing to accept this explanation, but I very much doubt if it really means that the

* “The art of making encaustic tiles in bright colours still survives in Sindh. The colouring of the bricks has almost disappeared and the gaps in the walls have been filled with plain chiselled bricks. There are still remaining many worn-out portions of the brick-facing on the outside, and these require similar repairs to those effected on the inside walls. The flush pointings in cement, done to the decayed portions, look very clumsy. The turrets at the corners, if repaired up to the top, would restore to some extent the former beauty.

“There is a tank on the east side, which was formerly included in the mosque compound.”

mosque was built by a dancing girl. From ancient Indian inscriptions we certainly know of several instances where "dancing girls," or any other women of a similar class, called *Ganikā* in Sanskrit, joined with Buddhist monks or nuns, and with respectable laymen and laywomen, in adorning a sacred *Stūpa* or temple of their religion. However, I entertain grave doubts if the Maulavis, *Imāms* and *Khādims*, even at the capital of the Muhammadan Kingdom of Bengal, ever would have deigned to accept the gift of a mosque, if it came from a dancing girl, although she might have been some sort of an ancient *dame aux camélias*, who, with the approach of old age, might have repented, and expressed a desire to atone for her former life, by some kind of meritorious work like the building of a mosque. Even if we accept such a theory, I am afraid we are laying too much stress on a name which we owe merely to the modern tradition current among the ignorant peasants, who now live at the site of the ancient capital of Bengal. Another explanation of the word *Laṭan Masjid* has occurred to me, to which I feel very much inclined to give the preference. I accept the current interpretation of the word *Laṭan* as a corruption of the Bengali word *Naṭin* (Sanskrit *naṭī*), "a dancing girl." But the mosque received this name not because it was built by a dancing girl, but on account of its gaudy appearance, both inside and outside, decked all over with glazed tiles in bright colours, such as white and blue, and green and yellow. The mosque itself, on that account, suggested to the ignorant peasants of modern Gaur the idea of a dancing girl, covered with bright garments and glittering jewels, and the name *Laṭan Masjid* thus really means "the mosque, which resembles a dancing girl," and not the "dancing girl's mosque." (Conservation Notes, Eastern Bengal and Assam, 7th April 1909.)

"THE KOTWĀLI DARWĀZAH

"This is the central gate in the south wall of the city of Gaur near Mahdīpūr. It had a magnificent archway which has now fallen in, but before this happened Creighton made a good sketch of the gate. . . . The gateway had a brick arch 30 feet high and 16 feet 9 inches span. It is said that the Chief of Police was stationed here. There are battlements east and west of the gateway, and on each side apertures still exist from which to fire on an enemy. General Cunningham says: 'This gateway appears to me to be of a much earlier style of architecture than that of the Citadel gates. On each face, both inside and outside, there are two sloping semi-circular towers 6 feet in diameter. On each side of these towers there are deep niches with pointed arches resting on ornamental pillars. As all these peculiar features, the sloping towers, the deep niches and the highly decorated pillars are characteristic of the early Muhammadan architecture of

Delhi, it seems to me not improbable that this gateway may belong to the same period, or sometime between the [date of the earliest Muhammadan inscription found in Gaur, 1235 A.D.—*tempore* Ītamish] and the death of 'Alāuddīn Muhammad Khaljī [in 1315] when the influence of Delhi was permanent in Lakhnauti.' (Report, p. 70)."

"TAMALTOLĀ AT RĀMKELĪ

"The small village called Rāmkelī which lies midway between the *Bārādwārī Masjid* and the Piyāsbārī Bungalow, deserves a visit from any one who halts at the bungalow, or is making a tour round the ancient buildings of Gaur that are to be found in the vicinity. It was here that Chaitanya, the great religious reformer of Bengal, arrived in the month of *Jeth* (June) on his way to Brindaban during the reign of Sultān Husain Shah, and halted for a few days at a place in the village now famous as Tamaltolā. The *tamal* tree under which he sat is still in existence, between four *kelī-kadamba* trees, and it is said that this was the spot at which not only did the Sultān's Brahmin Ministers, Rūp and Sanātan, become Chaitanya's disciples, but Sultān Husain himself had an interview with the Master.

"The trees are now surrounded by a raised platform (*chabūtra*), and on this an inscribed tablet has recently (1929) been erected showing Chaitanya sitting in meditation. There is also a footprint in stone of the Master's feet. Besides the larger N×S tank (about 800 feet by 300 feet) called Rūp Sāgar . . . , there are also four small tanks to the north and south of the *chabūtra* which are called by the names of *Syāma Kunda*, *Rādhā Kunda*, *Lalitā Kunda* and *Bisākhā Kunda*—it is said after the names of similar tanks at Brindaban. Local tradition states that these four tanks at Tamaltolā were excavated by Jiv Goswāmī, the nephew of Rūp and Sanātan."

"THE GREAT SĀGAR DIGHĪ

"This enormous tank lies about six miles south-west of English Bāzār on the north of the road leading to the *Ganga Snān*, or bathing *ghāt* on the Bhāgirathī—the former bed of the Ganges—at Sa'dullāhpūr, and it is nearly one mile long by half a mile broad; the actual water measures 1,600 yards by 800 yards. The length is from north to south, proving its Hindu origin. It had six masonry *ghāts* or landing places, each 60 yards in breadth, four of which faced each other on the east and west banks, while there was also one at each of the north and south ends. These are now only distinguished by the mass of bricks and stones accumulated over their sites and by the more gradual slope of the bank towards the water's edge. This great work is said to have been commenced in

the reign of Lakhan Sen about the middle of the 12th century A.D.* It is now full of weeds, but is still a beautiful sight; while the water is pure and sweet up to the present day."

"THE JAHĀNIYĀN MASJID

"[Date of construction—941 A.H. (1538 A.D.), in the reign of Ghiyāsuddīn Mahmūd Shah]

"Ravenshaw referred to this mosque by the name of Jan-Jan-Miyān's mosque, but the local people call it the Jhān Jhānia Masjid. Possibly these names are only corruptions of the name of one of the saints (Jahāniyān Jahāngasht). . . . The building is situated a little to the south of the tomb of Akhī Sirājuddīn.

"The mosque is 56 feet long and 42 feet wide, the inner dimensions being 40 feet by 26 feet 3 inches. 'It is an oblong brick building faced with stucco, with three arched openings in front and octagonal towers at the corners finished with petty pinnacles above the roof level. The roof consists of six large domes supported in the inside by stone pillars. Outside the whole face of the wall is divided by bands of cornice into four parallel rows of uniform panels, placed in regular order one above the other. The cornice-bands are all slightly curved in the Bengali fashion' (Cunningham's Report, p. 73). This is a very fine building, and over the middle doorway there is inscription** in *Tughra* characters. The reading and the translation are given below:—

"*Translation.*—"The Prophet—May the blessings and peace of Allāh be upon him!—has said, "Whoever builds a mosque for Allāh, Allāh will build a similar house for him in Paradise." This mosque was built in the time of the Sultān, son of a Sultān, Ghiyāsudduniyā waddīn Abūl Muzaffar Mahmūd Shāh the Sultān, son of Husain Shāh the Sultān—May Allāh perpetuate his Kingdom and Rule! Its builder is the Lady Māltī—May her virtues be prolonged, and May Allāh perpetuate her high position!—in the year 941 A.H. (1535 A.D.).

"From the inscription we learn that the mosque was built by a lady of high rank, and Cunningham thought that the lady may have belonged to the household of the reigning King Mahmūd III. This building was constructed only three years before Bengal passed into the hands of Sher Shah, and is thus the latest of all the buildings at Gaur, with the probable exception of the *Lukā Churi* Gate.

* "Vide Ravenshaw's *Gaur*, p. 6. As, however, it is also mentioned in histories that Husain Shah excavated a large tank in 916 A.H. (1510 A.D.), the *Sāgar Dighī* may have been re-excavated at that time, but, in view of the probable connection of Husain Shah with a building to the north of the *Chhota Sāgar Dighī* . . . it is more likely that it is the latter tank which is referred to.—H.E.S."

