

## Chapter IV

### Fifty Years After the East India Company

#### 4.1 The Transfer of Filatures

Between 1835 and 1836 the company ceased to operate in Malda region and its factories and filature establishments were sold to two sets of buyers :

(i) All the large silk establishments in Malda and Rajshahi districts passed into the hands of two big companies - M/s. Watson & Co., M/s. Louis Poyen & Co.; later on a third big firm ventured in the region, viz., Bengal Silk Company.<sup>1</sup> Of the two major companies, Louis Poyen was a French house. The silk producing areas of Dinajpur were now included in the newly formed district of Malda. (Please see Appendix D). Filatures of Bogra were shut down in 1834. During the forties and fifties smaller European firms also existed, but their role was insignificant and their operations were very temporary.

(ii) Some of the smaller establishments were first leased out and then sold to some solvent pycars and contractors of the company. But the emergence of native independent filature owners may be ascribed to the fact that the private filatures hired by the company were now freed. In Malda district only, their number was large enough to exceed one thousand basins. These native owners were the affluent

section of rural population, and in most cases they were former pycars of the company.

As two distinctly different groups of filature owners now controlled production, a clearly visible sharing of market is also witnessed.<sup>2</sup> Raw silk produced in the European filatures were exported; and the existence of a French company as a big producer indicated a relative expansion of French control in the European market : Data on import of Bengal silk into France during this period also justify such an indication. On the other hand, output of the natives were either consumed locally (including Murshidabad) or sent to northern India. A good quantity of superior quality silk thread from Malda found its way to Benaras famous for highly ornamented silk fabrics. Gradually trading communities from the north-west provinces and Bihar were attracted to Malda silk and established themselves as dealers of silk here. Marwaries - Agarwala, Oswal, Bhakat, Poddar etc. are some of the merchant communities who as dealers were interested in trading profit and did not manufacture silk. This aspect of an emerging class of dealers also signified the growth of domestic demand for silk.

The European firms continued the practice of Purchasing cocoons by contract through the pycars. This meant that the position of the rearers vis-a-vis the filatures did not alter as a result of the units changing hands from the East India Company to Watson and others. Theoretically, the

producers  
independent native ~~procedure~~ purchased cocoons from the market; but practically these owners with their legacy in the past regime preferred to continue the advance system and exploit the poverty of the rearers to earn a larger profit. Since, many of these owners were the pycars of the East India Company, they had a direct link with the rearers since a long time past; and they maintained the earlier production relation by simply using the cocoons now in his own filature instead of the filatures of the company. This is the origin of a mahajani business in the silk industry of Malda, which is still prevalent.

It was the petty reelers who either purchased the cocoons in the open market or used self-reared cocoons. Distinction between labour and capital was not pronounced in the case of petty reelers. These petty reelers were never solvent enough to invest and flourish; and they were victimised by the growing class of silk dealers. Thus the new set up failed to change the production relation from its colonial character : The hang over of East India Company's organisation of 'investment' fell too heavily on the silk industry of Malda region.

#### 4.2 Market Trends :

With these characteristics performance of Malda in terms of production and export of raw silk was fairly stable during the whole period from 1833 to 1875, and Malda retained

Table VIGeoghegan's Estimate of Average Annual  
Export from Bengal

Period	Average Annual Export of Raw-silk (in lbs.)	Average Annual Export of Waste- silk (in lbs.)
From 1838-39 to 1841-42	1,384,242	...
From 1842-43 to 1845-46	1,555,130	...
From 1846-47 to 1 1850-51	1,290,024	...
From 1851-52 to 1855-56	1,511,506	...
From 1856-57 to 1860-61	1,511,768	41,552
From 1861-62 to 1865-66	1,485,763	616,138
From 1866-67 to 1870-71	1,558,246	740,398

Source : J. Geoghegan - Some Account of Silk in  
India, Calcutta 1880; p.31.

its position as one of the big five (Rajshahi, Malda, Murshidabad, Midnapore and Birbhum districts).<sup>3</sup> Foreign demand was still the determining factor of the state of silk industry; and the export figures more or less justify the stability in external demand for Bengal silk even after the departure of the East India Company, which is evident from the following figures :

(i) Total export of Bengal silk  
to England in 1835 ... 727,535 lbs.<sup>4</sup>  
(in spite of some fluctuations and declines during  
1831-35)

(ii) Average annual export of  
raw silk from Bengal during  
1838-39 to 1841-42 rose to ... 1,384,242 lbs.

The export figures since 1838-39 have been shown  
in Table VI (transcribed into Graph I p.220A as well).

It is also to be noted in Table VI that waste silk which were so far mainly consumed within the country, now found its way into the foreign market since the middle of the 19th century. From the information furnished by Geoghegan, we get an additional conception : since Chinese exports of raw silk to Europe increased enormously since 1841, the stationary state of exports from Bengal in absolute terms meant a comparative decline of Bengal silk trade in the international market. In the background of entire transformation of Indian exports into the category of primary commodities, K.N.

Chaudhuri made his own calculations to high-light that percentage share of raw silk in the total Indian exports declined during the period from 1814 to 1858,<sup>5</sup> indicating a change in the composition. But, the export trend in table VI is in conformity with K.N. Chaudhuri's basic observation regarding the period : a rise in the value and volume of exports, more precisely, primary exports.

However, the relatively stable position of the raw silk industry of Malda up to 1870's should also be viewed in terms of some other general features of the Indian economy in the first half of the 19th century : (i) eagerness of the British Crown to follow a policy of promoting Indian exports in order to increase India's capacity to import; (ii) importance of Indian exports in a strictly financial sense in the new multilateral trading arrangements (i.e., international payments system of Britain : India : Rest of the world); (iii) commercialization of Indian agriculture; and (iv) emergence of factor markets in land and labour. But, in 1860's 70's and 80' the development of the silk industry of Malda was particularly shaped by the local aspects of famine and taxation. Hence, special attention has been given to these aspects in this chapter.

The appearance of the French companies in 1830's in production and export of Malda silk posed some problem for the British silk industry and policy of the British Crown

towards the export of silk piece goods to the European countries through France was not favourable. In the early 1830's Bengal's silk bandannas<sup>6</sup> and other handkerchief had a ready sale in France; hence the export of Indian silk piece goods was prohibited and British silk piece goods were sold in large quantities in France. When the prohibition had to be taken off silk handkerchiefs of Bengal faced additional demands since 1840 and British goods almost disappeared from the French Market.<sup>7</sup> But such a pull of demand was temporary and the specific item was of less significance as compared to bulk exports of raw silk.

