

PRESENTED BY
Sir Pherozeshah M. Mehta.

TELEGRAMS.

From Viceroy, 9th August 1897.

Famine. Monthly telegram.—Relief figures for each province as follows :— Madras has in six districts 191 relief works, with 536,647 workers, and 19,894 dependants, also 40,258 weavers employed in weaving, and 209,648 on gratuitous relief: also six test works in two districts with 530 workers in one district, no report other district. Affected and distressed area 26,000 square miles; population 5,774,000. Bombay in nine districts has 75 small and large works, with 285,588 workers, and 65,976 dependants, 25 poor-houses with 2,415 inmates, on gratuitous relief 54,164; distressed area 42,700 square miles, population 6,744,000. Bengal has 527 works, with 165,735 workers and 6,868 dependants, 125 poor-houses and kitchens, with 21,983 inmates, on gratuitous relief 367,206; distressed area 24,200 square miles, population 11,126,000: also seven test works, with 1,265 workers and dependants; affected area 800 square miles, population 60,000. North-West Provinces and Oudh have in 17 districts, 126 works, with 83,263 workers, and 17,406 dependants, 80 poor-houses with 33,360 inmates, besides 385,091 on gratuitous relief; distressed area 33,900 square miles, population 15,013,000: also in 19 districts five test works, with 1,199 workers, and 42 poor-houses with 9,859 inmates, besides 48,211 on gratuitous relief; affected area 19,100 square miles, population 10,484,000. Punjab has in five districts 86 works, with 19,820 workers and 2,792 dependants, 10 poor-houses with 1,126 inmates, besides 9,923 on gratuitous relief; distressed area 9,200 square miles, population 1,850,000. Central Provinces have in 18 districts 174 works, with 352,789 workers and 54,603 dependants, 56 poor-houses with 38,682 inmates, besides 152,100 on gratuitous relief; distressed area 51,800 square miles, population 6,461,000. Burma has in two districts two works, with 26,586 workers and 5,879 dependants, besides 1,331 on gratuitous relief; distressed area 4,900 square miles, population 527,000. Berar has 37 works, with 17,012 workers and 2,414 dependants, 23 poor-houses with 3,455 inmates, besides 8,362 on gratuitous relief; distressed area 16,700 square miles, population 2,627,000. Including Native States, numbers on relief are 3,146,008 against 3,303,968 last month. During past month rainfall good in Lower Burma, Bengal, North-West Provinces, Central Provinces, Berar, Rajputana, Central India, most parts Punjab, and North Bombay districts. Rainfall insufficient in Madras, Bombay Deccan, and parts Upper Burma. Prospects much improved therefore since rain. Crops are doing well throughout Lower Burma, Bengal (Deltaic and Central) and Behar, North-West Provinces. In latter province fine weather generally wanted for weeding, full average area having been sown. Central Provinces (East) in need of more rain for rice, but elsewhere crops are doing well. Prospects good in Berar and three-quarters Punjab. Frequent showers keep crops alive and permit sowings in most places in Bombay Deccan and Madras, and good rain now would relieve anxiety. In Upper Bombay parts of dry zone districts are suffering. Government of North-West Provinces and Oudh expect to close relief operations by end of September. In Bengal some gratuitous relief may be needed beyond that date, but numbers on relief should now decrease. In Central Provinces population enfeebled and resources exhausted; gratuitous relief increasing, and operations may last longer. In Madras, Bombay, future depends on early improvement in monsoon. Large increase in relief population in Madras due in part to lenient management; this now being remedied. Improvement continues Rajputana. Scarcity at end in Marwar. Prospects are favourable Central India. Closure of relief works in Bundelkhand and Baghelkhand by the end of September anticipated. In Hyderabad there is still cause for anxiety. Prices about the same as reported last month. Until situation is absolutely assured grain will be held up. During June, July, 120,000 tons Burma rice imported chiefly for Bengal and Central Provinces. In latter stocks low and imports continuous.

Foodstocks sufficient in North-West Provinces, and large in Punjab. Condition of people is fair to good everywhere, save in Central Provinces. In latter relief labourers are fairly well, but in outlying tracts cases of privation occur despite extension of relief. Cholera bad throughout Central Provinces and Bombay.

From Viceroy, 13th August 1897.

Famine. Heavy rain during past week throughout North-West Provinces; good rain has fallen throughout Bengal, Lower Burma, Rajputana, Central India States, Central Provinces, and many districts of Punjab. Prospects generally good, except in Madras and Bombay Deccan, Upper Burma, and Vizagapatam, where rain insufficient. No change in prices. On relief:—Madras 748,000, Bombay 399,000, Bengal 490,000, North-West Provinces 475,000 (excluding 69,000 relieved from Famine Fund), Punjab 30,000, Central Provinces 581,000, Burma 35,000, Berar 19,000, Hyderabad 18,000, Central India 55,000, Rajputana 5,000; total 2,855,000.

From Viceroy, 20th August 1897.

Famine. Good rain has fallen during the week in all parts of India, except in Madras Central and Deccan districts, in Bombay Deccan, and in Burma dry zone districts, where rainfall continues slight and partial, and sowings backward. In Hyderabad prospects, however, are now encouraging. Outside these areas prospects generally good. Early rice selling in Bengal at 10 seers per rupee, wheat in Punjab from 9 to 11; in North-West Provinces and Oudh prices easier. Prices are high still, from 6½ to 9 seers in Central Provinces and Bombay, and from 9 to 12 in Madras. On relief:—Madras 697,000, Bombay 403,000, Bengal 449,000, North-West Provinces and Oudh 467,000, Punjab 25,000, Central Provinces 578,000, Burma 26,000, Berar 15,000, Hyderabad 18,000, Central India 48,000, Rajputana 8,000; total 2,735,000.

From Viceroy, 27th August 1897.

Famine. Somewhat excessive rains in North-West Provinces. Excellent rain throughout Punjab, and sufficient rain has fallen generally in Bengal, Central Provinces, Rajputana, Sind, Guzerat, Central India, Berar, west and east coasts of Madras. Deficient only in Nizam's dominions, parts of Madras, Bombay Deccan, and dry zone districts, Upper Burma. Outside latter areas prospects excellent of ripening autumn crop. Prices falling slightly in Bengal and parts of North-West Provinces and Central Provinces; steady in Punjab; still slightly rising in Madras and Bombay. In affected districts of Hyderabad wheat 5½ seers per rupee, coarse rice 6. On relief:—Madras 654,000, Bombay 409,000, Bengal 392,000, North-west Provinces 424,000, Punjab 21,000, Central Provinces 592,000, Burma 27,000, Berar 14,000, Hyderabad 22,000, Central India 49,000, Rajputana 4,000; total 2,608,000.

From Viceroy, 30th August 1897.

Famine. In North-West Provinces July mortality highest in Jalaun 4·39, Lucknow 4·89, Hardoi 4·37, Azamgarh 3·89, elsewhere practically normal. In Central Provinces July mortality highest in Mandla 16·4 or, excluding cholera, 14·3, Bilaspur 9·92 or 9·45, Balaghat 8·81 or 8·54, Saugor 8·26 or 8·04, Seoni 8·28 or 8·05, Betul 7·45 or 6·44, Raipur 7·16 or 6·28, Nimar 5·60 or 5·29, Bhandara 5·48 or 4·64, Damoh 4·57 or 4·46, Chindwara 4·46 or 3·77.

Total number of deaths during the month 65,971, including 5,281 deaths from cholera. In Bombay highest mortality in Sholapur 7·72, Poona 10·1, Ahmednagar 6·86, Nasik 6·54, Satara 5·52, Bijapur 5·25; excess due principally to cholera. In all Behar districts July death-rate below normal. In Punjab death-rate below normal, except in Hissar. Madras return not received.

From Viceroy, 3rd September 1897.

Famine. Ample rain continues to fall in Bengal (Deltaic and Central), Behar, Central Provinces, North-West Provinces and Oudh, Punjab, Rajputana, Berar, Central India, Lower Burma. Harvest prospects excellent for autumnal crops. Good rain has fallen also in Madras, Hyderabad, North-West Provinces (West) and Punjab (Central), and prospects have improved there. Rain still insufficient in parts of Bombay Deccan. Prices falling in Bengal, easier elsewhere; maize in Darbhanga 13 seers per rupee. On relief:—Madras 593,000, Bombay 436,000, Bengal 336,000, North-West Provinces and Oudh 398,000, Punjab 18,000, Central Provinces 568,000, Burma 21,000, Berar 10,000, Hyderabad 21,000, Central India 49,000, Rajputana 6,000; total 2,457,000.

From Viceroy, 13th September 1897.

Famine monthly telegram. Relief figures for each province as follows:—Madras has in seven districts 157 relief works with 346,133 workers and 17,393 dependants, also 56,617 weavers employed in weaving and 114,289 on gratuitous relief, one poor-house with 58 inmates: also six intermediate works in two districts, with 158 workers; affected and distressed area 22,900 square miles, population 4,611,000. Bombay in nine districts has 79 small and large works with 320,982 workers and 70,079 dependants, 35 poor-houses with 3,484 inmates, on gratuitous relief 78,328; distressed area 42,700 square miles, population 6,744,000: also five test works with 221 workers in one district; affected area 900 square miles, population 263,000. Bengal has 141 works with 32,098 workers and 279 dependants, 340 poor-houses and kitchens with 42,774 inmates, on gratuitous relief 146,007; distressed area 14,200 square miles, population 8,877,000: also two test works with 41 workers in one district. Relief works closed in five districts. North-West Provinces and Oudh have in 17 districts 14 works with 13,236 workers and 2,539 dependants, 74 poor-houses with 16,914 inmates, besides 346,073 on gratuitous relief; distressed area 38,500 square miles, population 17,555,000; no test works open: also in 19 districts 35 poor-houses with 4,575 inmates, besides 39,167 on gratuitous relief; affected area 27,900 square miles, population 15,955,000. Punjab has in two districts seven works with 4,807 workers and 1,164 dependants, four poor-houses with 803 inmates, besides 7,061 on gratuitous relief; distressed area 3,700 square miles, population 544,000. Relief works closed except in Hissar. Central Provinces have in 18 districts 175 works with 238,184 workers and 39,857 dependants, 58 poor-houses with 38,833 inmates, besides 242,487 on gratuitous relief; distressed area 52,400 square miles, population 6,541,000: also two test works in one district with 169 workers. Burma has in two districts two works with 15,665 workers and 3,725 dependants, besides 1,455 on gratuitous relief; distressed area 4,900 square miles, population 527,000. Berar has 13 works with 2,626 workers and 115 dependants, 17 poor-houses with 2,029 inmates, besides 4,519 on gratuitous relief; distressed area 13,900 square miles, population 1,972,000. Including Native States, numbers on relief are 2,286,812, against 3,146,008 last month. Rain sufficient during the month, and excellent everywhere except in parts of Deccan and Upper Burma; lately good rain has fallen there also, and prospects much improved, especially in Madras, but the prolonged drought has injured early crops and forced up prices there. Millet is 7 seers per rupee in Poona, 9½ in Kurnool. With these exceptions, autumn harvest will be good everywhere. Early rain crops being harvested in Bengal. The great winter rice crop promises well, and prices easier in Upper

India. In Bengal new rice is 10 to 12 seers, maize 15. In North-West Provinces and Oudh and Punjab wheat is 9 to 11; new maize and millets, prices much cheaper. In Central Provinces harvest will be late, and wheat and rice are still 7 to 9 seers. Relief should close in Punjab, Bengal, North-West Provinces and Oudh this month. In Central Provinces condition of poorest classes in the most distressed districts not improved, and relief still extending. In Madras relief rapidly contracting. In Bombay, through the prolonged drought and reduced condition of people in the worst tracts, numbers on relief still increasing. In Central India, general prospects continue to be on the whole favourable, crop prospects good generally, distress abating, relief works about to be closed, prospects good. In Rajputana and Ajmere relief works closed, though gratuitous relief continues on small scale in five States. Prospects have improved in Hyderabad through good rain, though numbers on relief are higher.

From Viceroy, 17th September 1897.

Famine. Rainfall good during week in affected tracts, Madras and Bombay, and agricultural prospects continue to improve there. In Upper Burma more rain is still wanted. Elsewhere sufficient rain has fallen, and autumn harvest promises well. Winter rice crop prospects good in Bengal and Behar. Lands everywhere in course of preparation for cold weather sowings. Prices falling in Bengal, rice being from 8 to 12 seers. Staple grains are from 9 to 12 seers in Upper India, and common autumn grains still cheaper in villages. In Central Provinces prices lower by one seer. Prices have fallen in Madras also. Prices continue high in Bombay, ranging from $6\frac{1}{2}$ to 9 seers. On relief: Madras 427,000, Bombay 473,000, Bengal 149,000, North-West Provinces 304,000, Punjab 6,000, Central Provinces 604,000, Burma 18,000, Berar 9,000, Hyderabad 18,000, Central India 36,000, Rajputana 6,000; total, 2,050,000. Decrease of 237,000 on last week.

From Viceroy, 24th September 1897.

Famine. Sufficient rain has fallen during the week in Bengal, North-West Provinces and Oudh, Central Provinces and south-east Punjab, and prospects continue good. In Upper Burma, Madras and Bombay Deccan, Hyderabad, rainfall has been fairly general; outlook improving. Madras hopes to close relief at the end of next month. By that date relief is expected to have closed everywhere except in Central Provinces, Bombay, Upper Burma, provided prices fall; they are yielding in Bengal, North-West Provinces and Oudh, but elsewhere little change; from 7 to 9 seers prevails in Bombay Deccan and Central Provinces, and still higher rate in Hyderabad. On relief:—Madras 354,000, Bombay 465,000, Bengal 92,000, North-West Provinces and Oudh 242,000, Punjab 5,000, Central Provinces 614,000, Burma 18,000, Berar 7,000, Hyderabad 23,000, Central India 27,000, Rajputana 6,000; total 1,852,000; decrease 198,000.

From Viceroy, 30th September 1897.

Famine. North-Western Provinces and Oudh:—August mortality highest Hamirpur 6·6, Jalaun 6·2, Lucknow 6·0, Azamgarh 5·0, Benares 4·9, Mirzapur 4·6, Jhansi 4·4, Gorakpur 4·1. Malarial fever very prevalent. Central Provinces:—August death rate 8·35; rate highest Mandla 16·6, Bilaspur 12·5, Seoni 12·3, Balaghat and Betul 11·7, Saugor 11·6. Fevers, dysentery, diarrhoea very prevalent. Heavy rain has told on people weakened by long continued scarcity, especially among those who maintained themselves under much privation without going to relief works. Most strenuous efforts have been made to extend village relief and multiply kitchens. Bengal:—Death rate high, in Palamau 6·4,

Hazaribagh 10·5, Lohardaga 12·0, owing to cholera. Bombay :—Mortality high in Ahmednagar 7·1, Khandesh 7·3, Nasik 8·0, Poona 7·18, due principally to cholera. Berar :—Mortality also high, being 11·2 Akola, 8·0 Amraoti, due in part to cholera.

From Viceroy, 1st October 1897.

Famine. In Southern India rainfall still good and prospects are favourable now in Madras, Bombay. Moderate rain continues Central Provinces, Bengal, Upper India, ensuring sowing of winter crops. Prices falling slowly. On relief :—Madras 258,000, Bombay 424,000, Bengal 41,000, North-West Provinces and Oudh 206,000, Punjab 6,000, Central Provinces 628,000, Burma 17,000, Berar 6,000, Hyderabad 24,000, Central India 32,000, Rajputana 4,000 ; total 1,647,000. Decrease 205,000.

From Viceroy, 11th October 1897.

Famine monthly telegram. Relief figures for each province as follows :—Madras has in six districts 99 relief works with 92,942 workers and 8,477 dependants, also 30,862 weavers employed in weaving and 39,484 on gratuitous relief ; also one intermediate work in one district with 67 workers ; affected and distressed area 19,100 square miles, population 3,112,000. All relief operations have been closed in Vizagapatam. Bombay, in nine districts, has 70 small and large works with 206,157 workers and 50,185 dependants, 38 poor-houses with 3,827 inmates, on gratuitous relief 89,429 ; distressed area 42,900 square miles, population 6,866,000 ; also four test works with 287 workers, besides 2,724 on gratuitous relief in two districts ; affected area 2,500 square miles, population 360,000. Bengal has 34 works with 9,410 workers, 45 poor-houses and kitchens with 3,976 inmates, on gratuitous relief 4,290 ; distressed area 4,400 square miles, population 1,476,000. Relief works closed in all districts except four. North-West Provinces and Oudh relief works closed ; 24 poor-houses with 4,338 inmates, besides 149,729 on gratuitous relief, including 45,263 from charitable fund in 16 districts ; affected area 35,000 square miles, population 14,323,000 ; also in four districts six poor-houses with 679 inmates, besides 13,591 on gratuitous relief, including 2,470 from charitable fund ; affected area 4,300 square miles, population 2,318,000. Punjab relief works closed ; 844 on gratuitous relief. Central Provinces have in 18 districts 174 works, with 240,062 workers and 34,918 dependants, 57 poor-houses with 30,837 inmates, besides 315,543 on gratuitous relief ; distressed area 52,400 square miles, population 6,541,000 ; also one test work in one district, with 93 workers. Burma has in three districts four works with 14,061 workers and 2,961 dependants, besides 1,038 on gratuitous relief ; distressed area 4,900 square miles, population 527,000. Berar has 14 works with 2,122 workers, 72 poor-houses with 2,445 inmates, besides 3,154 on gratuitous relief ; distressed area 12,800 square miles, population 2,056,000. Including Native States, numbers on relief are 1,381,297 against 2,286,812 last month. During past month there has been excellent rain everywhere. Heavy rain has fallen during past week in Madras and the greater portion of Bombay, and good rain has fallen in most districts of Bengal and North-West Provinces and Oudh and Central Provinces (East). Early autumn crops reported to be above average in Bengal, Central Provinces, North-West Provinces, and Oudh. Late rice crop in Bengal and Chhattisgarh plain now safe, and winter sowings will be made generally under excellent conditions. In Bombay, Madras, prospects good now and late crop sowings being extensively made. Prices falling everywhere ; jowar in Bellary 14 seers, in Bijapur 11, rice in Behar between 10 and 13, Indian corn 19 seers, wheat and rice 9 seers at Jubbulpore. In Rangoon rice fallen heavily. Relief practically closed in Bengal, North-West Provinces and Oudh, Punjab, and should close soon in Madras, Bombay. In Central Provinces numbers on gratuitous relief increasing still, as in worst districts condition of low caste labourers and aboriginal tribes has required extension of village relief and kitchens. Condition of

people improving in districts of Central Provinces, in other provinces condition of people good or fair. Throughout Central India autumn crops very good. Most relief works closed and famine practically over in Rajputana. Prospects excellent generally. Prices falling, gratuitous relief ceased, except in two States. In Hyderabad prospects good. Prices still very high, though falling slightly. About 27,000 still on relief.

From Viceroy, 15th October 1897.

Famine. Prospects continue favourable in Bengal. Winter rice crop is estimated at 17 annas, namely above average crop in first forecast. Burma rice crops will be large also; sowings for winter crops progressing. Prices falling slowly. In Madras cholera 13 to 17 seers, in Bombay 9 to 12, in Punjab wheat 10 to 13, staple grain North-Western Provinces and Oudh 10 to 15, Central Provinces 8 to 11. On relief:—Madras 108,000, Bombay 278,000, Bengal 15,000, North-Western Provinces and Oudh 82,000, Central Provinces 618,000, Burma 11,000, Berar 7,000, Hyderabad 21,000, Central India 25,000, Punjab and Rajputana 1,000; total 1,166,000. Decrease 215,000.

From Viceroy, 22nd October 1897.

Famine. Relief virtually closed in North-West Provinces and Oudh, also in Punjab, Rajputana, and Bengal except in Manbhurn district. Relief works will close in Meiktila and Myingyan districts, Upper Burma, by 15th November next. Prospects continue favourable, but prices continue high. On relief:—Madras 74,000, Bombay 214,000, Bengal 12,000, North-West Provinces and Oudh 12,000, Central Provinces 562,000, Burma 11,000, Berar 4,000, Hyderabad 16,000, Central India 22,000; total, 928,000. Decrease 237,000.

From Viceroy, 28th October 1897.

Famine. In North-West Provinces and Oudh, September mortality highest in Agra 7·7, Hamirpur 8·9, Jhansi 5·1, Jalaun 9·3, Lucknow 5·2, Pilibhit 5·1; in twelve other districts between 4 and 5 per thousand: malarial fever is prevalent. In Central Provinces, highest in Saugor 11·3, Mandla 11·5, Balaghat 10·0, Bilaspur 11·0, Betul 12·2; in eight other districts between 7 and 9, and in four others between 5 and 7 per thousand: malarial fever very prevalent, affecting well-to-do as well as poor. In Bombay, highest mortality in Nasik 6·5, Khandesh 6·4, Satara 5·3, Poona 5·1, Ahmednagar 5·0: apparently due to fever. In Berar, highest in Akola 10·0, Amraoti 8·7, Buldana 11·5: cause not explained. In Punjab, high in Hissar 5·3: due to fever. Normal in Bengal and Madras, except in districts where cholera prevalent.

From Viceroy, 30th October 1897.

Famine. Prospects continue favourable generally. Spring sowings being actively prosecuted in all provinces. Prices continue very high in Bombay Presidency, but elsewhere prices falling slowly. In Central Provinces, staple grains range from 8 to 11½ seers. On relief:—Madras 37,000, Bombay 148,000, Bengal 13,000, North-West Provinces and Oudh 9,000, Central Provinces 513,000, Burma 13,000, Berar 1,000, Hyderabad 10,000, Central India 18,000: total, 762,000. Decrease 166,000.

From Viceroy, 6th November 1897.

Famine. In Madras relief works will now close. In Bombay will be closed after 15th November, save in exceptional localities. In Central Provinces will be closed this month except in worst districts. Some gratuitous relief may be needed for some weeks in Bombay and Madras and will continue on considerable scale in Central Provinces until end of December. Prospects generally good though fall in prices slow. On relief:—Madras 23,000, Bombay 108,000, Central Provinces 448,000, Burma 12,000, Hyderabad 9,000, Central India 17,000; total, 618,000. Decrease 144,000.

From Viceroy, 12th November 1897.

Famine. Prospects continue favourable generally, though more rain is urgently wanted in Madras. Spring sowings in progress everywhere. Autumn harvest commenced. All relief works closed in Madras, Bengal, North-West Provinces, Punjab, Hyderabad, Rajputana; in Central Provinces virtually closed in Jubbulpore division and Nerbudda valley. Prices continue to fall in Bengal, North-West Provinces, Central Provinces; elsewhere no material change in prices. On relief:—Madras 3,000, Bombay 59,000, Central Provinces 359,000, Burma 12,000, Hyderabad 6,000, Central India 14,000, total 452,000; decrease 165,000.

From Viceroy, 19th November 1897.

Famine. General prospects are favourable, but prolonged delay in establishment of north-east monsoon causes anxiety in Madras. Spring sowings progressing satisfactorily, and seed germinating well. Autumn harvest approaching completion in some provinces. Central Provinces reports good out-turns. Prices are rising in Madras and parts of Punjab, but prices continue to fall in Bengal, North-West Provinces, Central Provinces, Burma, Central India and Rajputana. On relief:—Madras 1,000, Burma 59,000, Central Provinces 269,000, Burma 8,000, Hyderabad 3,000, Central India 6,000; total 347,000.

From Viceroy, 22nd November 1897.

In despatch by next mail we propose appointment of small commission on precedent of 1878 to formulate results of experience gained in recent famine. We believe that relief operations generally have been conspicuously successful, but degree of success, especially as regards economy, has varied in various provinces. Broad principles of relief prescribed by Commission of 1878 have been adhered to; but detailed provisions of Famine Code have been departed from in not unimportant respects, and on different lines in different provinces. It is important to collate for future guidance results of different methods thus employed, while facts are fresh. Scope of inquiry will be far narrower than in 1878. No reconsideration of general principles required; but details of relief scheme, upon which effective relief at minimum cost depends, need revision. We propose following heads of inquiry:—1st, divergence in practice and departure from codes in various provinces; 2nd, varying degree of success in relieving distress and saving life at minimum cost; 3rd, most effective and economical method of working; 4th, recommendations or opinions likely to prove useful in future famines. We would suggest retired Indian official of high position as president, and one member, perhaps medical, appointed by you in England; and an Indian civilian, an engineer, and a native gentleman of high position selected by us in

India. Inquiry will last at least for four months, and should begin by the middle of January at the latest, or earlier if it be desired by you—though, if much earlier, preliminary collection of information may be incomplete. Please telegraph approval, and probable date of meeting.

From Viceroy, 26th November 1897.

Famine. Failure of north-east monsoon causes much anxiety in Carnatic, Deccan and adjoining districts of Madras. More rain is wanted also in some districts of Bombay. Elsewhere agricultural prospects are favourable generally. Out-turns of autumn harvest good in Central Provinces, middling to fair in Madras. Spring sowings in progress; where completed young crops promise well. Prices continue to fall in most provinces, but continue high in Punjab, and risen smartly in some districts of Madras. On relief:—Bombay 28,000, Central Provinces 211,000, Burma 7,000, Central India 6,000; total 252,000.

From Secretary of State, 30th November 1897.

Your telegram, dated 22nd November. I agree to your proposals regarding Famine Commission, which will be appointed by Viceroy as in 1879. I concur that main principles of famine administration are already settled, and I approve subjects of reference. I have selected Sir James Lyall as President, and Dr. Richardson as Medical Member. They can reach Calcutta about 7th January. Other members and secretary will be selected by you.

From Viceroy, 2nd December 1897.

Famine. In North-West Provinces, October mortality highest in Bareilly 12·8, Agra 12·3, Pilibhit 10·7, Hamirpur 9·8, Jalaun 9·7, Etawah 8·8, Muttra 8·3, Moradabad 7·2, Cawnpore 6·5, Etah 6·0; in fifteen other districts between 4 and 6 per mille. Increased mortality not explained, but explanation called for. In Central Provinces, highest in Bilaspur 11·4, Wardha 9·3, Saugor, Betul, Raipur 8·2, Mandla 8·0; in nine other districts between 5 and 7. Satisfactory improvement in Central Provinces. Rate for whole Provinces fallen from 8·30 to 7·22 per mille. Fever epidemic continued, however, throughout the greater part of October. In Bombay, highest mortality in Satara 6·7, Poona 5·2, Sholapur 5·2, Nasik 5·1. Plague very prevalent Satara. In Berar, highest in Amraoti 7·1, Akola 6·3. For Punjab, figures incomplete. Death-rate high still in Hissar, mainly on account of fever, but is steadily improving. In Bengal, death-rate below normal. Madras and Burma reports not received.

From Viceroy, 3rd December 1897.

Famine. Fair rain has fallen in some districts of Madras; prospects brighter, though in parts outlook not encouraging. Rain is wanted also in Bombay Deccan. Prospects continue favourable generally elsewhere. Harvest completed in Bombay, North-West Provinces, Punjab; spring sowings nearly completed, seedlings thriving. Prices falling still in Central Provinces, North-West Provinces, Central India; but risen sharply in some Madras districts. On relief:—Bombay 18,700, Central Provinces 170,900, Central India 5,800; total 195,400, of whom 169,700 are on gratuitous relief.

From Viceroy, 10th December 1897.

Famine. Rain somewhat improved situation in Madras, but prospects not yet assured; more rain is urgently wanted, particularly in Circars and Deccan, as well as in Bombay Deccan. Elsewhere prospects continue favourable. Prices easier somewhat in Madras, continue high in Punjab, elsewhere continue to fall. On relief:—Bombay 21,600, Central Provinces 114,700, Central India 4,600; total 141,200, of whom 118,400 are on gratuitous relief.

From Viceroy, 17th December 1897.

Famine. There is no improvement in Madras, where dry crops generally and wet crops suffering in parts. Rain is wanted also in Bombay Deccan and Carnatic and Hyderabad. General rain in Punjab has benefited spring crops. Prospects of spring crops continue generally favourable everywhere. Prices falling slightly or stationary. On relief:—Madras 400, Bombay 20,400, Central Provinces 63,300, Central India 3,000; total 87,100, of whom 66,800 are on gratuitous relief.

From Viceroy, 24th December 1897.

Famine. Position generally unaltered. Prices falling slowly. Still on relief:—Madras 1,000, Bombay 21,600, Central Provinces 23,600, Central India 2,800; total 49,000, of whom 27,100 are on gratuitous relief.

From Viceroy, 31st December 1897.

Famine. Fair rain has fallen in parts of South Carnatic and Tanjore. Agricultural position generally unaltered. Prices continue to fall slowly. On relief:—Madras 1,900, Bombay 22,300, Central Provinces 13,100; total 37,300, of whom 17,100 are on gratuitous relief.

From Viceroy, 7th January 1898.

Famine. Fair rain has fallen in four districts of Madras, but more rain is needed in that Presidency. Agricultural position unaltered. Prices are generally stationary. On relief:—Madras 2,300, Bombay 19,400, Central Provinces 6,000; total 27,700, of whom 8,300 are on gratuitous relief.

From Viceroy, 10th January 1898.

Famine. In North-West Provinces November mortality highest in Bareilly 11·5, Agra 9·2, Pilibhit 8, Muttra 7·7, Etawah 7·4, Jalaun 6·9, Hamirpur 6·6, Etah 6·2, Moradabad 6, in fifteen other districts between 4 and 6 per mille. Malaria of virulent type reported to have been prevalent in October. In Central Provinces highest in Wardha and Bilaspur 6·5, Bhandara 6·3, Raipur 6·1, Saugor and in eight other districts between 4 and 5. Every district shows a lower rate than in October, and rate for whole Provinces fallen from 7·22 to 5·28 per mille. In Bombay mortality highest in Satara 5·2, Poona 5·1, Sholapur 4·9.

From Viceroy, 14th January 1898.

Famine. Rain is urgently needed in Madras and Northern India generally. Agricultural position generally unaltered elsewhere. Prices are generally stationary, though very high in parts of Madras. On relief:—Madras 3,200, Bombay 12,800, Central Provinces 1,700; total 17,700, of whom 3,900 are on gratuitous relief.

From Viceroy, 21st January 1898.

Famine. Good rain has fallen in two districts of Madras, and eight local showers in five others. Agricultural position generally unaltered elsewhere. Prices continue high in Madras. They are generally stationary elsewhere, or falling. On relief:—Madras has not been reported, Bombay 12,700, Central Provinces 1,500; total 14,200, of whom 3,400 are on gratuitous relief.

From Viceroy, 28th January 1898.

Famine. Light showers in two districts of Madras. Fair rain has fallen in some districts of Punjab. Agricultural position generally unaltered. Prices continue high in Madras; elsewhere prices are generally stationary. On relief:—Madras 6,700, Bombay 12,100, Central Provinces 800; total 19,600, of whom 3,100 are on gratuitous relief.

From Viceroy, 3rd February 1898.

Famine. In North-West Provinces December mortality highest in Bareilly 6·6, Mainpuri 6·2, Pilibhit 6, Agra 5·9, Muttra and Jalaun 5; in ten other districts between 4 and 5 per thousand. In Central Provinces highest in Bilaspur 4·8, Wardha 4·6, Balaghat 4·1, Saugor 4; in ten other districts between 3 and 4. December death-rate lower than at any period since beginning of famine, and rate for whole provinces fallen from 5·28 to 3·70 per thousand. In Bombay mortality highest in Sholapur 4·3.

From Viceroy, 9th February 1898.

Famine. In Madras, December death rate highest in Vizagapatam 3·2; mortality there risen since November, but still substantially lower than in October. In no other affected district does rate exceed 2·4.

From Viceroy, 4th February 1898.

Famine. Light scattered showers in some southern districts of Madras, and general rain over Bengal proper and North Behar. Rain has fallen also in many sub-montane districts of North-West Provinces and Oude, and fair rain has fallen in some Punjab districts. More rain is wanted, however, in all these provinces, as well as in parts of Central Provinces, Central India and Rajputana, where crops have suffered from lack of usual winter rainfall. Otherwise agricultural position generally unaltered. Prices continue high in Madras; prices are generally satisfactory elsewhere. On relief:—Madras 4,800, Bombay 11,800, Central Provinces 600; total 17,200, of whom 3,400 are on gratuitous relief.

From Viceroy, 11th February 1898.

Famine. Latest agricultural reports show general rain in Behar and North Bengal, slight showers in other parts of province. There has been light rain also in most districts of North-West Provinces, in four districts of Central Provinces, and two of Punjab. Subsequently to these reports rain has fallen over the greater part of Northern and Central India and in parts of Madras, and prospects have improved generally. Prices continue high in Madras; elsewhere, they are generally stationary. On relief:—Madras not yet reported, Bombay 12,700, Central Provinces 400; total 13,100, of whom 4,200 are on gratuitous relief.

From Viceroy, 18th February 1898.

Famine. This week's agricultural reports show general rain throughout Bombay, Bengal, North-West Provinces, Punjab, Central Provinces, Hyderabad, Rajputana and Central India; also heavy local storms and scattered showers in several districts of Madras. Rain has everywhere benefited crops, and prospects have improved. Subsequently rain also reported from parts of North-West Provinces, Punjab, Rajputana, and few places in peninsula. Prices are slightly easier in Madras, and elsewhere show a tendency to fall. On relief:—Madras not reported, Bombay 12,700, Central Provinces 300; total 13,000, of whom 4,400 are on gratuitous relief.

From Viceroy, 25th February 1898.

Famine. Rain has fallen throughout Punjab, and slight rain in parts of Bengal, two districts of Central Provinces, and western sub-montane and hill districts of North-West Provinces and Oudh. In Madras, good showers in four districts and slight showers in other districts. Crop prospects excellent in Punjab, good in North-West Provinces and Bengal, fair in Central India, poor in some parts of Bombay and Madras. In Madras, improvement reported in three districts affected by shortness of north-east monsoon. Prices are slightly easier in Madras, and elsewhere stationary or falling. On relief:—Madras 6,700, Bombay 12,300, Central Provinces 300; total 19,300, of whom 4,400 are on gratuitous relief.

From Viceroy, 4th March 1898.

Famine. This week's agricultural reports show no rain of any importance. Spring harvest prospects continue favourable generally everywhere, except in Madras, where they are middling. In Central Provinces wheat is expected to yield three-fourths of full average, and linseed little below normal. Prices are slightly easier in Madras, and stationary elsewhere or falling, fall being noticeably large in Central Provinces. On relief:—Madras 7,100, Bombay 11,700, Central Provinces 200; total 19,000, of whom 4,100 are on gratuitous relief.

CENTRAL PROVINCES.

No. C-1129 (A.), dated Pachmarhi, the 16th June 1897.

From—M. W. Fox Strangways, Esq., I.C.S., Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces, To—The Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue and Agriculture.

I am directed to submit, for the information of the Government of India consolidated monthly statements A and B for May as prescribed by Section 16 IV.-VII. of the Central Provinces Famine Code. The usual memoranda by the Commissioners of Divisions and famine maps are also forwarded.

2. The total number of persons on relief rose during the month from 540,055 to 702,999, an increase of no less than 30 per cent. The increase is common to all the divisions, but is most marked in the Nagpur Division where it amounts to 93 per cent. on relief works, and 42 per cent. on gratuitous relief. The temporary relief given by the rabi harvest and the mohwa crop was exhausted long before the end of the month, prices rose steadily, and the area of distress necessarily widened.

It was anticipated, in the forecast submitted with my letter No. 1934, dated the 8th April, 1897, that the lack of other employment would bring on the works many people not in severe distress, and that the numbers would in this month rise to their maximum. That forecast, indeed, put the numbers far below the figure they have actually attained. In some districts, notably the rice districts of Chhattisgarh, Balaghat and Bhandara, the growth of distress has much exceeded the expectations entertained in March last; and, generally speaking, it may be said that sufficient allowance was not made for the numbers of people likely to resort to the works, not from absolute necessity, but as a convenient means of making a little money during the slackest season of the agricultural year. It has been clear for some time that we have large numbers of such people on our works, and measures were concerted during the month to ensure the return of as many of them as possible to their fields on the approach of the monsoon. The reports show, indeed, that the desertion of the works for field labour had already begun in some districts, notably in Jubbulpore, before the end of the month. Wherever the condition of the workers was such as to make the experiment a safe one, the process was hastened by the substitution for task work of the intermediate or gang piece-work system, the introduction of which on any work has been invariably followed by wholesale desertions. The really needy return after a few days, while those who have saved a little money on task work, and perhaps have small stocks in their homes, disappear altogether. On some works again desertions have resulted from outbreaks of cholera. The combating of these outbreaks has added much to the labours and anxieties of district and departmental officers, and it is owing to their untiring exertions that confidence has in nearly every case been rapidly restored, and that, although the disease was severe and widespread in several districts, it has never attained serious proportions on the works.

3. The condition of the labourers on relief works has been steadily improving from month to month, and is now everywhere reported to be good. Exceptional cases of emaciated persons are of course met with, and wherever piece-work has been started the precaution has been taken of retaining in the "charge" an "infirm gang" of task workers, or of drafting the weakly labourers to the nearest task work. The proportion of such persons is still naturally somewhat larger in those districts which have suffered most severely, and to this may, in part, be due the differences in classification of workers (B and D) noticed in your letter No. 2233-F.—26-20, dated the 8th June 1897. There is, however, another cause. An examination of the figures in detail has shown that there is some want of uniformity in the methods of classification followed, but, speaking generally, only those workers are classed as B workers who do the actual work by which the task of the gang is measured, *i.e.*, the diggers (in earthwork) or the breakers (in stone breaking). Carriers and other miscellaneous workers are all classed as D workers. Consequently the proportions must vary with the nature of the

work, and where stone breaking is not available the proportion of D workers must be large. Allowing, however, for both these causes, there still remain differences which require further explanation, and it must be admitted that the same degree of success in enforcing tasks has not been attained everywhere. Where, as in Raipur, the rush to the works was sudden and unexpected, and for a time outstripped the provision of establishment, the difficulties in the way of enforcing discipline from the outset were very great. The exaction of a proper task is a matter to which the Chief Engineer's attention is constantly directed, and the outturn of work has steadily improved.

Programmes of work to be carried out during the monsoon months were drawn up during the month for all districts, and the Public Works Department have been busily engaged in providing the necessary shelter for relief workers and for the supervising staff.

4. Large as are the numbers ($6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the whole population of the province) now in receipt of Government relief, they yet do not by any means represent the full number who are being maintained by public and private enterprise and charity. Of the ten lakhs provided by the Government of India for Famine Loans Rs. 253,000 were advanced in April and Rs. 324,000 in May, and the attached statement shows that the number of persons on such works in the eleven districts for which figures are available was no less than Rs. 141,817. Nearly half the total amount of Rs. 577,000 was distributed in four other districts from which no returns have been received, so that it is probable that the total number on these works did not fall short of two lakhs. Much useful work is being done, and the District officers appear to have been everywhere successful in insisting on the payment of a sufficient wage. Besides these 24,041 persons were employed on the Saugor-Katni Railway in the Jubbulpore Division, and 1,311 on the Dhamtari tramway in Raipur, while 18,065 were employed on private works, chiefly in the Bilaspur district.

The District Charitable Relief Committees are everywhere hard at work. The bulk of the funds allotted have been reserved for the provision of seed-grain and cattle to destitute agriculturists, but a considerable number of persons (the exact figures are not available) have been relieved by the provision of cheap clothing or (in the case of the respectable classes who will not resort to relief works or poor-houses) by gifts of money or food. It will also be observed from column 13 of Statement B that over four lakhs had been distributed before the end of May out of the ten lakhs provided for Agriculturists Loans.

5. The increase in the numbers gratuitously relieved has been mainly due to the extension of village relief. Dependants on relief works have, of course, increased with the increase of workers, but constant efforts are made to reduce the proportion. The kitchen system, under which all dependants are collected and fed, instead of being paid, has been worked with much success in the Nerbudda Division, and the introduction of piece-work has resulted in a further reduction in dependants. The poor-house population has generally decreased, except in Saugor and in Chhattisgarh. In Saugor the increasing numbers in the head-quarters poor-house are coincident with an extremely small number of deaths, 18 out of a population of 2,103. This points to a generally good condition of the paupers, and to laxity in drafting to relief works those who are fit for work. The Deputy Commissioner has had his attention specially drawn to this fault in his administration. In Bilaspur the latest reports show that the condition of people seeking for poor-house relief is less satisfactory, but even here the Chief Commissioner thinks that judicious drafting, either to works or to village relief, might sensibly reduce the numbers, and the Commissioner has been asked to give the matter his careful attention.

6. The machinery of relief being so complete it might have been hoped that the effect on the condition of the people would have been more apparent in the returns and that the death-rates for May would have shown a decided improvement over those for previous months. This, however, is unfortunately not the case. The figures are incomplete. They will be examined in detail when the special mortality return for May is received from the Administrative Medical Officer. Meanwhile column 16 of Statement A has been left blank, since it is evident from the divisional reports that the figures cannot be accepted without further scrutiny.

Column 15 shows very high death-rates in Balaghat, Hoshangabad, Narsinghpur and Raipur. In all of these districts cholera was very destructive. If the deaths from cholera be eliminated, the rate falls in Balaghat from 72·60 to 61·08, in Hoshangabad from 93·1 to 59·5, in Raipur from 91·08 to 51·60, and doubtless there would be a similar fall in Narsinghpur, were the figures showing deaths from cholera available. Moreover it is probable that many of the deaths assigned to bowel complaints were really caused by cholera. The Deputy Commissioner of Hoshangabad remarks on this point as follows :—

“There is serious reason to doubt the accuracy of their (the police) diagnosis between cases of cholera and other bowel complaints. In some outpost circles the total number of deaths from cholera returned from the police station houses is considerably less than the number reported on the relief works in that circle, showing clearly the inaccuracy of the statistics. While, therefore, I think the death-rate of 93·1 per mille for the district from all causes may be accepted as correct, I do not think any great weight can be placed on the death-rate of 59·5 per mille excluding deaths from epidemics.”

Mr. Crump has been constantly on tour in the distressed area during the month, and his remarks on the condition of the people, which he describes as generally good, are the result of personal observation. The same officer makes the following remarks on the difficulty of drawing any conclusions as to the pressure of distress merely from the mortality returns of particular areas and the rates calculated thereon, and thus of localising the causes of exceptional mortality :—

“Again, the death-rate from circle to circle varies most extraordinarily, and on a careful examination of the figures I find that this is often due to the fact that the death-rate is calculated on the population of the circle according to the census of 1891, whereas in the present year it has been largely increased or decreased by the flow of people to relief-works. Thus last month the Kesla Circle had an extraordinarily high death-rate, and this month, with no epidemic, it has reached a death-rate of 113·5. The next and exactly similar circle, Bordha, has a death-rate of 23·7, which is remarkably low for a tract probably the most highly distressed in the district. The population of Kesla, adopted for the purpose of calculation of the death-rate is 3,909, but throughout the month there has been a relief-work with an average population of 8,178 persons within its limits. Assuming that the whole of the people of the Kesla Circle were on this work the real death-rate per mille would be half of what it appears. Similarly many of the Bordha Circle, also a sparsely peopled tract, are on this work, and the Bordha death-rate thus works out lower than it should.”

The necessity, referred to in your letter quoted above, for further precautions to secure proper examination of the figures of deaths from starvation for each district, has engaged the Chief Commissioner's attention, and orders are now issuing which it is hoped will result in the exclusion from our returns of deaths which are not clearly due to this cause.

7. The measures, already reported to the Government of India, for securing a sufficient supply of food-stocks in Mandla during the monsoon months are now stated to have been successful, and no further anxiety is felt in this district. The report on the similar action taken in Balaghat, for the Baihar Tahsil has not yet been received, but the weekly returns show that imports are increasing, and that 30,000 maunds of grain have been imported into Baihar during April and May. The Commissioner is now in Balaghat, and has promised to report fully on the matter shortly. Elsewhere food-stocks are reported to be sufficient. Some officers express anxiety as to the supply of seed-grain, but it is hoped that a satisfactory opening of the rains will encourage the malguzars and others to bring out the stores which in many places they are known to be hoarding.

8. The Chief Commissioner has received the expression of the sympathy of the Governor General in Council in the lamentable loss which this Administration has sustained in the death, on the 23rd May 1897, of Mr. H. H. Priest, Commissioner of the Jubbulpore Division, a calamity which was followed, in the course of a few days, by the death of another able and devoted officer, Mr. C. O. Leefe, Executive Engineer of the Eastern Division. The last work of Mr. Priest's life was to visit each district of his division in turn. He had just returned from Saugor, after visiting, in April, Mandla and Damoh, and in May, Seoni. The Chief Commissioner himself went with him through the Jubbulpore rains programme at the end of April, and visited in his company Murwara on the 1st May. In each district he had most carefully considered the arrangements required for the monsoon months, and completed all that could be done in advance. Mr. Lyall trusts that the result will show, as he fully believes that these measures

have been wisely laid out. No pains and thought have been spared in elaborating them. Mr. Galbraith, who submits the report for the Jubbulpore Division for May, only took charge on the 1st June, and his report is interesting as recording the conclusions of a fresh observer; called from a distant field, upon the relief arrangements which experience has gradually led us to adopt in the Central Provinces. It will be seen that his criticisms are generally favourable. Everything, as he points out, depends on the character of the coming monsoon. Should it prove propitious, it may fairly be hoped that before many months are over the distress will gradually begin to melt away. If the case should be otherwise, then indeed the strain upon the resources, not in money only but chiefly in men of the Administration will be very great, and an entirely fresh programme of relief operations with far greater difficulties to encounter than have yet been experienced will be necessary. It is too early yet to judge whether this will probably have to be undertaken, but the contingency will not be overlooked.

9. Mr. Galbraith's remarks on village relief [head (6)] seem to the Chief Commissioner generally judicious. But he overestimates, in Mr. Lyall's opinion, the difficulty of supervision during the rains. This was one of the points specially considered by the Chief Commissioner in conference with the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner at Jubbulpore, and Mr. Lyall was assured that each village would continue to be visited either by the Circle Officer or his Assistants at least once a month. The monsoon programmes include provision for this. He also insists too strongly, Mr. Lyall thinks, on the necessity for strictness in the Administration of such relief during the rains. At that time it will be inevitable that employment on Public Works should be restricted. Earthwork is not possible in the rains. Stone breaking is the only form of relief labour available; and this cannot be provided except at a much smaller number of centres than have hitherto been open. Therefore many people will undoubtedly remain in their villages who would, with the more extensive system of works opened to them in the fair season, have gone on Public Works. It will be inevitable that some of these people should fall into a condition in which they will require village relief, and it will be cheaper to afford them such relief gratuitously than to open, under the difficulties occasioned by the rainy season, works for their reception. Besides these, large numbers of cultivators who have now left or are leaving the works for their fields, after they have sown their seed will have to remain in their villages to watch the growing crops, to weed them and tend them, and they cannot be expected to leave them for the works. Their dependants, if not themselves, may during this period need village relief, and it must be given. For these reasons the Chief Commissioner anticipates an increase rather than a decrease in village relief during the rains. This is, of course, quite consistent with a proper vigilance in applying the principles on which that relief is afforded, and it will be the care of the Deputy Commissioners and the Circle Relief Officers to see that these principles are fully carried out.

Monthly Famine Statement A for the five weeks ending Saturday evening the 29th May 1897.

[To be submitted to the Government of India within the first half of the next month.]

District.	Area.	Population in thousands.	Affected area.	Estimated population in thousands of column 4	NUMBERS ON RELIEF WORKS ON LAST DAY OF MONTH.					Number on gratuitous relief.	PRICE OF ONE OR MORE PRINCIPAL FOOD-GRAINS IN SEERS PER RUPEE.			Monthly death-rate per mille per annum.	Deaths due to starvation.
					Class A.	Class B.	Class C.	Class D.	Total.		Rice.	Juari.	Wheat.		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
JUBBULPORE DIVISION.															
Jubbulpore	3,948	748	2,853	498	215	9,592	...	45,573	55,380	30,970	8	(Gram.) 10½	10½	Not reported.	...
Saugor	4,007	592	4,007	592	192	12,893	...	29,516	42,601	20,020	...	8½	8½	Do.	...
Damoh	2,831	325	2,000	200	1,072	6,890	...	28,098	36,060	17,963	6½	9	8	Do.	...
Mandla	5,056	339	5,056	339	81	917	...	23,000	23,998	8,401	7	8½	8	Do.	...
Seoni	3,198	371	1,766	200	393	5,302	...	6,670	12,365	4,369	8½	...	10½	51·0	...
Total... ..	19,040	2,375	15,682	1,829	1,953	35,594	...	132,857	170,404	81,723	...	...	...	...	...
NAGPORE DIVISION.															
Nagpur	3,832	758	524	243	289	3,858	...	11,484	15,631	3,425	8½	9½	8½	Not reported.	...
Rhandara	3,968	742	2,350	430	330	8,366	...	22,392	31,088	10,669	8½	10	8½	33·84	...
Balaghat	3,164	383	1,500	230	716	8,994	...	31,600	41,310	19,550	7½	...	7½	72·60	...
Chanda	10,749	697	2,552	104	70	(All private and takavi works.) 739	...	3,628	4,437	26	6½	10½	8½	34·56	...
Wardha	2,428	400	650	70	70	...	...	...	...	...	...	9½	...	40·32	...
Total... ..	24,141	2,980	7,076	1,077	1,405	21,957	...	69,104	92,466	33,670	...	...	...	...	...
NERBUDDA DIVISION.															
Hoshangabad	4,024	499	3,794	361	1,756	42,440	...	5,240	49,436	12,415	...	8½	8½	93·1	...
Narsinghpur	1,916	367	1,916	367	1,072	29,945	...	11,137	42,154	9,993	9	...	8½	38·8	...
Nimar	3,928	285	3,928	285	3	536	...	3	342	543	7	9	8	56·4	...
Chhindwara	4,630	407	2,549	164	326	14,334	...	940	15,600	4,015	...	9	9½	27·6	...
Betul	3,824	323	2,868	149	915	12,165	...	1,961	15,341	4,799	...	...	7½	43·2	...
Total... ..	18,892	1,912	15,055	1,326	4,072	99,520	...	19,281	122,873	31,770	...	...	...	...	...
CHHATISHGARH DIVISION.															
Raipur	11,724	1,584	4,027	710	789	20,269	...	53,452	74,510	29,667	7½	...	9	91·08	...
Bilaspur	8,341	1,164	8,341	1,164	1,139	24,902	...	8,283	34,324	30,240	8½	8	8½	Not reported.	...
Sambalpur	4,948	796	228	62	31	198	...	780	1,009	343	9½	...	9	Do.	...
Total... ..	25,013	3,544	12,596	1,936	1,959	45,369	...	62,515	109,843	60,250	...	...	...	...	...
GRAND TOTAL	87,086	10,811	50,409	6,168	9,389	202,440	...	283,757	495,586	207,413	...	...	...	...	...

Monthly Famine Statement B for the five weeks ending Saturday the 29th May 1897.

[To be submitted to the Government of India within the first-half of the next month.]

District.	Maximum number for whom relief is estimated to be required in case of serious famine.	Number for whom relief was provided in last programme of relief works, (i.e., average daily number for three months).			Number for whom relief can be provided by works remaining on programme on date of report (i.e., average daily number for three months).		Expenditure since April 1st 1897.		Advances since April 1st up to end month under.			Revenue suspended.	
		Date of last programme.	On large works, (P. W. D. Schedule A).	Others.	On large works, (P. W. D. Schedule A).	Others.	Date up to which account is made up.	Rupees omitting 000s.		Land Improvement Act.	Famine Loans.	Agricultural Loans Act.	Rupees omitting 000s.
								On relief works.	On gratuitous relief.				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
JUBBULPORE DIVISION.													
Jubbulpore	93,000	12-5-97	127,556	...	165,000	...	29-5-97	311	96	...	75	5	253
Saugor	42,000	"	129,000	...	87,200	...	"	100	45	...	26	...	114
Damoh	40,000	"	91,511	...	80,600	...	"	85	29	1	29	186	(259 remitted).
Mandla	27,000	"	135,556	...	120,000	...	"	127	9	...	7	20	33
Seoni	26,000	"	98,222	...	105,400	...	31-5-97	7	8½	1	7	7	48
Total ...	228,000	...	581,845	...	558,200	...	...	630	187½	2	144	218	446 (259 remitted).
NAGPUR DIVISION.													
Nagpur	53,000	6-4-97	51,144	...	59,600	...	29-5-97	59	3	...	30	2	...
Bhandara	52,000	"	46,111	...	60,600	...	"	81	8	...	103	...	135
Balaghat	53,000	"	48,768	...	72,200	...	"	215	18	...	43	80	56 (3 remitted).
Chanda	49,000	"	47,262	...	125,800	...	"	...	...	...	82	6	...
Wardha	28,000	"	7,056	...	18,800	...	"	15	...	...	...	...	...
Total ...	235,000	...	200,641	...	336,400	...	...	370	29	...	258	88	191 (3 remitted).
NERBUDDA DIVISION.													
Hoshangabad	65,000	21-5-97	162,224	2,400	110,400	...	29-5-97	261	8	13	...	...	430
Narsinghpur	46,000	"	153,984	...	124,600	...	"	155	15	...	7	...	426
Nimar	18,000	"	77,171	...	33,400	...	"	5	4	2	...	3	...
Chhindwara	29,000	"	128,327	3,000	147,000	...	"	78	12	...	20	10	...
Betul	23,000	"	122,067	...	119,800	...	"	62	8	...	14	14	...
Total ...	181,000	...	643,773	5,400	535,200	...	...	561	47	15	41	27	856
CHHATTISGARH DIVISION.													
Raipur	89,000	4-12-96	146,228	5,555	162,000	...	29-5-97	292	36	...	106	30	164
Bilaspur	38,000	26-4-97	56,493	23,750	160,200	...	"	110	65	...	28	43	...
Sambalpur	56,000	4-12-96	25,778	...	32,400	...	"	4½	...	...	...	...	...
Total ...	183,000	...	228,559	29,305	354,600	...	...	406½	101	...	134	73½	164
Grand Total ...	827,000	...	1,654,818	34,705	1,784,400	...	...	1,967½	364½	17½	577	419½	1,657 (262 remitted).

Statement showing Number of Persons employed on Private Works.

Division.	Districts.	NUMBERS EMPLOYED ON					Remarks.
		Railway work.	Court of ward work.	Famine loans work.	Other private works.	Total.	
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
Jubbulpore	Jubbulpore ...	4,256	...	...	...	4,256	
	Saugor ...	8,781	19	4,097	...	12,897	
	Damoh ...	11,004	...	...	...	11,004	
	Mandla ...	...	...	2,104	1,118	3,222	
	Seoni ...	...	...	2,612	...	2,612	
Nagpur	Nagpur ...	...	...	5,650	...	5,650	
	Bhandara ...	...	...	11,000	...	11,000	
	Balaghat ...	...	...	9,264	...	9,264	
	Chanda ...	...	...	30,362	...	30,362	
	Wardha ...	...	...	...	...	...
Nerbudda	Hoshangabad ...	...	...	...	...	...
	Narsinghpur ...	...	...	...	...	...
	Nimar ...	...	...	...	...	...
	Chindwara ...	...	...	2,734	...	2,734	
	Betnl ...	...	...	1,756	...	1,756	
Chhattisgarh	Raipur ...	1,311	..	33,865	...	35,176	
	Bilaspur ...	...	3,622	38,373	16,947	58,942	
	Sambalpur ...	...	...	...	...	...
	TOTAL ...	25,352	3,641	141,817	18,065	188,875	

Summary to accompany Monthly Famine Statements A and B for the districts of the Central Provinces for the Month of May 1897.

JUBBULPORE DIVISION.

1. *Private Relief*.—The chief feature of the month has been the preparations made to ensure the proper distribution of the large sums provided by the Famine Charitable Relief Fund for the fourth object held in view—the supplying of seed-grain and cattle to needy cultivators. Small sums of money have been devoted to the supply of clothing and extra diet as also the support of orphan children; but the large bulk of the allotments has been devoted to the above—the main object. It has been generally concluded that the allotments have not been large enough; but it is also fully admitted that great and substantial benefit will have been conferred on the poorer classes. They have every reason to be peculiarly grateful to those generous persons who have contributed to the Famine Fund. The wants of the Indian famine-stricken cultivators are simply

immense, the catchment area, so to speak, is so large and extended that even the magnificent contribution of over half a million pounds sterling cannot satisfy all wants. Adding on the amounts locally subscribed—and they are *very* trifling—the following are the sums which have been placed at the disposal of the various districts :—

	Rs.
Jubbulpore	291,119
Saugor	200,940
Damoh	345,177
Seoni	37,389
Mandla	103,350
TOTAL ...	977,975

The districts have had then close on ten lakhs handed over to them for distribution—a large sum. It is beyond all doubt that the spreading of such a large amount over the distressed area must do an immense, an incalculable, amount of good. We should be grateful we have had such a large sum to dispose of, thankful in fact that we have received as much as we have.

The district reports show, in fair detail, the methods adopted for the distribution. Lists of deserving tenants have been carefully prepared and prudent steps have been taken to ensure honest payment to those needy persons who are to benefit. Payments had commenced towards the close of the month under report, and I trust that as I write (the 12th June) the whole amount has been transferred to the pockets of the people.

The sums reserved for this fourth object in the various districts were as follows :—

	Rs.
Jubbulpore	246,000
Saugor	180,000
Damoh	300,000
Seoni	23,000
Mandla	100,000
TOTAL ...	849,000

The Damoh figure is not quite accurate. The sum given represents the district requirements, but it is not certain what exact amount has been, or will be, appropriated to this fourth object. As I have already said distribution began towards the close of May, and it has, I hope, been by now completely carried out. It may be noted that in Mandla a sum of Rs. 30,000 (included in the one lakh) has been reserved for the next rabi when it is feared tenants may have no grain-seed to sow in their fields.

2. *Government poor-houses.*—The following table will show the number of poor-houses in the division and the number of inmates on the last Saturday of March, April, and May respectively :—

District.	No. of poor-houses.			No. of inmates.		
	March.	April.	May.	March.	April.	May.
Jubbulpore	5	5	5	2,241	2,715	2,408
Saugor	5	5	5	3,373	3,381	4,598
Damoh	4	4	4	1,146	1,104	1,236
Mandla	2	2	2	499	551	470
Seoni	2	2	2	558	430	465
TOTAL ...	18	18	18	7,817	8,181	9,177

These figures show a steady increase. In Jubbulpore itself there has been a decrease of some 300 paupers and this has been brought about by drafting inmates on to relief-works as they became fit for labour. The final resultant increase is altogether due to Saugor where there has been a rise of over 1,200. The Deputy Commissioner professes himself unable to explain the increase satisfactorily, but he is inclined to think that poor-house Superintendents do not discharge paupers as soon as they become fit for work. He promises to give the matter continued attention.

3. *Village Relief*.—In Saugor and Damoh there were no relief centres open. The comparative figures for the remaining three districts I now append :—

District.	NOT CENTRES.		RELIEVED GRATUITOUSLY.		ON WORK		TOTAL.	
	April.	May.	April.	May.	April.	May.	April.	May.
Jubbulpore	17	11	2,065	1,201	10,548	2,740	12,613	3,941
Mandla	17	17	830	919	3,111	3,562	3,941	4,481
Seoni	8	5	143	64	561	354	704	418
Total	42	33	3,038	2,184	14,220	6,656	17,258	8,840.

Nine of these centres have been closed, six in Jubbulpore and three in Seoni, as a result the total number of persons relieved has fallen from 17,258 to 8,840. This is satisfactory for, from a working point of view, these centres have not proved a success. In Jubbulpore a further decrease will take place very shortly. Mandla shows an increase—an increase partly due to efforts to finish up work before the rains break and partly to the end of the mohwa season.

(b) *Relief of persons in their homes*.—The numbers thus relieved stand thus :—

Jubbulpore	17,064	18,418	+ 1,354
Saugor	9,485	11,174	+ 1,689
Damoh	7,040	10,863	+ 3,823
Seoni	1,500	1,972	+ 472
Mandla	1,011	1,880	+ 869
Total	36,100	44,307	+ 8,207

The figures go on increasing and that too in every single district. The total increase comes up to 8,207 and the Damoh district has made the largest contribution to the increase. The figures there have ran up by not far off 4,000. The Deputy Commissioner attributes the increase to the great prevalence of guinea worm and a foot disease known as chakawa and partly to the demoralization of the people, who, finding that the State will support their dependants, refused to do so themselves. None of the reasons given can be called thoroughly satisfactory, and I shall request him to pay continued and considerable attention to this matter.

The Deputy Commissioner of Jubbulpore writes that village relief is in full operation, but has to admit that he expected decrease where he now actually finds increase. He has, he adds, "again issued orders that the village lists are to be carefully scrutinised and the whole system checked."

In Saugor the Deputy Commissioner has little doubt that many more persons are being gratuitously relieved than are really entitled to gratuitous relief. He attributes this fact to the unpopularity of the Public Works Department relief works. On these works, however, he admits considerable improvement has taken place, and he looks for a substantial diminution in the number gratuitously relieved at no distant date.

In Mandla the increase is attributed to :

- (1) the return of wanderers to their homes from the Jubbulpore District ;
- (2) the disappearance of forest produce, such as roots and green articles of the vegetable description.

The Deputy Commissioner anticipates still higher figures as distress is on the increase in the district. The number relieved gratuitously is not perhaps excessive for the district, but the Deputy Commissioner seems to forget that forest produce fit for food will rapidly appear with the rains.

The Seoni increase (472) is not perhaps excessive.

The main conclusion as regards this system of relief to be drawn is this. As a system it is liable to very great abuse, while the facilities for abuse are ample. The chances of escaping detection are very great, and it follows that it is a method of relief that should be worked with the most rigid precision, with the most continued and constant supervision. The rainy season. it should be added, must perforce render strict supervision quite impossible save in places on the main arteries of communication, and altogether as a system it should be worked with extreme caution, with great strictness, actual harshness alone being avoided. Where actual debility, old age, or the custom of the country do not forbid a recourse to relief works, all persons should be compelled to go on to such works.

4.—General character of relief work—

(a) *Public Works Department relief works.*—The number of persons on these works at the end of April and May is shown below :—

District.	WORKERS.		DEPENDANTS.		TOTAL.		
	April.	May.	April.	May.	April.	May.	+ or —
Jubbulpore	39,070	36,033	7,771	7,042	46,841	43,075	— 3,766
Saugor	15,168	25,896	1,116	2,750	16,284	28,646	+ 12,362
Damoh	14,279	21,048	2,065	2,917	16,344	23,965	+ 7,621
Mandla	18,131	18,178	4,931	4,800	23,062	22,978	— 84
Seoni	9,015	11,024	2,069	1,756	11,084	12,780	+ 1,096
TOTAL	95,663	112,179	17,952	19,265	113,615	131,444	+ 17,829

Jubbulpore still continues to show a fall. In April the numbers decreased by nearly two thousand. In May the decrease is not very far off four thousand. This is nearly entirely due to the introduction of piece-work.

Saugor and Damoh show very marked increases. The Saugor figures present some difficulty. In April they suddenly fell by nearly 16,000. In May they have again risen by 12,362. The great decrease in April was ascribed by the Deputy Commissioner to three causes—

- (a) incorrect, that is to say dishonest, figures in March,
- (b) the unpopularity of the Public Works Department works due to malpractices and deferred pay,
- (c) an exodus caused by mohwa picking.

The last cause has ceased to act. There is reason to believe that the steps taken by the District and Public Works Department authorities have removed the blemish referred to in (a). It is hoped by the Deputy Commissioner that the unpopularity referred to in (b) is disappearing. It may be added that a rise in the number of workers was to be expected as we more nearly approached the rains.

The rise in Damoh may be ascribed to natural causes. The mohwa crop is over and we are now in the very hardest time of the year. The rabi stocks were very low, and what little there was will be required for seed time if it can be kept back. As a consequence the distressed tracts must furnish a larger number of relief workers. In Mandla the figures have practically remained unchanged, while in Seoni, in spite of the introduction of the piece-work system on two works, the figures have gone up. The Deputy Commissioner's remarks on these figures are not quite as lucid and explanatory as they might have been.

The number of dependants on the Mandla relief-works is noticeable if the figures of the various districts be subjected to comparison. Those of Mandla appear to be peculiarly high. The number and distribution of charges remained unchanged in Damoh, Mandla, and Seoni. In Saugor two new charges were established. In Jubbulpore the introduction of piece-work effected the change. The four works on the two roads selected had a total number of 12,248 at work in the first week in May. The numbers had fallen to 2,525 by the 29th of the month. The Deputy Commissioner is in no way opposed to the new system; he advocates only its introduction cautiously until at least the rains break. In this I agree with him.

(b) *Local relief-works under District Officers.*—The numbers on these works, excluding dependants, at the close of the two months now under comparison, are as overleaf.

I must point out here, to avoid possible further reference, that the figures given by the late Mr. Priest in the last monthly report were inaccurate in the case of Saugor and Seoni. Again, the figures given by the Deputy Commissioner of Seoni in the body of his report are clearly incorrect and do not even agree with the figures given in his own printed statement which he has submitted.

Two districts alone show any noticeable increase, Jubbulpore and Damoh. In Jubbulpore there has been a very considerable change in these works. All are, with two exceptions, new works and in new localities. This renders any rigid comparison of numbers unnecessary. In Damoh the Deputy Commissioner gives the same reasons for the higher figure as he did in accounting for a similar rise on the Public Works Department works. The mohwa crop is over, and the people are passing through the hardest time of the year.

There must be a tendency to rise in nearly every district, for these works are in their nature such as every effort must be made to have them completed before the rains set in.

In Jubbulpore, as I have already stated, the month's works are nearly all fresh ones.

In Saugor one new work was started.

In Damoh one is about to be started.

District.	April.	May.	+ or —
Jubbulpore	14,971	16,607	+ 1,636
Saugor	13,240	13,617	+ 377
Damoh	10,649	15,012	+ 4,363
Mandla	1,779	2,258	+ 479
Seoni	1,538	987	—551
TOTAL	42,177	48,481	+ 6,304

FAMINE LOANS.

The Deputy Commissioner of Jubbulpore does not give his monthly expenditure under this head. He has simply given his total expenditure up to the end of May. It comes to Rs. 95,039. A similar remark applies to Damoh. There the total expenditure amounts to Rs. 29,250.

In Saugor, Mandla, and Seoni the expenditure for the month now under discussion is given. The figures are Rs. 12,855, Rs. 5,025 and Rs. 7,133 respectively.

The relief given on the works carried out by such loans has been considerable. They are carried out in localities closer to the homes of those who come to work on them than the ordinary relief works, and I gather that a reasonable tale of work is exacted for the wage given.

The persons who have accepted the loans have their own interests at stake, and they look after these works and see that proper and honest work is done. The tendency, however, must be to shut out the weakly persons. That is the drawback to the system.

5. *Physical condition of the people.*—The various opinions may be summarised by stating that the physical condition of the people on the relief works has improved.

The Deputy Commissioner of Jubbulpore writes—

“This continues to be good, and as relief is now so widely distributed, very few cases of emaciation are to be met with outside the poor-houses.”

The Deputy Commissioner of Saugor—

“There has been no change of any considerable importance in the physical condition of the people since last month, and it seems unnecessary for me to repeat what I have said in previous reports.”

The Deputy Commissioner, Damoh, writes—

“During the month I made some personal inspections of the relief works and poor-houses, and from what I have seen I can say that the condition of the people on works, in the poor-houses, and generally, has materially improved.”

The Deputy Commissioner, Mandla, remarks—

“The condition of the inmates of the poor-houses is, speaking generally, fair, although no further improvement seems to have taken place during the past month in spite of a third light meal being allowed to them.”

“The physique of those relieved at relief centres has very greatly improved.”

“The health of those working on Public Works Department relief works is very fair, and the percentage of emaciated cases may not exceed 10.”

“The condition of the general population in the affected tract is not bad, cases of emaciation not at all frequent, and there can be no manner of doubt that the general condition since the beginning of relief works has much improved.”

The Deputy Commissioner of Damoh writes—

“Outside of relief centres and poor-houses but few cases of emaciation are to be seen.”

The condition of those in the poor-houses shows a decided improvement.

The condition of those on relief works is good. The extension of the village relief system has noticeably improved the condition of the infirm and old.