** Text of inscription not reproduced.—*Editor*.

"*Ownership of the Jahāniyān Mosque, and Tomb of Shaikh Akhī Sirājuddīn.*

"The Manager of the *Shash-Hazārī* Estate of Pānduā claims these buildings on the ground that Akhī Sirājuddīn was the *murshid* (spiritual guide) of Hazrat 'Alāul Haqq, and the Estate receives the rent of the *waqf mahals* set apart for maintenance of these buildings. Repairs to the mosque and tomb are urgently needed, for if they continue to be left uncared for, they will soon fall into complete decay. The domes of the mosque, in particular, ought to be repaired and made watertight."

Old Māldā—The municipal town situated on the left bank of the Mahānandā at its confluence with the Kālindri. Population of the town was 4,885 in 1961. Old Māldā was the most important town in the district prior to the coming of the British in 1680. With the establishment of the town of English Bazar the importance of the town of Old Māldā began to wane, and by the time the district of Māldā came into existence the decline had almost become complete. The new town of English Bazar has not only deprived the town of Old Māldā of its importance but has also usurped its name, English Bazar being now known popularly as Māldā, and it is to differentiate the old town of Māldā from this new Māldā that it is now referred to as Old Māldā.

Old Māldā being a town of some antiquity contains some buildings erected long ago. The most important of such buildings is the Jāmi' Mosque. It is "a comparatively modern-looking building, built partly of carved brick and partly of stone; but if it is the *Jāmi' Masjid* referred to in the inscription now ever Shāh Gada's shrine, it may go back to at least the time of the Husaini Kings. The mosque is 72 feet long by 27 feet wide; and it has two domes and one big arched vault. The two side chambers are 16 feet square and the central hall is 22 feet by 18 feet. There are eight minarets at its corners and it has a gateway in front. From the inscription over the doorway it would seem that the mosque was built (or repaired) in Akbar's time in 1004 A.H. (1596 A.D.). The reading and translation of the inscription* are as follows:

"This place of worship became known in the world and was called in India by the name of Ka'aba. As it was the second Ka'aba, the date was disclosed from the invisible world (by the sentence) *Baitullāh al-harām Ma'sūm*.'"** The numerical (*abjad*) values of the individual letters of this phrase total 1004 which gives the *Hijra* year (or 1596 A.D.).

"There are stone lintels at the entrance gate of this mosque—evidently taken from Hindu buildings at Pānduā or Gaur—which are finely carved in a very similar fashion to a stone lintel in the Calcutta Museum.

"The arrangements that formerly existed for supplying water

* Text of inscription not reproduced.—*Editor*.

** "The sacred and protected House of Allāh." Ravenshaw states that the builder's name was Ma'sūm: . . . "

for ablution are also noteworthy. After water was drawn in buckets from the well in the compound it was poured into a reservoir just to the north of the well. This reservoir had 5 copper spouts on the northern side—possibly with taps or plugs—by which water could be supplied at will to the Faithful before *Namāz*.

“On a bastion in the S.W. corner of the mosque courtyard there is a building (with the remains of a flight of stone steps leading up to it from outside) which is said to have been formerly used as a *Madrasah*; and possibly there was a corresponding room at the N.W. corner as well. Behind these, to the west of the mosque are two other enclosures which were used as graveyards. There are about fifty graves altogether. It is said that the graves of the male members of the builder’s family are on the north-west side and those of the women members on the south-west side.”

The next important structure which merits visit is the tower at Nīmasarāī. This tower stands at the confluence of the Kālindri and the Mahānandā rivers, on the opposite side of the latter to Old Māldā. The upper portion of the tower is no longer in existence. The lower portion is still standing, and it is studded on the outside with stone projections resembling elephant’s tusks.

The *Phūtī Masjid* derives its name from the cracks it developed during an earthquake. It was constructed by one Khān Mu’azzan Ulugh Sher Khān in the year 900 A.H. (1495 A.D.).

Pānduā—It is situated at a distance of 11 miles (17.7 km.) from English Bazar on the road to Bālurghāt. It was for some time the capital of Bengal during the reign of Muslim Sultāns. It was also known as Firuzābād at that time. There are extensive ruins in and around Pānduā, the descriptions of which are reproduced from the *Memoirs of Gaur and Pānduā*:

“A visitor at the present day can either proceed in a car along the dusty road from the Nīmasarāī railway station (Old Māldah) to the *dāk* bungalow situated near the Adīna Mosque, or detrain at the Adīna station which is about 3 miles from the bungalow. In either case he will cross, at some point of the road, the line of old fortification 20 miles in circumference which the recent air survey have shown to have protected the town in former times. . . .

“On approaching Pandua in this way, the first two buildings which attract attention are the shrines of Makhdūm Shah Jalāl on the right of the road and of Hazrat Nūr Qutbul ‘Ālam on the left. The shrines are called *Barī Dargāh* and *Chhotī Dargāh* respectively. Numerous pilgrims still repair to these places, and every year two big fairs are held, one in the month of *Rajab* at the *Barī Dargāh* and the other in *Sha’bān* at the *Chhotī Dargāh*. The fairs are attended by thousands of persons and each lasts for four or five days. Further on, to the left, come the *Qutb Shāhī* Mosque and *Eklākhī* Mausoleum, and, finally, on the right (opposite the *dāk* bungalow) is found the great Adīna Mosque. It may be added that

most of the principal sites are within fairly easy walking distance of the bungalow, though it is better, if possible, for a thorough inspection of the fortifications, to avail oneself of the services of an elephant.

“ANTIQUITIES OF PĀNDUĀ

“Of the remains of old buildings, tanks, etc., at Pānduā, the following are the most important and in the best state of preservation:—

“I. THE *Barī Dargāh*, OR SHRINE OF SHAH JALĀL

“A.—Description of the Buildings

“The *Barī Dargāh* consists of the *Jāmi’ Masjid* (in the northern part of which is the original *Chilla Khāna* of the Saint) and other buildings dedicated to the memory of Hazrat Shah Jalāl Tabrīzī, who was possibly also the patron Saint of Sylhet. The original shrine at Pānduā may have been erected by Sultān ‘Alāuddīn ‘Alī Shah at the instance of the Saint in 1342 A.D. . . . as the rectangular pillars of the mosque are of a singularly severe character and—unlike what is seen in other buildings at Pānduā, e.g., the Adīna Mosque—all use of materials from Hindu temples seems to have been avoided in the original building.

“The actual compound containing the buildings is situated 200 or 300 yards away from the main Devkot road, but the existence of a *Salāmī Darwāzah* on this road points to the possibility of other buildings having formerly existed on either side of the narrow path that runs in a south-easterly direction from the *Salāmī Darwāzah* to the present main compound.

“On entering the compound through a small gateway, an isolated building, containing the grave of Chānd Khān (who erected the *Bhandar Khāna* . . .) with those of his wife and son, is seen in the further south-east corner. Opposite to Chānd Khān’s tomb is a short passage leading into the inner compound, and on the north side of this passage is the stone lattice work of which an illustration is given in. . . . On emerging from the passage, the *Jāmi’ Masjid* is seen in front, with the *Lakhan Senī Dālān* immediately to the left on the northern bank of a small tank. To the right lies Hājī Ibrāhīm’s tomb, and the *Bhandar Khāna* (which includes the Saint’s second *Chilla Khāna* at the western end), while the *Tannūr Khāna* is round the corner to the north-east, immediately to the east of the *Bhandar Khāna*.”

“B.—The *Jāmi’ Masjid*

“. . . the original mosque is said to have been erected by Sultān ‘Alāuddīn ‘Alī Shah in 1342 A.D. on the spot where

Hazrat Shah Jalāl used to sit for meditation. The Saint's seat was formerly enclosed with silver railings. The mosque was repaired in 1075 A.H. (1664 A.D.) by Shah Ni'matullāh of Firūzpūr, Gaur... The *Jhanda* (heraldic device in copper) of Makhdūm Jahāniyān Jahāngasht ('World Roamer'), as well as an ancient banner, are still preserved in this building.

"The inscriptions* put up in the east wall of the building are as follows:—

"*Translation.*—'When this grand building was completed the date was "Bright be the shrine" (1075 A.H.)'

"And in another place it is written* :—

"*Translation.*—'This is the building of Hazrat Shāh Jalāl. Hazrat Shāh Ni'matullāh repaired it.'

"The stone pillars inside the building for supporting the arches and domes are very massive. The stone slabs that project all round the cornice seem to be taken from the platform of the *Bādshāh-ka-Takht* of the Adīna Mosque, and one of them, which has a long inscription on it, ought to be replaced, so that the inscription can be read and the slab preserved. The building is 57 feet long, 64 feet wide and 24 feet high.

