CHAPTER X

Historical Background of Tea Plantation in Assam and Abroad

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CHAPTER - I

Historical Background of tea plantation in Assam and abroad.

Introduction:

The Tea Plantation Industry of Assam is an Agricultural industry having a very peculiar past history. It is more than 160 years old and during this long journey the industry experienced many ups and downs. The tea plants were abundantly available in Upper Assam jungles. The indigenous people of Assam used to drink the brew even before its discovery. In 1821\(^1\) Robert Bruce an Englishman discovered the tea plants from the Upper Assam jungles with the help of Beesa Gam a 'Singpho Chief'. In 1824 his younger brother Charles Alexander Bruce\(^2\) (C.A. Bruce) planted tea plants in front of his bungalow at Sadiya Upper Assam on an experimental basis for the first time.

Mr. Bruce sent First sample of tea leaf to the first commissioner of Assam David Scott. There is a proved that the first tea cultivation on commercial basis was carried on in 1835\(^3\) at Chabuwa area in Upper Assam. Incidentally the name of the place later on known as Chabuwa (i.e. cha means tea and bua means plant).

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1. Imperial Gazetteer of India Re-print Vol.III P-56
2. Dutta A. K. The Tea Story P-65
3. Choudhury, Robin. An article in the Souvenir, 55th Session of Assam Sahitya Sabha P-60

Doomdooma (Feb-1989)
Chinese tea seeds imported in 1828 and germinated in Joypur and Dinjoy:

In 1828 imported tea seeds were germinated in Joypur and later on at Dinjoy (Chabuwa) in Upper Assam. Here mention may be made that "The Bengal Tea Association" was formed in 1838 by some rich people of Bengal and some Europeans with a share capital of Rs. 10 lakhs. But they faced with some difficulties like acute shortage of labour, technical know-how, machines and tools as well as transport bottleneck. During that time Mr. F. Jenkins was in-charge of the Assam Valley while Mr. L. Charlton was in-charge of Sadiya.

A team of Scientists headed by Dr. N. Wallich studied the situations and appointed Major Charles Alexander Bruce as Superintendent of Tea gardens of Assam in 1838. But two years before in 1836 Mr. Bruce first produced tea with the help of Chinese skilled workers. At the initial stages the tea planters had to face many problems, as the local people were greatly depopulated due to Burmese incursions perpetrated several times and the remaining people being agriculturists were unwilling to work in tea gardens. The rural economy was primarily agricultural economy. The labourers had to be brought from Chota Nagpur and other adjoining surplus provinces of British India.

4. Borpujari, H. K. (Dr.), Assam in the Days of Company (1826 to 1858) P-246
5. Gait, Edward, Sir, The History of Assam P-354
Lack of infra-structure facilities in the early part of 19th Century:

The transport bottleneck was the main hurdle for expansion of tea industry. All lands were vast dense forests full of wild animals, insects of various kinds, birds and beasts. Huge labour force were required to clear dense forests for planting tea plants. There were no direct communication facilities. The only mode of transport was the ship or country boat from Calcutta to Assam partly through rivers like mighty Brahmaputra and remaining part through Bay of Bengal. As the country boats or ships were manually operated the mode of transport was very slow, and as such it took months together for a single journey from Calcutta to Guwahati or from Guwahati to Calcutta or from Calcutta to Dibrugarh where tea plantation sites are located. The R.S.N. Company was the only mode of transport through river waters and sea waters to and from Assam.

The tea planters had to appoint "sardars" who were made responsible for bringing labourers from other parts of the country by any means even they had to resort to false tactics and false promises also. They were also termed as "arkutti agents" or "coolie catcher". The agreements they entered into were not attractive or acceptable. The labourers came to Assam with the intention of going back to their respective homes after their work in the tea gardens was over. But they had to settle here for ever assimilated

with the local people accepting the cultural, economic, social and political set up of the people of Assam. Due to repeated incursions carried on by the Burmese armies and atrocities perpetrated in inhuman nature on the innocent people of Assam (i.e, Assamese) Assam was greatly depopulated.

As such there was hardly any possibility of earning revenue. But however the then British Government annexed Assam with India only on 26th February, 1826 as a result of Yandaboo treaty. The main aim of the British Government was to turn Assam into an agricultural estate of tea drinking Britons. In 1815 Colonel Latter had mentioned in his report about the habit of drinking tea by the Assamese tribes.