With the cessation of East India Company's monopoly finally in 1833, there was no reason to think that the monopoly of foreign purchasers had been waved. Companies like Watson almost monopolised the export of silk. Apart from the producing companies, the Agency Houses formed the institutional framework for export trade monopoly; the agency houses were the main instruments through which Western business organisations were being introduced in this country in response to the requirements of world trade, and through which a link between Indian peasant producers and the world market was maintained (to replace the East India Company). In 1830's only six agency houses controlled 65 per cent of exports from Bengal.<sup>8</sup> Potential domestic demand was also released; but the emerging mahajans took positions to leave the primary producer on the same footing. The foreign

companies as well as the dealer and mahajan community usurped the profits of the industry. The condition of the petty producer rather deteriorated since 1874-5, which will be discussed later on.

Price of raw silk rose slowly during the period from 1858 to 1870. As regards quality of silk, a change from the East India Company to the new private companies were without any marked difference. In 1840 Larpent expressed before the Select Committee of the House of Lords that the private companies' silk was not inferior to what had previously been supplied by the East India Company; but in 1841, complaints regarding inferior quality of silk piece goods from Bengal was available. This may not be an evidence of a fall in the quality of raw silk; but it is to be remembered that a fall in the quality of raw silk, if any, was due to degeneracy of cocoons. The problem of bad cocoons did not, however, receive any attention; rather Sir Thomas Wardle after 1858 manufactured and accomplished the renewal of the efforts to improve the method of reeling. It was only in 1882 that the government took up the question of experimenting with mulberry cultivation and supply of silk-worm eggs. The first trial was given at the Berhampore Central jail without any good result.

In Malda one major event was the use of steam power in the filatures of the European concerns in early 1870's. It is S.J. Andrews, the Manager of Louis Poyen & Co., to whom

credit is due for the first introduction of steam power.<sup>9</sup> But the event could not have a long-lasting effect on large scale production of raw silk, because the firms soon withdrew from the field of production and the units were closed down.

#### 4.3 Early Signs of Regional Specialization :

From the mid-19th century one important trend was visible, that is the decline in mulberry cultivation and cocoon rearing in some districts particularly in southern Bengal. This particular phenomenon grew into some sort of regional specialization since the closing years of the 19th century - Malda region specializing in rearing and raw silk production while Murshidabad (and to some extent Birbhum) specializing in silk weaving. But the early symptoms of such specialization was witnessed as a decline in sericulture - a gradual withdrawal of chassars from mulberry cultivation and rearing. In 1833 mulberry cultivation was pursued in the districts of Rajshahi, Malda, Bogra, Murshidabad, Birbhum, Burdwan and Midnapore; but Maxwell-Lefroy observed a gradual decline in mulberry cultivation and pointed out that sericulture existed in 1880 in five districts - Rajshahi, Malda, Murshidabad, Birbhum and Midnapore.<sup>10</sup> Sericulture did not recede from Malda except in a few small pockets.

The aspect of specialization will be dealt with in a forthcoming section in Chapter V; here we may emphasise the initial factor responsible for such a change. Every British

Report during this period mentions a shift of the cultivators from mulberry to other profitable crops; and in our opinion, the historical force behind this was commercialization of agriculture which particularly gained momentum after the extension of Indian railways. The commercialization of agriculture was undoubtedly influenced by the economic ties between the economies of Bengal and England; but it opened the prospect of selling crops in the open market.<sup>11</sup> The production decisions were, nevertheless, forced upon the peasants by the British rulers and rich farmers both of whom shared the profit.

In the case of Malda district the advent of commercialization did not cause much harm to sericulture for the following reasons :

(i) Mulberry was also a cash crop in the sense that it was necessary for producing cocoons to yield raw silk. England's interest in raw silk was dwarfed by the infiltration of the French companies; but the British government did not try to regulate the production and market of mulberry and cocoons, since that would have gone against the British and French companies depending on contract system for procuring cocoons. The government was also not interested in forcing extension of this cash crop. A status quo was maintained in this regard.

(ii) The second important commercial crop in the district was indigo; but the areas found suitable for indigo were

located in the thanas adjacent to Purnea; - the majority of the indigo factories were also located there. Thus, the thanas around English Bazar and Gaur did not come into conflict with indigo cultivation. Extension of jute cultivation was also a later event here and areas suitable for jute did not also come in conflict with mulberry.

(iii) The third important factor could be the necessity for producing food crops. But in Malda mulberry cultivation was mainly carried on in the high lands not suitable for food crop cultivation.<sup>12</sup> Scope for a better return from land was severely restricted in these areas in particular. In spite of the famine of 1866 and 1874 a switch over from mulberry to food crops was not a major trend in Malda. We shall discuss in the next chapter how sericulture rather concentrated in the district.

#### 4.4 The Famine Again :

##### (a) The Famine and the relief policy<sup>13</sup>

In 1865-66 and 1873-74 two successive famines swept over this part of the country; the second one affected not only Bengal and Bihar but also the north-western provinces of India. According to W.W. Hunter, the famine of 1866 was short lived in Malda and the shock was mild. In all the adjacent barind districts like Rajshahi, Dinajpur, Rangpur and Bogra, the experience was similar. But the famine of 1874 was severely felt in Malda as well as in other barind

districts.<sup>14</sup> In 1866 the highest price of rice in Malda was Rs.4 per maund, and food prices later on did not return entirely to the pre-famine normalcy.<sup>15</sup> In December 1873 when the famine was still mild, price of rice in different markets of Malda ranged between Rs.3-4 annas and Rs.4 per maund;<sup>16</sup> and such prices shot up during the following summer months. From a report given by H.R. Reily to the Collector of Malda in March 1874 we come to learn about starvation and epidemic in the villages, lack of rainfall and complete 'drying off' of the boro crop, as well as relief operations executed.<sup>17</sup>

In official documents, the first alarm on the famine was raised in Malda in the letter no.143 dt. 20 November 1873 from the Accountant General, Bengal to the Collector of Malda (MC-RR), which started with a note on the impending famine and informed the Collector about the arrangements for purchase of food grains for relief purposes. In December 1873, the Commissioner of Rajshahi Division<sup>18</sup> was informed of the appointment of W. LeF. Robinson as the Special Relief Commissioner in the districts of Dinajpur, Rangpur, Bograh, Malda and Rajshahi while his powers and functions were also specified.<sup>19</sup> He was invested with the powers of a first class magistrate and collector to be ordinarily exercised "in matters connected with relief, local works and land acquisition and other business connected with scarcity."