"There is an inscription on the west wall of the *Sīdāh-gāh* (place of prostration) to the south of the mosque. It contains sentences of the *Sūrah Alif-Lām-Mīm* from the Second Chapter of the *Qur'ān*.

"*Carved Stone Pillars, and other objects of note in the Inner Compound.*

"In front of the mosque there are two handsomely carved stone pillars which have evidently been taken from a Hindu temple. Nearby is a stone on which the Saint took his bath, as well as the base of a large pillar on which he is said to have sat when distributing alms.

"There are also growing in the enclosure a Jack-fruit tree and a Pomegranate tree which are said to have been planted by Shah Jalāl. The branches of the latter are weighed down by small pieces of brick which people who have no children, or are suffering from any disease, tie on to the branches by strips of cloth in order that the Saint may remove their affliction.

"C.—The Bhandār Khāna, or Store House

"This building was erected by Chānd Khān in 1084 A.H. (1673 A.D.), and appears to be only a continuation eastwards of an older building that contained the second *āstānah* (place of meditation) of Shah Jalāl. The local story as to why two *āstānahs* were provided is that when his *Pir*, Shaikh Shihāb-uddīn Suhrawardī, visited Pandua, Shah Jalāl made him sit on his own seat inside the mosque, and that after the *Pir* left, the Saint had another *āstānah* erected a short distance to the

* Text of inscription not reproduced.—*Editor.*

north-east as he did not feel it possible again to use the seat that had been occupied by his preceptor. The entire building (including the *āstānah* room to the west) is 62 feet 4 inches long, 30 feet 6 inches wide and 15 feet 10 inches high and the inscription* on the front wall is as follows:—

"*Translation.*—'O Benefactor! O Avenger! In the name of Allāh, the Merciful, the Compassionate! May it end well! Shāh Jalāluddīn who was born at Tabrīz, in whose praise tongues are pouring forth pearls. For his sake Chānd Khān erected this building, being full of sincere motives. If people ask who dwells in this bright and beautiful edifice, perform the ablution of your mouth, as was done by (the poet) Sāhir, and afterwards give in significant language its answer in the garb of a Chronogram "Shāh Jalāluddīn of Tabrīz." From the last line 1084 A.H. (1673 A.D.) comes out.'

"D.—The Lakhan Senī Dālān

"The *Lakhan Senī Dālān* is a small building, opposite the *Bhandar Khāna*, on the northern bank of the tank previously referred to, and appears to have served as a *baitak-khāna* (reception room). It is only noteworthy for the inscription* on its front wall, which seems to have been formerly over the first *āstānah* of Shah Jalāl, i.e., the *Jāmi'* Mosque building, and runs as follows:—

"*Translation.*—'This exalted *āstānah* of Hazrat Makhdūm Shāh Jalāl of Tabrīz was (formerly) repaired by Saīyid Ni'matullāh Shāh. As the wall on the southern side of it was not strong, the building was shaken a little during the *mutawallī*-ship of Mawlawī Haibatullāh. Muhammad 'Alī of Barjī, being appointed Manager, engaged Rām Rām, son of Baikāl Rāj (to repair it). The repairs were completed on the 22nd *Rajab* in the year 1134 A.H. (1722 A.D.), corresponding to 1119 of the Bengali era.'

"It would be interesting to ascertain how the building came to be known as 'Lakhan Sen's Building'. Some say that one Lakhan Sen was the *mutawallī* of the shrine for some time.

"E.—The Tannūr Khāna, or Kitchen

"This building, which lies to the east of the *Bhandar Khāna*, is of brick, and is 49 feet long, 27 feet wide and 16 feet 6 inches high. There is an oven in this house, which the Saint is said to have put on his head and used to cook meat and bread for his teacher while on their travels. The inscription* on the building records that it was built by one Sa'dullāh in 1093 A.H. (1682 A.D.), and runs as follows:—

"*Translation.*—'In the name of Allāh, the Merciful, the Compassionate! May it end well! Jalāluddīn Shāh was the Accepted of Allāh, Angelic in disposition and King of Reli-

* Text of inscription not reproduced.—*Editor.*

gion and of the World. His disciple Sa'dullāh erected from pure motives this rest-giving building on earth. How excellent is a structure wherein people attain their wishes! Wisdom asked what kind of building is this in which the hearts of men for ever find rest. An angel from the unseen world whispered to him "It is a noble building full of bliss." From the last line the year 1093 *Hijri* comes out.'

"F.—*The Salāmi Darwāzah, or Entrance Gate*

"This gateway stands on the right hand side of the main road. The gate proper is 22 feet long and 7 feet 9 inches wide. In front of this is a platform where, it is said, the Saint used to sit and perform his devotions. This gateway is built of brick and stone. The roof of the gate has recently been rebuilt in a wrong way by the *dārogā* of the shrine and thus the flat roof is now changed into a hut-shaped one. *Allāh, Shāh Jalāl* is written in Arabic characters on the stone lintel of the gate.

"Close by, to the south of this gate, is a very old *nīm* tree. Rumour goes that it has grown out of a *dāntwān* (twig) with which the Saint cleansed his teeth.

"Opposite the gateway there is a flowering tree known as *Gul-i-Chīn*. The local people allege that a branch of this tree hangs over the road as far as the *Chabūtra* of the Saint and daily sprinkles fresh flowers over it. Another story about this branch is that a Hindu overseer once happened to have that branch cut by his coolies. As the branch fell his pony reared, and the overseer fell down and died. Some of the coolies, it is said, also vomited blood and died."

"2. THE *Chhoti Dargāh*

"Within the precincts of this famous *dargāh*, which is about a quarter of a mile to the north-west of the shrine of Shah Jālāl are found (in addition to many other graves) the tombs of the Saints Nūr Qutbul 'Ālam and his father 'Alāul Haqq, who probably claimed descent from the Quraysh tribe of Arabia—in particular from the famous general of early Muhammadan times, Khālīd bin Walīd. They were thus of the same stock as the Prophet Muhammad."

"*Objects of Interest in the Dargāh Enclosure*

"The following are the more important objects of interest to be seen in the *Chhoti Dargāh* enclosure.

"A.—THE *Chilla Khāna* OF NŪR QUTBUL 'ĀLAM

"This is close to the tomb of the Saint and on the west side of it. Although the building is old, the roof and verandah appear to have been built of late years. It is of brick, with

stone facing, and there is a good deal of stone carving inside. On the east side there are three doors, over each of which there is an inscription. Those to the left and right are not very legible but, from the reproductions given in Ravenshaw's *Gaur* [Plate 49-No. 8(a): and Plate 52-No. 15], it may be seen that the former records the building of a mosque in the time of the short-lived Sultān Nāsiruddīn Abūl Mujāhid Mahmūd Shah II (*Rabī* II 896?-A.H.: Spring of 1491 A.D.) by Ulugh Majlis Khān A'lā, while the latter dates from 915 A.H. (1509 A.D.) in Husain Shah's reign, and also appears to commemorate the building of a mosque by one Ulugh Tāhir Khān. The middle inscription is more legible, and the reference to the tomb being in the *Sūfi Khāna* seems to show that the Saint was buried (like the Prophet himself) within his own house, which has now disappeared but which was rebuilt in 1493 A.D. It should be noted, however, that the local people also refer to the Guest House (now the local Post Office) which lies to the north-east of the main enclosure, as the *Sūfi Khāna*. The Muhammad Ghaus mentioned in the inscription was one of the great grandsons of Hazrat Nūr Qutbul 'Ālam. The wording of the inscription* is as follows:—

Translation.—'Almighty Allāh says: "Verily the first house that was sounded for men is the one in blessed Bakkah (Mecca) which is a guidance to all beings. In it are clear signs; the place of Abraham; and who enters into it is safe; and Allāh enjoined men to visit it, if they are able to go there; but whosoever disbelieves, verily, Allāh is independent of all beings." (*Qur'ān* III, verses 90 to 92). In this *Sūfi* building the Tomb of the Pole (*Qutb*) of Poles was built, who was slain by the love of the All-giver, the Shaikh of Shaikhs Hazrat Shaikh Nūrul Haqq wa-sh-Shara' wa-d-Dīn Saiyid Qutb 'Ālam—May Allāh purify his beloved heart and may Allāh illuminate his grave! This house was built in the reign of the just, liberal and learned Sultān, the Defender of Islām and of the Muslims, Shamsudduniyā waddīn Abū Nasr Muzaffar Shāh, the Sultān—May Allāh perpetuate his kingdom and rule and may He elevate his condition and dignity! This house was built during the *khilāfat* of Shaikhul Islām the Shaikh of Shaikhs, son of the Shaikh of Shaikhs, Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus—May Almighty Allāh ever protect him! Dated the 17th of the blessed *Ramazān* 898 A.H.' (2nd July 1493 A.D.).

