"A Tussle for Power between Dowager Rani Bishnukumari and Diwan Brijkishore culminating to the Segawulship of Nubkissen Bahadur (1771-82)."
The Council at Fort William, in their letter of July 21, 1770, informed Tej Chand, who succeeded Raja Tilok Chand, that they had confirmed him to the zemindary of his late father. Raja Tilok Chand, as stated above, died on May 25, 1770, in the midst of the gloom and misery of the famine of 1770. A 'Khilat' and an elephant was presented to Raja Tej Chand as a token of honour by the Company. On August 25, 1770, it was reported by the Council to the Directors that the Raja being a minor (only 16 years of age), the management of the zemindary of Burdwan was taken over by his mother, Rani Bishnukumari, the widow of Raja Tilok Chand.

Soon afterwards, a conflict developed between Rani Bishnukumari and Brojokishore Roy, the 'Diwan' of the zemindary of Burdwan. The Rani complained to the Council that......

Brojokishore Roy ignores the superiority of the Raja (i.e. Tej Chand)

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*Khilat*(Arabic) - Dress of honour presented by the Superior to inferior as a mark of distinction.

** In fact Raja Tej Chand, born in 1764, was only six years old in 1770 and in 1779, when he was fifteen years of age, assumed the charge of his ancestral zemindary. (Vide-Chapter on Raja Tej Chand - 'Eardhaman Rajbansanucharita' - by Rakhal Das Mukhopadhaya, published by the Burdwan Raj and printed at the Burdwan Raj Press - 1st.ed. - 1321 (B.S).
and '... refuses to regard a widow (i.e. Rani Bishnukumari) as their superior.' Hence she was unwilling to retain Brojokishore's services as the 'diwan' of Burdwan. On February 2, 1771, Rani Bishnukumari prayed to the Council for the dismissal of Brojokishore and also prayed for the favour of appointing one of her own choice as 'diwan'.

Consequently, Brojokishore was called down to Calcutta, by the Council, to answer the charges preferred against him by Rani Bishnukumari. After a careful enquiry he was not found guilty on any of the above charges and was invested with his former post and position. By August 1771, Brojokishore was ordered to discharge his duties as the 'diwan' of Burdwan.

Naturally, the Rani not being satisfied with the decision of the Council desired to stay away from Burdwan. With the permission of the Council she retired at Amboah, a place situated by the side of the Ganges and not far away from Burdwan. This place was somewhere near the Bandel-Hooghly area. The Rani was allowed a monthly sum of Rs. 4000-0-0, payable out of the allowance of Raja Tej Chand, but she lost all control over the affairs of the zemindary of Burdwan.

The minor Raja (Tej Chand) was placed under a tutor named Ramkanta. Ramkanta was 'to train the Raja in the management of the
zemindary'. It was further decided by the Council that this Ramkanta* and 'diwan' Brojokishore were to act as the joint guardians of the Raja and the trustees of his estates as well. It was true that though the minor Raja was removed from his mother, measures were taken up by the Company for proper education of minor Raja Tej Chand and the maintenance of his ancestral zemindary of Burdwan.

On this decision of the Company there was observed a difference of opinion among the members of the Comptrolling Committee of Revenue. Charles Floyer, a member of this Committee, was not happy with this decision. He remarked that, '...during the minority of the Raja, the Rani should appoint the 'diwan' on the Committee's recommendation.' He also demanded the dismissal of Brojokishore from the 'diwan' of Burdwan and was in favour of appointing 'some one else in that place'.

But the majority of the members of the Comptrolling Committee agreed that the right of appointing officers should be withheld from the Raja during his minority and that on his attaining 'majority'

* On the death of Ramkanta, Prankishore Mitra was appointed as the tutor of the minor Raja and the joint guardian with Brojokishore, the 'diwan' of the Burdwan zemindary.
he should exercise this right with the concurrence of the Committee. Thomas Kelsall and Middleton, other members of the Comptrolling Committee were in favour of retaining the services of Brojokishore as the 'diwan' of Burdwan. They viewed that 'in consideration of the minority of the Raja and the incapacity of the Rani 'the Company should act as guardians to the young Raja in all his affairs. Cartier, the President of the Comptrolling Committee of Revenue, also, absolved Brojokishore from all the charges brought against him by the Rani and retained his services as 'diwan'.