From these documents we learn that a famine-relief

policy was distinctly available in 1874; a relief policy that evolved gradually since 1860-61. In 1865-66, famine relief was half-hearted; food riots and inadequacy of relief vexed the government. In 1873-74 the government began to appreciate the approach of a famine in advance; and before the scarcity took a severe turn, the Government of India appointed Sir Richard Temple to organise famine relief specially by arranging for the distribution of food in the interior areas. He introduced for the first time a number of liberal measures, but his actions were later criticised as too generous and extravagant. Relief operations in Malda in 1874 should be viewed against such a back-drop.

The relief operations had two main aspects - (i) distribution of grain, and (ii) provision of "useful employment" to people by the Public Works Department for construction of roads, excavating tanks etc. In general the two were interrelated, because grains were distributed or sold at a cheaper rate as wages to the labourers employed. Relief employment was provided to people both in the towns and in the countryside. There were instances of cash advance to the cultivators as well as an instruction from the government that coercive means should not be applied to collect arrear rent of the January (1874) instalment.<sup>20</sup> That the government was not interested in spending funds directly for charitable relief is known

from the memo sanctioning relief funds for the month of July 1874.<sup>21</sup>

However, by 1876 a recovery from the famine-stricken condition was complete; market price of rice also declined. On the average, it was Rs.1-11-5 annas per maund in 1876-77; but a short-term rise is again noticed in 1877-78 (Rs.2-15 annas per maund).<sup>22</sup> Reilly wrote on 19 May 1876 to the Collector of Malda that he had already realised 87% of the famine advances to the cultivators and hoped to realise another 7% after the next rice crop that year.<sup>23</sup> Different relief measures had also been discontinued by that time.

Since the middle of the 19th century. Indian famines reflected a universal lack of employment, general poverty and scarcity price of grains. The famines of 1866 and 1874 were caused to some extent by the lack of favourable climatic conditions; but their nature was shaped by the general features of the Indian economy and its impoverishment.<sup>24</sup> Factors such as loss of employment, excessive land revenue burdens and export of food stuff played their roles while commercialization of agriculture had a very disastrous effect leading to shortage. In the case of Malda, general impoverishment, lack of employment etc. were undoubtedly the major factors; the contribution of commercialization of agriculture could not be traced for want of specific data. The question of mulberry cultivation affecting food crops did not, however,

arise for the simple reason that additional pressure of enlarged demand, internal or external, for silk could hardly be felt. It is only indigo cultivation in the northern and north-western parts of the district that might have limited food production seriously; but it should be noted that indigo production declined from a value of Rs.5,00,000 in 1876-77 to Rs.4,50,000 in 1877-78.<sup>25</sup> Such a decline was caused not only by the closure of one concern in the later half of 1877-78 but also by a general set back of the industry.

(b) The impact

Hunter did not elucidate the impact of this famine in his 'A Statistical Account of Bengal' (1876); nor such an account is available in other contemporary writings. However, in the case of Malda, impact of the famine on both cultivation of mulberry and production of raw silk can be traced without ambiguity. A very likely effect could have been a displacement of industrial crops by food crops; but in Malda such a trend was not visible immediately after the famine. From the following table on area of cultivated land and other related documents, a few things are clear.

Area of cultivated land (in acres)  
Malda District

	<u>1876-77</u>	<u>1877-78</u>
Total cultivated	5,33,760	5,33,960
Mulberry	25,388	25,388
Indigo	30,645	30,645
Rice	2,50,673	2,50,730

Source : Part I-A and III-D of Return 41B for the relevant years (MC-RR).

First, total cultivated area as well as area under rice cultivation indicated a slight increase; but area under mulberry or indigo remained unaltered. Secondly, famine destroys both human skill of the cultivator and his capital assets like cattle without any erosion of zamindar's land. This would affect cultivation of all food and non-food crops; and this would exert some pressure on average cost of production and price of industrial output using agricultural raw materials. Information in Part IIIG of the above Returns (41-B) reveals a change in the value of total raw silk output from Rs.2,50,000 to Rs.3,00,000 without any significant variation in quantity produced. This indicated a 20 per cent rise in the price of raw silk over the years 1876-77 and 1877-78. A change in labour cost was not responsible for the price rise, because wages for skilled and unskilled labour remained stationary. Thirdly, to meet the expenditure incurred on relief operations a license tax was imposed since 1878. We have discussed the significance of this tax in sec.4.5(b) below.

As regards impact of the famine on mass movement, the famine of 1874 was distinctly different from that of 1770. Unlike 1770 no upsurge of cotton and silk weavers or other oppressed workmen can be traced in Malda region immediately after 1874.

#### 4.5 The Fiscal Burden :

As an economy moves from agrarian stagnation to an

industrial society, newer fiscal weapons, other than land revenue, emerge. But in colonial India such newer tax bases were searched for with the purpose of further extraction of the already de-industrialised economy and of maintaining the 'imperial order'. Income Tax and License Tax are two taxes imposed during late 19th century, administered without much economic consideration and are relevant to Malda's economy.

(a) Income Tax

Rent roll of Bengal during the years 1853-54 to 1868-69 reveals that there has been a steady increase in the current demand; the collection also have increased, but there has been at the same time a large increase in remissions and outstanding balances.<sup>26</sup> The other urge for introducing new taxes was the heavy strain on the public exchequer caused by the mutiny of 1857. The government wanted to impose taxes on profit, property, profession and trade to augment public finance. However, in 1860 income tax was imposed on the advice of James Wilson; the rate and area of incidence were reduced in 1862 and the tax ceased in July 1865.<sup>27</sup> In 1867-68 a license tax was imposed at the advice of Mr. Massey; it worked unfairly so that a certificate tax took its place in 1868-69. This tax was also unfruitful and on the advice of Sir Richard Temple income tax was reimposed from 1st April 1869 at the rate of 1 per cent. This tax met with no opposition and in the middle of 1869-70 the rate was raised

Table VII

Return of Assessment under Part IV of  
the Indian Income Tax Act XVI of 1870 :  
For the Quarter ending 31 March 1871

District of Maldah		Form No.11			
Persons whose incomes or profits are assessed at Rs.		Number Assessed	Total Demand		
			Rs.	As.	Ps.
Not less than	500 but less than 750	617	12,109	8	0
"	750 " 1000	253	6,844	8	0
"	1000 " 1500	131	5,109	0	0
"	1500 " 2000	71	3,834	0	0
"	2000 " 10000	110	12,151	6	6
"	10000 "100,000	4	2,762	3	3
	100,000 & Upwards	1	3,437	8	0
	TOTAL	1187	46,248	1	0

Source : Malda Collectorate, Record Room.

to 2 per cent - further to 3.12 per cent in 1870-71. In Bengal, the collections from income tax in 1868-69 amounted to £1,55,412 while expected yield in 1869-70 and 1870-71 were £10,51,600 and £21,80,000 respectively.