The Singphoes and Khamties habilituated in drinking brew from tea:

The Singphoes and Khamties who came from Northern Burma to Assam and settled here in the pre-historic past were well acquainted with the tea bushes and drank brew from the tea leaves.

In 1823 Mr. Bruce arrived at Rongpur (the then Ahom capital in Upper Assam) and met Maniram Dutta Baruah (Dewan, 1806- 58). Mr. Bruce was a fortune hunter and he was in close touch with Maniram. Maniram Dewan in return introduced Mr. Bruce with a friendly Singhpho Chief Beesa Gam. He had entered into an agreement for supply of tea bushes and seeds to be collected during his next visit to Upper Assam. But Mr. Bruce had died in 1824 and his dream (i.e. Plans) could not be materialised. Robart Bruce before his death had informed his younger brother Charles Alexander Bruce about the indigenous tea.

7. Bhuyan S.K(Dr).Anglo Assamese Relations,1771 to 1826 P-556
8. ibid P-66
East India Company's strong opposition to indigenous tea and monopoly of Chinese tea trade and formation of tea committee in 1834:

The East India Company had preferred China tea and exported the same to London regularly. C.A. Bruce had visited extensively in search of tea plants and seeds even in the villages located in the dense jungles of Assam.

Charles Alexander Bruce. The father of Indian tea.

In 1823 he fought against Burmese army to make Assam free from Burmese dominations. Mr. Bruce was the Superintendent of tea culture and had to look after the government tea plantations in Assam. He opened up a nursery of indigenous Assam tea at Sadiya.

The first consignment of tea sent from Assam was made from the leaves of indigenous tea plants. He had collected tea plants (several hundred) and seeds from Singpho Chief Bessa Gam for which his elder brother Robert Bruce had negotiations before his death. Mr. Bruce had to employ non scientific trial and error methods in his tea practices. He always had an inquisitive mind and motivation for his adventure.

10. Borpujari H. K. (Dr.) Assam in the Days of Company (1826 to 1858) P-354
In spite of many difficulties that he had to face Mr. Bruce used to despatch tea chests regularly to London auction centres and Calcutta Sales. He was the first man to make experiment of the shade trees. The monopoly of Chinese tea trade by East India Company was over by 1833 the Colonial British Government hurriedly made all efforts to maintain the export of tea to England and with this end in view took proper initiative to increase the production of tea in India. In the meantime the then Governor General of British India Lord William Bantink set up the first "Tea Committee" in 1834 (i.e. on 1st Feb., 1834). Mr. George James Gordon was the Secretary of the committee.

As a first step the Governor General had removed the "Land Settlement" difficulties and had completed formalities within a very short time. The committee also maintained the trend of ignoring the native tea bushes of Assam and instead, Gordon left for China in the same year to find out the tea bushes plants and seeds. Captain Francis Jenkins, Agent to the Governor General for North East Frontier recommended Assam as ideal place for tea plantations. Mr. Charlton Assistant of Jenkins collected indigenous tea bushes from Sadiya, Upper Assam and sent to the Government.

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11. ibid P-68
12. ibid P-240
13. ibid P-69
Unsympathetic attitude of the British government towards tea
Martyr Bruce:

Mr. Bruce was the "father of Indian tea industry" and a Martyr of tea like Maniram Dewan. As the Assam Company was facing a financial ruin immediately he was removed from his post\(^1\) \(^4\) in 1843 along with J. Masters.

Dr. N. Wallich, the most controversial expert

In 1871 Mr. Charles Alexender Bruce died. Dr. N. Wallich, a scientiest never acknowledged Assam's indigenous tea as genuine tea. This was the attitude of the colonial British Government towards its colonies particularly to Assam.

Captain Jenkins and Lt. Charlton were awarded Gold Medals:

The Agricultural and Horticultural Society awarded Gold Medals to Mr. Jenkins and Charlton for their contributions in the field of tea researches\(^1\) \(^5\). However the actual credit should have gone to Robert Bruce his brother C.A. Bruce, Maniram Dewan, Beesa Gam and David Scott for their discovery of tea locally available in Assam jungles.