Though, by the decision of the Council of August 1771, Rani Bishnukumari retired at Amboah leaving behind the administration of the zamindary of Burdwan in the hands of her 'diwan' Brojokishore still she was undertaking every active interest in the management of the affairs of the zamindary. The Rani exercised a self-conferred authority over the business of the estates. This type of 'de-facto' interference of the Rani was not liked by the officials of the Company then posted at Burdwan.

Charles Stewart, the resident of Burdwan during this time, reported to the Council in May 1772 that owing to the 'injudicious acts' of Rani Bishnukumari, the affairs of the zamindary of Burdwan had greatly suffered. The Rani misused the seal of Raja Tej Chand,
which she had in her possession and tried to exert some control over the expenditures of the household of the Raja of Burdwan. Moreover, she did not allow the 'diwan' (i.e. Brojokishore) and the tutor (i.e. Ramkanta) to see the minor Raja Tej Chand.

As a consequence, Rani Bishnukumari was warned by the Company against this improper use of the seal of the Raja of Burdwan and was further advised not to carry on such measures detrimental to the cause of Raja Tej Chand and his semindary as well. Stewart was directed by the Council to remove the minor Raja from the custody of the Rani. He was also required to place Raja Tej Chand under the guardianship of Brojokishore and Ramkanta, the 'diwan' and the tutor respectively.

It will have been observed that a new system of administration was introduced there by Charles Stewart, the Resident of Burdwan, in 1771. He reported to the Controlling Committee of Revenue on March 29, 1771 that the farmers of the several pargunnahs of the district of Burdwan had greatly suffered from the severe drought, famine and desertion of 1770. In the circumstances, he apprehended an alarming fall of revenue receipts if the lands were put up at sale to new farmers. He suggested that the Company should prevail upon the old farmers, to renew their leases and allow a reduction to those farmers whose farms
were decayed. Steward was sure that his terms would be acceptable to farmers and they would 'renew their leases for five, six or seven years....'

In accordance with the views of Stewart, the Committee recommended the farming system with the old farmers for a period of five years. They held that the farming system was the best calculated method to promote the improvement and the cultivation of the lands and observed that the leases of the old farmers 'should be received for the term of five years.' Consequently, a five years settlement was concluded in Burdwan on September 5, 1771.9

This farming system differed from the system of farming that was introduced by Johnstone at Burdwan in 1762. In the farming system of Johnstone the lands were let out at public sale and were given to the highest bidders for a period of three years. But in this new system, the old farmers were preferred and the

* Roupnarayan Choudhury (a farmer) remarked that 'the method of settlement was not in the form of an outcry among the gentlemen'. He reported to the Comptrolling Committee of Revenue that at the time of disposal of the farms at Burdwan, he offered more money than any other person for the places called Bulleah, Chuttoah, Chowmohaw and Mundulghut, but Charles Stewart, the Resident at Burdwan, instead of letting him the above farms' have made them over to the former holders.....' (A petition of Roupnarayan Choudhury—vide : Proceedings of the Comptrolling Committee of Revenue—dt. June 25, 1771).
period of settlement was extended from three to five years.

Subsequently, this farming system was introduced throughout the rest of Bengal in 1772 by Hastings, the then Governor General of Bengal. A settlement was concluded with the farmers for a period of five years and this was nothing new as it had already been in use in Burdwan.* In introducing the system to the rest of Bengal, Hastings observed in 1772 '... I found the farming system already established throughout the country. I made it general.... I lengthened the period of leases which before was annual to give years. This was considered by many as a bold innovation'.

The main defect of this system was its over-rated assessment. The assessment in Burdwan was higher than those of the years before the famine. The revenues were rigorously collected by the Company. As a consequence of this many of the Zamindars either were ruined or became under-renters under the farmers of their own hereditary property.¹¹ The farming system at Burdwan came to an end in 1775.

* During the farming system at Burdwan, Raja Tej Chand was granted a 'Moshaira' or maintenance allowance of Rs.20,550-0-0 per month. The 'Moshaira' was allowed because the lands of his zamindary was contracted with the farmers for the land revenues for a period of five years. (Vide-Proceedings of the Comptrolling Committee of Revenue - dt. September 13, 1771).
Admitting the over assessment of lands *, Hastings remarked in March 1775, 'It is true that the lands were let in general too high...'. The exact value of the lands were known only to Zemindars and to find out the real value of lands the most suitable method was found to be to let them out to the highest bidders. Afterwards, the Amini Commission was formed in 1776 to make out a survey for the realisation of actual value of lands.