In Malda, according to Income Tax Return in Form 11 for the quarter ending 31 March 1871 from the Collector to the Board of Revenue (MC-RR) we get the figure Rs.46,248-1 as. - 9 as. to be the total demand on assessed income in the district. This means that annual collection from this tax source was about Rs.1.9 lakhs. Table VII gives us a fair idea about the income groups and their tax liability. From detailed description, we learn that most of the assesses, particularly having annual incomes above 750 were traders and businessmen or persons having large estates. Since silk was a staple manufacture of high value, it was likely that a large part of taxable income accrued from business in silk. Correspondence among the Collectors of Malda, Purnea, Dinajpur, Rajshahi, Calcutta etc. (MC-RR) reveals that individual assesseees had sources of profit and income in districts other than his place of residence, and at the time of assessment such income earned in other districts was also taken into account. Even, the Collector of Gazipur (U.P.) inform his counterpart in Malda about "the nature of business some businessmen of Malda conduct with places" of his jurisdiction.<sup>28</sup> We also come to learn from the letter that items imported to Malda from Gazipur were sugar and mustard while commodities

exported from Malda to Gazipur were rice, gunny and silk. Such silk finding its way to Gazipur were meant for the weavers of Benaras and other places. Information about individual big merchants is available but the abstract accounts of their business could not be traced.<sup>29</sup>

(b) License Tax

The license tax of 1878 was more extensive in character as it became applicable to all trades, manufacturers, artisans and professional<sup>s</sup>. According to the Act and Rules for its administration<sup>30</sup> :

(i) The act was called "The Bengal License Tax 1878" and was applicable to "all territories subject to the Lt. Governor of Bengal, including the Town of Calcutta."

(ii) "Whereas in order to provide means for defraying the public expenditure from time to time incurred and to be incurred for the relief and prevention of famine in British India it is necessary to effect a permanent income of the revenue, and it is therefore expedient that persons carrying on trades dealings and industries in the territories administered by the Lt. Governor of Bengal should take out licenses and pay for the same ..." (underline ours).

(iii) License would be granted by the district Collector or his office; but in the assessment and collection of the tax the Collector was "subject to the control of the Commissioner and the Board of Revenue."

(iv) Classes of trader or artisan or others who were under<sup>the</sup> purview of this act, as per schedule II, included from jewellers to fishermen and milkmen, from printers and book binders to liquor shopkeepers, from photographers and actors to snake-charmers, from inn-keepers to dhobis and barbars, from merchants and commission agents to hawkers and dealers in cowdung, from goldsmith to black smith and vendors of all sorts. The tax was also levied on artisans employed in large works; and the collector could "require the employer of such person to deduct the amount of his fee from any salary or wages due to such person." But, the act did not apply to persons "earning their livelihood solely by agriculture, or to any cultivator of land as such in respect of the sale of the produce of his land, when he shall not keep a shop or stall for the sale of such produce, or to any receiver of rent in kind in respect of the sale of produce received as such rent." By such arrangements landlords and tenant cultivators (compelled to sell his produce to the mahajan) were exempted; but the self-sufficient farmer emerging as a capitalist farmer was discriminated against. However, as per schedule II, the tax applied to weavers in silk, silk spinners, dealers in silk and every class of manufacturer of silk, - not even to spare the rearers as farmers.

(v) In schedule A of the Rules, the licensees or the assesseees were grouped into classes according to their minimum taxable income and the general rate of taxation <sup>was</sup> ~~as~~ 2 per

Table VIIIBengal License Tax : Act I, 1878 and  
Act II, 1880 Division of Classes

1878				1880		
Class	Grade	Minimum Taxable income (Rs.)	Rate of Tax (Rs.)	Class	Minimum Taxable income (Rs.)	Rate of Tax (Rs.)
I	1	25,000	500	I	25,000	500
	2	10,000	200			
II		5,000	100	II	10,000	200
III		2,500	50	III	5,000	100
IV		1,000	20	IV	2,500	50
V		250	5	V	1,000	20
VI	1	100	2	VI	500	10
	2	100	1			

Source : Malda Collectorate, Record Room.

cent of the gross annual income. Some changes were made in respect of classification and annual fees between the Acts of 1878 and 1880 as shown in Table VIII.

(c) Impact of the license tax - a closer look

As compared to income tax, burden of license tax fell heavily on the artisans. Shifting of the burden of such taxes by merchants and big producers was possible through various avenues; but such shifting by the petty artisans was almost impossible. It is difficult to analyse the impact, on Malda's silk industry, of license tax in isolation; because the general trend of the industry was the resultant of a good number of forces. But a few things should be stressed. First, as the preamble to the act states in unambiguous terms, the famine brought about the license tax; and their combined effect contributed to a general decline of the silk industry analysed in the following sections. Apparently the tax was 2 per cent of the gross income; but the rate at which the assesseees, particularly in class VI, fell defaulters and the coercive ways by which arrear taxes had to be collected, reveal that the tax was a heavy shock to middle and poor artisans. Secondly, the tax was not merely regressive in nature, but more important than the tax itself was the way the defaulters were dealt with; - in the silk industry the defaulters were small rearers, petty reelers and weavers of the mixed stuff. Thirdly, we have got in the Record Room of Malda Collectorate five Tour Diaries and three Assessment Lists by the License Tax

These persons though weavers of silk worms  
do not ~~in any form~~ according to  
my computation derive a taxable  
income - leaving Jadrpur at evening  
reached Chhota Mahadipur and by  
selling a pony of ~~Ashtadulal~~ Khidir  
Mandak realized Rs 9/- being the  
balance tax + fine remains due  
after what have been previously realized  
by the persons - visited Sulpur, Madanpur  
Chak Pratap Mokimerola. Here occupied  
Shah Sultan who weaves silk worms  
& reels silk by three silk reeling apparatus  
& earns a taxable income of about Rs 500/-  
a year. Passed through ~~Imulitola~~, ~~Satampura~~  
~~Ganga Prasad~~, & ~~Halled~~ for the night -  
+ ~~Chhabhpur~~