"B.—INSCRIPTION IN THE KITCHEN

"Just to the north of the *Chilla Khāna* lies the Saint's kitchen, in the passage of which, fixed over the door leading out to the north, is to be found a very beautiful inscription of the time of Nāsiruddīn Mahmūd Shah I, in whose person the

* Text of inscription not reproduced.—*Editor*.

House of Ilyās Shah was restored to the throne of Bengal in 1442 A.D. It records the construction of the tomb of an Imām (possibly that of the immediate successor to Shaikh Zāhid, the grandson of Hazrat Nūr Qutbul 'Ālam), by one Latif Khān, and is dated the 28th *Zil Hijja*, 863 A.H. (26th October 1459 A.D.). The inscription* . . . runs thus—

“*Translation.*—‘Almighty Allāh says: “Every soul shall taste of death” (*Qur’ān*, III, 182). He also says, “When their time is come, they shall neither retard nor advance it an hour” (*Qur’ān*, X, 50). He also says, “Everything on earth fadeth, but the face of thy Lord remaineth full of glory and honour,” (*Qur’ān*, LV, 26).

“‘Our revered Master, the Teacher of Imāms, the Proof of the Congregation, the Sun of the Faith, the Testimony of Islām and of the Muslims, who bestowed advantages upon the poor and the indigent, the Guide of Saints and of such as wish to be guided, passed away from this transient world to the everlasting mansion on the 28th *Zil Hijja*, a Monday, of the year 863, during the reign of the Sultān of Sultāns, the Protector of the countries of the Faithful, Nāsirudduniyā waddīn Abūl Muzaffar Mahmūd Shah, the Sultān—May Allāh keep him in safety and security! This tomb was erected by the great Khān, Latif Khān—May Allāh protect him against evils and misfortunes!’

“C.—*Sijdā-Gāh*, OR PRAYING-STATION

“The front wall of the kitchen passage serves as a *Sijdā-gāh*, before which persons visiting the *Chilla Khāna* can perform their devotions; and on the east face of this wall is fixed a very big inscribed stone*, the reading of which is as follows:—

“*Translation.*—‘The Prophet—May Allāh’s blessing rest upon him!—says: “He who builds a mosque for Allāh, shall have a castle built for him by Allāh in Paradise.” This mosque was built in the reign of the Just and Liberal Sultān Shamsudduniyā waddīn Abūl Muzaffar Yūsuf Shāh, the Sultān, son of Bārbak Shāh, the Sultān, son of Mahmūd Shāh the Sultān—May Allāh perpetuate his kingdom and sovereignty!—by the exalted Majlis, Majlisul Majālis—May Almighty Allāh exalt his dignity in both worlds! And this took place on Friday, the 20th *Rajab*—May its dignity be respected!—of the year 884, according to the era of the flight of the Prophet, upon whom may Allāh’s blessing and peace rest!’

“It is clear that this fine inscription originally belonged to a mosque built in 884 A.H. (1479 A.D.) in the reign of Yūsuf Shah; and that it has been brought to the shrine from elsewhere. A reproduction of the inscription will be found as Plate 47 of Ravenshaw’s *Gaur*.

* Text of inscription not reproduced.—*Editor*.

“This is a three-domed brick mosque which lies immediately to the north of the tomb of Makhdūm ‘Alāul Haqq. Its dimensions are 58 feet by 24 feet. There is no inscription over the door*.

“It is said that one Qāzī Nūr endowed a landed property at Qāzihatta (near the Raikhān Dighī, 3 miles to the north-west) for the proper up-keep of this mosque. The income of this property is still about Rs. 500 per annum and is included in the revenues of the *Shash Hazārī Estate*.

“E.—*Mitha Talao*, OR SWEET TANK

“On the east side of the shrine enclosure there is a tank, said to have been dug in the time of ‘Alāul Haqq. The *ghāts* are made of stone taken from the neighbouring ruined buildings. Some years ago a carved stone from the pulpit of the Adīna Mosque was found at the east *ghāt*.

“F.—*Bahisht-ka-Darwāzah*, OR GATE OF PARADISE

“This is a small one-domed building south-east of the tomb of Hazrat Nūr Qutb ‘Ālam. It is said that Shaikh Zāhid, grandson of Nūr Qutbul ‘Ālam, was born in this building, which thus became sacred, and pilgrims visit it with the hope that their sins will be forgiven in the next world. Over the gateway there is an inscription in curious characters, but only *Yā Allāh* and *Yā Fatāh* are legible. It is said that *Ism A’zam* (the Greatest Name of Allāh) is written on it. The common belief is that persons haunted by evil spirits are freed from them on approaching the door of this sacred place, and crowds of superstitious people are to be seen surrounding the spot to witness the interesting ceremonies by which evil spirits are exorcised when these are being performed.”

“K.—THE *Bībī Mahal*

“This was the house for the *harem* of the Saint Nūr Qutbul ‘Ālam. It lies north of the shrine and is now a heap of ruins. From the enamelled bricks lying on the site it is assumed that the building was faced with glazed bricks. It is said that the ground storey lies under these heaps of brick. Some carved stone lintels are still lying on the spot.

“L.—STONE CAPITAL

“A huge circular stone block, 6 feet 9 inches in diameter and 3 feet 6 inches thick, lies to the south of the *Bībī Mahal*. It

* “This mosque has now—1930—been repaired (and modernised) by Bībī Shamsun-Nahār, the eldest surviving descendant of the Saint.—H.E.S.”

seems to be the capital of a stone column, and a photograph of it has been given in Ravenshaw's *Gaur* (Fig. 1: Plate 30). The local people call it the Bath-seat of Nūr Qutbul 'Ālam. In 1896 this stone was moved by the then Manager of the Estate and a hole dug to search for supposed hidden treasure. The hole is still visible, and brickwork to a great depth can be seen in the hole.

"M.—THE *Musāfir Khāna*, OR GUEST HOUSE, AND GATE

"These buildings lie outside the enclosure of the *dargāh* and to the north-east of it. The *Musāfir Khāna* itself (which is also referred to by the local people as the *Sūfi Khāna*) is now used as a post office. The gate was built of carved tiles, traces of which are still existing in the walls, but the building is no longer in its original form and the roof is now covered with old wooden beams and *bargas* (small cross beams). The sill of the gateway is a black basalt stone and bears the signs of the Zodiac. On one of the jambs of this gateway are some marks said to have been caused by a *faqīr* named Dokor-posh, or Khirka-posh (He of the tattered clothes) who, the legend says, arrived at the gate, hungry and foot-sore and, on being refused admittance, dashed his head against the jamb. He was afterwards admitted to take a share of the food when decently dressed, and, it is said, revenged himself on the authorities by making his clothes eat the meal set before him."

"3. THE *Qutb Shāhī Masjid*

"[Built by a Member of the Qutbī Family in 990 A.H. (1582 A.D.)]

"The Qutb Shāhī Mosque lies midway between the shrine of Nūr Qutbul 'Ālam and Eklākhī Mausoleum. It is built of brick and stone and had ten domes. The roof has fallen in, but the walls and the pulpit are standing. Its dimensions are 82 feet 6 inches by 37 feet 8 inches. From the inscription it appears that it was built in 990 A.H. (1582 A.D.) by Makhdūm Shaikh, son of Muhammad al-Khālīdī who was a descendant of Nūr Qutb. It was called the *Qutb Shāhī Masjid*, as a mark of respect to the Saint Nūr Qutbul 'Ālam. The following is the two-line inscription* in *Tughra* characters over the doorway:—

"*Translation.*—'The Prophet—May the blessings and peace of Allāh be upon him!—has said, "Whoever in this world has erected a mosque for Allāh, Allāh will build for him seventy palaces in Paradise." This mosque was built by our great and respected Makhdūm Shaikh, son of Muhammad al-Khālīdī who was the Supervisor of the abode of the Pole of Poles and Leader of the Pious. He was a follower of

* Text of inscription not reproduced.—*Editor*.