It is to be mentioned here that prior to the expiration of the farming system, a Provincial Council of Revenue was established at Burdwan on May 6, 1774. The Council had its jurisdiction over the districts of Burdwan, Midnapur, Beerbhoom, Bishnupur, Potech, Ramgarh and the 'district under the management of Captain Camac.'

* Statement of Revenue Demands and Collection in Burdwan from 1772-73 to 1776 to 77.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Gross Jama</th>
<th>Net Collection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rs.</td>
<td>As. G.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1772-73</td>
<td>418,4867</td>
<td>9 17 395,2568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1773-74</td>
<td>391,7929</td>
<td>4 11 388,0494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1774-75</td>
<td>393,5784</td>
<td>4 11 400,2401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1775-76</td>
<td>396,7900</td>
<td>4 11 399,8471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1776-77</td>
<td>399,8062</td>
<td>4 11 390,7220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(For Gross Jama - vide, Proceedings of the Board of Revenue dt. June 24, 1778.

The annual expenditure of the Provincial Council of Revenue at Burdwan was estimated at Rupees Six thousand two hundred nearly. The maximum payment was made to George Vansittart, the Chief of the Provincial Council of Revenue (a monthly allowance of nearly three thousand rupees).

After the formation of this Provincial Council of Revenue at Burdwan, the British Collectors** of Revenues were withdrawn and the revenues of the districts were placed under

* The establishment of the Provincial Council of Revenue at Burdwan:

George Vansittart ... Chief ... Allowance ₹3000/- per month.
John Bathoe ...........Second ..., ₹600/- ...
Alexander Higginson ..........Third ..., ₹500/- ...
Samuel Lewis ...............Fourth ..., ₹400/- ...
Charles Fleetwood ..........Fourth ..., ₹400/- ...
Thomas Graham .............Secretary ..., ₹100/- ...
Accountant .................Secretary ..., ₹100/- ...
Persian Translator ..........Secretary ..., ₹100/- ...

'Bovany Metre' (i.e. Bhowani Mitra) was to act as a 'Dewan' of the Council and was to receive an allowance of ₹1000/- per month. (Vide - Proceedings of the Revenue Board Consisting of the Whole Council - dt. May 6, 1774).

But in February 1781, this Provincial Council of Revenue at Burdwan was abolished and a Committee of Revenue was formed at Calcutta. Very soon this Committee of Revenue changed its name as the Board of Revenue and dominated over the revenue functions of the Company.

** John Bathoe took over the charge of the Collectorship of Burdwan from Charles Stewart, the resident, on April 13, 1773. (Vide - Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the Whole Council - dt. April 20, 1773) - when the Provincial Council of Revenue was formed at Burdwan in May 1774, he was appointed the Second with a monthly allowance ₹600-0-0 per month. (Vide - Proceedings of Revenue Board consisting of the Whole Council - dt. May 6, 1774).
the control of the native 'diwans'. Brojokishore Roy, the 'diwan' of Burdwan, was then responsible for revenue payments of the district of Burdwan.

It had already been mentioned that the relationship between Dowager Rani Bishnukumari and the 'diwan' Brojokishore was strained. In January 1775, there developed a tussle for power between the Dowager Rani and the 'diwan' Brojokishore. The Rani complained to the Council against the 'diwan' and Graham of the embezzlement of the sum of Rs. 11,00,000.

Graham was resident of Burdwan from 1768 to 1770. The charges of Rani Bishnukumari were:

1) Upon the death of her husband Raja Tilokchand, Brojokishore obtained for himself the office of 'diwan' by a distribution of gold and jewels which he had appropriated from the household of minor Raja Tejchand. In securing for himself, the office of 'diwan', Brojokishore was supported by Graham, who was the resident at Burdwan during this time.

*List of the following jewels taken by Bobny Churn Mitra, the benian of Graham, the resident of Burdwan at this period, in B.S. 1180 (i.e. 1774-1775 A.D.) being the property of Rani Bishnukumari-

- Gold Paunchey or Bracelete - 1 Pair.
- Gold Baring set with stones - 3 pairs.
- Gold Surpech set with stones - 1 pair.
- Gold Paundan or Betel Box - One.
- Gold Ballah or Ring for the hands - 2 pairs.

ii) The Seal of the Raja of Burdwan, though the same was not misused by the Rani, was forcibly taken away from Rani Bishnukumari by Brojokishore, the 'diwan', and her infant son Tejohand was also removed from her possession.