6. *Mortality—Deaths from starvation.*—The monthly reports of the District officers deal again with the figures of March and April and do not touch on May save in the case of Seoni, where the death-rate of May is merely given at 51. These figures have already been dealt with by the late Mr. Priest on page 6 of the April monthly report, and it is hardly necessary for me to go again over the same ground. I must, however, point out that the present district reports work out very different per millage figures, and from the same identical figures. For these variations I am unable to account, and there remains no time for reference. I

append a table which shows these differences. The figures in italics are taken from Mr. Priest's table on page 6 of his last report. Those in romans are those now received by me from the districts :—

District.	NO. OF DEATHS.		PER THOUSAND.				May.
	March.	April.	<i>Exclusive of towns.</i>		<i>Inclusive of towns.</i>		
			March.	April.	March.	April.	
Jubbulpore	<i>5,287</i>	<i>4,014</i>	<i>81·82</i>	<i>62·8</i>	<i>88·18</i>	<i>65·</i>	...
	5,287	4,014	69·6	52·8	91·2	63·6	...
Saugor	<i>2,595</i>	<i>3,047</i>	<i>54·</i>	...	<i>53·</i>	<i>61·</i>	...
	2,595	3,047	53·	60·	52·62	62·	...
Damoh	<i>1,871</i>	<i>1,592</i>	...	...	<i>69·</i>	<i>58·</i>	...
	...	...	Not given		...	...	...
Mandla	<i>2,277</i>	<i>1,430</i>	..	...	<i>74·</i>	<i>50·</i>	...
	2,277	1,430	Not given		80·5	50·8	...
Seoni	<i>1,647</i>	<i>1,571</i>	...	...	<i>52·</i>	<i>50·</i>	...
	Not given	...	...	...	...	53·	51·

With varying per millage, calculated on identical figures, it is hard to say where the error lies without a reference being made in each case.

Cholera accounted for 1,390 deaths in the month of April. I fear the cholera returns for the month of May will be much higher. In Damoh alone I can at present state that the cholera figure was as high as 421.

Deaths due to—

- (a) Starvation.
- (b) Effects of privation.

Here again Mr. Priest reviewed the figures of March and April on page 7 of the April monthly report. In the May District Reports the Deputy Commissioner of Jubbulpore has confined himself to a comparison of the same two months, while the Deputy Commissioners of three districts, Saugor, Mandla, and Seoni, had given figures for the month of May. Damoh deals with no figures in the monthly criticism. The figures are alleged to be utterly untrustworthy by the Deputy Commissioner. I have to add that here again we find utterly irreconcilable figures, if those given in Mr. Priest's table are compared with those given now by the Deputy Commissioners. Under these circumstances, it becomes exceedingly difficult to deal with the figures at all, or to analyse them with any such degree of accuracy as to render an analysis of any practical value whatever.

I have endeavoured to combine the resultant figures, so far as it is possible, in a single statement. This I now append, adding that here again I give Mr. Priest's figures in italics as a distinctive mark :—

District.	STARVATION.			PRIVATION.		
	March.	April.	May.	March.	April.	May.
Jubbulpore	152	49	...	1,237	993	...
	152	49	...	814	547	...
Saugor	9	3	...	255	111	...
	...	9	3	255	141	158
Damoh	14	54	...	167	244	...
	Not given		Not given			
Mandla	2	1	...	39	7	...
	...	1	1	...	7	3
Seoni	17	8	...	131	199	...
	...	...	...	...	186	97

If the District Officer's present figures be taken as accurate, improvement would seem to have taken place, but I confess I do not like to argue on such figures.

From Damoh I have, as already pointed out, got no figures which the Deputy Commissioner will accept as trustworthy. I have, however, just received the May returns as furnished by the Civil Surgeon, and a comparison can be made between the months of April and May :—

—	April.	May.
Total deaths	1,593	1,407
Cholera	323	421
Small-pox	32	4
Poor-houses	244	158
Deaths ascribed not to disease but to actual	In towns or villages. 141	In towns or villages. 120
Want of food for several days before death	Wanderers. 55	Wanderers. 5

From the words of the heading used by the Civil Surgeon I assume we may, I think, conclude that 125 persons died of practical starvation.

I note that out of the figure 120 (towns and villages) 28 deaths were reported from one Circle, Mariadoh, and 85 from another, Gaisabad.

The Civil Surgeon writes on this matter as follows :—

"The death-rate from starvation is very high and is localised to places where there are large relief works."

"There were 28 deaths from Mariadoh. There is a large relief camp within two miles of the place. Then again there are 85 deaths reported from this cause from Gaisabad. These deaths according to the return occurred on the relief works. This is a most disgraceful state of affairs."

I am given to understand that the workers on these relief works get paid once in three or four days, and it is not surprising that those in a debilitated state succumb when they have got to wait days for a meal.

The condemnation is a severe one and I am communicating with the Deputy Commissioner by wire.

7. *Food stocks.*—In Jubbulpore, Saugor, and Seoni food stocks are said to be sufficient. Mandla presented considerable difficulty in this matter and special steps had to be taken to provide grain.

Raja Gokuldass has thrown down a large supply of grain along the Jubbulpore-Mandla Road, and as much as Rs. 66,000 worth of grain has been quite recently exported from Jubbulpore for the northern portion of the district. I have quite recently visited Mandla myself, and the Deputy Commissioner has assured me that his stocks are now ample.

The Deputy Commissioner of Damoh now writes that, though stocks are sufficient for the present, it is feared that a sufficient supply of food grain may not be available during the rains. Fortunately, however, the line of rail now runs up to Damoh and there should be no difficulty in importing grain. I shall now request the Deputy Commissioner to keep this matter constantly in view to see that supplies are got in by the local traders and to communicate with me at once should difficulty arise.

I now give a statement showing the retail prices of staple food grains during the months of April and May:—

District.	WHEAT.		GRAIN.		COMMON RICE.	
	24th April.	29th May.	24th April.	29th May.	24th April.	29th May.
Jubbulpore	10	10½	11	10½	9	8
Saugor	8½	8½	9	8½	6½	6½
Damoh	8	8	9½	9	7½	6½
Mandla	9½	8	10	8½	8½	7
Seoni	10½	10½	9	...	9	8½

Prices (except wheat) have risen all through the division. This was, I think, to be expected. The pressure on food stocks in a year like the present, with distress so very widespread and general, must be immense. The future is, moreover, unknown, and those who hold grain are forced, and very rightly forced, to act with prudence and caution. A succession of bad seasons has now made them timorous in addition to cautious. Altogether I do not see much chance of any marked fall in prices until the character of the approaching monsoon has become clearly known. Until future prospects become clearer a still further upward tendency in prices may, in my opinion, declare itself.

8. *Import and Export of Food Grains.*—The following table gives the figures for the past three months:—

District.	IMPORTS.			EXPORTS.		
	March.	April.	May.	March.	April.	May.
Jubbulpore	56,855	47,446	100,777	85,961	71,978	30,808
Saugor	4,237	26,012	47,279	5,878	595	950
Damoh ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mandla	3,000	5,000	50,000	<i>Nil.</i>	<i>Nil.</i>	<i>Nil.</i>
Seoni	8,744	16,124	10,280	4,056	6,126	3,120

Jubbulpore has been importing heavily, but then the local traders have been busily engaged exporting to the other districts, more notably Mandla. Mandla has been in fact entirely depending on Jubbulpore for her supplies.

In the other districts exports have fallen practically to nothing, and they are all importing. I have received no proper figures from Damoh, but here again it is also a case of import. Nothing to speak of is being exported.

9. *General Condition and Prospects of the Affected Areas.*—None of the district officers will commit themselves to any definite opinion on this matter. It is, of course, a question into which a great deal of uncertainty enters.

Generally speaking, what they say, comes to this. Throughout the affected areas famine relief has now been thoroughly organised, and, as a result, the general condition of the people has improved. Actual starvation has been, save in exceptional cases, warded off, and if people begin to suffer, there are relief works on to which they can go and obtain food. The village system of relief, they would add, has now been put into working order and that has also ameliorated the condition of the people. In addition some five lakhs has been advanced as takavi to agriculturists, a sum of Rs. 849,000 has been distributed as a free gift to the more needy of the impoverished tenants for seed-grain and plough cattle. To sum up, everything that could be done in the way of giving assistance has been done, and, in so far, prospects are hopeful *provided* we get fair and seasonable rains. Given a good rainy season, and the prospects are good. It all then depends on the rains. Nothing more can be said on the matter at present. All that human aid can do has been done and "*permittite divis cætera*" now explains the position.

The Deputy Commissioner of Jubbulpore sums up his opinion in the following words :—

"These 'general conditions' are, I consider, as favourable as could be expected. A large amount of famine loans has been given out during the month, and a good deal of employment has thus been found for labourers in embanking fields. The regular relief works have now been established long enough for most of the persons on relief to have made their circumstances fairly comfortable. In the large long-established works piece-work is being introduced, as the people can afford to take a holiday should they prefer to do so. But as has been previously mentioned, the introduction of the system is being deferred in places where relief has not yet been so ample as on the older works. In my opinion the general condition of the people will be sufficiently good to enable us to apply piece-work almost everywhere, once the rains set in."

"The poorer cultivators have been supplied with money from the charitable fund to buy seed-grain and bullocks, and they are now busy making their purchases. In addition takavi is being widely distributed, so that when the sowing season commences, cultivators should be very generally in a position to return to their villages and sow their crops."

The Deputy Commissioner, Saugor, writes as follows :—

"As to the general condition of the affected area I have little that is new to say. In most parts of the districts the land is now being busily prepared for the kharif sowings, but in the Khurai Tahsil the preparations are in rather a backward state. The general cry there is that *takavi* is badly wanted : and yet most of the persons who join in the cry have not even applied for it. The want of self-reliance among the cultivators of the district generally is most marked, but it is particularly marked in the Khurai Tahsil. It is, however, admitted on all hands that the grants from the charitable fund to destitute cultivators will be a great boon. On the whole I have hopes that most of the cultivated area will be sown this year."

The conclusions of the Deputy Commissioner of Damoh run thus :—

"There has been no material change in the general condition and prospects of the affected area. The outturn of the rabi crops was poor. The mohwa crop was a fairly good one. The harvesting season brought in poor wages. Whatever little stocks the majority of people had laid by, must by this time have been consumed. There is, therefore, no prospect of any improvement in the condition of the affected area. The takavi loans and the charitable grants will go some way to improve the prospects, but it is a question of time and much depends on the character of the season and the amount of land which the cultivators will be able to put under cultivation."

The Deputy Commissioner of Mandla writes :—

"The general condition cannot be said to be very bad yet. Probably it will go worse during the months of July and August."

This is quite possible in a wild sparsely cultivated country like Mandla. The people have absolutely nothing just at present to fall back upon. They are quite

at the end of their resources. Forest produce, as it springs up with the rains, will no doubt assist them but it cannot do *very* much. I may add that I passed through a large Public Works Department relief came quite recently on my way to Mandla. The workers appeared to me to be in a very fair condition indeed.

The Deputy Commissioner of Seoni is of opinion that :—

“It is impossible to offer any opinion yet. A fair area of land has been prepared for kharif and rabi sowings, but I fear the shortness of seed-grain will gravely (query ‘greatly’), restrict the area sown in kharif and rice land.”

I am unable to give at the present moment the exact disbursements under the Agriculturists Loans Act, but, as all the District Officers clamoured for more than they received, it may fairly be assumed that all the allotments have been swallowed up. These allotments, amounting in all to five lakhs, were :—

						Rs.
Jubbulpore	...	...	...	...	...	150,000
Saugor	...	...	...	...	...	50,000
Damoh	...	...	...	...	...	200,000
Mandla	...	...	...	...	...	60,000
Seoni	...	...	...	...	...	30,000

It is beyond all doubt that very much more could have with advantage been distributed, even in spite of the large sums disbursed by the Charitable Famine Relief Fund. Still, there must be a limit even to State aid, and the State has, in the present case, certainly been generous.

There has been a rise in the crime returns all over the division, but, considering the hard times the people are passing through, the rise is very slight indeed. Serious crimes against property, such as robbery and dakaiti, do not show any marked increase, as one might have expected. Cattle theft has increased and amongst the Gonds the animals are stolen merely to be killed and eaten.

10. *Changes in the Rate of Wages.*—In Jubbulpore and Saugor there has been no change. In the Damoh district the famine wage had to be changed towards the end of the month. The price of the staple food grains for the purposes of the wage was changed from ten to nine seers for the rupee. In Mandla the price of common rice rose to seven seers and the wages rate had in consequence to be raised also. In Seoni the piece-work rate on the great northern road had to be raised to Rs. 5 per 100 cubic feet. That rate was Rs. 3-8 on the Seoni-Balaghat Road ; but, as the Deputy Commissioner points out, the *gittee* on the former road is harder than that on the latter.

11. *Railway Work.*—The figures showing the numbers employed on the Saugor-Katni extension of the Indian Midland Railway during the months of March, April, and May, are as follows :—

District.	27th March.	24th April.	29th May.
Jubbulpore	3,935	3,921	4,256
Saugor	7,238	7,561	8,781
Damoh	12,214	13,090	11,004
	23,387	24,572	24,041

The fall in Damoh is due to the fact that the work now remaining to be done requires more or less skilled labour. The decrease here, moreover, will account to some extent for the increase in numbers on the relief works. I fancy that as the rains set in a good many of these railway labourers will find their way on to the district relief works.

12. *General Remarks for the division.*—The statement now given will show the aggregate numbers in receipt of Government relief at the end of April and May respectively.

Nature of relief.	24th April.	29th May.
	Nos. relieved.	Nos. relieved.
A. WORKS.		
1. Public Works Department	95,663	112,179
2. Under Civil Officers	56,497	55,137
Total	152,160	167,316
B. GRATUITOUS RELIEF.		
1. In Poor-houses	8,181	9,277
2. Other gratuitous relief, including that of dependants on works	60,724	62,356
	68,905	71,633
	221,065	238,949

There has thus been an increase of 15,156 on the works and of 2,728 in the case of those receiving gratuitous relief. These figures give percentages of rise approximating closely to ten and four respectively. If we consider that the gathering of the mohwa has ended and that we were, during the month of May, the last month before the rains, in perhaps one of the worst months that has to be passed through, the increase in numbers given above does not appear to be excessive.

(b) Measures taken to organize and complete measures of relief.

A full programme for monsoon relief has been drawn up for each district under the supervision of the late Mr. Priest. I have quite recently asked the District Officers whether they considered any changes or additions necessary. They have all replied in the negative. The programme then in each case may be accepted as complete, and Mr. Priest considered each one very carefully.

Care has been taken to improve the poor-houses in the division so as to render them habitable without discomfort during the rains. Office buildings, storage huts and workers' huts have been run up or improved during the month, and it is hoped that all will be ready before the monsoon bursts. Special measures have been taken to ensure a proper food supply for the Mandla district during the rainy season, and more especially for the northern portion of the district.

(c) Prospects of the division as regards the scarcity.

Every precaution that seems possible has been taken, and now all depends upon the character of the approaching rains. Looking to all pecuniary assistance given, if these rains are fairly plentiful and good, prospects are decidedly favourable. More cannot be said. As regards general health, it is undoubted that a great deal of cholera is about. It is hard to say what its course will be. The rains when they come will clear out the dirty places, and fill up with clean water those questionable places where the people *will* drink from in spite of all warning.

It is to be hoped that cholera may disappear, or at any rate greatly decrease, with the appearance of the rains, and if so, our chief enemy in the way of disease will have withdrawn.

The rainy season is, however, an unhealthy one in the case of all exposed to out-door work. Many of those on the works, although improved in health, are still pulled down and below par. In their case I fear we must look for a death-rate well above the normal.

EDGAR GALBRAITH,
Officiating Commissioner.

NAGPUR DIVISION.

1. *Private relief, Balaghat.*—Rs. 140-6-6, Rs. 57 and Rs. 137 were collected respectively for the three poor-houses of Balaghat, Bihar and Katangi, Rs. 309-9-6 were spent. The Revd. J. Lampard continues to maintain 20 or 30 orphans, and gives employment to about 200 men on the tanks in his village. A few malguzars are constructing tanks at their own expense. A substantial allotment from the charitable fund must have been received during the month, but no reference to this is made in the district report.

Bhandara.—The distribution of relief from charitable funds continues under the direction of the District Committee. Towards the close of the month a sum of Rs. 75,000 was allotted for the provision of seed-grain and bullocks for impoverished cultivators, and this sum has been distributed over the 12 circles into which the district is now divided for the purpose. The actual distribution to tenants is being made by the Deputy Commissioner, his three Assistants, the Settlement Officer, and two of his Assistants, the three Tahsildars, the Superintendent of Land Records, and the Munsiff of Bhandara. Agricultural loans to the extent of Rs. 25,000 are being made to tenants simultaneously with the distribution of the Charitable Fund.

Chanda.—The amount received in private charity in connection with the Indian Charitable Relief Fund was Rs. 3,126. A sum of Rs. 15,000 has been allotted from that fund. It is expected that this allotment, supplemented by local subscriptions, will amount to Rs. 30,000, of which it is proposed to devote Rs. 25,000 to the relief of destitute tenants; seed-grain has already been distributed in various parts of the district.

Nagpur.—Two hundred and forty-six passes entitling 464 persons to receive free food have been issued, and 5,660 passes entitling 33,750 persons to buy grain at reduced rates. Also 1,638 passes for seed-grain and food-grain (podger), to destitute agriculturists. These passes affect 472 villages, and benefit the families of persons to the number of 6,676. Rs. 1,500 have been assigned for the purchase and distribution of cloths at poor-houses and relief camps, the cloth so distributed being manufactured by the poorest Koshtis. Mr. James, the Vice-Chairman of the Indian Charitable Relief Fund, inquired about these arrangements in the city, and seemed pleased with the action taken by the District Committee. Poor-houses and relief centres have been opened by private enterprise at Mowar, Warkher, and Sowargaon. Many malguzars are carrying on works at their own expense. At Umrer Rs. 187 were raised for the purpose of providing cooked food for destitute paupers. The expenditure during the month on this account was Rs. 130.

Wardha.—Rs. 3,000 were raised in the Wardha Tahsil, besides which grain was also collected at several places. With such help poor-houses have been started. Paupers are either given raw or cooked food once a day. The quantity of grain collected, and other details are not yet known; information has been called for.

2. *Poor-house relief, Balaghat.*—There are three Government poor-houses at Balaghat, Katangi, and Baihar. The number of men, women and children was 1,041 in April, and fell to 721 in May. The reason for this decrease is that many persons were drafted out to the works or relieved in their villages, as the latter system of relief was gradually extended. There were 193 deaths during the month. There was a distinct improvement in the appearance of the inmates during the last two months. Feeding the bad cases three times a day is said to have had a very beneficial effect.

Bhandara.—No new poor-houses have been started. There is some doubt as to the actual number of inmates at the beginning of the month, in regard to which enquiry is being made. But taking the number 904 as reported for 1st May, there were during the month 685 admissions, 632 discharges, 135 deaths, and one birth.

The Gondia poor-house is responsible for about half the admissions and more than half the deaths. The figures for this poor-house are :—

Admissions	...	...	...	...	...	329
Discharged	...	...	...	...	...	351
Deaths	...	...	...	...	...	70
Births	...	...	...	...	...	<i>Nil.</i>

The poor-house at Tumsar is said to be exceptionally well managed. I saw the one at Bhandara during the month, and was much pleased with the arrangements there. In accordance with the recent orders of the Chief Commissioner a number of able-bodied paupers employed as cooks, water-carriers, etc., have been discharged, and replaced by weaker inmates. The total expenditure on poor-houses during the month was Rs. 3,517.

Chanda.—No poor-house relief.

Nagpur.—The Kamptee poor-house was closed on the 10th instant and the inmates transferred to the Nagpur poor-house, as this arrangement is found to be more economical. No new poor-houses were opened during the month. In the poor-house at Bagadganj (Nagpur city) the number of inmates on 7th May was 688, and on 7th June 600. Still further reduction is expected. Some of those sent out to work return to the poor-house, preferring the penal ration and light work there. By a resolution of the Poor-house Committee, suggested by the Deputy Commissioner, it was decided that no one who had been sent from the poor-house to a relief work was to be re-admitted, unless in an emaciated condition.

Wardha.—No poor-houses.

3. *Village relief, Balaghat.*—There are four relief centres and only 48 persons gratuitously relieved, besides 10 persons on light labour. It is intended to abolish these places now. The number of persons relieved in their homes in the Balaghat and Baihar Tahsils was 5,748 in April, and 7,906 in May. No further increase is expected, in fact there has been a tendency to decrease lately, as some recipients of such relief become gradually fit for work, and are consequently struck off the lists; and some have been otherwise struck off after local enquiry by the Deputy Commissioner. Distribution is made by Revenue Inspectors to mukaddams, and where the latter are incapable, to the paupers themselves. But there was only one instance detected of a mukaddam not making the payments properly.

Bhandara.—3,019 persons were relieved. The lists, prepared under Article 34 of the Famine Code, are checked by all Inspecting Officers from time to time, and any that do not appear to be entitled to relief are struck off. The expenditure during the months was Rs. 4,275. Children kitchens continue to do good work at police station houses and out-posts. The total number fed on 29th May was 568, and on 24th April 441. These kitchens are most appreciated in Tumsar, Andhargaoon, and Mohari, where a number of the poorest *Koshtis* gladly send their children for their two meals daily. The expenditure under this head was Rs. 563 and on account of relief to starving wanderers, by the police, Rs. 48. The wanderers in each case being sent on to either relief works or poor-houses.

Chanda.—No village relief. Two hundred and thirty-seven persons were relieved by private charity on the last day of the week ending 29th May.

Nagpur.—This form of relief has not yet been introduced in this district. The Deputy Commissioner who has just returned from a short tour does not think that the classes under section 34 require any special measures of relief. There are many well-to-do persons throughout the district who still support them by private charity as in ordinary years. Only seven cases of real emaciation were observed by the Deputy Commissioner, due as much to sickness as to privation. The vital statistics are, it is said, very reassuring. Taking Khondali there were 127 deaths, out of a population of 14,576 souls, in 1896-7, against 358 in 1895-6, during the period January to May inclusive, while for the same period there was an increase in the number of births of 78. The number of deaths in May was only 28, *i.e.*, very slightly above the monthly average of the first four months, 25.

Wardha.—Nil.

4. Relief Works, Balaghat.

The large works are as follows :—

	April.	May.
Lalbara-Rampaili Road, one camp	8,369	6,560
Balaghat-Baihar Road, three camps	2,729	3,205
Lanji-Amgaon Road, two camps	19,539	14,766
Lanji-Balaghat Road, two camps ... ..	...	18,149
Wara-Seoni-Katangi Road, one camp ... ..	...	6,634
Bakal Tank	482	899
Goardhehi Tank	670	216
Bhilewani "	813	1,075
Taregaon "	591	...
Alna "	716	379
Ajgara " ... ..	...	295
Total	33,909	52,178

During the month one camp (the Lalbarra-Ranipaili Road), was transferred to the Bhandara district. Two camps were opened on the 1st and 2nd sections of the Balaghat-Baihar Road, two on the Lanji-Balaghat and one on the Wara-Seoni-Katangi Road. Cultivators are said to be already leaving the section of the Baihar Road above the ghats for work in their fields. The number of persons on malguzari tanks was 9,264 in May in 520 villages and 9,172 persons in April.

Bhandara.—During the month two new relief works were opened, one on the Bhandara Circuit Road on the 6th, and the other on the Gondia-Balaghat Road on the 14th May. The following statement shows the rapid weekly increase in numbers on relief works :—

	Workers.	Dependants.	Total.
1st May	13,568	2,444	16,012
8th "	17,829	2,555	20,384
15th "	22,435	3,396	25,831
22nd "	32,309	6,352	38,661*
29th "	31,088	6,269	37,357*

* Include figures for Lalbarra-Rampaili Road, transferred from Balaghat.

There was a slight fall in numbers at camp No. 1 on the Tumsar-Rampaili Road, Bhandara Circuit Road, the Amgaon-Satgaon, and Rampaili-Lalbarra Roads, said to be due partly to cholera, and partly to better supervision and greater strictness in enforcing full tasks, but otherwise there has been a steady increase in numbers throughout the month, which is attributed to want of employment elsewhere. Three hundred and sixty-five private works are reported to have been in progress during the month, employing on the last day 12,716 persons, at a cost of Rs. 35,000, mostly from famine loans, but except these works there was not much employment for agricultural labourers who naturally flocked in large numbers to the relief works. All relief works have been managed throughout the month in strict accordance with the Famine Code, but attempts are now being made to introduce the piece-work system, on some of them.

Chanda.—The only relief works taken in hand consisted of repairs to 287 tanks and three wells, started partly with the aid of famine loans under Land Improvement Loans Act, aggregating Rs. 15,970

Nagpur.—There were relief works at Borgaon, Madhoba, Phutala and Telinkheri near Nagpur, the work consisting of stone-breaking and road-making and of the former only on the Nagpur, Murer, Kalmeshwar, Katol, and Great Northern Roads. The number of workers and dependants on the 7th June was 15,631 and 2,676, and, on the 7th May, 8,133 and 2,104 respectively. The following statement compares the number of each class :—

—	Men.	Women.	Children.	Dependants.
On 7th May	2,401	4,430	1,302	2,104
„ 7th June	4,149	7,911	3,571	2,676

Each of the above charges includes two or more camps. The piece-work system has now been introduced on the Katol and Umrer Roads as well as in the Nagpur charge, and to this cause is attributed the increase in the number of camps. Rs. 1,003 were advanced to the Bhonsla estate for two tanks in the immediate neighbourhood of Nagpur. Rs. 1,000 were allotted by the District Council for the deepening of the Katol tank: the work is being pushed on rapidly, seven hundred persons from Katol and a dozen neighbouring villages finding relief there.

Wardha.—The Arvi-Ashti Road is the only relief work. The piece-work system has been introduced but is said to be difficult to work. Four contractors were brought from Nagpur but were unwilling to stay. Since the introduction of the system the numbers on the work have decreased 50 per cent. Only one malguzar has up to date applied for a famine loan. Efforts are being made to induce others, but there is much unwillingness owing to the close approach of the rains. The Deputy Commissioner was asked some time ago to try and distribute these loans in small sums to reliable tenants. I believe that some measure of success in this respect has been obtained.

5. *Physical condition of the people.*—*Balaghat.*—In receipt of gratuitous relief, improving fast. On works, healthy and generally strong. The Deputy Commissioner writes :—

“In distressed tracts, *i.e.*, the whole of the district, I can safely say now that practically all in need of gratuitous relief are getting it. I have seen large numbers of cultivators both in Baihar and in Balaghat, this last week, and although one occasionally sees a drawn and hungry look the greater part appear very fit.”

Bhandara.—The general condition of the people in the affected and distressed area is reported to be about normal. On relief works good, almost without exception; in receipt of village relief as good as can be expected; while as regards poor-houses occasional cases of emaciation are still met with, especially among the old and infirm.

Chanda.—The physical condition of the people is reported to be satisfactory.

Nagpur.—It is reported that, except a few infants and recent admissions, there were no cases of emaciation. At Umrer the people were more wretched in appearance, but there were very few who presented the painful characteristics of the really famine-stricken. Those recently inspected by the Deputy Commissioner on the Umrer and Katol Roads and on the Nagpur charges are reported to have “looked well and improving.” It is believed that in no part of the district does any pressing necessity exist. Labourers on village and famine loan works all looked well and strong.

Wardha.—The condition of the people is said to be fairly good on relief works; a few cases of heat apoplexy and sun-stroke occurred, but cases of emaciation were few.

6. *State of crime, Balaghat.*—Said to show improvement, but no figures have been furnished.

Bhandara.—A few cases of petty thefts in the northern part of the district, but no serious crime that could in any way be connected with the prevailing scarcity.

Chanda.—There was a slight increase of crime throughout the month, especially thefts of grain.

Nagpur.—As regards heinous crime, there were 6 robberies and 2 dacoities which occurred all over the districts. They were not of a very serious kind. Also 95 burglaries and 130 thefts of all kinds, against 39 and 50 respectively in 1896, an increase said to be mainly due to the high rates at which grain is sold.

Wardha.—No information on this point has been furnished.

7. *Deaths from starvation.*—*Balaghat.*—Three hundred and sixty-eight deaths from cholera are reported from the Balaghat and Baihar Tahsils alone, the number of deaths in poor-houses being 193, and the death-rate for the district 6·05. Fourteen deaths are reported from starvation, said to be unknown wanderers. Cholera has broken out all over the district. It has had no effect as yet in diminishing the numbers on the large works.

Bhandara.—Two thousand and ninety-seven deaths occurred during May against 2,091 in April 1896, and 304 deaths from cholera against 251 in 1896. The death-rate of April 1897, is equal to an annual rate of 33·84 per mille against 31·80 the mean for the same month in the preceding 10 years. The increased death-rate is ascribed to cholera. Deducting the deaths from this cause, the balance gives an annual rate of 28·95. Twelve deaths are reported from starvation; two more were accelerated by privation. Out of the 12 cases only 2 occurred in the villages in which the deceased resided, 7 were unknown wanderers. In 4 cases the age of the deceased is reported to have been 60 years or more.

There is, however, a discrepancy in the number of deaths from starvation which the Deputy Commissioner will be asked to explain.

Chanda.—There were 6 deaths from alleged starvation but the Deputy Commissioner reports that enquiry as to their real cause is being made.

Nagpur.—Forty-three deaths are reported from starvation, or an average of nearly 9 per week. Most of the deceased were unknown wanderers, found dead. The Deputy Commissioner remarks, "cases of persons who have died in their houses have been in very different parts of the districts, and are possibly due, as in some cases I have tested, to the sufferers being thrown out of employment through sickness. Cases of this kind are very difficult to guard against; mortality returns have not yet been received for the month of May."

I have discussed, with both the Deputy Commissioner and the District Superintendent of Police, this large number of deaths said to be due to starvation. The latter explains that they are chiefly travellers returning from the Berars to their homes, who refuse aid to help them on to a relief work or to the poor-house, and prefer to beg their way homewards. I have explained, however, that such persons should be made to accept necessary help to enable them to continue their journey, and the Deputy Commissioner has called for weekly returns from the Police showing the number of persons so relieved in future.

Wardha.—Nine deaths are reported from starvation. There were none during the last week of the month. The Deputy Commissioner has hopes that this satisfactory state of things will continue owing to the organization of private charity.

8. *Changes in Rates.*—*Balaghat.*—Nil.

Bhandara.—During the month the payment of wages at the 8-seer rate on four out of the seven camps was sanctioned. The others are paid at the 9-seer rate.

Chanda.—No information has been given under this head.

Nagpur.—No change.

Wardha.—No information has been given on this point.

9. *Food-stocks—Balaghat*.—Transport is said to be a greater difficulty than ever. There are no food stocks in the district, which the Deputy Commissioner reports is living from hand to mouth on what it can import. A large amount of grain has been imported as far as Balaghat itself, but the difficulty is to get it up the ghats and distribute it over the uplands.

Nagpur.—Local bazaars are not well supplied but there is plenty of food in the district. Burma rice is sold everywhere, and is now dearer than ordinary rice. Rangoon jauari does not succeed on account of its bitter taste.

Chanda.—Food-stock reported to be adequate.

Bhandara.—Food supply fairly sufficient, but on two relief works, removed from large markets, contracts for the supply of grain have had to be given. It is considered probable that similar contracts will have to be given on other relief works during the rains. Large quantities of Burma rice are being imported.

Wardha.—The food-stock is reported to be sufficient, but those who have any stocks are reserving them for the rains, and thus prices are steadily rising and causing considerable hardship to the poor.

10. *Imports and Exports—Balaghat*.—*Vide* remarks *supra* under “9” exports are practically *nil*.

Bhandara.—130,692 maunds of food-grains were imported into the district by rail, while 10,158 maunds were exported, thus leaving a balance of 120,534 maunds. There seems, therefore, no reason to fear that food-stocks will ever be insufficient. The Deputy Commissioner, however, observes that much of the grain shown as imported, especially at Tumsar and Gondia actually finds its way to Balaghat.

Chanda.—The imports and exports were 900 and 11,700 respectively, against 800 and 5,000 maunds in the previous month.

Nagpur.—18,596 and 2,551 maunds of food-grains and pulses were respectively imported and exported from Nagpur by road. The statistics for other tahsils are as follows :—

	Imports. Maunds.	Exports. Maunds.
Ramtek	9,175	6,175
Katol... ..	3,000	<i>Nil</i>
Umrer	8,840	4,460

The imports and exports by rail were 138,131 and 9,430 maunds respectively, against 59,895 and 22,199 maunds in the previous month.

Wardha.—The imports were 13,274 maunds and exports 2,237 maunds.

11. *General Condition and Prospects*.—As regards Balaghat, the Deputy Commissioner thinks the worst stage has been reached, but that it will be some time before any marked improvement becomes apparent. Cultivators will go back to their fields, but want of sufficient seed-grain will prevent them sowing more land than they can manage themselves. Farm labourers will be required in comparatively few instances. The Settlement Officer anticipates that two-thirds the normal area will be sown, and that very thinly. In Bhandara there is now practically no distress except such as individuals may bring on themselves.

Village relief has been much extended, and money from charitable funds given to those not entitled to Government help. There are relief works for all who are willing to work, and poor-houses for those who are temporarily unable to do so.

Prospects depend, as in other districts, on a timely and well-distributed monsoon, and the provision of the necessary seed-grain. A lakh of rupees (Rs. 75,000 from charitable funds and Rs. 25,000 as agriculturists loans) are now being distributed in this district. But it is not anticipated that the normal area will be brought under cultivation ; still it is hoped that not more than 25 per cent. will remain uncultivated. Agricultural operations, such as manuring and hot weather ploughing, have been and are still being carried on in the Nagpur district, and if the monsoon is favourable, there is reason to believe that, even in the most distressed parts, there will be no decline in the area under cultivation, a remark which may be held to apply in a modified degree to the Chanda and Wardha districts also.

12. *General Remarks for the Division.*

(a) *Situation in regard to Famine.*—In all districts except Wardha the situation remains much the same. Though the numbers on receipt of relief have increased, there has been no proportionate increase in distress. On the contrary, the opening of relief camps, new relief works, the extension of the village relief system, combined with the operations of the charitable committees have afforded help to all those who otherwise, from lack of employment and high prices, would have been reduced to distress. Indeed, such distress as there is cannot be said to have declared itself generally till after the gathering of the mohwa crop. Had that crop been normal, or even the mango crop a good one, instead of a complete failure, any large measures of relief would have been unnecessary except as regards immigrants from other districts, and the poorer classes of large towns ; the weaver class specially.

In Wardha the distress has increased in the Hinganghat Tahsil especially ; grain stocks though fairly plentiful are confined to a wealthy few, who have stopped selling grain ; prices, therefore, are steadily rising and severely straining the resources of the poor, large numbers of whom are emigrating to large villages and towns. Rents are largely in arrears, and agricultural loans are being applied for on a large scale.

(b) *Measures taken to Organise and Complete Measures of Relief.*—These are complete and may be briefly described as consisting of several new relief camps gratuitous relief, agricultural loans ; the entertainment of additional Revenue Inspectors for the supervision of private works of improvement and for the distribution of gratuitous village relief ; the establishment of children's kitchens at Police station houses and outposts ; the issue of passes entitling the holders to free food, to buy grain at reduced rates ; also of passes for seed-grain and "podga" to destitute agriculturists ; the opening of combined poor-houses and relief centres by private enterprise, where wayfarers are maintained for three days up to a maximum of 50 per day. The introduction of a special system for the relief of the weaver class. In Wardha the appeal to private charity has been liberally responded to. Rs. 3,000 have been collected in Wardha, and a large quantity of juar in Arvi, Ashti, and other places. Raw grain or cooked food is distributed at these places to the weak and infirm, and they thus get one full meal a day. Rs. 10,000 have been received from the charitable fund, and an equal sum has further been applied for.

(c) *Prospects of the Division as Regards Scarcity.*—As already observed everything depends on the rainfall. If unfavourable prices will rise, distress will continue to increase and operations, more extensive than ever, will be necessitated. The number on relief works are not expected to increase much now ; on the contrary, on the break of the rains a large decrease may be looked for and will probably continue till about the end of July. Much depends, of course, on whether cultivators are able to obtain sufficient seed. Relief works for those who cannot find work in the fields will probably be necessary through July and August, and it is probable that the numbers will increase during September and

the early part of October, when there is not much work for the cultivating class. It is not expected that it will be possible to close permanently all Government relief works till November when the new rice will be in the market and prices will fall. As regards relief in poor-houses and children's kitchens no great change in numbers is anticipated, though there will probably be a fall in the number of children attending the kitchens during the busy season, but it will not be possible to close any of these institutions before November. It is difficult to place any limit to the period during which village relief will be required; no great increase in numbers is expected, but it is probable that this form of relief will be necessary till nearly the end of the year.

No. 643-C, dated the 10th June 1897.

From L. K. Laurie, Esq., I.C.S., Commissioner, Nerbudda Division, to the Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces.

I have the honour to forward herewith consolidated Statements A and B for the districts of this division (excepting Chhindwara) for the four weeks ending Saturday the 29th ultimo. I also send the District Officer's notes, and the prescribed memorandum. The Deputy Commissioner of Chhindwara has been called on by telegram for an explanation of the delay in submitting the returns for his district.

2. The following abstract compares the number of persons employed on relief works, as now reported, with the numbers shown in last month's statement :—

District.	No. of workers on 24th April.	No. of workers on 29th May.	Difference.
Hoshangabad	38,524	49,436	+ 10,912
Narsinghpur	22,770	42,154	+ 19,384
Betul	8,019	15,341	+ 7,322
Chhindwara	12,449	15,600	+ 3,151
Nimar	139	342	+ 203
Total	81,901	122,873	+ 40,972

In my report for last month I expressed the belief that the number of workers at the end of May would touch 100,000. The anticipation has been more than verified. Every district shows an increase, the most striking advance being in Narsinghpur where the numbers have nearly doubled. It may be noted, however, that the number of workers on relief works in the Hoshangabad district seems to have reached its maximum on the 22nd May, when the total was 59,339. As the condition of the workers is still reported to be good on the whole there can be little doubt that the rise in numbers is in a great measure due to the completion of harvest work (winnowing and storing grain) and to the absence of any other source of employment for the labouring classes at this slack season of the year. As there seems to be no reason why the State should provide work for the unemployed who are not in danger of starving, it was decided at a Conference held at the Pachmarhi Residency on the 25th ultimo not to admit to the relief works persons who are in good physical condition, showing no signs of privation, during the short period that has now to elapse before the burst of the monsoon.

3. The number of dependants and non-working children is in the ratio of 16.9 per cent. as compared with 17.4 per cent. last month :—

District.	Number on 24th April.	Number on 29th May.	Difference.
Hoshangabad	8,589	9,304	+ 715
Narsinghpur	2,952	6,643	+ 3,691
Betul	1,317	2,920	+ 1,603
Chhindwara	1,418	1,961	+ 543
Nimar	38	32	- 6
Total	14,314	20,860	+ 6,546

The percentage of dependants in the Hoshangabad district (which last month was the highest in the division) has declined from 22 per cent. to 18.8 per cent.

4. The poor-house population shows an increase of 406. This result is chiefly due to the rise in the number of inmates of the Narsinghpur poor-houses, and of the Gadawara poor-house in particular. The Deputy Commissioner has not referred to the subject in his remarks on the statements :—

District.	No. of inmates on 24th April.	No. of inmates on 29th May.	Difference.
Hoshangabad	830	856	+ 26
Narsinghpur	1,546	1,984	+ 438
Betul	289	287	- 2
Chhindwara	274	261	- 13
Nimar	161	118	- 43
Total	3,100	3,506	+ 406

From the inspection notes on the Gadawara poor-house I gather that the inmates are in a worse condition physically than the inmates of other poor-houses in the district. These conditions seem to point to the possibility that village relief arrangements in the Gadawara Tahsil are not yet wholly adequate, unless, indeed, it can be shown that a considerable proportion of the persons admitted to the poor-house are foreigners. All along, the poor-house population of the Narsinghpur district has been disproportionately high, as compared with other districts, while it will be seen from the following paragraph that the list of persons in receipt of village relief in the same district is not as large as even the Chhindwara and Betul lists. I consider it, therefore, desirable that the services of the additional Inspecting Officer (a staff corps subaltern) for village relief for which I have applied (as noted in last month's report) should be promptly supplied. A copy of this paragraph will be sent to the Deputy Commissioner, Narsinghpur, for consideration and report.

5. The returns of persons in receipt of gratuitous relief *at their homes* give the following totals :—

District.	Number of Persons Relieved on		Difference.
	24th April.	29th May.	
Hoshangabad	1,637	2,255	+ 618
Narsinghpur	429	1,143	+ 714
Betul	1,375	1,585	+ 210
Chhindwara	1,603	1,793	+ 190
Nimar	127	384	+ 257
Total	5,171	7,160	+ 1,989

Excluding Nimar, where the distress is slight, Narsinghpur shows the smallest number of persons on the village registers of poor. I am inclined to think that the *temporarily infirm* are not fully represented on these lists and are sent to the poor-houses instead of being maintained locally until they are strong enough to work. It is satisfactory, however, to note that a considerable advance has already been made in the revision of the village registers, the number in receipt of relief having increased in Narsinghpur during the month by over 700 and in all the districts together by nearly 2,000. This is a result of the orders issued in my circular letter No. 410-C., dated the 13th April last, referred to in last month's report.

6. The death-rate during May was very high in Hoshangabad (93·1 per mille per annum) and in Narsinghpur (88·8 per mille per annum). Cholera (and bowel complaints closely akin thereto) is mainly responsible for these abnormal figures. On this subject the remarks recorded by the Deputy Commissioner, Hoshangabad, merit perusal. Deaths from starvation were comparatively numerous in Hoshangabad (27) but this figure is much below last month's return. As the Deputy Commissioner has observed there is reason to doubt the accuracy of the returns, some of the deaths being probably due to cholera. The figure which I have given in columns 15 and 16 of consolidated Statement A are taken from returns for May furnished to me by the Civil Surgeons. In the case of the Hoshangabad district these figures tally with those reported by the Deputy Commissioner, while other districts have given returns for April only.

7. To the list of charges given in paragraph 8 of last month's report the following must be added:—

	District.
1. Bankheri-Umardha Road	Hoshangabad.
2, 3. Chirapatla and Sawalmendha Camps on Betul, Hurda and Betul-Ellichpur Roads	Betul.
4, 5, 6. Kareli-Panari and Narsinghpur-Gotegaon Sections of Bombay Road and Babasi-Barha Road	Narsinghpur.
7. Harrai Section of Chhindwara Narsinghpur Road	Chhindwara.

The total number of charges under the Public Works Department was thus raised from 21 to 28. The number of charges under Civil Officers remained unchanged. A village work was opened at Baidi in the Hoshangabad district where 1,200 persons were employed by the malguzar on the deepening of a tank.

8. The chief matters which received special attention during the month were (a) the prevalence of cholera on the works and the arrangements to be made for combatting the disease, and (b) the course to be adopted in order to induce the labourers who have been flocking to our works, because there is no other field of employment open to them at present, to return to their homes at the commencement of the monsoon. As to (a), I think it may be said that the arrangements made were successful, for cholera disappeared from most of the camps attacked almost as suddenly as it came. As to (b) the measures decided on are known to the Chief Commissioner as they were adopted after consultation with him at the Conference of the 25th May, which has been referred to in the second paragraph of this letter. The decisions then arrived at were communicated to the Deputy Commissioners concerned in my letter No. 597-C. of 26th idem. We are now awaiting the approach of the monsoon before taking action.

NERBUDDA DIVISION. ...

Private relief.—Seventy-six persons were relieved by private charity in the Narsinghpur district at a cost of Rs. 153-2-0. Rai Bahadur Seth Tikaram continued as in the preceding month to feed needy persons in the town of Narsinghpur. In the Nimar district Rs. 29-8-0 were expended from private contributions for the relief of distress.

Poor-houses.—There was no change in the number of poor-houses open. The number of inmates has been reported in paragraph 4 of my covering letter.

Village relief.—The system of village relief has been thoroughly organized in the Hoshangabad district and is carefully scrutinised by the Circle Relief officers. In some cases it has been difficult to induce persons entitled to it to accept relief as various rumours have been spread regarding the intention of Government. During the month the Police of the Hoshangabad district sent 233 persons to relief works and 178 to the poor-houses. In Narsinghpur the village registers have been recently revised, the result being the addition of a large number of persons (about 700) to the roll of those entitled to relief. In this district 350 persons were at the month's close being fed at Police stations preparatory to their being forwarded to relief works or poor-houses—or to their homes. The poor-house at Burhanpur in the Nimar district has very few inmates and will shortly be closed. The Police of Nimar relieved 44 starving wanderers. Details of the numbers in receipt of village relief on 29th May will be found in paragraph 5 of my covering letter.

Relief works.—Three new charges were opened in the Narsinghpur district, two in the Betul district, and one each in Hoshangabad and Chhindwara. The names of these new camps have been given in paragraph 7 of my covering letter.

The Deputy Commissioner, Narsinghpur, records that the relief kitchens opened on four of the relief works in his district have been managed admirably.

The numbers of workers and dependants on relief works in each district are detailed in paragraphs 2 and 3 of my covering letter.

Famine loans to the extent of Rs. 6,615 were advanced to cultivators in the Narsinghpur district during the month. "Local works are under construction" there and in all 1,196 persons were employed on them at the close of the month. In the Hoshangabad district the only important village work opened was the improvement of the Baidi tank where about 1,200 persons were employed. In Betul no local works were open, but 1,756 persons were employed on village works carried out with the aid of famine loans.

Physical condition of the people.—The physical condition of the people is generally reported to be fairly good, cases of emaciation being uncommon except on one or two works.

Cholera, however, claimed a considerable number of victims during the month. The Deputy Commissioner of Hoshangabad criticises at length the accuracy of the Police reports of deaths from this cause.

Deaths from Starvation.

Districts.	Number of Deaths.	Remarks.
Hoshangabad	27	Almost all were wanderers; 19 died close to relief works, and probably fell victims to cholera.
Narsinghpur ... ..	...	In April the number reported was 4, but on enquiry it was found to be <i>nil</i> . Figures for May not given.
Betul	6	Five of them were wanderers.
Nimar ... ..	...	In April 18 persons are reported to have died from privation and disease. "Deaths from starvation" apparently <i>nil</i> . No figures for May.
Chhindwara ... ..	...	Return not received.

Food-stocks.—In Hoshangabad stocks are sufficient, but prices are rising slowly. In Narsinghpur there are "no signs of insufficiency." The Deputy Commissioner, Betul, considers that there are considerable stocks, but the owners will not bring them into the market till the prospects of the next harvest are assured. The prices of food-grains have risen considerably in his district. In Nimar stocks are sufficient.

Importation of Grain.

District.	Imports. Maunds.	Exports. Maunds.
Hoshangabad	35,178	5,638
Narsingphur	23,674	15,573
Betul	7,850	500
Nimar	27,255	...

Changes in the rate of wages.—On 11th May the scale at which wages are calculated on relief works was raised in the Betul district from 9 seers to 8 seers to the rupee.

L. K. LAURIE,

Commissioner.

CHHATTISGARH DIVISION.

1. *Private Relief, Raipur District.*—As reported last month poor-houses were maintained from private funds at Sirpur and Bistrampur. The number of persons relieved in the former institution was 80, but no return of expenditure has been received. At Bistrampur poor-house 1,293 persons were relieved in May or more than double the figure (566) reported for April. Much good work is being done by the American Mission in affording relief to the destitute in that locality. Owing to the failure of a Bank in America where Mission funds had been deposited, the Mission has now applied for Government help in the future maintenance of the poor-house. The Deputy Commissioner has accordingly, with my approval, decided to convert the institution into a Government relief centre, keeping the management in the hands of Mr. Lohr of the Mission, who has undertaken, and may, I am convinced, be trusted, to conduct it strictly on the principles approved by Government, including that of absolute religious neutrality. It is clear that some relief of this kind is very necessary at Bistrampur and the action taken appears to be the best practicable.

Bilaspur District.—There is no regular private relief in this district other than that organized by the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund Committee. Local subscriptions collected up to date amount to Rs. 5,373.

Sambalpur District.—There were six private poor-houses in this district, but one of them, Lohella, was closed on the 22nd ultimo. The reason, though not specified by the Deputy Commissioner, is understood to be exhaustion of funds. It may possibly be necessary to grant some relief at Lohella or in the neighbourhood from Government funds. I have addressed the Deputy Commissioner on the subject. There are 116 inmates in the Sambalpur poor-house. Figures are not available for the other poor-houses.

The Raipur report is silent on the subject of relief afforded from the Indian Charitable Relief Fund. But both here and Bilaspur the work of usefully expending the funds placed at their disposal has been vigorously taken up by the local Committees under all the recognized heads. Clothes and small comforts are distributed to inmates of poor-houses and others; relief is afforded to the respectable poor; and distributions are being made to a large number of destitute cultivators in all parts of the districts for the purchase of seed-grain and plough cattle. In Raipur the demand for seed-grain is considerably larger than for cattle. But a number of bullocks has been purchased by the local Committee to be made over (nominally as a loan) to different village Committees for the use of poor cultivators. The special famine relief officers will personally supervise the working of these arrangements. I have asked the Deputy Commissioners to include in future reports some special information as to the extent of relief afforded from the charitable fund.

2. *Government poor-houses.*—The number of inmates in the Government poor-houses during April and May is compared below :—

		April.	May.
Raipur	Raipur	2,229	3,550
	Baloda		
	Drug		
	Singa... ..		
Bilaspur	Bilaspur	3,476	5,880
	Pendra		
	Mungeli		
	Pandaria		

The numbers have largely increased, as distress has become more acute, and this in spite of vigorous efforts made to weed out such persons as not to be retained as inmates. The construction of the Raipur poor-house had just been completed when a portion of it was destroyed by a fire, in which, and from the effects of which, seven lives were unhappily lost. The circumstances were reported in detail, and the Chief Commissioner has accepted the view that the occurrence was purely accidental, that the prescribed precautions had been carefully attended to, and that everything possible was done for the preservation of life and property. Immediate steps were taken to repair the damage done ; and the work of re-construction, though unfortunately retarded by further damage due to violent storms, is now practically complete.

3. *Village relief.*—The Deputy Commissioner, Raipur, reports that 21 more relief centres were established in the month of May, raising the total to 44. This figure arises from the inclusion of Police posts at which, with the Chief Commissioner's approval, orders have been issued for the receipt and relief, where necessary, of starving wanderers before sending them on to relief works, etc. : 1,775 persons were relieved at these centres. As remarked last month, with the development of other forms of relief, the necessity of this form of relief should be reduced to a minimum. In the Bilaspur district, there is one relief centre at Pendra on the Bilaspur-Mandla road. It is proposed to open another at Takalpur on the same road. The work of village relief has been pushed on vigorously in the Raipur and Bilaspur districts. The figures for the past two months are compared below :—

		April.	May.
Raipur		1,832	7,965
Bilaspur		9,139	18,565

The large increase in the Bilaspur figures may, doubtless, in some measure be ascribed to a circumstance, which has independently come to my notice and on which I have addressed the Deputy Commissioner, namely, that village relief in this district is not strictly confined to those entitled to it under the provisions of Section 34 of the Famine Code. In Raipur, Section 34 appears to have been very strictly interpreted ; but on the other hand, there has been a great deal of relief in the form of "casual" doles, which does not appear in the returns. The new rules which I am issuing, with the Chief Commissioner's approval, indicate a middle course between the systems hitherto prevailing in the two districts, and will, I trust, place the whole arrangements on a better as well as a more uniform basis.

It will be seen from the great increase in Raipur, as compared with the figure for April, that the work of organizing village relief in this district has made satisfactory progress.

The rules above referred to have been drawn up, in consultation with the Deputy Commissioners, for the guidance of Sub-divisional Officers, Revenue Inspectors and others administering village relief. They are being printed in English and Vernacular for distribution to all concerned.

4. *General character of relief works.*—The numbers of persons relieved on works under the Public Works Department during April and May are compared below :—

	RELIEF WORKERS.		DEPENDANTS.	
	April.	May.	April.	May.
Raipur	72,787	66,096	16,161	14,634
Bilaspur	19,878	30,709	3,104	5,767
Sambalpur	1,375	1,009	5	343

The increase in the Bilaspur district is due to the fact that a few more charges were open during the month. On the other hand, reports of a serious nature have been received of refusals of admission to relief works in this district, which are now forming the subject of special enquiry. Great difficulty has been experienced in this district in arranging for the opening of additional relief works throughout the distressed area. No work at all has been opened in the eastern portion, comprising the Sheorinarain Tahsil. It is not now the time to open any new works ; but the Superintendent of Works has promised me that all preliminary arrangements shall be made at Akallara, so as to enable work in that neighbourhood to be started at short notice, should it hereafter prove necessary. In the Raipur district the total number of large works has risen from 10 to 18. The total number of relief workers, which at the beginning of the month was rapidly rising, has since declined no less rapidly, and is now considerably less than at the end of April. The decline may be ascribed partly (perhaps mainly) to the prevalence of cholera, partly also to the commencement of agricultural operations, a cause which will, it is hoped, in the current month produce the same effect to a very much greater extent. The works in this division received very special attention during the month at the hands of Mr. Penny, Superintendent of Works, Mr. Leefe, Executive Engineer, and their Sub-divisional Officers, all of whom were actively engaged in inspections throughout the month. As a result innumerable defects, have been brought to light, and energetic measures have been taken, in regular communication with the Deputy Commissioners and myself, to remedy them. The sudden death, on the 30th of the month, of Mr. Leefe from cholera, while engaged in the inspection of relief works, is an irreparable public as well as private loss. The question of inducing the agricultural population to leave these works and betake themselves to the fields as soon as the monsoon bursts is engaging special attention. A number of works are being reorganized (under suitable precautions) on the piece-work basis ; others are to be experimentally closed ; while fresh admissions of able-bodied labourers are being generally discouraged. A further question which has engaged special attention is that of the large number of dependants on the works. There can be little doubt that in many cases persons have been improperly admitted by the subordinates in charge. But the rapid expansion of works has greatly overtaxed the energies of supervising officers, and the detailed checking of lists of dependants, which has been called for, is necessarily a work of time. Meanwhile, with the development of the piece-work system, many of these lists will have disappeared. The number of local works under civil agency has increased in the Raipur district from 19 to 23, and in the Bilaspur district from 9 to 11. The total number relieved in Raipur district on these works was 9,914 as compared with 5,131

in April. The figures for the Bilaspur district were respectively 3,638 and 910. Court of Wards Estate works in the Bilaspur district gave relief to 3,783 persons.

Works started by private individuals with their own funds and with the help of famine loans have been the means of affording very considerable relief to distressed cultivators and others while the people are kept together in their villages. 33,865 persons were relieved on private works in the Raipur district during the month of May. In the Bilaspur district 55,320 persons were so relieved. It will be found that in this district the amount of relief afforded on these private works is greater even than on roads under the Public Works Department.

5. *Physical condition of the people.*—In the Raipur district the physical condition of the people is reported to be generally fair ; cases of emaciation continue, however, to be reported from portions of the distressed areas. The Deputy Commissioner, Bilaspur, writes as follows :—

“The physical condition of the people is generally good upon relief works in the khalsa. In the zamindaris many of the workers are in poor condition, cases of emaciation (not generally extreme) being somewhat common. Those in receipt of gratuitous relief whether in poor-houses or at their homes are almost without exception in bad condition. In many cases emaciation is extreme? Almost the only exceptions, so far as poor-houses are concerned, are the children.”

The Deputy Commissioner, Sambalpur, reports that several of the relief workers on the Dabhra-Kharsia road who come from Raipur and Bilaspur are weak and emaciated. This part of the district, which is the north-west corner adjoining Bilaspur, is the only portion where there is any distress.

6. *Deaths from starvation.*—The Deputy Commissioner, Raipur, reports 112 deaths from starvation. In the Civil Surgeon's special mortality return for May, just received, the number shown is 425. I have reason to believe that the figures supplied by the Deputy Commissioner have been verified with special care, and they seem to me to be *primâ facie* more probable than those of the Civil Surgeon. At the same time the discrepancy appears to call for explanation, and the Deputy Commissioner has been asked to report after careful examination by Station House Areas.

In the Bilaspur district the Deputy Commissioner reports 575 deaths from starvation, of which 380 were verified by the Police, but I gather that he has but little confidence in these figures. The Civil Surgeon's special mortality return has not yet been received. For April the Civil Surgeons reported 356 deaths to have been caused by starvation, which figure the Deputy Commissioner would accept as correct. Considering the general circumstances of the district, I cannot but suspect it of being exaggerated, while the figures, reported for May, I should consider to be even more so. The Police of this district has been greatly overworked, and I am not satisfied that it has hitherto realized its responsibilities in this important respect. There appears reason to suspect that many deaths have been returned as due to starvation merely to save the trouble of assigning a better reason. The matter has been engaging very special attention, and instructions have recently been issued which, while carefully guarding against any suggestion that deaths really due to starvation are to be suppressed, are intended to ensure that none shall be so returned without good reason. I trust that these instructions will have a salutary effect on future returns.

Deaths from starvation in the Sambalpur district have not been reported. Two deaths occurred in April. In the Raipur district 401 deaths are reported by the Civil Surgeon to have occurred in poor-houses. For April 162 deaths in poor-houses were reported. The large increase calls for explanation. It appears that most of the deaths have been caused by dysentery and diarrhœa. The Deputy Commissioner has promised to submit a special report on the subject. In the absence of Civil Surgeon's special report for May the number of deaths in poor-houses in the Bilaspur district is not known. In connection with the figures reported for April, I called upon the Deputy Commissioners of Raipur and Bilaspur last month to submit a special report regarding the large number of deaths

which continue to be reported from poor-houses. The information is being collected by Deputy Commissioners, and I hope soon to be in a position to submit the result.

The death-rate per mille per annum in the three districts during the months of March and April for which figures are available is compared below—

—	March.	April.
Raipur	34·32	39·60
Bilaspur	50·6	61·81
Sambalpur	29·	33·

The figures show a steady increase in mortality, largely due to cholera.

In the Raipur district the death-rate per mille per annum for May has gone up to 91·08. This increase has been due chiefly to the fact that no less than 50·87 deaths from cholera in May were reported, the number of deaths from this cause in April being 633. The district has been doubly unfortunate in this respect, as the spread of the disease has naturally somewhat impeded relief operations. It may be mentioned to the credit of the district staff that no efforts have been spared to stamp out the epidemic. The personal efforts of Sub-divisional relief officers in attending to the sanitary arrangements of relief camps, etc., and disinfecting attacked villages have doubtless conduced greatly towards checking its progress, and with the advent of the rains it is hoped that it will disappear.

7. *Food-stock.*—The Deputy Commissioner, Raipur, writes that the district is sufficiently provided with grain, but that there is some room for anxiety in regard to the distribution of stocks available. A laxity in trade is feared in some quarters. It is expected, however, that timely negotiation with private traders will relieve this anxiety. The Deputy Commissioner, Bilaspur, writes as follows :—

“Food-stocks appear to be sufficient. Import of rice into the Mungeli Tahsil has been large. It is not worthy that this consists entirely of husked rice. No unhusked rice whatever has been imported. This, I think, tends to show that seed stocks are sufficient.”

Food is reported to be sufficient in all parts of the Sambalpur district.

8. *Import and export of grain.*—The exports of the Raipur and Bilaspur districts during the past two months are compared below :—

—	April. Maunds.	May. Maunds.
Raipur	84,081	66,231
Bilaspur	17,208	11,997

There has been a steady decline in the export traffic, combined with a no less steady rise in imports ; 30,582 maunds were imported into Raipur in May as compared with 6,955 maunds in April. The figures of the Bilaspur district were respectively 41,379 maunds and 26,718 maunds.

9. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—The supply of seed-grain and plough cattle to destitute cultivators continues to engage the special attention of Famine Relief Officers. All funds allotted for the purposes whether by Government or by the Charitable Relief Committee are freely utilized. Much good has been done and it is expected that a large proportion of the normal area will now be sown. There is room for further expenditure in this direction if funds are available, of which there is still some hope from the Charitable Relief Fund.

Should the commencement of the monsoon be favourable to sowings it is hoped that such malguzars as have hitherto been disposed to hold back their grain with a prospect of a still further rise in prices will readily come forward to help needy cultivators to sow their fields.

10. *Changes in the rate of wages.*—The rate of wages has been altered in Pendra and Pandaria in the Bilaspur district, the prevailing price of grain being respectively 8 seers and 9 seers per rupee. On other works in this district wages are still calculated on the scale of 10 seers per rupee; but in view of the general rise in prices the Deputy Commissioner has now submitted proposals for calculation on a more liberal scale.

In the Raipur district no changes have been reported. The rates of wages on the Public Works Department relief works in this district appear to have been variously fixed, in more or less haphazard fashion, and without due regard to standing orders. The late Mr. Leefe undertook to go thoroughly into the matter, in personal communication with the Deputy Commissioner, and to ascertain precisely for each work what rate is being paid, by what authority, and what changes, if any, are now necessary. I understand that some progress has been made with this enquiry and trust that the matter will not be overlooked by his successor.

11. *Other matters.*—Cases of cattle theft and cattle poisoning have increased in the Bilaspur district and seem to keep pace with the increase in distress. Four dacoities were also reported during the month. In the Raipur district the number of petty theft cases is reported to be large.

12. The general situation has been practically the same as during April. The month has been principally occupied with the organization of preparations for the monsoon. Strenuous efforts have been made by the officers of the Public Works Department to provide materials for monsoon labour along all the principal lines of road, while the provision of shelter both for workers and for officers has not been overlooked. Village relief has been systematically organized. Seed-grain has been freely distributed, and finally special measures have been set on foot with a view to encouraging the mass of the agricultural population to abandon the relief works for the fields.

13. The monsoon prospects are largely a matter of speculation. But assuming normally favourable climatic conditions, there appears good reason to hope that the greater part of the normal area will be sown throughout the division and that in this way employment will be found for the bulk of the population. But the subsistence of the people, until the harvest is reaped, more particularly of the aged and infirm, must continue to be a source of special anxiety, and there certainly appears to be no immediate prospect of any decrease in expenditure on gratuitous relief.

A. D. YOUNGHUSBAND,
Commissioner.

CIRCULAR LETTER No. 2960. REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

From M. W. Fox-Strangways, Esq., I.C.S., Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces. To all Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners, Central Provinces. Dated Nagpur, the 17th June 1897.

SIR,

In my Circular letter No. 1400, dated the 31st March, detailed instructions were given for the preparation of the special death-rate returns required for submission to the Secretary of State. It was laid down in that letter that

one copy of the return was to be sent direct to the Administrative Medical Officer by the 10th of each month, duplicate copies being sent to the Deputy Commissioner and the Commissioner.

The first returns submitted in accordance with these instructions were for March. They were found to contain obvious mistakes, and discrepancies were discovered between them and the mortality statistics given by Commissioners in their monthly famine statements. There has been much correspondence on the subject, and, in order to obviate the risk of discrepancies in future, it was ordered, in this office Circular letter No. C-1012—29, dated the 1st June, that the return destined for the Administrative Medical Officer should be forwarded through the Deputy Commissioner, who would send it on with any remarks he might have to make.

2. It is hoped that these orders will at least prevent the discrepancies in the returns which have led to so much troublesome correspondence. But the Chief Commissioner is far from being satisfied that Deputy Commissioners recognize the great importance of securing accurate statistics, more especially for the deaths reported as directly due to starvation, or that they realise that by reporting large numbers of such deaths, often without verification, they are furnishing opportunity for damaging attacks on their famine administration. It may not be generally known that the Central Provinces are the only part of India in which the number of deaths reported monthly from starvation cannot be counted by units. Yet there are districts in at least one other Province as severely distressed as any in the Central Provinces, and the Chief Commissioner does not believe that famine administration in the Central Provinces is less efficient than elsewhere.

3. At this stage of relief operations, when $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the whole population of the Provinces (and in one district as many as 20 per cent.) are on relief of one form or another, when village and town relief is thoroughly organized and wandering checked and controlled by the Police, such a thing as a death from actual starvation should, if all parts of this organization work efficiently, be exceedingly rare, although it must be conceded that nothing that public or private effort can do will prevent the general death-rates from rising above the figures of ordinary years. And a perusal of the accompanying statement will show that there is in many cases strong reason to doubt whether the figures of starvation deaths returned are even approximately correct. The great differences between Saugor and Damoh, Mandla and Balaghat, and Narsinghpur and Hoshangabad can hardly be explained except on the supposition that the principles of classification are not uniform.

In a letter commenting on these figures, recently received from the Government of India, the following remarks are made :—

“The number of deaths shown in column 16 of Statement A as due to starvation is grievously large in five or six districts. But it is clear from the divisional and district remarks that the returns include deaths from unknown causes which have been attributed, without sufficient evidence, to starvation by the reporting agency. The Jubbulpore Divisional Report contains some very good remarks and suggestions on the subject, with which the Government of India agree. In the Hoshangabad District Report it is noted that in 16 deaths only, out of 81 entered in column 16, had the cause of death been verified. In the Jubbulpore District it was found in scrutinizing the Civil Surgeon's returns that *all* deaths from *all* causes occurring in one of the registration circles had been returned as starvation deaths. More pains to secure correct classification and verification of such deaths, in accordance with your Circular order of the 4th February 1897, appear to have been taken in the Jubbulpore Division than elsewhere, but, as the Commissioner remarks, when, as often happens, the deceased are wanderers without friends or companions, ‘real verification is impossible.’ In the Chhindwara return, 11 of the 25 cases entered in column 16 were of this description. The Government of India think that further precautions are required to secure proper examination of the figures for each district before they are returned, and to exclude deaths from cholera or unknown causes.”

To this it may be added that a report recently submitted after special enquiry into the causes of high mortality in January showed that 9 deaths from starvation were entered as having occurred in that month among residents of

a large Cantonment, in which no measures of relief had been thought necessary ; from another district the largest number of starvation deaths have been reported from the Head-quarters Police Station-house Circle, by no means one of the most severely distressed areas ; and of 27 deaths from starvation, reported from a third district, 19 were said to have occurred in close proximity to relief works on which cholera was present.

4. In this office letter No. 626, dated the 4th February, the following definition of starvation deaths, which had been adopted by the Commissioner of the Jubbulpore Division, was quoted with approval, "deaths are only to be shown as due to starvation when it appears that the deceased actually had no food at all, or an amount quite insufficient to sustain life, for some days before he died," and in the Circular letter No. 1,400, quoted above (paragraph 4), attention was again drawn to this definition. To distinguish between deaths due to "starvation" and due to "privation" is no doubt very difficult, and it may be said that the definition adopted is an arbitrary one. But it must be remembered that what we have to ascertain and record is the number of people who die because relief has not been brought within their reach. When once a man has reached a relief work or poor-house, he has been relieved, and if, in spite of all efforts to save him, he dies there, his death should not be shown as due to "starvation," even though it may be obviously due to the effects of previous privation. "Starvation deaths" are, in fact, an index of the efficiency or otherwise of our relief organization, and it is for this reason that the Chief Commissioner has hesitated to issue stricter instructions as to verification of these deaths. There is always a danger of such instructions being misconstrued by the subordinate officials, by whom the reporting is carried out, into a hint that such reports are not wanted, and may safely be suppressed. It is better that the present exaggerated reports should continue than that actual deaths from starvation should be concealed.

5. But Mr. Lyall believes that accurate reporting, though extremely difficult, is not impossible, if only Deputy Commissioners will thoroughly realise and impress on their subordinates its importance. He trusts that they will now do their best to ensure that no more deaths are returned by the Police as due to starvation which should properly be ascribed to other causes. No figures should be returned which have not been thoroughly verified and to each return should be attached a report showing how and by whom each case has been verified. If this cannot be done within the time allowed, the verified figures of the previous month must be returned, with the time to which they refer clearly specified.

The figures returned for previous months are on record, and it is now too late to make any further local enquiry into their accuracy. But it is believed that a careful examination of the Police returns would show that many deaths have been included which are undoubtedly due to causes other than starvation, and Mr. Lyall desires that each District Officer will have such an examination made and report the result. The scrutiny should be done by the Deputy Commissioner himself or by a competent Assistant. It has been ascertained that in one district at least records are available showing that on a proper interpretation of the orders the number of deaths ascribed to starvation will be reduced by about 75 per cent., and it is hoped that similar records may be available elsewhere.

