CHAPTER V

INDUSTRY, COMMUNICATIONS, AND TRADE
INDUSTRIES

Cottage Industry played an important role in the rural economy of the States. A large number of people engaged in agriculture had adopted some household industries as part-time occupation. The important cottage industries in the states were handloom weaving, pottery, making of brass utensils, basket making, mat-making and lac-processing. These village industries not only met the simple needs of the villagers but also provided means of subsistence to nearly 14 per cent of the population of the states. There was no machine industries worth the name by 1947.

INDIGENOUS INDUSTRIES: 1803-1857

Unlike agriculture, industry in the Feudatory States was of no great importance. Nearly 18 per cent of the population were known to have adopted the same. There were no large scale industries either. That was because the people were poor and backward and they mostly depended on the produce on the fields and forests. Moreover, all manufactures were intended to meet the local demands of the villagers.

However, industries in the states included weaving of coarse cotton fabrics, tusser cloth, making palanquins, boat,
bamboo mats and baskets pavad, leaf mats, leaf plates and cups, ornaments and utensils of brass, bell-metal and black stone, besides bows, arrows, spears, axes, ploughs and other implements of husbandry, forest produces like molasses, lac, sabai grass ropes, hides and horns. Out of all these manufactures only lac, sabai grass ropes, molasses and tusser cocoons used to be exported.

The states and the places famous for different industries were as follows: Some of the states were noted for tusser textiles. Many villages were solely occupied in weaving tusser clothes. And out of all these states Sonepur and Mayurbhanj were held in high repute for tusser textiles. In 1761, Walter Clovill was known to have stated that "nowhere so good herbal goods as tusser could be procurable than in Mayurbhanj." Similarly Nuapatna in the State of Tigiria was famous for producing dhotis, sarees and wrappers of cotton, silk and tusser. That was largely because of the personal interest of its Raja Champat Singh. Having invited weavers from Dhenkanal and Baramba he made them settle at Nuapatna and gave them all possible encouragements. Similarly Kanti-llo in the State of Khandpara was noted throughout the Feudatory States of Orissa for its brass and bell metal utensils and idols. The state of Sonepur was also famous for the manufacture of the same. In the State of Nilagiri utensils of
black stone were manufactured. T. Motte saw the states of Narasinghpur, Talcher and Hindol noted for the manufacture of palanquins. The state of Mayurbhanj produced lacs in abundance. In the State of Dhenkanal, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Nilgiri, Pal-Lahara and Talcher ropes of sabai grass used to be manufactured for local use.

The goods were found to have been manufactured by a traditional class of skilled people. The cotton weaving was usually carried on by the pans and a few Tantis. In the states of Patna, Kalahandi, Sonepur and Bamra, the weaving was done by Bhuliyas. The Bhuyans were experts in making leaf plates, leaf cups and bamboo baskets and mats of wild date palm. Bamboo baskets and palm leaf mats were also made by the men and women of Hari, Dom and Pan castes. During respite from the field, the Bhuyan men used to make pumpkin guard, drinking vessels, wooden pestles and threshing apparatus called Dhankis and the women cups and plates of sal leaves. Rough axes, plough shares and other agricultural implements were prepared by the village blacksmiths, brass and bell metal ornaments by a caste called "Khararurus". In almost all Feudatory States the poor people prepared from the fruits of mahua a thick oil used as lamp oil and used as an aid for the adulteration of ghee. Similarly they used to collect horns and hides of different animals. And out of all the horns, the horns of the wild buffaloes were considered very good, as often they measured ten feet
in length. Bee keeping, sheep wearing, poultry, fruit growing, wax and gum making were also a few more cottage industries of the tribal people.¹

Thus handicrafts constituted an important source of livelihood of a large part of the population in the Feudatory States. But the Rajas of Orissa States were not found to have encouraged growth of indigenous industries.

COTTAGE INDUSTRIES: 1858-1947

The States were not remarkable for any special manufactures. There was complete absence of machine industries in the states. During the period under review, the communications developed in the Princely States of Orissa. This facilitated the sale of imported goods in the markets of the States. As a result the cottage industries of the states received a great setback.