Returned to Sudder Station, attended 14<sup>th</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>  
Office - submitted reports, paid money  
into the Treasury, prepared a revised list  
of assessment of villages of the taluk  
Kaliachak & the miscellaneous pincodes

PHOTOCOPY I

A page from the Diary of the Licence  
Tax Assessor ( 13 - 16 May 1882 )

Assessor;<sup>31</sup> they are relevant to particular areas of the district at a particular time, but a careful study of these documents helps us to perceive the above conclusions as well as many other aspects of the silk industry in Malda during early 1880's :

1. In Englishbazar-Sujapur-Kaliachak-Sahapur-Shibgunge belt more than 50 per cent of the assesses were deriving their income from sources of silk manufacture and trade; silk reeling and rearing were subsidiary occupations for other groups of people. For the areas Gomastapur, Bulbulchandi and Old Malda also silk is a prime occupation; but towards Ratua profitable occupation on silk declines in percentage of total taxable earning. This aspect reveals that regional concentration of sericulture and silk reeling to a certain degree had already taken place within the district of Malda.

2. The industry in general was not thriving to prosperity; rather a process of decline was under way. This can be understood not only from the cases of defaulters or of those excluded from the assessment list<sup>32</sup> but also from the general comments in the diary on 'decline' or 'fall in trade' in the context of silk in particular villages. Such a decline was specially noteworthy in specific villages. For example, in Sahapur, a village on the bank of Mahananda opposite Englishbazar, there were 19 taxpayers (in the income groups 500-2500) in 1884 most of whom were dealers

in silk and mixed cloth except one weaver; - but in 1885 the number dropped to 16, - the three excluded from the list suffered loss in silk business.<sup>33</sup>

A few examples of prosperous merchants or pycars of cocoon failing in business are worth mentioning as their cases reveal the aspect of decline better. First, take the case of ... Mondal<sup>34</sup> of Jarlahi beyond Golapgunge and Bhogmanpur. He was a pycar of cocoon and used to supply them to the Balighata silk filature in Jangipur sub-division (Murshidabad district). "On the close of the filature this person's circumstance has undergone a change" writes the assessor, "Instead of his being a money-lender himself he has become a debtor, having failed in his cocoon supply business, and he is no longer able to derive a taxable income - he has therefore been exempted from assessment this year."

Secondly, Doman Chandra Sha (Saha) of Sahapur was degraded from class V to class VI. He had been a dealer in silk, suffered a loss and fell into debt.<sup>35</sup> The assessor notes, "He has even pledged his dwelling house and other immovable property to secure a loan of Rs.1000. He also owes other sums to different mahajans. In fact this once prosperous silk dealer has entirely failed and ceased to deal in silk." However, on account of his income from other sources he was still assessed in class VI.

The third case - Abdul Karim Biswas of Shampur became a defaulter.<sup>36</sup> The assessee was a supplier of cocoon to Watson & Co., suffered a considerable loss possibly because he failed to fulfil the contract, and his "circumstances have undergone material alteration". "Messrs Robert Watson Co. of Barogharia has obtained a civil court decree against him of about Rs.5000 which the defaulter has not been able to pay up and consequently measures have been adopted by the civil court for the satisfaction of the decree by attachment of the immovable and movable properties."

The incidence of a few such bigger dealers failing in silk business had undoubtedly fallen on the petty grower and the loss of earning on the part of small producers might have been more widespread.

3. Weaving of mixed cloth was still prevalent in a few villages - Sahapur and its adjacent; but the industry was in the most decaying condition. Such weaving was being maintained as a subsidiary occupation as the column meant for recording source of income in the assessment list show;<sup>37</sup> weavers might have practised it along with weaving cotton. The decay of mixed cloth weaving is reflected not only in declining earning of the assesses but also in the general comment by the assessor, e.g., "... village is inhabited by mahamedans whose occupation is weaving mixed stuffs of silk and cotton. In former years there were great demands

for the sorts of cloths called by various names, viz., catar, muzlahar, Bulbulchasam etc. The trade declined since and weavers are now degenerating and no longer manufacture valuable thans as they used to do in former days. - None of these class of men are now able to earn a taxable income."<sup>38</sup>

4. From an observation of the new assesseees included or upgrading of assesseees from lower class to upper class we find such cases in the silk industry also. Such persons are particularly found in Englishbazar and Sujapur areas.<sup>39</sup> The class of people so included or upgraded may be grouped into two - one, dealers in silk in the town, and the second, big rearer-cum-reelers in the villages. In fact, both these groups can be identified as growing mahajans. There are also a few marginal taxpayers (in class VI) who are middle class sericulturists cultivating own land, rearing cocoons and reeling silk in one to three self owned reeling machines. These middle class growers may be called viable producers; and they hardly showed any sign of prosperity. On the other hand, there is seldom a case of petty rearer earning a taxable income.<sup>40</sup> In some villages inquiries were made to cases of rearers at the instance of the Panchayet, but it was found that they did not earn a taxable income.

These observations read with para 2 above, help us to conclude that in sericulture and silk business, only ~~to~~<sup>two</sup> sets of activities by two similar sets of economic agents

Inquired into the circumstances of the  
 defaulters Kasir Bahad & Kales Shukla  
 of Tikia Tule - Ranjan still ~~affiliated with~~  
 of Hysapur - failed to recover from them  
 the arrears taxes - The prospects of their recovery  
 is small but I will make another attempt  
 in future - The names of these <sup>defaulters</sup> persons  
 have been excluded from the current  
 years list as they have suffered <sup>considerable</sup> loss  
 in their silk-reeling business <sup>are</sup> no longer  
~~able~~ to earn a taxable income - Prepared  
 and submitted a complete revised list  
 of the Thana Ratura -

Proceeded to Hysapur after visiting  
 Ramchandpur, Gangapatti, Durganapur  
 - ~~Room~~ Nos-10 - from Mastah Pal  
 Rapur 4-7-5 from Bisah Pal 1-1-10  
 Rapur 6-14 - from Madal, Mandil  
 In the evening arrived at Hysapur  
 and made inquiry about license tax.

PHOTOCOPY II

Another page from the Diary of the Licence  
 Tax Assessor ( 15 - 16 June 1884 )

flourished profitably - the members of the former pycar community who could become mahajans in the villages, and the dealer-mahajans in the town trading in raw silk; - the basic grower or petty reeler drifted to poverty and insolvency and gradually became dependent on these two groups of mahajans. The profitability of dealing in raw silk by the growing merchants also indicated a rise in domestic demand. The mahajani system was further shaped and strengthened in the decades to come.