iii) The Company granted a monthly allowance of Rs. 20,000-0-0 and Rs. 4000-0-0 respectively to Raja Tejohand and Rani Bishnukumari, payable from the revenues of the district of Burdwan. But Brojokishore, the 'diwan', in conjunction with Graham, the resident of the district during this time, had embezzled a part of the above sum for seven consecutive years. 14

An account of the sum received by Graham, the resident at Burdwan of this period, could be had from the petition of Rani Bishnukumari made to the Governor General in Council in March 1775.*

* An account of the sum received by Graham, the Resident at Burdwan-

i) Account of embezzlements of Graham during the time he was the Chief of Burdwan for the Bengal Years 1175,1176,1177 and in 1180 and 1181 as well amounting to Rs. 2024,85-0-0.

ii) Account of money unjustly taken by Graham through means of Ramhurry Choudhury from Bijarah Manteswar belonging to the mother of Raja Tilokohand—Rs. 360,65-0-0.

iii) Account said to be received by Governor Hastings and the gentlemen of the Council—Rs. 150,000-0-0.

iv) Account of money paid to Cantoo Babu, the banian of Governor Hastings—Rs. 5500-0-0.

v) Account of the embezzlements of Bobany Churan Mitra, the banian of Graham, Rs. 304,25-0-0.

Again Brojokishore was summoned down to Calcutta by the Council to answer the charges preferred against him by the Rani of Burdwan. The Council put several questions to Brojokishore and the 'diwan' (i.e. Brojokishore) tried to provide answers to all of them showing that he was not guilty of any of the charges brought against him.

The questions put to the 'diwan' Brojokishore by the Council were as follows:

'Q. Did you give Mr. Graham Rs.150,000-O-O from the Cousummany (i.e. private) chest?'

A. I was not 'diwan' then - Raja Tilokchand was alive.

Q. Did you give that sum of money to Mr. Graham at any time or not?

A. Upon Mr. Graham's arrival at Burdwan, I gave him a sum of money by way of compliment. I do not recollect the exact sum. I paid to him by orders of Raja Tilokchand.

Q. Did you give Mukund Ram Byasack and Ramoo Poddar, Provincial Cash Keepers, any order to pay Mr. Graham a sum of money?

A. I do not give the first any orders; he was a servant of Mr. Graham's, but I desired the latter... by order of Raja Tilokchand, to pay Mr. Graham a sum of money amounting either to thirteen or fifteen thousand rupees as a compliment, I do not recollect the particular sum.
Q. Did you since you have been 'diwan', ever gave Mr. Graham any money through the hands of Mukund Ram Bysack, Ramoo Poddar or any other person?

A. I never gave him any money, either myself or through any other person. I made him and his family some presents of shawals, and cloths to about the value of four to five thousand rupees.15

But now the Council was not satisfied with the replies of Brojokishore. Monson, a member of the Council remarked that Brojokishore should be entirely dismissed from the services of the Raja of Burdwan and Rani Bishnukumari should be permitted 'to appoint such person as she shall think proper for the education of the Raja(i.e. Tejchand) and for the management of the household'. Subsequently Brojokishore was finally removed from the services of the Raja of Burdwan. 16

In 1771, the charges of Rani Bishnukumari against Brojokishore, proved to be futile. Then Rani Bishnukumari had to leave Burdwan to make room for 'diwan' Brojokishore, because he was then in the good book of the Company. At last in 1775 the Rani was successful in driving away Brojokishore from the 'diwanship' of the zamindary of Burdwan and also of the services of the Raja of Burdwan on a charge of embezzlement of a heavy sum of money of minor Raja Tejchand during the time when Brojokishore was in charge of the administration of the zamindary of Burdwan.
The charges against Graham, the resident, were not proved and he safely sailed for England. Perhaps, the Rani was aware that it was too difficult a task for an Indian to prove any of the charges against a European i.e. Graham.

On the revenue side it was seen that during the farming system in Burdwan, the farmers who contracted for the land revenues of Burdwan for a period of five years had again utterly failed. Gokul Ghosal, the banian of Verelst, was a big farmer of Burdwan lands, but was unsuccessful in paying his stipulated land revenues in time. Hence, the Company decided to bring back the Zemīdar of Burdwan to his place and position.

Francis, a member of the Council stated in May 1776 that the settlement of the Burdwan lands was to be made with the Raja of Burdwan 'as Zemindar, not as farmer'. He was strongly against the idea of again letting out the zemindary in farm. Twice this method was tested, once in 1762 and again in 1771, but twice it failed. Now, in 1776, the revenue settlement for Burdwan land was concluded with Raja Tejchand of Burdwan.