At Kantilo in the Khandpara State and in the Narasingpur State considerable manufacture of brass utensils was still

¹Bengal General Proceedings (Political), May 1878, T.E. Ravenshaw to Government of Bengal, No. 461B, 10 March 1878;
carried on. These were found their way throughout the states, but were entirely of the ordinary pattern and innowise remarkable either for design or workmanship.²

At Maniabandha in the Baramba State, a small settlement of Buddhists manufactured silk and cotton cloth of excellent quality and artistic patterns. In Dhenkanal and Nayagarh iron work of good quality was made by some families and in Boud there were skilful silversmiths. In Nilgiri soap stone utensils were manufactured extensively.³

In almost all the villages of the states were found the local cotton weavers. The cloth woven by them was very course. It was however very much more durable than the mill-made clothes. The weavers eked out a precarious existence from the proceeds of their toil.⁴

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³A. Stirling, An Account (Geographical, Statistical and Historical) of Orissa Proper or Cuttack, Calcutta, 1904, p. 71.

Cottage Industries found in the different states were as follows. In the Keonjhar State tessor was manufactured largely by the weavers of Fakirpur, a mile down Anandpur on the left bank of river Baitarni. A fine wire for sitar (guitar) was manufactured at the Keonjhar Garh. There were no manufactures of any special note. Coarse cotton cloth, agricultural implements, stone ware and bamboo baskets, bell-metal utensils, heavy brass female ornaments, etc. were manufactured, but they just sufficed for local consumption.

In the Talcher State, lac was grown in Deranga but was very rare. There were two varieties of lacs, of which one grown on Kusum tree had a beautiful golden colour and was superior in quality. It was sold at a higher price.

The Kamars generally extracted iron by melting iron ores or stones available in this state. The crude iron was made into useful domestic or agricultural implements by blacksmiths who earned more wages than Kamars. The Kumbers or potters were a class of workers who prepared earthen pots of various sorts which were useful every-day to the people.

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Brass utensils such as tumblers, cups, plates and other brass utensils were manufactured by other class people called Kansary in the Talcher State.6

A kind of coarse thread was spun in very small quantities by pans and Tantis. These men could prepare, with their hands country cloth. The Doms made baskets and mat from bamboos and reeds. They prepared baskets of all sizes which found prompt sale among the people. In addition, they collected hides and made handsome earnings by disposing them of to the licensed traders. Palm-leaf umbrella and hoods were all so prepared in some places in Talcher State.7

In Nilgir State, coarse country cloth, tassar cloth and muguni stone utensils were the principal commodities of local manufacture. Muguni utensils were found in abundance in markets. Stone utensils like plates, basins, tumblers and cups were exported to Bengal. Course tassar cloth was manufactured in fair quantities from the cocoons available in the forests of this state.8

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6 Settlement Report of the Talcher State for 1911-12, No Place, No date, p. 10.
7 Ibid.
8 Annual General Administration Report of Orissa Division, 1884-85, p. 5.
Practically there was no manufacture of articles worth mentioning in the State of Nayagarh. Coarse cotton fabrics, tassor cloth, gunny bags, brass and eell-metal utensils were manufactured in small quantities which were insufficient for the use in this state. 9

The manufactures of the Pal-Lahara State was as follows: Coarse cotton cloths were prepared by the local weavers who belonged to pan caste and those cloths were used by the local people. Oil was manufactured by the local oilmen known as Telis from the locally produced oil seeds. Bamboo baskets were prepared by the Juangs. Iron was manufactured in a small scale by the local people in this state. These blacksmiths also prepared implements of husbandry and instruments for domestic use for the local people. Household furniture were prepared by the local carpenters in a very crude form. Although good timber was cheap and easily available here, owing to the absence of good artisans no improvement could be expected in this direction. The raw hide which was available here could be tanned locally and shoes, slippers could be made by the local people. But the absence of a

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The cottage industries that flourished in Ranpur State were (1) weaving; (2) metal-working, bell-metal, gold and silver, (3) smithy, (4) wood work, (5) bamboo work, (6) cane work, (7) pottery and (8) oil milling.