I have, &c.,

M. W. FOX-STRANGWAYS,

Chief Secretary.

Statement showing Deaths from Starvation reported in each month from January to April 1897.

Districts.	JANUARY.		FEBRUARY.		MARCH.		APRIL.	
	In Monthly State-ments.	By Adminis-trative Medical Officer.	In Monthly State-ments.	By Adminis-trative Medical Officer.	In Monthly State-ments.	By Adminis-trative Medical Officer.	In Monthly State-ments.	By Adminis-trative Medical Officer.
Nagpur	30	...	24	...	23	23	7	7
Wardha ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	10	10
Chandha... ..	3	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
Bhandara	31	..	21	...	...	26	16	16
Balaghat... ..	167	...	33	...	48	48	13	13
Jubbulpore	704	...	631	...	152	152	49	49
Saugor ... ..	...	...	...	...	9	9	3	3
Mandla	102	...	8	...	2	2	1	1
Seoni	121	...	30	...	17	17	8	8
Damoh	11	...	9	...	14	14	54	54
Hoshangabad ... ..	...	...	2	...	85	85	81	81
Narsinghpur ... ..	...	...	42	...	...	25	4	4
Nimar	48	...	7	...	} Not reported.	...	...	...
Betul	28	...	42	...		14	6	6
Chhindwara	14	..	25	...		4	28	28
Raipur	39	...	31	...		213	71	203
Bilaspur... ..	160	...	224	...		278	189	35
Sambalpur ... ..	...	...	...	...	2	4	5	
TOTAL ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	912	544	844

No. C-1238, dated Pachmarhi, the 26th June 1897.

From M. W. Fox-Strangways, Esq., I.C.S., Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue and Agriculture.

In continuation of my letter No. C-965, dated the 18th May 1897, I am directed to submit a statement, compiled from figures received from the Sanitary Commissioner, showing the death-rates per mille per mensem in each district of the Central Provinces during the month of May.

2. The districts in which the death-rates, exclusive of deaths from cholera and small-pox, were highest, include all those which were conspicuous for high mortality in April, *viz.*, the districts of the Jubbulpore Division, Narsinghpur, Balaghat, Raipur and Bilaspur: to these districts are now added Nimar and Hoshangabad, where in April the death-rate was not excessive. Cholera was present during the month in epidemic form over the greater part of the province, but it was precisely in these districts (except Nimar) that it was most destructive, the proportion of deaths ascribed to it (and to small-pox, which was nowhere

very severe) ranging from 1·01 per mille in Balaghat to 3·36 in Raipur. The fact is well known that when epidemic cholera prevails, numerous deaths, which are really due to cholera, are ascribed in the returns to other forms of bowel disease which thus tend largely to exceed the normal. In all probability therefore the true cholera mortality is much understated, and the death-rates from all other causes are not really so high as appears from the statement. On this subject I am to refer to the remarks by the Deputy Commissioner of Hoshangabad quoted in the Monthly Famine Report for May submitted with my letter No. C-1129-A, dated the 16th June 1897. The prevalence of cholera in a district, moreover, greatly interferes with the working of the relief organization. Thousands of workers fly in a panic from the relief works, and many of them necessarily succumb to disease or privation when, if they had stayed on the works, they would have received both medical attendance and food. These causes doubtless contributed towards the very high mortality of the month, in addition to the inevitable suffering induced by the pressure of high prices.

The death-rate reported for Nimar (5·39 per mille) is extremely high for a district which is but slightly affected by scarcity. The Deputy Commissioner has been asked to examine the figures carefully, circle by circle, and report the result.

3. In only one district, Chanda, is the death-rate below that shown as the ten years' average. This district is but slightly affected by famine. Everywhere else the rates are in excess, the excesses ranging from ·16 in Chhindwara to 4·42 in Mandla. In making these comparisons, however, it has always to be borne in mind that death registration as carried on at present, when special and sustained attention is being given to the subject, is likely to be considerably more exhaustive and correct (though doubtless even now not complete) than it was in other years when no such attention was specially devoted to it. This is particularly the case in the wilder portions of the province, such as the districts of Mandla, Betul, Chanda, Sambalpur, the jagir area of Chhindwara, and the zamindaris of Bilaspur and Raipur.

It is only since February last that the zamindaris of the last two districts have been included in the reporting area, and the average annual death-rate returned for them for previous years has been shown by the Deputy Commissioner to present impossible figures.

4. As regards deaths from starvation I am to forward a copy of a Circular (No. 2960, dated the 17th June 1897) recently addressed to the Deputy Commissioners. This circular had not reached these officers when the returns for May were prepared, and the figures are consequently altogether inaccurate. They have therefore been omitted from the present return, and revised figures for May will be reported with the return for June.

Statement showing death-rates per mille per mensem in the districts of the Central Provinces during the month of May 1897.

District.	DEATHS FROM		DEATH-RATE FOR MAY.		Average death-rate of past ten years.	Excess over normal.	
	Cholera.	Small-pox.	Excluding cholera and small-pox.	From all causes.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Nagpur Division ...	Nagpur ...	838	28	3·40	4·54	2·59	1·95
	Wardha ...	318	9	3·40	4·22	2·61	1·61
	Bhandara ...	754	2	3·45	4·47	2·70	1·77
	Chanda ...	396	44	1·92	2·55	3·18	—·63
	Balaghat ...	368	21	5·55	6·56	3·05	3·51

District.	DEATHS FROM		DEATH-RATE FOR MAY.		Average death-rate of past ten years.	Excess over normal.	
	Cholera.	Small-pox.	Excluding cholera and small-pox.	From all causes.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Jubbulpore Division	Jubbulpore	738	26	5.29	6.31	3.56	2.75
	Saugor ...	971	26	5.80	7.48	3.46	4.02
	Damoh ...	721	4	5.29	6.31	3.74	2.57
	Seoni ...	379	37	3.50	4.62	3.12	1.50
	Mandla ...	681	17	5.11	7.17	2.75	4.42
Nerbudda Division ...	Hoshangabad	1,356	22	5.16	7.76	3.69	4.07
	Narsinghpur	768	3	5.31	7.41	3.09	4.32
	Nimar ...	11	7	5.32	5.39	2.93	2.46
	Betul ...	226	22	2.87	3.63	2.82	.81
	Chhindwara	278	21	2.10	2.83	2.67	.16
Chattisgarh Division	Raipur ...	5,087	237	4.14	7.50	3.43	4.07
	Bilaspur ...	1,955	98	5.03	6.79	2.93	3.86
	Sambalpur	330	39	3.14	3.61	2.87	.74
TOTAL ...	16,175	663	4.21	5.51	...	...

No. 1359-C., dated Raipur, the 19th July 1897.

From M. W. Fox-Strangways, Esq., I.C.S., Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue and Agriculture.

I am directed to submit for the information of the Government of India, consolidated monthly statements A and B for the month of June 1897, as prescribed by section 16, IV.—VII. of the Central Provinces Famine Code. The usual memoranda by Commissioners of Division and Famine maps are also forwarded.

2. At the end of May the total number of persons on relief was 702,999, of whom 70 per cent. were on relief works. The total had fallen by the end of June to 438,800 of whom 59 per cent. were on relief works. The total reduction amounted to 36 per cent. but while relief workers were less by 47 per cent. than at the end of May, the reduction in gratuitous relief was only 10 per cent. The fall in numbers was entirely due to contraction, for one reason or another, of relief works. The 263,209 workers who left the works must have taken with them some 40,000 dependants, but the total under the head "gratuitous relief" fell by only 22,621. There was in fact no diminution, but an increase, in gratuitous relief in other forms, that is, in poor-house and village relief. It was always expected that a great fall in numbers on relief works would take place on the breaking of the rains, and in the forecast submitted to the Government of India in my letter No. 1140-C., dated the 18th June, it was estimated that the total, which according to the latest information available was 681,542, would fall in July to 463,000. It was remarked in the monthly report for May that it had been clear for some time that large numbers of people resorted to our works not from absolute necessity but as a convenient means of making a little money during the slackest season of the agricultural year. As the time for ploughing

and sowing the kharif crops approached it became a matter of extreme importance to induce as many as possible of these people to return to their houses. A conference was held by the Chief Commissioner at Pachmarhi to consider the best means of attaining this end in the Nerbudda Division, and the notes of this conference (of which I am to forward a copy) were circulated to other divisions, as suggestions for corresponding action in districts where the conditions were similar to those of the Nerbudda Valley. Six charges in all were closed in the Nerbudda Division on or about the 19th June, and the remaining charges were as far as possible converted to piece work, task work camps being established within easy distance of every piece work to provide for weakly applicants unable to earn a living wage at piece work. These measures, combined with the refusal (temporarily) of work to new applicants showing no signs of privation, seems to have been successful, in securing a return to the fields of a sufficient body of labour, to plough and sow the crops. It was not thought safe, in several districts, to completely close any works, but, even where this was not done the showers which fell about the 19th of June caused the tenants and some of the agricultural labourers to leave the works of their own accord. Unfortunately the monsoon opened feebly and unsteadily, the last week of the month was practically rainless and many of those who had left the works were forced to return. The statements now submitted, however, show the figures of the 26th June, when sowing was still in full swing and the break in the rains had not begun to cause alarm. The accompanying reports from the Deputy Commissioners, however, on which the Commissioners' summaries are based, were all written during the persistence of the break, which did not terminate till about the 10th July, and reflect the apprehensions which were felt at that time.

The weekly figures of persons in receipt of relief for each week from the 29th May to the 3rd July were :—

Week ending 29th May	...	...	...	...	702,999
" " 5th June	...	...	...	...	681,542
" " 12th "	...	...	...	...	658,927
" " 19th "	...	...	...	...	569,247
" " 26th "	...	...	...	...	438,751
" " 3rd July	...	...	...	...	553,078

The gradual reduction up to the 12th June was due partly to spontaneous withdrawal of agriculturists, and partly to the unpopularity of the piece work system among those who are in no urgent need of relief, but are willing to be paid the minimum wage for doing the smallest possible amount of work. The heavy falls from the 12th to the 26th were the result of the first burst of rain, and of the special measures referred to above. When these measures were sanctioned it was specially impressed on district officers that great watchfulness would be necessary and that works would be re-opened at the slightest sign of increasing distress. By the end of the month the continued holding off of the rains had caused a renewed demand for labour, and all action in the direction of closing works was suspended.

3. The poor-house population rose from 24,259 to 29,795, the increase being most marked in the Jubbulpore and Nerbudda divisions. It was to be expected that the commencement of the rains would drive into the shelter of the poor-houses many of the beggars and wanderers who have hitherto preferred to pick up a scanty living outside. There will no doubt be a constant tendency to further increase during the next few months. District officers are constantly urged, in order to prevent overcrowding and disorder, to draft the able-bodied to works, and the weakly, provided they are not in such a state as to require medical care, to village relief. It is on an extension of this last form of relief that our main reliance must be placed during the rainy months. There has, indeed, been a very large increase in numbers (from 88,922 to 106,116) on village relief during the month under report. To this increase all districts, in which village relief is in operation, have contributed, except Saugor, where, however, it appears from the report of the Commissioner of the Jubbulpore Division that there has been a serious mistake in the figures, and that the numbers receiving relief are really larger than have been hitherto shown.

4. The death-rates given in column 15 of statement A are for the month of May. Figures for June have been reported only from the Nerbudda Division, and these are given in a supplementary statement. The death-rates for May are very high in Jubbulpore, Saugar, Mandla, Balaghat, Hoshangabad, Narsinghpur, Raipur and Bilaspur. These are all severely affected districts, but in all of them a great deal of the abnormal mortality may be put down to cholera. The supplementary statement for the Nerbudda Division shows that the death-rate fell in Hoshangabad and Narsinghpur, but rose largely in Betul, Nimar, and Chhindwara. These figures, and also the figures showing deaths from starvation, will be reported on in greater detail when the monthly mortality return is submitted. It has been frequently admitted that mortality due to famine cannot be properly ascertained in time for inclusion in the report for the month in which it occurred.

5. As already observed, district reports were written at a time when the prospects of a favourable monsoon were very gloomy. Much of the report from the Nagpur Division was written before the recent rain fell. The weather reports up to date show that Nagpur has received 7.97 inches of rain, Wardha 6.23, Bhandara 5.92, Balaghat 5.73, and Chandha 3.51, and it may therefore be hoped that the damage done by the sudden cessation of rain after the first sowings may not have been so great as was thought. The Commissioner's report, however, shows that even if lack of agricultural employment should drive large numbers back to the works in Balaghat and Bhandara, there is ample provision for them. In Nagpur where the bulk of the workers appear to be non-agriculturists there has been no closing of works. In Chandha the unavoidable closing of large numbers of mulguzari works (tanks) has thrown many people out of employment, some of whom may not obtain field labour, and to provide for possible distress among these, village relief has since the close of the month been started all over the district. It was suggested to the Commissioner that this might be advisable in parts of Nagpur also, but Mr. Nedham and the Deputy Commissioner both consider that in that district, the wealthiest in the province, the springs of private charity have not yet altogether dried up and the village poor are still being supported by their neighbours. The matter will be personally discussed by the Chief Commissioner with the Commissioner in a few days. A further measure taken since the close of the month was the opening of two poor-houses in Wardha. It may be hoped that in this division anxiety will now be practically confined to Balaghat. Here the exertions of the local officers have surmounted the main difficulty, the supply of grain for the Baihar Tahsil. The Chief Commissioner is now on his way to meet the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioners of Balaghat and Bhandara and will discuss the situation with them.

6. The report from the Jubbulpore Division is written by Mr. Fuller, who took charge on the 1st July, and who had still, at the time of writing, to see personally a large portion of his charge. His observations on the superiority of village relief to the aggregation of helpless people at relief centres are entirely in accordance with the principles which have always guided this administration. In Mandla, however (as in the Chhindwara Jagirs—a very similar wild tract of sparse population, great distances, and difficulties of communication, with a revenue staff poorly trained and ill-acquainted with the country), it was recognised that the character of the country offered great obstacles to the regular visitation of every village in the distressed area, and for this reason an exception was made to the rule prevailing elsewhere, and relief centres, where persons unable to work could be gathered together, were deliberately adopted as a standing (and not as elsewhere a provisional) form of relief. This view was that of Mr. Anderson, the Commissioner, and of the late Mr. Priest, his successor, who shortly before his death visited the district and recognized the relief centres. At the same time the Deputy Commissioner has consistently been urged to extend village relief wherever this can be done, and the numbers have been increasing, though slowly. If Mr. Fuller finds it possible, in this district, to extend the area of village relief and to contract the operation of relief centres, the Chief Commissioner will be very glad to see this done. But "to collect people at (even) imperfectly supervised depôts" is preferable to leaving them in places where no supervision at all is possible, the villages being too far apart or too inaccessible for the circle officer to visit them from month to month.

The decrease in the numbers on village relief in Saugor, which has been noticed above, is attributed by the Commissioner partly to orders, apparently restricting the operation of the system, which are said to have reached the Deputy Commissioner. No such orders, I am to say, were issued by the Chief Commissioner, whose views, as explained in paragraph 9 of last month's report, are different from those held on this subject by Mr. Galbraith, the Officiating Commissioner. I am also to forward a copy of this Administration's Circular No. 3205, dated 2nd July*, in which the importance of this branch of relief is emphasised.

The reduction in the number of relief workers was greater in the Jubbulpore Division than elsewhere. Piece work was introduced freely on works (of which there were many) that had been a long time in existence, and where the workers were in good condition. Opinions differ a good deal as to the success of the system, but where it has failed the failure has generally been due to misapprehension or neglect of the orders defining its conditions and limitations. These orders are contained in Public Works Department Circular No. 385—3822, dated 28th May 1897, a copy of which I am to enclose*. Mr. Fuller has now corrected any misapprehension which may have arisen on the subject in the Jubbulpore Division. It is satisfactory to learn that he is satisfied that under the piece-work rules "people in good health and strength" (for whom alone they are intended) "earn enough, and more than enough, for their support."

7. In the Nerbudda Division the matter which gave most trouble during the month was the rapidly rising price of grain in the Betul District, and the difficulty of supplying the relief works. Betul, though off the line of railway, is better served in the way of communications than Mandla, and the measures which were found necessary, and were successfully carried out, in the Mandla District, were not at first thought to be required in Betul. Prices, however, rose so quickly during the last part of June that the situation became serious, and the Chief Commissioner sanctioned advances to the amount of Rs. 5,000 to petty dealers for the supply of grain at local bazaars. In this district also the piece-work system did not at first work altogether satisfactorily, but it is believed that proper arrangements have now been made. The high death-rate in the Nimar district, although largely due to cholera, is disquieting. The attention of the Deputy Commissioner was called to the matter some time ago. The Chief Commissioner is now about to visit Khandwa, and will enquire further into it.

8. In the Chattisgarh Division the reduction in the number of relief workers has been less than elsewhere, and this difference is most marked in the Bilaspur District. Here, indeed, it has been found necessary, so far from contracting or closing works, to steadily extend them, while village relief, largely given before, has been doubled. The situation in this district has been causing anxiety for some time past. The Chief Commissioner has now visited Bilaspur and conferred with the local officers, and will shortly submit for the information of the Government of India the further information asked for in paragraph 4 of your No. ^{2233-F.}₂₆₋₂₀, dated 8th June. The condition of the Raipur District now (so far as can be judged) gives no serious cause for anxiety, and in both districts the present prospects of the kharif crops appear to be decidedly favourable.

9. In conclusion I am to express regret that, partly owing to the late receipt of the report from Jubbulpore, and partly to the Chief Commissioner being now engaged on a rapid tour through the distressed districts, this report is some days late.

* Not reprinted.

Monthly Famine Statement A for the four weeks ending Saturday evening, the 26th June 1897.

[To be submitted to the Government of India within the first-half of the next month.]

District	Area.	Population in thousands.	Affected area.	Estimated population in thousands of column 4.	NUMBERS ON RELIEF WORKS ON LAST DAY OF MONTH.					Number on gratuitous relief.	PRICE OF ONE OR MORE PRINCIPAL FOOD-GRAINS IN SEERS PER RUPEE.			Monthly death-rate for May per mille per annum.	Deaths due to starvation.
					Class A.	Class B.	Class C.	Class D.	Total.		Rice.	Juar.	Wheat.		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
JUBBULPORE DIVISION.															
Jubbulpore	3,948	748	2,853	498	235	5,780	...	15,179	21,194	25,310	8	...	9½	75·72	...
Saugor	4,007	592	4,007	592	28	3,547	...	14,317	17,892	17,974	...	6	8½	89·76	...
Damoh	2,831	325	2,000	200	535	3,601	...	19,276	23,412	16,635	6	...	7½	75·72	...
Mandla	5,056	339	5,056	339	7	2,205	...	9,626	11,838	5,537	7	...	7½	86·04	...
Seoni	3,198	371	1,766	200	273	2,865	...	3,469	6,607	3,636	...	...	8½	55·44	...
Total	19,040	2,375	15,682	1,829	1,078	17,998	...	61,867	80,943	69,112	...	...	...	...	...
NAGPUR DIVISION.															
Nagpur	3,832	758	524	243	179	2,973	...	8,278	11,430	4,007	8½	9½	8½	54·48	...
Bhandara	3,968	742	2,900	550	100	4,459	...	12,713	17,272	9,078	8½	10	8½	53·64	...
Balaghat	3,164	383	1,500	230	559	4,463	...	15,887	23,923(a)	14,126	7	...	...	68·72	...
Chanda	10,749	697	2,052	104	All private and	Takavi Works.	...	...	...	...	6½	8½	6½	30·60	...
Wardha	2,428	400	650	70	21	313	...	1,216	1,550	20	...	8½	...	50·64	...
Total	24,141	2,980	7,626	1,197	859	12,208	...	38,094	54,175	27,231	...	...	...	...	...
NERBUDDA DIVISION.															
Hoshangabad	4,024	499	3,794	361	933	14,649	...	4,723	20,305	7,777	8½	7½	6½	93·12	...
Narsinghpur	1,916	367	1,916	367	588	15,072	...	5,245	20,905	8,011	...	8	8	88·92	...
Nimar	3,928	285	3,928	285	3	136	...	5	144	631	6½	8	7½	64·68	...
Chindwara	4,630	407	2,549	164	409	10,235	...	1,013	11,657	3,476	...	8½	7½	33·96	...
Betul	3,824	323	3,824	323	234	5,248	...	1,581	7,063	2,730	...	...	6	43·56	...
Total	18,892	1,912	16,011	1,500	2,167	45,340	...	12,567	60,074	22,625	...	...	...	...	...
CHHATTISGARH DIVISION.															
Raipur	11,724	1,584	4,027	710	681	9,056	...	31,432	41,169	23,888	7½	...	8	90·00	...
Bilaspur	8,341	1,164	8,341	1,164	988	19,040	...	6,594	26,622	41,873	8	...	8½	81·48	...
Sambalpur	4,948	796	228	62	9	51	...	166	226	63	9	...	7½	43·32	...
Total	25,013	3,544	12,596	1,936	1,678	28,147	...	38,192	68,017	65,824	...	...	...	...	...
Grand Total	87,086	10,811	51,915	6,462	5,782	103,693	...	150,720	263,209	184,792	...	...	...	...	...

(a) Includes 3,014 on malguzari works.

SUPPLEMENTARY STATEMENT A.

Death-rates (per mille per annum) in the Nerbudda Division in June.

Hoshangabad	...	...	...	...	78·0
Narsinghpur...	...	...	...	...	76·8
Nimar	...	...	...	...	82·8
Betul	...	...	...	...	75·6
Chhindwara ...	...	...	...	...	48·0

Monthly famine statement B for the four weeks ending Saturday the 26th June 1897.

[To be submitted to the Government of India within the first half of the next month.]

District.	Maximum number for whom relief is estimated to be required in case of serious famine.	Number for whom relief was provided in last programme of relief works (i.e., average daily number for three months).			Number for whom relief can be provided by works remaining on programme on date of report (i.e., average daily number for three months) (a).		Expenditure since April 1st 1897 (b).			Advances since April 1st up to end of month under (c).			Revenue suspended.
		Date of last programme.	On large works (P. W. D. Schedule A).	Others.	On large works (P. W. D. Schedule A).	Others.	Date up to which account is made up.	Rupees omitting 000s.		Land Improvement Act.	Famine Loans.	Agricultural Loans Act.	Rupees omitting 000s.
								On relief works.	On gratuitous relief.				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
JUBBULPORE DIVISION.													
Jubbulpore	93,000	12-5-97	127,556	...	40,645	...	26-6-97	399	140	...	75	133	399
Saugor	42,000	12-5-97	129,000	...	70,362	...	26-6-97	82	40	...	29	16	425
Damoh	40,000	12-5-97	91,511	...	65,193	...	26-6-97	70	22	3	51	221	(259 remitted)
Mandla	27,000	12-5-97	135,556	...	105,790	...	26-6-97	185	12	...	9	29	33
Seoni	26,000	12-5-97	98,222	...	97,696	...	30-6-97	9	14	1	10	7	84
Total	228,000	...	581,845	...	379,686	...	...	745	228	4	174	406	941 (259 remitted)
NAGPUR DIVISION.													
Nagpur	53,000	6-4-97	51,444	...	50,154	...	26-6-97	89	4	...	30	6	...
Bhandara	52,000	6-4-97	46,111	...	41,172	...	26-6-97	178	21	...	119	...	135
Balaghat	53,000	6-4-97	48,768	...	29,719	...	26-6-97	318	33	...	45	93	155 (3 remitted zamindari Sakolis).
Chanda	49,000	6-4-97	47,262	...	101,308	...	26-6-97	...	...	...	85	6	...
Wardha	28,000	6-4-97	7,056	...	15,876	...	26-6-97	23	...	...	1	1	...
Total	235,000	...	200,641	...	238,229	...	...	608	58	...	280	106	290 (3 remitted).
NERBUDDA DIVISION.													
Hoshangabad	65,000	21-5-97	162,224	24,000	91,549	...	26-6-97	345	12	14	...	...	430
Narsinghpur	46,000	21-5-97	153,984	...	117,608	...	26-6-97	261	26	...	15	5	426
Nimar	18,000	21-5-97	77,171	...	99,230	...	26-6-97	5	5	2	...	6	6
Chhindwara	29,000	21-5-97	128,327	3,000	67,101	...	26-6-97	119	18	...	21	10	...
Betul	23,000	21-5-97	122,067	...	110,252	...	26-6-97	89	13	...	16	14	...
Total	181,000	...	643,773	27,000	485,740	...	...	819	74	16	52	35	862
CHEHATTISGARH DIVISION.													
Raipur	89,000	4-12-96	146,228	17,246	144,884	...	26-6-97	405	36	...	127	34	164
Bilaspur	75,000	26-4-97	56,493	30,000	100,028	...	26-6-97	269	134	...	61	56	210
Sambalpur... ..	56,000	4-12-96	25,778	...	31,519	...	26-6-97	7	1/2	1/2	...	3	...
Total	220,000	...	228,559	47,246	276,431	...	...	681	170 1/2	1/2	188	93	374
GRAND TOTAL	864,000	...	1,654,818	74,246	1,380,086	...	...	2,853	530 1/2	20 1/2	694	640	2,467 (262 remitted).

- (a) Some relief works will have been more or less exhausted since the last programme, and others will have been provided for entry in the next programme. The net result should be shown in columns 6 and 7.
 (b) The submission of the report should not be delayed in order that accounts of expenditure may be made up to date of report.
 (c) The total expenditure incurred and the advances made during the financial year previous to that to which the report and statements under submission belong should be stated in a foot-note.
 This statement will relate to the period between the last Saturday of the previous month and the last Saturday of the month under report.

Summary of the remarks in the District Reports to accompany monthly Famine Statements A and B for the month of June 1897.

JUBBULPORE DIVISION.

1. *Private charity*.—At a time when mothers are grudging food to their children much cannot be expected from private charity. Alms-giving seems to extend very little beyond the distribution effected from the Indian Charitable Relief Fund. During the month of June efforts were concentrated on the distribution of money to cultivators for seed and cattle (head IV. of the programme); accounts are still imperfect, but it appears that:—

	Rs.	
In Saugor ...	193,750	were distributed to 14,000 ryots.
In Damoh ...	163,159	„ „ „ 9,763 „
In Jubbulpore...	246,000	„ „ „ 20,000 „
In Mandla ...	80,000	„ „ „ 7,000 „
In Seoni ...	27,391	„ „ „ 4,648 „

Steps will be taken to get completed accounts submitted without delay.

Lists drawn up by the patwaris formed the primary basis of distribution. They were checked as well as possible by distributing officers who took what care they could to ensure that the recipients were deserving. I am sorry to learn that in the Saugor and Damoh districts patwaris are reported to have levied a large commission. The Deputy Commissioners are fully alive to the gravity of this charge and are taking steps to bring offenders to justice and to compel them to refund.

Not much was done under other heads of the Charity Fund relief programme. Clothes are not a striking necessity in June and it was only in Jubbulpore that many were distributed. In Jubbulpore 390 orphans were maintained by grants from the fund. It is again only in Jubbulpore that funds have been used to any great extent in relief of respectable paupers at their homes. About 1,500 persons were relieved in this way. I have recently been looking into the working of this part of the Charity Fund operations and think that it is susceptible of improvement. In other districts the number of respectable paupers relieved was very small. People of this class are only numerous in large cities.

At Mandla the Church of England Mission provided 1,155 persons with labour relief and maintained 150 in a poor-house. At Seoni the Church of Scotland Mission fed 854 people.

A new departure in charity work at Jubbulpore is the establishment of a cheap grain shop concerning which more will be said next month.

In Jubbulpore and Seoni (and perhaps in other places) charitable people occasionally distribute small doles of grain. But this does more harm than good. It attracts beggars without maintaining them.

2. *Government poor-houses*.—The following table compares the number of poor-houses and their population in each district during the past three months:—

District.	NUMBER OF POOR-HOUSES.			NUMBER OF INMATES.		
	April.	May.	June.	April.	May.	June.
Saugor	5	5	5	3,381	4,598	6,813
Damoh	4	4	5	1,104	1,236	1,548
Jubbulpore	5	5	4	2,715	2,408	3,342
Mandla	2	2	2	551	470	733
Seoni	2	2	2	430	465	720
Total	18	18	18	8,181	9,177	12,156

A rise was to be expected with the curtailment of work relief as the monsoon approached, and the increases in all districts except Saugor call for no special explanation. In Saugor I fear that arrangements have been allowed to get out of hand. At the present time there are over 4,000 people in the Saugor poor-house and the proper management of this crowd must be impossible. The Deputy Commissioner thinks that the Police have been sending too freely to the poor-houses. But these institutions are intended to be worked as depôts and I would deprecate any restrictions on their use as such, especially at the present time when there is an idea that admissions to Public Works Department works are to be strictly scrutinised. It would seem that the poor-house Superintendent is to blame for not having drafted persons out with sufficient expedition. So far as appears it has not been the practice to draft persons from poor-houses on to the village relief lists, as is very largely done in the North-Western Provinces, and I think that a possible explanation of the large poor-house population may be found in the state of village relief in this district which will be noticed further on. I have now given instructions to the Deputy Commissioner which I hope will have the effect of reducing the poor-house population to manageable proportions.

The poor-house mortality continues regrettably high. In the Saugor District the poor-house death-rate was 44 per mille per mensem, in Damoh 64 per mille, in Jubbulpore 97 per mille and in Mandla actually 143 per mille, nearly a seventh of the inmates having died. The continuance of this very high mortality is one of the most unsatisfactory features in the present situation, as it seems to indicate that there are a number of people who are not reached by our relief measures till they find death's door at the poor-house compound.

3. *Relief centres.*—In Saugor and Damoh there were no relief centres. The effect of these centres in the other three districts during each of the past two months is indicated below :—

District.	NO. OF CENTRES.		NO. RELIEVED GRATUITOUSLY.		NO. ON LIGHT WORK.		TOTAL.	
	May.	June.	May.	June.	May.	June.	May.	June.
Jubbulpore ...	11	9	1,201	1,460	2,740	786	3,941	2,246
Mandla	17	17	919	745	3,562	3,029	4,481	3,774
Seoni	5	4	64	79	354	269	418	348
Total ...	33	30	2,184	2,284	6,656	4,084	8,840	6,368

The grant of daily money allowances at certain central places either gratuitously or in return for light work, is not expressly contemplated by the Famine Code, and was apparently only undertaken as a makeshift till works and village relief were properly organized. The numbers relieved at these centres have been rapidly falling. The 9 centres still open in the Jubbulpore District will be now merely used as kitchens and hospitals, and I propose to have, if possible, a similar arrangement made in Mandla and Seoni.

4. *Village relief.*—Totals for the two last months are compared below :—

Districts.	NO. RELIEVED AT THEIR HOUSES.		
	May.	June.	Difference.
Saugor	11,174	9,385	— 1,789
Damoh	10,863	11,203	+ 340
Jubbulpore	18,418	18,178	— 240
Mandla	1,880	2,268	+ 388
Seoni	1,972	2,026	+ 54
Total	44,307	— 43,060	— 1,247

There are remarkable differences between one district and another in the extent to which use is made of house to house relief. In Jubbulpore the relief lists include 2·4 per cent. of the total population, but the proportion is as high as 3·0 per cent. in the Murwara and 3·2 per cent. in the Sehora tahsils [I may mention that in the North-Western Provinces 3 per cent. is accepted as the limit for all but exceptionally distressed tracts]. In Damoh this percentage is exceeded, 3·5 per cent. of the population being on the lists. But this does not appear excessive looking to the circumstances of the district. It may be said to its credit that the death-rate and the poor-house population are both low. Saugor presents the most violent contrast: on the district as a whole the percentage is only 1·6. It is highest (2·9) in the tahsil, which I understand to be less distressed, Rehli, and is only 1·8 in the Khurai tahsil where distress is acute. In Banda the figures show only 0·2 per cent. but they are disowned by the Deputy Commissioner. He shows that the tahsildar has all along been grossly understating the extent to which this kind of relief has been granted, reporting from work to work only the numbers relieved in the villages actually visited, not the total number on the relief list. This may have been excusable four months ago when the famine organization was new, but in my judgment it is inexcusable now, and the Deputy Commissioner has laid himself open to severe criticism for having permitted it. In Mandla again house to house relief is plainly inadequate, touching only 0·7 per cent. of the population. The Deputy Commissioner may have thought that his relief centres would take its place. It is undoubtedly easier to wait till people come for relief than to bring it to their doors. But it is infinitely less effective as a means of saving life, which is the object immediately before us. And for many other obvious reasons it is preferable to keep weakly people at their homes than to collect them at imperfectly supervised depôts, especially during the rains.

I will not comment on the decrease shown in the Saugor district as orders which have reached the Deputy Commissioner may be responsible for it. The Deputy Commissioner of Jubbulpore mentioned that village relief has been altogether stopped in *Haveli* villages. I am not sure that so sweeping a measure is judicious and I am addressing him on the point.

5. General character of relief works.

(a) Under the Public Works Department.

The statistics of the two past months are contrasted below:—

Districts.	WORKERS.		DEPENDANTS.		TOTAL.		DIFFERENCE.
	May.	June.	May.	June.	May.	June.	+ or —
Saugor	25,896	16,502	2,750	1,776	28,646	18,278	—10,368
Damoh	21,048	18,080	2,917	2,656	23,965	20,736	— 3,229
Jubbulpore	36,033	15,933	7,042	1,908	43,075	17,841	—25,234
Mandla	18,178	7,170	4,800	1,452	22,978	8,622	—14,356
Seoni	11,024	6,025	1,756	773	12,780	6,798	— 5,982
Total	112,179	63,710	19,265	8,565	131,444	72,275	—59,169

Taking workers and dependants together there is a decrease of 45 per cent. This is ascribed in the District Reports to—

- (1) the closing of certain works ;
- (2) the introduction of the piece-work system ;
- (3) the return of people to their villages for field work.

Four works were closed in the Jubbulpore District and one work in Mandla. Piece work was introduced on 3 charges out of 12 in Saugor, on 4 charges out of 11 in Jubbulpore, on 4 charges out of 5 in Mandla and on all the charges in Seoni. Damoh is the only district in which there was no curtailment in the work relief offered, and it will be seen that in it the decline in numbers was only 14 per cent. The condition of the relief workers generally warranted an increase in the severity of the test, and it was of the utmost importance that the works should not tempt people to stay away from their fields. But so radical a change necessarily entailed some hardship, and it is clear that the Deputy Commissioners of Saugor, Jubbulpore, and Mandla are not quite satisfied with the results. Indeed, the Deputy Commissioner of Saugor has retrogressed to the task system on all of his works, and the Deputy Commissioner of Jubbulpore has recommended that this course be followed in some cases. The orders for the introduction of piece work strongly insist on the absolute necessity of making separate provision for infirm people who come to the works for relief. But this has in most cases not been done. I have issued stringent instructions on the subject. If weakly persons are denied relief and are left to wander away in search of it (as on one work I found to be the case) there will certainly be a risk of deaths from starvation.

On the other hand, I should note that the Executive Engineer of the Jubbulpore Division has informed me that on one work (at Jhiria) a very large decline in numbers is simply due to people leaving for their fields, and that this is generally sufficient to account for a considerable decrease in numbers is evident from the large proportion of women on the works. The fields offer them no employment till weeding begins. I have, moreover, satisfied myself that people in good health and strength earn, under the piece work rules, sufficient, and more than sufficient, for their support. But the rules press hardly on those who are weak or sickly. On those, in fact, who under the rules ought not to be on piece works at all.

(b) *Under District Officers.*

Comparative figures are given below :—

District.	May.	June.	+ or -
Jubbulpore	16,607	4,475	-12,132
Saugor	13,617	595	-13,022
Damoh	15,012	5,332	- 9,680
Mandla	2,258	1,639	- 619
Seoni	987	313	- 674
Total	48,481	12,354	-36,127

The decrease in numbers here amounts to 75 per cent., chiefly due to works being closed. Most of them are tank works, and it has all along been recognized that it would be impossible to keep them open once the rains had broken.

(c) *Loan works.*

No complete figures are given to show the extent to which works undertaken with Government loans employed labour during the month, but it is evident that the field was not very great. Operations were being contracted rapidly as the time for the monsoon approached, and in the Jubbulpore District some loans were returned to the Deputy Commissioner.

6. *Physical condition of the people.*—There seems to be a consensus of opinions that the condition of relief workers had by the middle of June become very satisfactory, and it was, indeed, on reports to this effect that steps were taken

to render the relief works rather less attractive. But on almost every work there was a residuum of weakly people whose condition now attracts more notice than it did when they were diffused amongst hundreds of well-fed coolies, and this partly no doubt explains reports which have reached me that the condition of the people on the relief works is actually deteriorating. The Deputy Commissioners of Saugor, Damoh, and Seoni write cheerfully. Mr. Phillips states that cases of emaciation are very rare even in the most affected parts. Mr. Blakesley writes that the condition of the people has generally much improved. Captain McNabb reports that it is rare to meet with cases of emaciation except in poor-houses. The reports from Jubbulpore and Mandla are less satisfactory. Mr. Robertson believes that the condition of the people is in some respects deteriorating, and his view is certainly fully borne out by reports which have reached him from his inspecting officers and the Police. Syed Alay Mohomed quotes the Civil Surgeon's opinion that "owing to increasing difficulty in procuring food-grain the physical condition of village people is generally deteriorating, weakness and emaciation being more apparent. Dr. Murphy's opinion certainly carries weight.

Vigorous measures will now be taken under the Chief Commissioner's orders to improve the administration of village relief and to supplement it with kitchens, and I am hopeful of the effect of these measures, which, in the event of a heavy monsoon, must to some extent take the place of work relief. It is to be remembered, moreover, that these reports were written at a time when rain was persistently holding off and apprehension of future troubles added to the gravity of those in the present.

7. *Mortality*.—The usual statistics are given below :—

District.	No of Deaths.		RATE PER MILLE PER ANNUM.			
			Exclusive of towns.		Inclusive of towns.	
	April.	May.	April.	May.	April.	May.
Jubbulpore	4,014	4,721	52·8	74·4	63·6	75·6
Saugor	3,047	4,427	60	86·86	62	89
Damoh	1,592	1,362	} Not given }		58	50
Seoni	1,571	...			53	55
Mandla... ..	1,430	2,436			50·8	86·16

These figures are not very instructive as they include a very large mortality from cholera. Excluding deaths from cholera the monthly death-rates per mille have been :—

Districts.	April.	May.	COMPARE PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION IN RECEIPT OF RELIEF.	
			April.	May.
Saugor	4·2	5·8	7·3	9·9
Damoh	3·9	3·1	11·3	16·6
Jubbulpore	5·6	5·3	12·8	11·5
Mandla	?	5·1	9·0	9·6
Seoni	3·4	3·6	3·7	4·5

It is a striking fact that the death-rate (apart from cholera) is lowest in Damoh, and it is difficult not to see some connection between this and the liberality with which Mr. Blakesley has given relief, and in particular to people at their houses. In this district alone was there a substantial extension of relief measures during May. The death-rate of May was at its highest in Saugor, though I suspect that if deaths had been properly registered in the wilds of Mandla that district would have headed the list. In both districts and in Jubbulpore the rate is high, being, I presume, nearly double what it should have been during the hot weather months.

Cholera caused very heavy mortality during both months. In May it was responsible for the death of over 3,000 persons in this division.

The number of deaths which should be ascribed to privation or to starvation has not and cannot be returned with anything approaching exactitude. Mandla alone returns deaths as having directly resulted from want of food. Eight deaths are so reported, but the Deputy Commissioner distrusts the reports. Deaths indirectly due to the famine are more numerous, but it is very difficult to bring the information given in the District Reports within the columns of a single table:—

DEATHS ASCRIBED DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY TO WANT OF FOOD.						
Districts.	MAY.			JUNE.		
	In poor-houses.	Else-where.	TOTAL.	In poor-houses.	Else-where.	TOTAL.
Saugor	158	3	161	261	?	261
Damoh	99	1	100	Not reported.		...
Jubbulpore	582	57	639	329	520	849
Mandla	155	4	159	105	9	114
Seoni	?	?	97	?	?	136

The statistics of mortality due to famine are supposed to be brought up to the end of the month under report. But it is obviously very difficult, if not impossible, to get them in from distant reporting circles in time for submission, and the Deputy Commissioner of Damoh has not attempted to give figures for June. The Jubbulpore statistics alone are complete. In other cases Deputy Commissioners have not had time to look much beyond their poor-houses. The increase in the number of deaths reported from Jubbulpore, coupled with the local reports on the situation, gives ground for some anxiety.

8. *Stocks.*—Prices ran very high in parts of Damoh, but the Mandla District appears to include the only localities which could not safely be left for their grain supply to private enterprise. So long ago as the middle of May last disquieting reports were received from the Dindori Tahsil, in one case an officer in charge reporting that he had been compelled to close the children's kitchen for lack of grain. We owe it to arrangements made by the late Mr. Priest that prospects have improved. The firm of Raja Seth Gokaldass has undertaken responsibility for the provision of grain on works in the Mandla Tahsil other than the one on the Jubbulpore road. The needs of Dindori have been met by the importation on Government account of 7,771 maunds of grain which have been safely delivered by road. The Deputy Commissioner has been able himself to arrange for the delivery of some 3,000 maunds of small millet (kodou and kutki) from Rewa and other places outside the district to meet the requirements for seed grain as well as for food.

The Deputy Commissioner of Damoh was able to arrange with the Indian Midland Railway for the use of ballast trains for the importation of a large quantity of grain—over 20,000 maunds, I believe—during the short period for which the rails were laid through to Damoh.

9. *Prices.*—The prices for the two past months are compared below :—

Seers per rupee.

Districts.	WHEAT.		GRAM.		COMMON RICE.	
	May.	June.	May.	June.	May.	June.
Saugor	8½	8½	8¼	8¼	6½	6
Damoh	8	7¼	9	7½	6½	6
Jubbulpore	10¼	9¼	10¼	9½	8	8
Mandla... ..	8	7½	8½	7½	7	7
Seoni	10¾	8	...	...	8½	...

The price of wheat and gram has risen largely in Jubbulpore and in the two districts which are supplied from Jubbulpore, Damoh, and Mandla.

10. *Import and Export of grain :—*

Districts.	IMPORTS.			EXPORTS.		
	April.	May.	June.	April.	May.	June.
	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.
Saugor	26,012	47,279	64,843	595	950	1,783
Damoh		Not reported.				
Jubbulpore	47,446	100,777	95,677	71,978	30,808	26,574
Mandla... ..	5,000	50,000	105,000	<i>Nil.</i>	<i>Nil.</i>	<i>Nil.</i>
Seoni	16,124	10,280	5,531	6,126	3,120	2,009

The net imports during June into Saugor, Jubbulpore, and Mandla sufficed to feed for one month 28, 24, and 82 per cent. of the population respectively. It will be seen that Seoni is practically self-supporting.

11. *General condition and prospects of affected areas.*—The physical condition of the people has been already touched upon. For the rest everything depends on the character of the monsoon. The large sums which have been given away for seed and bullocks are of themselves sufficient for the cultivation of a considerable proportion of the total kharif area. And the people generally manage to sow a much larger area than *a priori* considerations would trust to them. Excellent rain fell at the end of the third week of June, but the monsoon current drew off, and, save for some scattered showers, no rain fell from the 24th June to the 8th July. Very little rice was sown on the strength of the June rainfall save in good land, and the loss of rice seed has not been considerable. But juari and kodou were sown largely, and it is feared that much of the sowings have germinated and withered. The question of distributing supplementary advances is receiving urgent attention. In most districts there are balances to the credit of the Charity Fund, which will be promptly utilized, and under the Chief Commissioner's orders additional grants of Government money are to be applied for where necessary.

The Deputy Commissioner's reports were written before the welcome rainfall of the last two days, and are gloomier in tone than they would be if now re-written. The Deputy Commissioner, Saugor, writes :—

"The rainy season has begun well. The heavy falls of rain on the 20th, 21st, and 22nd followed by a long spell of clear weather, have been most favourable for the kharif sowings ;

and it is believed that the greater part of the area to be sown has been sown. The destitute cultivators have, as I have indicated above, been enabled by the grants made to them from the charitable fund to make due arrangements for the carrying on of cultivation.

"The whole of my allotment for the current year (Rs. 52,000) has already been expended in Takkavi. Numerous applications for agricultural loans have of necessity been rejected. But, on the whole, I believe that the cultivators have been able to obtain the requisite plough cattle, seed, and subsistence grain somehow."

The Deputy Commissioner of Damoh states that :—

"Whatever small stocks the people had, have already been consumed. The Takkavi loans and the charitable grants have relieved the people greatly, and their results will be noticed in a few months. The first fall of rain enabled the people to prepare their land for kharif sowings; but the long and continued break which followed it has caused anxiety. Those who have already sown their land are likely to suffer most if it does not rain soon."

From Jubbulpore Mr. Robertson reports that :—

"The break in the rains is doing much harm to the crops already sown. These are beginning to wither and dry up. Persons who have received Takkavi and grants of money from the charitable fund are unable to sow their land, and the latter class are reported to be in some cases using their grants for food."

For Mandla the Deputy Commissioner gives the guarded opinion that :—

"The general condition cannot be said to be very bad yet. Probably it will go to worse in the months of July and August."

The Deputy Commissioner of Seoni believes that in one tahsil (Lakhnadon) all the available seed was sown during the fourth week of June, and a very considerable amount of millet and some rice in the other tahsil. Much damage had been done by the cessation of rain at the time he wrote and prospects were decidedly gloomy.

12. *Crime*.—There is nothing very remarkable in the statistics of crime.

	NUMBER OF OFFENCES.				
	Saugor.	Damoh.	Jubbulpore.	Mandla.	Seoni.
June 1897	240	133	357*	123	90
May 1897	275	138	270*	133	72
Compare June 1896... ..	211	177	350*	104	130

* Thefts and burglaries only.

13. *Changes in the Rate of Wages*.—In Damoh the rate on which wages are calculated was raised to eight seers per rupee, and a rise was also made in the northern tahsils of Jubbulpore where three rates are now in use, in different localities $8\frac{1}{2}$, 9, and $9\frac{1}{2}$ seers per rupee. No changes were made in other districts if we except the important results of the introduction of piece work.

14. *Employment afforded by Railway Work*.—Statistics are given below.

Numbers working on the—

Districts.	24th April.	29th May.	26th June.
Jubbulpore	3,921	4,256	3,723
Saugor	7,561	8,781	5,073
Damoh	13,090	11,004	5,190
Total	24,572	24,041	13,986

The decline in numbers is generally due to the opening of employment in the fields.

15. *Summary for the Division.*—The aggregate numbers on relief at the end of May and June are compared below :—

Nature of relief.	29th May.	26th June.
	Numbers relieved.	Numbers relieved.
(A) WORKS.		
1. Public Works Department	112,179	63,710
2. Under Civil Officers	55,137	16,438
Total	167,316	80,148
(B) GRATUITOUS RELIEF.		
1. In poor-houses	9,277	13,206
2. Other gratuitous relief, including that of dependants on works	62,356	55,847
Total (B)	71,633	69,053
TOTAL (A) AND (B)	238,949	149,201

There has been a decline in numbers of 38 per cent. almost wholly due to a diminution in the amount of work relief granted.

(b) *Action taken to Organize and Complete Measures of Relief.*—A monsoon programme has been drawn up for each district and is being followed. If rains are favourable it will doubtless suffice. But if good rains should fail distress will intensify beyond anything as yet experienced, and it will be necessary to reconsider the plan of operations. I have already taken the instructions of the Chief Commissioner on this point, and am instituting enquiries with reference to an expansion of the programme which will, it is hoped, prove unnecessary. Meanwhile the adequacy of village relief measures is receiving the attention of Deputy Commissioners, and steps are being taken to facilitate the obtaining of cooked food by the hungry. Public Works Department kitchens are being expanded, and new kitchens established in places where the condition of the children shows that they are needed.

(c) *Prospects of the Division.*—There is little to be said at the present time of transition except to re-iterate the obvious truism that everything depends on the character of the monsoon, and to remark that famine administration seems to need most attention in the districts of Saugor and Mandla.

NAGPUR DIVISION.

1. *Private Relief.—Balaghat.*—There are no private institutions. Subscriptions amounting to Rs. 246 were collected for the poor-houses in Balaghat, Baihar, and Katangi. Out of an allotment of Rs. 218,540 made from the charitable fund Rs. 214,263 were spent during the month, including a large amount distributed in grain in the Baihar Tahsil.

Bhandara.—The sum of Rs. 75,000 referred to in my last report as having been allotted by the Charitable Relief Committee for the provision of seed, grain, and bullocks for impoverished agriculturists, was distributed throughout the district, thereby assisting over 5,000 cultivators. In addition to this, agricultural loans to the extent of 25,000 were advanced to about 2,000 cultivators. These sums, although not, of course, sufficient to meet all demands, have undoubtedly effected an immense amount of good. Expenditure was also incurred in providing clothing for the destitute on relief works and in poor-houses.

Chanda.—Seed grain of the value of Rs. 25,880 has been distributed throughout the district to necessitous tenants. In consequence of the damage already caused by the delay in the monsoon, application has been made to the Charitable Relief Committee for a sum of Rs. 30,000 in addition to the 15,000 already allotted to the district.

Nagpur.—There are at present seven poor-houses, *viz.*, three in Umrer and one each in Bela, Mowar, Markher, and Sawargaon. These institutions have been established by private persons for the purpose of providing cooked food for the more destitute paupers—859 persons were relieved on the last day of the month in these poor-houses, and the amount spent was Rs. 863-6-6. The subscriptions towards the poor-houses at Umrer and Bela amounted to Rs. 703-5-0. There are many well-to-do persons throughout the district who continue to help destitute travellers and other paupers.

In the village of Mandhal, in the Umrer Tahsil, the wealthy residents have subscribed Rs. 500, with which a shop has been started. Grain is here sold to the local poor at cost price. In the same village about a hundred poor people are fed daily by private charity.

Wardha.—Juari is still being doled out to the poor people at various centres in the districts. The subscriptions raised for the purpose are said to be likely to last for a month more.

2. *Poor-house Relief.*—*Balaghat.*—There has been no change in the number and locality of Government poor-houses. The inmates have increased from 721 to 811. There were 121 deaths against 193 in May.

Bhandara.—The number of poor-houses remained the same throughout the month. The buildings have all been completed and strengthened so as to afford adequate shelter during the monsoon months. The number of the inmates has fluctuated but little during the month; it was 825 against 823 at the end of May. The total number of admissions during the month to all poor-houses was 516 as against 685 during May, 418 persons were discharged as fit for work, and 159 deaths occurred; there was also one birth. The number of deaths was somewhat higher than in May, especially at Gondia, where the Hospital Assistant was found to take very little interest in his work. He has now been removed. At Gondia the new admissions are reported to be mostly beggars who have hitherto been living on what they could pick up, but at the other poor-houses new arrivals are generally labourers who have obstinately clung to their homes, where they had no work, instead of seeking it elsewhere, till increasing distress drove them to seek Government help. The high mortality is, however, due to some extent to the excessive and abnormal heat, which naturally told on aged and weakly people, and many succumbed to its effects who were not really suffering from privation. The police also continue to relieve starving wanderers and send them to the nearest poor-house if they are not fit for work; 155 persons were so relieved during the period under report against 227 in May. Such cases are now becoming exceptional, as will be seen from the following:—

Number relieved during week ending 5th June	...	...	76
" " " " " 12th "	...	...	34
" " " " " 19th "	...	...	29
" " " " " 26th "	...	...	16

Chanda.—No poor-house relief.

Nagpur.—The number in the Nagpur poor-house has increased from 600 to 773. A further increase is expected when heavy rain sets in. Accommodation is ample. It is under contemplation to open a poor-house at Katol shortly.

Wardha.—There are no Government poor-houses at present, but owing to distress commencing because of the monsoon being delayed I have just sanctioned an application of the Deputy Commissioner to open a poor-house at Headquarters, and another at Hinganghat.

3. *Village Relief.*

Balaghat.—The number of relief centres continues to stand at four, but the recipients of such relief have decreased from 48 to 35 and ten persons are

getting light labour. The number of persons relieved in their homes in the Balaghat and Baihar tahsils was (6,917+1,878) 8,795 against (6,510+1,396) 7,906 in May.

Bhandara.—The only relief centres in this district are the children's kitchens established at all police-station houses and outposts. Their number remained unchanged during the month, *viz.*, 26, but the number of children fed rose from 558 to 757. The number of persons in receipt of gratuitous relief in their homes increased during the month from 3,019 to 4,389. This form of relief may, I think, now be considered to be completely organised throughout those parts of the district where it is required. But owing to persons entitled to this relief being sent to their homes from time to time, either from poor-houses or from relief works, where they have been hitherto wrongly relieved as "dependants," some slight increase may still be expected in the future. The lists prepared are checked frequently by inspecting officers and every endeavour is made to limit this form of relief to those strictly entitled to it.

Chanda.—Village relief is just commencing in consequence of rise in prices. 1,725 persons were relieved by private charity against 237 in the previous month.

Nagpur.—All the distressed parts have just been visited by the Deputy Commissioner, Superintendent of Land Records, Tahsildars, and Munsiffs in order to check the expenditure of famine loan money and to see that it was spent on the objects for which it was given. Relief under Section 34 has not been found necessary. The Deputy Commissioner, however, reports that if the present state of affairs continues such relief will soon be required, because the well-to-do, of whom there are many, are likely to be overwhelmed by the prospect of continued misfortunes and their means will be exhausted. The Deputy Commissioner of this district (Mr. Blenkinsop) makes some remarks about village relief in which I quite concur, and therefore quote below :—

"I do not think that the blind, halt, and lepers are by any means the first to suffer in a wealthy district. It is a religious duty to feed them, and they are a limited number, whereas those who begin to starve because they cannot get work, or are thrown out of work temporarily through sickness, have no claim on the charity of the wealthy. There is no religious duty to help them, and their number is unlimited, *i.e.*, if a wealthy person began to help them he would not know where to draw the line. For this reason, I have ordered Tahsildars to keep a careful look-out for such cases. Kotwals are ordered to bring them to the Mukkaddams' notice, and I have asked for a permanent advance of Rs. 50 for each Tahsildar for expenditure likely to be incurred in this way."

Wardha.—The Deputy Commissioner reports that lists of the poor are being prepared by patwaris, and that relief of this kind will be organized as soon as they are ready, if no rain falls in the interval and no improvement in the present prospects occurs.

4. Relief Works.

Balaghat.—The large works and the number of persons employed on them at the end of May and June are shown below :—

	May.	June.
Lalbara-Rampaili Road (1 camp)	6,560	2,110
Balaghat-Baihar Road (3 camps)... ..	3,205	4,049
Lanji-Amgaon Road (2 camps)	14,766	1,537
Lanji-Balaghat Road (3 camps)	18,149	9,225
	(2 camps)	
Waraseoni-Katangi Road (1 camp)	6,634	6,027
Bakal tank	899	500
Goradehi tank	216	...
Bhilewani tank	1,075	1,221
Alna tank	379	222
Ajgara tank	295	493
Total	52,178	25,384

A third camp has been opened on the Lanji-Balaghat road, and the Goradehi tank has been completed. The number of persons on malguzari tanks was 3,014 in 168 villages against 9,264 in 520 villages in May.

Bhandara and Nagpur.—The number of persons on Public Works Department relief works at the end of May and June respectively is shown below :—

Districts.	WORKERS.		DEPENDANTS.		TOTAL.		
	May.	June.	May.	June.	May.	June.	+ or —
Bhandara	31,088	17,272	6,269	3,107	37,357	20,379	—16,978
Nagpur	15,631	11,430	2,676	2,375	18,307	13,805	— 4,502

It will be noticed that in Bhandara numbers have decreased to nearly half of their former figure, while there has been a large decrease in Nagpur.

The introduction of the piece-work system on three works (the Bhandara circuit road, Gondia-Balaghat road, and Satgaon road) is no doubt responsible for part of the decrease in Bhandara, the balance must be ascribed to the approach of the monsoon, which caused cultivators and agricultural labourers to return to their homes for ploughing and sowing operations. The decrease in the number of dependants is almost proportionate to the fall in the number of workers, but the actual figure is still high and efforts are being made to limit this form of relief to true adult dependants and non-working children.

In Bhandara there are no local works under the District Officer, but a large number of private works were in progress during the month, mostly carried on with the aid of famine loans. There were 499 such works open at the close of the month employing 15,725 labourers. The expenditure from famine loans was Rs. 31,510-8-5, while Rs. 4,736-9-6 more are said to have been spent from private funds (including Court of Wards). The works being executed with the aid of these famine loans are of inestimable benefit in providing employment for the labouring classes at or near their villages and are also of very great permanent value to the district; several fine large tanks have been newly constructed and many old ones have been extensively repaired.

In Nagpur famine loans to the extent of nearly Rs. 30,000 have been granted. The number of persons employed on famine loan works at the end of the month was 1,778, consisting of 832 men, 886 women and 60 children.

Chanda.—The only Public Works Department work which was under construction in the Nandgaon State had to be closed during the month owing to an outbreak of cholera. Some of the tank works referred to in my last report have been completed.

Wardha.—There is only one relief work, *viz.*, that at Arvi. It is worked on both the piece-work and task-work systems conjointly. Numbers have considerably fallen and this the Deputy Commissioner attributes partly to the introduction of piece work and partly to the expected approach of the rains. If the rains are delayed longer it will be necessary to open out more works.

5. Physical condition of the people.

Balaghat.—The condition of those in receipt of gratuitous relief is much the same as was reported last month. People, as they become fit, are sent on the works, others who refuse to leave their villages are brought on the lists. Those on works are healthy and generally strong. As regards the distressed tracts the condition of the people varies immensely. The Deputy Commissioner, who has been distributing charitable relief during the month to several thousand cultivators, reports that in one village the people are fairly fit, and in the next they are a set of skeletons, and that too within 5 or 6 miles of a relief work. These people flatly refuse to leave their villages unless they can come and go to their work daily. With the ordinary labourer, who is accustomed to go to Berar

for employment, it is just the opposite. They prefer wandering about in a state of utter destitution, picking up what they can, and they will not settle down at a relief work.

Bhandara.—The general condition of the people throughout the district is now fairly normal. The Deputy Commissioner reports that on relief works their condition is almost without exception good, as nearly all of them have been at work for some months. In poor-houses persons showing signs of privation are seen, but principally among the old and infirm or among wanderers brought in by the Police. The condition of those in receipt of village relief is as good as can be expected.

Chanda.—The physical condition of the people is said to be fair.

Nagpur.—Many of the people coming in to the poor-houses are very emaciated. On the works the labourers are in fair condition. The condition of the people in distressed tracts is gradually deteriorating. The Deputy Commissioner states that owing to the want of rain sowing is delayed and the vegetables, which are relied upon by the very poor for food at this season, have not come up.

Wardha.—The condition of the people is said to be good on works and fairly good elsewhere.

6. Deaths from starvation.

Balaghat.—The figures for June have not yet been entirely verified. The Deputy Commissioner reports that in May there were no deaths from starvation. The total number of deaths in that month was 3,371, of which 789 were due to cholera and 25 to small-pox. Omitting these deaths therefore the death-rate for May was 6·67, against a death-rate of 5·62 in April. There were 121 deaths in the poor-houses, due chiefly to dysentery and diarrhœa.

Bhandara.—The mortality return for May shows an annual death-rate of 44·69. Only one death, proved to be due to starvation, was reported during that month at the Downiwara outpost in the north of the district. The Deputy Commissioner states that 10 more deaths were reported by the Police as due to starvation, but these were all cases of unknown wanderers whose bodies were found in the jungle or in fields; in such cases the actual cause of death could not be ascertained. Two of the victims are said to have been 70 and 80 years old respectively. Two more cases were reported as accelerated by privation; they were both unknown wanderers, 50 and 60 years old, returning from the direction of Berar. They were fed by the Mukaddams of the village through which they passed, but succumbed to the results of previous privation.

Chanda.—Of the six deaths reported in May as due to starvation it has been found on verification that two were caused by fever and two by cholera. The Deputy Commissioner in a telegram just received (copy of which has been sent by him direct to the Secretariat) reports that the remaining two deaths were due to other causes though one may be ascribed to effects of previous privation.

Nagpur.—One death occurred from starvation in the poor-house; 46 deaths in all were reported during June as verified by the Police. The Deputy Commissioner, however, reports that "going carefully through the lists I find only 10 deaths where the presumption is strong that death was really due to hunger." Nearly all the cases reported were of wanderers.

Wardha.—The Deputy Commissioner states that a few cases have been reported, but that they have not yet been verified, and seem doubtful.

7. Food stocks.

Balaghat.—Please see remarks below under 8.

Bhandara.—There is no scarcity of food supply in the District, although some difficulty was anticipated in securing a regular supply on all relief works during the rains. Contracts have been given out for the supply of grain to four camps.

Chanda and Wardha.—Food supply is said to be sufficient at present.

8. *Importation of grain.*—The imports and exports, as reported by Deputy Commissioners, are shown below :—

Districts.	IMPORTS IN MAUNDS.		EXPORTS IN MAUNDS.		Remarks.
	May.	June.	May.	June.	
Balaghat ... ..	...	47,634	...	...
Bhandara	130,692	80,888	10,158	10,515	
Nagpur	67,722	138,131	6,705	9,430	By rail.
		41,145	...	1,485	By road.
Wardha	13,274	7,019	2,237	3,546	

The Charitable Relief Committee have imported nearly Rs. 40,000 worth of food grain into Baihar tahsil. The difficulty reported in my last report as regards the arrangements for transport of grain up to Baihar has been overcome by the employment of banjaras for the purpose. A large quantity of grain, more than we hoped for at one time, has already been distributed in the Baihar tahsil, and with the aid of the banjaras who have been induced to take up the work, I do not anticipate any serious difficulty in transport throughout the rains.

In Bhandara the Deputy Commissioner considers that private enterprise may be trusted to keep the supply up to the demand.

9. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*

Balaghat.—The Deputy Commissioner reports: "Prospects as I write exceedingly gloomy. All the seed for transplantation has been sown and half is already withered up. For the broad-cast rice there is still hope, so long as it has not germinated. The seed beds; which a week ago were a brilliant green, are now a uniform grey." This is serious and means that still less labour than ever will be required in the fields so that the numbers on relief works will rise shortly and that the distress will continue right on till next year. These remarks about Balaghat apply, though in less degree, to the other districts. For want of rain, sowings have generally been much retarded or, where they have been effected, the seed has dried up in many places, and resowing will be necessary, and people who had gone to their villages are now flocking back to the relief works. Fodder reported to be scarce and cattle are suffering in consequence.

10. *Changes in rates of wages.*

There has practically been little or no change, but owing to prices rising some alteration will soon become necessary.

11. *State of crime.*

Balaghat.—The Deputy Commissioner reports that there has been a satisfactory decrease.

Bhandara.—There has been no serious crime which could be attributed to famine. Cases of petty thefts have been somewhat frequent.

Chanda.—There is a decided increase of crime throughout the district, principally thefts of small value, owing to rise in prices.

Nagpur.—Petty crime is still very prevalent, owing apparently to prevailing high prices.

12. *General remarks for the division.*

(a) *Situation with regard to famine.*—In order to get the best possible idea of the situation I visited each district of the division during the past month,

Balaghat and Bhandara about the middle of the month, and Chanda and Wardha towards the close.

In Balaghat and Bhandara everything was comparatively hopeful, as there were good showers on four or five days with every indication of an early monsoon and sowing was briskly carried on. Chanda and Wardha had, however, only one good shower each, just about the middle of the month, and when I was at these places, between 28th ultimo and 3rd current, no more rain had fallen and there was consequently great despondency and anxiety. Much rice sown in Chanda and cotton in Wardha was drying up for want of moisture, and a considerable amount of resowing will have to be done. On the 5th current I began to receive disheartening reports from Balaghat, where there was practically no rain since the 22nd ultimo, which caused much damage to the rice which awaited transplantation. No news from Bhandara, I hoped augured well, and that hope has been confirmed by recent information. All the district reports were dispatched by or before the 6th current, till when there had been no rain to speak of anywhere in the division, nothing but a few scattered showers of light rain. During the last three days, however, there has been some rain all over the division, which though late has arrived just in time to effect an incalculable amount of good, and to improve materially the general situation. In the Headquarters district of Nagpur, there has been comparatively more rain, and better distributed than elsewhere, and the situation here is distinctly hopeful and promising.

(b) *Measures taken to organize and complete measures of relief.*—These have been already described in my last report. The system of village to village relief is working smoothly and advances have been made to the Police for assisting and forwarding on wanderers to the various relief centres. A new camp was opened on the Lanji-Balaghat road. Preparations have been made for the monsoon months both in the way of strengthening poor-house buildings and of erecting substantial sheds and huts on relief camps. I saw several of these during my tour last month, and thought them suitable and well placed. The piece-work system was introduced on certain relief works in conjunction with infirm gangs on task work, into which those who were unable to earn a living at piece work were drafted.

With regard to public works the policy has been to induce agriculturists and labourers to return to their villages for field work.

(c) *Prospects of the Division as regards scarcity.*—My remarks under (a) "Situation with regard to Famine" apply also here. Prospects are not very bright. In some districts more than half of last year's area has already been sown, of which over 25 per cent. has not germinated for want of rain. Everything now depends upon an early and good rainfall, the chance of which, however, has much improved during the last three days. Large grants of takkavi or charitable funds will be required, but even then the supply of seed grain would probably be a difficult matter, at any rate in Bhandara and Balaghat. Prices are also showing a tendency to rise which will continue unless the regular monsoon commences soon and continues favourably. It is a great relief to me that prospects have improved so much since the receipt of the district reports, but I am not yet certain how far the rain during these last three days has been generally distributed, or confined to local showers.

It remains to be seen also whether it will continue favourably and merge rapidly into the regular monsoon, of which the weather reports now give reasonable hope. It is somewhat difficult therefore to express any confident opinion about prospects till another week or so has elapsed meanwhile, as above stated, it is a great relief to feel that prospects are not so gloomy as they were a few days ago.

(Sd.) W. A. NEDHAM,
Offg. Commissioner, Nagpur Division.

NERBUDDA DIVISION.

No. 765-C., dated the 10th July 1897.

From L. K. Laurie, Esq., I.C.S., Commissioner, Nerbudda Division, to the Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces.

I have the honour to forward herewith consolidated statements A and B for the districts of this division, for the four weeks ending Saturday, the 26th June. I also send the District Officer's notes and the prescribed memorandum.

2. The following abstract compares the number of workers on relief works, as now reported, with the numbers shown in last month's statement A :—

Districts.	Number of Workers on 29th May.	Number of Workers on 26th June.	Difference.
Hoshangabad	49,436	20,305	—29,131
Narsinghpur	42,154	20,906	—21,249
Betul	15,341	7,063	— 8,278
Chhindwara	15,600	11,657	— 3,943
Nimar	342	144	— 198
Total... ..	122,873	60,074	—62,799

Thus there was a decrease of 62,799 or of more than fifty per cent. in the number of workers. This is the result of (a) the spontaneous withdrawal from the works of cultivators who went off to sow their fields; (b) the measures taken in accordance with the decision of the Pachmarhi Conference, held on 25th May, to temporarily close certain works in each district by the 20th June in order to prevent competition between Government works and the agricultural labour market; and (c) the introduction of piece work on most of the works in the Hoshangabad and Betul districts. The Deputy Commissioner, Hoshangabad, has given the fullest account of the manner in which the measures above referred to were carried out. Only one work (the Bankheri-Umardha road work) was absolutely closed; on the four others selected for closure in the Hoshangabad, district numbers were reduced by the expedient of giving all able-bodied workers three days' pay and directing them to return to their homes." At the same time large gifts of money were made to the more indigent cultivators to enable them to procure bullocks and seed-grain. In this way a large proportion of the people who left the works were absorbed in agricultural pursuits. The burst of rain on the 19th to 22nd June stimulated sowing of kharif crops and ploughing, and although all were not able to find employment at once there is no occasion to think that any great number were distressed. As, however, the rains began to hold off and there was a likelihood of the people being again unable to find work it was decided to reopen the works to admissions at the close of the month." In the Narsinghpur district four works were closed, and in the Chhindwara district one work (under civil agency).