[* ... But I could not make my counsel understand that I had any fair claim upon Mr. Graham, sufficient to arrest his person or acquire bail for him... I know I was injured, I know I had suffered great indignities, and that was all I knew how to obtain satisfaction no body could inform me...*]

As the zeminder was minor (i.e. Raja Tejchand), it was desired by the Company that they should be regularly informed of the amount of gross collections of the estates and all about the management of the zemindary as well. The Raja was bound by the Sunnud 'to grant pottahs' (i.e. leases) to his ryots on their requisition in a certain form which was to be prescribed by the Government. It was also resolved that, all regulations by which the Raja was bound in making collections should be put to the Notice Board in every Cutcherry of the district.

The servants of the Raja, who were responsible for his 'household' were to deliver a monthly report to the Chief of the Provincial Council of Revenue at Burdwan. This report contained the accounts of receipts and disbursements of the 'household' of the Raja and were transmitted regularly to the Governor-General in Council by the Provincial Council for consideraion. On confirmation of the settlement, Duneechund, the vaqueel of the Raja of Burdwan, requested the Council on May 21, 1776, that,

i) the representations of self-interested persons should not be attended before a proper enquiry;

ii) all papers, officers and servants at Burdwan should be put under Raja's charge - the Raja should be at liberty to make such settlements as he would think satisfactory for his zemindary - that the Cutcherry of the estates to be held at his own house:
iii) as robberies were very often committed, the Raja should have the charge and authority to change and remove the officers of the different 'thanas' in the district;

iv) the English gentlemen should not take anything by force from the ryots;

But as this requests were thought to be improper by the Governor-General in Council, they were not agreed upon. The Raja was informed that the Council was at its pleasure to take such measures as it would think beneficial for the zemindary of Burdwan.¹⁹

According to the settlement of 1776, Raja Tejchand was made responsible for all balances in the revenue payments. It was also expressed in the 'Sunnud' that it was a duty of the Raja of Burdwan to keep the embankments in a proper state of repair, to save the lands from inundation and to render every assistance to the ryots when required. As Raja Tejchand was a minor, his mother Rani Bishnukumari, who was then looking after the management of the zemindary appointed Cossaul Chand and Roupanarayan Choudhuri as managers of collections and country business and Baboo Tutteh Chand was ordered to take charge of the education of the Raja.²⁰

In about 1777, Hastings, the Governor-General of Bengal, was in a position to obserge that the revenues of every districts of Bengal, as far as possible should be settled with the zemindar of that district. He decided to ignore the requests of others to
be recognised as farmers of lands even if they were willing to offer more as land revenue. The revenue policies were first tried in Burdwan and after a successful experiment were subsequently introduced to the rest of Bengal.

Meanwhile, in the zemindary of Burdwan, changes occurred. Both Cossaul Chand and Roupnarayan Choudhuri were dismissed from service by Rani Bishnukumari after they had served for about a month. In their places Punjab Roy and Bagbutty Churn Sharma were appointed zemindary 'diwan' and 'naib' respectively.

* The nature of services rendered by the zemindary 'diwan' and the 'naib' (i.e. deputy) were as follows:

i) The 'diwan' and the 'naib' were to put their signatures, on the part of the zemindar, to the summons, perwannas, sunnuds and decrees etc. which are issued by the Chief and Council.

ii) The 'diwan' and the 'naib' were to discuss the zemindary business with the Council.

iii) In cases of complaints, 'diwan' and the 'naib' should give their evidence regarding their customs of the country.

iv) The zemindary 'diwan' should sit at the Cutcherry during the time of collections and along with the Company's 'diwan' inspect the state of collections.

v) The 'diwan' is the head of land transactions and in all zemindary affairs; the 'naib' acts in the same capacity in his absence.

It should be mentioned here in this connection that during 1776 Rani Bishnukumari was conducting the affairs of the seminary of Burdwan in the name of her minor son Raja Tejchand. She failed to deliver to the Council some of the 'Consummany' (i.e. expenses of the household of the Raja of Burdwan) accounts of the Raja of Burdwan, of March 1777. The Governor-General (Hastings), ordered Higginson, the Chief of the Provincial Council of Revenue at Burdwan, to place Bahadur Singh, a man of insignificant importance, in the temporary charge and possession of the 'Consummany' for the purpose of bringing this accounts before the Council at Calcutta.