\(^{14}\) ibid P-75
\(^{15}\) Gait, Eduward Sir-History of Assam P-353
Although Gold Medals were awarded to those British people for their discovery (said to be) of tea, but the actual credit deserved by Tea Martyr Maniram Dewan. Even Mr. Samual Baildon an English writer mentioned in his book entitled "Tea in Assam" that Mr. Maniram had first discovered tea. C. A. Bruce later received Gold Medal from the Royal Society of Arts, London.

Tea Martyr Maniram Dewan established Cinnamora, Toklai and Selung (Singlo):

In 1845 Maniram Dewan started tea plantations in the Cinnamora and Toklai tea gardens (station) and Selung (now it is Singlo) in undivided Sibsagar district. But as ill luck would have it, at the instigations of the British tea planters in Assam the then British Government convicted the noble innocent person in the conspiracy case and was hanged on 26th February, 1858. He was the first tea martyr of Assam. He took active part in the freedom movement in 1857 and his two tea estates were confiscated and tactfully purchased by Mr. George Williamson at a very nominal price in an auction. But Williamson became very unpopular after the purchase of two tea gardens of Maniram Dewan. illigally and could not enjoy the ill acquired properties. Ultimately, Mr. Williamson was force to sell Cinnamora tea estate to

17. ibid P-69
18. Dutta, A. K. - The Tea Story P-63
Jorehaut Tea Company which was formed later and Singlo to some other purchaser at a very nominal price. All labourers including Chinese tea makers left their jobs in protest against Williamson's illegal actions and was forced to re-sell his two gardens.

Moniram Dewan, the first Assamese tea martyr.

Tea Committee's Wrong site selection:

The tea committee recommended that cultivation of the indigenous species tea could be cultivated with complete success for commercial purposes.

In the meantime, Mr. Gorden came back from China in 1835 carrying tea seeds from Bohea which were planted in the nurseries in the Botanical Garden, Calcutta. The Scientific commission comprising of Dr. Wallich, Dr. W. Griffiths and Dr. J. Mclelland were to find out a suitable site for tea plantations. But due to differences of opinion in the site selection the commission members after visiting different

19. ibid P -69
20. Gait, E. A The History of Assam P-355
places selected a worst possible location a char area at Kundilmukh near Sadiya. During monsoon, the torrential floods washed away the tea plantations. C. A. Bruce, however, planted few hundred at Joypur and another few hundreds at Chabuwa. The Chinese tea plantations were complete failure but the authorities realised it only after a long time.

With the help of Singpho Chief and Khamti friends Mr. Bruce planted indigenous tea plants at Sadiya and made tea from existing bushes. The nominal Ahom king Purandar Singha agreed to hand over Gabhoru Purbat (hills) area to Mr. Bruce. In 1836 Mr. Bruce despatched a small quantity of samples of manufactured tea and Lord Aucland approved the first sample as good quality tea. In 1837, Mr. Bruce had despatched another consignment of 46 chests of tea. But on transit through river waters and exposures, half of the tea were spoiled and as such was rejected. Again another consignment of 350 pounds of tea in 8 chests were despatched to London in 1838. The whole lot was sold at a very high price in an auction and was bought by Captain Pidding a rich merchant.

21. ibid P-354
22. Dutta, A. K. The Tea Story P-71
In 1839 Mr. Bruce had despatched 95 chests of better quality tea in a better packed which was sold in auction. Again he had despatched 130 chests of tea to Calcutta in 1841 of which 35 chests were produced by Singpho Chief Ningroola. The rest was produced in the Government held gardens under the Supervision of Mr. Bruce.

Expansion of tea plantation in quick succession:

The high ambitious Mr. C. A. Bruce started plantations in quick succession at Dinjoy, Chota Tingri and Hukanpukhuri. Colonel White had desposed the Ahom King Purander Singha in 1839 and Assam came under direct British Government. In the same year, some merchants of Calcutta had formed the Bengal Tea Association and a Joint Stock Company was formed in London. These two companies got combined and formed the first Indian Tea Company called the "Assam Company", which happens to be the first Joint Stock Company in India. The Assam Company was the first Joint stock company established in India under an Act of Parliament. The company had established a tea garden at Nazira on the bank of the river Dikhow. In subsequent years, Maijan Tea Company was formed. Lt. F. S. Hanny established the Maijan tea estate in 1851 near Dibrugarh.