The piece-work system has not been introduced in the Chhindwara District, and was only tried on a very small scale in the Narsinghpur District. In Hoshangabad there were 7 charges at the close of the month (out of 17 in all) where piece

work was in force: and only one* of these was exclusively piece work, the others having one or more subsidiary task works. In Betul, piece work has been introduced on all the six charges now open, only those persons who are passed by the Hospital Assistant as unfit for piece work being employed on task work.

With regard to the piece-work system the Deputy Commissioner of Hoshangabad observes that "it is at present very unpopular with the people and I have received constant complaints regarding it. It may be that the people so long as they see any hope of getting their living in idleness, and that the complaints are all made with the object of persuading Government to return to the task-work system under which they earned enough to support them with very little trouble." The Deputy Commissioner of Betul is of opinion that on works where stonebreaking is being carried on (that is to say, on 3 out of the 6 charges open in his district) the workers cannot earn a subsistence wage under the piece-work system, unless they are skilled hands. This assertion is directly traversed by the officers of the Public Works Department. I incline to the belief that piece-work is unpopular because it is hard work and the relief workers have been to some extent demoralised by obtaining relief on too easy terms. This is illustrated by the behaviour of some of the inmates of the Sohagpur poor-house, as will be explained below. I purpose paying the Betul district a visit shortly in order to clear up the discrepancies which exist in the accounts of the working of the system.

3. The number of dependants and non-working children is in the ratio of 14·7 per cent. on the number of workers, as compared with 16·9 per cent. in May and 17·4 per cent. in April.

Districts.	Number on 29th May.	Number on 26th June.	Difference.
Hoshangabad	9,304	3,961	- 5,343
Narsinghpur	6,643	3,157	- 3,486
Betul	2,920	490	- 2,430
Chhindwara	1,961	1,255	- 706
Nimar	32	7	- 25
Total	20,860	8,870	-11,990

The percentage of dependants is highest (19) in the Hoshangabad district, but is only slightly above last month's figure.

4. The poor-house population shows an increase of 1,119. The greatest rise in the number of inmates occurred in Hoshangabad; and these principally in the Sohagpur poor-house. The Deputy Commissioner explains that now that tasks are being more rigidly enforced on relief works, there is a strong tendency on the part of the people to crowd into the poor-houses where they can get a subsistence without labour.

Districts.	Number of Inmates on 29th May.	Number of Inmates on 26th June.	Difference.
Hoshangabad	856	1,414	+ 558
Narsinghpur	1,984	2,322	+ 338
Betul	287	291	+ 4
Chhindwara	261	420	+ 159
Nimar	118	178	+ 60
Total	3,506	4,625	+1,119

It is still the Narsinghpur district which shows the largest poor-house population; and this despite the fact that village relief has been largely extended. The

example given by the Deputy Commissioner of Hoshangabad of the failure of his attempt to place out inmates of the Sohagpur poor-house on a neighbouring relief work (the draft absconding during * the night and returning to the poor-house) coupled with the remark of the Deputy Commissioner, Chhindwara, that the Chhindwara poor-house contains many wanderers from Hoshangabad and Narsinghpur, "typical casuals, who have been in other poor-houses," indicates that we have to deal with a considerable body of professional paupers who find the poor-house only too comfortable a home. Persons who, though fit for work, refuse to labour on a relief work should, I think, be not only placed upon penal diet (which they do not seem to consider much of a punishment) but should be required to earn their meals by some form of task work. The matter will be commended to the consideration of the Deputy Commissioners of Narsinghpur and Hoshangabad. Apart from the above special considerations, however, there was ample reason for a rise in the population of the poor-houses in the continued upward tendency of the price of food stuffs. That in Betul, where prices were highest, the poor-house population was below 300 is only to be explained by holding the view that the Gonds are too independent to relish existence within the walls of a pauper ward.

5. The returns of persons in receipt of gratuitous relief *at their homes* give the following totals :—

Districts.	Number of Persons relieved on 29th May.	Number of Persons relieved on 26th June.	Difference.
Hoshangabad	2,255	2,402	+ 147
Narsinghpur	1,143	2,176	+ 1,032
Betul	1,585	1,720	+ 135
Chhindwara	1,793	1,801†	+ 8
Nimar	384	421	+ 37
Total	7,160	8,519	+ 1,359

† Includes persons relieved at "Distributing Centres" in the Jagir.

In all districts the organisation of village relief is complete and the advance in the numbers on the Registers is evidence that the lists are regularly revised and enlarged with the increase in distress produced by the rising price of food. The large addition in Narsinghpur is from my point of view satisfactory as I was hitherto not convinced that the village lists in this district had been made sufficiently comprehensive.

6. The death-rate during June was very high in Nimar (82·8 per mille) owing chiefly to the prevalence of cholera, which caused 427 deaths. In Hoshangabad, Narsinghpur and Betul the rate was between 75 and 78 per mille

* Hoshangabad	78	per annum*. Malaria and cholera were
Narsinghpur	76·8	fatal to large numbers in Hoshangabad. In
Betul	75·6	Narsinghpur fever accounted for 1,161

deaths, and cholera and bowel complaints for 872 deaths. In Betul 676 persons died from cholera. In all districts the ravages of malaria appear to have been more than ordinarily fatal, owing, no doubt, to the enfeebled condition of a large portion of the population. It is now practically certain that many of the deaths attributed during previous months to starvation were in reality caused by fever.

The figures, which I have given in columns 15 and 16 of consolidated statement A, are taken from returns for June furnished to me by the Civil Surgeon. In the case of the Hoshangabad district these figures tally with those reported by the Deputy Commissioner while other districts have given returns for May only.

* I have since heard from the Deputy Commissioner, Narsinghpur, that he has been obliged to draft out able bodied paupers from poor-houses to relief works *every other day*, as many are crowding in who are fit for work.

7. The number of relief work "charges" open at the end of June in the various districts are as under :—

Hoshangabad	...	..	10	(not including piece-works of which there were 7).
Narsinghpur	...	...	5	
Betul	...	...	6	
Chhindwara...	...	...	2	(these are roads, not charges. The Deputy Commissioner has not detailed the "charges" on each road).
Nimar	...	...	1	
Total			24	

The total number of charges under the Public Work Department was thus four less than in the preceding month, but if *piece-works* are counted as separate charges, the total was greater by three. The number of charges under Civil officers remained unchanged.

8. The chief matter which received special attention during the month was the arrangements to be made for the dispersal to their homes, on the advent of the monsoon, of cultivators and agricultural labourers, and for watching the condition of the population after this dispersal. The high prices of grain in Betul and the working of the piece-work system in that district were also the subject of correspondence with the Deputy Commissioner.

9. The outlook was distinctly depressing till a few days ago, when rain once more fell. Fears had been entertained that all the seed sown would be lost through the withering of the seedlings. Now, however, that anxiety has been dispelled, for sufficient rain has fallen everywhere to give the young crops a nucleus of life, and the sowing which was interrupted has been resumed.

NERBUDDA DIVISION.

Private relief.

The distribution of charitable relief from the Indian Famine Fund is noticed by the Deputy Commissioners of Narsinghpur, Betul and Chhindwara. In Chhindwara Rs. 38,967 were distributed to over 4,000 cultivators for the purchase of seed-grain and plough bullocks. The larger part of this sum was distributed in the Jagirs where tenants' security is not good enough as a rule to warrant the advance of Takkavi loans by Government. The distribution was completed by the 6th of June, the Deputy Commissioner having personally supervised the payments made. In the Betul district Rs. 38,569 were disbursed to necessitous agriculturists resident in the most distressed parts of the Betul tahsil—most of them being Gonds and Korkus. In the Narsinghpur district 163 persons (resident in eight villages) who are debarred by social custom from publicly seeking the aid of which they stand urgently in need are being given charitable relief.

It has not been made clear by the orders of Government that details of the work done by the district charitable committees are to be recorded under this head in the Remarks on Famine, statement A. If this is desired, fuller particulars can be given in future, presumably, the district committees submit regular reports to the Provincial Committee, but these reports do not pass through this office.

Poor-houses.

The number of poor-houses is fewer by 1, owing to the closing of the poor-house at Burhanpur. Details of the number of inmates have been given in paragraph 4 of my covering letter, where also the remarks of the Deputy Commissioner Hoshangabad have been abstracted.

Village relief.

Details of the numbers in receipt of village relief on the 26th June will be found in paragraph 5 of my covering letter. The numbers have increased owing to distress having been rendered more acute by the rise in prices.

Relief work.

Four charges were closed in the Narsinghpur district, 1 in the Chhindwara district and 1 in the Hoshangabad district. The number of relief-workers and dependants on relief-works on the 26th June is given in paragraphs 2 and 3 of my covering letter. Relief kitchens are now managed by the Public Works Department.

Famine loans to the amount of Rs. 9,158 were advanced to cultivators in the Narsinghpur district. Local works employing 1,438 persons were under construction in the same district, 2,505 persons were employed in the Betul district on works constructed with the help of famine loans. Work on the three tanks in the Chhindwara jagirs has been completed, and the construction of the Sobhapur and Bairi tanks in Hoshangabad is also nearly at an end.

Physical condition of the people.

There is no change for the worse in the physical condition of the people, so far as can be ascertained; but the great mortality from fever and bowel complaints is probably due to the reduced standard of vitality among the poorer classes.

Death from starvation.

There has been only one verified death from starvation. It occurred in the Chhindwara district.

Prices.

Prices continue to rise. The highest level has been reached by Betul, which reports *six seers* of wheat to the rupee. The Deputy Commissioner attributes this to the difficulty of obtaining carriage from Itarsi owing to the bullocks being employed in ploughing. Special measures have been under consideration and orders will issue shortly. It is probable that if rain continues to fall prices will considerably improve.

Imports and exports.

The following are the figures showing imports and exports of food grains during the months :—

	Imports. Maunds.	Exports. Maunds.
Hoshangabad	63,798	723
Narsinghpur	66,795	2,502
Betul	3,255	<i>Nil</i>
Nimar	36,167	3,090

That despite the considerable imports into Hoshangabad and Narsinghpur prices should rise there is not a little curious, and the Deputy Commissioner, Hoshangabad, suggests that the supply of food grain has been trenched upon to supply seed-grain.

Changes in rate of wages.

The wages scale in the Betul district was changed from 8 to 6 seers shortly after the close of the month.

Other facts.

The Deputy Commissioner, Chhindwara, notes that the entire population of a village in the Sausar tahsil turned out and looted the carts of a resident of Betul, who had come to purchase grain, as a protest against exportation.

CHHATTISGARH DIVISION.

Raipur District.

(1) *Private relief.*—Private poor-houses continue to be maintained at Sirpur and Bistrampur. The latter institution is kept up in addition to the Government Relief Centre at the same place under the same management (that of the Rev. Mr. Lohr, Honorary Magistrate), the opening of which was referred to in the report for last month. The poor-house at Bistrampur is maintained from Mission Funds, the strain on which has been relieved by the opening of the Government Relief Centre. The number relieved at the poor-house on the 26th June was 109 with an expenditure for the month of Rs. 400-2-4 against 403 with a monthly expenditure of Rs. 504 returned on the 29th May. The number of persons relieved in May was erroneously reported to be 1,293. At the Sirpur poor-house the number of inmates rose from 80 in May to 87 in June. The expenditure during June is reported to have been Rs. 578-12-6.

Bilaspur District.

There are no private institutions in this district. Local subscriptions amounted to Rs. 2,350.

Sambalpur District.

Five poor-houses are returned by the Deputy Commissioner at which a total of 834 persons were relieved. In addition to these the zamindar of Barpali is reported to have opened a poor-house at the head-quarters of his zamindari, where about 300 inmates are relieved. The Sambalpur poor-house was inspected by me at the close of the month; the inmates, it contained, were found to be nearly all strong and fit for work; and local opinion was unanimously in favour of closing the institution. It has accordingly been closed in the current month, and the inmates sent to their homes at the cost of the subscribers.

The allotments made during the month to the Raipur and Bilaspur districts by the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund have been usefully spent by the local committees, in granting relief under the recognized heads. Expenditure has been mainly incurred in granting relief to destitute cultivators, by the distribution of seed-grain and plough cattle; and to this it is largely due that nearly the whole of the normal cultivated area has been or is being sown at the present time.

(2) *Government poor-houses.*—The number of inmates in the Government poor-houses during May and June is compared below :—

				May.	June.
Raipur	...	{ Raipur Baloda Drug Simga }		3,550	4,222
Bilaspur	...	{ Bilaspur Pendra Mungeli Pandaria }		5,880	6,385

The number of inmates still shows a tendency to increase. In both districts large stocks of grain have been purchased and stored away for consumption in poor-houses during the monsoon months. I have inspected several of these institutions, and have found them generally well-managed, particularly so in the Raipur district. In the Bilaspur head-quarter poor-house the enormous numbers (and upwards of 2,000) have rendered effective supervision difficult, particularly while the construction of extended accommodation is still in progress. But the matter receives careful and sustained attention at the hands of local authorities.

(3) *Village relief.*—The Deputy Commissioner, Raipur, has, since the submission of his report for May, reported that the number of relief centres.

in his districts at the close of that month was 24 and not 44. They include, as explained in the last monthly report, a number of Police posts, at which starving wanderers were received and fed. Three more relief centres have been opened during June, raising the total to 27. Among them is the relief centre at Bistrampur, already referred to as having been opened under the management of the Rev. Mr. Lohr, Missionary and Honorary Magistrate, who has readily consented to be guided by the accepted Government principles of relief, including that of religious neutrality. The arrangements here have been personally supervised by Mr. Hemingway, Assistant Commissioner; and the Deputy Commissioner's report shows that one good result has been the exercise of greater discrimination on the part of the excellent missionaries in respect of the classes of persons really needing relief. The number of persons relieved at these centres was 1,684 against 1,775 in May. There are two relief centres in the Bilaspur district, but the numbers relieved at them have not been reported. The opening of a third centre, on lines similar to those adopted at Bistrampur, in Raipur, is under consideration. Experience has shown that nothing in this direction is practicable in Bilaspur through the agency of the District Police, which at the present time is undermanned and overburdened with an abnormal development of crime. It has been found incapable of undertaking its share of relief duties, and a special agency is now being organised for the purpose. The numbers of persons on the village registers of poor in both districts during May and June are compared below :—

	May.	June.
Raipur	7,965	9,444
Bilaspur	18,565	31,914

The increase in the Bilaspur district is very remarkable. Relief has been extended in this district to 3,807 villages against 2,746 villages reported for May. But the Deputy Commissioner writes :—

“The increase is due not so much to the extension of this form of relief to tracts, where it was not formerly considered necessary, but to the great increase in the number of recipients in those parts, where it was first introduced. Distress has become more acute as the year advanced, and owing to causes, which have already been reported, relief works have failed to provide adequately for those able to work; considerable tracts, moreover, are unprotected by relief works, or have been so till quite recently. The diaries received from Famine Officers on tour and from Tahsildars, show that on all sides large additions have constantly to be made to the relief lists.”

The development of distress is unfortunately beyond question: and it is probably in large measure to be ascribed to the insufficient number of relief works. The need for more works has for months past been felt, and duly reported. But there have been difficulties in the way of procuring them, and (owing to causes which have been elsewhere stated at length) it is only quite recently that the special and pressing urgency of the need has been at all realized. Steps are now being taken to remedy it. But this, after all, is only one of the causes which have contributed to the present state of things. Another is undoubtedly to be found in the failure of Police aid which has been referred to.

(4) *General character of works.*—The number of persons relieved on works under the Public Works Department during May and June are compared below :—

	Relief Works.		Dependants.	
	May.	June.	May.	June.
Raipur	66,096	39,501	14,634	8,248
Bilaspur	30,709	24,862	5,767	3,552
Sambalpur... ..	1,009	226	343	63

The numbers have fallen off very considerably in all districts with the commencement of agricultural operations and the return of the people to their villages. The introduction of the piece-work system on some roads has also had the effect of preventing overcrowding of the works by able-bodied persons not really needing relief, who flocked to the roads under the task-work system, as places where they could comfortably earn the prescribed minimum wage without any undue exertion. The new system, it may be observed, has nowhere been introduced without the special precaution of having, side by side with the piece work, an ample provision of task work for weakly persons, a kitchen for those incapable of any work at all, and a hospital for the sick. The introduction of this system, with other measures adopted, has had a good effect in giving the necessary impetus to the crowds of cultivators and agricultural labourers employed on the works to betake themselves to their fields. There are signs that the system is already gaining popularity among those who really need work, and it may confidently be predicted that numbers will now steadily go up again, though, of course, not to the same extent as before. The remarkable falling off in the number of workers on the Pandaria-Lormi and Pendra-Parasi roads in the Bilaspur district has been explained in detail by the Executive Engineer, Chhatisgarh States Roads Division, copy of whose note is appended. The figures for these roads during the past two months are compared below :—

--	May.	June.
Pandaria-Lormi Road	2,599	120*
Pendra-Parasi Road	2,311	691

* Note.—This figure apparently excludes piece-workers and is therefore fallacious.

On the former roads, the numbers declined owing to the commencement of agricultural operations. On the 19th June the number was 1,057. The special holidays were then given, and the workers paid three days' pay. On the 23rd June, it was found that only 120 workers returned. (As above stated, this is believed to represent only the number of *task* workers.) Apparently a great number had gone back permanently to their villages, while there has been hesitation on the part of others to undertake piece work which was introduced on the 23rd June. The numbers have since this date been steadily increasing. On 5th July there were 174 workers (presumably task-workers) on the road. As regards the Pendra-Parasi road, while agricultural operations have resulted mainly in reducing the numbers, a great falling off took place on the introduction of the piece-work system. There appears to have been at first a "strike" against it, which is now rapidly dissolving. The falling off in the number of workers on the Dabra-Kharsia road from 1009 to 226 is apparently mainly due to the commencement of agricultural operations and the enforcement of the piece-work system on able-bodied labourers, who do not seem really in need of relief. This road is now mainly confined to weak labourers employed under the task-work system. The number of local works under civil agency in the Raipur district decreased from 23 with 9914 persons relieved in May, to 10 with 1714 persons relieved at the end of June. In the Bilaspur district the number of local works rose from 11 to 12, but the number relieved declined from 3,638 to 1,782; local works in court of wards estates in this district gave relief to 389 as compared with 3,783 persons in May. This is chiefly due to the taking over of the Pandaria-Lormi road by Government, the decline of workers on which work has been explained above. As regards private works in the Raipur district, 4,976 persons were relieved on works started on famine loans, and 5,840 on works started from private funds, making a total of 10,816 persons relieved against 33,865 reported for May. In the Bilaspur district 12,802 persons were relieved on famine loan works, and 4,523 on other private works, making a total of 17,325 persons relieved against 55,320 reported for May. The large falling off in both districts shows that most cultivators and field labourers have gone back to their usual occupations with the commencement of the rains. It is also in part due to the fact that many of these works being tank works have necessarily had to be closed.

(5) *Physical condition of the people.*—Cases of emaciation are less frequently to be seen in the Raipur district. The people are reported to be generally in good condition ; cholera continued to work much havoc, but its ravages were mostly confined to the villages, and to persons relieved at local private works. Timely sanitary arrangements prevented the spread of the disease to any considerable extent in Government Relief Camps. In the Bilaspur district the condition of the people is reported to be good on most Government works, though there are some works in which their condition is still bad. Cases of emaciation are still common in villages ; with the exception of a few zamindari village relief has been extended to all villages in the district, and there is no reason to fear that the Deputy Commissioner will not be able to fully cope with the prevailing distress ; the system of village relief has now been fully organized in the district. For the Sambalpur district the Deputy Commissioner writes :—“ The health of the people is said to be bad.” No explanation is given of this statement, but it is presumed that the Deputy Commissioner is thinking of cholera, which has visited the Sambalpur district in a very severe form. Many of the workers on the Dabra-Khursia road are said to be weakly, but their condition is no index of the state of the people in the district generally or even in that small tract of it which this work serves, and which is specially classed as distressed, since many of the workers belong to the Bilaspur district, the reason assigned for so few able-bodied persons being found on the work is that they do not require relief. The Deputy Commissioner has written separately as follows :—

“The only able-bodied men are those from the country near the works, who join the works for a few days at a time when they happen to be out of work for a short time. These men do not require relief, as is shown by the fact that they left the works in a body when the work was moved on five miles along the road on account of cholera.”

(6) *Deaths from starvation.*

The number of deaths in the Raipur district reported as due to starvation is 166. This figure differs from the Civil Surgeon's report which returns 326 deaths. The latter figure is reported by the Deputy Commissioner to be unreliable. The mortality statistics of the Raipur district are being carefully verified by the Deputy Commissioner and a separate report will be submitted in the matter. It is expected that the 166 deaths reported by the Deputy Commissioner will be considerably reduced on further verification. The Deputy Commissioner instances a typical case showing the tendency of Kotwars to ascribe as many deaths as possible to starvation, even though it may be quite apparent that they were due to other causes. The number of deaths is reported to have been 166 against 112 in the preceding month. But a number of these deaths will on verification, enquiries being made, turn out not to be true cases. Mr. Shewell, who is on duty in the North-Western zamindaris, wrote early in June as follows :—

“In the last weekly report furnished by the Police it is shown that four people died of starvation in the Gandai zamindari, 3 of whom died at Katanji and one at Deopur. As I had inspected the village of Katanji three times lately, and Deopur is where the centre relief camp is, I could hardly believe the Police report ; so I went and made enquiries. I found at Katanji that two of the deaths were due to cholera and the other was that of a man aged, so report said, 80. *All three people were being fed under section 34* ; so I had the Kotwar up and he said that the Police had noted the deaths as due to starvation *because the people were getting relief.*”

I quote this *in extenso* because I think it is characteristic. The most careful instructions were given by Mr. Morris to his Police, but it is very hard to contend against the local mode of speech and thought. No distinction is made between privation and starvation, and if the corpse of a lean man is found it is hard for the Police to resist the temptation of recording the death as one from starvation. Besides in many cases the report originates with the Kotwar and when questioned by the Police he will reply with unblushing mendacity to the questions put to him about the circumstances preceding the death of the accused, even though he is in perfect ignorance of them. The Deputy Commissioner, Bilaspur, reports 46 deaths as having been proved on verification to have been due to starvation. The figure is expected to be a little larger than this since

'some deaths ascribed to privation have not yet been verified. Even so, the contrast between this figure and those returned in the preceding month's report is remarkable, and emphasizes all that has previously been observed as to the exaggerated nature of the statistics hitherto supplied. The lower return is certainly not accounted for by any diminution of distress. The accurate distinction between starvation deaths and deaths due to privation has been much insisted on in the past month. The reports of Kotwars are generally inaccurate in ascribing the cause of death, and as the Police have been in the habit of reserving their verification of the Kotwar's reports to a later date, it has not been possible to return in the first instance accurate figures, while the verifications subsequently made have been too late to divest the figures of their uncertain character. I have recently emphasized the importance of insisting on the Police verifying the Kotwar's reports *at the time they are made*, and I trust that the very stringent orders which have been issued by the District Superintendents of Police of Raipur and Bilaspur will have the desired effect in having all starvation deaths correctly reported. There is no doubt that the Police have not themselves in the past thoroughly understood the distinction between deaths caused by starvation and those due to privation. But the District Superintendents of Police of both districts have spared no pains to have the matter carefully explained. It is hoped that the repeated instructions which have issued and the criticisms frequently made on the returns furnished from station-houses will have already had a good effect which will be apparent in future returns. No deaths from starvation are reported from the Sambalpur district. As regards deaths in poor-houses the Civil Surgeon, Raipur, reports 394 deaths, which is a slight decrease compared with May's figure (401). In the Bilaspur district 586 deaths are reported by the Deputy Commissioner (the Civil Surgeon's report has not been received) as having occurred in poor-houses. The Deputy Commissioner writes as follows :—

"The number of deaths in poor-houses is high, but the condition of many of those who are admitted is so extremely bad especially at Mungeli and Pandaria that they are beyond hope of cure."

I have not yet received from the Deputy Commissioners a report on the deaths in poor-houses which have occurred in past months. There is no doubt, however, that the large majority of the deaths must be ascribed to the extremely enaciated and hopeless condition in which many persons are brought into the poor-house and not to any want of proper care in the treatment of the inmates.

The death rate per mille per annum in the three districts during April and May for which figures are available are compared below :—

—	April.	May.
Raipur... ..	39·60	91·8
Bilaspur	61·81	87·69
Sambalpur	33·	45·

These figures show a very marked increase in mortality. In the Raipur district the increase must be mainly if not entirely attributable to cholera. Of Bilaspur the same may be said. But here it is by no means improbable that the development of distress, of which other indications are apparent, has had its effect on the mortality returns independently of the ravages of cholera.

(7) *Food stock*.—No deficiency of food stock is reported anywhere. In the Raipur district, where apprehensions were at one time expressed, negotiations with private traders have brought about the desired result in stimulating the trade. The public generally will benefit from the employment of contractors for the supply of grain required for relief works and for distributions in village relief.

(8) *Importation and exportation of grain.*—The exports of Raipur and Bilaspur districts during the past two months are compared below :—

—						May mds.	June mds.
Raipur	...	...	...	...	...	66,231	35,134
Bilaspur	...	...	...	...	...	11,997	5,117

The imports were as follows :—

—						May mds.	June mds.
Raipur	...	...	...	...	...	30,582	43,573
Bilaspur	...	...	...	...	...	41,379	51,708

The imports are steadily increasing while there is a continued marked falling off in the export traffic. In the Bilaspur district the reports are trifling, while an import traffic is mainly carried on. In the Raipur district the imports have now begun to exceed the exports, showing that the grain stocks are being replenished.

(9) *General condition and prospects of affected tracts.*—The rains commenced well in the middle of June, but a prolonged drought at the end of that month and beginning of July gave cause for much anxiety. Within the last few days, however, there has been a timely and copious fall, which is believed, from such reports as have as yet been received, to have been general throughout the division, and at the time of writing (10th July) this is steadily continuing. The prospects at the present moment appear to be as favourable as could be desired. Of what has been already sown, it is believed that only an infinitesimal proportion has actually perished, while the bulk of the sowings should be saved by the present timely fall, and for the late sowings, of the considerable quantities of seed yet remaining in hand, the conditions are in every way favourable.

(10) *Changes in the rates of wages.*—The Executive Engineer, Eastern Division, has not yet furnished a long promised report on the rates of wages in the Raipur district, and on the changes considered necessary. The Deputy Commissioner, Raipur, reports that no authorised change in the rate of wage has taken place during the month. In the Bilaspur district, the price of grain was assumed to be 9 seers per rupee for the calculation of the rate of wages, but a proposal for alteration of the scale has just been received and is under consideration.

(11) *State of crime, &c.*—A large amount of petty crime continues to be reported in the Raipur and Bilaspur districts. In the former district there were some indications of general looting which, however, were promptly suppressed by the Police. In the Bilaspur district 2 dacoities and 4 robberies were reported in June. Cattle thefts and house breakings were numerous, and the state of crime generally was such as to overburden the resources of the Police, which, however, has dealt with it very successfully.

A. D. YOUNGHUSBAND.
Commissioner.

No. 1411-F., dated Saugor, the 28th July 1897.

From M. W. Fox-Strangways, Esq., I.C.S., Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue and Agriculture.

With reference to paragraph 2 of your letter No. ²⁴²⁰/₂₅₋₂₂-F., dated the 5th July 1897, I am directed to forward, for the information of the Government of India,

copy of a letter, No. 7940, dated the 22nd instant, from the Commissioner, Jubbulpore Division, on the subject of deaths reported as due to starvation on relief works in the Damoh district.

No. 7940, dated the 22nd July 1897.

From J. B. Fuller, Esq., I.C.S., C.I.E., Officiating Commissioner, Jubbulpore Division, to the Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces.

Referring to correspondence in regard to the mortality on Public Works Department works in the Damoh district, ending with your letter, No. C.-1342, of 14th instant, I have the honour to state that enquiries made by the Deputy Commissioner subsequently to the submission of the monthly report for May led him to the conclusion that the information on which he wrote was incorrect, and that as a matter of fact no deaths resulted from starvation on the works at Mariahdoh (Kanti) and Gaibabad. I would refer to my No. 7567, dated 14th instant, in which the mortality returns for May were corrected. It seems that there were two reporting agencies on these works, one of which attributed the deaths to starvation and the other to different complaints. Enquiry showed that starvation was considered the cause, because there had been irregularity in payment. I have taken steps to prevent the occurrence of such discrepancies and of such generalizations in future. It is to be regretted that such incorrect information was submitted on a matter so important. In excuse of the Deputy Commissioner, it may be remarked that the dates fixed for the submission of the monthly reports leave no time for the verification of statistics, and that the mortality on these works was certainly very high.

No. F.-1415, dated Saugor, the 29th July 1897.

From M. W. Fox-Strangways, Esq., I.C.S., Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue and Agriculture.

In continuation of my letter, No. C.-1238, dated 26th June 1897, I am directed to submit a statement compiled from figures received from the Sanitary Commissioner showing the death rates per mille per mensem in each district of the Central Provinces during the month of June.

2. The most noticeable feature of this statement is the havoc wrought by cholera, which attacked every district of the province, and was in many places exceptionally virulent. The total number of deaths from this cause rose from 16,175 in May to 21,236 in June. In commenting on the return for May it was remarked that the districts which showed the highest figures, exclusive of deaths from cholera, were precisely those in which cholera had been most prevalent, and it was pointed out that, when epidemic cholera prevails, numerous deaths which are really due to cholera are ascribed in the returns to other forms of bowel disease. The same phenomenon is apparent in the return for June. The districts which show the highest death rates, exclusive of cholera, are Saugor, Balaghat, Mandla, Bilaspur, and Raipur, and in all of these districts cholera was most destructive. It is probable then that even the enormous total of 21,236 does not represent the whole of the mortality due to this disease, and that the death rates, exclusive of cholera, are not really so high as they appear to be. But even after allowing for this it must be admitted that the figures are very high. The only districts in which the rates have fallen since May are Balaghat (—4·28), Sambalpur (—1·82), Damoh (—·76), Hoshangabad (—·73), Chhindwara (—·34), and Jubbulpore (—·23). In Balaghat the total number of deaths reported in the special return for May was 2,513, and in June it was 5,615, so that at first sight it would appear that the rate has risen largely. But of these 5,615 deaths it is noted that 1,714 occurred in May. The correct rates for May are therefore 13·63 and (excluding cholera) 11·20, and not 6·56 and 5·55, as previously reported, and they have fallen to 10·52 and 6·91 in June.

On the other hand, there have been large increases in Saugor (+2.70), Bilaspur (+1.85), Mandla (+1.80), Bhandara (+1.75), Raipur (+1.59), Seoni (+1.43), and Betul (+1.14).

3. The reports of the Civil Surgeons show that some, at least, of the abnormal mortality must be put down to the excessive heat of the month, and in some districts also the consequent scarcity of water. This explanation is especially applicable to Nimar, where the death-rate, though not among the highest in the province, is very much above the normal. The Chief Commissioner has lately visited this district, and carefully examined and discussed the statistics with the Local Officers. It was shown that in the first place, the parts of the Nimar district which have suffered most from scarcity are not remarkable for specially high death-rates, and in the second place, that the rate (excluding cholera) for the Khandwa Station House Circle, in which, though it is not a distressed tract, are situated the only poor-house and the only relief work in the district, is as high as the district average. This seems to show that some general cause other than privation has contributed to swell the figures. What is true of Nimar is doubtless true to some extent of other districts also. All such explanations, however, are only partial. Nothing can prevent the death-rates from rising in time of famine, and it was to be expected that June would be the most fatal month of the year.

4. In column 8 are shown the deaths, verified as due to starvation, in the month of May, the figures for June not being yet ready. Eight districts return no deaths from starvation, and five districts one each. They were numerous only in Bilaspur and Nagpur. The Government of India have recently asked for detailed information regarding the general situation in Bilaspur, and this is being submitted separately. Most of the deaths in Nagpur, and all those in Betul occurred among wanderers. All Police posts have advances of money to be spent on feeding such persons and forwarding them to their destination, and all possible care is taken to see that they carry out their duties in this respect. Still some cases escape notice. The frequency of these in Nagpur is attributed to the numbers of labourers returning to Balaghat and Bhandara after a vain search for work in Berar.

5. In conclusion, I am to express regret that, owing to the late submission of one of the district reports, this return has been unduly delayed.

Statement showing the Death-rates per mille per mensem in the Districts of the Central Provinces during the month of June 1897.

District.	DEATHS FROM		DEATH-RATE FOR JUNE.		Average Death-rate of past 10 years.	Excess over Normal.	Deaths from Starvation (in May).	
	Cholera.	Small-pox.	Excluding Cholera and Small-pox.	From all Causes.				
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	
Nagpur Division.	Nagpur ...	644	11	3.97	4.83	1.96	2.87	27
	Wardha ...	564	19	4.13	5.59	1.89	3.70	...
	Bhandara ...	1,347	5	5.20	7.02	2.21	4.81	1
	Chanda ...	422	21	2.25	2.88	2.44	.44	...
	Balaghat ...	1,223	23	6.92	11.76	2.42	9.34	...
Jubbulpore Division.	Jubbulpore ...	471	13	5.06	5.71	3.15	2.56	5
	Saugor ...	1,057	50	8.50	10.37	3.32	7.05	...
	Damoh ...	601	4	4.53	6.39	3.63	2.76	1
	Seoni ...	704	11	4.93	6.86	2.67	4.19	1
	Mandla ...	1,220	4	6.91	10.52	3.38	7.14	...

District.	DEATHS FROM		DEATH-RATE FOR JUNE.		Average Death-rate of past 10 years.	Excess over Normal.	Deaths from Starvation (in May).	
	Cholera.	Small-pox.	Excluding Cholera and Small-pox.	From all Causes.				
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	
Nerbudda Division.	Hoshangabad...	779	3	4.43	6.15	2.95	3.20	1
	Narsinghpur ...	383	...	5.43	6.48	3.41	3.07	...
	Nimar... ..	427	1	5.47	6.96	1.95	5.01	...
	Betul	676	20	4.01	6.30	1.95	4.35	8
	Chhindwara ...	890	22	1.76	4.08	1.97	2.11	1
Chhattisgarh Division.	Raipur	4,705	138	5.73	9.05	3.43	5.62	12
	Bilaspur	4,618	57	6.88	10.99	3.32	7.67	98
	Sambalpur ...	507	31	1.32	4.11	2.92	1.19	...
	21,236	433	...	...	...	...	155	

From M. W. Fox-Strangways, Esq., I.C.S., Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Revenue and Agricultural Department, No. 3,600, dated Nagpur, the 2nd August 1897.

SIR,

In your letter No. ²²³³~~28-20~~ F., dated the 8th June 1897, you intimated that the Government of India would be glad to see any further detailed information which might be available with reference to the famine situation in the Balaghat and Bilaspur districts. The Chief Commissioner deferred answering this letter until he should have an opportunity of visiting these districts and conferring with the local officers on the spot. Sir Charles Lyall has now spent some days in the Bilaspur district, and has also met the Commissioner of the Nagpur Division and the Deputy Commissioner of Balaghat at Gondia, on the borders of the Balaghat district, and I am now to forward for the information of the Government of India the marginally noted papers. To the memorandum on Bilaspur and its appendices the Chief Commissioner has nothing to add.

1. Memorandum by the Chief Commissioner on the situation in Bilaspur.

2. Letter No. 3,601, dated the 8th April 1897, from the late Commissioner of the Nagpur Division, Mr. A. H. L. Fraser.*

3. Letter No. 6727-A., dated the 12th July 1897, from the Commissioner of the Nagpur Division, Mr. Nedham (with enclosures).*

found to explain what has been done as regards the supply of food and seed-grain in the Baihar Tahsil, regarding which a question was asked in paragraph 9 of your letter.

2. In paragraph 3 of your letter you ask, with reference to the differences noticed between different districts in the classification of relief workers, firstly, whether any inspections have been made to verify the assumption that these differences correctly reflect a substantial difference in the condition of the people coming on the works; and, secondly, whether it is the practice to show all working children in the Class D. column.

In answer to these questions, I am to invite a reference to paragraph 3 of my letter No. C-1,129-A, dated the 16th June, forwarding the monthly statements for May. The difficulties in the way of correct classification of workers have now

* Not reprinted.

been largely removed by the introduction of the piece-work system for able-bodied workers. Roughly speaking, it may be said that piece-workers, that is, the able-bodied, are now classed as B workers and task-workers, the weakly and infirm as D workers. Children are classed B or D, according as they are on piece or task work.

I have, etc.,

M. W. FOX-STRANGWAYS,

Chief Secretary.

MEMORANDUM.

I HAVE now spent four days in the Bilaspur district, and have discussed the situation as fully as I could with the Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner and the local officers. I have also seen the poor-houses at Pendra and Bilaspur, and the appearance of the general population at those two places. From all these evidences, from the rapid growth of the figures of village relief, and from the high mortality now prevailing, there cannot be any doubt that the present situation of the district is one of great gravity, that distress is widespread and acute, and that special exertions are necessary to organise efficient relief and to enable the population to resist the depressing influences to which they will be subjected during the next four months.

2. Happily, the anxiety which was beginning to be felt regarding the great rice harvest, which is the one important food supply of the district, by reason of the holding-off of the rains after their commencement soon after the middle of June, has for the present been removed by the return of the normal conditions of moisture. No appreciable losses, so far as is yet known, have been suffered from the drought, and the condition of things as regards the rice sowings is just now satisfactory. A large breadth of land has been sown. There is still a great demand for loans for seed, but the money allotted on that account is exhausted (unless a further grant can be made from the Indian Famine Charitable Fund), and the ryots must be left to make the best arrangements they can for the additional seed they may require.

3. But the new harvest, however good it may be, will bring no alleviation of the distress until it is reaped. I do not anticipate any marked fall in prices until the September rains have assured the safety of the rice and the possibility of sowing the rabi crops with the prospect of a good yield. Meantime the resources of the poorer classes are being gradually exhausted, and as they cannot be added to until the harvest, the distress must continue to grow more acute and widespread until that time arrives. The country is one of great distances. The open and thickly-peopled parts are rice-swamps, and the more distant and backward ones are forest. Communications in both are most difficult during the rains. The tendency of Indian populations is to stay at home at that season, and, except in the case of the homeless, who will be driven into the poor-houses for want of shelter, it may be regarded as certain that the indisposition to come on relief-works will everywhere be intensified during the next three months.

4. In these circumstances, it is evident that the time has arrived when practically the only form of relief which will effectively reach the bulk of the population is house-to-house relief in their villages; and our efforts must necessarily be mainly directed to that end.

5. Unfortunately the condition of the people is such as to make the provision of this form of relief, which, owing to the difficulty of communications, is no easy matter to carry out, a very urgent question. Several causes seem to have contributed to this result. The Deputy Commissioner was new to the district when he joined it in November last. The estimate that he formed, in his letter No. 538, dated the 21st January 1897, of the prospects of his charge was too sanguine; and so late as the Conference of the 8th and 9th March last he entertained views regarding the necessity of relief in the Seorinarayan and part of the Mungeli tahsil which experience has not shown to be justified. Owing to the

supposed greater urgency of the provision of relief in Raipur in April last, the requirements of Bilaspur as regards the opening of works were postponed to those of that district, and neither the Commissioner nor the Deputy Commissioner pressed the needs of Bilaspur with the insistence which was required to secure the additions to the programme which were really necessary. In neither district had the rush on to relief-works, which declared itself in April and May, been foreseen, and there was great difficulty in providing the staff adequate for the many new charges required.

6. Moreover, owing to a quite inexcusable misreading of the instructions issued in General Order (Public Works Department) No. C-498, dated the 26th December last, regarding famine relief-works under the Public Works Department, it appears that certain officers in charge of relief-works considered themselves authorised to refuse applicants for work when the numbers on the works in their charge reached or approached the maximum of 5,000. I consider, with the Commissioner, that it is proved that this occurred, though the extent to which it affected the numbers relieved, and the period for which this course was followed, are uncertain. It was not discovered by the Deputy Commissioner or his Assistants until the eve of the setting-in of the rains. If it had been going on for any length of time during the open season, it would undoubtedly have affected the efficiency of relief, and left a large portion of the population who would otherwise have sought relief to shift for themselves, or to wander abroad, thus finding their way into the poor-houses or falling victims to disease and privation on the roads. It is difficult to understand how, with efficient inspection, with the very large staff of assistants whom the Deputy Commissioner has had at his disposal, and with the constant touring throughout his charge which Mr. Cooke himself carried out, the matter did not earlier come to light. When people are refused admission to relief-works, my experience in other districts is that they readily complain to officers whom they meet; and enquiry into any cases of the kind encountered would have at once disclosed this weak place in our arrangements. Perhaps the right conclusion is that the error (which was corrected as soon as it was discovered at the end of May) was not in operation for very long before it was detected.

7. Another cause, which is admitted by the Deputy Commissioner to have impaired the efficiency of relief, is the interruption in the administration of village relief owing to the diversion of the attention of Circle Officers and patwaris to the business of arranging for the distribution of seed-grain advances and grants from the Charitable Fund for seed in May last. It is to be feared that this cause explains a good deal of the deterioration in the condition of the people, which would have been avoided if the regular distribution of village relief and the inspection of villages had gone on uninterruptedly.

8. The figures relating to mortality due to privation and starvation for past months are, as they stand, worthless. It is shown that no proper enquiry has ever been made by the Police into cases reported, and it is impossible now to discriminate between deaths due to starvation and other deaths. There is reason to believe that great exaggeration has occurred in the deaths ascribed to starvation. But the general death rate of the district has undoubtedly been very high and increasing for the past four months. The following are the figures as reported:—

	*(POPULATION 1,164,158.)			RATE PER MILLE.	
	Total.	Cholera.	Small-pox.	Total.	Excluding Epidemics.
March	4,345	818	59	3·7	2·9
April	5,506	1,102	117	4·7	3·6
May	7,905	1,955	98	6·8	5·0
June	12,794	4,618	57	10·9	6·9

* It has been ascertained that in the monthly statements submitted to the Government of India for the first three months the mortality was calculated on the population *excluding the zamindaris*. They should be included, as the deaths in them are included in the reported mortality.

The mortality from cholera has been most deplorable ; and when this disease is prevalent it is well known that many other deaths, really due to it, are returned under other forms of bowel disease or causes unknown, so that it may reasonably be admitted that the death-rate, excluding epidemics, is really less than that shown above. But, after all deductions are made, there can be no ignoring of the fact that the death-rate has considerably more than doubled in the four months. The causes to which this is due, so far as they can be ascertained, have been set forth above, and the task for the future is to remove them, and to make relief really effective in all parts of the district.

9. The measures necessary to this end were discussed by me in conference with the Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner, the Superintendent of Works, and a large number of the famine-relief officers, at Bilaspur on the 12th instant, and are now in process of being carried out. The following is a statement of them.

10. In the first place, the programme of Public Works to be maintained during the rains will be enlarged. This is necessary in order to provide for the large number of persons who have hitherto been supported on earthwork carried out from famine loans, whom the advent of the rains has thrown out of employment, and also to protect parts of the district not served by existing works. The works at present open are the following (all roads) :—

No. in revised Statement A,
dated the 3rd June 1897.

1	(1) Bilaspur-Mungeli, Charge No. I.	} Central Sub-division, under Mr. Gadgil.
1	(2) Bilaspur-Mungeli, Charge No. II.	
10	(3) Kota-Lormi.	
5	(4) Bilaspur-Masturi.	
8	(5) Akaltara-Pámgarh.	} Western Sub-Division, under Mr. Shaw.
2	(6) Bhatapára-Nandghát.	
3	(7) Nandghát-Mungeli.	
9	(8) Bhatapara-Laun.	
	(9) Pandaria-Lormi.	} Chhattisgarh States Roads Division (Mr. Harriott).
	(10) Pendra-Parási.	

The tracts considered to be specially in need of additional works are :—

- (a) The country south of the Mahanadi.
- (b) The trans-Hásdo portion of the Seorinarayan Tahsil.
- (c) The country to the north and north-east of Bilaspur.
- (d) The neighbourhood of Lormi.

The following new works have accordingly been proposed and agreed to by me :—

No. in revised Statement A,
dated the 3rd June 1897.

12	(11) Láun-Sárangarh. Camp to be in the neighbourhood of Pauni.
Not in Statement A.	(12) Chámpa Railway Station to town, and town roads generally.
13	(13) Akaltara-Baloda from the Baloda end.
6	(14) Bilaspur-Ratanpur from the Ratanpur end.
10	(15) Kota-Lormi (2nd charge), at or near Simbha.

Of the above, Nos. (11) and (15) involve construction ; it is believed (so far as information is at present available) that the soil is in both cases suitable for earthwork during the rains. Nos. (12), (13) and (14) will consist mainly of metal and murram collection. The Public Works Department are already making the necessary arrangements for starting these works, including provision of shelter for the workers.

11. It is the unanimous opinion of all the local officers who have been consulted that the piece-work system may now with safety be adopted on all works in the district, subject to the special precautions referred to in the Commissioner's letter No. 6263, dated the 8th July 1897, to the Secretary, Public Works Department. These precautions are in complete accordance with the policy which I have laid down as to piece-work from the beginning, and which I wish to see carried out wherever that system is introduced. A copy of that letter will be appended to this Memorandum.

It is essential that, attached to every piece-work, there should be a task-work, under the special charge of the "Officer in Charge," to which weakly persons will be freely admitted. The classification of workers will be made by the Hospital Assistant, but no worker desiring to work on piece-work shall be compelled to go on task-work.

Any refusal of an officer in charge or other person in authority to admit to piece-work or task-work, as the case may be, any worker seeking admission, will be visited with the severest punishment, and this should be made generally known to all employés of the Public Works Department.

12. Secondly, the organization of relief centres or kitchens requires attention. At present there are two of these, Pendri and Takhpur. The Deputy Commissioner has now arranged to open one at Seorinarayan, and another at Chandkuri on the Raipur-Bilaspur Road under the management of the Reverend Mr. Nottrott, on the lines of that managed at Bisrampur in the Raipur district by the Reverend Mr. Lohr. It is important that the Famine Assistant of the circle (Mr. Streatfeild) should devote some attention to personally supervising and assisting in the organization of arrangements, as has been done with some success by Mr. Hemingway at Bisrampur.

But besides these points, which will be chosen so as to chiefly catch wanderers on the main routes, it is necessary that free use should be made of all available agencies for the establishment of kitchens, where emaciated children and others suffering from privation and willing to accept cooked food will be fed. Each one of the Public Works Department relief charges must have a kitchen attached under the management of the Hospital Assistant. Where this can be arranged at a Police Station, not otherwise provided for, this should be done. There should similarly be one at the head-quarters of each Famine Relief Assistant, where there is not one already. If the Deputy Commissioner can arrange with schoolmasters and others for the establishment of kitchens under trustworthy supervision at other points, this should be done. When children are relieved at these institutions (for which rules will be found in Chapter IX. and Appendix V. of the Famine Code), care should be taken to see that they do not at the same time receive village relief in their homes. The organization of this form of relief, in the stage of distress which has been reached in Bilaspur, is a matter of great importance, and the Deputy Commissioner should, as enjoined in paragraph 4 of my Circular No. 3205, dated the 2nd July, take immediate measures to set it on foot. Mr. Fuller has the same task in hand in the Jubbulpore Division, and the Commissioner should communicate freely with him as to his experience there.

13. Thirdly, the relief of starving wanderers has to be attended to. These are far more numerous in this district than they should be. This is in the first place the work of the Police (Famine Code, articles 120, 123). I was informed that at Bilaspur the Police, owing to the increase of crime, was so undermanned and overworked that it was unable to attend to this important part of its duties. I await a special report on this subject, with proposals for temporary additions to the force (Famine Code, article 122), from the Commissioner. Meantime, as reported in his letter No. 6149, dated the 5th July, Mr. Younghusband has organised a special service of road patrols, provided with carriers and litters, for the conveyance of wanderers unable to walk to the nearest poor-house, relief kitchen, or other place where food and rest can be found.

A copy of the Commissioner's letter is appended to this Memorandum. The details have been worked out by the Deputy Commissioner, and I hope to receive a good account of the system in the next monthly report.

14. Fourthly, the main work of famine relief during the rains in Bilaspur will, as already indicated, consist in the proper organisation and careful supervision of village relief. The Deputy Commissioner has been given a very liberal staff, and it is his business to see that it is fully instructed in its duties and makes the best use of its time during the four months remaining till harvest. The district has been parcelled out between the staff into relief circles. The following is the arrangement as it stands at present (or will stand when a few pending changes are made) :—

Relief Officer in charge.	Circle.	Number of Villages.	Circle Officers.
BILASPUR TAHSIL.			
Lieutenant Watson and Tahsildar ...	Bija	225	One Revenue Inspector and one Assistant.
	Nargora	228	Do.
Mr. McLeod and Additional Tahsildar	Kandar	192	Do.
	Mopka	197	Do.
<i>Zamindaris.</i>			
Lieutenant Beadon	Pendra and Kenda (including Matin, not surveyed).	174	Two Revenue Inspectors.
Lieutenant Grace	Korba and Chhuri (and Lappa and Uprora, not surveyed).	490	One Revenue Inspector.
MUNGELI TAHSIL.			
Mr. Streatfeild and Additional Tahsildar.	Nawagarh	305	One Revenue Inspector and one Assistant.
	Maro	221	Do.
Mr. Krishnaji Anant, Extra-Assistant Commissioner and Tahsildar.	Kodwa	379	Do.
<i>Zamindari.</i>			
Lieutenant Moore	Pandaria	295	Do.
SEORINARAYAN TAHSIL.			
Lieutenant O'Brien and Tahsildar ...	Akaltara	121	Do.
	Dhardehi	126	Do.
Lieutenant Ames and Additional Tahsildar.	Karnode	130	Do.
	Hasod	183	Do.
<i>Zamindaris.</i>			
Lieutenant O'Brien and Tahsildar ...	Bilaigarh	166	One Revenue Inspector.
	Katgi		
Lieutenant Ames and Additional Tahsildar.	Bhatgaon	66	Do.
Do. do.	Champa		

This appears to be a well thought-out and exhaustive distribution, so far as the superior officers are concerned. But the Circle staff of Revenue Inspectors will, the Deputy Commissioner thinks, need substantially strengthening to enable it to cope with the work of visiting all the villages in the rains. Of this there can be little doubt. The Deputy Commissioner's plan had not been fully elaborated before I left Bilaspur, but is expected to be submitted at a very early date. The Commissioner should lose no time in sending it on with his recommendation. It is essential that the Circle Officer should be able to visit every village in his charge at least once a month. It will not suffice, as was allowed in some districts in the earlier stages of the distress, to assemble the recipients of village relief at a central place and inspect them there to see that no unfit person had been put on the list. What is still more important is to see that no one who should be on the list is omitted, and this cannot be done except in the village itself. Each Revenue Inspector and Assistant Inspector should have a definite area assigned to him, and be required to visit each village situated therein in a regular roster. He should submit his programme weekly to the Relief Officer in charge of the Circle, and also the diary of his visitations. The Relief Officer will on the other hand arrange his tours so as to check a fair proportion of the villages in each Circle under him in the month. His visits should be without notice, and particular care should be taken that the Revenue Inspector does not receive intimation beforehand of the line he intends to take. The Relief Officer should submit weekly diaries to the Deputy Commissioner showing the villages visited and his proceedings in them. Some diaries I have seen are a mere enumeration of the paupers found entered, struck off, or added in each village visited. This is insufficient. The diary should show (if possible) the population of the village, the number of paupers listed, the classes to which they belong (under Section 34), the reasons why any have been struck off or added, and whether those added are temporarily or permanently incapacitated for labour. It should in fact be sufficient to show that the Relief Officer has understood the provisions of the village-relief rules, and has put them in force. Any shortcomings on the part of the Revenue Inspector or the patwari or mukkaddam should be promptly brought to the Deputy Commissioner's notice for the necessary action.

I was promised a revised draft of the special rules for village relief in this district, but it was not ready before I left Bilaspur. The Commissioner has undertaken to settle it with the Deputy Commissioner without loss of time, and it is necessary that all Relief Officers, European and Native, should study it carefully and be fully instructed in its working. When it has been settled, I shall be glad if the Commissioner will forward a copy for my information. One point to be carefully thought out is the manner in which the Revenue Inspector is to supply himself with funds. It will be difficult for him to obtain them personally from the tahsil without much loss of time, and to carry about large sums on his circuits will involve considerable risk. The Relief Officers might be furnished with money from which to make advances to the Revenue Inspectors. It is probably too late to arrange in Bilaspur, as has been done in a considerable part of Raipur, for relief in grain, provided by a contractor in some central village, on whom orders would be given by the Revenue Inspector. Difficulties of transport during the rains seem an insuperable obstacle to this. But if in any tract it seems feasible, it should be tried.

15. The poor-house at Bilaspur, when I visited it, had a population of over 3,200, of whom over 700 were in hospital. It is impossible that order should be properly kept, and abuses avoided, with so great a crowd—more than double the population of our largest central jail. The numbers in this poor-house must, I fear, always be large, and for this reason I think it desirable that an officer of a superior class should be put in charge of it as Superintendent. I understand that the Deputy Commissioner has a candidate in view, and will submit proposals. But it is necessary that a sustained effort should be made to reduce the population on the lines indicated by the Famine Code. It should never be forgotten that, according to the code, the poor-house is not intended to be a permanent place of residence for anyone. It is for two classes of inmates only:—“(1) persons who, being unfit for employment on works, cannot conveniently be sent to their homes; and (2) persons who, being fit for employment on works, refuse to labour.” The latter class is to be given penal diet. I did not find that in Bilaspur any attempt

to do this was made : all not on special sick diet received the same scale of food. Nor was there any regular and prescribed parade for the purpose of separating off to works people fit for work. This should be done regularly and with great care at stated intervals—twice a week would, I think, be suitable ; and it is very important that persons sent to a relief-work should not merely be turned out of the poor-house and directed to go there, but actually escorted to the work chosen for them, which should be that nearest their 'homes. If they will not work, and return to the poor-house, they should be put on penal diet. A separate line of sheds should be reserved for such cases, and no able-bodied person (except, of course, poor-house servants) should receive other than penal rations (Famine Code, Article 83).

As regards the other class, persons unfit for labour, when they are not in a state of health needing medical attention, it is much better that they should be sent to their homes and put on village relief there ; and Mr. Kelkar and the new Superintendent should, with the assistance of the Medical Officer in charge, go systematically through the poor-house population, and ascertain how many of them can be disposed of in this way. When suitable cases have been selected, they should be forwarded under escort, as before, to the nearest Police Station or Out-post to their homes, and there made over to the Kotwar of their village on his next weekly visit. They should each receive the allowance for maintenance under village relief for one month (a receipt being given for it at the Police Station or Out-post on their arrival there), an intimation should at once be sent to the Famine Relief Officer in charge of the Circle with particulars of name, village, and amount given for subsistence. The officer will cause their names to be entered on the village-relief register, and will on his next visit ascertain that they have safely arrived and that their allowance has not been misappropriated by anyone in transit.

The same procedure should be followed at other poor-houses.

It is, of course, to be understood that where special sick diet, or other medical treatment, is found to be required, persons are to be kept in the poor-house and not sent to their homes. But the procedure indicated above should materially reduce the poor-house population, and I shall be glad to receive a report in a month's time showing what has been done to carry it out.

16. I believe that these measures, if vigorously and consistently carried out, will effect a great improvement in the condition of the district. The expenditure involved is likely to be a good deal larger than was anticipated. But all officers are aware that no expenditure is grudged by Government which is necessary for the saving of life. The Government of India has given me a special Medical Officer to assist the Civil Surgeon in looking after famine arrangements in Bilaspur, and the Commissioner should see that his services are properly utilized.

C. J. LYALL,

Chief Commissioner.

Dated the 19th July 1897.

No. 2753-26-27-F., dated Simla, the 16th August 1897.

From T. W. Holderness, Esq., I.C.S., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue and Agriculture, to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 3600, dated 2nd August 1897, submitting further information regarding the famine situation in the Bilaspur and Balaghat districts.

2. The situation in the Bilaspur district appears from your memorandum of the 19th July 1897 to be very serious. Your enquiries into the causes which have led to the failure of relief arrangements in the district to meet the necessities

of the people were made with a minuteness and care which the Government of India warmly appreciate, and they trust that the measures which you have now directed the district officers to adopt will prove sufficient. They have read with

* Paragraph 4 of Deputy Commissioner's concern the statement* of the Deputy letter No. 4715, dated 24th June 1897. Commissioner of the district that the primary cause of the admitted deterioration in the physical condition of the people and of the consequent increase in the numbers on gratuitous relief has been the failure of the Public Works Department, in spite of his repeated applications, to open a sufficient number of relief works. No graver charge could be made against any officer or any Department. It is substantiated by the Commissioner of the Division, who both says that applications for additional works were made months before and frequently renewed, and also that the present condition of the district is largely due to works not having been opened. On the other hand, it is noted in your memorandum that neither the Commissioner nor the Deputy Commissioner pressed the needs of Bilaspur with sufficient insistence. The present Commissioner would apparently admit this as regards himself, but he exonerates the Deputy Commissioner. That there has been a very serious failure of relief in the Bilaspur district is unhappily beyond doubt, and the Government of India desire to know definitely what officer in your opinion is to blame.

3. With regard to the revised measures of relief, which you have authorised, the only matter which calls for remark is the decision to make piece work the leading feature of the relief works opened or to be opened in the district. The Government of India are inclined to doubt whether piece work, even with task work sections open for the weakly, is suitable for a population so generally feeble as that described by the Deputy Commissioner. The Commissioner of the Division and all the other officers present at the July Conference favoured the piece-work system. But the trials of it made in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh have shown that piece work coupled, as it must be, with the precautions you have rightly insisted on, requires very close supervision and control. Neglect to observe these precautions, or insufficient supervision or control, might in Bilaspur entail serious consequences. One of the rules originally laid down by you was that whenever in any district the inefficient labour coming on relief works exceeded 25 per cent. piece work should not in that district be adopted. Unless the description of the condition of the population in Bilaspur given by the Deputy Commissioner is much overcoloured, the inefficient and weakly labourers will be very numerous. The Government of India think it proper to put these considerations before you, and although they will not ask you to alter a decision, which has evidently been taken after close deliberation, they regard it with anxiety. They suggest, however, that full authority should be given to the Commissioner of the Division to at once order the conversion of any or all piece-work charges in the district into ordinary Famine Code Works, in case he should think this desirable. It might also be made the duty of the relief officers specified in paragraph 14 of your memorandum to frequently inspect the works and to satisfy themselves that all weakly persons are freely given task work, that sufficient task work is provided in all places, and that the Hospital Assistants' classification is correctly made.

4. The correspondence regarding the condition and the food-supply of the Balaghat district which is also forwarded with your letter conveys the impression that the situation in that district is less serious than at one time appeared to be the case, and that the relief arrangements are sufficient and satisfactory.

From T. W. Holderness, Esq., I.C.S., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces, Simla, the 7th August 1897.

SIR,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1359-C., dated 19th July 1897, submitting the famine report for the Central Provinces for the month of June.

2. The numbers on relief at the end of June showed a reduction of 255,000 on the May figures, the numbers being respectively 448,001 and 702,999. The diminution occurred exclusively under the head of "relief workers," and their "dependants," as both the poor-house population and the persons in receipt of gratuitous relief in their homes and at relief centres increased. These sub-divisions of relief are not distinguished in the prescribed famine Statement A, and owing to the want of uniformity with which the divisional reports accompanying your letter are drawn up, it is difficult to ascertain the figures under each sub-head. I am to suggest that in future the divisional reports should follow the arrangement of subjects adopted by the Commissioner of Jubbulpur and should give the same tabulated statistics as are given in that officer's report.

3. A marked decrease in the number of relief workers was to be expected, on the advent of the rains in the early part of June, but the decrease which actually took place was evidently due to some extent to the measures taken in accordance with your circular instructions of the 25th May, to close some of the works, to temporarily refuse admission on those kept open to persons who showed no sign of privation, and to substitute piece work for task work wherever the able-bodied workers were not less than 75 per cent. of the labourers, a separate task work section being in this event retained for the weekly and infirm. These orders were well calculated to bring about the necessary reduction in the numbers of relief workers without undue harshness. But it would seem that in the Jubbulpur Division piece work was introduced without making separate provision for inefficient labour, and that this pressed hardly on the people. This omission to carry out your plain instructions clearly imperilled the success of the scheme. In other districts, though the mistake is said not to have occurred, the change was excessively unpopular, and the decrease in the relief-work population was accompanied by an increase in the poor-house population and by wandering. The reported immigration into the Berars from the Betul district appears to have been partly due to this cause. The break in the monsoon towards the end of June was also very unfortunate and militated greatly in all districts against the success of the experiment. Considerable experience has now been acquired in different provinces as to the strong and weak points of the piece work system applied to famine relief, and as to the conditions under which it can be successfully substituted for the task work system of the Famine Codes. The Government of India agree with the conclusion of the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh in its letter No. 1525, dated 10th July 1897, which has been circulated to other local Governments for information, that piece work is unsuited for acutely distressed districts where relief works on an extensive scale are required, and that in localities suited for its operation careful arrangements should be made for the employment of inefficient labour and for supporting the non-working children of the workers. The Government of India will be glad to know how far it has been found necessary to revert to task work in the Central Provinces, and whether due precautions are now observed in all districts in which piece work is still the rule.

4. Since your letter under reply was considered your subsequent letter No. 1415-F., dated 29th July, reporting the mortality for June has been received. The Government of India are concerned to find the death-rate so high in most districts of the provinces, ranging from 11.76 per mille for the month in Balaghat and 10 to 11 per mille in Saugor, Mandla and Bilaspur to over 5 per mille in ten other districts. As your letter shows, much of the excess mortality is due to cholera, over 21,000 deaths being returned under that head. But after deducting the reported cholera mortality, and allowing for deaths due to cholera but returned under other heads, the death-rate of the month in most districts was much above the normal, and painfully illustrates the enfeebled condition of the people.

5. The verified reports of deaths due to starvation accompanying your letter of the 29th July show a satisfactory decrease on the unverified returns of preceding months. In the Divisional reports for June, appended to your letter No. 1359-C. of the 19th July, the unverified returns of deaths due to privation and starvation are discussed. As such figures and any inferences drawn from them are misleading, the Commissioners should confine their remarks in future to the verified returns of the preceding month.

6. Prices reached a very high point during the month in Mandla, Balaghat and Betul, and in these districts there has been serious apprehension of the complete exhaustion of local food stocks, and the inability of private trade owing to bad communications to satisfy the demand by importation. The reports, however, show that in Mandla and in Balaghat the arrangements made by the local officers for the transport of grain are proving sufficient. In Betul the transport difficulty still continues, and the Government of India will be glad to learn that the special measures which have been taken have alleviated the situation.

7. With the exception of the Bilaspur district, which appears to be now the most distressed in the provinces, the relief agency and the scheme of relief are reported to be sufficient and capable of meeting any probable calls upon them. Your promised report on the relief arrangements of the Bilaspur district will be awaited, and the Government of India wish particularly to know the cause of the failure to open a sufficient number of relief works. It is to this that the Commissioner attributes in a large measure the development of distress, which he states is a fact unfortunately beyond question. Though the numbers in receipt of gratuitous relief have in this district risen largely since May, cases of emaciation are said to be still common in villages, the death-rate is very high, and deaths from privation numerous. The Government of India trust that arrangements have now been made for making relief effective throughout the district.

8. Since your report was written good rain has fallen throughout the provinces, and excepting possibly in the rice-growing districts, the falls have been sufficient for present requirements. The situation has been greatly improved, though the numbers on relief are higher than they were at the end of June.

I have, &c.,

T. W. HOLDERNESS,

Deputy Secretary to the Government of India.

From M. W. Fox-Strangways, Esq., I.C.S., Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Revenue and Agricultural Department, F. 1526, dated Nagpur, the 17th August 1897.

SIR,

I am directed to submit, for the information of the Government of India, consolidated monthly Statements A and B for July, as prescribed by Section 16 IV.—VII. of the Central Provinces Famine Code. The usual memoranda by Commissioners of Divisions and famine maps are also forwarded.

2. The appended statement will show the numbers on each form of relief at the end of July as compared with those at the end of June.

There have been increases under every head of relief, and the grand total has risen by 36 per cent. Fifty-seven per cent. of the recipients of relief, against 59 per cent. in June, are workers, and 25 per cent. or $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the total population of the affected area, are on village relief. Poor-houses alone show but a slight increase. Admissions to poor-houses were indeed more numerous in July than in any previous month, and the poor-house population was kept down only by constant insistence on selection and drafting of able-bodied inmates to relief works, and of others, unable to work, but not in need of medical care, to village relief. The extension of village relief has been the principal feature of the relief operations of the month. Nagpur, Wardha, and Sambalpur are now the only districts where this form of relief has not yet been introduced. In the Jubbulpore Division 3 per cent., and in the Chhattisgarh Division nearly 4 per cent., of

the population of the affected area are being relieved in this way. The establishment of children's kitchens, which is now proceeding rapidly in all divisions, had hardly begun during July, except in the Jubbulpore Division, where the numbers relieved in relief centres and kitchens show a large increase.

3. During the month the Chief Commissioner made an extended tour throughout the distressed districts, except those of the Satpura plateau and Damoh, and in each district discussed the situation carefully with the Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner, and the local officers (including those of the Public Works Department) engaged in the work of relief. In these conferences Sir Charles Lyall laid particular stress upon the two measures chiefly insisted on in his Circular No. 3205, dated the 2nd July last (copy forwarded with the report for June)—the development of village relief, and the establishment of children's kitchens. The memorandum containing the Chief Commissioner's conclusions in regard to Bilaspur has already been forwarded to the Government of India with my letter No. 3600 of the 2nd August, and copies of the Conference Notes dealing with the other districts are enclosed. As regards the remaining districts, which Sir Charles Lyall was unable to visit, Mandla, Damoh, and Seoni were specially inspected by the Commissioner, Mr. Fuller, and the relief organization in each was examined, and, where necessary, corrected or amplified; while the Commissioner of the Nerbudda Division has recently spent eight days in Betul (where a sudden deepening of distress is reported to have occurred in the Multai Tahsil), and measures have been taken to strengthen the relief establishments there so as to enable them to cope with any possible need of relief. The only districts which have not been recently visited by the Chief Commissioner or Commissioner are Sambalpur and Chhindwara. The Deputy Commissioner of the former district met Sir Charles Lyall at Bilaspur, and gave an account of his charge which showed that no anxiety need be felt regarding it. Chhindwara is in good hands, and the Commissioner will shortly inspect it in person.

4. The main feature of the month was the break in the rains, which commenced in some districts on the 24th, in others on the 25th or 26th June, and lasting for periods ranging from 16 to 20 days in different parts of the province. The effect of this break upon the crops was to seriously injure those of which sowings had been made during or before the rain of June, and to greatly retard the further sowings which had not been carried out before the rain stopped. The injury under the first head was greatest in the rice districts of the Wain-ganga Valley and in Raipur, where also the re-establishment of the rains occurred latest. The *juari* in the north, and it is believed the small millets in the hill districts, suffered less, and the return of the rain preserved them from serious danger. But the retardation of sowings and the necessity of repairing losses, together with the check to the growth of the crops sown caused by the drought, have everywhere thrown back the kharif crops, so that it is expected that the harvest will be later than usual, and that good rain in September and early October will be more than ever necessary to bring it to a proper maturity. Should the rains close early in this province, or should timely and sufficient falls be wanting in September and October, it is greatly to be feared that there will be a renewed failure in those parts of the province which have suffered most heavily from a similar autumn drought in the past two years, with a consequent continuance, with generally depleted resources, of the prevailing distress.