But Francis, another member of the Council, opposed this decision of the Governor-General. He remarked that what the Rani had supplied to the Governor-General in Council were sufficient for the purpose. Rani Bishnukumari also decided not to accept the proposal of the Governor-General without a protest. She wrote to Francis on March 14, 1777, '... I never, never will permit it... if any person obstructs or hinders me, I will sacrifice myself with all my servants and family...'. She strongly felt that she being the mistress of the Raja's household should possess the right of expenditure of the 'Consummany' accounts in the ways she liked.24

* Francis refused to take any part in the violence to be unlawfully exercised against Rani Bishnukumari of Burdwan for the delivery of the 'Consummany' accounts of the Burdwan Raj Family.
Rani Bishnukumari also lodged a complaint to Mr. Justice Lemaitre, of the Supreme Court at Calcutta, on the subject of the guards being placed on the Raja's house and appointment of Bahadur Sing in the charge of the 'Consummanny'. Mr. Justice Lemaitre directed Higginson, the Chief of the Provincial Council of Revenue at Burdwan, to attend to his summons at Calcutta. Mr. Justice ordered the Chief of the Provincial Council to withdraw the sepoys from the house of the Raja of Burdwan and also directed that a constable be sent 'to apprehend Bahadur Sing'.

The Governor-General in Council requested the Court of Directors of the Company at London, in their letter of November 18, 1777, that Higginson, Bahadur Sing and all other persons who might be subjected to the prosecutions of the Supreme Court by Rani Bishnukumari of Burdwan,'... should be indemnified by the Hon'ble Company, for any costs or losses which they might sustain thereby.' 25

The Council could not put up with this discomfiture on the affairs of Rani Bishnukumari and brought back the infamous Brojokishore, the ex-diwan of the zemindary of Burdwan, again into the picture in September 1777 as 'diwan' of the zemindary
of Burdwan. They informed the Provincial Council of Revenue at Burdwan, '... we are determined for the present to commit the business of the revenue solely to his charge...' and immediately after his appointment Brojokishore remitted Sa. Rs. 400,000-0-0 to the 'khalsa' or ex-cheque,26 as a token of gratitude for investing him again with the charge of the 'diwan-ship' of the zamindary of Burdwan.

Rani Bishnukumari protested against this appointment and consequently left Burdwan for Calcutta with Raja Tejchand. John Clavering and Phillip Francis, the other members of the Governor-General in Council at Calcutta refused to sign the letter addressed to the Provincial Council of Revenue at Burdwan vesting Brojokishore with the power of the guardian of the Raja and the controller of the revenue business of the zamindary of Burdwan. They also held the view that the Council had no right and authority to invest Brojokishore with these powers who in 1775, was held responsible for embezzlement of a heavy sum of the zamindary of Burdwan.

A study of the contemporary British records reveals the fact that Francis, one of the prominent members of the Governor-General in Council, often advanced his views in favour of Rani Bishnukumari of Burdwan. But it is not definitely known
whether this sentiment of Francis was the outcome of his disputes with Hastings, the Governor-General, or whether he (i.e. Francis) really tried to uphold the dignity of the traditional Raj Family of Burdwan.

Brojokishore got 'cold reception' on his arrival at Burdwan and neither the managers nor any of the 'mutsuddies' (i.e. Clerks) of the Raja of Burdwan paid any attention to him although the appointment of Brojokishore was notified to them long ago. 27 It seems, therefore, that none was perhaps happy at the re-appointment of Brojokishore in the zamindary of Burdwan.

But Brojokishore could not clear revenue arrears, in 1777-78, amounting to Sa. Rs. 3165,38-10-1 and subsequently was discharged from the services of the zamindary. The settlements of 1778-79 and 1779-80 was again concluded with Rani Bishnukumari at the 'jumma' of Sa. Rs. 3507,220-1-4. The Rani also made her answerable for the payment of Sa. Rs. 3165,38-10-1 on account of the balance during the years of 1777-78. The Governor-General in Council this time allowed Rani Bishnukumari the choice of her own officers for the management of the collection of the zamindary of Burdwan and the household as well. 28 That being so, the Rani appointed Buddun Chandra Majumder and Bhagabutty Churan Roy to take charge of the collections. 29
Inspite of her sincere attempts to pay up the revenues and the balances of the zemindary of Burdwan in time, Rani Bishnukumari incurred a heavy balance amounting to Saka 933,7-5-12-15 in July, 1779. The Council decided that in default of the payment of the above sum, the Rani should be disposed of the charge of zemindary of Burdwan. The Rani was unsuccessful in paying off the balances in time and was consequently dispossessed from the charge of the management of the zemindary of Burdwan.