5. What was particularly painful for the artisans was the coercive method of collecting arrear taxes from the defaulters. For such collection, the assessor and his peons generally practised the so-called "distress sale" of the defaulter's movable properties. Even in the case of death of an assessee arrear taxes were recovered from the sale of movable properties in possession of his heirs. The assessor and his peons also frequently adopted "all possible coercive measures" to recover taxes, but he has not specified what these are. Hence, in addition to distress sale such coercive measures might have implied any sort of harassment and torture. The diaries are full of such practices and not infrequent are the examples of extreme inhuman coercion like those on a defaulter who is now infirm and unable to reel silk for an earning,<sup>41</sup> on a rearer-reeler - an old man who has lost his eye sight,<sup>42</sup> on a widow and his son who have no means of earning but huge debt,<sup>43</sup> and so on. In the case of

rearers and reelers distress sale was made of cocoons, raw silk, reeling apparatus, cow, bullocks or anything the assessor could lay his hands on. Thus, distress sale for the recovery of taxes resulted into loss of capital or assets on the part of the producer and led him to further distress and insolvency. Such an effect accelerated the decline and strengthened the mahajani system.

A specific example, in this context, of a reeler pauperized may be cited : the case of Ramjan Shekh of Mirerchak in Englishbazar thana. According to tour diary dt. 17 April 1883, "The defaulter it appeared loss in silk-reeling business and ceased to reel silk..."; and the arrear tax was realised by distress sale. In the next year, on 8 July 1884, "... inquiries into the circumstances of Ramjan Shekh" was again made and "Found no movable property worth distress sale"; - the diary states, - "The assessee incurred debts from Kalu Sarkar and other money lenders and having suffered loss in the silk-reeling business is not able to pay up his debts and his liabilities since increased and become now an insolvent." The assessor, however, recommended for remission of his arrear tax.

6. Finally, the method of assessment and collection was unscientific. In most cases, the assessment was based on verbal instances supplied by the panchayet or influential persons, and above all, on complete guesswork of the assessor

on tour.<sup>44</sup> It is only in the case of big merchants that scrutiny of accounts and books was made. It is very important to note that about 50 per cent of the assesseees were assessed at the minimum level of Rs.500 p.a. (class VI). It is doubtful whether all these artisans really earned that income. In an assessment on the basis of guess work and others' information, there is every possibility that poorer artisans were also drawn into the assessment list to enhance revenue collection to the credit of the district authorities. On the other hand, method of collection was also disadvantageous to the small producers since no instalment was allowed; but the fine on arrear tax was three times the amount of tax due.

#### 4.6 The State of the Industry :

On the 30th May 1884, The Statesman, a Calcutta daily published an interesting editorial note on the basis of Dr. Hunter's estimates and Mr. Hume's letter to the Pioneer, to show that "90 per cent of the people in India are worse off and have fewer comforts, fewer clothes and less food "under British rule than "they every were under any native administration". In the background of such a general impoverishment of the economy and her people it is difficult to expect prosperity of a particular industry in a particular region.

A description of the general condition of silk

industry in Malda during late 70's and early 80's of the last century is available from Hunter's Account and the Reports from R. Porch, the Collector of Malda.<sup>45</sup> These descriptions do not admit that a general decline has started. But a scrutiny of these accounts as well as other available documents prompt us to conclude otherwise; and our observations have been accommodated in this section as well as in Section 5.2 Hunter found the silk weaving industry of Malda in a "languishing state", but observed on the other hand the manufacture of raw silk "in a flourishing condition". The weaving branch of the industry had already become insignificant and the silk industry of Malda in Hunter's time was mainly producing raw silk. Hence, Hunter compiling his studies mostly in 1874-5 could find no symptom of a decline; and in our opinion the decline occurred presumably just after the famine. A comparison of Hunter's account (published 1876) with the Return 41B for 1876-77 from Malda district (MC-RR) gives us an indication : the number of European concerns in raw silk production declined from 7 to 6.<sup>46</sup> The indication that the European part of the raw silk producing industry in Malda started experiencing a downfall, is strengthened by the report from Porch. According to him business of the European part of the industry was not prospering, - it was "at best a very precarious industry"; the native side of the industry on the contrary was prospering. The Collector further comments, "If the European supervised silk filatures were closed, the native silk

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industry would still thrive for a long time, but undoubtedly such collapse would recoil upon it and be disastrous to the native silk industry which is so largely subsidised and indirectly guided by European capitalists. Without that capital and guidance and support the native silk industry would, it is believed, become very precarious and collapse after a time." There is much truth in these comments; because the silk industry of this region had grown with European demand, European capital and European commercial interest for more than two centuries past. Although in terms of output the European part of the industry was less than one-third of the total,<sup>47</sup> the shock of dwindling European filatures must be great for the district's industrial scene, and it was to be felt by the rearers. But Porch failed to see that the native side of the industry did not actually thrive for a long time. The backward organisation, with mahajans at the apex, inherited from the European commercial organisation and the lack of growth of capitalist enterprise within the country were bound to be reflected in a general decline.

Hunter's account is statistically precise, while the report of Porch is statistically inaccurate, ambiguous, and full of phrases like 'nearly' 'about' etc. But still some comparison may be worthwhile. In Hunter the estimated area of land under mulberry cultivation in the district is 20,000 acres while Porch calculated it to be about 35 square

miles (i.e. 22,400 acres). Hunter estimated annual cocoon production to 60,000 maunds, Porch ambiguously stated such out-turn to be variably calculated from 12,000 to 60,000 maunds. Thus, during the period 1876-83 there was no appreciable change in mulberry cultivation and cocoon production in the district. Rather, if both the estimates are taken to be accurate, slight changes may be presumed in terms of a rise in mulberry cultivation as well as of an instability in cocoon production : the first presumption is a symptom of Malda's growing specialization as a sericulturist,<sup>48</sup> and the second one a symptom of decline. Hunter estimated the number of artisans in weaving and reeling of silk in Malda to be 13,366, while in the census of 1891, population dependent on all branches of silk was 42,896; here again no appreciable change can be presumed. Porch in his report mentioned such population dependent on mulberry cultivation, rearing, reeling and weaving of silk as 3,00,000; this seemed to be an exaggeration, because total population in the major silk producing areas of the district (thanas Englishbazar, Malda, Kaliachak and Sibganj) was 3,61,357 only as per 1871-72 census.<sup>49</sup> However, all these statistical observations do not indicate that the industry was thriving, although such data, in our opinion, is not sufficient.

