

Methodology :

In order to be fully acquainted with the culture of tea and the different functional aspects, the author made approaches to different institutions, organisations concerned with it and took interviews of a number of persons closely connected with culture and manufacture of tea. It has to be admitted that the data available in this region are far from adequate. In many cases people involved in the industry feel reluctant to part with necessary information. Besides, many of them do not keep records in systematic order. During the study, the author has observed different types of problems faced by the tea industry in this region. In studying the entire situations, the author has adopted certain principles for getting access to the fact relating to the running of this important industry.

In fact, the work has mainly been done on the basis of extensive field work. On the whole, 62 tea estates, comprising 21 percent of the total number were visited personally by the author. The selection of these estates were based on two criteria: a) the area of the estates, and b) the production of the estates. Therefore, on these basis the estates were sub-divided into three categories in terms of their geographical locations, such as the gardens on the Hills, the Farai and the Doears. During the visit to the estates, the author used to take a cyclostyled copy of 'proforma' prepared by him in consultation with his Supervisor and collected various types of information and data. The same proforma was also sent by post to each of the estates in the region. The character of landuse obtaining in the estates on the basis of settlement survey maps were also stu-

died in detail during such visits. Altogether the thirteen months, from November, 1973 to December, 1974, were devoted at a stretch to the field-study. Besides, visits of short duration were also made from time to time in all the following years.

In this connection, the author took interviews of various persons ranging from the management of the tea industry to the labour side, and the persons closely associated with tea. Thus, eleven managers or renowned tea planters were questioned covering all aspects of tea. Persons other than mentioned above were also interviewed. They are the Secretaries of the Darjeeling Branch Indian Tea Association; Tea Association of India (Darjeeling Branch), Terai Indian Planters' Association; Indian Tea Planters' Association (Jalpaiguri); Adviser Officer, Tea Research Association (Darjeeling); President, Siliguri Tea Auction Committee; Deputy Labour Commissioner, Siliguri; Assistant Labour Commissioner, Darjeeling; Assistant Soil Conservation Officer, Siliguri; Managing Director, Gopalpur Tea Co. Ltd. (Jalpaiguri); Director, A.W. Figgis & Co. (P) Ltd., Calcutta; Managing Director, J. Thomas & Co. (P) Ltd., Calcutta; Inspector of Factories, Jalpaiguri; etc. The author took interviews of the different trade union leaders associated with Darjeeling Cha Kaman Masdur Union, Rashtriya Cha Bagan Masdur Sangha, Bharatiya Cha Masdur Union, etc., and also the experienced tea labourers as well as staff members working in the tea estates for quite a long time.

The information gathered in this way have been thoroughly compared, analysed and weighted before incorporating as materials for the present study.

Further the author visited a number of institutions as well as organisations for collecting necessary information and data. They are : The Tea Board of India, Calcutta; Calcutta Tea Traders Association, Calcutta; Indian Tea Association, Calcutta; Tea Association of India, Calcutta; Directories of Factories, Calcutta; A.W. Figgis & Co. (P) Ltd., Calcutta; Calcutta Tea Auction Mart, Calcutta; Darjeeling Branch Indian Tea Association, Darjeeling; Tea Association of India (Darjeeling Branch), Darjeeling; Tea Research Association, Darjeeling; Terai Indian Planters' Association, Naitigara; Indian Tea Planters' Association, Jalpaiguri; Siliguri Tea Auction Committee, Siliguri; A.W. Figgis & Co. Ltd. (Siliguri Branch), Siliguri; Office of the Deputy Labour Commissioner, Siliguri; Office of the Assistant Labour Commissioner, Darjeeling; Office of the Inspector of Factories, Jalpaiguri; Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Darjeeling; Records Room, Darjeeling; Office of the Commissioner, North Bengal Division, Jalpaiguri; Records Room, Jalpaiguri; Tea Board of India, Siliguri Branch, Siliguri; Tea Association of India, Siliguri Branch; Office of the Executive Engineer, Irrigation and Waterways, North Bengal Investigation Division, Government of West Bengal, Siliguri; Office of the Regional Director, Worker's Education Centre, Siliguri; Regional Meteorological Centre, Alipur; Office of the Soil Conservation Officer (Survey and Planning), Siliguri; Office of the District Industrial Officer, Siliguri; United Bank of India, Jalpaiguri Branch; Central Bank of India, Siliguri Branch; National Atlas Organisation, Calcutta; Geological Survey of India, Calcutta; Siliguri Planning Organisation, Siliguri; etc.

During the tenure of his studies, the author also visited the Head Offices of some of the tea estates, The author also examined the old records maintained by the relevant authorities.

The data and information thus collected through extensive field work and from various organisations have been thoroughly evaluated and processed for presentation in this thesis.