Weaving was the principal industry. There were about 500 weaver families in this state. The 'Patras' of Ranpurgarh were once famous for weaving the 'Ranpur Joda'. They prepared fine textile work in cotton such as lungis of various colours, dhotis and napkins with ornamental borders and beautiful sarees. Their Ranpuri Joda was once Orissa famous, but for want of fine yarn and capital, this industry was dying out. One-fourth of the population depended on these country-made clothes.

There was one Kansari Street in Ranpurgarh with about 15 families. They prepared utensils of all varieties in bell-metals and met the local demand of the state. There were some goldsmiths who prepared fine ornaments of gold and silver.

The blacksmiths prepared agricultural implements and other articles for household use out of the iron purchased from outside. This industry was in a very crude stage.

The carpenters prepared furnitures, doors and windows from timbers. Most of them got jagirs or revenue-free lands for doing such work. There were some carpenters in the Ranpurgarh and Sunkhala who could prepare very fine furniture. As timber was available locally, the industry had a great future if the carpenters were encouraged and financed.

The Doms got bamboos from the forest and prepared baskets and other household things. But subsequently they did not get sufficient bamboos, and hence the industry was gradually decaying.

There was a class of people called Betras and they got canes from the forest and prepared cane baskets, paddy measures, boxes, choirs and other furnitures. Some of them could prepare very fine furnitures. As the canes were being leased out to contractors after 1890, they did not get canes sufficiently. As a result, cane work suffered much.

Earthen pots were prepared by the local potters who were known as Kumbars. They prepared various kinds of pots to meet the local demands. They also sent their pots in carts
to the weekly markets, bazars and fares for sale. They got good income out of it but still this industry was in a crude stage.

Oil was processed by oilmen in their oil mills (Ghanas) which were still in an antiquated and crude condition. Sufficient quantity of til oil was prepared in the state and major portion of this was exported outside.¹¹

The articles of manufacture of the Dhenkanal State were lac, iron, bell-metal utensils and cloth. The lac manufacture was in a depressed condition. There was no effort to improve and extend the rearing of lac. Bhuban was famous for brass and bell-metal utensils. Weavers of Simlai produced various types of cotton cloths while Bonihapur, Bhuban and Indupur were well known for tassor weaving. The gold and silver smiths of Dhenkanal made attractive ornaments of gold and silver which were very popular among the woman. The irony ornaments made with artistic designs were once popular throughout Orissa. The blacksmiths of Dhenkanal produced various types of weapons such as Tangi (axe), knife, spears and artistic sword-

In the State of Khandpara, molasses was manufactured in the villages of Ghansolia, Karbar, Gunthuni and Benagadia. Brass and bell metal utensils of Kantilo, brass and stone idols of Khalisahi, wood, ivory and iron works and hand-made fine cotton clothes of Khandparagarh and pretty napkins of Baigania were the articles manufactured in the state, which found a ready sale in the markets outside Bir-Hardis (Degebia) and water-pots made of brass and plates of bell were exported in large quantity to the Central Provinces and also to the bordering British districts of Cuttack and Puri. The nut-crackers, sword-sticks, knives and other fancy implement were also prepared by blacksmiths of Khandparagarh and Badsahara.

The cotton grown in the Daspalla State was spun and woven to meet the local needs. A large quantity of hand-made cloth was annually turned out and used mostly by low caste poor people and peasantry throughout the state.

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12 Orissa District Gazetteers (Dhenkanal), Cuttack, 1972, p. 197.

In Daspalla State, Balpora Trading village turned out annually a large number of bell-metal utensils and exported them to various places. The design and finishing of these utensils and specially the carved works on them were indeed admirably fastet and they had found a market in British districts. Considering their workmanship the price which the artisans, locally called Kansaries, charged was not very high. In an exhibition held at Calcutta in 1900, the utensils exhibited secured for their maker a medal. Similarly at an exhibition held at Angul in 1904, the utensils secured first prize and also at the Jajpur exhibition in the Cuttack district held in 1905 first prize was awarded.  