During this time Raja Tejchand was fifteen years of age and a settlement was made with him on condition of immediate payment of the balances of revenue of 1778-79. It was also laid down that the medium of the revenues paid into the treasury in 1773-74, 1774-75, and in 1775-76, which was also the fixed standard for the 'jumma' of all other lands of Bengal, should be the standard for the future 'jumma' of Burdwan.

Raja Tejchand, being not satisfied with this settlement prayed to the Council that the 'jumma' of his zemindary be fixed upon the 'medium of payments made into the treasury during the sixteen years the Company have been the rulers...'. But his request was turned down. As a natural consequence, the Raja incurred heavy debts for saving his hereditary properties.
Raja Nobkissen, who was appointed by the Company the 'Sezawul' or Comptroller of the revenues of Burdwan in November 1780 stated in a petition that he had advanced a loan of 900,000 to Raja Tejchand and Rani Bishnukumari in November 1780 to enable them to discharge the revenue balances of the zemindary of Burdwan of 1779-80. But the Raja and Rani of Burdwan showed no signs of paying back to him the aforesaid sum.

Lastly, finding no other way for the realisation of the sum, advanced to Raja Tejchand and Rani Bishnukumari, Nobkissen prayed to the Company that the office of 'Sezawul' or Comptroller of the Revenues of Burdwan might be conferred upon him for the year of 1780-81. He offered the proposal that after discharging the revenues payable to the Company, the surplus might be applied towards the liquidation of his debt. The request of Nobkissen was granted by the Company.

Accordingly, the members of the Governor-General in Council informed their Directors at London on November 25, 1780:

'.... We accordingly appointed Nobkissen to the sezawully of Burdwan for the year 1187 B.S. ' and invested him with the

* Nobkissen in 1776, was entrusted with the management of the affairs of the Rani of Amboah (the mother of Raja Tilokchand), who was then alive. It was the tradition with the Burdwan Raj Family to refer the eldest living Rani of that zemindary as the Rani of Amboah.
usual authority to control the officers of the zemindar in making the settlement of that year i.e. 1780.33

The Raja and Rani Bishnukumari of Burdwan were served with a 'perwannah' to act in concert with the 'sezawul' of Burdwan for farming the settlement and making the collections of the year 1780. It is worth mentioning here that during this period the total charges of the zemindary of Burdwan amounted to Sa. Rs. 5142-3-0.*

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Charges belonging to the Zemindar of Burdwan</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dewans Dufter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deduct Mohurres &amp; ca. attending Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jumabundy Dufter</td>
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<td>Gazano Dufter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deduct Pddars &amp; ca. under the Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jemma Kuroh Dufter</td>
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<td>Bazee-Zeeman Dufter</td>
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<td>Aumeena Dufter</td>
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<td>Buxey Dufter</td>
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<td>Mohurres for(torn)Pergunnahs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tannadar and Pykes</td>
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<td>(These having always been paid from Buxey Dufter which is now under the zemindar, their allowances must consequently be disbursed by him).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charges of transporting treasure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cutwherry Contingencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deduct on account the Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Sa.</td>
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</table>

Though Raja Tejohand and Rani Bishnukumari were directed to act in conjunction with the 'Sezawul' Nobkissen, but in defiance of the order of the Council, they decided not to co-operate with Nobkissen and returned to Calcutta. Ducarel, the late Superintendent of the Khalsa Records, was sent to bring back Raja Tejohand to Burdwan and he performed his job successfully. Rani Bishnukumari was advised by the Council to stay at Amboah as she was putting every obstacle in Nobkissen's activities and was causing difficulties in the collection of revenues. 34

Nobkissen managed very successfully the revenues of Burdwan of 1780-81 and without troubles paid to the Government in advance the revenues of the zamindary of Burdwan. The Governor-General in Council at Calcutta was much satisfied with his business and informed the Directors: 'Nobkissen is successfully managing the revenues of Burdwan and the Government demands are paid in advance...

# The Council was so much afraid of Rani Bishnukumari's return to Burdwan, that they ordered their peons at Amboah to see that, no covered dooly(i.e. palanquin) or conveyance should pass without their being properly satisfied that the Rani was not in it. It also warned their peons, '... not to enter her house or otherwise molest her', but only to prevent her return to Burdwan till they received any orders from them.