Both Hunter and Porch gave us an idea about the commerce in silk produced in the district. Filatures under European system of reeling and supervision manufactured

superior quality of raw silk for the European markets. Silk reeled in the antive sector was inferior in quality (known as khamru) and was sold to Bombay, Benaras, Delhi, Mirzapur etc. as well as to the local weavers of Maldahi cloths. These cloths were marketed to Calcutta, Benaras, Bombay, Nagpur, Allahabad and were also partly purchased by local people. Hunter described Amanigunj hat to be the chief silk mart of the district, where buyers from the neighbouring districts like Rajshahi and Murshidabad came to make purchases; the other silk markets were at Bholahat and Kashimpur. Hunter also observed that through silk trade wealth accumulated in the hands of traders in silk and cocoon; but the majority of the banias or trader-mahajans were from the north-west provinces and Bihar so that profits of these classes were ultimately remitted away from the district.

This particular observation and our analysis in this chapter affirms our views :

(i) In the organisation of industry after the East India Company, even if the industry had maintained its flourishing condition, the profits were appropriated by the Europeans and the emerging class of mahajans and traders ; - the condition of general rearers and reelers could not improve as a result of the pressure of mahajani mode of business, the famine and taxes.

(ii) We are of the opinion that a process of decline in the silk industry of Malda started since the mid-1870's and the basic force behind it was the very unfavourable structure of the industry where profits are not ploughed back but general growers are exploited to enhance such profits. It is this structure that prevented the industry from growing even in the face of a rise in domestic demand which we have noticed. The traders and mahajans not only refrained from performing the responsibilities of entrepreneurs but also prevented the growth of a free market. The raw silk reelers often did not know where and who were their purchasers while the purchasers also had no information about the individual reelers.

A few other factors responsible for initiating the process of decline may be briefly mentioned here. First, as R.R. Ghosh observed, just after the famine of 1874 the degeneracy of Bengal cocoons were accentuated by the spread of pebrine, a silk worm disease. Perhaps, this explains the instability in cocoon output estimated by Porch in 1880-83. In fact, pebrine became a problem to almost all the silk producing countries of the world except Japan. But, the European countries "worked out the salvation of the industry" from this dreadful disease by the cellulaire system of seed selection after Pasteur of France, while Bengal "still steeped in ignorance" was losing her position in the world market.<sup>50</sup> In addition to this epidemic, Ghosh pointed out

the tendency of the rearers to underfeed the worms; and he has also explained the economic reason behind this. In his opinion, the presence of a class of leaf-seller and another class of rearer "who depend solely upon the former for the supply of leaves" was the cause.<sup>51</sup> The question of ownership of mulberry land and mahajani business becomes relevant to this point.

Secondly, high rate of rent for mulberry land acted against the interests of the industry. Porch in his 1883 report remarked, "rents for mulberry lands sub-ryoti are so high as from <sup>Rs.</sup> 16 to Rs. 25 per bigha, and press heavily on the industry." Such rent was discriminatory against mulberry and was an effect of commercialization of agriculture. Such prohibitive rent reduced net earning of the small rearer and increased that of the landowner-mahajan. The issue of rent became subject to attack since 1886.

Finally, in spite of an enlarged domestic demand, the foreign demand condition was still the guiding force. Decline of Bengal raw silk export presented in Graph II (p. 220 B ) and section 5.2 show us why external demand might have caused a general decline of the silk industry of Malda. From 1872 production of silk in Japan increased enormously; - since disease was unknown in Japan and since she improved the quality of her silk to a very high standard. Japan rapidly rose to be the most important supplier of silk and silk goods to the world market and demand for Bengal silk

consequently began to fall. Prominence of Japan in the international market became faster in the decades to come and Maxwell-Lefroy observed a continuous fall in the demand and price of Bengal silk upto 1915.<sup>52</sup>

Notes and References to Chapter IV

1. H. Maxwell-Lefroy - Report on an inquiry into the Silk Industry in India, Vol.I, Calcutta 1916; p.18.
2. For details of such an account, W.W. Hunter - Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol.IV, London 1881; p.572.
3. J. Geoghegan - Some Account of Silk in India, Calcutta 1880; p.32 and  
N.G. Mukherjee - A Monograph on the silk fabrics of Bengal, Calcutta 1903; p.32.
4. Report of the proceedings of the E.I. Company in regard to Trade, Culture and Manufacture of Raw Silk, London 1836, Appendix A; p.4.
5. K.N. Chaudhuri (ed.) - The Economic Development of India under the East India Company (1814-58), Cambridge 1971; Introduction p.26; Also p.1, 2, 3, 5, 10 for the general issues in the following paragraph.
6. i.e. Bandhanas which were silk handkerchiefs dyed with spots and rings. They were mainly woven in Murshidabad and Malda. 'Tie and dye' method of printing the handkerchiefs signifies the name bandhanas.  
L.S.S. O'Malley - Bengal District Gazetteer (Murshidabad), Calcutta 1914; p.137.
7. N.K. Sinha - The Economic History of Bengal, Vol.III, Calcutta 1971; p.12.
8. S. Bhattacharya in Cambridge Economic History of India, Vol.II (Edited by Dharma Kumar), Delhi 1982; p.293.
9. W.W. Hunter - A Statistical Account of Bengal, Vol.VII, (Indian Reprint) Delhi 1974; p.96.
10. W.W. Hunter - Imperial Gazetteer of India, Op.cit., p.509, and  
H. Maxwell-Lefroy - Report on an inquiry into the Silk Industry in India, Op.cit., pp.12-13, 18.
11. Under the colonial conditions such open market was not 'free' in a theoretical sense. Prospects of higher price and cash return should be emphasised.

12. The levels of such land were further raised by tank silt dressing on the surroundings - a practice required by the nature of the soil.
13. For further documentation of the relief operations in Malda, please see Appendix B.
14. For a detailed account of the intensity of these two famines in this region, W.W. Hunter - A Statistical Account of Bengal, Vols.VII and VIII, London 1876 (Indian Reprint 1974).
15. W.W. Hunter - A Statistical Account of Bengal, Ibid., p.92.

In the official English documents 1 maund = 80 lbs and 1 seer = 80 tolas.

16. Letter No.280 dt. 18 December 1873 from H.R. Reily, Deputy Collector and Manager Chanchal Estate to the Collector of Malda.

Source : Malda Collectorate Record Room (henceforth mentioned as 'MC-RR').

Source of all other primary documents in rest of this chapter is also MC-RR.