Ghalahandi and Madhyakhand village of Despalla State manufactured excellent sword-sticks, and wooden sticks, country razor and good cutlery. Daspallagarh and Satpatna manufactured various kinds of silver and gold ornaments of beautiful design. But these had not found markets outside. They were locally sold. The Daspalla town also manufactured excellent ivory chains and irons and wooden horns, combs and wooden sticks.  

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14 Utkal Dipika, 11 November, 1905.  

The only manufactures of the Mayurbhanj State which were worth-mentioning were the manufacture of coarse cloth mostly by pans and of tussar fabrics by Tantis of Olmara Pargana and in Bamanghati Sub-Division. The aboriginal population had shown preference for coarse cloths locally manufactured as they were more durable and could stand rough use better than the finer mill-woven cloths.¹⁶

Cultivation of tussar cocoons and of lac was an important occupation of the aboriginal populations. The manufacture of tussar fabrics formed an important industry during the rule of Tribikram Bhanj (1660-88), but it was declining gradually owing to keen competition with imported fabrics.¹⁷

Owing to the opening up of the state by roads and by the Mayurbhanj State light Railway, the manufacture of sleepers in the fine forests of the Simillipal hills had been undertaken and good qualities of sleepers were being exported in the beginning of the 20th century.¹⁸


¹⁷ Orissa District Gazetteers (Mayurbhanj), Cuttack, 1967.

¹⁸ Ibid.
In the States of Athgarh, Athmallik, Baud, Hindol, Narsingpur and Tigiria, there was no manufacture of worth mentioning. In the Baramba State, the inhabitants of village Maniabanda wore silk sarees and silk cloth of fine texture and artistic patterns. As in the case of other states, so also in the above state, the necessaries of every day life were manufactured.

MACHINE INDUSTRIES

Machine Industries were almost conspicuous by their absence. There was no large scale or medium-size industries. The benevolent administration in the States of Bolangir and Mayurbhanj led to the establishment of some small-scale industries in these states. The extreme industrial backwardness of the states could be assigned to the following factors: (i) high percentage of backward people, (ii) shortage of capital and entrepreneurial talent, (iii) lack of skilled labour, (iv) small extent of mineral resources available, (v) low production of agricultural raw-materials

excepting paddy, (vi) inadequate transport facilities, (vii) almost total absence of states' patronage. 

Although large scale mining started in the State of Mayurbhanj as early as 1910, there had been no mineral-based industry in the state for the utilisation of these minerals. All minerals were sent cut Mayurbhanj for which the state was realising large amount of revenue.

A factory known as Mayurbhanj Textile started production in August 1943. The Mayurbhanj Oil Factory started in 1947. These were mainly financed by the State which had share of 50 per cent in each case, the remaining shares being owned by private individuals. The oil factory was started with the aim of better utilisation of oil-seeds produced in the area.

Lac was a major cottage industry in Mayurbhanj State. A section of the people in Bamanghati and Panchpir Sub-divisions cultivated lac as the principal money crop. A seed lac factory was established at Rairangpur in the Mayurbhanj State in 1935 to manufacture seed lac, button lac, superfine shellac,

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hiri and cakes. But the lac trade declined from 1943-44 and the factory had to be closed down. 21

In 1941-42, the administration of Patna helped in the establishment of small handloom factories by local people. Accordingly, three such factories were started at Belgam, Haldi and Bandra.

The Patna State Weaving Factory was established in 1942-43 at Bolangir with an initial capital of Rs. 25,000. By 1947, many modern improvements had been introduced in this weaving factory which was being worked out on a commercial basis.

A textile factory was established in 1945 by the Durbar of Sonepur and was named "Maharaja Birmitrodoya Weaving and Dying Factory, Sonepur". It was progressing well.