Shaikh Nūr—May Allāh extend his shadow and make his past deeds fruitful! This mosque is called the Qutb Shāhī Mosque, and its Chronogram is "Makhdūm 'Ubaid Rājī." By taking the numerical value of the Arabic letters of the last sentence, the date is seen to be 990 A.H.

"There is another inscription* over the pulpit . . .

" . . . , the meaning of this inscription is more or less unintelligible, and they do not yield the date 993 A.H. given on the stone. Perhaps the correct reading of the last line . . . yields 993 A.H. The purport of the above verse** might then be said to be: 'Look well at this bird who is always inclined to live in the desert. With his beak he utters a melody of the true faith like the morning breeze. This chronogram was revealed by the grace (of Allāh) and was accepted. "The foundation of the mosque adorned by Makhdūm" in the year 993.'

"There is an entrance gate attached to this mosque; but it is now past repair. This gate had an inscription but it is no longer traceable. The text and translation of the inscription* are reproduced here (with slight corrections) from Beveridge's notes on the *Khurshūd-i-Jahān Numā* . . .

"*Translation.*—'The gate of this mosque was built by the humble *Faqīr* Makhdūm Shaikh, son of Muhammad al-Khālīdī, who was the disciple of him of high rank, the Sun of the Sky of Religion, and the Moon of the Mine of Truth, a Guide to the Way of Spirituality, the Exalted Makhdūm, Makhdūm Qutb-i-'Ālam—May Allāh illuminate his grave! The gate of the mosque was finished in the year 993' (A.H.: 1585 A.D.).

"This mosque is sometimes called the *Sona Masjid* (Golden mosque). It seems that the name *Sona* originated from the gilding of the carved work on the face of the walls as well as on the crowns of the turrets.

"*Architectural Notes on the building*

"(a) *Pierced work in the windows.*—There are two windows in each of the short walls of the mosque, containing pierced stone work for ventilation such as is to be seen in many mosques at Gaur.

"(b) The construction of the mosque is excellent though it was built with materials collected from other buildings. The walls are curved at the cornices to imitate the appearance of a bungalow.

"(c) The hemispherical domes rested on pointed arches which were built over the pillars. When the pillars sunk, the arches cracked and the thrust of the broken arches caused the domes to fall.

"(d) The pillars in the middle of the mosque are all clumsy, and they collapsed when the roof fell in. They have now been set up and the floor has been terraced.

* Text of inscriptions not reproduced.—*Editor*.

** Verse not reproduced.—*Editor*.

“(e) The *Chabūtra* in front of the pulpit . . . is a peculiar feature of this mosque. It seems to be a grave of some *fakīr* who was buried in the mosque after it fell into disrepair.

“4. THE EKLAHĪ MAUSOLEUM

“[Probable date of construction c. 1412-15 A.D.]

“This is a brick building, with a single lofty dome, which lies a short distance to the north-east of the Qutb Shāhī Mosque. Its dimensions are 78 feet 6 inches by 74 feet 6 inches, the inner diameter of the dome being 48 feet 6 inches. The door openings are 6 feet 7½ inches by 13 feet 6 inches and the walls are 13 feet thick. Its name is due to the tradition that it cost a lakh of rupees. Though the materials are chiefly brick, it is the handsomest building in the place. The external walls are ornamented by curved tiles and the ceiling of the dome is neatly plastered and covered with ornamental work. Its interior is an octagon which is only lighted through the four small doors, one on each side. Over the entrance door is a lintel with a Hindu idol carved on it, and round the doorway are other stones on which may be detected partial representations of the human figure: the original carvings must therefore have been of Hindu origin. There are three graves inside. The author of *Riyāzu-s-Salātīn* states that one tomb is that of Jalāluddīn, the son of Rājā Kāns, and that the other two belong to Jalāluddīn’s wife and son. Munshī Ilāhī Bakhsh, the author of the *Khurshūd-i-Jahān Numā*, was inclined to think that the western tomb, which is the highest, is that of Sultān Jalāluddīn; that the one to the east is of his son Sultān Ahmad Shah; and that the middle one is the tomb of his wife.

“There are two stone posts at the head of the tombs of Jalāluddīn and Ahmad Shah. The stone on that of the latter is raised a little above the level of the tomb, which shows that the grave belongs to a martyr. The stone post of Jalāluddīn’s tomb is on the same level with the tomb, and so it is known that he died a natural death.

“The architecture of this building is of the usual Indo-Saracenic style, and the period seems to be about that of Jalāluddīn’s reign. Possibly it was built by his father, Rājā Kāns. . . . it is almost identical in structure with the so-called *Chikā Masjid* at Gaur near the *Qadam Rasūl* building.

“Notes on the construction of the building

“(a) *Cells*.—There are four cells in the walls inside the building. These were intended for the readers of the *Qur’ān*. The blessings of Allāh were generally invoked on behalf of the deceased on every completion of the reading of the whole *Qur’ān*. It is believed that ‘Hāfizes’ (persons who know the *Qur’ān* by heart) were paid by the estate for such readings.

“(b) *Peculiar construction of the Entrance door*.—The chief door, or public entrance to the east, has its threshold sloping down towards the main room where the Royal graves are lying, a construction making it natural for persons entering the room to bend the head towards the graves of the Kings as a mark of respect. It is possible that it was into this building that Rājā Kāns called Shaikh Badrul Islām, the son of Shaikh Mu’inuddīn ‘Abbās, before he was executed by drowning. His object was to induce the Shaikh to bend his head towards him as he entered the room, but the Shaikh, when entering, thrust forward his legs first and thus avoided saluting the Rājā whom he regarded as a *Kāfir* (infidel).

“(c) *Grooves in the window frames*.—The other door openings, or rather windows, bear grooves in the stone sills and lintels, which were probably intended to enable these openings to be closed with iron rods. The windows are now provided with wire-netting, and the main door is also closed with the same material and locked. From the stone bearings near the entrance it appears that a wooden door was originally provided for the building.

“(d) *The crowns of the turrets*.—The turrets at the four corners of the building have lost their capitals, so that these cannot be restored in the absence of any old drawings or photographs to show their original appearance.

“(e) . . . this building has also a curvature in the walls at the cornices to imitate the ordinary appearance of a bungalow.

“(f) *Carved ornamentation in the brickwork*.—There are two broad bands of richly decorated brickwork below the cornice. The ornamentation is very varied in design, and no single pattern is often repeated.

“5. THE ADĪNA MOSQUE

“This celebrated mosque was built by Sikandar Shah, between 766 and 776 A.H. (1364-1374 A.D.). Though partly in ruins, it is the most remarkable existing example of Muslim architecture of that period. It is a quadrangular building consisting of cloisters, which surround a central area of the same form. It extends 507½ feet from north to south and 285½ feet from east to west. On the east side, through which the building is entered by an insignificant door, the cloisters are 38 feet wide, and have 3 aisles. The total space is subdivided by means of transverse brick walls and stone pillars into 108 squares, each of which was once covered with a small dome. The northern and southern sides are constructed on the same pattern, but, being shorter, had only 39 and 51 domes respectively in each. The western range of cloisters, being 64 feet in breadth, had 5 (instead of 3) aisles, but as the centre is occupied by the Nave of the mosque the number of domes on this side was only the same as that of the eastern cloister,

viz., 108. The number of domes covering the cloisters was therefore 306 in all. The height of all these cloisters was about 20 feet, including a broad ornamented cornice. Towards the quadrangle* they opened inwards with arches, which corresponded to the squares*. On the outside to the north, east, and south, there are many small windows, highly decorated with carved tiles disposed in arches. The western wall, except for four small doors, and a window high up in the Central Hall, is devoid of openings, but inside there are the usual niches towards which the worshippers turned their faces, when at prayer. Many of these are polished and highly carved. In the southern wing of the western cloister where the common people worshipped, the niches correspond to the 18 rows of arches which form the cloisters. The northern wing of the same cloister only differs in so far as it contains, next to the Central Hall, a raised platform called the *Bādshāh-ka-Takht*, which will be described later. This is supported upon thick columns, about eight feet high. The adjacent wall contains three niches and two doors, which are minutely carved and ornamented with passages from the *Qur'ān*. These doors communicate directly with a room on the same level called by the name of Sikandar's Chamber. This is 42 feet square, and was formerly covered by nine domes. The outer front of the west side, though rendered irregular by the projection of Sikandar's Chamber, is the best preserved portion of the building, and is highly ornamented. The western wall, up to a height of 11 feet is of stone, but above this is brickwork subdivided into minute sections and most elaborately carved. The doors on this side, which are of stone, are the parts which have been executed in the best taste.