23. Borpujari, H.K. (Dr.) - Assam in the Days of Company P-244
24. ibid P-246
25. Guha, Amalendu (Dr.) - Planter Raj to Swaraj P-75
The production of tea was gradually increasing year after year since 1838. For administrative convenience the Assam Company was divided into three Divisions, C.A. Bruce was in-charge of Northern Division with head-quarter at Joypur, J. Master of Southern Division with head-quarter at Nazira and J. Parker of Eastern Division. James Warren secretly purchased Chabuwa tea garden in London and sent his two nephews to take delivery:

James Warren secretly had purchased the Chabuwa tea seeds garden in London and sent his nephew Mr. James in 1857-58 to take delivery of the same at Chabuwa, Upper Assam from Assam company. His second nephew, Mr. Walter Stephen also came to Assam. Both the brothers, Mr. James and Mr. Stephen met together in Assam in due course and established two gardens, one at Hansara west of Doomdooma and the other at Bishakhupee, Doom dooma, Upper Assam in 1859-60. The Doomdooma Tea company was formed in 1877 with these gardens later on and the present Doomdooma India Ltd., is the outcome of Doomdooma Tea Company.

The East India Company was granted charter in 1833. The European people were granted to hold land on long term basis under this cahrter for the first time, that is, free land-holdings. This was the beginning of the colonial plantation economy.

26. Choudhury, Robin, Somaroh (Souvenir),
Assam Sahitya Sabha, Doomdooma Session, Beb.'1989 P-85.
Tea gardens like Hilikha, Hukanguari and Raidong gardens of Pabhajan tea company, Talap, Khubang and Dangari of Assam Frontier company, Duarmara and Philobari were established in quick succession. Thus Doomdooma became a mixed cultural centre of Dibrugarh district. Within a short time the entire areas of Doomdooma, Borhapjan, Makum, Tinsukia, Chabua, Dikam and Dibrugarh was converted into plantation areas of green carpets.

Williamson Brothers Established Scores of new tea garden:

During the 6th decade of the nineteenth century scores of new tea gardens were established by legendary Williamson Brothers. They acquired vast areas of land to be brought under tea plantations. They had applied indigenous methods of cultivation and planted indigenous tea bushes. They made a remarkable success.

Promulgation of Waste-land Rule in 1838 and 1854:

In 1838 the Colonial British Government had promulgated the first Waste-land Rules and in 1854 another more easy rules which facilitated the European tea maniac people to expand the tea cultivation in Assam on easy terms for 99 years. But in 1861 Lord Canning framed another very easy rules applicable to British people through which they could purchase land through auctions for the first time.

27. Borpujari, H. K. (Dr)- Assam in the days of Company (1826-58)
Discriminatory Land Revenue Policy:

The colonial British Government framed most unfavourable discriminatory land laws as well as Land Revenue Rules which were exceptionally favourable to the British People. Under the above waste-land rule 1838 the British people could acquire vast areas of waste land (jungle-land) at free of cost and no land revenue had to be paid by them upto 75% of their land-holdings. For the remaining 25% also they had to pay a nominal rate of land revenue. The British people were the biggest land-holders. But they were paying the lowest land revenue to the state. On the other hand, the Indian poor cultivators had to pay much higher land revenue per annum for their land-holdings.  

Jorehaut Tea Company formed in 1859, (second tea company in Assam):

The Jorehaut Tea Company was formed and incorporated in 1859. This was the second tea company established in Assam. This company purchased Cinnamora, Oating and Kaliabor from Williamson Brothers and from Henry Burkiyoung the Numaligarh tea garden. In 1859, there were 51 tea gardens but during next few years unprecedented expansions took place.

28. ibid P-360
29. Barpujari, H. K. (Dr.)- Assam in the Days of Company P-251
In those days particularly from the sixth decade of the nineteenth century, most of the tea planters were highly placed retired Colonial British Government officials. The highly placed civil servants gave up their jobs and became tea planters. The shares of the tea companies rose to the highest magnitude. The cheating, treachery and fraud were prevailing everywhere and land hungry European people ran after land for tea plantations even the mountaneous terrain like Lushai Hills.