The Graphite Factory at Titilagarh was established in January, 1937 by the Patna State Graphite Mining Company, the monopolist for purchasing graphite of the state. It was meant for using, concentrating and preparing various marketable forms of graphite.

A Tannery was established in 1939 at Titilagarh by the state administration of Patna. Its objectives were collection of raw hides and production of tanned leather. In 1941-42, 28,043 pieces of hide were used in the factory and 8,340 pieces exported. Normal tanning work started at the tannery from 29 March, 1944.22

In Baramba State, there were Saw Mills for cutting logs into railway sleepers. These mills gave employment to many workmen.

In 1947, Orissa was one of the most backward regions of India industrially. Neither British authorities nor Princely authorities took any interest in the industrialisation of Orissa.

MEANS OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION FROM 1858 TO 1905

The means of communication and transport in the Princely States of Orissa were very undeveloped and perilous during the later part of the 19th century. The foodgrains were much cheaper in the native states than in British districts, owing

22 Nilamani Senapati, Orissa District Gazetteers (Bolangir), Bhubaneswar, 1968.
chiefly to the want of communications.

Generally speaking, after 1905 there was a development of means of communications everywhere on modern lines. The chiefs were alive to the necessity and importance of suitable communication for the proper administration and well-being of the people. The steady increase in the expenditure from year to year on roads bear testimony to the active interest taken by the chiefs in improving communication.23

Roads:

An agency Engineer was in charge of the maintenance and construction of the roads from the year 1912. He had little scope for work as expenditure was reduced as far as possible to permit larger investment in the war loan from 1914. From 1920 to 1925 there prevailed acute scarcity of food in some states either due to drought or flood. Consequently, there was smaller expenditure on public works owing to the necessity for conserving resources to provide public funds for the relief of the distressed people.

During the period, 1925 to 1947, the development of inter-state and internal communications received a great deal of attention. Realising the great importance of the communication, the chiefs paid more attention to roads than to buildings. The improvement of local roads and construction of new ones occupied a large part of the public works programme of many states.

In the states under the management of the Government, the definite aim was to carry on construction of main traffic routes until these communications had everywhere been established. In 1926, Political Agent wrote:

"This had continued to absorb the largest share in the expenditure and must continue to do so for sometime to come, until these [traffic routes are solid and secure; for without them no real progress of permanent value can result."^{24}

The steady progress in the development of communication was noticed in the major states like Mayurbhanj, Dhenkanal, Keojhar, Kalahandi, Patna and Gangpur. But the small states like Dasapalla, Boud, Khandapara, Tigiria, Baramba, and Hindol

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were greatly handicapped by the paucity of funds. In the states of Gangpur, Bamara, Bonai and Keonjhar, one of the main aims was to link up the states with Bengal-Nagpur Railway by metalled roads. The advent of motor-bus which ran to and from nearly all states in dry weather had been the inspiration which had led to a great deal for improvement of kacha roads and construction of metalled roads. In 1930 Political Agent remarked:

"It is an encouraging sign that expenditure on communications is increasing and it is hoped that this most important feature will receive even more attention in future budgets. Desirable as local comforts may be to residents in headquarters, the prosperity of the general population depends largely upon the existence of good roads, giving access to wider markets and the outside world, as well as free movement and opportunity for development within the state." 25

The improvement of communication not only in the bridging of main roads but in the opening out of villages cart tracks continued apace. Gradually, the carts could easily reach any

part of the state. Traders from outside were coming in increased numbers. As a result, not only trade continued to increase but also agriculture and cottage industry received a stimulus.

A sign of the times was the number of motor bus services playing in the states and the number of applications filed for the opening of new services. In 1925, there were regular bus services from Khurda to Nayagarh, from Cuttack through Dhenkanal to Angul, and from Jharsuguda to Sundergarh in and Gangapur, there were intermittent services in Bamra and from Sambalpur to Sonpur.