"Notes on the construction of the Mosque"

"(a) As Sikandar Shah at the beginning of his reign was occupied in warring against the Hindus of Sylhet, and as many stones from what must have been Hindu temples are found in the Adina Mosque, it is possible that he was a strict Musalmān and encouraged his subjects to be converted to Islām. If so, this would explain why he erected such a large mosque, so that all the Muslim inhabitants of Pandua could gather in one place for their Friday prayers. The building, however, is not specially well designed, e.g., very little care was taken to ensure sufficient light, and the *Bādshāh-ka-Takht* is dark even in the daytime.

"(b) The projecting portion of the building on the west side for the chamber of Sikandar Shah was an after-thought and it was most probably added by Sikandar Shah for the members of the Royal family, where they used to sit and take rest just before prayer time. There were windows in

* "These cloisters have nearly all fallen down and only the bases of the double row of columns and portions of the inside walls are standing to-day."

the south and west walls of this chamber, which were filled in with stone trellis-work.

"(c) There was apparently no means of mounting the *Takht* from the interior; the only way of entering was through the two small doors in the west wall of the *Takht* through the chamber of Sikandar Shah.

"(d) The *Bādshāh-ka-Takht* was originally paved with beautiful slabs of black basalt, but nearly all have now disappeared and their place is taken by a wooden platform. In the shrine of Shah Jalāl at Pandua several stone slabs can be seen in the cornice of the *Chilla Khāna* and at the entrance to the shrine. These were probably brought from the *Bādshāh-ka-Takht*. There were railings on three sides of the *Takht* but no traces of them have been found. It is said that these railings originally belonged to a Buddhist temple.

"(e) There is ornamented terracotta brickwork on the west wall of the mosque which is profusely decorated with geometrical drawings and shows how advanced art was in Bengal in the 14th Century. That on the western wall of the *Takht* is beyond praise. Marks of unfinished work however are still to be seen here and there, as if the building was never properly finished.

"(f) The window openings of the mosque on three sides are all blocked up now with plain Gaur bricks. It would be better if they were rebuilt with *jālī* (pierced stone) work from the materials lying on the site.

"(g) Cement coating over the tops of the exposed walls of the cloisters, etc., to protect them from the rain is not very pleasing to the eyes. If more funds were available the tops of these walls might be rebuilt, say about one foot deep, with brickwork in cement with raked joints. The facing of the walls which have fallen down might also be renewed with old bricks set in cement.

"(h) There were fluted pillars at the four corners of the mosque. The remains of the two on the western front show how good workmanship was at the time the building was erected.

"(i) The stone pillars for supporting the arches and domes are of beautiful construction. They are square at the base, the middle portion is rounded with a slight taper and the capitals are cut slantwise.

"(j) A portion of broken wall above the existing roof shows that the domes of the roof were hidden by a parapet.

"(k) *A tomb inside the mosque.*—Though it is most objectionable to bury any one inside a mosque, it is said by the local people that a *faqīr* used to live here when the mosque was full of jungle, and that, when he died, his disciples buried him in the western cloister, close to the main Hall.

"(l) A drainage hole in the east wall is closed by a stone crocodile with a large head and trunk, the mouth of which served to carry off the rain water from the compound.

“(m) There are two very large lotus flower rosettes in the west wall of the central hall apparently placed there for the sake of beauty. There are other carved lotus flowers below the *Takht* and in the west wall of Sikandar’s chamber. These, as well as the *lingam* which is to be seen high up on the western wall of the main Hall, may have been brought from a Hindu temple.

“General Cunningham’s remarks on the absence of any Entrance Gateway to the *Adina Mosque*”

“The most remarkable feature about this great masjid is the total absence of any entrance gateway. There are two small doors in the back wall, but these are mere posterns or private entrances for the convenience of the King and the *Mullahs*. There is also a small arched opening in the middle of the east side, which was no doubt intended for public use; but this is a simple doorway or passage through the walls, unmarked by any projecting wings or rising battlements. The real public entrance I believe to have been at the south-east corner of the cloisters, where the three archways at the eastern end of the south cloisters are left open, so that the people would enter at once into the south and the east cloisters from the outside. As this arrangement utterly spoils the symmetry of the building, it was most probably an after-thought when the single small door in the middle of the east side was found utterly insufficient.” (*Report*, p. 91).

“The Great Central Hall”

“The large central room which forms the Nave of the mosque is 64 feet long and 33 feet wide. On each side, it has five arched openings. The roof was a long vault, a simple continuation of the main front arch which spanned the whole breadth of the room. Both lines of the vaulted roof are indistinctly marked against the top of the back wall. It is not known whether the front opening of this grand vault was screened in at the top or whether the whole was protected with a wall above the arch opening; but it is probable that the opening on the east side was capped by a lofty battlement. The height of the roof was about 60 feet.

“The Qibla on the West Wall of the Transept”

“The back wall of the Central Hall has the usual *Qibla*, or prayer niche, in the middle, with a pulpit on the north side. The whole of the back wall is very richly decorated, but the carving is shallow and affords a strange contrast to the deep cutting of some Hindu door jambs which are placed horizontally in a single line, touching end to end, just below the two lines of Arabic writing containing sentences from the *Qur’ān* in ornamental *Kufic* and *Tughra* character.

“The reading and translation of the inscriptions* on this wall are given below:—

“Inscription* (in *Kufic* character) on the wall at a great height:—

“In the name of Allāh the Merciful, the Compassionate.”

“There is no God but Allāh and Muhammad is the Prophet of Allāh.”

“*Tughra* inscriptions* containing extracts from the *Qur’ān*:—

“Said Almighty Allāh “O people, who believe, bend in prayer, touch your forehead to the ground, and worship.””

Inscription*:—

“Translation.—‘Almighty Allāh said: “He only who builds mosques for Allāh, and who believeth in Him and in the last day, and observeth prayer, and payeth alms, and dreadeth none but Allāh, may be counted among those who are rightly guided. Do ye take the giving of drink to pilgrims or building a house for Allāh to be equal in value to him who believeth in Allāh and the last day and exerts himself in the path of Allāh? They are not held equal by Allāh: for Allāh guideth not the unrighteous”’ [*Qur’ān*, *Sūrah IX*, Verses 18 and 19—(slightly altered)].

“The Pulpit”

“On the right hand of the *Qibla* is a *Mimbar* (pulpit) from which the *Imām* preached to the people. It is built of black basalt (*Sang-i-Mūsā*—Stone of Moses) curiously wrought with carved work, and the ascent to this pulpit is by a flight of steps of the same material. Underneath the *Mimbar* is a small square chamber, tastefully ornamented with carvings. Among other decorations, it contains a very beautiful reproduction of a circular hanging lamp or incense burner. The railings and two steps of the pulpit are missing and the greater portion of the roof of the upper chamber is gone. It would be a good thing if the missing steps and railings could be replaced. As regards the roof, possibly it was originally furnished with a small dome similar to that of the pulpit in the *Qutb Shāhī Masjid* Pulpits of many mosques in Egypt are also provided with small domes.

“In the broken portion of the steps is to be seen the head of a lion which is supposed to have formed a part of the throne of a Hindu King. There are other Hindu idols in a broken condition in the door sills and in the *mihrābs* (prayer-niches) all over the mosque.

“The Bādshāh-ka-Takht”

“This upper room, which is situated directly to the north of the Central Hall, was intended to provide separate accommo-

* Text of inscriptions not reproduced.—*Editor*.

dation for the King and his family during services. It occupies five bays in the three back aisles and is covered by 15 domes. In place of the usual fluted stone columns, massive octagonal stone piers were used to carry the heavy weight of the stone floor of the *Takht*, and, above these, come fluted pillars that support the arches that carry the domes. With the few adjacent bays in the south and east this is the only portion of the mosque that still retains its roof. The domes most probably owe their safety to the massive pillars of the lower storey which gave extra stability to the arches above them, while at the same time they offered no temptation to the spoiler to carry them off. The ten-foot stone shafts in the rest of the cloisters were not difficult to remove and, in consequence, several scores of them have disappeared. There are three prayer-niches in the west wall of the *Takht* which are surrounded with beautiful ornamental *Tughra* inscriptions and with fine carvings all over the surface. Over the entrance to the chamber of Sikandar Shah, there is also an inscription in *Tughra* character which contains the *Kalimah Shahādat* (Confession of Faith of a Muslim).