As a reward of the services rendered by Nobkissen to the Company, the Council decided to continue him as the 'Sezawul' of Burdwan for another year i.e. 1782 and also allowed him a commission of $\frac{1}{2}$% on the collections 'for his trouble' taken during the collections of revenues of the zamindary of Burdwan.\textsuperscript{35*}

But things did not continue as such for long. Nobkissen also incurred a balance of Sa. Rs.213,502-6-14 in the payment of revenues of Burdwan for 1782.\textsuperscript{36} He prayed for a reduction in the 'jumma' of Burdwan, but his appeal was rejected. Immediately after Nobkissen was dismissed from the office of the 'sezawul' of Burdwan. Thus it appears that it was a common practice with the Company to relieve one of the charge of the collections of the zamindary of Burdwan when he fell into revenue arrears.

\textsuperscript{*} i) Sezawul's allowance and establishment as allowed by the Governor-General in Council on the 26th January, 1781 at the rate of $\frac{1}{2}$% on the collections estimated at Sa. Rs.65,300-0-0. (Vide - Proceedings of the Committee of Revenues, dt. May 18,1781).

\textsuperscript{ii}) Nobkissen was also authorised, '... to enter into an engagement for five years' on behalf of the Raja of Burdwan, with J.Byne, the agent of the Contractor for the repair of Government embankments. He was also invested with the charge of embankments of the private lands of the Ranis of Burdwan. (Vide-Letter to Court: dt. September 1st, 1781, para 8 - General Letters to the Court of Directors in the Revenue Department).
Consequently, a settlement was made with Raja Tejchand for 1189 B.S. i.e. 1782 at the same 'jumma' of the proceeding year i.e. Sa. Rs. 4358,026-12-0,37 which deducting the charges of collection, usual allowance to the Raja, left a net revenue of Sa. Rs.3880,586-8-10. Raja Tejchand prayed for the continuance of the allowance of 1½% on the revenues as enjoyed in the last two years by Nobkissen. But the Council did not comply with the request of the Raja of Burdwan and replied, 'We do not think it proper to grant such allowance ...' as the settlement was made with the zemindar and no 'sezawul' appointed.38

Raja Tejchand thus engaged himself to liquidate the revenue balances of Nobkissen and appointed Nundakumar Roy and Jugut Narayan Mitra as his 'diwan' and 'carkoon' (i.e. the manager).39 The Raja also demanded that he should examined the accounts of 1187 and 1188 B.S., the term of Nobkissen's 'sezawulship' in Burdwan, before Nobkissen was let free by the Company. Nobkissen also showed his willingness for the scrutiny of the accounts and prayed for the quick disposal of the papers.40
REFERENCES:

3. Calendar of Persian Correspondence- Vol.III- No.582.
4. Ibid No. 850.
5. Ibid No.864.
7. "Original Consultations of the Enquiry held into the Complaints of the Dowager Rani of Burdwan, against her Diwan Brojkishore Roy - 1st July, 1771 - 12 August 1771".
8. Calendar of Persian Correspondence - Vol.IV, No.35.
   (ii) Letter to Court - dt. August 19, 1778.
24. Ibid.
    Vide - General Letters to the Court of Directors in the Revenue Department.

26. Proceedings of the Burdwan Provincial Council of Revenue:
   (i) dt. September 27, 1777; (ii) September 29, 1777.

   (Vide - General Letters to the Court of Directors in the Revenue Department).

28. (i) Proceedings of the Governor-General in Council-
   dt. June 12, 1778.


   (iii) Letter to Court - dt. August 19, 1778, paras 10, 11.
   (Vide - General Letters to the Court of Directors in the Revenue Department).


30. Proceedings of the Governor-General in Council-
   dt. July 6, 1779.

31. Letter to Court - dt. January 10, 1780 paras 9, 12.
   (Vide - General Letters to the Court of Directors in the Revenue Department).

32. Proceedings of the Governor-General in Council-
   dt. May 28, 1779.
(i) Letter to Court - dt. November 25, 1780 - paras-51,52.
(Vide-General Letters to the Court of Directors in the Revenue Department).

(ii) "Memories of Maharaja Nubkissen Bahadur" - by N.N.Ghose - pp.150.

34. Letter to Court: dt. May 5,1781; paras 4,5,6.
(Vide- General Letters to the Court of Directors in the Revenue Department).


36. Proceedings of the Committee of Revenue -
dt. August 19, 1782.

(Vide - General Letters to the Court in the Revenue Department).

38. Proceedings of the Committee of Revenue -
dt. August 19, 1782.

39. Ibid.

40. Proceedings of the Committee of Revenue -
dt. November 7, 1782.