5. Turning from the condition of the crops to that of the people, the effect of the break was in a great measure to nullify the improvement in the resources and physique of the labouring classes which had been brought about by the liberal employment which they had received throughout the spring and summer on relief works. As already reported, a great reduction of numbers on works took place in the last week of June. The persons who then left the works were to some extent agriculturists, but mostly agricultural labourers who expected to find work in the fields. This they in a large proportion of cases failed to do. The drought prevented the usual sowing and weeding from going on, and the tenants, with the prospect of renewed disaster before them, were averse from affording employment on grain wages as they do in ordinary years, and, where they gave any employment at all, offered instead money wages which were below the minimum famine wage. Consequently, after consuming the savings they had made from the wages earned

on relief work, these people flocked back to the works, which had to be kept open and in some cases extended to receive them. Many, however, still clung to their villages, and, when the rain commenced, no doubt a good many of them obtained employment. But the general effect was a deterioration in their condition, and this was very marked among the children of agricultural labourers. Many took to eking out their diet by the use as a vegetable of a plant, commonly called wild indigo, but really a *Cassia* (*puwár* or *Cassia tora*), which grows abundantly or waste places by road-sides and about villages. This plant, like others of its family, has purgative properties, and it is to be feared that instead of affording sustenance it increased the tendency to bowel disease which is always found to prevail in the rainy season. The general result is that, while the tenants and their families are now in good condition almost everywhere, the labouring classes cannot be said to be so, and anxiety is concentrated upon them and their children. The work of the present time and the next two months is, as already indicated, the thorough enforcement of village relief and the provision of cooked food at numerous kitchens for children showing signs of privation. Sir Charles Lyall believes that this is now everywhere thoroughly understood, and that the policy inculcated is being actively carried out.

6. As regards relief works, measures have been taken, which are embodied in the orders of which I am to enclose a copy, to obviate those dangers which have been found to attend the extension of the piece-work system. These orders, which were issued before receipt of your letter No. $\frac{24-F}{91-6}$, dated the 22nd July 1897,

exhibiting the experience of the North-Western Provinces, are, the Chief Commissioner is glad to find, in complete accordance with the policy therein inculcated; and it is hoped that their effect will everywhere be to lead to a proper administration of relief in this form. If the rains continue favourable, Sir Charles Lyall believes that the numbers on works will soon materially diminish; and he anticipates that by the end of October it may be possible to close almost all the relief works now being carried on under the Public Works Department. Everything, however, as already explained, depends upon the nature of the weather during the latter part of the monsoon season.

7. The mortality statistics entered in columns 15 and 16 of Statement A are those for June, the figures for July not being yet available. They have already been reported to the Government of India in my letter No. 1415-F, dated the 29th July.

8. It cannot be said that prices have yet shown any general tendency to fall, nor are they now likely to do so materially until the kharif harvest is assured. In Betul, however, where in May and June prices rose to an extent greater than appeared to be explicable by such information as was available as to stocks and imports, there has been a marked fall. This may have been due in part to the action taken in June, and referred to in paragraph 7 of the report for that month, in making advances to petty dealers for the supply of grain at local bazaars. At any rate matters seem now to have adjusted themselves, and neither here nor in any other district does any further Government interference seem called for.

9. In the Nagpur Division a new departure in famine relief has been made in the shape of a scheme for the relief of weavers by advancing them thread for weaving, and purchasing the cloth woven at a price somewhat above that now obtainable in the market, which is so low as to make it impossible for them to support themselves by their trade without assistance. The report for the Nagpur district, which is the only one where this scheme has so far been introduced, does not give statistics of the persons so relieved, but the weekly reports show that they already number more than 4,000. The scheme is based on the rules in force in the Madras Presidency, and has proved very useful in Nagpur, where the large non-agricultural population includes a great number of weavers, among whom distress is severe.

10. In the report from the Jubbulpore Division reference is again made to the immigration from Rewa and other Native States, which has been from the beginning one of the chief difficulties of the situation. After the rabi harvest there seems to have been an ebb in the tide, and, although our works and poor-

houses in Jubbulpore have never been without considerable numbers of foreigners, the strangers were for some time not so much in evidence as they had been in January and February. For some weeks past, however, the weekly reports have contained complaints of renewed inflow, and the figures given by the Commissioner show that we are supporting a very large number of people who are not British subjects. In drawing attention to this fact the Chief Commissioner is well aware that efforts are being made by the States concerned to check wandering and to provide relief for their distressed subjects, and he does not wish to imply that because these efforts have not been successful they have been inadequate. Recent correspondence with the Government of India has shown that Berar is maintaining wanderers from areas of the Central Provinces where relief was easily accessible, and who need therefore never have left their homes. These, however, Sir Charles Lyall believes, are not to be compared in number to the immigrants from the north.

11. In the report for June it was stated that the situation in the Bilaspur district had been causing anxiety for some time past. The Chief Commissioner visited the district early in July, and the results of his visit have been communicated to the Government of India in the memorandum referred to above. The Commissioner's remarks show that when he wrote there was as yet no material change in the situation; but the Chief Commissioner's orders only reached the district towards the end of the month, and sufficient time had not elapsed to admit of the reforms indicated as necessary being fully carried out. The district is practically dependent on the rice crop alone, and during the next month or six weeks (that is, until the early crop comes in), the distress must necessarily deepen. The area is very large, and communications are defective. It must therefore take time to carry out all the measures detailed in the memorandum. The urgent necessity of completing them as quickly as possible has been pressed on the Deputy Commissioner, and Sir Charles Lyall trusts that the result will be apparent in a substantial decrease in the death-rate for August, if not in that for July.

I have, &c.,

M. W. FOX-STRANGWAYS,

Chief Secretary.

Statement showing the numbers on each form of Relief at the end of July as compared with those at the end of June.

		Relief Workers.	Depend- ants.	In Poor- houses.	At Relief Centres and Kitchens.	On Village Relief.	Total.
Nagpur	{ 26th June ...	54,175	10,846	2,409	792	13,184	81,406
	{ 31st July ...	71,170	12,424	3,266	1,197	16,628	104,685
Jubbulpore	{ 26th June ...	79,906	8,565	12,156	6,368	43,060	150,055
	{ 31st July ...	102,710	14,839	10,898	13,951	54,578	196,976
Nerbudda	{ 26th June ...	60,685	8,870	4,625	...	8,519	82,699
	{ 31st July ...	78,740	11,894	4,386	1,924	16,533	113,477
Chhattisgarh	{ 26th June ...	68,017	11,863	10,697	1,996	41,358	133,841
	{ 31st July ...	94,245	16,295	12,299	1,570	70,153	194,562
Total	{ 26th June ...	262,783	40,144	29,797	9,156	106,121	448,001
	{ 31st July ...	346,865	55,452	30,849	18,642	157,892	609,700

District.	Maximum number for whom relief is estimated to be required in case of serious famine.	Number for whom relief was provided in last programme of relief works (i.e., average daily number for three months).			Number for whom relief can be provided by works remaining on programme on date of report (i.e., average daily number for three months) (a).		Expenditure since April 1st 1897.		Advances since April 1st up to end of month under			Revenue suspended or remitted.	
		Date of last programme.	On large works (P. W. D. Schedule A).	Others.	On large works (P. W. D. Schedule A).	Others.	Date up to which account is made up.	Rupees omitting 000s.		Land Improvement Act.	Famine Loans.	Agricultural Loans Act.	Rupees omitting 000s.
								On relief works.	On gratuitous relief.				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
JUBBULPORE DIVISION.													
Jubbulpore	93,000	12-5-97	127,556	...	23,565	...	31-7-97	480	203	...	75	133	399
Saugor	42,000	...	129,000	...	51,787	...	...	61	44	...	29	46	425
Damoh	40,000	...	91,511	...	37,737	...	...	248	102	1	55	220	288
Mandla	27,000	...	135,556	...	100,211	...	...	224	20	...	9	38	33
Seoni	26,000	...	98,222	...	92,885	...	...	10	23	1	12	31	84
Total	228,000	...	581,845	...	306,185	...	...	1,023	392	2	180	468	841 (288 remitted).
NAGPUR DIVISION.													
Nagpur	53,000	6-4-97	51,444	...	38,277	...	31-7-97	*138	8	...	30	10	...
Bhandara	52,000	5-7-97	46,111	...	26,708	...	31-7-97	252	37	...	121	25	39
Balaghat	53,000	6-4-97	48,768	...	48,205	...	31-7-97	457	54	...	47	93	155 (3 remitted, Zamindari Takolis).
Chanda	49,000	11-5-97	47,262	...	101,307	...	...	...	...	...	91	7	...
Wardha	28,000	6-4-97	7,056	...	13,824	...	...	35	...	...	1	3	1
Total	235,000	...	200,641	...	228,321	...	...	882	99	...	290	138	195 (3 remitted).
NERBUDDA DIVISION.													
Hoshangabad	65,000	26-4-97	162,224	24,000	63,668	...	31-7-97	435	31	14	...	...	430
Narsinghpur	46,000	16-11-96	153,984	...	94,094	...	31-7-97	328	43	...	16	10	...
Nimar	18,000	5-6-97	77,171	...	98,975	...	31-7-97	7	9	2	...	6	5 (3 remitted).
Chhindwara	29,000	21-5-97	128,327	3,000	59,407	...	31-7-97	167	27	...	23	10	...
Betul	23,000	26-4-97	122,067	...	102,647	...	31-7-97	123	20	...	16	14	3
Total	181,000	...	643,773	27,000	418,791	...	...	1,060	130	16	55	40	438 (3 remitted).
CHHATTISGARH DIVISION.													
Raipur	89,000	4-12-96	146,228	17,246	109,426	...	31-7-97	649	85	...	131	34	165
Bilaspur	75,000	26-4-97	56,493	30,000	72,427	...	...	415	297	7	58	84	210
Sambalpur... ..	56,000	4-12-96	25,778	...	30,855	...	...	10	1	1	...	4	...
Total	220,000	...	228,499	47,246	212,708	...	...	1,074	382½	7½	189	122	375
GRAND TOTAL	864,000	...	1,654,758	74,246	1,166,005	...	...	4,039	1,003½	25½	714	768	1,849 (294 remitted).

* Includes two spent under the scheme for the relief of weavers.

(a) Some relief works will have been more or less exhausted since the last programme, and others will have been provided for entry in the next programme. The net result should be shown in columns 6 and 7.

(b) The submission of the report should not be delayed in order that accounts of expenditure may be made up to date of report.

(c) The total expenditure incurred and the advances made during the financial year previous to that to which the report and statements under submission belong should be stated in a foot-note.

(d) This statement will relate to the period between the last Saturday of the previous month and the last Saturday of the month under report.

Summary of the Remarks in the District Reports to accompany Monthly Famine Statements A and B for the month of July 1897.

JUBBULPORE DIVISION.

(1) *Private Charity.*

There is not much to record in regard to the administration of the Charity Fund. The liberal expenditure of May and June in grants to needy cultivators nearly exhausted the funds available for this purpose. But in all districts, except Saugor, something could be spared to supplement previous gifts in cases where crops had been ruined by the long break of June, and measures were taken to enquire into these cases and to help the sufferers. In Seoni alone, however, was the amount thus disbursed considerable (Rs. 17,162). The enquiries showed that reports had generally exaggerated the evil, and more harm resulted from delay in sowing than from the destruction of crops already in the ground.

In all districts some expenditure was incurred in clothing the naked. It was largest in Saugor, where it amounted to Rs. 795-12-6. I think that clothes are needed more urgently in Saugor than elsewhere. The condition of the poor-house people there struck me as particularly pitiable in this respect.

In no district was anything spent from the Charity Fund on orphans.

Monthly allowances made to the respectable poor number 200 in Saugor, 1,500 in Jubbulpore, 120 in Mandla, and 123 in Seoni. The Jubbulpore report is silent as to the results of the cheap grain shop which has been established in the town. I will enquire into its history.

The Church of England Mission at Mandla fed 168 persons and gave employment to 1,451. At Seoni the Scotch Mission gave daily doles of grain to 977 persons. But the doles are insufficient and are distributed unsystematically, and I fear that their grant results in more harm than good.

(2) *Government Poor-houses.*

The number of poor-houses and the number of their inmates during July are compared below with the numbers during the two months preceding :—

District.	NUMBER OF POOR-HOUSES.			NUMBER OF INMATES.		
	May.	June.	July.	May.	June.	July.
Jubbulpore	5	4	3	2,408	3,342	2,441
Saugor	5	5	5	4,598	6,813	4,547
Damoh	4	5	5	1,236	1,548	1,662
Mandla	2	2	2	470	733	1,169
Seoni	2	2	2	465	720	1,079
Total	18	18	17	9,177	13,156	10,898

The small poor-house at Katangi in the Jubbulpore district is now classed as a relief-centre or kitchen.

Efforts have been made to reduce the poor-house population by systematically drafting out all those who are either able to work or are fit subjects for village

relief, and the decrease in numbers would have been considerably larger were it not for the large numbers of orphans the poor-houses include. There are over 2,000 under the care of the Government in the Division.

Another difficulty arises from the large influx of people from Native States. When I visited the Murwara poor-house a short time ago, I found that nearly half its inmates had their homes in the Rewa and Maihar States, and of 43 wanderers found begging in the bazaar, 26 came from Native territory. Rewa has sent us nearly a quarter of the paupers in the Jubbulpore poor-house. The Khurai poor-house (in the Saugor district), where the general condition of the inmates is especially miserable, is inundated from Bhopal and neighbouring States. Immigration, which fell off during May, has lately been largely on the increase, doubtless from the same causes as have led to a rise in the death-rate in British districts.

The draftings from the poor-houses have mainly been to works, and what I have seen has convinced me that large numbers have been marched off to Public Works Department Camps who are quite unable to do any work worth the name, and who should certainly have been sent back to their villages and be relieved there. Considerable numbers decamp *en route* (in Seoni at least 30 per cent. absconded) and then after wandering about for some days in a starving state return to the poor-house gate. I have impressed on Deputy Commissioners the importance of using the village relief lists more freely; the procedure in registering and paying village paupers has been simplified, and I hope that during August we shall find fewer incapables sent to work. In July the best results are shown by the Deputy Commissioner of Seoni, who drafted 419 persons from the poor-houses to their villages.

I have lately inspected the six principal poor-houses in the Division, and have found the management to be generally satisfactory, though in some cases (notably at Mandla) good results have been obtained by limiting admission—a measure which is quite indefensible. The number of deaths continues very high. In Seoni a quarter of the average strength died; in Jubbulpore and Mandla over a fifth. These figures tell their own tales as to the condition of the paupers on first admission. It should be explained that a large proportion of the deaths at Jubbulpore have been among the children, who have been more than decimated by the epidemic form of scurvy known as "*cancrum oris*." They are being moved to a more healthy site.

(3) Relief-centres and Kitchens.

In Mandla alone have these centres of relief retained their original character as a place for providing light work for those not wholly incapacitated and of gratuitously relieving the incapable. Elsewhere they have practically become kitchens with, in some cases, small hospitals attached. I contrast below the figures for June and July:—

District.	NUMBER OF CENTRES AND KITCHENS.		NUMBER OF PERSONS RELIEVED GRATUITOUSLY.		NUMBER OF PERSONS ON LIGHT WORK.		TOTAL.	
	June.	July.	June.	July.	June.	July.	June.	July.
Saugor ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	...
Damoh ... ..	...	1	...	275	...	...	...	275
Jubbulpore ...	9	30	1,460	7,899	786	226	2,246	8,125
Mandla	17	17	745	1,309	3,029	4,074	3,774	5,383
Seoni	4	4	79	75	269	93	348	168
Total	30	52	2,284	9,558	4,084	4,393	6,368	13,951

The notable increase in the Jubbulpore district is due to the establishment of a large number of children's kitchens, which are mostly situated at Police-stations or Outposts. Other districts have not been so prompt in opening these kitchens, of the need of which I become each day more convinced. But in Seoni arrangements have been matured for opening 59, and in a large number distribution has actually begun. I trust that within the next week 20 will have been opened in Mandla, 25 in Saugor and several in Damoh, where the large number of Public Works Department works still open (with kitchens attached) render village kitchens less urgently required.

I have lately inspected seven of these kitchens in the Jubbulpore and Seoni districts. The children throng to them. Only those in poor condition are admitted, but, even so, each kitchen commonly feeds from one to two hundred, a large proportion of whom are reduced to mere skin and bone. That the children are deteriorating strikes me everywhere. The Deputy Commissioner of Seoni, who has lately visited a large number of villages, notices this particularly, and gives the probable explanation of it. Labouring men and women can at the present time earn no more than suffices for their own food. Any savings they may have accumulated on famine works were exhausted during the break in the rains at the end of June. They have nothing for their children, who are practically left to graze in the fields. It is commonly admitted by the people that the emaciated children one sees in the kitchens have been subsisting entirely on wild indigo and similar weeds for the past month.

(4) Village Relief.

Orders issued by the Chief Commissioner at the beginning of the month emphasized the importance of gratuitous relief at the houses of the people during the monsoon months, when relief works were necessarily contracted and the exposure which they entailed would be particularly injurious to the sick and feeble. The following figures show that this policy has taken practical shape in Damoh, Jubbulpore and Seoni :—

District.	NUMBER BELIEVED AT THEIR HOUSES.		
	June.	July.	Difference.
Saugor	9,385	7,621	-1,764
Damoh	11,203	12,002	+ 799
Jubbulpore	18,178	28,421	+10,243
Mandla	2,268	2,418	+150
Seoni	2,026	4,116	+2,090
Total	43,060	54,578	+11,518

The Jubbulpore figures overstate the facts, as they include a number of persons who have been provisionally entered on the relief lists and have not as yet received payment. As they stand they cover 3·8 per cent. of the population, which, present circumstances considered, is not very high. The percentage in Damoh is about the same. In Seoni the lists still include only 1 per cent. of the population. But they have been doubled during the month. The Deputy Commissioners of Saugor and Mandla show no increase. Indeed in Saugor names have been struck off very largely under a misapprehension which it has taken much time to remove. In neither district has the staff of Revenue Inspectors been increased on the scale followed in other districts. I have now arranged for doubling the staff, and by this time the Assistants should have taken charge. I have issued instructions simplifying the procedure for the registration and payment of village paupers, and hope that during the current month relief will be extended in both

these districts as far as circumstances demand it. In both the death-rate for June was very high. The death-rates for July have not yet been officially reported. But figures have reached me from Damoh and Jubbulpore which show a most satisfactory decrease.

(5) *Relief-works.*

(a)—*Under the Public Works Department.*—The numbers of workers and dependants on Public Works Department relief-works during June and July are contrasted below :—

District.	NUMBER OF WORKERS.		NUMBER OF DEPENDANTS.		TOTAL.		Difference. (+) or (-)
	June.	July.	June.	July.	June.	July.	
Saugor	16,502	23,277	1,776	2,514	18,278	25,791	+7,513
Damoh	18,080	31,879	2,656	5,692	20,736	37,571	+16,835
Jubbulpore	15,933	23,329	1,908	3,342	17,841	26,671	+8,830
Mandla	7,170	6,905	1,452	2,244	8,622	9,149	+527
Seoni	6,025	4,766	773	1,047	6,798	5,813	-985
Total	63,710	90,156	8,565	14,839	72,275	104,995	+32,720

The most striking point is the large increase (80 per cent.) in Damoh. About a quarter of this is due to the transfer of coolies from local works, but new admissions have been growing rapidly; and I ascribe this to the fact that in Damoh alone of all the districts in this Division no attempt has been made to introduce piece work or to pay by results. I have lately inspected three of the works in this district, and came to the conclusion that although a considerable proportion of the workers were in really bad case, there was a large number of them fairly well-to-do, chiefly women who came from neighbouring villages and accepted the subsistence wage as a supplement to the earnings of their fathers and husbands. With the concurrence of the Deputy Commissioner and Executive Engineer, I decided to recommend the introduction of the "piece-work" system, or payment by results, for all those who were specially selected as being in good condition, leaving the balance to work on the Famine Code terms and extending the grant of cooked food in lieu of cash to dependants—adults as well as children. Moreover, as no attempt could successfully be made to compel piece-workers to support their own dependants, and not to throw them on our hands, it was decided to limit the earnings of piece-workers to the subsistence wage. They might earn less but not more. These recommendations have been accepted by the Chief Commissioner and will, I think, result in the curtailment of our expenditure on the relief of people who do not really require it, of whom there is no small proportion on the Damoh works.

Saugor and Jubbulpore show increases of approximately like amount, and have nearly the same numbers on Public Works Department relief works. But Jubbulpore has over 10,000 people on local works, who are not included in these figures. Two new Public Works Department charges were opened in Jubbulpore—at Hardua in the extreme north, and at Chapra about the centre of the district. In Saugor the charges remained practically unchanged. There was a small increase in Mandla—much smaller than the circumstances of the people demanded. At the end of June numbers on the Public Works Department works of this district fell off very largely indeed, distress is certainly on the increase, and the grant of relief work requires extension. On my visit to the district I arranged for re-opening the work at Thonda (near Bichia) which had been closed in June, and the Deputy Commissioner has strictly limited the exaction of piece-work conditions. The Seoni district alone shows a decline in numbers, which may possibly be the result of the employment of contractors on the piece works, a plan followed in no

other district. The intervention of these men will, under recent orders of the Chief Commissioner, be dispensed with, if possible, without breach of contract.

The scope of the kitchens attached to Public Works Department camps has been greatly extended. They now distribute cooked food to most of the adult dependants as well as the children, and in addition feed a considerable number of children belonging to villagers in the vicinity who are not connected with the workers.

(b) *Works under District Officers.*—The numbers employed during the past two months are contrasted below :—

District.	June.	July.	Difference. (+) or (—)
	No.	No.	
Saugor	595	120	—475
Damoh	5,332	781	—4,551
Jubbulpore	4,475	10,449	+5,974
Mandla	1,639	1,089	—550
Seoni	313	115	—198
Total	12,354	12,554	+200

These works have been greatly contracted, save in Jubbulpore, where it has been found necessary to open several works in corners of the district which the effect of the Public Works Department works does not reach. One of these (at Majholi) has attracted over 3,000 persons, although the wage rates are lower by a pice than those given on Public Works Department works. There are a number of minor works in Mandla, supervised by patwaris, which were introduced to take the place of village relief, but have not been very successful.

In Damoh local works have been opened at Jhalon and Taradehi—localities remote from Public Works Department works—where the people were reported to need relief. There are small works in the vicinity of the towns of Damoh, Jubbulpore, and Mandla, used mainly as a means of employing persons drafted from the poor-houses and able-bodied vagrants, and I have arranged for starting small works in the vicinity of Saugor and Seoni.

(c) *Loan Works.*—These have nearly all been closed. Seoni reports 14 still open, supporting 540 persons.

(6) *Railway Works.*

These employed labour in Saugor, Damoh, and Jubbulpore. The numbers were :—

District.	On 26th June.	On 31st July.
	No.	No.
Saugor	5,073	4,200
Damoh	5,190	6,057
Jubbulpore	3,723	3,660
Total	13,986	13,917

There has been no change to speak of.

(7) *Summary of the Relief Granted in the Division.*

The numbers on relief in all five districts of the Division have risen from 149,201 to 198,225 or by nearly 33 per cent. The proportion relieved gratuitously has remained constant at 46 per cent., which is, I venture to think, if anything rather low for the monsoon months. The percentage of the total population on relief in each district during each of the past three months is given below :—

District.	May.	June.	July.
Saugor	10.6	6.1	6.4
Damoh	16.6	12.3	16.1
Jubbulpore	11.5	6.2	10.3
Mandla	9.6	5.1	5.8
Seoni	4.6	2.7	3.3

In Jubbulpore and Damoh relief measures have nearly regained the extension to which they had been carried at the end of the hot weather. Relief has been liberally granted, but its beneficial effect is seen in the death-rate which in both districts fell during July to under 5 per mille per mensem. In Seoni the rate has risen considerably. I have not yet learnt the mortality during July in Saugor and Mandla.

(8) *Food-stocks and Trade.*

Stocks appear to be generally adequate to supply consumption at present prices, except in the remoter parts of the Mandla district, where, however, matters have been greatly improved by the imports recently effected by Government.

Figures for the grain traffic of the month are given below :—

District.	IMPORTS.			EXPORTS.		
	May.	June.	July.	May.	June.	July.
	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.
Saugor	47,279	64,843	88,022	950	1,783	374
Damoh	Not reported.		54,675	Not reported.		...
Jubbulpore	100,777	95,677	55,146	30,808	26,574	7,072
Mandla	50,000	105,000	...	...	...	...
Seoni	10,280	5,531	4,816	3,120	2,009	855

The exports from Jubbulpore are incorrectly reported, as they should correspond very nearly with the imports into Damoh. Cart traffic has been very brisk indeed along the Jubbulpore-Damoh Road, and special arrangements have been made to facilitate the passage of carts over unbridged streams and nallas. The quantity shown as imported would suffice to feed for a month nearly half the population of the district. I cannot understand why the Deputy Commissioner of Mandla returns no imports. Traffic on the Mandla Road is much less considerable than with Damoh, but I passed several carts laden with grain when I last travelled along it. I have asked the Deputy Commissioner to arrange for properly recording the traffic.

(9) *Prices.*

The average prices ruling during June and July are compared below :—

District.	SEERS PER RUPEE.					
	WHEAT.		GRAM.		COMMON RICE.	
	June.	July.	June.	July.	June.	July.
Saugor	8½	8½	8½	8	6	6
Damoh	7½	7	7½	7	6	6
Jubbulpore	9½	9½	9½	9½	8	8
Mandla... ..	7½	8½	7½	8½	7	7½
Seoni	8	8½	...	8	...	8

Prices have fallen substantially in Mandla, and slightly in Seoni. In Saugor and Damoh there has been a slight rise. Jubbulpore shows no change.

(10) *Rates of Wages on Public Works Department Relief-works.*

The only changes reported are in the Damoh and Seoni districts. In the former the rate was raised from 8 to 7 seers with the object of encouraging importation. It has now been lowered again to 8 seers. In Seoni rates have been raised on two works—at Kenri from 8 to 7½ and at Ugli from 8½ to 8 seers

(11) *Crime.*

Comparative statistics are given below :—

	TOTAL NUMBER OF OFFENCES.				
	Jubbulpore.	Saugor.	Damoh.	Mandla.	Seoni.
July 1897	662	568	226	319	270
June 1897	418	240	133	123	189
July 1896	656	459	227	162	234

All districts exhibit a very large increase on the crime of the preceding month, but in the case of all except Saugor and Mandla the crime of the month corresponds pretty nearly with that of July 1896. Saugor and Mandla show a very large increase in the number of offences and, taken with other facts, I believe this to indicate that relief measures are hardly sufficiently extended. The characteristic crime of the day is the stealing of cattle to be killed and eaten. Cases of this sort have become extremely common in the tracts inhabited by Gonds, and largely contribute to the overcrowding of the jails. The offence is one which must be repressed, however pitiable be the motives for it.

(12) *Mortality.*

This is, perhaps, the most important section of these notes, as it affords the best indication available of the extent to which our relief measures are required and are successful. Unfortunately the monthly reports are submitted before the vital statistics for the month can be tabulated, and no later figures have been officially reported than those for June.

There was a serious increase in the mortality of all districts except Jubbulpore :—

District.	TOTAL NUMBER OF DEATHS.		DEATHS FROM CHOLERA.		MONTHLY DEATH-RATE.	
	May.	June.	May.	June.	May.	June.
Saugor	4,427	6,138	971	1,057	7·5	10·4
Damoh	1,362	2,699	333	679	4·1	8·3
Jubbulpore	4,721	4,272	738	471	6·3	5·7
Mandla	2,436	3,571	681	1,220	7·2	10·5
Seoni	1,713	2,545	379	704	4·7	6·8

The rates are exceedingly high in Saugor and Mandla. But a fairer test will be gained by eliminating the deaths from cholera—

District.	MONTHLY DEATH-RATE EXCLUDING DEATHS FROM CHOLERA.					
	January.	February.	March.	April.	May.	June.
Saugor	3·8	4·6	4·0	4·2	5·8	8·5
Damoh	5·3	4·2	4·1	4·0	3·1	6·2
Jubbulpore	7·7	8·8	6·5	5·0	5·3	5·1
Mandla	3·9	5·5	5·5	3·9	5·1	6·9
Seoni	5·3	4·4	4·1	3·4	3·6	4·9

Put in this way the Mandla death-rate is not so formidable, though I fear that it does not represent accurate reporting. The Saugor rate remains very high indeed. Both Damoh and Seoni have, till the end of May, returned figures which were distinctly reassuring. In both there was in June a sudden and large rise. The steady decline of the death-rate in Jubbulpore is a very satisfactory feature in the table; and I am glad to be able to report the receipt of telegrams from Damoh and Jubbulpore which show that the mortality rate for July declined respectively to below 5·0 and 4·5 per mille. In Seoni the rate has risen to about 8 per mille. I have received no information from Saugor and Mandla.

These statistics agree with the general results of observations in showing that a sudden and rapid deterioration in the condition of the poorest classes of the people took place almost everywhere during the month of June.

The special statistics of deaths due to starvation are separately reported, and as finally verified for June have not yet reached me. My enquiries lead me to fear that no effort will render these statistics reliable, and that the general death-rate (excluding deaths from cholera), coupled with the deaths in poor-houses, is, however imperfect, the best statistical clue available to the extent of the distress prevailing.

(13) *Physical condition of the people.*

Cultivators and their families are generally in very good case. They have been immensely assisted by the Charity Fund grants and by the advances made by Government, and have sown a larger area than was anticipated. It is in regard to the class of field and casual labourers that there is some ground for anxiety. In the Jubbulpore district emaciated people are rarely to be met with, and from the reports which reach me and my own observations I should say that they were not common in Damoh. The Deputy Commissioner of Saugor writes

that "in no part of the district has the physical condition of the people suffered a change for the worse sufficiently marked to attract special notice." But the state of the inmates of the Saugor and Khurai poor-houses is not a reassuring index. And on a large work which I visited in the north of the district nearly half the people were, to say the least of it, in very poor condition indeed. It is true that a considerable number of them came from Native territory. But the condition of crowds of our own people was such as to cause anxiety. The Deputy Commissioner of Mandla also in my opinion underrated the signs of distress there apparent. An examination of some hundreds in the town of Mandla disclosed a large proportion of half-starved people, and on one work I visited fully a quarter of the coolies showed signs of acute distress. The Civil Surgeon writes: "The fresh increase in mortality is to be distinctly traced to continued and severe privation. . . . The practical closure of Public Works Department works to all but robust workers caused fresh distress." The Deputy Commissioner agrees in ascribing the deterioration of the poorest classes to over-strictness in the admission to Public Works Department relief-works, but he failed altogether to provide for the change of conditions by arranging to extend his village relief. The Deputy Commissioner of Seoni has lately made a very thorough tour of inspection, turning out and examining the people of 68 villages. He found adults generally in good condition, but came across 393 children—3 per cent. of the population—in urgent need of food, having been altogether neglected by their parents. The distress with which we have to deal is restricted to one class of the community, and can in my opinion be adequately met by the extension of village relief and kitchens already ordered by the Chief Commissioner.

(14) *General condition and prospects.*

Generally, prospects are exceedingly good. In Saugor more than the normal area has been sown and the crops promise unusually well. In Damoh short rainfall at the outset delayed rice sowings on light soils, but heavy rain at the end of July has enabled the cultivators to make up arrears. The same remarks apply to Jubbulpore. Until late in July a good deal of rice land remained unsown in Bahoriban, Bilehri and Murwara, but sowings are reported to have now been satisfactorily extended. In Mandla generally prospects are exceedingly good, this district having received more rain early in the month than Jubbulpore and Damoh, and the rice crop was there nearly a foot high when still sprouting in the latter districts. In some of the remoter villages a considerable area has been left unsown for want of seed, but this was only to be expected with Gonds and Baigas. The northern and western portions of Seoni are in very promising condition, the area sown being considerably larger than the normal. But towards the Balaghat border, in the Ashta taluqa, the Deputy Commissioner has recently found sowings in a very backward state, and the people discontented and listless, though he thinks that this is due more to the bad management of the landlord than to lack of means or unsuitability of rainfall.

J. B. FULLER,
Officiating Commissioner.

The 14th August 1897.

NAGPUR DIVISION.

(1) *Private relief.*

Nagpur.—One of the three private poor-houses at Umrer was taken over by Government on the 23rd July and one was opened at Katol on the 1st idem. The private institution at Bela had to be closed at the end of the month for want of funds. The number relieved at all the poor-houses on the last day of the month was 789 with an expenditure Rs. 1,130, against 859 persons with an expenditure of Rs. 863 returned on 26th June. Besides this relief in poor-houses, a good deal of private charity continues throughout the district in the shape of both food and cash distributed to the local poor.

Bhandara.—No funds having been received from the Central Committee during the month, it was not found possible to allot any more money for seed-grain

and bullocks. The other operations of the Fund had to be considerably restricted. There is a large demand for clothing by labourers on relief works. Towards the close of the month an allotment of Rs. 20,000 was made to the district under the Agriculturists Loans Act, in order to provide seed for tenants whose seed has dried up owing to the holding off of the monsoon. Nearly the whole of this amount has now been distributed.

Balaghat.—A sum of Rs. 152 was spent at the poor-houses, *viz.*, Rs. 38 at Balaghat, Rs. 50 at Baihar and Rs. 64 at Katangi. The expenditure from the Charitable Relief Fund under Head IV. amounted to Rs. 1,366, relief being afforded to 207 families.

Chanda.—During the month a further distribution of Rs. 2,006 was made from the Charitable Relief Fund for the purchase of seed-grain.

Wardha.—Juari is being doled out to poor people at various centres in the district, apparently in sufficient quantities to afford appreciable relief.

(2) *Poor-house relief.*

Nagpur.—The number in the poor-house has not increased, as was anticipated in the previous month. This is due to large drafts to Bhandara and Balaghat and to the local relief-works. The number of inmates on the last day of July was 738 in the Nagpur poor-house and 341 in the one at Umrer taken over by Government. Several of those who were sent to relief-works persistently returned to the poor-house, so were placed on penal rations. This probably helped to check the rush to the poor-house which was expected on the setting in of the rains.

Bhandara.—The number of poor-houses remained the same throughout the month. All of them were visited by the Deputy Commissioner. There has been some increase in the total number of inmates, which stood at 948 on the 31st July as against 825 on the 26th June. The increase is practically confined to the Gondia poor-house. During the period under report there were 934 admissions, 589 discharges, 253 deaths and 2 births, the figures for the previous month being 516, 418, 159 and 1 respectively. It must, however, be remembered that the period now under report is one of five weeks, instead of four; allowing for this fact, however, the figures still show a considerable increase under the head of admissions and deaths. This is no doubt due to many beggars and wanderers, who have hitherto attempted to pick up a scanty living outside, being driven to take shelter in a poor-house owing to the rains. The able-bodied are periodically drafted to relief-works, while permanent cripples entitled to village relief are sent to their homes at the beginning of every month, a month's allowance being given to them, and arrangements being made to put them on the mukaddam's list in their villages. The Police continue to relieve starving wanderers, sending them to relief-works or poor-houses or to their own villages, as may appear proper in each case. The number of persons so relieved during the five weeks under report was 163 against 155 in June.

Balaghat.—The population of the poor-houses rose with the setting in of the rains, as will be seen from the figures below :—

—	June.	July.
Balaghat	559	598
Baihar	164	361
Katangi... ..	88	117
Total	811	1,076

The greatest increase is at Baihar, where the commencement of the rains involved the closing of several of the tank works.

Chanda.—No poor-house relief.

Wardha.—Two poor-houses—one at Wardha and one at Hinganghat—were opened on the 19th and 25th July, respectively. The total number of inmates on the last day of the month was 504.

(3) *Village relief.*

Nagpur.—The Deputy Commissioner reports :—“ The advances to Tahsildars have so far proved inoperative ; that is to say, no expenditure from these advances is yet reported. It is possible, however, that the orders issued have had effect in causing malguzars and mukaddams to give more assistance to the distressed in their villages, and claims for recoument will probably come in later on.”

An examination of vital statistics shows that the death-rate has been very high in some 13 circles, where it will, perhaps, be necessary to start village relief. In four of these circles, however, there are relief camps which necessarily affect the percentage of deaths on population. The Deputy Commissioner is giving careful attention to the subject, and prompt action will be taken if necessary.

Moreover, there is less distress now than there was during the early part of last month, when there was some difficulty about finding work except at the relief camps. Towards the close of the month weeding operations began and are now in full swing.

Bhandara.—The number of children's kitchens has remained the same, *viz.*, 26, while the number of children fed has risen from 757 to 1,158. The Deputy Commissioner, who has visited a number of these kitchens at Police Out-posts, states that all children look fairly fit. These kitchens are much appreciated by the Koshtis in places where they are numerous and their trade has been practically at a standstill for some time. The number of persons in receipt of gratuitous relief in their homes has increased from 4,389 to 6,623. New cases are continually coming to notice that require such relief, and with the return of a large number of labourers and dependants to their homes, which may be expected during August, a further increase is probable. Eight additional Revenue Inspectors have recently been sanctioned for employment on the work of distributing village relief, as the existing circles are too large to admit of the Inspector visiting all his villages in regular rotation during the month. Two Additional Naib-Tahsildars have also been sanctioned for inspecting this form of relief, and have been actually employed since the close of the month.

Palaghat.—There are four relief centres. The recipients of such relief have decreased from 45 to 29. The number of persons relieved *at their homes* has, however, risen from 8,795 to 10,005, and will rise still further as the recent orders of the Chief Commissioner are thoroughly understood. It has been found necessary to increase the staff in the Baihar Tahsil by one Revenue Inspector and two Naib-Tahsildars, as the means of communication above the ghats are frequently closed for days together. The number of kotwars in receipt of relief is 537, thirty-one names having been added during the month.

Chanda.—Village-to-village relief has just been organised here. A sum of Rs. 5,880 was paid out during the month as advances. Children's kitchens are being opened out at all relief centres.

Wardha.—This kind of relief has just commenced and advances have been furnished to the Police and Tahsildars to meet expenditure under this head. Section 33 of the Code has been made applicable to the district and the responsibility of the mukaddams and kotwars in the matter is being enforced.

(4) *Relief-works.*

Nagpur.—There are four large works, at all of which stone-breaking is carried on. The number of persons on these works was 11,163 and dependants 2,507 against 11,430 and 2,375 respectively in the previous month.

During the month there was a considerable increase temporarily, but more favourable weather caused a reduction. The gradual substitution of piece-work for task-work is receiving systematic attention, and fair progress in this direction

has already been made on the Katol and Umrer Roads. Weaver relief has attained considerable dimensions in Nagpur and Kamptee.

Bhandara.—The number of persons on Public Works Department relief works was 19,477 workers and 2,970 dependants against 17,272 workers and 3,107 dependants at the end of June. The fluctuations, week by week, shown by the following figures are rather interesting :—

	Workers.	Dependants.	Total.
26th June	17,272	3,107	20,379
3rd July	16,326	2,523	18,849
10th do.	19,544	3,494	23,038
17th do.	21,877	3,304	25,181
24th do.	25,720	3,980	29,700
31st do.	19,477	2,970	22,447

The steady fall in numbers, which has occurred throughout June, continued during the week ending the 3rd July, but then the holding off of the rain caused large numbers to return to the relief-works, and there was a continuous increase till nearly the end of the month, when improved weather, combined with the extension of the piece-work system, had the effect of again reducing numbers. The piece-work system was introduced during the month in three camps. All the Government relief-works were visited either by the Deputy Commissioner or the Extra-Assistant Commissioner on famine duty and also by the Civil Surgeon.

Private works continued to be carried on during the month, as the scanty rainfall enabled earthwork still to be done in many places. One hundred and sixty-seven works employing an average of 4,353 labourers are reported to have been open during the month. The heavy rain which has fallen since the close of the month has probably rendered any further work of this sort impossible. Rupees 11,159 are said to have been spent from famine loans during the month, but this figure is probably only approximate.

Balaghat.—All the tank works in Baihar have been closed. The large works and the number of persons employed on them at the end of June and July are as follows .—

	June.	July.
Lalbarra-Rampaili Road	2,110	6,971
Balaghat-Baihar Road	4,049	6,656
Lanji-Amgaon Road	1,537	6,546
Lanji-Balaghat Road	9,225	16,423
Waraseoni-Katangi Road	6,027	6,350
Bakal Tank	500	...
Bhilwani Tank	1,221	...
Alna Tank	222	...
Ajgara Tank	493	...
Total	25,384	42,946

The large increase in numbers in July is due to the same causes as in the Bhandara district, and since the close of the month there has been a corresponding reduction for reasons similar to those shown against Bhandara.

Wardha.—There is only one such work at Arvi, which continues to be managed on both the piece-work and task-work systems conjointly.

(5) *Physical condition of the people.*

Nagpur.—The condition of the people in the Nagpur poor-house is said to be "indifferent," but the Deputy Commissioner explains that the Superintendent means by this neither very good nor very bad. Some applicants for admission have evidently suffered a good deal, but the majority have not. I was myself at the poor-house a few days ago, and thought the condition of the people distinctly satisfactory on the whole. There seemed to be proportionately fewer cases of emaciation than I had noticed on some previous occasions, but owing to long absences from head-quarters I had not visited the institution recently till about a week ago. There were 29 deaths in the poor-house against 19 in the previous month.

On the Great Northern Road many of the kitchen inmates were very emaciated, but the workers seemed to be in very fair condition. The piece-work camps include only strong workers. The condition of the people in the district generally is fairly good.

Bhandara.—The condition of the people both on relief-works and at large has somewhat deteriorated. The change is most marked among the majority of those who had left the relief-works during June in the hope of agricultural employment, but who after wandering about for some time, living on probably insufficient means, have now returned to the works. Of those who left the works in June and did not return in July, a large proportion must, until quite lately, have been without employment. The Deputy Commissioner writes :—

"People are more than usually disinclined to leave their houses during the rains in search of work; others may have been deterred by the thought of the piece-work system, the introduction of which soon became generally known, while the fact of weakly people being retained on task-work was probably not so widely recognised."

As regards those in receipt of village relief, no deterioration was noticeable in their condition during the period under report.

Balaghat.—It has been found possible to strike off a number of persons from the lists of those in receipt of gratuitous relief and to send them to the relief-works.

The condition of the people on works is said to be healthy and generally strong.

As regards the distressed tracts, the Deputy Commissioner writes :—

"The distribution of money to the poorest cultivators has had an excellent effect, but cases of emaciation among this class are still painfully evident. Nothing but brute force would induce them to leave their homes and fields for relief-work, unless they can return every night.

Chanda.—The condition of the people continues to be fair. No cases of emaciation have been noticed,

Wardha.—The condition of the people is said to be good on works and fairly good elsewhere.

(6) *Deaths from starvation.*

Nagpur.—Four cases were reported during the month. One of these was a resident of Nagpur, the other three wanderers. The resident of Nagpur was mother-in-law to a schoolmaster. He, his wife, and the woman's daughter are reported to be well off, but to have neglected the deceased. Another case was reported from Nagpur, but on enquiry, a sum of Rs. 6-4-0 was found on the body of the deceased.

Bhanuara.—The return for July is not yet available. The mortality return for June shows an annual death-rate of 84.24 per mille. Cholera was prevalent

throughout the district. Eliminating deaths from cholera, the mortality during that month is equal to an annual rate of 62·47 per mille. There were 138 deaths in poor-houses. No deaths were proved to be due to starvation. That deaths from starvation do most probably occur in some of the jungly parts of the district where villages are few and far between cannot be denied. Five cases were reported by the Police. The dead bodies were found on the outskirts of villages and there was nothing but a certain appearance of emaciation and privation to warrant the assumption that death was due to starvation. None of the victims had applied for help to the Police or the village mukaddams. Three of them were males and two females, aged between 40 and 50.

Balaghat.—There were no deaths from starvation. In June the total number of deaths was 3,901, giving a death-rate of 10·18. Of these 705 were due to cholera and 19 to small-pox. Omitting these, the death-rate was equal to 8·29 per mille per menses. The Deputy Commissioner attributes this terribly high death-rate to the effect of the rains on the constitution of the people, weakened as they have been by a long course of privation. The statistics for July are not yet to hand.

Chanda.—Eight deaths were reported in June as due to starvation. They were in two cases wanderers from Native States, and a third was from Raipur. All three occurred in the Zamindari area. Of the remaining five, two were children of a mother who died of cholera, and it is now reported that the children succumbed to the same complaint. One case at Warora is attributed to constant fever, aggravated probably by want and privation. One death in the Sironcha Tahsil was of an old woman over 70 years of age.

Wardha.—No deaths are reported as due to starvation.

(7) *Food-stocks.*

These are reported to be sufficient in Nagpur, Wardha, Chanda, and Bhandara. Even in Balaghat all anxiety on this subject is practically at an end. More grain has been already conveyed to Baihar and distributed about the plateau than we thought possible at one time; and with imports continuing steadily, there is no ground for any apprehension that the supply will fall short of all requirements.

(8) *Importation of grain.*

The imports and exports as reported by Deputy Commissioners are shown in the following table:—

Districts.	IMPORTS IN MAUNDS.		EXPORTS IN MAUNDS.		REMARKS,
	June.	July.	June.	July.	
Nagpur	138,131	93,593	9,430	13,090	By rail.
	41,145	36,677	1,485	2,878	By road.
Bhandara	80,888	63,404	10,515	12,255	
Balaghat	47,634	26,454	<i>Nil.</i>	<i>Nil.</i>	
Wardha	7,019	15,700	3,546	3,424	

No figures are given for Chanda, but from my recollection of those in the weekly statements exports have been in excess of imports. This is keeping up prices, but will not otherwise have any ill effect.

(9) *General condition and prospects of affected area.*

Nagpur.—During the month the District Charitable Committee allotted Rs. 14,000 for payment to distressed cultivators for rabi seed. Tahsildars had also in their hands certain savings from the kharif allotments owing to unsuitable selections in the first instance. Altogether there are some Rs. 19,000 for allotment. The Committee, finding their work in that city arduous, made over this amount

towards the end of the month to the Deputy Commissioner, who has already allotted Rs. 11,600. An additional sum of Rs. 4,000 allotted to this district for kharif resowings is being disposed of gradually. The original Rs. 10,000 is said to have been fully allotted. Prospects, which were very doubtful at the time of writing the last report, are now much brighter. The rain during July was most avourable and all crops are in good condition : little damage is said to have been caused to rice and cotton, none to other crops. There has been a fall in the area under cotton, which has been replaced by juari.

Bhandara.—The first half of the month was almost rainless and much damage was undoubtedly caused to seed beds. About the 15th or 16th good rain fell in most parts of the district, but in many places the fall was very scanty. The next week was one of intermittent showers, which did much good and enabled transplanting to be taken in hand in some places. The last week was again practically rainless and very hot, and a good deal of the water in the fields must have evaporated, till on the 31st there was a fairly heavy fall throughout the district. Since the close of the month rain has fallen almost daily, and transplanting operations are now in full swing. A good deal of the damage done in the early part of July has been made good by resowings (broadcast), in many cases with the help of takavi loans recently granted. Still a considerable area will remain fallow for want of seed, and, a larger proportionate area having been sown broadcast, the total outturn will be less. If all goes well now, a rice crop may be expected of about 11 annas of the normal area. But the demand for labour will be unusually small throughout the rains, and when transplanting is over a rise in the numbers on relief-works will necessarily occur.

Balaghat.—Prospects looked very black indeed when the last report was written. There was hardly any rain from the 24th June to the 7th July, from which date, however, about 15 inches fell during the month, sufficient to enable transplanting to be commenced in the early part of August. Much irreparable damage has, however, been done to seed beds, many of which, having entirely withered, were ploughed up, and broadcast dhan was sown. Far less transplanted rice was sown this year than usual. This, together with the partial loss of what was sown, necessarily entails the employment of fewer farm labourers during the rains. It is estimated that the yield of the rice crop will be from half the area ordinarily sown. The supply of labour will therefore far exceed the demand for some time to come.

Chanda.—The condition and prospects of the district have improved vastly since the last report.

Wardha.—Rain has fallen all over the district, but more rain is needed in the Arvi Tahsil. Prospects are reported to be good everywhere. Grass and weeds, &c., have shot up in the fields and the labouring and poorer classes are now getting wages for field work.

(10) *Changes in rate of wages.*

In Bhandara the rate was changed from 9 to 7½ seers on the Bhandara Circuit Road and from 8 to 7 seers at Camp No. 1 on the Tumsar-Rampaili Road. No changes were made in other camps.

In Balaghat wages were raised to the rate of 7 seers.

In Wardha wages are calculated at 8½ seers per rupee.

(11) *State of crime.*

Nagpur.—There is still a marked increase in crime over the past year :—

	1896.	1897.
Burglaries	49	140
Cattle thefts	10	17
Thefts	42	185

The offences are mostly of a petty description.

Bhandara.—The amount of crime during the month has been normal, though cases of petty theft and of killing animals for food are still unduly frequent.

Balaghat.—An unsatisfactory feature is the large number of cattle killed for food. The Deputy Commissioner writes, "The jail was so overcrowded that I issued instructions that cattle thefts should be punished with whipping. This, however, had not the least effect on the Gonds, who were perfectly ready to take thirty stripes for the sake of a few annas diet money to take them home."

Chanda.—The crime returns show 59 cases of theft, and 22 burglaries, as against 40 and 15 in June. The thefts are principally petty ones of grain, and call for no remarks.

(12) *General remarks for the Division.*

(a) *Situation with regard to famine.*—The situation has vastly improved during the month. Rain coming on again about the 7th July, after the long break, stopped any further damage to the crops, but was too late to enable them to recover entirely. The crops are now doing fairly well. More rain is required in Chanda for rice transplantation and for the tanks. Weeding operations, which have commenced, are affording the labouring and poorer classes work in their own villages.

(b) *Measures taken to organise and complete measures of relief.*—In parts of the Nagpur district weaver relief is being developed. Additional staff has been provided in Bhandara, Balaghat, and Chanda to cope with the increasing work of village relief during the rains. The Police have been moved to activity in the relief of wanderers, and their returns show that a good deal has been done. Large sums have been distributed for the purchase of seed-grain. Increased attention is being paid to Public Works Department kitchens and children's kitchens generally.

(c) *Prospects of the Division as regards scarcity.*—I was at Chanda and Wardha in the early part of the month, when prospects were very gloomy, and I saw something of the Bhandara district during the third week of the month. Even then there had been insufficient rain to admit of any general rice transplanting, and I received reports to the same effect from Chanda. In both these districts the regular steady rain came later than in other parts of the Division, but the past fortnight has effected a complete change in prospects, which may now be described as hopeful throughout the Division. The distribution of the Charitable Relief Fund money still to be received will be very useful for the maintenance of the poorer cultivators, and will prevent some from coming on to Government relief-works while their crops are ripening. The introduction of piece-work will result in a large fall in the number on relief-works. As regards gratuitous relief, it does not seem probable that the permanent discontinuance of any of the forms of relief can take place much before the close of the year. If prices fall, as they should do, during the next two months, prospects will improve materially, but everything depends now on the rains continuing favourably and not stopping too soon, as they unfortunately did during the last two years.

11th August, 1897.

W. A. NEDHAM,
Officiating Commissioner.

NERBUDDA DIVISION.

(1) *Private Charity.*

Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund.—In most districts the distribution of money from this fund for the purchase of seed-grain for the kharif sowings and for the purchase of plough cattle was completed during June. In Nimar a sum of Rs. 4,961, and in Betul a sum of Rs. 1,644 was disbursed on this account during July.

In all districts funds are being held up for the supply of seed for the rabi sowings. This is a wise precaution, as the rabi sowings are comparatively costly, and the balance of takavi available is (except in Hoshangabad and Narsinghpur) not considerable.

Relief of *parda-nashin* women and others who are on the lists of the District Committees of the Charitable Fund continued; and in the Chhindwara district clothing was supplied to 661 persons at a cost of Rs. 567-13-10. This latter form of relief is appropriate during the rains, as persons reduced by famine are particularly susceptible to the diseases induced by cold and damp.

The District Charitable Committee, Chhindwara, opened a grain shop in the head-quarters town with the object of affording help to the working population and the large community of poor Muhammadans who depend for their livelihood on cotton-carding and dyeing. Tickets were issued to 760 families, representing 3,081 individuals, entitling the holders to purchase a specified amount of grain at 9 seers the rupee, the bazaar rate being 7 seers. From the 4th to the 31st July, inclusive, grain worth Rs. 3,145 was purchased and was sold to ticket-holders for Rs. 2,630, or at a loss of Rs. 515. The cost of establishment and sundry charges amounted to Rs. 53, making a total cost of Rs. 568.

Other private agencies.—The various mission centres continued to distribute relief in food, seed and clothes, besides taking charge of orphans. Detailed information as to the numbers thus succoured is not forthcoming. Seth Tikaram in Narsinghpur continued to distribute charity to the poor in that town, and Seth Champalal of Khandwa supplemented the rations issued to the inmates of the local poor-house.

(2) Government Poor-houses.

The following figures compare the poor-house population at the end of July with the total at the close of June :—

Districts.	Population of Poor-houses on 26th June.	Population of Poor-houses on 31st July.
Hoshangabad	1,414	1,392
Narsinghpur	2,322	1,874
Betul	291	192
Chhindwara	420	611
Nimar	178	317
Total	4,625	4,386

The considerable decrease in Narsinghpur (—448) is due to a large number of paupers having been drafted out to relief-works or sent to their villages for the purpose of being brought on village relief. The tendency of paupers to return to the shelter of the poor-house, to which I referred in last month's report, has been checked by placing those who thus return on some form of labour in addition to penal diet. If only suitable industries could be discovered, work in the poor-house would, as the Deputy Commissioner of Hoshangabad points out, be a useful preparation for harder labour on the relief-works as well as a means of punishment for the refractory. Basket-making is carried on at Narsinghpur. I think the manufacture of *boris* or palm-leaf hoods for protection against the rain might be undertaken in all poor-houses as a form of light labour, while the more robust inmates might be employed on digging drains, clearing away weeds, &c., in out-door gangs. In the early days of the famine the difficulty was to keep the people in the poor-houses, while now the difficulty is to keep paupers who are fit for work from idling within the walls of these institutions. On my recent inspection of the Harda poor-house I was struck by the anxiety of some of the inmates to bring forward reasons why they should be allowed to remain where

they were. In Narsinghpur it has been found necessary to bring in the kotwars to the poor houses in order to identify inhabitants of villages in the district who refuse to reveal whence they came; and the conveyance of persons so identified to their villages (where they are placed on village relief) has proved a tedious task.

Immigrants from Bhopal are still to be found among our poor-house population. The total is also swelled by orphans brought in by the police from all parts. Only a few orphans have been made over to private individuals who have agreed to adopt them, the number of those latter who came forward not being great. Applications are now being received from local missionary bodies on the one hand and representatives of Hindu philanthropic societies on the other for permission to relieve District Officers of the charge of orphans.

(3) Relief centres.

In this Division all Police-stations and Out-posts are centres of relief to this extent that they give food (uncooked) to emaciated wanderers and forward them to relief-works or poor-houses. At all relief-works there is a kitchen where cooked food is given to hungry persons in search of work. The "relief centres" in the Chhindwara district are merely distributing centres for village relief and are situated in the Jagirdaris where village relief on ordinary methods is impracticable.

(4) Village relief.

Totals for the last two months are compared below:—

Districts.	Number of Persons Relieved on the 26th June.	Number of Persons Relieved on the 31st July.
Hoshangabad	2,402	4,881
Narsinghpur	2,175	7,364
Betul... ..	1,720	2,955
Chhindwara... ..	1,801*	2,371†
Nimar	421	695
Total... ..	8,519	18,266

* Includes 1,293 persons relieved at *distributing centres* in the Jagirs.

† Includes 1,733 persons relieved at *distributing centres* in the Jagirs.

There has thus been a very large increase in all districts, especially in Narsinghpur where the total has been nearly trebled, and in Hoshangabad where it has been more than doubled. Several causes have contributed to this increase. In the first place, the cultivators' stocks of food have been running very low or are entirely exhausted, while prices have, until recently, been rising higher. In the second place, fields have to be sown and weeded, and while some members of a family attend to this duty, it is not so easy for the others to travel to and from a relief-work in wet weather. In the third place, this is, *in all years*, a period of hardship for the aboriginal tribes and the poorer classes. As was pointed out in Secretariat letter No. 3205, dated the 2nd ultimo, large numbers of Bharias, Gonds and Korkus habitually support themselves during the interval between the exhaustion of the *mahua* harvest and the reaping of the early *kutki* and *makka*, by eating roots and herbs. I have recently had a small collection made of the roots which the people of the district in which I at present am (Betul) use for food when they can get nothing else, and though the variety of choice is considerable, the nutritive value of the whole cannot be great. The example of these forest tribes has been this year followed to some extent by persons unaccustomed to this dietary, with the result that bowel complaints have been rife, and that the number of men and women incapacitated for labour by debility is

large. In the fourth place, the rise in prices has extended the area of distress, and it has been found necessary to organise village relief in those portions of the Chhindwara and Betul districts (the Sausar Tahsil and the Multai Tahsil) which were hitherto considered to be beyond the need of it. It seems likely, I may add, that the numbers on village relief will go on rising until the end of August. In the Narsinghpur district the total is now 2 per cent. of the population, but in no other district has this percentage been nearly reached. In both Narsinghpur and Hoshangabad the administration of village relief is being carefully supervised by special relief officers; and from the conversations which I have had with them in the course of my tour, I learn that there are few, if any, complaints of non-payment of allowances by the mukaddams to the registered poor. It is sometimes difficult to determine whether a person claiming relief is really entitled to it or not, but in doubtful cases, the benefit of the doubt is conceded. The Deputy Commissioner of Chhindwara, however, quotes an extraordinary instance of a widow who deceived a relieving officer by her emaciated appearance and got herself and her two children placed on the register of poor, receiving the prescribed money dole. Shortly afterwards she died (apparently of privation), and when the police came to make arrangements for the disposal of the two orphan children, Rs. 775 in cash and Rs. 50 worth of ornaments were found in her house tied up in a bundle of rags.

(5) *General character of relief-works.*

(a) *Under the Public Works Department.*—The numbers of relief-work “charges” open at the end of July in the various districts are as under:—

Hoshangabad ...	...	10 (with 7 piece-works attached).
Narsinghpur ...	...	6
Betul ...	...	5
Chhindwara ...	...	5 (on two roads).
Nimar ...	...	1
		—
Total ...	...	27
		—

A new charge was opened at Tamia on the Matkuli-Chhindwara Road, to take the place of the Khanchari charge. The Gadarwara-Sainkhera Road, in the Narsinghpur district, was re-opened. Work was discontinued on the Kheri-Badnur Section of the Badnur-Ellichpur Road.

Piece-work was in force on 7 of the 10 Hoshangabad charges, on all the Betul charges, and to a limited extent on some of the Narsinghpur charges. I have inspected two piece-works in the Hoshangabad district and two in the Betul district and am of opinion that the unpopularity of the system in this Division was due to the employment of contractors. The very name of a contractor frightened away many, while the ignorance and timidity of the people render them liable to be easily imposed upon. A contractor's underlings are able to cheat the workers in the matter of measurements. When piece-work is managed departmentally, as on the Itarsi-Dhar Road, there is no tendency to give short payment for work done. In Betul, though contractors are employed, the payment of the workers and the measurement of their work has been kept out of the contractor's hands, but under this system it is difficult to see of what use the contractor is. A new set of rules on the subject of piece-work is, I understand, about to issue, so I will say no more on the subject here, beyond that it seems very desirable that all applicants for work should be put on task-work at the outset, and only transferred to piece-work when they have acquired some small degree of proficiency in the class of work to be done. Gonds acquire proficiency very rapidly as stone-breakers, or diggers, while Mehras and others are slow to learn a form of labour to which they are unaccustomed. The Deputy Commissioner of Betul has recently cut the Gordian knot by allowing workers the *option* of going on piece-work or task-work, but unless the task-work is made really irksome, this plan must lead to piece-works being deserted by the lazily disposed, a class which forms, I fear, the majority of those in receipt of relief.

The number of workers employed on relief-works at the end of July is compared below with the total for the previous month :—

Districts.	Number of Relief-workers on the 26th June.	Number of Relief-workers on the 26th July.
Hoshangabad	20,305	34,398
Narsinghpur	20,905	19,720
Betul... ..	7,063	9,290
Chhindwara... ..	11,657	14,644
Nimar	144	688
Total	60,074	78,740

There has been an increase in all districts except Narsinghpur. It is said to be due to the return of cultivators to the works after sowing their fields. In Nimar a number of Korkus have been brought into Khandwa by the Forest Divisional Officer and placed on the Mohgat Road relief-work. These people refused to work on forest roads, but have apparently become reconciled to labouring steadily for a livelihood. The number of dependants has risen from 8,870 to 11,894. The increase occurred chiefly in the Hoshangabad district, where the total of 3,961 at the end of June was swelled to 6,605 at the end of July. The Deputy Commissioner explains that the total now returned does not "really represent dependants of relief-workers." All adults at the kitchens who are being fed for a few days before they become fit for work, and emaciated children from neighbouring villages who are fed at the kitchens under the orders contained in Secretariat letter No. C-1328, dated the 9th ultimo, are included in the total. Thus at Semri-Sohagpur Road kitchen, he writes: "I found no less than 40 orphans being fed and housed, and a large number of decrepit people who should have been on village relief. So long as they are supported it is not of much consequence whether they are relieved at the kitchen or in their own houses."

(b) *Under District Officers.*—The tank work at Sobhapur in the Hoshangabad district was closed during the month, and on the Bairi tank in the same district only one gang remained at work. Work on the Punasa tank in the Nimar district was also practically at an end. There were no other works under Civil Officers.

(c) *Loan Works.*—Three thousand two hundred and forty-eight persons were reported as employed on works which were being constructed in the Betul district from famine loans. On the Dhanora tank in one of the Chhindwara Jagirs 668 persons were employed. Rupees 1,333 were advanced during the month on famine loans in the Narsinghpur district.

(6) *Physical condition of the people.*

There seems to be no doubt that during the past month there has been a more or less general decline in the physical condition of the poorer classes due to the causes which I have enumerated when considering the figures for village relief. I gather this not only from what is stated in the reports now summarised, but from my conversations with Deputy Commissioners and special Relief Officers and my personal observations when on tour. Of course, there are still a large number of able-bodied workers on our relief works, and among the persons recently admitted to the jails of this division for petty offences against property, and to our poor-houses cases of emaciation are not common; but it is among the stay-at-homes in the more remote villages, where grain is dear and scarce, that the long spell of privation is beginning to tell. I have seen persons in a very reduced condition brought into Narsinghpur for medical treatment from the neighbourhood of Bachai, and into Multai (in the Betul district) from villages further east. Most of them were old men and women. It is, of course, the sick and the senile who suffer the most

from the want of nourishing food. We are doing our best to meet this state of things by doubling and trebling our lists of persons in receipt of gratuitous relief at their homes, and starvation is thus kept from their doors ; but it is beyond our powers to shield the feeble from the effects of the rainy season following upon an unusually exhausting hot weather. Under the circumstances, it is not, I think, surprising that the death-rate should be high.

(7) *Mortality.*

The returns embodied in the district statements and reports (except those for Hoshangabad) give the mortality figures for June. These were embodied in my consolidated Statement A (column 15) for June, on the basis of telegrams received from the Civil Surgeons. I repeat the rates *per mille* below, adding the rates for July, which have been similarly communicated to me this month.

Monthly death-rate (*per mille per annum*) from all causes in—

	June.	July.
Hoshangabad	78	51
Narsinghpur	76·8	74·4
Betul	75·6	88·8
Chhindwara	48	Not received.
Nimar	82·8	67·2

Hoshangabad was practically free from cholera during July and shows an improvement in the rate. In Nimar there is a marked decline, due also in part to the dwindling of the cholera epidemic. In Narsinghpur there is a slight fall. Betul, on the other hand, shows a remarkable increase in the death-rate. In June the rate was 75·6. Deducting deaths from cholera (676) and small-pox (20) the rate was 49·2. In July the death-rate (from all causes) was 88·8. Deducting deaths from cholera (317) and small-pox (9) the rate was 76·8. This sudden rise can only be explained on the lines already indicated by me, viz., that the advent of the monsoon has proved fatal to numbers of persons, chiefly the old and sick, whose vitality had been lowered by the want of sufficient nourishment. Prices had risen very high in Betul, higher than in any other district in the division. On the 3rd July wheat was selling at 6 seers to the rupee, and kodo and juari were reported to be unobtainable. I arranged with Rai Sahib Sundarlal of Multai for the import of grain in considerable quantities for the relief works, and this action at once affected prices, the stringency of which was partly due, no doubt, to speculative causes. By the end of July wheat was selling at 7½ seers and juari at 8 seers for the rupee. In order to induce small grain dealers in outlying tracts to lay in stocks of grain for sale a sum of Rs. 5,000 was distributed in the form of advances for the purchase of grain. At the beginning of the month it became clear to the Deputy Commissioner from the reports of Police officers and others that distress was not confined to the Betul Tahsil, but was making itself felt also in the Multai Tahsil. In this tract prices had hitherto been lower, and it had been regarded as only "slightly affected" by the famine, as its harvests had been comparatively good. It was accordingly determined to extend village relief to all parts of the Multai Tahsil, and to enable this to be done the patwaris, who had been called in in June for settlement work at headquarters, were on the 10th July ordered to return to their circles. I have now, after visiting Betul, directed that the number of circle officers (Revenue Inspectors) shall be doubled, and have posted an additional Tahsildar to the Multai Tahsil. I have also ordered the opening of kitchens at three places in the Multai Tahsil where distress seems to be marked. Betul and Chhindwara are the only districts which report any "verified" deaths from starvation. These deaths occurred in June. In Chhindwara there was only one such case. The deceased was a stranger, and the "verification" rests on the kotwar's statement. I have had an analysis made of the Betul cases and set forth the results below. Seventeen of them occurred in

the Atnar division, which includes the Masod outpost circle, in the Multai Tahsil, and six in the Multai division :—

—	Residents. No.	Travellers. No.	
Old men	6	4	
Old women	3	...	
Others	4	6	(one from Chhindwara ; one from the Berars.

Thus 13 out of the 23 were aged persons who died in their homes, probably from age and privation combined, and of the rest, 6 were travellers. It is not explained how the deaths of the travellers from outside the district were "verified" by the police. I have asked for further information on the point.

(8) Prices.

Prices have not fallen much in any district except Betul, where, as already stated, they were very high at the commencement of the month. In view of the continuance of favourable weather and of the fact that early *kutki* will soon be on the market (*makka* following shortly after), they will probably fall before long unless there is an increasing demand for export to Provinces where the rainfall has not been so good. Imports and exports are reported as under :—

Districts.	JUNE.		JULY.	
	Imports.	Exports.	Imports.	Exports.
	Mds.	Mds.	Mds.	Mds.
Hoshangabad	63,798	723	51,357	4,238
Narsinghpur	66,795	2,502	53,738	2,389
Betul	3,190	Nil.	4,895	Nil.
Nimar	36,167	3,090	52,382	1,170

Thus imports decreased in Hoshangabad and Narsinghpur and increased in Betul and Nimar. Exports from Hoshangabad increased largely.

(9) General conditions and prospects.

The Deputy Commissioner of Hoshangabad writes :—

"The present prospects of the kharif crops are good, and the cultivators seem to be hopeful of a good crop. They are at present engaged in preparing the land for *kutki* and *tilli*, which will be sown in the next fortnight. Very few tenants appear to have been unable to cultivate at least a portion of their land, and there is at present no reason to think that the area out of cultivation will be greater than last year."

The Deputy Commissioner, Narsinghpur, remarks :—

"The fall of rain has, it is believed, placed the crops out of all danger at present. There have only been a few cases of resowing."

The Deputy Commissioner of Betul records that :—

"The prospects of the standing kharif crops are now fair. Early *kutki* appears flourishing and will be ready for cutting after a fortnight. *Kodo* and *juari* have not done so well. Resowing of *juari* has been necessary in some places. In the extreme west of the district sowing is said to be restricted owing to the difficulty experienced in obtaining seed."

The Deputy Commissioner of Chhindwara's account of the outlook is as under :—

"At the time of writing the report for last month prospects were decidedly gloomy owing to the continued drought. The excellent rain which the district has had since the 10th of

July has, however, relieved the people of anxiety for the present. The crops are everywhere in good condition, and those early sown, except where the soil is inferior and the land badly situated, seem to have received little damage from the delay in the breaking of the rains. Resowing has only been required over a very small area. The kharif area cannot be given at present with any degree of exactness, as sowings of *jagni* will continue well on into August. Rough estimates of the area sown have, however, been submitted by Revenue Inspectors. From these it appears that in the Chhindwara Tahsil the area at present sown is little short of the normal, and that the ultimate area under kharif will probably exceed that of last year. In the Sausar Tahsil the area reported to be sown already exceeds that of last year by 20,000 acres. In the jagirs it is anticipated that only three-fourths of last year's area will be sown, but the standing crops are in good condition. The extent to which kharif crops have been sown will probably be counterbalanced by a reduction of the area sown with wheat and gram, as many cultivators must have sown *juari* in preference to these crops, partly because their food-stocks urgently require replenishment, and partly because the prices of rabi seed grains will be beyond their means. Over the greater part of the district, however, and in particular where distress has been most severely felt, the rain crops are of the first importance, and that so large an area should have been successfully sown means that if favourable conditions continue the people will be relieved from distress at an early date."