17. No.426 dt. 21 March 1874, Report on scarcity and relief, From Reily to the Collector Malda (MC-RR).
18. Malda was then included in the Rajshahi Division having its headquarters at Berhampore. Please see Appendix D also.
19. Letter No.3810 dt. 5 December 1873, from C. Bernard, the Officiating Secretary, Govt. of Bengal to the Commissioner of Rajshahi Division; Copy forwarded to the Collector, Malda.
20. No.155-SR dt. 16 January 1874 from C. Bernard, the Officiating Secretary, Govt. of Bengal to the Commissioner of Rajshahi Division.
21. No.4257-SR dt. 3 July 1874, from J.F.K. Hewitt, Officiating Junior Secretary, Govt. of Bengal, Scarcity & Relief Department to the Relief Commissioner, Rajshahi.

22. Prices of rice quoted from Part III F of Return 41B to the Board of Revenue (Dist. Malda).

Such return (XLI-B) contained an extensive annual statistical reporting on the district to be sent to the Board of Revenue at the end of each financial year.

23. Letter No.41 dt. 19 May 1876.

24. Causation of starvation and famines analysed by Amartya Sen in his master piece 'Poverty and Famines : An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation' (OUP 1984) is very relevant in the discussion of famines in India under colonial rule. Exchange entitlements are determined by the mode of production and production relation; and the entitlement approach to famine concentrates on the ability of different sections of population to establish command over food, using the entitlement relations operating in the society depending on its legal, economic, political and social characteristics.

25. Part III G of Return 41B for the years 1876-77 and 1877-78.

26. George Smith (ed.) - Annals of Indian Administration, Vol.XIV, Serampore 1870; p.293.

Necessity for replenishing the treasury implies that the pressure was thrust upon the existing land revenue burden.

27. The tax yielded £8.25 million.

George Smith - Annals of Indian Administration, Ibid.; p.343.

Other information in this paragraph is also primarily based on the same reference.

28. No.183 dt. 11 September 1870 in reply to Malda Collr.'s No.140 dt. 6 September 1870 (MC-RR).

29. From the above letter (in ref.no.27) we come to know about one Deepram of Malda who was a big businessman in silk at Gazipur. In the Diary of the License Tax Assessor dt. 21 April 1883 (MC-RR) we find one Shewgolam Bhakat carrying on business in the districts of Malda, Murshidabad, Rajshahi and Patna as well as in the north-western provinces.

30. Abstract of the Act passed by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal in Council as well as the Rules for the Administration of the Act under section 39 of Act I 1878 and under section 32 of Act II 1880. (MC-RR)
31. The assessor concerned was M.N. Banerjee. He was the Head Clerk in the Collectorate and was appointed the License Tax Assessor by the Collector Malda during certain period in the year. All the diaries commence with a similar note on the joining report and assuming charge of the assessor. The purpose of his tour was making inquiry into any new case of taxable income and collection from the defaulters. According to his T.A. Bill for October 1885 : his pay was Rs.150 per month and he was eligible for a daily allowance @ Rs.3 per day during the tour. The establishment of Mr. Banerjee as the assessor consisted of one clerk and two peons. Available documents mentioned in the text are as follows (MC-RR) :-

Diaries (i) May-June 1882 (ii) April 1883 (iii) June 1883 (iv) May-July 1884 (v) July, October 1885.

Assessment Lists (in Form A of the Revised Rules) dt. (i) 24 September 1885 (ii) 4 October 1885 and (iii) 13 October 1885.

Such documents for the whole of the district and well arranged chronologically for a few years were, however, not available.

32. A good number of defaulters every year suffered considerable loss in the business of silk rearing, reeling or trade; many of these defaulters were subsequently excluded from the list of tax-payers.
33. Tour Diary, September 1885 and Assessment List dt. 24 Sept. 1885. (Henceforth T. Diary and A. List).
34. Name illegible, T. Diary 27 June 1884.
35. T. Diary 15 September 1885.
36. T. Diary 27 July 1885.
37. In the case of taxable assesseees weaving of mixed cloth had been combined with reeling, money leading, tailoring, trading etc., excepting a single weaver of Sahapur whose occupation has been mentioned as "weaving mixed stuff" only, - earning Rs.500 per annum.

38. T. Diary 22 September 1885.
39. T. Diary 18 April 1883, 27-28 April 1883, 15 September 1885, etc.
40. There were several occasions that the assessor had passed through a village of rearers, even in the Kaliachak area, but a single person could not be assessed.
- T. Diary 12-13 May 1882, 29 April 1883.
41. T. Diary 29 April 1883.
42. T. Diary 4 July 1884.
43. T. Diary 28 April 1883.
- Similar coercion and attempts to distress sale were frequently made on persons in total helplessness after a big fire burning all his properties (28 April 1883), or persons over head and ears in debt (5 June 1883) etc.; - needless to extend examples.
44. There were also occasions when the assessor depended on verbal instructions from the Collector or Deputy Collector in charge of license tax. For example, T. Diary 15 June 1883 : "Gangadasahara Holiday - solicited an interview with the Collector. This was granted at 5.50 p.m. Received verbal instructions on matters of license tax."
45. W.W. Hunter - A Statistical Account of Bengal, Vol.VII, Op.cit.; pp.96-102.
- Porch sent two reports to the Govt. of Bengal, one in June 1880 and the other in February 1883; since the original texts are not available we depend on abstracts quoted in L. Liotard - Memorandum on Silk in India, Part I, Calcutta 1883; pp.21-22.
46. Hunter mentioned 7 European units producing filature raw silk, majority of which belonged to Watson & Co., Louis Poyen and Cie of Lyon; Return 41 B mentions 6 such units.
47. According to Hunter's estimate (1876) the European part produced 620 maunds and the native part produced 1500 maunds raw silk in the district.

48. In Hunter's account value of annual raw silk output in the district was Rs.15,20,000. He has also compared the value of woven silk and mixed cloth with those of Buchanan Hamilton's estimates to show a decline in weaving; in Hunter value of mixed cloth (Maldahi) was only Rs.6,000.
49. W.W. Hunter - A Statistical Account of Bengal, Vol.VII, Op.cit.; p.38.
50. R.R. Ghose - Decline of the Silk Industry in Bengal and how to arrest it; Calcutta 1915; p.3.
51. R.R. Ghose - Decline of the Silk Industry in Bengal and how to arrest it, Ibid.; p.4.
52. H. Maxwell-Lefroy - Report on an inquiry into the Silk Industry in India, Vol.I, Op,cit.; p.10.