During crisis, land-holdings of tea gardens were transferred to Bank:

The banks located in Assam viz Quomilla Modern Bank, Nath Bank, Imperial Bank, Guwahati Bank etc. were the main source of finance to the tea plantations from the middle of the nineteenth century on the security of "Fee Simple Title Deeds". But, suddenly tragedy followed the tea plantations in 1865 as a bolt from the blue and crack started quickly mainly speculative ventures. The mortgaged landed properties were transferred to the bank as those planters could not repay their loans in time. Those who could prudently manage their gardens were survived but others could not survive.

Having no other alternatives some gardens were closed, some discharged their workers and some others were compelled to live in temporary huts leaving aside their belongings.

The crisis continued up to early part of 1870 and fortunately the crisis gradually disappeared from the early part of 1870 and the process of recovery started.

By 1872 almost all tea gardens viz. Gotonga cinnamora, Rangajan, Bokahola, Chaikota, Dhekiajuli, Daphalating, Sakalatenga, Numaligarh, Halmora, oating, Balijan, Negheriting, Chaulkhowa, Singirijan, Panitola, Moran, Maijan, Rongagara, Borborooa, Chabuwa, Mohunbaree, Tipuk, Naharani and Halmari to name only a few were re-opened.

Recruitment of labourers by unscrupulous Calcutta Contractors:

The Planter's Association was formed in 1859 for the purpose of recruitment of labourers from outside Assam. The Association depended upon the unscrupulous Calcutta contractors for recruitment of labourers. The contractors were using most unethical brutal means to acquire labourers to be sent to Assam. The shrewed contractors enticed poverty-stricken tribals very frequently resorting to kidnapping threatened them by taking thumb prints on contracts at the time of drunkenness or intoxication. The workers were held liable under the Workmen's Breach of Contract Act, 1859. The recruits were sent to Assam by worst possible manner.

31. ibid, P - 81
Exploitation of human being:

The labourers had to live in very unhygienic environment, paid little, fed too less and the magnitude of human exploitation was beyond imaginations. A batch of 64 workers were sent to Assam but 9 died on transit 2 absconded. The Assam Company brought 2,272 labourers between December 1859 and November 1861 out of which 250 died on transit. Between April 1861 and February 1862 the company recruited 2,569 labourers of which 135 died on the way and 103 absconded. Between May 1863 and May 1866 a total of 84,915 labourers were arrived in Assam out of which 30,000 had died by June 1866. This was the most unfortunate and sad story of death and misery in the colonial history of Assam. The average mortality rate was 10% to 15% and sometimes rose to 50%.

First and Second Enquiry committees appointed in 1861 and 1868 respectively:

The British Government had set-up an Enquiry Committee in 1861 to inquire about the whole affairs. After enquiry the committee gave an adverse report and as a result the "Transport of Native Labourers Act, 1863" was passed. The compulsory registration of new migrants and licensing of recruiting agents was provided in the Act although it served no purpose to the labourers. The Act of 1863 was amended in 1865 providing fixed wages, fixed hours of work and appointment of Protectors and Inspectors of labourers.
In 1868 another enquiry commission was set up to inquire into the lapses of the provisions of the various Acts in force. The commission reported that the planters were violating the provisions of the existing Acts. The planters hunted the runaway labourers and inflicted severe punishments.

The British people were successful in building up the Indian tea industry by applying their qualifications, knowledge, skill, experiences, ability and farsightedness. The land and labourers were two pre-requisites for the expansion of the tea plantation industry. The land was not a problem for them, as very little formalities had to abide by them. Within 1870 the British people were successful in consolidating the Indian tea industry by bulldozing all obstacles.

Expansion of tea plantations in Kumaon, Garhwal, Kangra and Kulu Valley:

The proprietorial tea gardens on small-scale basis were set-up in Kumaon, Garhwal, Kangra, Kulu Valley and Dehra-Dun in 1856. Now-a-days, tea gardens located in those areas are producing about one million Kg. tea every year. Mr. A. Sconce had started tea gardens at Chitagong in 1840 and the first tea garden was started at Sylhet in 1856. These two districts were parts of British India.