In Nimar the Deputy Commissioner writes :—

"Agricultural prospects generally are now decidedly good. Field work will soon give general employment in the open parts of the district."

(10) *Changes in rate of wages.*

The rate of wages was raised to the scale of 7 seers for the rupee in Betul. In Chhindwara they were fixed on the basis of $7\frac{1}{2}$ seers to the rupee, and in Nimar of 8 seers to the rupee. Elsewhere there was no change.

(11) *Crime.*

The Deputy Commissioner, Chhindwara, reports that "petty crime still shows no sign of decreasing" and three grain dacoities occurred during the month.

In Narsinghpur crime is reported to be "generally of a petty nature."

In Nimar the figures for thefts and house-breakings are reported to be "much above those for the corresponding period of last year."

I. K. LAURIE,
Commissioner.

10th August 1897.

CHHATTISGARH DIVISION.

(1) *Private relief.*

Raipur District.—The private poor-house at Sirpur was closed during the month. The Bistrampur poor-house is the only institution of this kind now in the district. The number of inmates in the poor-house was considerably less in June than in May. In July, however, there have been some admissions, and the number of inmates was 160 against 109 in June. The expenditure incurred during the two months was respectively Rs. 569-15-0 and Rs. 400-2-4. Some miscellaneous private relief was also granted in this district. The Deputy Commissioner writes :—

"In addition to the relief given at the Bistrampur private poor-house, relief of a similar kind has been given in an unsystematic manner at the head-quarters of the Gandai, Dondi Lohara and Gundardehi Zamindaris, and to a smaller extent at the residences of other Zamindars and well-to-do Malguzars. It is impossible to state the number relieved by casual alms-giving of this sort. Under the orders of the Chief Commissioner it has been settled to have poor-houses started at the three centres above mentioned, and I have received a report of the starting of the institution at Gandai."

Bilaspur District.—The Deputy Commissioner reports as follows :—

"Private relief is given by three Missionaries in different parts of the district. At Bilaspur, the Revd. Mr. Adams distributes rice to some 350 persons. The Revd. Mr. Gordon does the same to about 400 persons at Mungeli and 370 at Setganga. One hundred and thirty children (included in the above) at the two places are given a meal of cooked rice once a day. The Revd. Mr. Nottrott provides work for 109 persons at Chankheri on the Raipur Road."

Local subscriptions in this district towards famine relief have amounted to Rs. 2,450.

Sambalpur District.—The closing of the Sambalpur poor-house was reported last month. The Deputy Commissioner is arranging to close the remaining poor-houses in the district by drafting the inmates on to the Dabhra-Khursia Road. It is believed (though on this point the report contains little information) that the majority of the inmates are now fit for at least light work. The Seraipally poor-house in the Phuljhar Zamindari has already been closed, and the one at Padampur in the Borasambhar Zamindari will shortly follow suit. These two institutions are maintained from the funds of the two Zamindari estates which are under the Court of Wards. The Deputy Commissioner's reason for closing the institutions is that almost all the persons relieved in them come from places outside the district, who cannot therefore fairly expect support at the cost of estate funds. The poor-house at Bargarh is maintained from private subscriptions, but these are now at a low ebb, and it is expected that this institution will also have to be closed. No mention is made of the poor-house opened by the Zamindar of Barpali, but it is understood that this is still maintained. I have asked the Deputy Commissioner for a more detailed report and have pointed out to him that in closing the private poor-houses in the district care should be taken to see that the present inmates are provided for either at the Dabhra-Khursia work or otherwise.

The extent of relief afforded from funds provided by the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund Committee is noticed by the Deputy Commissioner, Bilaspur. Relief was granted under all the recognized heads, but chiefly to destitute cultivators for the purchase of seed and cattle: 20,546 cultivators have been granted relief of this description, the expenditure involved being Rs. 183,800. If the cultivators' families are included, the Deputy Commissioner estimates the relief as having reached about 80,000 people. Similarly, in the Raipur district the attention of the Local Committee has been mainly directed towards providing distressed cultivators with seed and cattle. The amount of relief which has been thus afforded in the two districts in the past two months has removed the apprehensions which at one time existed of a considerable area being left unsown. It is believed that not less than 75 per cent. of the normal area has now been sown.

(2) *Government poor-houses.*

The number of inmates in the Government poor-houses in June and July are given below:—

				June.	July.
				No.	No.
Raipur	...	...	{ Raipur Balod Drug Simga }	4,222	4,170
Bilaspur	...	...	{ Bilaspur Pendra Mungeli Pandaria }	6,385	8,129

The numbers have slightly fallen in the Raipur district, where the work of drafting the inmates to relief works and to village relief has for some time past been systematically carried on. They have risen considerably in the Bilaspur district, the poor-house at head-quarters accounting mainly for the large increase. In this poor-house alone the numbers had before the end of the month reached the enormous figure of 4,000, though they again fell below that figure. The absolute necessity of reducing these unmanageable crowds has been strongly impressed on the Deputy Commissioner, and systematic arrangements for drafting to relief works have already been introduced. In respect of the still more important matter of drafting people to their homes detailed instructions have been issued.

The task is a large one, and owing partly to the lack of system that has hitherto prevailed, a good many preliminary arrangements are necessary. I was disappointed on the occasion of my last visit to the district to find that little, if anything, had been done even to start such arrangements; but I trust that good progress is now being made. I am not prepared to endorse the Deputy Commissioner's view that there is small hope of keeping down the numbers. I consider it most essential that this should be done and that with proper arrangements it can be done. Persons without homes, and unfit for work, must of course be kept in the poor-house; but I take it that the large majority of the inmates *have* homes of some sort in the district.

In the Raipur district the orders of the Chief Commissioner to convert the private relief centres at head-quarters of Zamindaris into poor-houses are being given effect to. The Deputy Commissioner writes:—

“As a matter of fact the private relief at Gandai has been organized and arrangements made for taking over the expenditure, and although this has not yet a place in the returns for the month, the number of Government poor-houses has really increased by one. I have not had a report on the subject from Dondi Lohara. The institution of a Government poor-house at Gundardehi has been delayed owing to changes in the staff of relief officers. As soon as the Assistant Commissioner in whose charge Gundardehi now lies gets out to the spot, action will be taken to carry out the Chief Commissioner's instructions. The need is fortunately not very pressing, as the Public Works Department road kitchen there is said to be working satisfactorily. But some of the persons receiving relief there are probably fit subjects for poor-house relief.”

(3) *Village relief.*

The number of relief centres in the Raipur district remains the same as in the preceding month, viz., 27. The number relieved at these centres was 1,504, against 1,684 in June. These centres are at present managed by mukaddams, but arrangements are being made by the Deputy Commissioner to transfer this work to the Police at places where there is a police-station and to organize them as *kitchens*. Some new kitchens will also be opened at other police-stations. The careful attention of the Deputy Commissioner has been drawn to the Chief Commissioner's remarks at the recent conference regarding kitchens and he has been asked to submit a full report to me when the orders have been carried out.

There are four relief centres in the Bilaspur district—at Pendri, Takhtpur, Chandkhuri and Seorinarayan. Figures for the last named have not been received, but the total relieved at the first three was 66. The Deputy Commissioner explains that the numbers would have been much higher but for constant drafting to poor-houses. At the Bilaspur conference the need of establishing kitchens for the relief of emaciated children was insisted on. The matter has been specially impressed on the attention of the Deputy Commissioner. Besides the kitchens under the management of the Public Works Department on road works, he has been asked to arrange for their being opened at the head-quarters of each Famine Relief Assistant and at police-stations. The latter are being taken in hand by the District Superintendent of Police, and will be further developed as soon as he can receive the necessary additions to his force. I hope to report satisfactorily on the working of these kitchens in the next monthly report. The scheme organized in this district by which special road patrols have been appointed for rescuing starving wanderers and drafting them to the poor-houses, &c., promises to be successful, though but little detailed information regarding its working has yet been received. By means of this agency, 166 persons, including 19 orphans, were brought into Bilaspur for relief during the month. Figures are, however, not available as to the total number rescued throughout the district. The Deputy Commissioner has been asked to report specially on the success of this scheme in the current month's report. The scheme was started, as reported last month, in consequence of the inadequacy of the undermanned Police for the duties expected of them. Police reinforcements are now very shortly looked for, but it will probably be found desirable to retain this agency as supplementary to their work, and it may be well to place it under their supervision.

The number of persons on the village registers of poor in the Raipur and Bilaspur districts during the months of June and July are compared below :—

	June.	July.
Raipur	9,444	10,989
Bilaspur	*31,728	59,164

* Figure reported last month by Deputy Commissioner was wrong.

The increase is not large in the Raipur district. But the Deputy Commissioner writes :—

“It is expected that the number in receipt of relief will go up considerably during the next two months, but with the gathering in of the harvest, it should be possible to reduce the numbers very materially.”

In the Bilaspur district village relief is the chief form of relief now granted, as it is unquestionably the most important. The numbers relieved have gone up very considerably and the system now embraces nearly the whole of the district. The Deputy Commissioner reports :—

“It has been found necessary to extend village relief to the Lafa Zamindari, where registers are in course of preparation. When they are complete the only part of the district where this kind of relief is not given will be the wild and mountainous Zamindaris of Matin and Uprora.”

In both districts the staff employed in administering village relief has been largely augmented by the appointment of additional Revenue Inspectors. Each Revenue Inspector has now a smaller circle to control and thus has ample time to thoroughly supervise the arrangements in his circle. The Revenue Inspectors work directly under the Famine Relief Officers in charge of sub-divisions, the work of inspection being in the Bilaspur district shared with these officers by the Tahsildars and Additional Tahsildars. In accordance with the instructions given by the Chief Commissioner at the recent conference, Revenue Inspectors have been required to submit to the Famine Officers in charge weekly programmes of their movements, as also diaries showing the villages inspected by them and the result of their inspection. In this way there should be no difficulty in checking the work of Revenue Inspectors and ensuring that they visit their villages regularly. The need for such systematic arrangements is recognized by the Deputy Commissioner, Raipur, who writes :—

“I found myself that a Revenue Inspector had been calling recipients in from their villages to his head-quarters and had given the money there. The danger in this was that since his last visit to the village, other persons might have become in a condition requiring relief. Such is the case with some of those returning to their villages from relief works closed with the breaking of the rains. As far as I can judge, all sub-divisional relief officers now understand the importance of this point and will insist on obedience on the part of Revenue Inspectors.”

In Raipur relief is given under the rules drawn up for the Division and approved by the Chief Commissioner in May last. These rules are reported to be working in every way satisfactorily and the whole organization has been a marked success. One noticeable feature in this district is the extensive and efficient arrangements that have been made for the distribution of village relief in the form of grain instead of in money. In Bilaspur the divisional rules were considered to be unsuitable, and the Deputy Commissioner has been allowed to work on his own lines subject to certain necessary modifications. A definite set of rules based on these lines, which the Deputy Commissioner was instructed to draw up and submit for approval, is still awaited. Distress in the Bilaspur district is by this time far more extensive and more difficult to contend against than in Raipur, where it has been adequately dealt with almost, if not quite, from the first; and during the past two or three months it is to be feared that it has been allowed to make some head. But every effort has been made to meet the Deputy Commissioner's requirements in the way of additional staff and the like, and, with the resources at his disposal, it may be hoped that far more satisfactory results will be shown than hitherto.

(4) *General character of relief-works.*

The number of persons relieved on the works under the Public Works Department during June and July are compared below :—

	RELIEF WORKS.		DEPENDANTS.	
	June.	July.	June.	July.
Raipur	39,501	39,415	8,248	10,175
Bilaspur	24,862	45,863	3,552	5,926
Sambalpur	226	2,218	63	194

There is little fluctuation in the numbers relieved on Public Works Department relief-works in the Raipur district. A considerable reduction might have taken place but for the character of the season in the early part of the month. The Deputy Commissioner reports :—

“The holding off of the rain put back agricultural operations, and employment on weeding, which would in the ordinary course of events have been available in the latter part of July, was not to be had. I do not think any reduction in the number of Public Works Department works can be expected, though we may hope for a temporary reduction in numbers.”

I concur in these remarks, in so far as that no contraction of the area over which relief works are now spread is likely to be practicable. I have indeed been looking forward to a reduction in the nominal number of “charges” by the simple process of throwing two or more existing charges into a single charge covering a large area, under the “piece-work” system recently introduced into this Division. But I am now a little doubtful to what extent this will be practicable, in view of the latest orders on the subject of piece-work. One more road work was opened out in the district during the month, *viz.*, the Bhatapara-Laon road. Fourteen out of the nineteen charges in Raipur have already been organised on a piece-work basis. In the Bilaspur district five more road works were sanctioned, and three actually opened, and workers are rapidly crowding to these roads. The number relieved by the Public Works Department in the whole district has almost doubled itself in the past month. The necessity for more extensive relief by the Public Works Department has become apparent, but it is hoped that the road-works now opened and those proposed to be opened will be sufficient for affording the relief required in this direction. Should it unfortunately prove otherwise, no time will be lost in arranging for the provision of yet more work. Little progress appears to have been made with the introduction of piece-work in this district. In the Sambalpur district the number of relief-workers on the Dabhra-Khursia road has gone up very considerably. This road has been organised as a piece-work, due provision being made here as elsewhere for task-work side by side with it.

As regards local works under civil agency, there were 6 works open in the Raipur district during the month with 1,288 workers and dependants, against 10 works with 1,714 workers and dependants in the preceding month. In the Bilaspur district there were 7 works open with 1,586 workers and dependants against 12 works with 1,782 workers in the preceding month. In the Court of Wards Estates in this district 5 works remained open with 302 workers against 10 works and 389 persons in June. Tank works in both districts had for the most part to be closed in consequence of the rain. The number of persons relieved on private works started with the help of famine loans was 1,412. In the district report the number is stated to be 2,100, but this is apparently an error. The former figure is taken from the district statement. No private works started otherwise than with the help of famine loans were open during the month. The

total number of persons relieved on all private works during the past three months are compared below :—

May.	June.	July.
33,865	10,816	1,412

There is of course an immense amount of employment given by private individuals which is not officially returned, but which nevertheless is a material factor in keeping down distress. Still, when full account has been taken of this, it may be said that private relief works at the present time form an insignificant item in the programme of famine operations of the district. With the commencement of agricultural operations, the people were called away to the fields, and there was consequently no need to continue the village works formerly open. The number of persons relieved on private works in the Bilaspur district was 2,757, that is, 1,350 relieved on works started with the help of famine loans and 1,407 started without the help of these loans. In June the number relieved on private works was less than a third of that reported for May, and in the month under report it was still further reduced. The figures are now inconsiderable.

(5.) *Physical condition of the people.*

The general condition of the people is reported to be fair in the Raipur district, but the smaller tenants and field labourers in many villages show signs of privation. The Charitable Relief Fund Committee are providing some measure for the grant of food to distressed cultivators up to the time of harvest. The necessity for helping the poorer tenantry in this way is emphasized by the Deputy Commissioner, who writes :—

“Herbs growing wild in the fields are largely used as vegetables and form a useful addition to diet. On the other hand, herbs alone are not sufficient to sustain life. Yet more than one of my Sub-Divisional Relief Officers on examining the daily meal which was being cooked found that it consisted entirely of herbs. In such cases assistance either from Government or charitable funds is needed.”

The Deputy Commissioner, Bilaspur, writes as follows on the condition of the people in his district :—

“I have nothing to add to what has been said in many previous reports. Some officers report an improvement in the condition of those on village relief. Others appear to think that the people squander their doles, and that little or no improvement is visible.”

This tendency to squander the monthly dole as soon as received, and then to starve for the remainder of the month, is a very real danger, which has long been foreseen. In the Raipur district endeavours have been made to guard against it by making payments weekly, or even at shorter intervals, through the mukaddams. In Bilaspur the Deputy Commissioner considers that his mukaddams are not as a class to be trusted, and as the Revenue Inspector cannot be expected to make direct payments oftener than once a month, no other remedy seems practicable. There can be no doubt that the distress in this district is severe and widespread. But the systematic working of the village relief arrangements, together with the extension of other forms of relief, such as the establishment of kitchens, the opening out of more road works, and the rescue of starving wanderers by means of road patrols, ought before long to have the effect of very materially improving the general condition of the people. The Deputy Commissioner, Sambalpur, reports that the health of the workers on the Dabhra-Khursia road continues to be unfavourable, though they have enough of food and water supply. Of the 2,218 workers on this road 2,101 are employed on piece work, while 117 workers with 194 dependants are on task-work. This would suggest that most of the workers are in fairly good condition and weakly persons in a small minority. I have asked the Deputy Commissioner to report again in this matter. The number of weakly persons on the work must presumably have been swelled by the drafting to it of inmates of poor-houses.

(6.) *Deaths from starvation.*

The Deputy Commissioner, Raipur, reports as follows :—

“The number of deaths is reported to have been 12 against 166 in the preceding month. The decrease is due to the great stress which has been laid on the definition of the phrase ‘death from starvation.’ I have not before me information as to the details of the 12 cases shown in the return, but I should doubt much if these would stand the test prescribed. In no case where verification has been made by my Sub-Divisional Relief Officers has a case been found to stand the test, and a number of cases were discovered in which the death was not due to starvation, but to disease or general debility for which the provision of food was not an adequate remedy. In order to ensure careful verification *panchayatnamas* are now framed in the case of such deaths, and we are not left at the mercy of a careless or untruthful statement made by a kotwar. As far as I can judge from personal observation, and from what I hear from my Sub-Divisional Relief Officers and others, deaths from starvation are really very rare, because the facilities for obtaining some food are extensive. But deaths from privation are no doubt of daily occurrence, and it is difficult, if not impossible, to cope with the apathy, dulness and suspicion which prevents the use of the means of relief afforded by Government, which, if widely known and understood and utilized, would reduce even those deaths to a minimum.”

In these remarks I entirely concur. While the character of the people remains what it is, deaths cannot but occur which are more or less directly traceable to privation. Such deaths probably occur to some extent even in ordinary years. But I am sceptical as to any deaths from actual starvation occurring at the present time in the Raipur district, save under the most exceptional circumstances. Special pains have been bestowed in this district on securing accuracy of reporting, and though the agency employed is necessarily very imperfect, I believe that everything possible is being done to render it as effective as possible.

The Police of the Bilaspur district return 11 deaths as due to starvation and 94 as due to privation. The Deputy Commissioner writes :—

“I offer no opinion as to the credibility of these figures.”

The point is one on which opinion is obviously called for, and the deliberate omission to offer it is presumably meant to be significant. From other remarks of his that have recently attracted my notice, I fear that Mr. Cooke means to suggest that the Police are wilfully suppressing real cases of starvation. If so, the matter demands his immediate and most careful attention, and I have instructed him accordingly. In the orders issued both from the Secretariat and from this office the Deputy Commissioner has been specially and repeatedly warned to guard against any possible danger of its being supposed that there was anything like a “hint” to suppress the truth; and if, after all, the Police have mistaken their instructions, the responsibility must rest with the district authorities. I see no reason for assuming that they have. I prefer to believe that the remarkable decrease in the number of starvation deaths returned is an evidence of the greater efficiency of relief operations during the month, as well as of the greater care exercised by the Police in discriminating between deaths due to starvation and others. The number of deaths due to privation is still large; but it is impossible to expect speedy improvement in these figures. Frequent cases of emaciation continued to be met with. It is hoped, however, that they will be rare in future. No starvation deaths are reported to have occurred in the Sambalpur district. As regards deaths in poor-houses, the Deputy Commissioner, Bilaspur, reports 814 deaths as compared with 586 in the preceding month. The increase is partly explained by the fact that the period for which the deaths are reported covers 5 weeks instead of 4 as in the previous month. The death-rate is largest in the Pandaria poor-house, while it is smallest in the Bilaspur poor-house. I quote the following from the District Report :—

“The death-rate at Pandaria is lamentable. Distress is very severe in the Zamindari, and the condition of the inmates, especially of the new admissions, is known to be excessively bad. Lieutenant Hamilton Moore has lately been devoting some attention to this poor-house, and Dr. Wall, I believe, intends to visit it shortly. The low death-rate at Bilaspur, in spite of the large numbers and the bad condition of the inmates, is remarkable, and was noticed by Dr. Hutcheson at his recent inspection.”

I quote his remarks on the subject :—

“This,” he says (speaking of the death-rate), “can only be ascribed to the care and effectiveness of the arrangements regarding the dieting of the inmates and the skilful professional care and attention devoted to the feeble, the emaciated, and actual sick. Considering the number dealt with, the accommodation provided at short notice, and the extra care and attention demanded by the sick and infirm, the institution has, in my opinion, been very well and successfully managed. The credit of minimising sickness and mortality under circumstances of great difficulty and pressure is due to Dr. Silcock, whose laborious professional and heavy extra duties have been accomplished with a willingness and freedom from complaint altogether exceptional. Dr. Silcock’s work during the past six months merits high commendation.”

I am glad to note this high testimony to the success of the arrangements for the preservation of life. The charge of a sadly overcrowded jail, in addition to the medical supervision of the poor-house, have been found to demand Dr. Silcock’s constant presence at head-quarters, and the services of a special Commissioned Medical Officer (Surgeon-Lieutenant Wall) have now been obtained to relieve him of inspection duties in the interior of the district.

The number of deaths in poor-houses in the Raipur district is not reported, as the Civil Surgeon’s return has not yet been received.

The death-rate per mille per annum in the three districts during May and June for which figures are available is compared below :—

	May.	June.
Raipur	91·8	109·68
Bilaspur	87·69	137·45
Sambalpur	45·	49·

The death-rate is most deplorably high in the Bilaspur district. Excluding cases of cholera, it comes to 89·56 against 61·33 in the month of May, a figure which is only too eloquent of the development of distress. It is doubtful whether the death-rate in the Raipur district has been correctly calculated in reference to the total population. The Deputy Commissioner has been asked to explain the figures.

(7.) *Food-stocks.*

There is no deficiency in the food-stock in any district, and prices have fluctuated little. The Deputy Commissioner, Raipur, reports as follows :—

“Action has been taken to provide for adequate distribution of food-stocks over the district by the establishment of grain shops on Public Works Department roads, and the provision of grain for use under Section 34, and for distribution as subsistence to agriculturists. In some cases the Revenue Inspector’s head-quarters have been made the grain-storing centre. In other places it is stored at important villages with selected malguzars. In spite of the difficulties of communication, I trust that food-stuffs may be available at reasonable prices throughout the district.

(8.) *Importation of grain.*

The exports of Raipur and Bilaspur districts during the past two months were as follows :—

	June. Maunds.	July. Maunds.
Raipur	35,134	26,722
Bilaspur	5,117	676

The imports were—

	June. Maunds.	July. Maunds.
Raipur	43,573	15,657
Bilaspur	51,708	34,463

Exports continue to fall, and the export traffic of Bilaspur is now quite insignificant. The large imports into Raipur during June were largely due to the special action taken in connection with seed-grain advances from Government and from the Charitable Fund. Otherwise the current, as far as this district is concerned, continues to flow outwards. Grain is still imported into both districts, but there has naturally been some slackness in the trade since the advent of the monsoon.

(9.) *General condition and prospects of affected tracts.*

The agricultural prospects at the beginning of the month were somewhat gloomy, owing to the break in the rains. Then heavy rain fell, and prospects improved everywhere. At the close of the month there was again a break, which gave some cause for anxiety. But there has since been copious showers everywhere, and the prospects of the rice harvest are very encouraging. The description of the situation given by the Deputy Commissioner of Raipur may, with necessary reservations, be generally applied to the whole Division. He says :—

“The month opened with somewhat gloomy prospects on account of the want of rain, but during the month there was considerable improvement in this respect, though at the close of it the rainfall still fell short of what was needed for “*beasi*” or ploughing up the young rice, an essential part of the Chhattisgarh broad-casted rice cultivation. In the low-lying ground and in ground favourably situated as regards irrigation “*beasi*” has been effected; but at the close of the month high-lying land still suffered. On the other hand, the weather has been favourable for kodon and for the little kutki that the district has. Sowing has been widely carried out; and as far as can be judged an average of not less than 12 annas or 75 per cent. of the kharif cultivated area has been sown. The seed provided from Government and Charitable Funds probably contributed from one-sixth to one-eighth of the seed sown. Reports that reach me indicate that the great bulk of the money and grain was used for the purpose for which it was intended. With reasonable weather, then, there is nothing in the condition of the affected area to give any cause for alarm.”

Since the district reports were received, there has been continuous and most satisfactory rain. The total fall up to date has been considerably below the average, but its exceptionally favourable distribution has rendered it far more valuable than the mere figures would suggest; and so far as it is safe to anticipate at present, there appears every prospect of a magnificent harvest.

But while, as regards the extremely satisfactory agricultural prospects of the present moment, there is little or nothing to choose between the two distressed districts of Raipur and Bilaspur, as regards the general situation there is a marked contrast, for which it is extremely difficult to account, and which is reflected in the character of the two district reports. In Raipur, Mr. Laurie, who has never been backward in sounding the note of alarm, now finds himself in a position to wait with calmness and confidence for what the season may bring forth. His arrangements, though possibly open to criticism in point of detail, have been worked out with the utmost care and method. Each officer in the district has had definite duties assigned to him and knows exactly what they are, and each is in touch with the rest as well as with the Deputy Commissioner, so that the whole organization works with something like the precision of a machine. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that adequate relief is now at the door of every person in the district who needs it, and the consequence has been an immense alleviation of the distress, which a few months back was so acute as to occasion the most serious anxiety and alarm. The advent of a good harvest (which everything humanly possible has been done to secure) will not indeed, it is anticipated, justify the *immediate* winding up of all our special arrangements, but it should at least place us well within sight of the end. Of Bilaspur it is impossible to write in the same happy strain. Despite much hard and zealous work on the part of the Deputy Commissioner himself and of his Assistants, it cannot be said that the development of

distress has as yet been fairly arrested. The statistics continue to show a steady rise, and no signs of improvement have hitherto manifested themselves. The situation has been engaging the special attention of the Chief Commissioner, who visited Bilaspur during the month, and issued orders which I am endeavouring to see fully carried out. Everything possible is being done to strengthen the Deputy Commissioner's hands; his establishments have been largely strengthened, and efforts are being made to meet his requirements in every direction in which he can suggest a need. Additional relief-works are being opened by the Public Works Department; other forms of relief have been indicated; the Police are in process of being reinforced; and a number of very detailed instructions have been issued with the view to the introduction of more method and system into the relief arrangements generally. With the consistent support that is being afforded him, it is hoped that Mr. Cooke will be able to grapple more effectually with what is beyond all doubt an exceptionally trying and difficult situation.

In Sambalpur there has never been any agricultural distress at all. The agriculturists themselves must have profited largely during the season by the demand for export and the consequent high prices of produce. Such slight distress as there has been is partly among the poor non-cultivating classes, who have felt the rise in prices, but mainly among immigrants from other districts. Of the situation in this district there is nothing more to say than that the prospects of the coming harvest are excellent.

(10.) *Changes in the rates of wages.*

In the Raipur district the rate of wages on the Drug-Balod Road was changed. The wages, which had hitherto been calculated on the basis that rice was selling at 9 seers per rupee, have now been fixed on a $7\frac{1}{2}$ seers basis, it having been satisfactorily ascertained that rice cannot be got anywhere on the road or in the neighbourhood at a cheaper rate than at $7\frac{1}{2}$ seers per rupee. The Executive Engineer's long-promised report on wages in this district generally has not yet reached me. For the Bilaspur district generally it has been decided that wages should henceforth be calculated at the rate of $7\frac{1}{2}$ seers per rupee, which is now the prevailing price in the district, instead of at 9 seers as before.

(11.) *State of crime, &c.*

Petty theft cases including cattle-killing continue high in the Raipur and Bilaspur districts. Two dacoities are also reported from the latter district. The arrangement in Raipur, under which the Police have been instructed not to send up petty cases without first taking the orders of the local magistrate, has so far been found to work satisfactorily. There is of course always a danger, to which the Raipur authorities are fully alive, lest the issue of orders of this nature should lead to a popular idea that petty crimes may be committed with impunity and consequently tend to their multiplication. In Bilaspur it appears to be thought that the character of the criminal classes would render any such arrangement unsafe. But it is perfectly clear that some further steps are most necessary in this district, not only to keep down the work of the Police and magistracy, but to prevent any more crowding of the overflowing district jail, and the Deputy Commissioner's special attention has been again invited in this matter.

A. D. YOUNGHUSBAND,

13th August 1897.

Commissioner.

No. 1591-F., dated Nagpur, the 25th August 1897.

From the Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Revenue and Agricultural Department.

In continuation of my letter No. 1415-F., dated 29th July 1897, I am directed to submit a statement compiled from figures received from the Sanitary Commissioner showing the death-rates per mille per mensem in each district of the Central Provinces during the month of July.

2. The total of reported deaths has fallen from 77,146 in June to 65,971 in July, and the death-rate from 7.54 per mille in the former to 6.46 per mille in the latter month. This decrease is wholly attributable to the diminished mortality from cholera, which has fallen from 21,236 in June to 5,281 in July. Small-pox, also, which caused 433 deaths in June, is credited with only 213 in July. Deducting cholera and small-pox, the provincial death-rate is 5.92 against 5.43 in June, and thus exhibits a deterioration in the general condition of the population. The causes of this deterioration, so far as they are special to the month, and not due to the progressive exhaustion of resources and of bodily strength which is the natural and inevitable concomitant of the continued pressure of famine conditions, have been discussed in paragraph 5 of my letter No. 1526-F., dated the 17th August, submitting the monthly report for July. The break in the rains with which the month commenced, and which lasted throughout a third of it, was not only in itself adverse to health, restoring conditions of drought and heat after a heavy and general downpour, but also deprived the labouring classes of that employment to seek which many thousands had left the relief-works. The savings they had made were soon exhausted, while prices, which might have been expected to fall with a continuance of favourable rain, remained extremely high, or even (in the general apprehension of renewed failure of crops) rose still higher than at the end of the hot weather. The climatic conditions of the rainy season are at all times adverse to health, and they were particularly so to persons enfeebled by long continued privation, and exposed without sufficient clothing or shelter to great changes of temperature and heavy falls of rain. The mortality of the month is chiefly ascribed to bowel diseases and fevers, the normal complaints of the season. The former were probably aggravated by the use of unwholesome food, as pointed out in the monthly report, while the latter were particularly prevalent in consequence of the return of heat during the break in the rains, and the sudden lowering of temperature when the monsoon rainfall recommenced.

3. The districts which exhibit a mortality in excess of the provincial average are the following :—

	RATE PER MILLE.	
	Total deaths.	Excluding epidemics.
Mandla	16.44	14.23
Bilaspur	9.92	9.45
Balaghat	8.81	8.54
Seoni	8.28	8.05
Saugor	8.26	8.04
Betul	7.45	6.44
Raipur	7.16	6.28

For Mandla the monthly death-rates from January to June will be found in paragraph 12 of the Commissioner's memorandum attached to the monthly report for July. It will be seen that the rise from 5.1 per mille in May and 6.9 in June to 14.23 in July (all rates excluding cholera) has been extremely sudden. The Commissioner is now at Mandla, and has for the past month been giving much attention to the relief organization in this district, where during the rains, owing to the great difficulties of communication, and the backwardness and superstitious character of the aboriginal population, the task is particularly arduous. The Chief Commissioner fears that the result of Mr. Fuller's enquiries may be to show that a change in the charge of the district is necessary. A great development of village relief, and the starting of numerous kitchens for children, are being taken in hand, and all that is possible will be done to cope with the situation.

In Bilaspur the condition of the district in July presents, as was set forth in the Chief Commissioner's memorandum of the 19th of that month, which has been submitted to the Government of India, the result of a progressive increase in the pressure of distress. The measures taken to combat it have already been described in the memorandum, and they are now being carried out; great extension has already been given to village relief, and the Deputy Commissioner is being urged to open large numbers of kitchens for children in all the distressed portions of the district.

The Balaghat figures are alarmingly high, and point to a decided increase in the pressure of distress. Here also kitchens and village relief are being largely extended, and the Chief Commissioner trusts that they will succeed in greatly reducing the mortality.

In Seoni the rise in July to a rate of 8.05 (excluding cholera) has been sudden and unexpected, the rates for April, May and June having been 3.4, 3.6, and 4.9 per mille. The Commissioner's memorandum attached to the monthly report discusses the figures, and also shows the measures which have been promptly taken to meet the necessity.

In Saugor the rate is hardly lower than that of June, and indicates a persistence of unfavourable conditions. These were discussed with the Deputy Commissioner on the Chief Commissioner's recent visit to the district, and extension of village relief and the opening of kitchens have been ordered, and are being carried out.

In Betul there has been a sudden deepening of distress among the forest tribes in the south of the district, and in the Multai Tahsil forming its eastern half. As explained in the Commissioner's letter No. 833-C., dated the 12th August 1897 (copy of which is being forwarded separately), dealing with the emigration from this district into Berar, the Multai Tahsil had not previously been regarded as a seriously distressed tract, and the absence of the patwaris from their circles at head-quarters (whither they had been summoned on settlement duty) caused the progress of distress at first to escape notice. The Chief Commissioner has now greatly strengthened the relief establishments in this part of the district, and with the organization of village relief and children's kitchens he hopes that the temporary pressure which exists will be satisfactorily dealt with.

The rate in Raipur has risen from 5.73 in June to 6.28. Here also the extension of local relief is being pushed on.

In some districts, notably Jubbulpore and Damoh, there is a gratifying reduction in the death rate; but it seems best to defer comment upon particular variations of this kind until it is seen whether the improvement is sustained.

4. The figures in the last column of the statement give the number of deaths in June ascribed, after verification, to starvation. Those shown in column 16 of Statement A of the monthly report for July were for May and not for June. The number has fallen from 140 to 111. Only eight of the eighteen districts report such deaths, and only in Bilaspur, Betul and Raipur are they at all numerous. But I am to say that although everything possible is done to secure accuracy in these figures, the Chief Commissioner cannot attach much value to them. The Commissioner of Jubbulpore, in paragraph 12 of his memorandum for July, remarked:—

“My enquiries lead me to fear that no effort will render these statistics reliable, and that the general death-rate (excluding deaths from cholera) coupled with the deaths in poor-houses, is, however, imperfect, the best statistical clue available to the extent of the distress prevailing.”

A similar view was expressed by the late Commissioner of Jubbulpore, Mr. Priest, in his memorandum for April last (*vide* my letter No. 893-C., dated the 17th May), and was accepted by the Government of India, in paragraph 6 of your letter No. ²²³³~~16-20~~-F., dated the 8th June.

5. In conclusion, the Chief Commissioner has only to add that, as the Government of India will have gathered from the monthly report for July and its

enclosures, every effort that seems possible is being made to render the operations of relief thoroughly efficient. These efforts, Sir Charles Lyall regrets to say, promise to entail a larger total of famine expenditure than even the last revised estimate anticipated. But with prices at their present extraordinarily high level, and with mortality such as is exhibited in the table now submitted, it is evident that the time has not come to curtail the measures undertaken to cope with the distress, and the Chief Commissioner fears that it will yet be some months before the strain can be materially relaxed.

Name of District.	Deaths from cholera.	Deaths from small-pox.	Death-rate for July.		Average death-rate of past 10 years.	Excess over normal.	Deaths from starvation in June.
			Deaths, excluding cholera and small-pox.	From all causes.			
Nagpur	213	...	3.64	3.93	2.09	1.84	4
Wardha	75	1	3.80	4.00	2.05	1.95	...
Bhandara	617	3	4.64	5.48	2.25	3.23	...
Chanda	525	3	2.41	3.30	2.30	1.00	3
Balaghat	95	6	8.54	8.81	2.43	6.38	...
Jubbulpore	75	3	4.28	4.38	2.83	1.55	...
Saugor	118	13	8.04	8.26	3.64	4.62	...
Damoh	29	5	4.46	4.57	3.54	1.03	5
Seoni	80	2	8.05	8.28	2.48	5.80	...
Mandla	747	3	14.23	16.44	3.21	13.23	8
Hoshangabad	37	6	4.23	4.33	2.47	1.86	...
Narsinghpur	141	1	5.87	6.26	3.67	2.59	...
Nimar	86	...	5.29	5.60	1.95	3.65	...
Betul	317	9	6.44	7.45	2.05	5.40	23
Chhindwara	251	15	3.77	4.46	2.19	2.17	1
Raipur	1,286	78	6.28	7.16	3.05	4.11	14
Bilaspur	500	50	9.45	9.92	2.89	7.03	53
Sambalpur	89	15	2.03	2.30	2.63	—33	...
Total	5,281	213	...	...	...	...	111

No. F.-1761, dated Pachmarhi, 17th September 1897.

From M. W. Fox-Strangways, Esq., I.C.S., Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces, to the Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Revenue and Agricultural Department (Famine.)

SIR,

I am directed to submit, for the information of the Government of India, consolidated monthly Statements A. and B. for August, as prescribed by Section 16 (IV.—VII.) of the Central Provinces Famine Code. The usual memoranda by Commissioners of Divisions and famine maps are also forwarded.

2. The following table will show the numbers on each form of relief at the end of August, as compared with those at the end of July :—

Divisions.	Workers.	Depen- dents.	Poor- houses.	Relief centres and kitchens.	Village relief.	TOTAL.			
						Relief workers.	Gratui- tous.	Total.	
Nagpur ...	31st July ...	71,170	12,424	3,266	1,197	16,628	71,170	33,515	104,685
	28th August	52,672	6,435	4,128	2,493	28,254	52,672	41,310	93,982
Jubbulpore	31st July ...	102,710	14,839	10,898	13,951	54,576	102,710	94,266	196,976
	28th August	58,943	11,161	9,351	17,119	82,091	58,943	119,722	178,665
Nerbudda	31st July ...	78,740	11,894	4,386	1,924	16,533	78,740	34,737	113,477
	28th August	72,126	11,349	4,239	4,131	24,311	72,126	44,030	116,156
Chhattisgarh	31st July ...	94,245	16,295	12,299	1,570	70,153	94,245	100,317	194,562
	28th August	76,816	10,820	11,166	4,024	89,199	76,816	115,209	192,025
Total ...	31st July ...	346,865	55,452	30,849	18,642	157,892	346,865	262,835	609,700
	28th August	267,557	39,765	28,884	27,767	223,855	260,557	320,271	580,828

Though the total number in receipt of relief has varied but little, there has been a considerable fall in the number of relief workers. The new rules introducing a system of payment by results, which were referred to in paragraph 6 of the report for last month, were issued early in August, but were not generally brought into effect except in four districts of the Jubbulpore division. Full discretion was allowed to Commissioners to suspend their introduction wherever they might appear unnecessary or hazardous, and this has been freely used. Unfortunately a misunderstanding of orders on the part of subordinates in Bilaspur led to the hasty introduction of the rules on a few works in that district towards the close of the month, but this was corrected within a few days. Where the new system has been introduced it has hastened the departure of able-bodied workers to the fields. But there seems to be some reason to think that the demand for agricultural labour has now been fully supplied. Although the area sown with kharif crops is believed to be in most districts up to the average, and in several considerably above it, yet the great majority of the cultivators, and even of the smaller malguzars, as said to be so impoverished as to be unable to employ the body of labour to which they give work in ordinary years, or to pay an adequate wage to those labourers whom they do employ. It will probably not be until the later kharif crops are harvested that the main body of workers now on our works will be able to find full employment in the fields. The main reason for the general fall in the number of relief workers is to be found not in the tightening of the piece-work rules, but in the conditions under which the work had to be carried on. In most districts there was almost incessant rain throughout the month. Even the most complete arrangements for hutting cannot prevent life on the works from being one of much hardship, and with village relief constantly extending, it is natural that people should show an increasing disinclination to leave their homes. In the Nagpur division much of the decrease is due to the fact that the Pola festival, which is chiefly observed in the Nagpur country, happened to fall on the last day of the month. Numbers of labourers left the works in order to celebrate this festival, returning for the most part during the course of the following week.

3. But the reduction in works has been nearly counterbalanced by increases under other heads of relief. In the report for July it was noted that the extension of village relief had been the principal feature of the relief operations of that month. This extension continued still more rapidly in August, and at the end of the month the numbers on this form of relief amounted to $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the

estimated population of the distressed area. In Bilaspur the percentage rose to 6 per cent., and even this figure has been exceeded since the close of the month. In Betul, Mandla, Narsinghpur and Chanda the increases have been very large. It is on this form of relief that our main reliance must be placed during the rainy months. No appreciable reduction in the numbers can be expected for some weeks to come, even in the districts which show the highest totals, while there are others, such as Saugor, Betul, Mandla and Chhindwara, in which further additions must be looked for.

4. *Pari passu* with the extension of village relief has proceeded the multiplication of children's kitchens. These kitchens are proving most useful and effective. It has been established by experience that in most cases parents cannot be trusted to feed their children out of the doles granted them for the purpose, and that in severely distressed tracts the village relief system is therefore by itself inadequate and requires to be supplemented by special measures to secure that the children are properly fed. The numbers shown in the statement as in receipt of this form of relief are, it is known, considerably below the truth, especially in the Nagpur and Chhattisgarh divisions. Many of the kitchens are situated in remote and inaccessible parts of the districts. They are necessarily often entrusted to the care of half-educated men, who find a difficulty in preparing even the simplest form of return, and who do not understand the meaning of punctuality. Efforts are being made to improve the reporting arrangements, and it is hoped that future reports will show more accurately the numbers relieved in this shape.

5. The success of this extensive system of gratuitous relief depends on a complete organization for village inspection. The Land Record Staff has been everywhere strengthened; in most districts the number of Revenue or Circle Inspectors has been doubled, and in some trebled, and each Circle Inspector has now a circle in which he should be able to visit every village at least once a month. But constant inspection and control by superior officers are essential to ensure that this visitation is properly carried out. At this time of the year, unfortunately, travelling in this Province is not only slow and difficult, but in no small degree dangerous to health, and the Famine-Relief Officers, who do not spare themselves, are frequently incapacitated by illness caused by exposure. The removal, at such a time, of several Military Officers who had gained valuable experience of relief work, for service on the frontier, was particularly unfortunate. In saying this the Chief Commissioner fully recognises that Military Service has paramount claims upon Military Officers, and that His Excellency the Governor-General in Council must be the only judge of the necessity which should compel the reversion of an officer to military duty. He is also deeply sensible of the liberality with which he has been treated from the beginning by the Government of India in the matter of European assistance. He desires only to point out that the removal of several Executive Officers and of a large number of Medical Officers and subordinates, most of whom had made themselves very useful in the famine organization, has added materially to the difficulties of the situation, and that although arrangements have been made in most cases to replace the officers removed by others, it must be some time before the new arrivals become as efficient as those whom they have replaced.

6. The districts whose condition has caused most anxiety during the month are Mandla, Betul and Bilaspur. The Mandla charge, on account of its enormous area, its scattered population, and the difficult nature of the country, has always been one of the most arduous in the Province. The Chief Commissioner fully anticipated that the difficulties would be greatly increased in the rains, as has proved to be the case; but he hoped that the knowledge of the district which the Deputy Commissioner had acquired during his five years' incumbency would enable him to grapple with them successfully. This expectation has unfortunately been disappointed. The Deputy Commissioner, Saiyid Alay Muhammad, has now proceeded on leave, and another officer, Mr. Maw, who has gained valuable experience of famine work in the Jubbulpore district, has taken his place. Much has already been done under Mr. Fuller's guidance to recover lost ground, and the Chief Commissioner trusts that future reports will show a steady improvement.

The situation in Betul has been the subject of correspondence with the Government of India, and a copy of a full report upon it by the Commissioner was submitted with my letter No. F-1671, dated the 2nd September 1897. The distress in the Multai Tahsil of this district, which had previously been considered but slightly affected, developed during July and August with great rapidity, and was not dealt with as promptly and vigorously as it should have been by the Deputy Commissioner. Three European officers, including the Settlement Officer, Mr. Standen, who knows the Multai Tahsil well, have been added to the Famine-relief Staff in Betul, and village and kitchen relief is being rapidly extended.

In Bilaspur the organization of relief has proceeded on the lines laid down by the Chief Commissioner on his visit to the district in the middle of July. Every effort is being made to extend house-to-house relief, and to establish kitchens where they are needed. The district has now a complete network of public works, and has been withdrawn from the operation of the rules for "payment by results" issued on the 7th August. These rules were applied, contrary to orders, to certain works by the subordinate officers of the Public Works Department, and caused a temporary decrease in numbers, which may have included some persons who were in need of relief. But the mistake made was promptly corrected, and the numbers on works will probably rise again up to or above their former level. The mortality, the Chief Commissioner regrets to say, remains lamentably high: the physical conditions of the country, the character of the population, and the effect on debilitated constitutions of the depressing influences of the rainy season interpose obstacles to a speedy reduction in the death-rate which only time and constant perseverance on the part of the Relief Officers can overcome.

7. The death-rates given in column 15 of Statement A are for the month of July, and have already been reported to the Government of India, with my letter No. F-1591, dated the 25th ultimo. The completed returns for the Province for August are not yet ready, but will be submitted in due course when received. The Jubbulpore Divisional memorandum deals with the August death-rate for the five districts making up that Division, and shows, what the Chief Commissioner fears is likely to be the case in other Divisions also, that the rates have generally risen even above the high pitch reached in July. They will be examined in detail when the Special Mortality Return is submitted. Meanwhile it may be observed that the climatic conditions of the month were peculiarly unfavourable to the general health.

The following remarks are quoted from a diary recently submitted by the Deputy Commissioner of Jubbulpore:—

29th August.—We marched across country from Majhgawan to Umaria, and I was able to appreciate what Mr. Marriott had said about the conditions under which the people worked in their fields. The whole country, being *Haveli*, was under water, and people were sitting up to their waists in water, weeding. People who have run down from want can hardly help getting ill under these conditions, and I expect our death-rate will increase wherever they prevail.

The same might be said of every other rice district; while in the mountainous and broken parts of the Province malaria is at this season of the year more than ordinarily deadly, and chills are liable to bring on, even in the healthy, violent and dangerous attacks of bowel complaint. The mortality in the poor-houses has been very high. Great numbers of the unfortunate people sheltered there, especially in the Jubbulpore division, come from outside the Province. It may be noted in passing that the figures given in paragraph II. of the Jubbulpore memorandum are to some extent misleading, since they show only the proportion of the ordinary inmates of the poor-house, and not of those in hospital, who come from outside the district. It is naturally among the latter that the proportion of wanderers from a distance is highest, since their condition on arrival is the worst.

8. The rainfall throughout August was everywhere most timely and beneficial, and the condition of the standing kharif crop is generally excellent. Good rain has continued to fall since the close of the month, and from one district reports already speak of an "assured" harvest. Though it is yet too early for certainty, there is a reasonable hope that the crop will be a full one. Statistics of the area

sown with kharif grains, which are being prepared this year under special arrangements in advance of the usual time, are not yet complete, but from such returns as have been received, and from the general tenor of the reports, it may be confidently hoped that the area sown is nearly everywhere, except in the rice districts, above the average. The early crops, the small millets called *kutki* and *sanwa*, and the Indian corn grown in cottage gardens, are already being reaped. The quantity that has so far come into the market has, however, nowhere been sufficient to cause any appreciable reduction in general prices, which cannot yet be said to show signs of falling except in Sambalpur. That there must be a fall, if the rice and juari crops are placed beyond the risk of danger, seems certain, but as to the precise time when it will occur and the extent to which it will go, there is much diversity of opinion. Local estimates vary according to the staple grown in the district, and some persons whom the Chief Commissioner has consulted think that it will not be until the great demand for seed grain, which will arise for the rabi sowings, has been satisfied, that there will be any substantial fall. Probably also the conditions prevailing elsewhere in India will, as in the past, have to be taken largely into account in any forecast. On the whole, the most probable conclusion seems to be that the advent of materially cheaper prices is likely to be deferred till the *Diwali* in the last week of October.

9. While prices continue at their present level, and while the death-rate tends to increase rather than to diminish, it is obvious that the cessation, or even the restriction, of relief operations is not yet within view. The most that can be said is that if the present promise of a good harvest is fulfilled, and if there is a substantial fall in prices, it may then be possible to close most of the relief works and to very largely reduce gratuitous relief, though in the more deeply distressed parts of the Province, such as Bilaspur, northern Raipur, Balaghat, and the mountainous districts of Mandla, parts of Seoni, and Chhindwara and Betul, it will probably be necessary to continue relief operations longer than elsewhere. But the extent of these operations has so largely exceeded all estimates hitherto made that the additional allotment of 46 lakhs, which, it was hoped in June, would be sufficient for all famine expenditure likely to be incurred within the financial year, has already been almost entirely exhausted. And, for the present, as will be clear from the Divisional Memoranda, and from what has been written above, the tendency is rather to an increase than a reduction in the number receiving relief. This subject will shortly be dealt with in a separate reference.

10. I am to express regret that this report is submitted two days after the due date. The memorandum for the Chhattisgarh division was not received till this morning, in consequence, the Commissioner explains, of the late receipt by him of the report for Bilaspur, which was caused by the illness of the Deputy Commissioner.

I have, &c., .

M. W. FOX-STRANGWAYS,
Chief Secretary.

Monthly Famine Statement A for the four weeks ending Saturday evening the 28th August 1897

[To be submitted to the Government of India within the first half of the next month.]

District	Area in square miles.	Population in thousands.	Affected Area in square miles.	Estimated Population in thousands of column 4.	NUMBERS ON RELIEF WORKS ON LAST DAY OF MONTH.					Number on Gratuitous Relief.	PRICE OF ONE OR MORE PRINCIPAL FOOD GRAINS IN SEERS PER RUPEE.			FOR JULY.	
					Class A.	Class B.	Class C.	Class D.	Total.		Rice.	Gram.	Wheat.	Monthly Death-rate (per mille per annum).	Deaths due to Starvation.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
JUBBULPORE DIVISION.															
Jubbulpore	3,948	748	2,853	498	1,120	7,756	...	13,152	22,023	47,834	8	9½	9	52.56	...
Saugor	4,007	592	4,007	592	111	973	...	10,500	11,584	18,873	6	7½	8½	99.12	...
Damoh	2,831	325	2,807	200	446	1,820	...	8,490	10,756	17,598	6	7½	7	54.84	...
Mandla	5,056	339	5,056	339	111	3,064	...	8,414	11,589	21,413	7	8½	8	197.28	...
Seoni	3,198	371	1,766	200	234	995	...	1,757	2,986	14,004	...	7½	8½	99.36	...
Total ...	19,040	2,375	15,682	1,829	2,022	14,608	...	42,313	58,943	119,722	...	...	...	...	...
NAGPUR DIVISION.															
Nagpur	3,832	758	524	243	154	8,099	...	5,511	13,764	2,514	8½	(Juari.) 9½	8½	47.16	...
Bhandara	3,968	742	2,900	550	158	1,732	...	11,206	13,085	11,424	7½	9½	7½	65.76	...
Balaghat	3,164	383	1,500	230	828	5,355	...	19,033	25,216	16,429	6½	...	...	105.72	...
Chanda	10,749	697	2,052	104	...	...	...	...	10,139	10,139	6½	8½	6½	39.60	...
Wardha	2,428	400	650	70	...	74	...	523	597	804	6½	8	...	48.00	...
Total ...	24,141	2,980	7,626	1,197	1,140	15,260	...	36,272	52,672	41,310	...	...	...	...	...
NERBUDDA DIVISION.															
Hoshangabad	4,024	499	3,794	361	1,275	18,838	...	10,398	30,511	13,318	7½	...	7½	51.96	2
Narsinghpur	1,916	367	1,916	367	618	7,835	...	11,337	19,790	17,125	...	8½	8	75.12	...
Nimar	3,928	285	3,928	285	54	134	...	653	841	1,630	7	...	8	67.20	...
Chhindwara	4,630	407	2,549	164	264	8,181	...	4,661	13,106	5,616	...	7½	7½	53.52	...
Betul	3,824	323	3,824	323	357	6,082	...	1,489	7,878	6,341	...	...	7½	89.40	...
Total ...	18,322	1,881	16,011	1,500	2,568	41,020	...	28,538	72,126	44,030	...	...	...	...	2
CHHATTISGARH DIVISION.															
Raipur	11,724	1,584	4,027	710	455	8,535	...	25,224	34,214	30,845	7½	...	8	85.92	...
Bilaspur	3,341	1,164	3,341	1,164	892	13,938	...	27,437	42,317	34,194	7½	...	7½	119.04	...
Sambalpur	4,948	796	228	62	52	62	...	191	285	170	9	...	7½	27.60	...
Total ...	25,013	3,544	12,596	1,936	1,379	22,535	...	52,902	76,816	115,209	...	...	...	...	...
Grand Total ...	86,516	10,780	51,915	6,462	7,109	93,423	...	160,025	260,557	320,271	...	...	...	...	...

Monthly Famine Statement B for the four weeks ending Saturday the 28th August 1897.

[To be submitted to the Government of India within the first half of the next month.]

District.	Maximum number for whom relief is estimated to be required in case of serious famine.	Number for whom relief was provided in last programme of relief works (i.e., average daily number for three months).			Number for whom relief can be provided by works remaining on programme on date of report (i.e., average daily number for three months) (a).		Expenditure since April 1st 1897 (b).			Advances since April 1st up to end of month under (c).			Revenue suspended or remitted.	
		Date of last programme.	On large works (P. W. D. Schedule A).	Others.	On large works (P. W. D. Schedule A).	Others.	Date up to which account is made up.	Rupees omitting 000s.		Land Improvement Act.	Famine Loans.	Agricultural Loans Act.	Rupees omitting 000s.	
								On relief works.	On gratuitous relief.				Rupees omitting 000s.	Rupees omitting 000s.	Rupees omitting 000s.	Suspended.	Remitted.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
JUBBULPORE DIVISION.														
Jubbulpore	93,000	12-5-97	127,556	...	6,493	...	28-8-97	540	327	...	75	133	299	...
Saugor	42,000	...	129,000	...	17,988	...	28-8-97	49	36	...	29	51	425	...
Damoh	40,000	...	91,511	...	61,177	...	28-8-97	286	135	1	55	220	...	289
Mandla	27,000	...	135,556	...	91,478	...	28-8-97	263	39	...	9	58	33	...
Seoni... ..	26,000	...	98,222	...	87,823	...	28-8-97	10	40	1	15	35	84	...
Total	228,000	...	581,845	...	264,959	...	...	1,148	577	2	183	497	841	289
NAGPUR DIVISION.														
Nagpur	53,000	6-4-97	51,444	...	306,724	...	28-8-97	198	10	...	30	11	...	...
Bhandara	52,000	5-7-97	46,111	...	52,960	...	28-8-97	293	47	...	122	45	39	...
Balaghat	53,000	6-4-97	48,768	...	41,649	...	28-8-97	548	73	...	47	95	155	3
Chanda	49,000	11-5-97	47,262	...	89,174	...	28-8-97	...	...	...	104	11	...	...
Wardha	28,000	6-4-97	7,056	...	11,514	...	28-8-97	41	...	1	2	8	...	...
Total	235,000	...	200,641	...	502,021	...	...	1,080	130	1	305	170	194	3
NERBUDDA DIVISION														
Hoshangabad	65,000	26-4-97	162,224	24,000	43,327	1,200	28-8-97	514	49	14	...	4	430	...
Narsinghpur	46,000	16-11-96	153,984	...	76,888	...	28-8-97	386	64	...	18	21	...	...
Nimar	18,000	5-6-97	77,171	...	98,170	...	28-8-97	7	12	2	...	6	5	3
Chhindwara... ..	29,000	21-5-97	128,327	3,000	69,412	...	28-8-97	203	37	...	23	10	...	...
Betul... ..	23,000	26-4-97	122,067	...	100,469	...	28-8-97	135	27	...	16	14	3	...
Total	181,000	...	643,773	27,000	388,266	1,200	...	1,245	189	16	57	55	438	3
CHHATTISGARH DIVISION.														
Raipur	89,000	4-12-96	146,228	...	84,966	...	28-8-97	751	129	...	132	34	165	...
Bilaspur	75,000	26-4-97	56,493	...	45,209	...	28-8-97	588	530	10	59	84	210	...
Sambalpur	56,000	4-12-96	25,778	...	30,505	...	28-8-97	14	...	...	...	6	...	...
Total	220,000	...	228,499	...	160,680	1,353	659	10½	191	124	375	...
GRAND TOTAL ...	864,000	...	1,654,758	...	1,815,926	4,826	1,555	29½	736	846	1,848	295

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(a) Some relief-works will have been more or less exhausted since the last programme, and others will have been provided for entry in the next programme. The net result should be shown in columns 6 and 7.
 (b) The submission of the report should not be delayed in order that accounts of expenditure may be made up to date of report.
 (c) The total expenditure incurred and the advances made during the financial year previous to that to which the report and statements under submission belong should be stated in a foot-note.
 This statement will relate to the period between the last Saturday of the previous month and the last Saturday of the month under report.

Summary of the remarks in the District Reports to accompany Monthly Famine Statements A and B for the month of August 1897.

JUBBULPORE DIVISION.

(1) *Private Charity.*

By far the most important of the objects before the District Charity Fund Committee is now, as it was in May last, the provision of seed grain for resourceless tenants.

The following sums have been reserved for this purpose :—

							Rs.
Saugor	...	...	...	...	...	...	80,000
Damoh	...	...	...	...	...	...	75,000
Jubbulpore	...	...	...	...	...	...	105,000
Mandla	...	...	...	...	...	...	50,000
Seoni	...	...	...	...	...	...	50,000
Total	...	...	...	...	...	...	360,000

The price of rabi seed grain will be so high that this amount, considerable though it may seem, will not provide seed for more than 80,000 acres at the outside, about 4 per cent. of the area ordinarily cultivated with rabi crops in the division. I fear that the impossibility of providing State funds for repayable advances will occasion a good deal of difficulty and some contraction of area. In distributing the Charity Fund grants Deputy Commissioners will act as the agents of the District Committees, and I have issued some instructions to ensure that the money is given out with system, and to none who can possibly make shift without it.

The expenditure from the Charity Fund during the month has been :—

				I. Additional comforts.	II. Relief of respect- able paupers.	III. Orphans.	IV. Grants to agri- culturists.
				Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Saugor	...	...	...	2,127	297	...	200
Damoh	...	...	...	1,050	...	...	...
Jubbulpore	...	...	...	3,284	413	634	1,000
Mandla	...	...	...	647	231	...	...
Seoni	...	...	...	635	248	...	441
Total				7,743	1,189	634	1,641

The money spent under head I. mainly represents gifts of clothing. Jubbulpore is the only district in which grants from the Charity Fund are made to Missionary bodies for the maintenance of orphans. There are 317 for whom a monthly subsidy is given at Rs. 2 per head.

The cheap grain shops which have been opened at Jubbulpore have been very successful. They are only open to ticket holders, the number of whom is limited to 5,000. Each ticket entitles the holder to purchase Rs. 3 worth of grain during the month at a rate 2 seers per rupee cheaper than that ruling in the market. A similar shop has been opened at Sehora.

The Church Missionary Society supported 1,797 people in the Mandla district. Its representatives there are doing excellent work, maintaining nine

rural kitchens where village children are fed in large numbers. The representative of the Church of Scotland at Seoni gives daily doles of uncooked grain to 818 people, but his efforts still lack system, though no doubt alleviating the distress of many.

(2) *Government Poor-houses.*

The number of poor-houses and the number of persons maintained in them are shown below and are contrasted with the figures for the two months preceding :—

District.	NUMBER OF POOR-HOUSES.			NUMBER OF INMATES.		
	June.	July.	August.	June.	July.	August.
Saugor	5	5	5	6,813	4,547	2,885
Damoh	5	5	5	1,548	1,662	1,585
Jubbulpore	4	3	2	3,342	2,441	2,553
Mandla	2	2	2	733	1,169	1,521
Seoni	2	2	2	720	1,079	807
Total	18	17	17	13,156	10,898	9,351

There has been in the past a tendency on the part of Local Committees to regard poor-houses rather in the light of almshouses than of temporary refuges for the sick and infirm. This idea is now giving way, and people are being sent to their homes and brought on the relief list of their villages much more liberally than was formerly the case. The numbers in the Jubbulpore Poor-house would have been much smaller had not some hundreds of people returned to it from a work where they considered they had been unfairly treated. They have now resumed work.

The following table give an analysis of the poor-house population at the close of the month :—

District.	NUMBER OF INMATES AT END OF AUGUST.			
	AUGUST 1897.			
	Orphans.	In Hospital.	<i>In poor-houses proper.</i>	
			Belonging to District.	Strangers.
Saugor	351*	409	1,230	450
Damoh	420	267	654	244
Jubbulpore	415	577	469	1,087
Mandla	415	121	954	31
Seoni	411	123	113	51
Total	2,012	1,088	3,420	1,863

* Exclusive of the Rehli and Banda poor-houses.

There are 2,012 orphans on the hands of Government in the division. About a seventh of the poor-house inmates are in the hospital wards. The poor-houses of the Saugor, Damoh, and Mandla districts still contain a large number of people belonging to the district who would be better at their homes.

At Mandla there has been very little drafting, owing to a misapprehension on the part of the Deputy Commissioner which has now been removed. It has

been impressed on Deputy Commissioners that the penultimate column of this table should be very nearly blank. The number of strangers (nearly all immigrants from Native States) in the poor-houses of the Saugor and Jubbulpore districts is very large. The Deputy Commissioner of Jubbulpore has made definite arrangements with the authorities of the Rewah, Panna, and Maihar States for the periodical removal of their people, and over 600 were sent off by rail during the month. But new arrivals take their place.

I regret to say that the poor-house mortality rose considerably, though I can confidently assert, with regard to most of them, that this resulted from no lack of care or attention. The deaths amounted to 563 in Saugor, 640 in Jubbulpore, 321 Mandla, and 292 in Seoni. Damoh is silent on the point.

Two-thirds of those that died in the Jubbulpore poor-houses were immigrants from Native States, in regard to whom the Deputy Commissioner writes :—

“Ever since the middle of June we have been greatly troubled with the wretched starving creatures who wander in from the north of the district. Along all the main roads they are to be met with. The Police do their best to deal with them, and they are brought into the poor-houses or fed at the kitchens and forwarded to relief camps. But many are in such a hopelessly bad condition that it is impossible to save their lives.”

In the Murwara poor-house 70 of these wanderers died within a week of admission. But deaths have been by no means confined to new arrivals. At Mandla 16 per cent., at Jubbulpore 24 per cent., and at Saugor 40 per cent. of the deaths occurred amongst people who had been in the poor-houses for over a month. The deaths amongst the orphans at Jubbulpore and Seoni have been deplorably numerous, although no expedient has been left untried, and Surgeon-Lieutenant-Colonel McKay and Captain MacNabb have respectively been unremitting in their attentions. The rainy weather which prevailed almost continuously throughout the month was terribly against the sick and infirm. During the past week dry sunny weather has resulted in a decrease of mortality at Jubbulpore.

3. Relief-centres and Kitchens.

Children's kitchens have now become a very important feature in our relief measures :—

District.	Number of Centres and Kitchens.		Number of Persons relieved Gratuitously.		Number of Persons on Light Work.		Total.	
	July.	August.	July.	August.	July.	August.	July.	August.
Saugor ... ..	...	4	...	2,373	...	...	...	2,373
Damoh	1	10	275	930	...	...	275	930
Jubbulpore ...	30	57	7,899	8,205	226	152	8,125	8,357
Mandla	17	64	1,309	2,263	4,074	3,524	5,383	5,787
Seoni	4	65	75	3,196	93	38	168	3,234
Total	51	200	9,558	16,967	4,393	3,714	13,951	20,681

At the end of the month there were nearly 17,000 persons, mostly little children, in receipt of cooked food at kitchens hastily improvised at police stations, village schools and malguzars' houses. The numbers are largest in Jubbulpore, where the District Superintendent of Police, Mr. McIver, has been most energetic and successful. The Deputy Commissioner has during the month inspected a number of the kitchens, and writes that they are “affording a much-needed form of relief.” In Seoni the Deputy Commissioner has enlisted the services of a number of malguzars who, he writes, have shown real interest in managing kitchens, and have not unfrequently carried them on with money supplied from their own pockets when Government funds have run short. During the month every kitchen in Seoni came under inspection, and Captain MacNabb states from

personal observation that the condition of the children attending them has markedly improved. Less has been done in Damoh, and in Saugor progress has been distinctly disappointing. At the end of July the District Superintendent of Police was instructed to open kitchens at 15 of his police stations. Only four had been opened by the end of August. I am calling for an explanation of this. More than two-thirds of the children shown as attending kitchens in this district belong to the town of Saugor, where I suspect that they are admitted with rather too much liberality.*

In the Mandla district alone relief centres are still open for the employment of labour on light work. Most of them are in the charge of patwaris. They have received very little inspection, and I am doubtful of the results. They are now being brought under proper control, and all weak and sickly persons are being drafted to village relief. At most of them the work consists nominally in cutting paths over hill passes in localities remote from villages.

4. Village Relief.

I am glad to be able to report satisfactory progress in extending this form of relief, which during the monsoon months should be the backbone of our famine administration :—

District.	Number Relieved at their Homes.		
	July.	August.	Difference.
Saugor	7,621	11,877	+4,256
Damoh	12,002	13,056	+1,054
Jubbulpore	28,421	33,720	+5,299
Mandla	2,418	14,649	+12,231
Seoni	4,116	8,789	+4,673
Total	54,578	82,091	+27,513

The increase has been least in Damoh, and I have asked the Deputy Commissioner to be more liberal in view of a rise in the death-rate, and the departure to their homes of a large number of people from the Public Works Department relief-works, taking of course their dependents with them. In the Jubbulpore district measures are sufficiently wide, and have been so for some time past, and I attribute to this in great part the fact that the death-rate is now much lower in Jubbulpore than in any other district of the division. The increases in Saugor and Seoni are substantial and will continue during the current month. I distrust the figures for Mandla. Village relief had been greatly neglected in this district by the Deputy Commissioner (Saiyid Alay Muhammad) till the end of July. Since then efforts have been made to reach the people, but without system or proper control, and I doubt whether people gained much beyond what they owe to the energy and sympathy of Mr. Sharp, one of the Famine Relief Officers of the Mandla Tahsil. I have lately again visited Mandla and have seen arrangements properly organized, reporting to the Chief Commissioner the action taken. Mr. Maw, who has gained much experience of famine work in the Jubbulpore district, has taken the charge of the district from Saiyid Alay Muhammad (who has left on sick leave), and has been personally instructed by me as to the points requiring attention. I have also drawn upon the Jubbulpore staff for a Famine Relief Officer of energy and capacity (Lieutenant Heale) to take charge of relief measures in the Dindori tahsil, and there are now three English Officers in inspecting charge of villages in addition to three Native Famine Relief Officers. The number of Circle Officers has been trebled. The staff is now, I think, sufficient for success. But there is much lost ground to recover.

* NOTE.—It was afterwards found that the large number shown against the town of Saugor was due to an error in calculation.