The demand for facilities for motor transport was developing in a very astonishing way. Hence, it led to efforts to metall the main roads as far as possible to permit of traffic during the rains. By 1947, as a result of considerable improvement of motor lines, the arrival of daily or bi-weekly bus had been possible in most states. The Political Agent observed:

"With the motor bus came greater fluidity in labour a rise in wages in backward areas and a general awakening through increased contacts with the outer world."26

The communication were developed mainly keeping in view the facility of administration. So the development of road system in Orissa States was far from satisfactory. All weather roads were less than one-third of the total roads. Many necessary bridges were not constructed. Due to very limited expansion of metalled roads, mechanised vehicles that were playing were too insufficient to meet the needs of the people. Even after 1935, rulers, zamindars and other Aristocrats used; palanquins, horses and elephants as conveyance; common people depended to a large extent on bullock-carts, bhara and pack-bullocks for the purpose of transport. 27

Railways and Waterways:

The Bengal Nagpur Railways was opened in coastal Orissa during the closing years of the 19th century. By 1905 railway connecting Baripada, the principal town of the Tributary States of Mayurbhanja was opened. The line was constructed by the Chief of Mayurbhanja and was worked for him by the Bengal-Nagpur Railway Company.

The extension of the Railway line from Baripada to Talbandh and for their extension upto Badampahar Iron Mines

27 Ibid., 1945-46, p. 198.
were made during the period from 1915 to 1922. They were opened to traffic in 1920 and 1922 respectively. A broad-guage line was constructed from Kalimati Station on the Bengal-Nagpur Railway to the foot of the Gorumahisani hill in the Mayurbhanja State to transport the iron ore for the steel works to be erected at the former place.\(^\text{28}\)

The Talcher Coal Field Railway extending from the Nirgundi Station of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway up to the Princely State of Talcher was opened in 1927. It was laid primarily on account of the Talcher Coal Fields.

The Vijayanagaram-Raipur broadgauge railway line of the South-Eastern Railways which passed through the states of Kalahandi and Patna was projected as a famine relief measure at an estimated cost of Rs. 2 crores in 1899. It was only completed and opened to traffic on 1 January 1932. The importance of the railway to Patna and Kalahandi states could not be exaggerated.\(^\text{29}\)

\(^{28}\)Report on Administration of Mayurbhanj State, 1922-23, p. 120.

\(^{29}\)Report on the Administration of the Patna State, 1932-33, p. 89.
In view of the inadequate road communication facilities of the princely states of Orissa, the railway lines played an important role in the economic life of the people. It served the business community as well as the ordinary consumers and helped in developing the region in several ways.

Most of the rivers flowing through the states of Orissa were not navigable. Two navigable rivers Mahanadi and Brahmani were the main water-ways of the several states like Boud, Baramba, Daspalla and Khandpara. Goods like bamboo, timber and other commodities were transported through the rivers. But there was no steamer or regular boat service in either of them.30

TRADE AND COMMERCE

The chief occupation of the people was agriculture. Other occupations were generally of a subsidiary nature. Broadly speaking, the total population was divided into agriculturists and labourers, of whom former preponderated

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over the latter. When the earnings of a person were inadequate to support his family, he turned to trade to supplement his income. Trade and Commerce attracted only a few thousand persons.

The principal article of export were rice, oil-seeds, pea, gram, pulses, hide, horn, jute, timber, lac, tossar, cocoons, honey and molasses. The articles imported were cotton piece-goods, cotton twist, spices, salt, dry-fish, sugar, kerosine and iron. Most of the export and the import trade was carried on with Cuttack and to a smaller extent also with Balasore, Puri and Sambalpur.

The river communication was very conductive to trade and commerce. The larger rivers like Mahanadi, Bhabmani and Tel were open to country-boats for about four months and afforded a cheap and ready means of communication for the export and import trade.

