III. THE HOST

A. Geographical distribution:

*Mangifera indica* Linn. (commonly known as mango) is a perennial tree which belongs to the family Anacardiaceae. It grows in wild and semi-wild state throughout India up to an altitude of 3,000 feet. In West Bengal most of the mango orchards are found in the districts of Malda, Murshidabad, 24-Parganas and Midnapur. According to de Candolle (1884) and Popenoe (1927) it is a native tree of Southern Asia particularly in the Malayan region. Vavilov (1926) and Mukherjee (1951) on the other hand consider it to be a native of Indo-Burma. Its introduction in other parts of the world is completely recent. Now it is found in almost all the tropical countries of the world. (Plate A, Fig. A).

B. Economic importance of timber:

*M. indica* is an evergreen tree with stout and straight bole which often reaches up to 45-60 feet in height and provides timber. The timber is grey to greenish brown in colour, hard and can be finished to a fine surface and the fibre sometimes orient in a good fashion. It is used for heavy furnitures, wooden floor, windows and doors, different kinds of frames, packing boxes, ply-wood and others. In
The mango (*Mangifera indica* Lin.) growing states of India.
Plate - A

Fig. : The host ($\times \frac{1}{54}$)
Madras and in West coast of India it is valued for dugouts and boats, and also used for various agricultural implements. In comparison to 'Teak' (Tectona grandis L.f.) and 'Sal' (Shorea robusta Gaertn.) it's mechanical properties are low. As such it is not durable in exposed condition. It also produces delicious fruits, which have much economic importance.

C. Structure of wood:

The wood of Mangifera indica is strong and it's stout trunk is provided with bark 1-2 cm. thick, dark grey with irregular cracks and rough surface. It is hard with distinct annual rings and is differentiated into heart and sap wood in old trunk and branches. The heart wood is either lacking or minutely differentiated in young branches of the tree. Solitary to clustered vessels are unevenly distributed within abundant parenchyma and fibrous tissues. The tracheids are entirely absent. The pits leading to adjacent vessels are orbicular to oval or angular in shape with broad border and lenticular orifice but those leading to the rays are large, rounded and window-like in appearance with narrow border.