(5.) *Relief Works.*

(a.)—*Under Public Works Department management.*—The following figures contrast the numbers receiving relief on Public Works Department works at the end of July and at the end of August :—

District.	Number of Workers.		Number of Dependents.		Total.		Difference (+) or (—)
	July.	August.	July.	August.	July.	August.	
Saugor	23,277	11,584	2,514	1,738	25,791	13,322	—11,369
Damoh	31,879	9,812	5,692	2,012	37,571	9,824	—27,747
Jubbulpore	23,329	14,009	3,342	3,152	26,671	17,161	—9,510
Mandla	6,905	6,668	2,244	2,347	9,149	9,015	—134
Seoni	4,766	2,948	1,047	1,212	5,813	4,160	—1,653
Total	90,156	45,021	14,839	10,461	104,995	53,482	—51,513

There has been a notable decrease in numbers. This was to be expected, as, during August and the beginning of September, weeding offers employment sufficient in ordinary years to support the whole of the labouring population. But the return of people to their homes has certainly been hastened by the orders requiring that those who are distinctly robust and strong should be employed on piece-work terms, that is to say, should be paid by results. This has imposed a real work test which was lacking before, and the crowds of women and children which flocked to the works from the villages in their vicinity now do not find it worth their while to come. They were mostly in very good condition, and came not in want of food, but in hope of saving a little money. The Deputy Commissioner of Saugor writes that “able-bodied workers, on finding that they must do a certain amount of work in order to get full wages, have left the relief works and returned to their villages. This is rather a good thing, as malguzars have been complaining lately that they cannot get labour in villages.” The Deputy Commissioner, Damoh, writes that “almost all the able-bodied persons have left the works for their villages, where they can at present find work.” Mr. Blakesley thinks, however, that a number of them will return when weeding is over. A large number of infirm persons have been sent from the works to their villages and brought on the village relief lists. This is as it should be. In Jubbulpore, there have been cases in which officers-in-charge have wrongly classified the labourers and have thrown on to piece-work persons who were unfit for it. I have felt compelled to withdraw generally from officers-in-charge the authority to draft persons from task-work to piece-work, which will in future be only exercised by Inspecting Officers. But a very large decrease in numbers on local works in this district indicates that weeding has been successfully competing with relief work irrespective of any tightening in conditions. In the Mandla and Seoni districts, piece-work has all along been in force, and the new rules were in the direction of leniency, as instead of exempting the infirm they only applied to the robust. Numbers nevertheless fell off in both districts, and it is clear from the district reports that labourers in full strength can now obtain employment in the fields. But the Deputy Commissioner and Civil Surgeon of Mandla strongly urged the abolition of piece-work altogether, on the ground that overstrict classification had made the works unpopular, and that the weak and sickly would not come to them without special encouragement. The weak and sickly should of course have been on the village relief lists, but (as already stated) the arrangements for village relief in this district were unsatisfactory, and I decided to accept the recommendation of the local authorities and revert entirely to Famine Code terms. The death-rate is very high, and we can afford to neglect no possible remedy. For similar reasons, I have just stopped piece-work in the Seoni district also.

The only changes of organization made during the month were the amalgamation of two charges in the Banda tahsil of the Saugor district and the opening of

a new charge in the vicinity of Saugor town. Orders were issued for the establishment of this charge at the end of July, but it was not opened till the end of August. I am enquiring into the cause of delay.

(b.) *Works under District Officers.* Comparative statistics are given below :—

District.	July.	August.	Difference (+) or (-).
Saugor	No. 120	No. ...	-120
Damoh	781	959	+178
Jubbulpore	10,449	8,019	-2,430
Mandla	1,089	1,397	+308
Seoni	115	15	-100
Total	12,554	10,390	-2,164

The works at Damoh and Mandla are situated in the vicinity of the town, and are intended for the relief of distressed townspeople and people drafted from the poor-houses. The numbers at Mandla will be cut down by drafting to Public Works Department works. There are also local works open near the town of Jubbulpore, but the greater number of the people shown as employed belong to a road work at Majholi which was started by the Deputy Commissioner in July, and has been of great utility. Field work has now drawn off a large proportion of the labourers.

Loan works have practically been closed everywhere.

(6.) *Railway Works.*

These continue to be of much assistance in Saugor, Damoh and Jubbulpore :—

District.	On 31st July.	On 28th August.
Saugor	No. 4,200	No. 4,568
Damoh	6,057	6,322
Jubbulpore	3,660	4,671
Total	13,917	15,561

Numbers have risen, probably owing to the limitation of the wages which can be earned by the strong and able-bodied on Government works.

(7.) *Summary of the relief granted in the Division.*

Notwithstanding the large decrease of numbers on the Public Works Department relief works, there has been a fall of only 8 per cent. in the total number in receipt of relief. The feature of the month's operations has been the enlargement of gratuitous relief at the expense of work relief, and the percentage relieved gratuitously has risen from 46 to 67 per cent. I think that this proportion is still rather too low for this season of the year. An inspection of the hospitals attached to Public Works Department works shows very clearly that in the past large numbers have sought relief on works who should have been dealt with in their villages, and that the Public Works Department Officers have been saddled with the charge of crowds of weak and sickly people for whom the works were never intended. Supervision of the hospitals cannot be very effective, and the continuous rain of the month has rendered their management difficult and unsatisfactory. The mortality on some works, especially those in the Seoni district, has been very

high. I compare below the percentage of the total population on relief in each district during each of the past three months :—

District.	June.	July.	August.
Saugor	6.1	6.4	5.5
Damoh	12.3	16.1	8.7
Jubbulpore	6.2	10.3	9.4
Mandla	5.1	5.8	9.7
Seoni	2.7	3.3	4.6

Having regard to present conditions, I think that relief needs further extension in Saugor, Mandla and Seoni. In Damoh arrangements are fairly satisfactory, and they are very satisfactory in Jubbulpore, where Mr. Robertson, by energetic and systematic control and inspection, has succeeded in stemming the tide of distress with its crest of rising mortality.

(8.) *Food-stocks and Trade.*

No marked deficiency of food-grain is reported save in the interior of the Mandla district. Import to Mandla has been reviving :—

District.	Imports.			Exports.		
	June.	July.	August.	June.	July.	August.
	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.
Saugor	64,843	88,022	40,255	1,783	374	1,658
Damoh ... ..	...	54,675	23,530	Not reported.		Nil.
Jubbulpore	93,677	55,146	32,297	26,574	7,072	11,242
Mandla	105,000	...	1,398	...	...	Nil.
Seoni	5,531	4,816	1,954	2,009	855	1,560

The localities where grain is scarcest lie in the Dindori tahsil to the north of the Mandla district, and the famine has, I think, demonstrated the necessity of opening good road communication between this tract and the Katni-Bilaspur branch of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway. A road between Dindori and the Birsingpur Station on the Railway has for some time been under construction.

(9.) *Prices.*

The average price rates for wheat, gram and rice in each district are compared below :—

District.	SEERS PER RUPEE.					
	Wheat.		Gram.		Common Rice.	
	June.	August.	June.	August.	June.	August.
Saugor	8½	8½	8	7¾	6	6
Damoh	7	7	7	7½	6	6
Jubbulpore	9½	9	9½	9½	8	8
Mandla	8½	8	8½	8½	7½	7
Seoni	8½	8½	8	8½	8	7½

Prices have remained practically unchanged with a tendency to rise in Mandla. Harvest prospects are unusually good, and it is extraordinary that as yet they should have had no influence on prices. If the present break in the rains should mean that we have come to the end of them, the crops would for the most part fail as they did last year, and it is no doubt the apprehension of a recurrence of last year's distress that keeps prices up. If so a heavy fall of rain between the middle and end of September should bring them down with a run.

(10). *Rates of Wages on Public Works Department Relief Works.*

The only change has been in Damoh, where the rate has been raised from 8 to 7 seers, the rate which was in force during the month preceding.

(11.) *Crime.*

I give comparative statistics below :—

	Total Number of Offences.				
	Saugor.	Damoh.	Jubbulpore.	Mandla.	Seoni.
August 1897	368	148	718	223	315
July 1897	568	226	662	319	270
August 1896	357	253	760	234	247

The decrease in Saugor, Damoh and Mandla is reassuring. Jubbulpore shows an increase, but crime is actually less than it was at the corresponding period of last year. In Seoni there has been a further rise.

(12.) *Mortality.*

The latest month for which complete returns have been received is July. The figures are compared below with those for June :—

District.	Total Number of Deaths.		Deaths from Cholera.		Monthly Death-rate.	
	June.	July.	June.	July.	June.	July.
Saugor	6,138	4,887	1,037	118	10·4	8·25
Damoh	2,699	1,564	679	47	8·3	4·8
Jubbulpore	4,272	3,279	471	75	5·7	4·4
Mandla	3,571	5,579	1,220	747	10·5	16·44
Seoni	2,545	3,070	704	80	6·8	8·3

The total mortality during August has been reported to me from all districts and I include it in the following table from which deaths ascribed to cholera are omitted.

District.	Monthly Death-rate, excluding Deaths from Cholera.							
	January.	February.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.
Saugor	3·8	4·6	4·0	4·2	5·8	8·5	8·0	11·6
Damoh	5·3	4·2	4·1	4·0	3·1	6·2	4·6	6·9
Jubbulpore	7·7	8·8	6·5	5·0	5·3	5·1	4·3	5·5
Mandla	3·9	5·5	5·5	3·9	5·1	6·9	14·2	16·1
Seoni	5·3	4·4	4·1	3·4	3·6	4·9	8·0	12·2

The death-rate in Jubbulpore showed a most satisfactory fall in July. It rose in August, but the rise is ascribed by the Civil Surgeon solely to unfavourable conditions of weather, incessant rain having induced a great deal of diarrhoea and dysentery. The Deputy Commissioner also remarks on the ill effect which the weeding of rice fields must have on general health; crouching in knee deep water all day long must be unhealthy, however accustomed the people may be to it. And as a matter of fact the death-rate for August is 2 per mille lower than it was in 1896. Damoh also shows a fall in July followed by a rise in August. But here again matters are very much better than they were last year when the August death-rate was 10·72. In both Mandla and Seoni the death-rate rose in July and rose again in August, and has reached a lamentably high figure. In both cases the mortality must, I fear, be ascribed in some part to insufficiency of village relief. At the end of June there were in each of these districts only some 2,000 people on the village relief lists, and in Mandla the numbers increased but little until near the end of July. Relief has now been very greatly expanded, but lost ground cannot be rapidly recovered, and we cannot look for results before the middle of the current month at earliest. In Seoni there is the excuse that distress has developed with extraordinary rapidity. In May the death-rate was only 3·6. Mandla earlier showed statistical signs of distress, but here also the extraordinary rapidity with which distress has deepened has been specially noticed by Mr. Sharp, one of the most zealous and sympathetic of our Relief Officers. I have already touched on the steps which have been taken to place village relief in this district on an efficient footing. In both Mandla and Seoni famine relief presents special difficulties in the large areas to be covered and in the character of the population. The hill people, who here constitute a very large proportion of the population, have never taken kindly to relief works, and a fine or even a harsh word sends them back to their villages. I have received a striking confirmation of this from the representative of the Church Mission Society at Mandla, the Revd. H. J. Molony, who has informed me that his efforts to employ Gonds as servants have always resulted in failure, as they abscond on the slightest fault finding. House-to-house relief is the only expedient with them, and the great distance between village and village makes this unusually difficult. But when all is said, the death rates are shockingly high, and I can only assure the Chief Commissioner that no stone is being left unturned to relieve the people.

In Saugor the death-rate was very high in June, exhibited a small fall in July, and has risen formidably in August. Here again I believe that village relief has not received nearly sufficient extension. I compare below the percentages of the total population in receipt of village relief during each of the past three months in Saugor, Damoh and Jubbulpore :—

—	Saugor.	Damoh.	Jubbulpore.
June	1·6	3·4	2·4
July	1·3	3·7	3·8
August	2·0	4·0	4·5

The importance of extending his operations has been repeatedly forced on the attention of the Deputy Commissioner since the beginning of last July. But I do not think that he has recognised the necessity for personal attention and intervention. Too much has been left to subordinates. The Deputy Commissioner has been much pressed with other work. But at the present time his famine duties should have given way to no others.

(13.) *Physical condition of the People.*

It goes without saying that in Mandla and Seoni distress has increased largely, and that the poorer classes are in a very bad way.

It is observed by the Deputy Commissioner of Seoni (Captain Macnabb) that “the greatest distress is confined to a class of people who can only be reached

by village relief and kitchens," and no pains are being spared to bring them within the scope of these relief measures.

Of Saugor the Deputy Commissioner (Mr. Phillips) writes that "conditions have undoubtedly deteriorated somewhat, especially amongst children," and the expansion of kitchen relief seems to require his special attention. The Deputy Commissioner of Damoh (Mr. Blakesley) considers on the other hand that "conditions have been much improved; the labouring classes are in the worst condition. At present some work can be found in the fields, but as soon as the weeding season is over, these persons will hardly find any work in their villages till the reaping of the rice crop commences." Care will be taken to keep works open for them. The people are pretty well-off owing very largely to the unsparing efforts of Mr. Blakesley on their behalf. I have already referred to the success which Mr. Robertson can point to in Jubbulpore. I have just returned from a visit to the Bijeraghogharh pargana, which, six months ago, was the most distressed tract in the Provinces, and have been struck with the cheerfulness and gratitude of the people and the absence of signs of distress. The death-rate in this locality is now actually lower than in any other part of the district.

(11.) *General Condition and Prospects.*

Nothing could be better than the present state of the crops. But everything depends on a good fall of rain towards the end of this month. The one disquieting feature is the backwardness of most of the rice crops, which renders late rain more than ever necessary. The maize harvest has begun, and cottage gardens are now supplying food to their fortunate owners. Maize cobs are selling at 5 or 6 to the pice. The poorer classes are obtaining a good deal of food by gathering the grain of a small millet (*sawan*) which grows wild in the fields, and shortly wild rice (*pasai*) will ripen. There is nothing new in their dependence upon these self-grown products. They have indeed a special apparatus for gathering them.

J. B. FULLER,
Officiating Commissioner.

NAGPUR DIVISION.

(1.) *Private Relief.*

Nagpur.—The poor-houses at Sawargaon and Narker were closed and the inmates taken into the Katol Poor-house, which is now managed by Government. The inmates of the private poor-house at Baila, which was closed at the end of July, were admitted into the Umrer Poor-house. A large number of paupers have assembled at Kalmeshwar, where a kitchen has been opened. In addition to a small grant made by the Deputy Commissioner, the local subscriptions in cash and grain amounted to Rs. 225. The distressed Koshtis and other respectable persons at this place are being given weekly allowances of grain as caste prejudice prevents their eating at the kitchen. The total number of persons relieved at the poor-houses was 209 on the last day of the month with an expenditure of Rs. 409 against 789 with an expenditure of Rs. 1,130 in July.

The following persons continue to distribute cooked food and parched grain to destitute travellers and to the local poor :—

Nagpur Tahsil.—Ganpat Rao Nistane of Takalghat village.

Yado Rao Namdeo, Koshti, of Takalghat village.

Katol Tahsil.—Sitaram, Patel of Dorli.

Manoharpuri, Malguzar of Lakhari.

Ramchandara Saluram Marwari, Malguzar of Junapani.

Umrer Tahsil.—Shankar Narain Shastri.

Bhandara.—Out of a sum of Rs. 50,000 received from the Central Committee, Indian Charitable Relief Fund, Rs. 35,000 were allotted for the provision of subsistence grain and rabi seed for agriculturists. The lists of persons relieved as "respectable poor" are now being revised, as it has been found that a number of these persons should be properly relieved by Government under Section 34 of the Famine Code.

Balaghat.—The expenditure in the poor-houses from private subscriptions was :—

	July.	August.
Balaghat	Rs. 38	Rs. 10
Katangi	50	<i>Nil.</i>
Baihar	64	7

which shows that private charity is now practically exhausted in this district. Rs. 22 were spent under head (3) from the Charitable Fund in the relief of respectable people and Rs. 80,928 in procuring seed for tenants' rabi sowings.

Chanda.—A sum of Rs. 10,000 received from the Charitable Relief Fund has helped in starting four cheap grain shops which, owing to the high prices of food grains, are much appreciated by the people. Rs. 1,000 have been set apart for the purchase of rabi seed for destitute tenants and for clothing, which is urgently needed for a considerable number of the poorer classes.

Wardha.—Local subscriptions are nearly at an end, but timely aid has been given from the Charitable Fund, Rs. 8,000 having been distributed to destitute cultivators for the purchase of seed and other purposes. Rs. 10,000 more received for rabi seed are being distributed.

(2.) Government Poor-houses.

The number of poor-houses and the number of their inmates during August are compared below with the numbers during the two preceding months :—

District.	Number of Poor-houses.			Number of Inmates.		
	June.	July.	August.	June.	July.	August.
Nagpur	1	2	3	773	1,079	1,500
Bhandara	4	4	4	825	948	886
Balaghat	3	3	3	811	1,076	1,028
Chanda ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...
Wardha ... ..	...	2	2	...	504	505
Total	8	11	12	2,409	3,607	3,919

The number of inmates has increased in the Nagpur district proportionately with the increase in the number of poor-houses, but pressure is being relieved by drafting on to village relief. The number of deaths in the Bhandara Poor-houses has been unusually large, viz., 294. The Deputy Commissioner writes :—

“ This cannot, I think, be ascribed to any neglect or want of care on the part of Medical Officers in charge of poor-houses, and must be due to persons refusing this form of relief until they are so weak and emaciated that their recovery is hopeless. There has been no epidemic at any of the poor-houses, the large majority of deaths being ascribed to famine diarrhoea.”

In Balaghat the numbers have remained practically unchanged, although the population is reported to be continually changing. Here, as in Nagpur, large drafts have been sent away of people not requiring medical aid,—those fit to work to the neighbouring relief works, and others on village relief. In Wardha the number of inmates has remained stationary.

(3.) *Relief Centres and Kitchens.*

These centres of relief have practically become kitchens. I contrast below the figures for July and August.

District.	Number of Centres and Kitchens.		Number of Persons Relieved Gratuitously.		Number of Persons on Light Work.		Total Number of Persons.	
	July.	August.	July.	August.	July.	August.	July.	August.
Nagpur ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Bhandara	26	27	1,158	1,035	...	...	1,158	1,035
Balaghat	4	21	29	1,059	...	...	29	1,059
Chanda ... ..	...	4	...	399	...	...	...	399
Wardha ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	30	52	1,187	2,493	...	...	1,187	2,493

No kitchens or relief centres were open during the month in Nagpur, while the only kitchen in the Wardha district is attached to the relief-work at Arvi. No relief centres exist in Bhandara except children's kitchens, which increased by one during the month owing to an additional kitchen being opened at Darekasa. The Deputy Commissioner writes :—

"I visited five of these kitchens during the month and found almost all the children, except the new-comers, looking very fit."

Arrangements have been made for starting 36 more kitchens at selected schools in this district. There are now only two relief centres in Balaghat, two having been closed during the month. Eighteen kitchens were started by the District Superintendent of Police, and one is being managed by Mr. Lampard at Nikkmu. In addition to these there are 12 kitchens at the Public Works Department camps, and Tahsildars are starting more. The Deputy Commissioner hoped within a week more to have over 50 kitchens altogether.

Kitchens were a pressing need in the Chanda District. The Deputy Commissioner is extending them to all relief centres. Properly speaking there are no relief centres in this district, and they are merely designated as such in order that the Police may know where to send starving wanderers. Only children who are thin and emaciated are admitted to these kitchens. The number shown in the statement does not, the Deputy Commissioner states, represent the number actually relieved, as some of the returns had not been received at the time of writing his report. He thinks it may safely be put down as 800.

(4.) *Village Relief.*

The following figures indicate the extent to which gratuitous relief has been afforded to people at their houses :—

District.	July.	August.	Increase.
Bhandara	6,623	7,144	521
Nagpur ... ..	...	...	...
Balaghat	10,005	11,325	1,320
Chanda	1,139	9,740	8,601
Wardha ... ..	...	45	45
Total	17,767	28,254	10,487

The most striking point is the large rise in Chanda, where, however, this form of relief was only commenced in July and not fully organized till last month. The Chief Commissioner has sanctioned an increase in the monthly rates of payment for Balaghat, where prices are higher than elsewhere in this division. Six hundred and one kotwars also are now in receipt of an allowance of Rs. 3 each per mensem.

In some villages in the Nagpur District, *e.g.*, Kalmeshwar, Khapa and Saoner, the death-rate for July was very high. The Deputy Commissioner recently visited most of these places and after making personal enquiries into the deaths reported, organized kitchens wherever they were found necessary. He writes :—

“The condition of the people is undoubtedly deteriorating owing to the insufficiency of the agricultural wage with the present high prices. I found a considerable number of cases of emaciation especially in Dhapewara and Kalmeshwar, where professional beggars have collected.”

One hundred and twenty-four destitute persons were relieved by Tahsildars with an expenditure of Rs. 92 during the month out of the permanent advances made : 45 persons were similarly relieved in the Wardha district.

(5.) Relief Works.

(a)—*Under the Public Works Department.*—The number of workers and dependents on Public Works Department relief works during July and August are compared below :—

Districts.	Number of Workers.		Number of Dependents.		Total.		Difference.
	July	August.	July.	August.	July.	August.	
Nagpur... ..	11,163	6,951	2,507	805	13,670	7,756	—5,914
Bhandara	19,477	13,095	2,970	2,359	22,447	15,454	—6,993
Balaghat	36,690	25,301	6,256	3,026	42,946	28,327	—14,619
Chanda... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Wardha... ..	1,565	597	...	254	1,565	851	—714
Total	68,895	45,944	11,733	6,444	80,628	52,388	—28,240

The figures show a great reduction, due partly to the last two days of the month being the “Pola” festival, when a large number of workers were absent. The increase in dependents in Wardha is said to be due to the Tahsildar unauthorisedly closing the private poor-house at Arvi and sending weak and emaciated persons to the Public Works Department kitchen. The Deputy Commissioner is arranging to re-open the poor-house. The substitution of kitchens for cash payment to dependents has had a beneficial effect on the whole, but in some places caste rules prevent people eating at such places. Piece-work is in full swing in Bhandara and Balaghat, having been introduced at six camps in the latter district and on all the Bhandara charges except one. Contractors are being eliminated as fast as possible, and efforts are being made to introduce the system of payment by results.

(b.) *Works under District Officers.*—There are no works of this kind in the Division. Private works carried on with the help of famine loans have also ceased.

(6.) Physical Condition of the People.

Nagpur.—In the Public Works Department kitchens the inmates are generally in fair condition and show very little sign of distress. The general condition of the poor-house population is good, but I noticed a few cases of emaciation, and bowel complaints have been rather prevalent. There were 30 deaths at the Umrer

poor-house, eight of which were due to cholera and the rest to diarrhœa. Fifty-five deaths occurred in the Nagpur poor-house. The Katol houses report 19 deaths, one due to cholera.

At relief camps "the general condition," the Deputy Commissioner reports, "is good, I should say very good, but, as already pointed out, the kitchen rule for dependents works hardly on those who will not send their children to the kitchens through caste pride, and some of them are looking emaciated."

I discussed this subject with the Deputy Commissioner, and we agreed that in some such instances relief must be given in cash as formerly.

In distressed tracts there had been considerable deterioration and the Deputy Commissioner classes the distressed as follows :—

- (1) Respectable artizans, as Koshtis ;
- (2) Children of agricultural labourers where the parents have several children ;
- (3) The non-cultivating castes, as Mangs, Dhimars, Kalars, &c.

The last class consists of people who can get work if they like, but prefer to beg. Kitchens are being opened for class (2) and some cases under No. 1 are being relieved in their own houses.

Bhandara.—The Deputy Commissioner, who has made a tour in the Sakoli Tahsil, reports that the condition of the people there has deteriorated very considerably during the last three months.

In many cases cultivators are said to have been found looking worse than labourers, which is due often to the obstinacy with which they stick to their homes and refuse to go on relief works. With regard to this tahsil, the Deputy Commissioner writes :—

"When the lists of village poor were originally prepared under Section 34 of the Famine Code, very few persons fit for entry therein were found in this tahsil, but since then, owing principally to the obstinacy with which they have stuck to their homes, a very large number have become so reduced as to render it absolutely necessary to admit them to relief."

The large proportion of weak and emaciated labourers is attributed to their not spending anything like their day's wage or indeed even sufficient of it to keep them in health and strength. In the Tirora Tahsil the general condition of the people is not much better than that described in Sakoli. Those formerly admitted to village relief are in fair condition, but the more recent admissions still show signs of privation, and it must necessarily take some time before they regain their strength.

As regards the other districts, the condition of the people is said to be generally satisfactory both on the works and elsewhere. The Deputy Commissioner, Chanda, writes :—

"It is only amongst the old, the halt and the blind, in fact among the professional beggars, that any signs of emaciation are to be found, and these are now being cared for."

(7.) *Deaths from Starvation.*

In July, 4 deaths in Nagpur and 2 in Chanda, were reported as due to starvation. The return is blank for that month for the other districts. Those of Nagpur have been referred to in my last monthly report. The two in Chanda were those of men found lying on the roadside and of whom nothing was known. The Deputy Commissioner writes :—

"Enquiry has failed to elicit anything beyond the fact that they must have been the inhabitants of some Native State making for the Mohabi kitchen in the Panabaras Zamindari. No one knows anything about them, but their bodies were in an emaciated condition and no money or food was found near them."

Eleven cases were reported from Bhandara, but inquiry showed that none of these could be properly put down to starvation.

(8.) *Mortality.*

The figures for August not being yet available, I give below those for July as compared with the figures for June :—

District.	Total Number of Deaths.		Deaths from Cholera.	
	June.	July.	June.	July.
Nagpur	3,664	2,975	644	213
Bhandara	5,215	4,070	1,347	617
Balaghat... ..	5,615	3,223	705	89
Chanda	2,013	2,020	422	525
Wardha	2,239	1,442	564	112
Total	18,746	13,730	3,682	1,556

Monthly Death Rate.

District.	All Causes.		Excluding Cholera.	
	June.	July.	June.	July.
Nagpur	4.83	3.92	3.98	3.51
Bhandara	7.02	5.34	5.20	4.65
Balaghat... ..	11.76	8.41	8.07	8.25
Chanda	2.88	3.60	2.84	2.66
Wardha	5.59	4.00	4.15	3.32

There is a satisfactory decrease almost everywhere, and the rates, though still high, are not conspicuously so except in Balaghat, but even here the death rate from all causes has been reduced by 3.35 as compared with the rate for June.

(9.) *Food-Stocks.*

These are reported to be sufficient in Nagpur, Bhandara, Chanda and Wardha. In Balaghat retail prices have risen and food stocks are said to be getting low.

In Bhandara the arrangements for supplying grain to relief-works by contract are working well.

(10.) *Importation of Grain.*

Figures for the grain traffic of the month are shown in the subjoined table :—

District.	Imports in Maunds.		Exports in Maunds.	
	July.	August.	July.	August.
Nagpur	95,593	51,557	13,090	23,385
Bhandara	63,404	34,132	12,265	7,868
Balaghat... ..	26,454	10,479	<i>Nil.</i>	<i>Nil.</i>
Chanda	3,300	300	12,100	5,100
Wardha	15,700	22,523	3,424	3,383

The imports except in Wardha show a fall, which was to be expected in some places from rain continuing steadily during the greater part of the month. The Deputy Commissioner, Balaghat, writes :—

“Difficulty of carriage has been the cause of the fall, combined with an expectation of fall in prices which would cause a loss on large stocks.”

The Deputy Commissioner, Nagpur, reports that malguzars are now beginning to sell their grain and to distribute it in “podga” (food grain) in the interior of the district, as prospects are good. But he adds that no improvement in this way can be looked for at large centres, as grain there is bought up for export.

This remark is supported by the large amount of exports shown against Nagpur during August.

(11.) *General Condition and Prospects of affected Area.*

The rainfall of the month has been sufficient and well distributed, and prospects of the kharif crops are now good all over the Division.

In most districts, however, the people, more especially petty cultivators, are in a debilitated condition, and the demand for labour has been comparatively small. I therefore anticipate an increase under the heads of village relief and relief works for another month or so. A break now would suit the Nagpur and Wardha districts for their juari and cotton, but Bhandara wants more rain to fill tanks and strengthen the more recently transplanted rice.

Balaghat and Chanda only require the few more occasional showers which may reasonably be expected during the current month. In Chanda the total area sown is expected to be at least normal. The rice area is estimated at 93 per cent. of last year, while cotton is in excess, and although juari is not yet up to the average, it is still being sown.

(12.) *Changes in Rates.*

The only change reported is from Nagpur on the Great Northern road, where the rate was lowered from 9 to 8 seers. Prices have practically remained stationary.

(13.) *Crime.*

All districts, except Chanda, report an increase in crime as compared with the previous year, especially in offences against property. The Deputy Commissioner, Chanda, writes :—

“I know from the weekly returns that there has been a steady decrease in the number of offences against property and that the crime of the district is now normal.”

In Nagpur the figures for burglaries and thefts are reported to be much above those for July.

(14.) *Relief to Weavers.*

In Nagpur, Kamptee and Umrer, in the Nagpur district, a new form of relief has, with the sanction of the Chief Commissioner, been introduced in the shape of a scheme for the relief of weavers, as briefly referred to in last month's report under the head of measures taken to organize and complete measures of relief. This scheme provides for the employment of middlemen and for cash advances to them to the extent of half the value of the cloth to be supplied. The work is carried on on terms to which both the labourer and the middleman are accustomed. It is on the piece-work system, and a full tale of work is easily obtained and willingly performed. The first essentials of the scheme are :—

- (1) the selection of middlemen ;
- (2) the selection of weavers to whom relief is a necessity ;
- (3) ensuring a subsistence wage to the weaver ; and
- (4) regulating the price to be paid, so that the labourer may receive only a bare subsistence wage, the middleman a sufficient profit or commission to induce him to carry out his part willingly and equitably.

The object is (a) to give the labourer a fair normal wage, and (b) for Government to pay a price fixed so as to afford hope that there will be no great loss when the time comes for selling the cloth. Rao Bahadur Trimbak Rao, Extra Assistant Commissioner, has been placed in direct charge of the whole scheme.

I give below statistics of the persons relieved during the month under report :—

Number of Middlemen Enlisted.	Amount advanced to Middlemen.	Number of Persons to whom Relief was afforded on the last day of the Month.			
		Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.
405	Rs. 28,848	2,255	1,889	2,669	6,813

The Deputy Commissioner writes : "The wage earned, though apparently scanty and much less than if the whole family were on a relief camp, satisfies them much better, as they remain in their own houses, and their children add to the earnings by odd jobs."

(15.) *General Remarks for the Division.*

(a)—*Situation with regard to famine.*—The situation has generally improved, and there is every prospect of a satisfactory crop, as the rains continue favourable with intervals of sunshine up to date of my writing this report, viz., 10th September.

The situation with regard to each district has been already described in the remarks under the head "general condition and prospects of affected area."

(b)—*Measures taken to organize and complete measures of relief.*—Village relief, which had been going on for some time past in Balaghat and Bhandara, has now been fully organized in Chanda, and commenced to some extent in Nagpur and Wardha.

The kitchen system is being rapidly extended in Balaghat and Chanda, and continues to do much good in Bhandara. It has also been recently started in some parts of the Nagpur district. Weaver relief, as already described, has been developed in the Nagpur district.

Tahsildars and the Police have been active in relieving distress with the advances made to them for this purpose.

The cheap grain shops in Nagpur and Kamptee and those recently started in Chanda form a very popular means of relief.

(c)—*Prospects of the Division as regards scarcity.*—The rainfall of August was all that could be desired, though some tahsils have not received enough to fill the tanks. The distribution of Charitable Relief Fund money made during the month and still to be made will be very useful in affording subsistence to needy agriculturists and in providing rabi seed. Prices have not fallen yet, however, and until they do, no permanent improvement in the situation can be expected, but with the present prospect of a favourable kharif harvest, it seems impossible for prices to keep up much longer, and if all goes well during the next three weeks or so, distress ought practically to be at an end in the Nagpur, Wardha, and Chanda districts by the middle or end of next month, except perhaps for the artizan class in Nagpur.

Bhandara will, however, take longer to recover from the effects of the past scarcity, and with regard to Balaghat the Deputy Commissioner writes : "Thin sowings and a large fallow area will keep a large number of farm labourers out of employment, and I cannot yet see the end of our relief works and village relief."

I fear that his view of the situation is correct.

W. A. NEDHAM,

Offg. Commissioner.

NERBUDDA DIVISION.

(1.) *Private Charity.*

The local Committees of the Charitable Relief Fund, while reserving the bulk of their balances for the seed-grain required for the *rabi* sowings, continued during the month to relieve the present needs of the poor by the distribution of clothing and of subsistence money. Particulars of the expenditure are not available from all districts. Chhindwara reports an outlay of Rs.5,633, in which sum is included the cost of maintaining the cheap grain shop referred to in last month's report and the price of 1,600 blankets distributed at relief centres, poor-houses and relief works. A noteworthy feature of the month's record of private charity was the arrival of consignments of grain from America as a charitable gift to the famine-stricken. These consignments were distributed in the districts on the railway under the auspices of the American Mission. The quantity thus bestowed in Nimar alone amounted to 381 maunds. The Friends Foreign Mission at Hoshangabad is carrying on a small relief work, and is also distributing food. The Missions at Harda were engaged in giving out grain free to persons in need of it. In Narsinghpur and Khandwa two charitably-disposed *Seths* continued to afford relief to the needy and to supplement the poor-house dietary with special rations.

(2.) *Government Poor-houses.*

The following table compares the number of poor-houses, and their population, in each district, during the past three months :—

District.	Number of Poor-houses.			Number of Inmates.		
	June.	July.	August,	June.	July.	August.
Hoshangabad	3	3	3	1,414	1,392	1,348
Narsinghpur	3	3	3	2,322	1,874	1,664
Betul	1	1	1	291	192	349
Chhindwara	2	2	2	420	611	595
Nimar	2	1	1	178	317	283
Total	11	10	10	4,625	4,386	4,239

There has been a slow but steady decline in the divisional total of poor-house inmates, due mainly to the more complete organization of village relief and to the transfer of inmates to their villages or to relief works. The results achieved in this direction are most marked in the case of Narsinghpur, where, however, the poor-house population is still the highest in the division. Arrangements have now been made in every poor-house for the grinding of food-grain by the inmates themselves—a system which provides labour and at the same time reduces expenses. Kotwars are called in to identify inmates who refuse to give the names of their villages, with a view to the removal of the latter to their homes. Both in Hoshangabad and Narsinghpur the poor-houses contain a considerable number of foreign immigrants. On this subject the Deputy Commissioner of Hoshangabad writes as follows :—

“The condition of the persons admitted towards the end of the month at Hoshangabad poor-house was reported to be bad and became the subject of a special enquiry. I then found that 30 per cent. of the new-comers were residents of the Chichli pargana in Bhopal and that these were the people in specially bad condition. I drew the attention of the Political Agent, Bhopal, to the fact, and the Darbar has since the close of the month taken measures to remove all Bhopalis from the Hoshangabad poor-house and to check the distress.”

Most of the poor-houses in the Nerbudda valley have been inspected, and favourably reported on, by the Administrative Medical Officer, and those at Khandwa, Hoshangabad and Narsinghpur have been visited recently by the Chief Commissioner himself. I do not think that much fault can be found with the arrangements for the housing, feeding and clothing of the inmates. The

Committees of visitors include representatives of Missionary bodies and wealthy *Seths* who give not only time and care, but also more substantial tokens of interest in their charges. The Civil Surgeon is indefatigable in his attention to the health of the inmates, and there are separate hospitals for patients suffering from infectious complaints. As has been already stated, clothing is distributed by the Charitable Relief Committees, and I recently sent to the Hoshangabad poor-house a bale of clothing received from Liverpool through the Central Committee for the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund. Notwithstanding all this, the death-rate in the poor-houses continues high: 273 deaths occurred in the poor-houses of the Hoshangabad district during August. The Deputy Commissioner gives details as under:—

Name of Poor-house.	Average Number of Inmates.	Number of In-patients.	Number of Out-patients.	Deaths.
Hoshangabad	629	212	137	106
Harda	243	123	126	46
Sohagpur	606	223	259	121
Total	1,478	558	522	273

The principal diseases were diarrhoea, dysentery and pneumonia.

In the Khandwa poor-house, with an average population of 292, the mortality was 94. With reference to this high rate, the Deputy Commissioner records that it was "chiefly due to dysentery and diarrhoea amongst cases in a bad state on admission. About two-thirds of those who died came from outside the district."

In the poor-houses of the Narsinghpur district the deaths and the ratio per mille were as under:—

—	Number of Deaths.	Ratio per Mille.
Narsinghpur	111	118.33
Gadarwara	104	184.39
Chhindwara	32	148.80
Total	247	...

Here again dysentery and diarrhoea were the prevailing causes.

In the Betul poor-house there were 41 deaths, "most of which were due to dysentery." In the two poor-houses of the Chhindwara district there were 32 deaths. Of these, 8 deaths were due to debility and the remainder to fever, dysentery and diarrhoea.

The Chief Commissioner called attention during the month to the high death-rate in the Khandwa poor-house. In a memorandum on the subject the Civil Surgeon points out that "more than two-thirds of the inmates come from long distances, being residents of other districts of the Central Provinces, of the North-Western Provinces, Bhopal and (lately) Holkar's territory, so that before they reach here they are worn out by travel, want of food, and disease." This explanation applies (as has been seen) to the poor-houses of the Hoshangabad district and probably to those of the Narsinghpur district as well.

(3.) *Relief Centres (or Kitchens).*

The term "Relief Centre" includes, in this division, (a) Police posts at which money doles or food are issued to starving wanderers, and (b) selected villages in the Chhindwara Jagirs where relief is distributed in the form of rations, village relief upon the ordinary system not being feasible. Orders issued during the month for the substitution of cooked food for money doles at all Police posts and for the establishment of kitchens at certain other places as well. The number

of kitchens open at the end of August and the number of persons fed thereat is not given in all the reports. The Deputy Commissioner, Betul, writes: "Eleven kitchens are now open, including four connected with relief works." Four of these are in the Betul Tahsil and four in the Multai Tahsil. The number of persons receiving relief at these kitchens on the last day of the month is shown as 220 in Statement A, although in his remarks the Deputy Commissioner gives the total as 92 only. The Deputy Commissioner of Narsinghpur records that the number of persons gratuitously relieved (by money doles or uncooked food) at Police posts on the last day of the period under report was 1,354 as against 111 in the previous month. To these must be added 429 to whom cooked food was given under the most recent orders, making a total of 1,783 persons relieved at "Relief Centres." The number of persons in attendance at distributing centres for village relief in the Chhindwara Jagirs increased from 1,733 in July to 2,128 in August. The Deputy Commissioner writes "that at the end of the month I inspected the centres at Pagara, Tamiā, Delakhari and Mahawaljhir and found that admissions were being made daily, the new-comers being in a decidedly reduced condition. The arrangements for conservancy, sheltering and feeding were satisfactory. The chief want of the people is clothing, which is being supplied by the District Charitable Committee to the best of its resources. As the numbers in receipt of relief in the Pagara Jagir were increasing, a new centre was started at the close of the month at Etawa, making the total 16. The numbers in receipt of relief at these centres form 2·8 per cent. of the total Jagir population." I may note that I inspected the Delakhari Relief Centre last month and was satisfied with the accommodation and the arrangements for cooking, &c. The persons in receipt of relief were obviously in need of it.

Deputy Commissioners have been asked to give in future, under the head "Relief Centres and Kitchens" in their remarks on the monthly Famine Statements full details of the number of kitchens open and the number of persons fed at them—distinguishing between (a) kitchens on relief-works, (b) kitchens at Police posts and (c) kitchens at other places. For the first named class of kitchens I have retained in use the rules framed by me on the 3rd March last; while for the other kitchens I have adopted the rules printed on page 9 of the notes of the conference held by the Chief Commissioner at Jubbulpore on the 2nd ultimo.

(4.) *Village Relief.*

Totals for the last two months are compared below:—

District.	Number Relieved at their Houses.		Difference.
	July.	August.	
Hoshangabad	4,881	6,439	+1,558
Narsinghpur	7,364	10,953	+3,589
Betul	2,955	4,414	+1,459
Chhindwara	*638	1,386	+748
Nimar	695	1,119	+424
Total	16,533	24,311	+7,778

* Excluding 1,733 persons relieved at *distributing centres* in the Jagirs.

The percentage of the population on village relief is now highest in the Narsinghpur district, where it stands at nearly 3 per cent. Next comes the Betul district with 1·3 per cent. and the Hoshangabad district with 1·2 per cent. In the case of Betul the increase in the percentage has resulted from my visit to that district at the beginning of the month. As I have submitted a special report on the subject, I need only explain here that the number of persons on the Registers of Poor was found to be below the requirements of the situation. As the Deputy Commissioner puts it, in his remarks herewith forwarded,

"Revenue Inspectors had formerly been too strict in judging who was entitled to relief; but their work is now properly supervised."

It is to be regretted that the Deputy Commissioner did not inform himself earlier of the doings of the Revenue Inspectors and take steps to secure effective supervision. With the sanction of the Chief Commissioner the number of Circle Inspectors in the Betul district has been doubled, an additional Tahsildar has been posted to the Multai Tahsil and two special Relief Officers—Mr. Standen, I.C.S., and Mr. Kirkham, Assistant District Superintendent of Police—have been placed in charge of village relief operations in the tahsils of Multai and Betul respectively. Kitchens have been opened at places where the need for aid is most urgent. The case of the Multai Tahsil is a fresh instance of the rapidity and unexpectedness with which a tract of country supposed to be comparatively immune from famine may develop symptoms of distress, and illustrates the need for watchfulness on the part of district officers. Before the close of the month I visited the Chhindwara district and, warned by the experience of Multai, made enquiries as to the demand for extension of village relief in the rural areas of the Sausar Tahsil, which has hitherto been regarded as only slightly affected by the famine. The Deputy Commissioner was of opinion that the time had now come for taking action in this direction, as infirm persons who have hitherto been supported by their relatives cannot at present hope for much help from the latter. With the sanction of the Chief Commissioner four Additional Inspectors have been appointed and an Extra-Assistant Commissioner has been detailed to assist the Deputy Commissioner in checking the adequacy of the relief given. "A very considerable increase in the numbers on this form of relief," writes the Deputy Commissioner, "may be expected in the course of the next fortnight." The Deputy Commissioner of Hoshangabad has given statistics of the numbers on village relief in each tahsil of his district. It appears that the Hoshangabad Tahsil shows the largest percentage; while the percentage in the Harda Tahsil is only 0.9 per cent. The persons on the registers are said to be "principally those incapacitated for work by age or blindness and are mostly of low caste." The Deputy Commissioner has been asked to see that persons temporarily incapacitated for work by weakness due to deficiency of food are not excluded from relief.

In the Nimar district the tract where an extension of village relief is required, and is being carried out, is the Harsud Tahsil, where the Korkus are in same straits for food.

(5.) *General Character of Relief-Works.*

(a)—*Under the Public Works Department.*—The statistics of the two past months are contrasted below :—

District.	Workers.		Dependents.		Total.		Difference. (+) or (-).
	July.	August.	July.	August.	July.	August.	
Hoshangabad	34,398	30,511	6,605	5,531	41,003	36,042	-4,961
Narsinghpur	19,720	19,790	3,108	2,725	22,828	22,515	-313
Betul	9,290	7,878	671	1,358	9,961	9,236	-725
Chhindwara	14,644	13,106	1,405	1,507	16,049	14,613	-1,436
Nimar	688	841	105	228	793	1,069	+276
Total	78,740	72,126	11,894	11,349	90,634	83,475	-7,159

In the case of Betul, the reduction is only nominal, as the returns for the Jhallar-Sawal-Mendha section of the Ellichpur road had not been received when the totals for the week ending 28th August were made up: and this section employed 1,000 workers and about 400 dependents in the preceding week. Still there has been a falling off in the number of *workers* in every district except Narsinghpur and a Nimar—a result partially attributable (as the Deputy Commissioners of Hoshangabad and Chhindwara remark) to the demand for labour in connection with the early *kharif* harvest.

An additional work was opened at Pachmarhi during the month, to provide employment for the wanderers who have gathered there: and a kitchen and a hospital have been established in connection therewith. Metal breaking was started on the Multai-Nagpur road, on my visit to the Betul district, at the

beginning of the month. In the Narsinghpur district work was re-opened on the Narsinghpur-Kareli road. With these exceptions, the number of relief-works remain unaltered.

Piece-work was in force (side by side with task-work), on the relief-works in the Nerbudda Valley districts, with one or two exceptions. I had seen the works at Khandwa and Harda at the close of July: and in August, I inspected the workers on the Itarsi-Betul road, the Betul-Multai road and the Matkuli-Chhindwara road. My conclusion was that piece-work when managed departmentally is a useful check on the resort to relief-works of persons not absolutely starving and able to earn a subsistence elsewhere. If *contractors*, however, are employed, and are allowed to measure up work and pay the labourers, abuses are almost certain to arise and the system does more harm than good. Towards the close of the month, the revised system prescribed by the Chief Commissioner whereby contractors are excluded and piece-workers cannot earn more than the D. wage was being introduced everywhere except in the Chhindwara district and on certain roads in the Betul district where the condition of the workers was poor. I have asked Deputy Commissioners to be careful in introducing the new rules to see that the persons selected for piece-work are really robust enough to do a hard day's work for a subsistence wage, and to report to me if the condition of the workers on any other road calls for the exercise of the discretion (allowed to me by the rules) of excluding it from the operation of the piece-work system.

(b)—*Loan Works*.—Two thousand eight hundred persons are reported to have been employed on works carried out with the aid of famine loans in the Betul district during the month. Rupees 1,438 were advanced during the month on famine loans in the Narsinghpur district.

(6.) *Physical Condition of the People.*

On this subject, the following remarks taken from the report of the Deputy Commissioner of Chhindwara, seem to me to be of general application:—

“There has not been any marked change for the worse and in no locality have the people shown a tendency to leave their homes and wander in search of food. There is no doubt, however, that a large part of the labouring population and, to a less extent, cultivators in poor tracts are reduced by insufficient food. On relief-works the deterioration is noticeable, but is, I think, more apparent than real, as the people who were in good case—that is to say cultivators and robust labourers—have resumed their agricultural employments, and those who are left are (to a large extent) the residue who are not efficient enough to be able to earn a living elsewhere than on relief-works.”

I visited all the districts of the Division during August and the last week of July, and what I observed enables me to adopt the foregoing statement of the position as substantially correct. The persons admitted to poor-houses were, as has been remarked above, when dealing with the poor-house statistics, mostly in a debilitated condition, being chiefly wanderers from other districts and Provinces.

(7.) *Mortality.*

Including deaths from all causes the mortality in July was as shown in the subjoined comparative statement:—

District.	Number of Deaths.		Rate per Mille per annum.	
	June.	July.	June.	July.
Hoshangabad	3,031	2,130	73.80	51.9
Narsinghpur	2,378	2,298	77.76	75.12
Betul	2,036	2,408	75.60	89.43
Chhindwara	1,630	1,654	48.96	48.72
Nimar	1,992	1,603	83.52	67.32
Total	11,067	10,093	...	...

There was thus a decrease in the mortality in all districts except Betul and Chhindwara. In Chhindwara there was practically no change. In Betul the death-rate rose from 75.60 to 89.43. In my report for July, I gave the July mortality statistics (as nearly as they were then obtainable) in advance, and pointed out that the decrease in Hoshangabad and Nimar was due to the disappearance of cholera. I also adverted to the Betul figures and need not repeat here what I then said.

The Deputy Commissioner of Chhindwara, after pointing out that the number of deaths reported for July in his district has on four occasions in the last decade been considerably exceeded, and on four occasions been very nearly equalled in years when scarcity was not recognised or suspected, records the following observations which are, I think, equally applicable to Betul :—

“The month of July was a very trying one for people who had for some months been living on a bare subsistence. Rain fell without intermission day after day, and weeding and other field work had to be carried on under conditions which must have been trying even to persons of robust constitution. It is not surprising therefore that deaths from fever, lung affections and diarrhoea induced by chill should have been frequent. In one village alone in the Sausar Tahsil 15 deaths from bronchitis were reported; and similar cases have been quoted from Police roznamchas as having occurred among the field servants of malguzars and others who cannot be said to have been exposed to privation.”

The only district which reports *verified* deaths from starvation during July is Hoshangabad. The two persons who died are said to have been wanderers from Bhopal who dropped by the road-side before reaching any centre of relief.

(8.) Stocks.

The following remarks on the subject of food stocks are abstracted from the district summaries :—

Narsinghpur.—“It is believed that the food stock is still not insufficient.”

Nimar.—“Food stock sufficient.”

Chhindwara.—“Food stocks continue to be adequate.”

(9.) Prices.

The prices prevailing in the last week of the months of July and August are compared below :—

District.	SEERS PER RUPEE.					
	Wheat		Juari.		Rice.	
	July	August.	July.	August.	July.	August.
Hoshangabad	S. Ch. 8 12	S. Ch. 7 12	S. Ch. 8 10½	S. Ch. 8 6	S. Ch. 8 3½	S. Ch. 7 5½
Narsinghpur	8 0	8 0	8 0	9 0	7 0	7 8
Betul	7 8	7 4	8 0	8 0	...	...
Chhindwara	7 0	7 5	8 0	8 2	6 2	6 5
Nimar ... ..	...	...	8 0	8 8	...	...

It will be observed that prices rose slightly in Hoshangabad and were fairly steady elsewhere. The ripening of the cheaper *kharif* grains is not likely to affect the price of wheat, *juari*, and rice, but will afford relief by providing an ample supply of a cheaper food.

(10.) *Import and Export of Grain.*

District.	Imports.		Exports.	
	July.	August.	July.	August.
Hoshangabad	Maunds. 51,357	Maunds. 21,136	Maunds. 4,238	Maunds. 5,950
Narsinghpur	53,738	25,331	2,389	3,148
Betul	4,895	540	<i>Nil.</i>	<i>Nil.</i>
Nimar	55,382	40,961	1,170	802
Chhindwara	Details	not given.		

There was thus a considerable falling off in the imports into all districts.

(11.) *General Condition and Prospects of Affected Area.*

The Deputy Commissioner of Hoshangabad writes :—

“The present prospects are most hopeful. A very large area has been sown with *kharif* crops, all of which are in perfect condition. The early *kharif* crops are being cut and are yielding a bumper crop. I saw one field which for Re. 1 of grain sown was yielding a crop worth Rs. 60 at present prices, and this was only a little above the average. These crops will do much to re-instate the credit of the tenants and should render it easier to get the remainder of the land sown with *rabi* crops, if the monsoon continues favourable.

The Deputy Commissioner of Narsinghpur notes that :—

“At present the prospects of the *kharif* crops are very favourable as the fall of rain has been seasonable up to this time.”

The Deputy Commissioner of Chhindwara observes that :—

“Nothing has occurred to make any change necessary in the favourable forecast given last month of the district as a whole. The present break in the rains, on the contrary, is relieving the anxiety felt in some parts about the prospects of the *juari* sown in heavy lands, which was suffering from excessive moisture. In the villages forming the part of the Pagara Jagir below the Ghâts which borders on the Hoshangabad and Narsinghpur districts the *kharif* area sown is, however, very small, being estimated at 4 or 5 annas. The people of this part appear to have left their villages for employment in the neighbouring districts and many have up to now not returned to their homes. It will be necessary to set aside a special allotment for *rabi* sowing in this area, and orders are now issuing for the preparation of lists of the tenants who will require assistance.

The Deputy Commissioner of Betul records that :—

“If we do not receive too much rain during the next few days, but have moderate rain during the latter part of the month, agriculturists will have nothing to complain of.”

Finally the Deputy Commissioner, Nimar, writes that :—

“Crops are so far good. Inferior grains will be shortly reaped, and the prevailing distress will be somewhat ameliorated.”

(12.) *Changes in the rate of Wages.*

There is nothing under this head.

(13.) *Crime.*

The Deputy Commissioner, Narsinghpur, reports a decrease in the number of offences. The Deputy Commissioner of Betul records that “thefts are numerous.” In Nimar the figures representing offences are “much in excess of last year’s, which, however, were remarkably low.”

(14.) *Summary for the Division.*

The aggregate numbers on relief at the end of July and August are compared below :—

Nature of Relief.	31st July.	28th August.
	Numbers Relieved.	Numbers Relieved.
A.— <i>Works</i>	78,740	72,126
B.— <i>Gratuitous Relief</i> —		
1. In Poor-houses	4,386	4,239
2. Other gratuitous relief, including dependents	30,351	39,791
Total A.	34,737	44,030
Total A. and B.	113,477	116,156

The decline in numbers on relief-works has been more than counterbalanced by the increase in the numbers on village relief.

L. K. LAURIE,
Commissioner.

10th September, 1897.

CHHATTISGARH DIVISION.

(1.) *Private Charity.*

The report of the Bilaspur district shows that the District Committee of the Indian Charitable Relief Fund have up to the close of the month assisted in all 22,321 cultivators, making with their families a total of 90,000 persons. The Raipur report deals only with the operations of the month, during which an expenditure of Rs. 15,483 was incurred in providing "Khawai" or subsistence until the harvest for 5,612 families of poor cultivators, besides Rs. 2,500 expended in the purchase of clothes for the destitute. Complete accounts of the extent of relief afforded by the Indian Charitable Relief Fund Committees at Raipur and Bilaspur are not at present available. They are being obtained by the Deputy Commissioners and will be reported at an early date. The poor-house at Birsampur in the Raipur district continued open, and nothing new is reported regarding it. There was also some distribution of alms by Missionaries in the district. The Deputy Commissioner, Bilaspur, reports as follows :—

"The Reverend Mr. Adams at Bilaspur supports about 600 persons and the Reverend Mr. Gordon distributes rice on alternate days to 225 persons at Mungeli and to 547 at Setganga. Besides this he feeds at his kitchen in Mungeli 175 orphans and destitute children. The Reverend Mr. Nottrott provides work for 197 people."

In regard to the indiscriminate distribution of alms by Missionaries, I may reproduce the criticism of the Deputy Commissioner, Raipur, which, from the information that has reached me, would appear to be in some degree applicable to the Bilaspur district also :—

"This has not had altogether satisfactory results, as it caused the congregation of a number of weakly persons, some of whom could not be relieved in time. On the other hand, the fact that distressed wanderers collect there makes it easier for the police to seize them in batches for purposes of relief, instead of having to hunt for them scattered about the neighbourhood. The only fault I have to find with this almsgiving is that, according to the reports that I have received, there is no serious attempt to exact any labour in return for it even where the recipient is well able to do work; but I have not had the advantage of hearing what the reverend gentleman concerned has to say on this point."

The private poor-houses in the Sambalpur District have all been closed. The inmates were mostly from other districts, to which they have been sent away, with the exception of 124 weakly persons; who have been temporarily detained at the Sambalpur Main Dispensary until they are fit to travel.

(2.) *Government Poor-Houses.*

The following table compares the number of poor-houses and their population in each district during the past three months :—

	Number of Poorhouses.			Number of Inmates.		
	June.	July.	August.	June.	July.	August.
Raipur	4	4	6	4,222	4,170	4,892
Bilaspur	4	4	4	6,385	8,129	6,274
Total	8	8	10	10,607	12,299	11,166

In the Raipur district the semi-private institution previously existing at Gondia was during the month regularly organised as a Government poor-house, as directed by the Chief Commissioner, and it is assumed that similar action must have been taken at Lohara, though no definite report to that effect has been received. I am instructing the Deputy Commissioner to impress once more on his assistants, and particularly on the officer in charge of the Lohara sub-division, the absolute necessity of keeping him furnished with punctual as well as full information on all points ; and a copy of my instructions is being sent to Bilaspur. A poor-house has not been opened at Gunderdehi as originally proposed, as the Public Works Department kitchen there is found to answer all requirements.

The population of the poor-houses in the Raipur district has increased from 4,170 to 4,892, a result partly due to the increase in the number of institutions. In the Bilaspur district the population of poor-houses fell from 8,129 to 6,274. The numbers drafted to relief works and to village relief were in the Raipur district 2,049 and 323, and in the Bilaspur district 2,337 and 437 respectively. The figures for the latter district do not include the Mungeli Poor-house, for which returns have not been sent in. From the large fall, however, in the population of the institution, viz., from 2,065 to 1,084, it is gathered that a very considerable number of the inmates have been sent to the relief-works or to their homes for village relief. In this and in the other poor-houses of the district the statistics returned show that attention has been paid to the subject of reducing the numbers by removing those persons who can more suitably be relieved in other forms. The population is still very large in the Bilaspur poor-house, being 3,700, or only 159 less than in July, though no less than 2,458 persons were removed during the month. The population includes 980 persons in hospital and 520 orphans who are kept in a separate orphanage. The fresh admissions to the poor-houses are said to have numbered no less than 3,639 persons ; but this figure seems scarcely consistent with the other statistics given. In the Raipur district the instructions for drafting persons from the poor-houses appear to have been imperfectly understood. The Deputy Commissioner has taken the matter in hand, and better results may be looked for in the current month.

Deaths in poor-houses continue to be lamentably high. In the Raipur district the actual number of deaths appears to have been 348 against 270 in July, though the police returns show figures largely in excess of these, and it seems doubtful whether, even as now returned, the figures have all been properly verified. The Deputy Commissioner has been asked to make arrangements for securing greater accuracy in future. The distribution is as under :—

				July.	August.
Raipur Poor-house	...	...	...	65	70
Baloda do.	...	...	...	77	93
Gondia do.	...	...	...	6	<i>Nil.</i>
Drug do.	...	...	...	28	41
Simga do.	...	...	...	94	144
Total	...	...	...	270	348

For Simga the correct figure is shown by a report just received to be 144, and not 193, as taken by the Deputy Commissioner from the police return, which return is shown to have included under the head of deaths in the Simga poor-house the entire mortality of Simga village and its suburbs. Even with this correction, the deaths in this poor-house have been very numerous; but it is satisfactory to note that the matter engaged the special personal attention of the Deputy Commissioner during the month, and that everything possible has been done by him to improve the health of the inmates.

In the poor-houses of the Bilaspur district the total number of deaths returned was 885 against 814 in July and 586 in June. Of these, no less than 319 occurred in the Mungeli and 248 in the Pandaria Poor-house, where it is reported that one-third of the deaths were of persons who had been less than three days in the institution. The arrangements of both these poor-houses have been defective in the past; but better paid and more efficient Superintendents have lately been appointed to them; and their sanitation is now carefully and constantly supervised by the special Medical Officer (Surgeon-Lieutenant Wall) deputed to famine duty in the district. Much of the mortality in all the poor-houses is no doubt due to the hopeless condition in which persons are received, and is one of many indications of the severity of distress in the district. It is hoped that the measures of relief now adopted will sensibly diminish the number of such cases.

(3.) *Relief Centres.*

It appears that there are still 26 relief centres in the Raipur district, at which 1,554 persons were relieved, as compared with 1,504 persons at 27 centres in the month of July. But little progress would appear from these figures to have been made with the work of converting relief centres at Police stations into kitchens, although 19 new kitchens are reported to have been opened by the Police. I have some reason, however, for believing that more progress has been made than the figures indicate, and that at many of these centres relief is now given in the form of cooked food; in other words, that their conversion into kitchens has been duly effected. The Deputy Commissioner is being asked to report definitely on the point.

In the Bilaspur district relief centres are said to have been maintained in connection with the road patrol system. These are presumably what I referred to in my report on the system as "relief stages." The Deputy Commissioner reports that 27 such centres were maintained at Pendri and 17 at Thakatpur, a statement which is not very intelligible and which I have asked him to explain. The relief centres at Seorinarain and Chandkuri have been converted into kitchens. The road patrol system continues to work well, 525 starving wanderers being shown as rescued during the month by means of this agency.

(4.) *Relief Kitchens.*

In the Raipur district, 39 kitchens have been established, of which 18 are under the Public Works Department and 19 are managed by the Police. The numbers relieved are not given, as figures have not yet been reported to the Deputy Commissioner. In the Bilaspur district altogether 17 kitchens were opened, at which 1,805 persons were fed, 1,789 of them being children.

The Deputy Commissioner reports:—

"This form of relief is being extended as rapidly as possible, and a large increase in the numbers may be looked for. Some other kitchens, especially in the Mungeli Tahsil, are known to have been opened, from which reports have not yet been received."

(5.) *Village Relief.*

The number of persons on the village registers of poor in the Raipur and Bilaspur districts during the past two months is compared below:—

	July.	August.
Raipur	10,989	17,010
Bilaspur	59,164	71,922

There has been a large increase in both districts, and the figures will probably be still higher in the current month. The Deputy Commissioner of Raipur writes at length on this subject, explaining that the additions to the village registers were necessary and were made after careful enquiry. In these views I fully concur. The strict application of the terms of Section 34 of the Famine Code, which was formerly insisted upon in this district, has proved, as the result of practical experience, an inadequate remedy for distress in its present stage; and, as in the Jubbulpore Division, it is now found necessary to accept an emaciated appearance as a sufficient qualification for admission to this form of relief. In the Bilaspur district the severity of the distress has brought up the number. This is no more than was expected. Arrangements in this district appear to be now working efficiently.

(6.) *General Character of Works.*

(a) *Under the Public Works Department.*—The statistics of the past two months are contrasted below :—

Districts.	Workers.		Dependents.		Total.		Difference	
	July.	August.	July.	August.	July.	August.	+	-
Raipur	39,415	32,690	10,175	6,501	49,590	39,191	...	-10,399
Bilaspur	45,863	40,248	5,926	4,130	51,789	44,378	...	-7,411
Sambalpur	2,218	285	194	170	2,412	455	...	-1,957
Total	87,496	73,223	16,295	10,801	103,791	84,024	...	-19,767

Taking workers and dependents together, there has been a decrease of 19 per cent. The decline in the Raipur district is attributed mainly to a number of persons having returned to work in their fields, and the same reason is assigned for the decline in the Sambalpur district. On the other hand, the decrease in the Bilaspur district is due chiefly to the unauthorized introduction by subordinates of the Public Works Department on a number of roads of the new system of piece-work described in Chief Commissioner's memo. of the 3rd August. Para. 5 (a) of that memo. leaves to the Commissioner full discretion to prohibit the introduction of the new system in any locality where he may consider it unsafe, while para. 6 provides for the continuance of the old piece-work system formerly devised for this Division on any works where it already existed. As there was some doubt regarding the particular works on which the old piece-work system had not been already introduced, and to which therefore the new orders would apply, I wrote to the Executive Engineer for a list of such works, to enable me to consider, for each of them, whether there was occasion for the exercise of my veto under para. 5 (a), requesting that in the meanwhile no action might be taken. While correspondence on the point was proceeding between the Executive Engineer and myself, it seems that his sub-divisional officers took upon themselves, apparently of their own initiative, and without reference to him, to set about introducing the new system on all works indiscriminately. I found it necessary, as separately reported, to issue peremptory orders for its discontinuance throughout that district, and to declare the whole district an unsafe locality for its operation. In the Raipur district there has been less scope for the introduction of the new system, owing to most of the works having been already organized on a piece-work basis, under what are generally referred as Mr. Penny's rules. On one of the works not so organized it is believed,—(though the Executive Engineer appears to have no definite information on the subject)—that the new system has been introduced without waiting for orders; and here I have allowed it to continue. It is only in respect of one work in the Raipur district, the Dongargarh-Pandaria road, that I have, for special reasons elsewhere recorded, found it necessary to declare the introduction of this system unsafe.

There was no change in the number of charges in Raipur and Sambalpur. In Bilaspur two additional charges were opened, completing the programme laid down for this district at the beginning of July.

(b)—*Under District Officers.*—The number of works under civil agency in the Raipur district fell from 1,288 workers and dependents to 564 workers only. There appear to have been no dependents on these works during the month. In the Bilaspur district these works gave employment to 579 persons including 19 dependents against 1,586 persons relieved in July. The number of these works open during the month is not stated.

(c)—*Loan Works.*—Private works started with the help of famine loans gave relief to 702 persons in the Raipur district during the month. No private works were open in the Bilaspur district during the month.

(7.) *Physical Condition of the People.*

On this subject the remarks of the Deputy Commissioner of Raipur, which are corroborated by all the latest information now being received, are worthy of reproduction :—

“The general condition of the people on works is not so favourable as it was, and this deterioration is common throughout the district and has been observed by me and by my sub-divisional relief officers. The general physical condition cannot be termed satisfactory and, notwithstanding the relief given in various ways during the hot weather months, the people do not seem to be strong enough to withstand the effects of the cold and damp in the rains. Children in particular show signs of distress.

Mr. Scott writes :—

“This gradual deterioration is due, I should say, to the fact that each bread-winner of a family can barely earn sufficient for himself when prices rule so high, and when, as is frequently the case, there are five or six helpless old women and children to feed, his earnings do not go far. The women and children gradually grow lean and gaunt, and Government relief is required to prevent deaths from privation.”

The physical deterioration since the beginning of the rains is coincident with the reduction of numbers on Public Works Department road works which has taken place in the same period, and it looks as though persons driven by hereditary custom and strong personal inclination to follow agricultural pursuits had had to do so at the expense of physical health and sometimes at the sacrifice of life itself. The increase in the general mortality, though due no doubt in a large measure to the inclemency of the season, points to a physical condition weakened by previous hardships and unequal to the task of withstanding the inroads of disease.

The Deputy Commissioner, Bilaspur, writes as follows :—

“It cannot, I fear, be said that much improvement is as yet discernible. Upon relief works the condition is said to be generally good except upon those newly opened. A disposition among those on village relief to eat to excess upon receipt of the dole is noticed by most officers. Not a few deaths are said to have been caused in this way. Generally the disposition to be wasteful of the money appears to be most marked among those who are in the worst condition. Entertaining, it is said, little or no hope of recovery, they see small necessity for being provident.”

The Deputy Commissioner, Sambalpur, reports that the general health of the district is good. Piece-workers on the Dabhra-Khursia road are in good condition. The task workers are reported to be “slightly emaciated, but that there is no specific disease among them, they having sufficient food and a good water supply.”

(8.) *Deaths from Starvation.*

No deaths from this cause are reported to have occurred in the Raipur district during the past month. The 12 deaths from starvation reported for July are found on further investigation to have been due to other causes. Deaths from privation in this district numbered 54 against 162 in July. In the Bilaspur district 28 deaths from starvation are reported to have occurred in August, but these deaths have not been all verified as yet. In the district statement, 13 deaths from starvation are returned as having been verified up to the date of report. The number of deaths due to privation during the past month is not reported by the Deputy Commissioner. No deaths from starvation occurred in the Sambalpur district.

The death rate per mille per annum in the three districts during June and July are compared below :—

	June.	July.
Raipur	109·68	84·
Bilaspur	137·45	119·04
Sambalpur	49·	27·

The death rate has declined everywhere, but it still continues very high in the Bilaspur district. It is to be feared that the mortality in August, and probably also in September, will prove to have been high everywhere.

(9.) *Food Stock.*

No deficiency of food stocks is reported to exist in any district. Prices, however, continue to be high. The prices of rice at the head-quarters of each district during the past two months is compared below :—

	July.	August.
Raipur	7½ Seers per Rupee.	7½ Seers per Rupee.
Bilaspur	7¾ " "	7¾ " "
Sambalpur	8¾ " "	9½ " "

The food stock of the poorer classes in the Raipur district, the Deputy Commissioner writes :—

“Is now being augmented by ‘kutki,’ ‘sawa’ (a sort of grass seed), a small grain called ‘mandia’ and by the ‘makka’ or Indian corn, 500 rupees worth of which was given out in small quantities by the Charitable Relief Committee.”

(10.) *Import and Export of Grain.*

District.	Exports.			Imports.		
	June.	July.	August.	June.	July.	August.
Raipur	35,134	26,722	34,290	43,573	15,657	16,726
Bilaspur	5,117	676	398	51,708	34,463	45,729

Imports have increased in both districts. The exports from Bilaspur are very trifling, while the export traffic from Raipur is again on the increase.

(11.) *General Condition and Prospects of Affected Area.*

The prospects of the season are so far very hopeful. The rainfall has been most seasonably distributed, and up to the time of writing there are no indications of a sudden cessation. Statistics recently collected in the Raipur district confirm the estimate previously arrived at, that not less than 75 per cent. of the normal area has been sown. The outturn, however, can hardly fail to be more or less injuriously affected by the neglect, which appears to have been considerable, of the ordinary agricultural operations of weeding and the like, many of the cultivators being too enfeebled to do much hard work for themselves, and being without the means of employing the usual hired labour. Commenting on statistics of persons

found absent from their homes on the 1st of July, the Deputy Commissioner, Raipur, writes as follows :—

“The figures indicate how very severely and how widely the pressure of hunger has affected the district. It is idle to suppose that by the end of next month, even with the very best promise of harvest, relief measures can be discontinued. During the cold weather, when the harvest is available for food, if prices go down considerably, we shall be able greatly to modify existing arrangements and to curtail expenditure on relief. But, as far as can be judged, it will not be possible entirely to discontinue them for another season, and I think we must be prepared to face this. A premature cessation of relief would have exactly the same evil effects as dilatory inception of it. Current prices and percentage of mortality must always have an important bearing on the decision in such a matter, but even if prices and the death-rate go down, we are bound to consider whether the fall is likely to be permanent, or the conditions of the past year to repeat themselves, though in a milder form.”