34. Borpujari, H.K.(Dr)-Assam in the days of Company P-355
Tea plantations started in Darjeeling and Terrai in 1850 and 1860 respectively:

In Darjeeling tea plantations was started in 1850 which produced a peculiar variety of tea with an exquisite aroma and flavour, Dr. A. Campbell had planted tea in his residence in 1841 at the height of 7,000 feet. The commercial cultivation of tea was started in 1852-53 in Darjeeling with the Chinese variety of tea bushes.

In 1860 the tea plantations were started at Terrai regions. In 1862 James White first started commercial cultivation of tea at Champta.

Tea plantations on commercial basis was started in Southern India in 1859:

In Southern India the commercial cultivation of tea was started in 1859 with samplings brought from Calcutta Botanical Garden. At the height of 6,000 feet tea.

plantations were started at Nilgiris in Tamilnadu and Wynad district in Kerala. At the end of 19th century an area of 4,000 hectares of land was under tea cultivation. The tea gardens of Southern India were very small and both Assam and China bushes were planted. The productive capacity of Southern India tea gardens were very high and producers were mainly the small farmers. They could sell their green leaves to Bought Leaf Factory as small farmers could not afford to have their own factory.

Gradual growth and expansion of tea plantations in India since 1885:

The growth of Indian tea industry in India including Assam was practically started in 1851 but rapidly expanded from 1860 to 1865 and even some of the gardens were established overnight. The historical progress and growth of Indian tea plantation industry since 1885 to 1995 are shown in Table No. 1.1.

36, ibid P-87
# GROWTH OF INDIAN TEA

Table No.: 1.1

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<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of tea gardens</th>
<th>Area under tea cultivation in hectares</th>
<th>Production in Tonnes</th>
<th>Yield per hectare</th>
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1 Hectares=2.47 acre
1 Ton=1000Kg.

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37. Tea Statistics, 1995 - 96. Tea Board India Ps 3, 4, 5, 12 & 26
It is observed that such a tremendous success in the tea plantation industry is mainly due to factors like-improved methods of cultivation, application of fertilizers, pesticides, sophisticated machines and tools for manufacture of tea, improved clones, plants and constant research in tea culture. Above all efficient management and workers efficiency are playing vital role.

Historical perspective of tea industry of the world - Evolution of tea plantation industry in China:

In the mountaneous regions of South western boarders of China wild tea bushes were found abundantly. The aboriginal tribes of Mynmar (Burma), Thailand (Siam) and Indo-China regions were harvesting the Miang 39 (i.e. wild tea tree) for medicinal beverage in ancient time. The tea penetrated into China through the Yunan Province in due course.

Emperor Shen Nung first discovered tea in 2732 B.C. in China. The Emperor wrote in his popular version of treaties "A Book of Medicines", about boiling of water before drinking it. The Chinese people were using tea in various forms in ancient times as medicinal herb by chewing drinking brew and sometimes in the form of paste for external use.

Mr. Lu Yu was the greatest tea maker of Emperor Chi Shim of China. In 780 A.D. he wrote his book "Ch'a Ching 40 " about tea in details.

39. Dutta, A. K. The Tea Story P-8
40. ibid P-10
In China tea was used by monks as rituals. The Royal families and other aristocratic societies were also using tea and was limited within those families up to last part of 18th century. But, from the early part of the 19th century tea was penetrated among the common people in China and became a popular drink from the early part of the present century.

During Tang period (i.e.620 A.D. to 907 A.D.), the habit of drinking tea began to spread from Yangte Kiang Valley to the remote corners of China. In 783 A.D. the first tea tax was imposed in China.

The tea was known by two names, like "T'e" (i.e.tay) of Chinese Fukien Dialect of Fukien province and "Ch'a" (i.e.Chah) in Cantonese. The present name of this beverage is derived from these two names with slight modifications in the whole world.

The tea plantations done on small scale basis:

All tea plantations in China was done on small-scale basis, from 100 to 200 bushes by every family as a cottager and sometimes from one acre to four or five acres of land. They prepared their tea leaves with their primitive tools at their own homes. The commercial productions and manufacture

41. ibid P-26
42. ibid P-28
with sophisticated implements were done at the community factories called "HONGS" from the nineteenth century. China was the sole supplier of tea to the whole world. The Central and Southern provinces have been producing 95% of the productions of tea in China. In course of time, the Chinese people learnt to manufacture tea with three varieties viz-

(a) Green or unfermented tea  
(b) Black or fermented tea and  
(c) Oolong or semi-fermented tea

But during the fourth decade of the present century a fourth class of tea was manufactured which was known as "Instant tea".