"The reading and translation of the inscriptions* on the west wall of the *Bādshāh-ka-Takht* are given below. The first is taken from the *Āyat-u-l-Kursī* (Throne Verses) chapter of the *Qur'ān* and as it is the same as the first few lines of the inscription over the gate of the enclosure of 'Alāul Haqq's tomb . . . it need not be repeated here. The rest* are also from the *Qur'ān* and run as follows:—

"*Translation.*—'Verily Allāh and His angels bless the Prophet. Bless ye him, O Believers, and salute him with salutations of Peace.' (*Sūrah XXXIII*, verse 56).

Inscription* :—

"*Translation.*—'Now hath Allāh in truth verified unto his Apostle the vision wherein He said, "Ye shall surely enter the Sacred Mosque (of Mecca) if Allāh please, in full security, having your heads shaved, and your hair cut: ye shall not fear: for Allāh knoweth that which ye know not, and He hath appointed for you, besides this, a speedy victory." It is He who hath sent His Apostle with "the Guidance" and the religion of truth; that He may exalt the same above every religion: and Allāh is a sufficient witness hereof. Muhammad is the Apostle of Allāh: and those who are with him are most vehement against unbelievers but full of tenderness among themselves. Thou mayest see them bowing down, prostrating themselves, imploring favours from Allāh and His good pleasure.' (*Sūrah XLVIII*, verses 27-29).

Inscription* :—

"*Translation.*—'Allāh the Great, greater than any Saver and nobler than any Speaker, saith: Seek refuge with Allāh from

* Text of inscriptions not reproduced.—*Editor*.

the cursed Satan. Surely Allāh is He who hears most and knows best. In the name of Allāh, the Clement, the Merciful. They who have believed, and fled from their homes, and striven with their substance and with their persons on the path of Allāh, are of the highest rank with Allāh: and these are they who shall enjoy felicity (*Sūrah IX*, verse 20). Their Lord, by His mercy and pleasure assures Paradise to them: therein they will abide in plenty for ever and in perpetuity. Verily with Allāh is great recompense.'"

"*Chamber of Sikandar Shah*

" . . . to the west of the *Bādshāh-ka-Takht* lies a roofless room, 42 feet square, known as Sikandar's Chamber. There is a tradition amongst the local people that Sikandar was buried in this chamber after his defeat and death, but unfortunately the ten-domed roof fell in, and much débris collected over the tomb. When this was ultimately removed, the remains of the King's tomb was cleared away by the coolies along with the rubbish and thrown into the adjoining tank. Ilāhī Bakhsh gives the dimensions of the tomb itself as 9 cubits long and 7½ cubits broad (*i.e.*, about 13½ by 11½ feet), and Cunningham also noted in 1880 that the sarcophagus was in ruins and the inside of the vault, in which the body was deposited, was then exposed. Over the doorway leading to the *Bādshāh-ka-Takht*, there are figures of Hindu gods as well as a fine carving of a snake, called *Nāgdeva*, which is coiled all round the door-frame.

"*Sikandar Shah's inscription on the back of the building*

"There is an inscribed stone outside, fixed in the west wall of the mosque, and very close to the back door, which gives the date of the erection of the building and the name of the builder. The following is a reading of the inscription,* . . .

"*Translation.*—'This *Jāmi'* Masjid was ordered to be built in the days of the reign of the great Sultān, the Wisest, the most Just, the most Liberal and most Perfect of the Sultāns of Arabia and Persia, who trusts in the assistance of the Merciful, Abūl Mujāhid Sikandar Shāh, the Sultān, son of Ilyās Shāh, the Sultān. May his reign be continued till the Day of Promise (*i.e.*, Resurrection)! Written on the 6th of *Rajab* of the year 770 A.H.' (14th February 1369 A.D.).

"It is said that Sultān Sikandar himself wrote the inscription."

"6. THE 'PALACE' AREA

"A short distance to the south-east of the Adīna Mosque an embanked area of ground is to be found which, local tradition

* Text of inscription not reproduced.—*Editor*.

states, was the site of the Palace of Sikandar Shah. As will be seen later, this however probably dates back, in Muhammadan times, to at least the reign of Shamsuddīn Ilyās Shah (1339-1358 A.D.), while there are also clear indications that the area in question (as well as that further to the north and north-east) was the headquarters of Hindu sovereignty—possibly from a very early period. The site was first described in 1808 by Dr. Buchanan Hamilton, and his vivid account will now be quoted from his *Description of Dinajpur* (ed. cit., pp. 47 and 48) by way of introduction to what is, historically, the most important area of the ancient city of Pandua.

“Dr. Buchanan Hamilton’s Description

“About a mile east from Adinah is a ruin called the Satasgurh, or sixty towers, which is said to have been the palace of the king. On penetrating the woods and reaching this place, I was much disappointed, as except the high name, I could find nothing worthy of a royal residence. The remains consist of a tank about 120 yards in length and 80 in breadth. The bank formed by throwing out the earth has been surrounded by a brick wall, in one place entire, and 16 feet high. This wall seems to have included many buildings, which from the bulk of the ruins, seem to have been most considerable at the two ends. At the N.W. corner is a small building, which contains an arched chamber in the centre, communicating with several smaller ones, by which it is surrounded. These communicate only with the central room, from whence there is a passage to an antichamber in front. Some appearance of pipes in the walls, and the general structure of the building, confirm the opinion of the natives that this was a bath. The north end of the tank seems to have been lined through the whole of its length by a narrow gallery, supported by arches, from whence stairs led down to the water, and within the gallery there appears to have been a row of small chambers; but these are now almost entirely choked with rubbish. At a little distance from the S.E. corner of the tank, and without the wall, is another ruin like that of the bath, which probably served for the same purpose. A cylindrical cavity, lined with brick, which descends from the top of the building to a considerable depth, and which is about 10 feet wide, served in all probability to give a supply of water. Very few stones have been employed in these buildings and such as have been used are quite plain. Two large blocks of uncut gray granite are lying on the surface of the ruins. Some of the bricks are coated with green enamel.

“About half way between Adinah and Satasgurh is an earthen rampart, with a ditch on its west side, which probably is part of a fortification that may have surrounded the palace.

“The tank at Satasgurh has its greatest length extending from north to south, and therefore has undoubtedly been the work

of a Hindu; and in fact both Hindus and Muhammadans agree in attributing its construction to a Pandu Raja, who lived a long time ago and communicated his name to the place. He is very remarkable as having been the father of Yudhisthir, who, according to legend, was sovereign of India in the commencement of this age, about 5000 years ago. The country then belonged to Virat, one of the adherents of the family of Pandu, and according to tradition, this part was under the immediate management of a certain Kichok, to whose sister Virat was married. It is possible, that during some rebellion, or disputed succession, Pandu may have been compelled to retire from Hastinapur, and to take refuge in a friendly territory. Peruya, it must be observed, is a corrupt vulgar name, and the true appellation of the city is said to be Panduya or Pandoviya.’

“A. Dhanush Dighī, and Minār

“Turning now to the present condition of the ruins and tanks found in the ‘Palace’ area—the extent of which (as estimated from the Air Survey photographs) is roughly speaking 1,430 yards from west to east, and 1,210 yards from north to south, exclusive of the square bastion (about 600 × 600 yards) at the south-east corner formed by the *Nāsir Shāh Dighī*, with its embankments—the first object of interest that is to be seen when proceeding south-east from the Adīna Mosque is the *Dhanush Dighī*, a large N × S tank about 465 yards long by 105 yards broad which constitutes the north-western portion of the Palace enclosure. It is now almost silted up. Near the south-east corner of this tank stands a tower called the *Minār* which may have formed one of the two towers of a Western Gate. The raised area in the immediate vicinity of the *Minār* seems to merit excavation in order to discover whether there was actually a gate here, or only a mosque from the *Minār* of which the *Muazzin* called the Faithful to prayer.