The river Mahanadi offered excellent facilities in case of states like Baramba, Athmallick, Daspalla and Bond. During the rains and winter, the export and import trade was carried on by country-boats through the river Mahanadi which commercially connected all other states with the British districts specially Cuttack and Puri but in summer the trade was carried out by bullock-carts through the roads.
The rivers Brahmani offered good facilities of water communication in case of the states like Bamara, Pal-Lahra, Rairakhol, and Bonai. The rafts of timber and bamboo, were floated down by traders from the forests of these states when there was sufficient water in the Brahmani. When it was dry, the traders carried their good by pack-bullocks and carts.\textsuperscript{31}

The bulk of the trade was carried on from November to May in country carts, where there were fair weather roads, and elsewhere on pack-bullocks which still formed the chief means of carriage. In case of the states like Athmallick and Rairakhol, the trade was carried on in summer by trucks through the Cuttack-Sambalpur Road Via. Angul up to Meramandali Railway Station where it was entrained.

The Railways had been very helpful in carrying on the export and import trade of the states of Mayurbhanj, Kala-handi, Patna, Talcher and Gangpur. The Mayurbhanj and Talcher branches of Bengal-Nagpur Railways have greatly benefited traders of these two states.

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., 1928-29, pp. 169-71.
The Railways had been of special advantage to the Gangpur state in the matter of trade of commerce. Lime was exported by the Bisra Stone Lime Company through Biramitrapur-Rourkela branch line. The Railway Stations of Bisra, Kulanga, Rourkela and Panposh on the main line drained rice, timber, lac of this state. Salt, clothes and other foreign things were imported to his state through Rajgangpur station. 32

Ordinarily the Garjat States produced a much larger quantity of the autumn and winter rice. A greater part of the excess quantity was exported to Cuttack and other places. It was remarked that, the exportation of food grains was a clear indication of the fact that the people come to appreciate the value of money and commerce. 33

Salt became much dearer in Triburary States than in regulation districts and was difficult to procure. Hence here it was not only an article of daily use (consumption) but it


was also used as a medium of exchange and was bartered by dealers for oil-seeds, grain and hill produce. 34

Regular weekly or bi-weekly markets were held in all the states at convenient centres where the ordinary necessaries of a rural population such as salt, cloth, dried-fish, etc. were bartered for grain. 35 There were, however, no central markets of great importance, but Kantilo in Khandpara, Anandpur in Keonjhar, Bhuban and Dhenkanalgahr in Dhenkanal were important markets. 36

There were some fairs, the most noted of which were Kapilas in Dhenkanal, Deogaon in Keonjhar and Dhabaleswar in Athgarh. Large number of pilgrims including visitors from outside congregated on the Sivaratri day (February-March) at Kapilas and Deogaon and at Dhabaleswar on the Kartik Purnima

34 Bengal Revenue Proceedings (Political), No. 333, 2 January 1875, Superintendent of Tributary Mahals, Orissa to Secretary to Government of Bengal.

35 Annual Report on the Administration of the Territories under the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal during the year 1870-71, P. 5.

day (October - November). But these places did not attract much trade being resorted to chiefly for purposes of devotion. 37

Business was conducted almost entirely by barter. Silver currency was scarcely known. Even the ancient shell money (cowries) of Orissa was sparingly used. 38

Trade in every state was carried on principally by foreign traders and partly by a class of local men. These foreign traders purchased grains and forest produce when the prices were low and exported them to Cuttack and other places. 39 They generally made advance of money to the paikars or middle-men for the purchase of agricultural and other products. They also imported many useful foreign goods. Carrying them in the carts or pack-bullocks to the different markets


where they found ready sale. 40

The following factors hindered the growth of trade and commerce in the states of Orissa. Firstly, the importance of roads in promoting trade and commerce cannot be under-estimated. As more road-ways opened up, the more would be the growth of trade and more improvement would be the material condition of the people. 41 But the lack of good roadways was the main obstacle to the growth of import and export trade. Secondly, the Oriyas were too unenterprising to take any part in trade beyond the passive one of sitting in their house and selling their surplus produce to the Bengali, Marwari, Telugu and Bombay merchants who went to them.

40 Settlement Report of Talcher State, 1911-12, No Place, p. 10.

41 Utkal Dipika, 4 September 1875.