Queen Camellia:

The International Botanical congress held at Amsterdam in 1935 accepted the term "Camellia Sinensis(L)" for tea plants. The first gentleman to write about tea plants of Asia during 1661 to 1706 A.D. was Mr. George Joseph Kamel or Camellia a Moravian Jesuit, the genetic name "Camellia" was after this gentleman and the other word "Sinensis" referred to China. The name of tea plants as "Camellia sinensis(L)" was given by Mr. O.Kuntze. Thus according to original birthplace the tea plants have been classified into three varieties as follows:

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Evolution of tea industry in Sri Lanka:

The tea seeds of Assam was planted in the Botanical Garden in Peradeniya in 1839 and in 1867 Kier Dundes and Company planted tea plants in Loolecondera tea estate on commercial basis.

Rapid expansions of tea plantations took place between 1875 and 1900 and in overall 1,50,000 ha. of land tea plants were planted. Sri Lanka produced 2,06,988 tonnes of tea in 1988 and the total plantation area was 2,21,682 ha of land being the second largest exporter of tea in the world. The size of the gardens are small and concentrated on the South Western parts of the island. The tea industry is a nationalised industry in Sri Lanka.

Evolution of tea industry in Japan:

The tea was first introduced in Japan in 593 A.D. which was brought from China. The Japanese monks used to drink tea in "Cha no yu", which means "hot water tea" and the Japanese ritual tea ceremony was very peculiar.

The Japanese people knew about three forms of tea viz.

(1) brick or cake tea of the Tang
(2) powdered tea of the Sung and
(3) the leaf tea of the Ming.

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46. ibid P-117
47. ibid P-111
The Japanese Emperor Shomu gave tea plants to one hundred Buddhist priests at his palace at Nara in 729 A.D. After returning to their respective temples, all priests planted tea bushes in their respective temple lands for the first time. Mr. Gyoki, a monk constructed temples during the period 658 to 749 A.D. and planted tea bushes in each temple garden.

Tea was a part and parcel of religion in Japan. Eisai brought tea seeds from China and planted at Reisen-ji temple at Seburiyama in Hizen province. The seeds of Reisen-ji temple garden was the main source of most of the tea plantations of Japan.

Japanese Government declaration in 1859:

In 1859 the Japanese Government declared that tea should be an item of international trade so it should be cultivated on commercial basis. The Japanese cultivators began to cultivate tea on commercial basis in response to this declaration and expansions took place on a large-scale. The productions of tea in 1890 was 24 million kg. and it rose to 54 million kg. in 1937.

Evolution of tea plantation industry in Indonesia:

Indonesia is also one of the tea producing countries having 1,10,000 hectares of land under tea plantations with production capacity of 149 million kg. (i.e. in 1989). The main tea producing areas are Java and Sumatra.

48. ibid P-34
49. ibid P-34
50. ibid P-41
51. ibid P-110
Evolution of tea Plantation industry in South East Asia and rest of the world:

The tea cultivation in South East Asia particularly in Indo-China, Mynmer(Burma) and Thailand were carried on since time immemorial. Vietnam had 50,000 hectares of land under tea cultivation and produced 30 million Kg. tea. Malaysia is also in the tea map of the world. In 1995, total production of tea was 255,25.42 tonnes. But in 1991 total production of tea was 260,40.01 tonnes which was the highest during the decade. The total area under tea plantations in the whole world in 1995 was 21,75,224 hectares of land excluding Sri Lanka and few other countries whose figures are not available (NA) during 1993 and 1994-95. The other tea producing countries of the world are Russia, South Africa, Malawi, Iran (Persia), Uganda, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zaire, Rowanda, Cameroon, Argentina, Equador, Ethiopia, Paraguay, Mexico, Columbia, Fiji, New-Zealand, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Turkey and Papua-New Guina.

52. Tea statistics 1995-96 Tea Board of India P-174