*“B. The Satā’isghara Dighī, and site of
Sikandar Shah’s Palace*

“A little over a quarter of a mile east of the southern end of the *Dhanush Dighī* and approximately in the centre of the main enclosure is to be found the *Satā’isghara Dighī*, which measures about 200 yards from North to South and 100 yards from West to East. It is however enclosed in a much larger raised area, about 550 yards from North to South by 165 yards, which, as already stated, is the reputed site of the palace of Sultān Sikandar Shah. The buildings mentioned by Buchanan Hamilton as being on the north-west corner of the Tank were revisited by Cunningham in 1880 and he agreed that they represent the Turkish Baths of the Palace. The

octagonal room, 24 feet in diameter, with a small room on each of the eight sides, as well as some of the adjacent masonry bathing cabins on the actual bank of the tank, can still be traced, but unless some conservation is done, they will soon entirely disappear. The Baths are possibly those built by Shamsuddīn Ilyās Shah in imitation of the *Hauz-i-Shamsī* of Delhi—the construction of which by the Bengal King was one of the reasons why Firūz Shah of Delhi invaded Bengal in 1354. The name of the building, according to the local people, is certainly *Satā'ishghara* and not, as Buchanan Hamilton states, *Satasgurh*, but no one can say what exactly *ghara* means. Possibly however it may refer to there having been twenty-seven rooms in the Baths, or that the Palace comprised twenty-seven separate houses. The raised area round the tank, especially that to the north and south, would appear to be well worth excavating by the Archaeological Survey.

"C. Pāndap Rājā Dālān

"A little to the south-east of the south-east corner of the *Satā'ishghara* Tank is another and much better preserved Turkish Bath which is situated to the west of a small but very deep round pond—the latter being said to have a pavilion in the centre which becomes visible in the dry season. The local people call the building *Pāndap Rājā Dālān*, which is particularly interesting as confirming the local story given to Buchanan Hamilton over 120 years ago that Pandua owed its foundation and name to a Rājā belonging to the Pāndava family of Old Delhi who came to, and remained in, Bengal for sufficient time to found a new city there. In the 'sixties of the last century Ravenshaw also (on p. 67 of his *Gaur*) mentions that, according to current local tradition, the *Satā'ishghara* tank was the work of Arjūn of the race of Pāndū. The actual building appears, however, to be much more recent than the *Satā'ishghara* itself, and as it is undergoing the same process of destruction (from trees growing on it) which has already befallen the greater part of the last-named building, it is most desirable that immediate steps should be taken by the Archaeological Department to put it in a proper state of repair—in particular, to have the mosaics over the arches in two or three of the rooms preserved. When this is done, it is likely to be an even more attractive place of pilgrimage to visitors than the Adīna Mosque.

"The circular room, or well, at the south-east corner of the building is now filled almost to ground level with stones and other débris, but the local people (by whom it is known as *Jiban Kund* or 'Well of Life' from its reputed property of restoring the dead to life) say that it held water up to the time of the great earthquake—presumably that of 1897. If cleared out, it might yield some objects of archaeological interest: and, at the time of effecting repairs, investigations

might also be made regarding the alleged masonry building in the middle of the adjoining pond.

"D. Āt-Bāgh (or Rāhat-Bank) Dighī

"Proceeding a little further over rough ground to the east, the visitor will arrive at a long and very deep N × S tank (now being rapidly silted up), the water surface of which measures about 500 × 175 yards. The present name appears to be *Āt-Bāgh Dighī* or 'Eight Tiger Tank', but another name may also be *Rāhat-Bank Dighī*. The 'oldest inhabitant', however, claimed that the latter is the real name of the small pond near the *Pāndap Rājā Dālān*, the name—'Tank of the Reposeful Curve'—in each case referring to the bend round an island (or pavilion). This tank is said to have had two towers in the water—one near each end—and the northern one (now a peninsula of brick ruins) is still connected with the western bank by an earthen ridge to which access from the side was given by a flight of brick steps. Immediately opposite this *ghāt*, to the west, is a small N × S tank with remains of a stone *ghāt* on the south, which has the curious name *Koibūtki Pukkur*. The towers in the *Āt-Bāgh Dighī* are said to have been connected by a subterranean passage under the tank, and, before they fell in, some weapons are said to have been found in the southern tower. A short distance to the east of the northern portion of the *Āt-Bāgh Dighī* is a small round tank called *Purān* ('Old') *Dighī*. This is only mentioned as one of the local people gave the name *Prān* ('Life') *Dighī* to the *Āt-Bāgh Dighī*, which caused some confusion until the 'oldest inhabitant' corrected the pronunciation and pointed out the mistake in the location of the tank.

"E. Nāsir Shāh Dighī

"Owing probably to the jungle that, until comparatively recently—when Sontals began to be employed to clear it away—covered the 'Palace' area, this magnificent tank was not apparently visited by either Buchanan Hamilton, Ravenshaw, or Cunningham, and Ilāhī Bakhsh confuses it with the *Satā'ishghara Dighī*. It is certainly the best preserved of all the tanks that lie within the fortified area of 25 square miles that Pānduā occupied when it was at its greatest, but it appears to be later in date than the rest of the tanks in its immediate vicinity as it projects like a sort of bastion from what must have been once the south-east corner of the embanked area in this locality. It is a very deep N × S tank of absolutely clear water, and the actual area of water is about 360 × 250 yards. Its south-east extremity on the S.E. is about 1½ miles from the Adīna Mosque.

"Both its name and excellent state of preservation suggest that the *Nāsir Shāh Dighī* was excavated by Nāsiruddīn Nasrat

Shah, the son of Husain Shah (1519-1532 A.D.). On the other hand, as no reference is found in the *Riyāz* to this King having ever lived at Pānduā, it may go even further back to Nāsiruddīn Mahmūd Shah (1442-1459 A.D.) who was a descendant of Ilyās Shah, and in whose reign—possibly in the last year—the inscription in the kitchen of Nūr Qutbul ‘Ālam’s shrine was erected by Latif Khān. Though it is difficult to understand how the tank could remain in such a perfect state of preservation for 470 years, it would be only natural for Nāsiruddīn Mahmūd Shah to have desired to live in close proximity to the *Satā’isghara* if, as is believed, this was the site of the Palace of his ancestor Ilyās Shah and if the latter building had fallen into ruins during the usurpation of the House of Rājā Kāns. The fact that there are no embankments to the south-east of the *Nāsir Shāh Dighī* shows that it can only have been excavated in a time of a King who had little fear of any rival, which would agree more with the history of Mahmūd Shah than that of Nasrat Shah.

“F. Sukan Dighī (*Dried up Tank*): *Burjpur* Mauzā:
and Damdamā (*the ‘Citadel’*)

“Immediately to the north of the northern side of the embankment that surrounds the ‘Palace’ area of the Muhammadan Kings is another and still broader belt of raised land which forms the southern bank of an enormous dried up N × S tank called *Sukan Dighī*. This measures about 625 yards in length by 275 yards in breadth, and must therefore have been nearly twice the size of the *Nāsir Shāh Dighī*. The *Sukan Dighī* lies in the southern part of *Mauzā Burjpur* (Revenue Survey No. 106) which extends northwards beyond, and includes the northern gate of Pānduā (Buchanan Hamilton’s *Garhḍwar*). The name of the *mauzā*—‘*Burj*’ means ‘Fort’—may only refer to the fortified gate: but a short distance to the west and north is found another *Mauzā* (No. 105), called Binodepūr, an alternative name of which is *Damdamā*. No traces of a fort now appear to exist in the vicinity: but the conjunction of the site of a Fort with this great tank* suggests that *Damdamā* marks the site of the citadel of the Hindu Kings. The disappearance of any trace of this is only natural as the materials of which it was constructed would certainly have been removed for building the later palace of Ilyās Shah.”

* “The only tank of greater area in the neighbourhood of Old Pānduā is the now partially-silted-up N × S *Palkhān*, or *Raikhān Dighī*—near the Eklākhi Railway Station, 4 miles to the East of the *Sukan Dighī*—which is about 1,320 yards long by 525 yards broad.—H.E.S.”

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(Key: ā = अ | आ; ā̄ = आ | आ; ô = ओ | ओ; m̄ = म | म; ñ = ण | ण; chh = छ | छ; t = त | त; t̄ = ट | ट; th = थ | थ; d̄ = ड | ड; dh = ढ | ढ)

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