(12.) *Crime.*

The number of cases (complaints made to the Police) of theft, cattle-killing and house-breaking in the Bilaspur district during the past two months is compared below :—

July, 1897	...	...	...	650
August, 1897	...	...	...	607
August, 1896	...	...	...	263

There has been a small decrease in crime as compared with that reported for July. No statistics of crime are furnished in the Raipur report, but the Deputy Commissioner remarks that the number of cases continues to be high.

(13.) *Changes in the Rate of Wages.*

There has been no change during the month in the rate of wages.

(14.) *Employment afforded by Railway Work.*

The Bengal-Nagpur Railway Company's work on the Dhamtari Feeder Line in the Raipur district was stopped at the beginning of the month, owing to want of funds. It has since been arranged that earthwork on this line should be undertaken by Government as a famine work, to be taken over hereafter by the Company at a valuation. Work was in the first instance started under civil agency, giving employment at the close of the month to 960 workers. It has since been transferred to the Public Works Department.

(15.) *Summary for the Division.*

The aggregate numbers on the relief at the end of July and August are compared below :—

Name of Relief.	July.	August.
	Number Relieved.	Number Relieved.
<i>A.—Works.</i>		
1. Public Works Department	87,496	73,223
2. Under civil officers, including works done by Famine loans and private works	9,506	4,275
Total	97,002	77,498
<i>B.—Gratuitous relief.</i>		
1. In poor-houses	12,299	11,166
2. Other gratuitous relief including that of dependents in poor-houses	88,425	104,043
Total	100,724	115,209
Grand Total A. and B.	197,726	192,707

(b)—*Action taken to organize and complete measures of relief.*—Special attention has been devoted during the month to the proper organization of the arrangements for village relief in the Bilaspur district, which now appears to be working very satisfactorily. Attention has everywhere been directed to the important question of reducing poor-house populations, while in both Raipur and Bilaspur good progress has been made with the establishment of kitchens. In Bilaspur two more relief-works have been opened, completing the sanctioned programme. In many parts of Raipur the subsidizing of field labour has been found a most useful form of relief.

(c)—*Prospects of Division.*—The character and conditions of the season have been fully described above. If all continues to go well, another month should see the commencement of an excellent harvest which cannot fail to mitigate very largely the existing distress. But it is too much to expect that, with the advent of the harvest, distress will at once subside altogether, or that measures of relief can with safety be wholly withdrawn for a considerable time to come.

The 14th September 1897.

A. D. YOUNGHUSBAND,
Commissioner.

No. F-1771-A., dated Pachmarhi, the 20th September 1897.

From M. W. Fox Strangways, Esq., I.C.S., Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces, to The Secretary to the Government of India, Revenue and Agricultural Department.

In continuation of my letter No. 1591-F., date the 25th August 1897, I am directed to submit a statement, compiled from figures received from the Sanitary Commissioner, showing the death-rates per mille per mensem in each district of the Central Provinces during the month of August.

The total number of reported deaths has risen from 65,971 in July to 88,275 in August, and the death-rate from 6.46 per mille in the former to 8.35 per mille in the latter month, and this in spite of a large reduction in the number of deaths from cholera and small-pox. Cholera was nowhere present in a virulently epidemic form, yet every district shows an increase of mortality.

2. This general increase, characterising alike those districts where distress is most acute and those where it is (comparatively) less severe, points to a common cause which is not wholly the pressure of scarcity, but is climatic in its origin. The copious rainfall of the month, with chills due to the fall of temperature caused thereby, has undoubtedly produced a large excess of deaths from fevers, dysentery and diarrhœa. The use of the vegetables common in the rainy season—various forms of gourds and cucumbers—has probably added to the virulence of bowel-complaints. But, quite apart from the causes affecting the general population, there can be no doubt that the deplorable mortality of the month (in all years one of the most unhealthy of the twelve) is mainly to be ascribed to the effect of unfavourable conditions on constitutions weakened by continued privation. Although all through the month every effort was made to extend village and kitchen relief to those in need, it was not possible to counteract the effects of a continued scanty allowance of food in the case of the many thousands of persons who had not taken advantage of the relief offered them by Government on works, but had preferred to remain at home, looking after their crops or accepting private employment, at a low and insufficient wage. These are persons whom no form of Government relief, except such as would completely take the place of private employment, could reach. The Chief Commissioner fears that, until the autumn crops are fully harvested and a plentiful supply of food is thus obtained, there cannot be any great reduction in the mortality. September, like August, is a specially unhealthy month in these provinces. But by October it may be hoped that conditions will improve.

3. The districts which show the highest rates are again those which were so distinguished in July, namely, Mandla (16·66), Bilaspur (12·51), Seoni (12·29), Betul (11·76), Balaghat (11·75), Saugor (11·62). In Mandla indeed the rate is only a fraction higher than it was in July, and it may be hoped that the worst is now past. A change of Deputy Commissioners took place at the end of August, and the staff has been further strengthened by the transfer of a military officer from Jubbulpore. Strenuous efforts are being made to extend village relief and multiply children's kitchens. The difficulties of the task before the local officers in the hills and forests of Mandla have been described in previous letters. There is some reason to hope that the more vigorous measures that have recently been organised are beginning to bear fruit, since a weekly report received to-day shows a very substantial fall in the mortality figures.

4. In Bilaspur the numbers on village relief now amount to $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the total population of the district, and the total number on all forms of relief to nearly 12 per cent. At the end of the month some 4,000 children were being fed in kitchens. Recent reports show that wandering has been nearly stopped. Village relief has been steadily and rapidly growing, and it is difficult to believe that it is not now sufficient, yet deaths occur even among persons in receipt of this form of relief. The same is reported to be the case in the Balaghat district also. The reason is not that the doles are insufficient, for in these two districts specially high rates have been sanctioned, but that it is impossible to guard against the improvidence of the recipients. It appears to be not uncommon to find that a man has spent the whole of his monthly allowance a week or ten days before the next payment is due.

Seoni and Betul show the greatest increases in the rates over those of last month, and this circumstance is additional evidence of the fact that the variations in rates do not, after all, depend wholly on the completeness or incompleteness of Government measures of relief. For while in Betul, as explained in the report for July, the sudden development of distress in the south and east of the district was not recognised and dealt with as promptly as it should have been, in Seoni the extension of village relief, and in particular the organisation of children's kitchens, of which there are now 67 scattered over all parts of the district, was taken up in July, and carried out very rapidly. Kitchen relief was in operation throughout the month of August. In Seoni it is said that many deaths are caused by the effects of eating new and unripe grain. This was noticed at the last rabi harvest, and is no doubt occurring now both in Seoni and elsewhere.

In Balaghat also village and kitchen relief were extended during the month. Much of the Balaghat district is very similar in character to Mandla, and the same difficulties have to be overcome. In Saugor village relief has grown steadily, but the establishment of kitchens was not, during the early part of the month, pushed on quite so rapidly as was necessary. The Commissioner is now in Saugor, and it may be expected that the returns for the current month will show considerably larger numbers on this form of relief.

5. The number of deaths verified as due to starvation in July are considerably less than those ascribed to this cause in June. But for the Betul figures, indeed, the return would be by far the most satisfactory that has yet been submitted. Some of the verifications in Betul do not seem to be altogether reliable, and further enquiry will be made. There is unfortunately, however, no doubt that, whether or not these deaths are correctly classified under the technical heading "starvation" they were due, directly or indirectly, to the effects of privation.

*Statement showing the Death-rates per mille per mensem in each District of the
Central Provinces during the month of August 1897.*

Name of District.	Cholera.	Small-pox.	Death-rate excluding Cholera and Small-pox.	Death-rate from all Causes.	Average Death-rate of past ten years.	Excess over Normal.	Excess over last Month.	Deaths verified as due to Starvation in July.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nagpur	304	...	5.28	5.68	2.94	2.74	1.75	4
Wardha	76	4	6.04	6.24	3.39	2.85	2.24	...
Bhandara	136	5	6.23	6.42	3.17	3.25	.94	...
Chanda	150	6	3.89	4.17	3.09	1.08	.87	2
Balaghat	83	6	11.52	11.75	3.21	8.54	2.94	...
Jubbulpore	22	3	5.54	5.60	3.37	2.23	1.22	...
Saugor	11	5	11.59	11.62	4.77	6.85	3.36	...
Damoh	140	4	6.82	7.26	4.52	2.74	2.69	2
Seoni	47	2	12.15	12.29	3.19	9.10	4.01	...
Mandla	184	...	16.12	16.66	3.76	12.90	.22	5
Hoshangabad	66	2	6.81	6.95	3.04	3.91	2.62	2
Narsinghpur	17	...	7.19	7.24	4.43	2.81	.98	...
Nimar	160	...	6.76	7.32	3.11	4.21	1.72	...
Betul	80	3	11.50	11.76	3.16	8.60	4.31	60
Chhindwara	76	1	4.60	4.80	3.18	1.62	.34	...
Raipur	392	46	9.58	9.86	3.17	6.69	2.70	...
Bilaspur	170	20	12.41	12.51	2.94	9.57	2.59	13
Sambalpur	107	14	3.62	3.78	3.59	.19	.52	...
Total	2,221	121	8.2	8.35	3.39	4.96	1.89	88

From M. W. Fox-Strangways, Esq., I.C.S., Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces, to the Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Revenue and Agriculture Department (Famine).

No. F. 1948, dated Pachmarhi, the 15th October 1897.

SIR,

I am directed to submit, for the information of the Government of India, consolidated monthly Statements A and B for September, as prescribed by Section 16 (IV.—VII.) of the Central Provinces Famine Code. The usual memoranda by Commissioners of Divisions and famine maps are also forwarded.

2. The following table will show the numbers on each form of relief at the end of September as compared with those at the end of August :—

Divisions.		Wo. kers.	Depen- dents.	Poor- houses.	Relief Centres and Kitchens.	Village Relief.	Total.		
							Relief Workers.	Gratuit- ous.	Total.
Nagpur	28th Aug.	52,672	6,435	4,128	2,493	28,254	52,672	41,310	93,982
	25th Sept.	60,122	4,970	3,543	7,674	32,188	60,122	48,375	108,497
Jubbulpore.	28th Aug.	58,943	11,161	9,351	17,119	82,091	58,943	119,722	178,665
	25th Sept.	51,924	9,585	5,240	21,904	93,269	51,924	129,998	181,922
Nerbudda.	28th Aug.	72,126	11,349	4,239	4,131	24,311	72,126	44,030	116,156
	25th Sept.	48,895	10,891	3,334	5,299	44,584	48,895	64,108	113,003
Chhattisgarh.	28th Aug.	76,816	10,820	11,166	4,024	89,199	76,816	115,209	192,025
	25th Sept.	80,066	13,218	9,182	8,494	119,891	80,066	150,785	230,851
Total	28th Aug.	260,557	39,765	28,884	27,767	223,855	260,557	320,271	580,828
	25th Sept.	241,007	38,664	21,299	43,371	289,932	241,007	393,266	634,273

There has been in September, as in August, a reduction of work-relief, and an expansion of gratuitous relief ; but while the former has been confined to the two northern divisions and has been very much less marked than in August, the latter has been general and rapid, and thus the nett result has been an increase of some 54,000 in the total numbers on all forms of relief. The increase in the number of relief workers in the Nagpur division is fortuitous, and is due to the fact that the figure for August represented the state of affairs on the day of the *Pola* festival, which happened to coincide with the last day of the month, and for which large numbers of labourers temporarily left the works. In Chhattisgarh the increase was due partly to the total suspension, in the Bilaspur district, of the system of payment by results, which has worked well elsewhere, but which was evidently unsuited to the conditions of that district, and partly to the completion of weeding operations and the consequent lessening of the demand for agricultural labour. In the report for August, written on the 17th September, it was stated that there was reason to think that the demand for agricultural labour had been fully supplied. The district reports for September show that this was the case. The ripening of the early crops afforded relief to cultivators, but their harvesting does not employ any great body of labour, and, during the interval between weeding and the reaping of the main kharif crop, the bulk of the labouring population had no resource but the relief works.

3. The time has now come when, in consequence of the setting in on a large scale of harvest operations and rabi sowings, we may look for a general opening out of field labour. The remark made in the last monthly report regarding the inability of the great majority of cultivators to employ labour at the usual wages, will not apply generally to harvest labour, as that—at any rate when the harvest is abundant, as it promises on this occasion to be almost everywhere—is ordinarily paid by a share of the grain reaped, and there is thus every hope that within

a short time the labouring classes will have food placed within their reach. The time has therefore now arrived in most districts of the Province when the closing of relief works can be taken systematically in hand. In the Northern and Plateau districts the harvesting of the early millets and the early kinds of rice has enabled this operation to be commenced already. Where, as in parts of Saugor and Damoh, and in the Nagpur country, *juari* is the main autumn food crop, there is still some time before the harvest of food grains will begin. In the southern rice tract of the Wainganga valley also, though the coarse rice is beginning to be cut already, the main rice harvest will be later, and therefore in Balaghat and parts of Bhandara the period of closing works must be somewhat deferred. In Chhattisgarh there are considerable differences between different parts of the large area affected. Orders have already issued for the closing of the one work in the Sambalpur district, where distress has never been severe, and where the harvesting of the early rice, here an important crop, has already caused a substantial fall in prices. In the northern zamindaris of Bilaspur also distress is disappearing, and the one work in that locality has been ordered to be closed. But in the great rice plains of Southern Bilaspur and Northern Raipur it is the opinion of the local officers that the closing of the works cannot, with due regard to the safety of the distressed population, be taken in hand till the beginning of November. Orders have already been issued for the winding up of relief operations in three of the four divisions of the Province. They will immediately issue in regard to Raipur and Bilaspur, and copies will, as desired in your Circular letter No. 27—203-2 F., dated the 18th August 1897, be forwarded for the information of the Government of India.

4. The expansion of gratuitous relief has been entirely in the direction of village relief and children's kitchens. A steady reduction of poor-house population has been going on throughout the month, and since its close good progress has been made in returning to their homes all inmates who are fit to travel, and it is hoped that by the end of the current month such poor-houses as remain open will contain few but hospital patients and orphans. But the terribly high death-rates and the reduced condition of the mass of the village labouring population precluded any idea of curtailing village relief, and this, as well as the establishment of children's kitchens, was pushed on vigorously in every district. The percentage of the population classed as "affected" which is on village and kitchen relief now amounts to 5, and it may be hoped that the numbers have reached their limit. There still some parts of the Province—Mandla, Chanda, and the southern part of Chhindwara—where a further extension may be looked for, and the process of closing works and clearing poor-houses will entail the relegation of a considerable number of persons to this form of relief. But in several districts a contraction has already begun. This will proceed throughout the remainder of the current month, and will become general in November. In all but a few specially distressed tracts it should be possible to make the final payments in the beginning of December.

5. It must always be remembered that, apart from other points of difference, the autumn harvest in the Central Provinces is, in the northern and central districts, fully six weeks behind that of the Ganges valley, while in the rice areas and in the *juari* tracts of the south it is $2\frac{1}{2}$ months later. The addition to food-stocks afforded by the minor crops, such as maize, are far less important here than there. It may now be considered as certain that the harvest failures which have brought about the present famine have been in the Central Provinces much more serious and extensive than they were in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, and the climatic conditions of this Province during the rainy season have had an effect upon the health of the people which has been much more fatal and general than that which the ordinary monsoon brings with it in the open parts of the country. With a population generally impoverished and debilitated, living under conditions most adverse to health, great caution is necessary, even with the abundant harvest now in view, in bringing famine-relief operations to a close.

6. The month of September is in these Provinces always recognized, with August and October, as the most unhealthy season of the year, and a large increase of mortality is usually to be expected in this month. The figures for September are not yet available, but from such indications as may be gathered

from the reports and from the weekly returns it may be hoped that, although in some districts, and those not the most severely distressed, the death-rates have again risen, there will prove to have been, on the whole, a sensible diminution of the terribly high rate reached in August. The rates given in the memorandum for the Jubbulpore division (paragraph 12) show a very marked decrease in Maudla and Seoni, where the mortality in August was exceptionally high, and a slight increase in only one district, Jubbulpore, where the August rate was, considering the conditions of the year, remarkably low. If these anticipations are confirmed by the special mortality return now under preparation, it may safely be said that the worst is now over, and that a rapid return to normal rates of mortality may be hoped for. There is no doubt, from the observations made by officers who enquired personally and locally into the high mortality of August and September, that the bulk of it was due to fever, which attacked alike the poor and well-to-do—those who suffered from privation and those who did not. The Commissioner of Jubbulpore describes, in paragraph 12 of his memorandum, the effect of the “wave of malignant fever” which swept over Saugor. The account given by the Deputy Commissioner of Chhindwara (paragraph 7 of the Nerbudda memorandum) of the result of his personal enquiries in the Sausar Tahsil of that district points to a similar condition of things there. And reports to the same effect come from other districts also. Thus the Deputy Commissioner of Hoshangabad writes :—

“Fever this year is unusually prevalent, and no house is free from it * * * The main peculiarity in the mortality is the high proportion of deaths among children five and over, and persons fifty and over. * * * Harda I have not seen since the beginning of September, but in my tour in that tahsil I came across several recent deaths in really wealthy families.”

And the Deputy Commissioner of Jubbulpore writes :—

“The unhealthy character of the season has greatly to do with the rise in mortality. Fevers are extremely prevalent in every quarter of the district.”

A further proof of the unhealthiness of the season is to be found in the deplorable amount of sickness among the Famine-relief Staff. Officers of all grades have been repeatedly incapacitated by fever, and two—Lieutenant Hamilton Moore in Bilaspur, and Naib-Tahsildar Mukund Ram in Seoni—have died from illness contracted during their inspections. Both these officers, in their several capacities, had been doing excellent work, and both fell victims to their devotion to duty. The Chief Commissioner greatly regrets their loss.

7. There had not, at the end of the month, been that general fall of prices which was looked for; but since its close the downward tendency has been accentuated, and with the large crop of small millets, aided by maize, the food-stocks of the people in the Plateau districts, and to a considerable extent in the Nerbudda valley, have been greatly replenished.

8. The harvest promises to be a bumper one in the case of all crops on the ground, except (so far as the Chief Commissioner's information yet goes) in a part of the Bilaspur district and portions of North Raipur, where the rainfall, elsewhere copious, has been markedly deficient. Full details as to the areas sown are not yet available, but the result of the special kharif field inspection ordered this year should be known by the end of this month. Except in Balaghat and parts of Raipur and Bilaspur, it is generally believed that the kharif area is up to and in some cases in excess of the normal. In Balaghat it is feared that there has been serious deficiency. This district is almost entirely dependent upon one harvest—the kharif—for its food supply, and there is thus a possibility of a recrudescence of distress there in the spring.

In spite of the high death-rate, there is, in most parts of the Province, reported to be a considerable improvement already apparent in the condition of the people. They are in heart again, and the end of the distress appears to be at last clearly in view.

I have, &c.,

M. W. FOX-STRANGWAYS,

Chief Secretary.

Monthly Famine Statement A. for the four weeks ending Saturday evening the 25th September 1897.

[To be submitted to the Government of India within the first half of the next month.]

District.	Area in square miles.	Population in thousands.	Affected Area in square miles.	Estimated Population in thousands of column 4.	NUMBERS ON RELIEF WORKS ON LAST DAY OF MONTH.					Number on Gratuitous Relief.	PRICE OF ONE OR MORE PRINCIPAL FOOD GRAINS IN SEERS PER RUPEE.			Monthly Death-rate (per mille per annum).	Deaths due to Starvation.
					Class A.	Class B.	Class C.	Class D.	Total.		Rice.	Gram.	Wheat.		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
JUBBULPORE DIVISION.															
Jubbulpore	3,948	748	2,853	498	1,489	5,305	...	15,107	21,901	37,109	8½	9½	9½	...	...
Saugor	4,007	592	4,007	592	77	1,025	...	7,984	9,086	27,700	6½	7½	8½	...	...
Damoh	2,831	325	2,007	200	477	543	...	10,600	11,620	21,613	6½	7½	7½	...	...
Mandla	5,056	339	5,056	339	151	1,500	...	6,221	7,872	26,391	9	8½	9	...	...
Seoni... ..	3,198	371	1,766	200	216	110	...	1,119	1,445	17,185	8	8½	9½	...	...
Total	19,040	2,375	15,682	1,829	2,410	8,483	...	41,031	51,924	129,998	...	...	...	...	...
NAGPUR DIVISION.															
Nagpur	3,832	758	524	243	124	7,679	...	4,887	12,690	4,354	9½	(Juar.) 9½	8½	...	...
Bhandara	3,968	742	3,400	630	...	137	...	16,135	16,272	19,481	8½	13	8½	...	...
Balaghat	3,164	383	1,500	230	206	2,650	...	26,841	29,697	16,474	8	...	...	...	...
Chanda	10,749	697	2,052	104	...	...	...	...	...	5,331	6½	10	7½	...	...
Wardha	2,428	400	650	70	...	521	...	942	1,463	2,735	...	10½	...	...	...
Total	24,141	2,980	8,126	1,277	330	10,987	...	48,805	60,122	48,375	...	...	...	...	...
NERBUDDA DIVISION.															
Hoshangabad	4,024	499	3,794	361	1,203	13,326	...	7,534	22,063	15,839	7½	...	7½	...	2
Narsinghpur	1,916	367	1,916	367	441	4,832	...	5,453	10,726	18,351	...	9	8½	...	...
Nimar	3,928	285	3,928	285	84	199	...	1,087	1,370	1,908	7½	10½	9	...	...
Chhindwara... ..	4,630	407	2,549	164	155	5,447	...	2,324	7,926	10,300	...	7½	7½	...	...
Betul... ..	3,824	323	3,824	323	417	5,707	...	686	6,810	17,710	...	8	7½	...	...
Total	18,322	1,881	16,011	1,500	2,300	29,511	...	17,084	48,895	64,108	...	...	...	...	...
CHHATTISGARH DIVISION.															
Raipur	11,724	1,584	4,027	710	269	9,671	...	26,161	36,101	45,146	8½	...	8	...	...
Bilaspur	8,341	1,164	8,341	1,164	...	14,712	...	28,571	43,283	105,539	10	7½	8	...	...
Sambalpur	4,948	796	228	62	...	339	...	343	682	100	10	...	7	...	...
Total	25,013	3,544	12,596	1,936	269	24,722	...	55,075	80,066	150,785	...	...	...	...	...
GRAND TOTAL ...	86,516	10,780	52,415	6,542	5,309	73,703	...	161,995	241,007	393,266	...	...	...	...	...

[To be submitted to the Government of India within the first half of the next month.]

District.	Maximum number for whom relief is estimated to be required in case of serious famine.	Number for whom relief was provided in last programme of relief works (i.e., average daily number for three months).			Number for whom relief can be provided by works remaining on programme on date of report (i.e., average daily number for three months) (a).		Expenditure since April 1st 1937 (b).			Advances since April 1st up to end of month under (c).			Revenue suspended or remitted.	
		Date of last programme.	On large works (P. W. D. Schedule A).	Others.	On large works (P. W. D. Schedule A).	Others.	Date up to which account is made up.	Rupees omitting 000s.		Land Improvement Act.	Famine Loans.	Agricultural Loans Act.	Rupees omitting 000s.	
								On relief works.	On gratuitous relief.				Rupees omitting 000s.	Rupees omitting 000s.	Rupees omitting 000s.	Rupees omitted.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
JUBBULPORE DIVISION.														
Jubbulpore	93,000	...	181,496	...	7,150	...	25-9-37	588	420	...	75	133	316	...
Saugor	42,000	...	142,970	...	7,991	...	25-9-37	27	46	...	29	51	441	...
Damoh	40,000	...	152,849	...	53,680	...	25-9-37	324	184	1	55	229	...	407
Mandla	27,000	...	209,514	...	125,260	...	25-9-37	296	88	...	9	56	66	...
Seoni... ..	26,000	...	126,211	...	10,762	...	25-9-37	10	68½	1½	15	38	84	...
Total	228,000	...	813,040	...	204,843	...	...	1,245	806½	2½	183	498	907	407
NAGPUR DIVISION.														
Nagpur	53,000	...	90,260	...	37,878	...	25-9-37	264	14	...	30	11	...	...
Bhandara	52,000	...	136,542	...	39,676	...	25-9-37	398	68	...	123	45	79	...
Balaghat	53,000	...	149,644	...	10,000	...	25-9-37	647	112	...	47	95	176	...
Chanda	49,000	...	101,308	...	101,308	...	25-9-37	...	...	...	105	11	...	...
Wardha	28,000	...	21,549	...	10,878	...	25-9-37	48	...	...	2	11	...	...
Total	235,000	...	499,803	...	199,740	...	...	1,297	194	...	307	173	255	...
NERBUDDA DIVISION.														
Hoshangabad	65,000	...	261,396	24,000	22,740	1,200	25-9-37	589	69	19	...	4	430	...
Narsinghpur	46,000	...	249,332	...	73,358	...	25-9-37	424	88	...	19	27	426	...
Nimar	18,000	...	100,211	...	97,434	...	25-9-37	8	15	2	...	6	6	...
Chhindwara	29,000	...	104,642	3,000	70,491	...	25-9-37	235	60	...	23	10	10	...
Betul... ..	23,000	...	154,851	...	91,358	...	25-9-37	161	54	...	16	14	4	...
Total	181,000	...	870,432	27,000	360,381	1,200	...	1,417	286	21	58	61	876	...
CHHATTISGARH DIVISION.														
Raipur	89,000	...	248,733	17,246	12,030	2,000	25-9-37	866	180	...	132	58	272	...
Bilaspur	75,000	...	16,640	30,000	23,522	...	25-9-37	703	772	10	57	84	307	...
Sambalpur	56,000	...	35,822	...	32,149	...	25-9-37	17	...	½	...	7	...	...
Total	220,000	...	301,195	47,246	68,001	2,000	...	1,586	952	10½	189	149	579	...
GRAND TOTAL ...	864,000	...	2,483,970	74,246	832,965	3,200	...	5,545	2,238½	34	737	881	2,617	407

- (a) Some relief-works will have been more or less exhausted since the last programme, and others will have been provided for entry in the next programme. The net result should be shown in columns 6 and 7.
 (b) The submission of the report should not be delayed in order that accounts of expenditure may be made up to date of report.
 (c) The total expenditure incurred and the advances made during the financial year previous to that to which the report and statements under submission belong should be stated in a foot-note.
 This statement will relate to the period between the last Saturday of the previous month and the last Saturday of the month under report.

Summary of the remarks in the District Reports accompanying Monthly Famine Statements A and B for the month of September, 1897.

JUBBULPORE DIVISION.

(1.) *Private Charity.*

The sums allotted for *rabi* seed-grain are being rapidly distributed. Arrangements have been made to keep the distribution as far as possible in the hands of Famine Relief Officers and Assistant (including Extra-Assistant) Commissioners.

Excluding these allotments, the expenditure from the Charity Fund during the month is reported to have been :—

District.	I. Additional comforts.	II. Orphans.	III. Relief of respectable paupers.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Saugor	50	...	345
Damoh	213	...	...
Jubbulpore	4,959	1,264	3,371
Mandla	2,763	...	191
Seoni	1,119	...	365
Total	9,104	1,264	4,272

The allowances granted to respectable paupers in the town of Jubbulpore have now been discontinued, and the charity grain shops have been closed. Coarse rice is now procurable at 11 seers per rupee.

The Church Missionary Society has continued its good work in the interior of the Mandla district.

At Seoni the Scotch Church Mission fed 850 people till the 25th September, when funds ran short and the paupers were thrown on the Deputy Commissioner's hands. Those who deserved relief have been systematically admitted to it.

The Jubbulpore and Saugor districts received a large share of the charity ship-load of grain which lately arrived from America. The American Mission at Bina in the Saugor district distributed about 4,000 maunds. The people of the neighbourhood are indebted to this Mission for much assistance, the utility of which has been enhanced by the discriminating fashion in which it has been given. In Jubbulpore the American Mission made over to the Deputy Commissioner a large amount of grain (about 5,000 maunds) for distribution in the district. It was given to needy families, according to a fixed scale, on cheques issued by Famine Relief Officers. Large quantities have been given to the poor of Jubbulpore town. A share was also placed at my disposal for despatch to Mandla.

(2.) *Government Poor-houses.*

The poor-house population of the past three months has been as follows :—

District.	Number of Poor-houses.			Number of Inmates.		
	July.	August.	September.	July.	August.	September.
Saugor	5	5	5	4,547	2,885	1,753
Damoh	5	5	5	1,662	1,585	1,090
Jubbulpore	3	3	3	2,441	2,553	1,405
Mandla	2	2	2	1,169	1,521	488
Seoni	2	2	2	1,079	807	507
Total	17	17	17	10,898	9,351	5,243

The large reduction in the number of inmates indicates that Deputy Commissioners have been following a proper policy in poor-house management. I analyse below the figures for September :—

District.	Number of Inmates at end of September.				
	Orphans.	In Hospital.		In Poor-houses proper.	
		Belonging to District.	Strangers.	Belonging to District.	Strangers.
Saugor	257	*415	...	630	352
Damoh	387	195	85	356	70
Jubbulpore	445	98	203	166	547
Mandla	334	78	20	56	...
Seoni	275	147	23	121	54
Total	1,698	1,264		1,329	1,023

* Including strangers.

At both Saugor and Damoh a large number of local paupers are still in the poor-houses and the Deputy Commissioner's attention will be drawn to the desirability of sending them to their villages and relieving them there. In Jubbulpore 70 per cent. of the poor-house inmates are strangers from outside. Those who are able to travel will now be sent back to their homes, and it is hoped that by the end of the current month poor-houses will contain very few beyond those in hospital. Poor-houses at outlying places in the Saugor and Damoh districts are now being closed, and in these, as in other districts, there will be only one poor-house maintained in each tahsil.

The poor-house mortality has fallen considerably in all districts except Saugor, but is still very high. The total number of deaths reported during September was 544 in Saugor, 320 in Damoh, 452 in Jubbulpore, 238 in Mandla and 218 in Seoni. Save in the case of Saugor, these totals are all about 50 per cent. lower than those for the month preceding. Deaths amongst children have been lamentably numerous in spite of the great improvements which have been made in the management of our temporary orphanages. Indeed, care and attention seem to have had but little effect on the death-rate. At Damoh, where the orphans are in the charge of American ladies, and receive the closest and kindest attention, one-seventh of the number died. The case has been similar at the Roman Catholic Orphanage in the Saugor district. Dysentery, diarrhœa and *cancerum oris* have prevailed in a very fatal form, and appear to have taken the place of the relapsing or "famine" fever which has been such a scourge in previous famines. That the diseases are communicable has been recognized for some time past, and the children are everywhere carefully examined every day, and those showing symptoms of diarrhœa or *stomatitis* are immediately segregated. Nevertheless it is clear from the number who die some time after admission and from the histories of typical cases that in spite of precautions disease has been spreading by communication, and that the only chance of successfully combating its extension would have lain in breaking up the orphanages altogether. It should be remembered that the past two months have been extraordinarily unhealthy for children. I found the other day at the village of Banda in the Saugor district that on a population of 1,516 there had been 24 deaths during August and September, of which 20 were amongst little children, mostly belonging to well-to-do families.

To less than 54 per cent. of those who died in the Jubbulpore poor-houses were strangers—mostly from Riwa. Strangers also contributed largely (24 per cent.) to the deaths which occurred in the poor-houses at Saugor.

(3.) *Relief Centres and Kitchens.*

Statistics for August and September are compared below :—

District.	Number of Centres and Kitchens.		Number of Persons gratuitously Believed.		Number of Persons on Light Work.		Total.	
	August.	September.	August.	September.	August.	September.	August.	September.
Saugor	4	30	2,373	4,398	...	...	2,373	4,398
Damoh	10	31	930	2,552	...	...	930	2,552
Jubbulpore ...	57	57	8,205	7,794	152	181	8,357	7,975
Mandla	64	70	2,263	3,295	3,524	2,553	5,787	5,848
Seoni	65	87	3,196	3,719	38	42	3,234	3,761
Total	200	275	16,967	21,758	3,714	2,776	20,681	24,534

There has been a considerable extension of the relief given at kitchens in the Saugor and Damoh districts, and in the division as a whole there were at the end of the month over 20,000 children in receipt of cooked food at 275 centres.

I noticed in last month's report the delay which had occurred in opening police kitchens in the Saugor district. These kitchens are now all in full swing, but my recent tour in this district convinced me that this form of relief was very urgently required there, and should have been started earlier in the day. In Damoh, where during August kitchens were also less numerous than elsewhere, the children show fewer signs of distress owing I think to the efficiency with which village relief has been distributed during the past three months.

There is a consensus of opinion as to the very great service these kitchens have rendered to the country, and to humanity, in saving the lives of the field labourers of the future. The children improve with marvellous rapidity and thrive better in freedom on their single meal a day than with the care and constant feeding they receive in orphanages. In some places much persuasion has been required, especially with Gonds, to induce the children to take cooked food. But the kitchens have generally become popular. The numbers attending them will now begin to rapidly decline as the rice crop is harvested.

Mandla is the only district in which relief centres are still maintained as a means of employing the indigent on light work. The numbers attending them are falling rapidly, and they will be closed very shortly.

(4.) *Village Relief.*

There has been a further expansion in all districts but Jubbulpore :—

District.	Numbers Relieved at their Homes.		
	August.	September.	Difference.
Saugor	11,877	20,236	+8,359
Damoh	13,056	14,994	+1,938
Jubbulpore ...	33,720	24,416	-9,304
Mandla	14,649	21,023	+6,374
Seoni	8,789	12,600	+3,811
Total	82,091	93,269	+11,178

In Saugor this form of relief has now reached sufficient extension. But it has in the past not been given with sufficient liberality, and the arrangements for its distribution left much to be desired. I have recently submitted a separate report on the subject. My recent tour in Damoh left me entirely satisfied with the procedure which has been followed there. The same may be said of Jubbulpore, where village paupers have generally been brought into fair condition, and it has become possible to strike large numbers off the lists. In Mandla relief is now adequately granted in the "home" tahsil. But in the distant tahsil of Dindori the Famine Relief Officers have as yet not been able to recover all lost ground and the numbers on relief are still less than they should be. But increased efficiency has been manifested by a considerable fall in the death-rate.

This is also the case in the Seoni district.

(5.) *Relief Works.*

(a.) *Under Public Works Department Management.*—The numbers on Public Works Department relief works during August and September are compared below :—

District.	Number of Workers.		Number of Dependents.		Total.		Difference (+) or (-)
	August.	September.	August.	September.	August.	September.	
Saugor	11,584	9,086	1,738	1,167	13,322	10,253	-3,069
Damoh	9,812	10,503	2,012	2,977	11,824	13,480	+1,656
Jubbulpore	14,009	14,948	3,152	3,440	17,161	18,388	-1,227
Mandla	6,668	4,972	2,347	1,387	9,015	6,359	-2,656
Seoni	2,948	1,403	1,212	416	4,160	1,819	-2,341
Total	45,021	40,912	10,461	9,387	55,482	50,299	-5,183

Taking the division as a whole, numbers have declined, but not to the extent one might *primâ facie* have expected. Indeed in two districts there has been an increase. The explanation lies in the fact that weeding is generally completed by the end of August, and from that time till the commencement of the kharif harvesting there is but small demand for casual field labour. This was noticed in last month's report and its effect on the relief works was foreseen. The cutting of early rice has now begun, and though there is still at least a month before the *juari* crop ripens, the cutting of grass is affording a good deal of employment. It is then possible to commence closing relief works without risk, and orders issued some days back for the immediate closure of three in Saugor, three in Damoh and four in Jubbulpore. In Mandla and Seoni the works are gradually closing themselves. They have never been popular in those districts, and the people gladly leave them as soon as other resources open. It is expected that by the end of the current month all Public Works Department charges in the division will have been closed.

(b.) *Works under District Officers.*—These only remain of any importance in Jubbulpore :—

District.	August.	September.	Difference (+) or (-).
Saugor ... ..	...	17	+17
Damoh	959	1,117	+158
Jubbulpore	8,019	6,772	+1,247
Mandla	1,397	545	-852
Seoni ... ..	...	No works.	
Total	10,375	8,451	-1,924

The few dependents relieved on these works are classed with the workers. The 17 persons shown against Saugar are employed on a loan work.

Works in the neighbourhood of towns employ about 40 per cent. of the total. These were primarily intended for weakly persons who could not go to the regular relief-works and who if not given relief-work near their homes, would come on to the gratuitous relief lists. Admissions to these works have, however, tended to be more liberal than this principle would justify. The Deputy Commissioner of Mandla has carefully examined the workers and excluded the strong, and steps in this direction are being taken at Damoh and Jubbulpore.

(6.) *Railway Works.*

There has been no diminution to speak of in the employment afforded to able-bodied workers on the construction of the Saugar-Katni line—

District.	28th August.	25th September.
Saugor	No. 4,568	No. 6,700
Damoh	6,322	5,927
Jubbulpore	4,671	3,906
Total	15,561	15,533

I was informed ten days ago that financial pressure necessitated the immediate stoppage of work and the dismissal of all these labourers. But I am glad to say that different counsels have apparently prevailed. To suddenly throw out of work over 15,000 labourers would have introduced a most serious complication and would probably have obliged us to keep relief-works open some time after the date on which we now expect to close them.

(7.) *Summary of the Relief granted in the Division.*

The numbers on relief in all five districts have risen from 178,665 to 181,796 or by something under 2 per cent. For this, speaking broadly, the slackness in the field-labour market has been responsible. The Jubbulpore district alone shows a decrease in the numbers relieved. But the poor are here generally in better condition than elsewhere in the division and have been in the past relieved with more liberality. I compare below the percentages of the total population receiving relief in the five districts.

District.	July.	August.	September.
Saugor	Per cent. 6·4	Per cent. 5·5	Per cent. 6·1
Damoh	16·1	8·7	10·2
Jubbulpore	10·3	9·4	7·9
Mandla	5·8	9·7	10·0
Seoni	3·3	4·6	5·0

The percentage gratuitously relieved rose from 67 to 72. This is more than was expected.

(8.) *Food-Stocks and Trade.*

The three outlying districts—Damoh, Mandla and Seoni—imported more largely than in the month preceding :—

District.	Imports.			Exports.		
	July.	August.	September.	July.	August.	September.
	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.
Saugor	88,022	40,255	15,630	374	1,658	...
Damoh	54,675	23,530	26,899	Not reported.	Nil.	90
Jubbulpore	55,146	32,297	15,938	7,072	11,242	11,202
Mandla ... ..	...	1,398	6,733	...	Nil.	Nil.
Seoni	4,816	1,954	3,201	855	1,560	2,442

The *kutki* and early rice crops have come into market in Mandla and Seoni, and there is now no lack of food-grain. Prices are falling rapidly in these districts. The tract in which grain is now scarcest is the Hatta Tahsil of Damoh where little is grown in the kharif besides *juari*, which will not be harvested for some time to come.

(9.) *Prices.*

The average prices for wheat, gram and rice are compared below :—

District.	Wheat.		Gram.		Common Rice.	
	August.	September.	August.	September.	August.	September.
	Seers per rupee.	Seers per rupee.	Seers per rupee.	Seers per rupee.	Seers per rupee.	Seers per rupee.
Saugor	8½	8½	7¾	7¼	6	6¼
Damoh	7	7¼	7½	7½	6	6¼
Jubbulpore	9	9½	9½	9½	8	8½
Mandla	8	9	8½	8½	7	9
Seoni	8¾	9½	8¼	8½	7½	8

Wheat has fallen a little everywhere except in Saugor. It is just now in great demand for the rabi sowings and maintains its price independently of the general value of food-grain. This is also true in regard to gram, and in a still greater degree, as there seems to be very little gram in the country. The price of rice has fallen considerably in Jubbulpore, Mandla and Seoni, but shows very little change in Saugor and Damoh, where the production of rice is inconsiderable, and, so far as local supplies are concerned, the harvest will not influence prices much till the *juari* crop is reaped. In Mandla and Seoni *kutki* is now selling at over 12 seers per rupee : and the Deputy Commissioner of Seoni notices the curious fact that quantities of old *kodo* and *kutki* are coming to market, which have been hitherto held up by the ryots in case last year's disasters should repeat themselves.

(10.) *Rates of Wages on Public Works Department Relief Works.*

In Seoni the wage rate was lowered to 9 seers before the end of the month. Elsewhere no change was made. But rates have generally been lowered since the commencement of October.

(11.) *Crime.*

Comparative statistics are given below :—

	Total Number of Offences.				
	Saugor.	Damoh.	Jubbulpore.	Mandla.	Seoni.
September 1897 ...	222	81	435	115	121
August 1897 ...	368	148	718	223	315
September 1896 ...	217	129	511	135	152

The marked decrease in the crime everywhere is the most striking of all the indications of improved conditions. It will be observed that its amount is not very much less than during the month preceding, but that except in Saugor the statistics compare very favourably with those for September 1896.

(12.) *Mortality.*

The latest complete returns received are those for August. They are compared below with those for July :—

District.	Total Number of Deaths.		Deaths from Cholera.		Monthly Death-rate.	
	July.	August.	July.	August.	July.	August.
Saugor ...	4,887	6,877	118	11	8.2	11.6
Damoh ...	1,564	2,364	47	140	4.8	7.2
Jubbulpore ...	3,279	4,192	75	22	4.4	5.6
Mandla ...	5,579	5,653	747	184	16.4	16.6
Seoni ...	3,070	4,555	80	47	8.3	12.5

The portentous increase in the death-rates of Saugor, Mandla and Seoni during the month of August was noticed in last month's report. It remains to accentuate the fact that during that month fever attacked certain tracts with pestilential severity. From some points of view the increase in the Saugor death-rate was one of the most unsatisfactory features of the month, as there were no such difficulties to be encountered in this district as in the wilds of Mandla and Seoni, and famine relief should have been as efficient as in Damoh or Jubbulpore. I have lately spent 12 days touring in the interior of the Saugor district and have made detailed enquiries into the mortality of the villages I came across. The general results have been separately reported, but I may note here that they indicated that a wave of malignant fever passed across the district such as was experienced in some districts of the North-Western Provinces after the famine of 1877, and that, as in the North-Western Provinces on that occasion, the well-to-do suffered equally with the poor. On the occasion of my visit to Saugor I was assured that not a household in the city have escaped sickness. Of 45 clerks in the Deputy Commissioner's office, 11 had been incapacitated for duty in August and 10 in September, for periods which gave an average of a week to each man. At one time sickness deprived the Executive Engineer of the services of seven out of his nine clerks. The Police force suffered from an abnormal amount of sickness, 13.4 per cent. of the strength being in hospital during August, and numbers being invalided at their homes from lack of hospital accommodation. Similar reports, though not in so much detail, have reached me from Mandla and Seoni, and it may be accepted that a very large proportion of the abnormal mortality of

August resulted from sickness which, so far as one can judge, was quite unconnected with the scarcity of food, and may have proceeded from the rise in the water level from the abnormal depth to which it had fallen through the long period of drought.

September is ordinarily more unhealthy than August, and last year the September death-rates were exceedingly high. In Saugor, Jubbulpore and Mandla more than eight persons died per thousand of population, and in Damoh the number of deaths per thousand exceeded 11. This year I am able to report a general fall as shown by the following figures :—

District.	Monthly Death-rate, excluding Cholera Deaths.								
	January.	February.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	September.
Saugor	3·8	4·6	4·0	4·2	5·8	8·5	8·0	11·6	*11·2
Damoh	5·3	4·2	4·1	4·0	3·1	6·2	4·6	6·9	6·7
Jubbulpore ...	7·7	8·8	6·5	5·0	5·3	5·1	4·3	5·5	5·9
Mandla	3·9	5·5	5·5	3·9	5·1	6·9	14·2	16·1	10·3
Seoni	5·3	4·4	4·1	3·4	3·6	4·9	8·0	12·2	8·6

* Approximate only.

Mortality increased in Jubbulpore, but to no great extent, and a death-rate of 6 per mille seems no more than must be expected during so unhealthy a season. In Damoh the number of deaths decreased and about 1,500 fewer people died than during the corresponding period of last year. There was a very large decrease in the number of deaths occurring in Mandla and Seoni, which, though still excessive, do not appear so when judged by last year's standard. The Saugor death-rate has remained practically stationary at over 11 per mille. It is true that for this the fever epidemic is in great measure responsible ; but it is also true that the poorest classes of Saugor are in worse case than those of Damoh and Jubbulpore.

(13.) *The Physical Condition of the People.*

I have during the month toured in the interior of the Jubbulpore, Damoh and Saugor districts. In Jubbulpore and Damoh the condition of the villagers struck me as generally satisfactory and one very rarely meets with a person showing signs of great privation. In Saugor distress was more apparent. Many of the people on the village relief lists were exceedingly thin, and in each kitchen I inspected, children in miserable condition were to be seen. I was unable to visit either Mandla or Seoni. The Deputy Commissioner of Mandla (who only took charge towards the middle of the month) has not found distress as acute as he expected, but he writes that "the general condition of the people is bad," and this is borne out by the diaries which have reached me from his Famine Relief Officers. There has been a great improvement in Seoni, and the Deputy Commissioner writes very cheerfully. It is to be wished that the death-rate was lower. In both these districts the harvesting of the kharif staples has begun, and distress will soon be a thing of the past.

(14.) *General Condition and Prospects.*

Excluding the little patches of maize grown in cottage gardens, the first crop to be cut was the small millet called *kutki* (*panicum miliare*), which is largely grown in Mandla and Seoni and has given the people of these districts much cheaper grain than is obtainable elsewhere. The harvesting of the early rice has now commenced, and this will again benefit Mandla and Seoni as well as parts of Jubbulpore and Damoh. The tracts which must wait longest for relief are those where *juari* is the chief crop, and from this point of view the Khurai Tahsil of Saugor and the Hatta Tahsil of Damoh are just now the least fortunate parts of the division.

The kharif harvest is assured and will be an exceedingly good one. A season very seldom suits all the crops on the ground. But it is so this year. Rice, *juari*, cotton, *tl* and *ramtilli* all are excellent, and the cultivators have not to balance the gain on one crop by the loss of another. A fall of rain during the first week of October would have been useful for the rabi sowings. But so far as one can learn there is everywhere sufficient moisture in the ground to ensure germination.

J. B. FULLER,
Officiating Commissioner.

NAGPUR DIVISION.

(1.) *Private Relief.*

Nagpur.—Complete accounts of the extent of relief afforded by the Charitable Relief Fund Committee are not available. The main features of the month were the opening of a branch cheap grain shop in the Sadar Bazar and an allotment for distribution of clothes at the kitchens throughout the district. The respectable poor are assisted at Nagpur, Kamptee and Umrer. Private subscriptions are said to have been readily forthcoming in support of kitchens at Kalmeshwar, Kelod, Saoner, Khapa and Kondhali. The Revd. J. Douglas has given assistance to a kitchen opened by the Deputy Commissioner at Dhapewara and has himself opened a kitchen at Patansaongi which is conducted on Government lines. Kitchens have also been opened by the Raja of Nagpur, the Swasthanik Estate, Musst. Laxmi Bai and Krishna Rao Gujar (both under Court of Wards) at some of their villages. Malguzars and others mentioned in previous reports continue their "*Sadā-basts*" or daily dole.

The Deputy Commissioner writes :—

"Bishop Pelvat has an orphanage with about 150 inmates ; this I had thought to be the home of the orphans brought from Jubbulpore and elsewhere, but on visiting it I find it is a poor-house, all who require help being admitted."

Bhandara.—It is reported that nearly all the money allotted from the Charitable Fund for rabi seed has been distributed and that voluntary monthly subscriptions for providing comforts, &c., in poor-houses, originally promised in November last for eight months, have now been discontinued. The lists of respectable poor have been revised, and this has relieved the Fund of a considerable portion of the expenditure that was being incurred on their account.

Balaghat.—The following amounts were spent in poor-houses from private subscriptions during the months of August and September :—

	August.	September.
	Rs.	Rs.
Balaghat	11	86
Katangi ... ..	...	...
Baihar	6	...
Total	17	86

Large quantities of rabi seed-grain were distributed and are still being distributed from the Charitable Fund, but statistics are not available.

Chanda.—The cheap grain shops which have been opened at Chanda, Warora, Brahmmapuri and the lower taluqs of Sironcha have been very successful.

It has been decided to spend some Rs. 5,000 of the funds of the Indian Charitable Relief Fund for the purpose of clothing the destitute poor before the cold weather sets in, and at the same time to provide employment for the weavers and blanket-makers of the district, who are now feeling the pinch of privation. For this purpose Rs. 2,500 have already been allotted to Tahsildars, and the work is in progress.

Wardha.—Juari is being doled out to poor people at some half dozen centres. Whenever the money raised by subscriptions was exhausted, aid was given from the Charitable Fund.

(2.) *Government Poor-houses.*

The number of poor-houses and the number of persons maintained in them are shown below with the numbers during the two preceding months :—

District.	Number of Poorhouses.			Number of Inmatef.		
	July.	August.	September.	July.	August.	September.
Nagpur	2	3	3	1,079	1,500	1,194
Bhandara	4	4	5	948	886	917
Balaghat	3	3	3	1,076	1,028	906
Chanda ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...
Wardha	2	2	2	504	505	526
Total	11	12	13	3,607	3,919	3,543

New admissions are said to be still frequent at Nagpur and Katol, chiefly owing to wanderers returning from the Berars.

The increase of one in the number of poor-houses in Bhandara is not due to the opening of any new institution, but merely to the fact that the Bhandara orphanage, which was formerly included in the poor-house, is now shown separately, as owing to increase in the number of children there was no longer sufficient accommodation for them in the poor-house. The rise in the number of paupers is due to ordinary fluctuations only.

There has been a satisfactory decrease in the number of deaths, although the mortality, especially at Gondia, is still high. A special "isolation shed" has now been constructed at Gondia in which new arrivals suspected to be suffering from dysentery are kept for some time, and all the more serious cases are treated in private houses close by which have been rented for the purpose, as, owing to the high water level of the Gondia tank, the site of the poor-house has become somewhat damp.

The increase in the number of admissions is largely due to the receipt of two large drafts of paupers from Nagpur; nearly all these were discharged during the month. Now that village relief has been thoroughly organised and numerous kitchens established, it is hoped that the number of new admissions to poor-houses will rapidly diminish.

In Balaghat the number has fallen slightly, which is due to persons having been drafted to village relief and relief-works. The population now consists practically of orphans, sick people in hospital and a few wanderers from other districts.

In Wardha there has been a slight increase in the number of inmates. The paupers in the Wardha poor-house are said to be mostly outsiders, and those belonging to Bhandara, Nagpur, Balaghat, Seoni and Chhindwara have just been sent on to Nagpur for despatch to their respective districts. Those belonging to the Northern districts will be similarly sent back. If present prospects continue, the poor-houses may be closed by the end of the current month.

I saw all the poor-houses at District Head-quarters during the past month, and also the one at Gondia.

The reason for numbers continuing high is that as the rice harvest is commencing people chiefly of the Balaghat and Bhandara districts are returning from the Berars of their own accord, as they do indeed every year, and are temporarily accommodated in poor-houses *en route* till arrangements are made for their being forwarded to their destination.

(3.) *Relief Centres and Kitchens.*

Gratuitous relief has expanded especially, in the shape of kitchens, as the figures below will show :—

District.	Number of Centres and Kitchens.		Number of Persons Relieved gratuitously		Number of Persons on Light Work.		Total Number of Persons.	
	August.	September.	August.	September.	August.	September.	August.	September.
Nagpur ... ..	...	16	...	1,477	...	...	...	1,477
Bhandara	27	63	1,035	3,526	...	...	1,035	3,526
Balaghat	21	48	1,059	1,879	...	...	1,059	1,879
Chanda	64	70	*399	*792	...	...	399	792
Wardha ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	112	197	2,493	7,674	...	...	2,493	7,674

* NOTE.—The Deputy Commissioner, Chanda, explains that this represents only the children fed at kitchens. All others gratuitously relieved are shown under the head "Village Relief." This does not, however, convey a correct idea of the real facts, as adults also relieved at kitchens should be shown in this statement.

Of the 63 kitchens in Bhandara, 26 are at Police station-houses and outposts. The Police continue to feed starving wanderers and to conduct them to poor-houses, relief-works or their homes, as may be most suitable in each case. The number of kitchens in Balaghat has more than doubled. During my visit last month to some of the camps with the Deputy Commissioner, I found emaciated children who had been fed in the kitchens for some considerable time without apparently showing any improvement. On enquiry it seemed that the probable cause was that they had been getting unsuitable food, *i.e.*, the standard "*kitchri*" (rice and dāl), which they were obviously unable to digest properly. It has been impressed on Officers in Charge and Hospital Assistants that in such cases discretion should be exercised and more suitable food, such as sago, gruel and milk, should be substituted.

The Deputy Commissioner, Chanda, states that there are a number of people in receipt of gratuitous relief both in Chanda and Warora who are employed on light work such as weeding, but that their numbers cannot be given.

There is only one kitchen in the Wardha district, and that is attached to the relief work on the Arvi-Ashti road. This is said to have become overcrowded owing to the Officer in Charge not having used proper discretion in admitting people and in having allowed them to remain for more than the fixed period of 15 days. The number has since been considerably reduced, and some of those discharged have been taken on village relief. The Deputy Commissioner enquired locally into the matter when his attention was drawn thereto, and promptly had things put right.

(4.) *Village Relief.*

The number of persons relieved at their homes for the past two months is compared below. The figures show a satisfactory progress.—

District.	August.	September.	Increase.
	No.	No.	No.
Nagpur ... ..	...	1,221	1,221
Bhandara	7,144	11,633	4,489
Balaghat... ..	11,325	12,911	1,586
Chanda	*2,350	4,539	2,189
Wardha	45	1,884	1,839
Total	20,864	32,188	11,324

* NOTE.—The number entered last month, *viz.*, 9,740, was a mistake. It represented the total number of people fed during the month instead of on the last day.

Nagpur.—This form of relief was found necessary on a small scale. Of the number shown above, 310 were relieved under the modified village relief rules and 238 by transfer from poor-houses. It has been chiefly confined to the respectable poor, as it was found that the lame, blind, &c., are still supported by private charity, and distress was chiefly apparent amongst destitute wanderers, the hand-to-mouth labouring class, especially where there are large families, and the non-agricultural classes, as Mangs, Dhimars, Kalars, who cannot get work, or will not work at anything but their own particular calling. These have been provided for by kitchens.

The Deputy Commissioner remarks that the—

“Death-rate of the Umrer Station-house has remained very moderate, whilst the rates elsewhere in August rose very rapidly. One cause of this is that that part of the country is not so overrun with wanderers, but even so, I think that, from my observation elsewhere, it must also be due to the vigorous way in which the Tahsildar has interested himself in famine matters all along, and his personal influence with the malguzars.”

Bhandara.—The numbers have increased by 4,489, and a further increase is expected during the current month, especially if, as is anticipated, it becomes possible to close three or four of the relief works. The Deputy Commissioner writes :—

“The illness of the Extra-Assistant Commissioner appointed specially on famine duty, and his recent resignation, has again rendered the supervision of this form of relief exceedingly difficult in the circles of which he was in charge.”

“In other circles the two additional Naib-Tahsildars are doing good work, but the multifarious duties imposed on the ordinary staff of Tahsildars, Naibs and Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of Land Records render the performance of their duties as Village Inspecting Officers far less thorough, I fear, than it should be.”

The Extra-Assistant Commissioner referred to has been replaced by another who is commended for his famine work by the Deputy Commissioner, Nagpur.

The increase in Balaghat has been distributed over all circles. There was a tendency during the month to strike people off the lists because they were fit and able to work, but orders have been issued that such people should not be struck off unless it was certain that work was available; otherwise they would starve again and all the money spent on them would be wasted. The number of kotwars in receipt of a money allowance has increased to 616.

The numbers in Chanda have nearly doubled during the month. This form of relief is of the greatest assistance to the people. It must continue to increase during the current month as there is very little field work to be obtained just now; but we hope to be able to stop it altogether early next month.

During the month under report it was found necessary to give a small amount of village relief in Wardha, but it will not expand here, as there is already a certain amount of demand for field work.

(5.) *Relief Works.*

(a) *Under the Public Works Department.*—The number of workers and dependents during August and September is compared below :—

District.	Number of Workers.		Number of Dependents.		Total.		Difference.
	August.	September.	August.	September.	August.	September.	
Nagpur	6,951	6,280	805	462	7,756	6,742	−1,014
Bhandara	13,095	16,272	2,359	3,405	15,454	19,677	+4,223
Balaghat	25,301	29,697	3,026	778	28,327	30,475	+2,148
Chanda ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Wardha	597	1,463	254	325	851	1,788	+937
Total	45,944	53,712	6,444	4,970	52,388	58,682	+6,294

Much of the increase is due to the fact that the *Pola* festival happened to fall on the last day of August. Numbers of labourers left the works in order to celebrate this festival, returning for the most part during the course of the following week.

The Deputy Commissioner, Nagpur, reports that :—

“Except for the Great Northern Road, all camps are shrinking steadily. Some smaller camps have been closed.”

The payment by results system has now been extended to all the relief-works of the Bhandara district. The Deputy Commissioner writes :—

“Able-bodied loafers have now learnt that they must work in order even to earn a subsistence wage, and many of them accordingly departed in disgust. The proportion of more or less weakly people on the works is thus now probably much higher than before, for a large proportion of the new-comers are not able-bodied.”

The increase in the number of dependents is said to be due to the kitchens being now open to outsiders also. There are about 30 such kitchens on the eight relief camps in the district, and the figure, 3,405, reported as the number of dependents gratuitously relieved includes 1,039 outsiders fed in them. The numbers on one camp are now very low and it is proposed to close it in a few days, all the really weak and emaciated being brought on village relief, while those who are in search of employment will be referred to the other camp, 6 or 8 miles off. During the month I inspected five camps in the Balaghat district and three camps in Bhandara with a view to deciding whether the payment by results system could be safely introduced on any works on those districts.

I discussed the question thoroughly with Deputy Commissioners and the Executive Engineer, and decided that it could be introduced on all the Bhandara works and most of those in Balaghat.

Deputy Commissioners were instructed to watch the effect carefully, but I have not yet heard of any ill result ; on the contrary, I think it will prove distinctly beneficial in weeding out the able-bodied loafer, as reported by the Deputy Commissioner, Bhandara, and in making relief-workers generally realise the necessity for now seeking employment elsewhere.

(b.) *Works under District Officers.*—Nil.

(6.) *Physical Condition of the People.*

Nagpur.—Of those in receipt of gratuitous relief, the Deputy Commissioner reports that he has seen many cases of emaciation amongst new inmates of the Nagpur poor-house during the month, so emaciated that there was little hope of recovery. He adds :—

“During my village enquiries I found that some persons who had received money doles had kept them unexpended, continuing to subsist on bare leaves and vegetables.”

The condition of workers is said to be good.

Bhandara.—It is reported that no real improvement has yet taken place in the general condition of the people. New admissions to poor-houses, especially at Gondia and Sakoli, continue to show signs of long-continued privation. On relief-works the condition of the new-comers is also far from good. As regards those in receipt of village relief, the Deputy Commissioner writes :—

“It is somewhat surprising that their condition does not improve more rapidly. Many of them, no doubt, are old and infirm and cannot be expected ever to be in robust health and strength, but on the other hand a large proportion, more especially of those admitted within the last two months or so, were admitted simply on account of their weak and emaciated appearance, and were expected soon to regain ordinary health and strength. * * * This at least is certain that whereas emaciated children improve in a wonderful degree after even a few meals in a kitchen, it takes a very long time to effect any permanent improvement in the case of adults suffering from a long course of privation.”

Balaghat.—The condition of those in receipt of gratuitous relief is said to have improved immensely ; while on works the condition varies very considerably from camp to camp. The Deputy Commissioner states that the Mehras, low caste weavers and others not accustomed to road work do not look fit although they

have been in the camps for months. In Chanda and Wardha the people are in fairly good condition, but in the former, notwithstanding that some of the lighter crops are being cut, many people will find it difficult to obtain field labour until rice harvesting is in full swing.

(7.) *Mortality.*

The following table shows the figures for August as compared with those for July :—

District.	Total Number of Deaths.		Deaths from Cholera.	
	July.	August.	July.	August.
Nagpur	2,575	4,303	213	304
Bhandara	4,070	4,771	617	136
Balaghat... ..	3,273	4,254	93	81
Chanda	2,020	2,339	525	150
Wardha	1,442	2,502	112	76

Monthly Death-rate.

District.	All Causes.		Excluding Cholera.	
	July.	August.	July.	August.
Nagpur	3.33	5.68	3.51	5.27
Bhandara	5.48	6.42	4.65	6.24
Balaghat... ..	8.81	11.10	8.25	10.89
Chanda	3.60	4.17	2.66	3.92
Wardha	4.00	6.24	3.32	6.06

The heavy mortality indicates that the month of August has been very unhealthy in all the districts of the division. The high death-rates are partly due to the effects of long-continued distress and privation. Fever has caused much of this mortality, but many have fallen victims to diarrhoea and dysentery, which are always very prevalent in this month. The normal rate of mortality for this month, as pointed out by the Deputy Commissioner, Bhandara, is always very high, in fact, August and September are about the two most unhealthy months in most districts in this division. In this connection the Deputy Commissioner, Nagpur, has some original remarks, which I fear are true enough. His theory is that in a district like his, where distress has not been acute, and where there is consequently hardly any special famine staff, the unhealthy months have a double effect, *viz.*, they increase the mortality because they are the unhealthy months, and also not merely, as generally supposed, because of the fatal effects of sickness on a weakened constitution, but because the hand-to-mouth person who becomes sick has nothing to fall back upon and rapidly succumbs. With a large special famine staff and incessant inspection, such persons could be promptly hunted up, and possibly aided in time; otherwise we have to trust chiefly to mukaddams to bring their condition to notice, and it can be hardly expected that all of them realize their responsibility in this respect. The recent notification in the Gazette declaring and emphasizing their duties in this respect ought to be of great use if duly notified throughout every district, and should prove a valuable adjunct to village relief and kitchens at this critical season of the year.

(8.) *Food Stocks.*

These continue to be sufficient in Nagpur, Bhandara and Wardha. In Balaghat also prices have become easier as the early millets have come on the market, and a good monsoon has assured the safety of the kharif crop. It is reported from Chanda that food-grain is sufficient to last until the autumn crops are harvested, and that the only place where some deficiency threatened was in the extreme southern limit of the lower taluqs of the Sironcha Tahsil. The Deputy Commissioner, however, made arrangements for the importation of grain from the Madras side and for starting cheap grain shops, and thus averted any ill-effect.

(9.) *Importation of Grain.*

The figures for the last two months are as follows:—

District.	Imports in Maunds.		Exports in Maunds.	
	August.	September.	August.	September.
Nagpur	51,557	54,034	23,385	13,303
Bhandara	34,132	16,048	7,868	8,568
Balaghat... ..	10,479	10,597	...	...
Chanda	300	2,200	5,100	500
Wardha	22,523	20,458	3,383	1,752

The Deputy Commissioner, Nagpur, states that malguzars were cautious and timid to a degree that could hardly have been expected, but they are more liberal now to their tenants, and that there should be no difficulty about the supply of rabi seed.

Imports into Bhandara may be expected to cease very shortly when the common rice will be coming freely into the market.

Imports into Baihar have now ceased, but their continuance into Balaghat proves the depletion of local stocks.

(10.) *General Condition and Prospects of Affected Area.*

The situation is very satisfactory on the whole, as may be seen from the following remarks of Deputy Commissioners:—

Bhandara.—The rainfall of the month has again been seasonable and sufficient; there was a heavy fall during the first week and again on the 24th September, and all tanks are now full. Occasional showers have improved all standing crops, and artificial irrigation has nowhere yet been resorted to. The early sown coarse rice is now being cut and yielding at least an average outturn. The better kinds of irrigated rice will not be ready for a month or so; but in many places a 20-anna crop is expected. Juar is in excellent condition, sowings of linseed have begun, and if sufficient seed is available, the area sown with rabi seed should be unusually large this year. On the whole it may be said that the present prospects of the crops are more hopeful now than they have been for some years past.

Balaghat.—Very satisfactory on the whole. The rice crop is a good one, and is assured. The only cloud I can now foresee is the condition of the labouring classes during next February and the following months, more especially in Baihar, where the crops although good are scanty. They will scrape through the harvest time all right, but after then, very many will be without employment and without means.

Wardha.—Good and plentiful rain has fallen throughout the district. There has been a break since 29th ultimo, which is very welcome. Prospects are good everywhere. The labouring and poorer classes have been obtaining wages. Prices have undergone change for the better. Should present prospects continue and more heavy rain does not spoil the crops, a bumper harvest is expected, better than any reaped during the past six or seven years.

(11.) *Changes in Rates.*

Owing to the fall in prices it was found possible to reduce wages on most of the camps to the 9 seer scale in Bhandara and the 8 seer scale in Balaghat. There has been no change in the rate of wages in Nagpur and Wardha, where prices continued high.

(12.) *Crime.*

In Nagpur petty thefts have decreased, but burglaries remain numerous. In Chanda there has been a considerable decrease under both heads, while in Wardha the number of offences against property has risen.

The Deputy Commissioner, Balaghat, observes :—

“There was a distinct decrease in the number of cattle thefts for food with the advent of the maize crop, but this form of offence is again becoming apparent. In the course of my enquiries on tour during the month, I found that several malguzars intended to employ double the number of hands at their harvest in order to get the crop in sharp and prevent its being looted.”

Crime has decidedly increased in Bhandara, but the Deputy Commissioner reports that none of the cases of theft or house-breaking were of a serious type. He adds :—

“Now that crops are being cut and stacked, it seems indeed probable that a further increase in petty thefts from granaries and threshing floors is likely to take place.”

(13.) *Relief to Weavers.*

This form of relief had been much extended. It was, however, checked towards the end of the month and contracted in Kamptee. No further advances will be made after the 15th instant :—

Number of Middlemen Enlisted.	Amount advanced to Middlemen.	Number of Persons to whom Relief was afforded on the last day of the Month.			
		Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.
540	Rs. 33,210	2,214	1,784	2,412	6,410

(14.) *General Remarks for the Division.*

(a).—*Situation with regard to Famine.*—The rain has been sufficient and well distributed in all districts, and the prospects of standing crops are generally satisfactory, as already indicated in paragraph 10.

(b).—*Measures taken to organise and complete measures of relief.*—Kitchen and village relief have been extended throughout the division, and the Public Works Department camp gangs in Bhandara and Balaghat have been re-organised on the payment-by-results system after local conferences which I held in those districts.

(c).—*Prospects of the Division.*—The kharif harvest at the present time is excellent, and at least average crops are expected. Prices have already fallen, and a further fall must occur as soon as the new grain comes freely into the market. All those who have merely suffered from the prevailing high prices will experience speedy relief.

It is hoped that we shall be in a position to close all relief-works by the end of the current month in Nagpur, Bhandara and Wardha, but it may be necessary to retain a few kitchens and some village relief through part of December in places where crops may be backward. In Balaghat, where distress has been most acute, the numbers still on relief-works to be otherwise provided for are very large, and the malguzars and tenant class generally are now so impoverished as to be unable to employ anything like the usual amount of agricultural labour. The work of closing relief in that district must therefore be more gradual. In Chanda there are no Public Works Department relief-works, and relief there is confined to some

small works being carried out by local bodies to provide labour during the current month, when the demand for agricultural labour is small, and to village relief and kitchens, the necessity for which will cease next month. I have recently visited every district in the division except Chanda, where I am arranging to go soon after despatching this report.

Prospects everywhere are most encouraging, and people seemed to me generally cheering up and gaining fresh courage with the hopeful condition of the kharif harvest. Anxiety must, however, still continue about Balaghat, where, as the Deputy Commissioner remarks, many people will have a very trying time after the rice harvest is over, *i.e.*, soon after the commencement of next year.

W. A. NEDHAM,

Offg. Commissioner.

NERBUDDA DIVISION.

(1.) *Private Charity.*

Relief from the Indian Charitable Fund was given to indigent persons in all districts of the division, and clothing purchased from the same fund was distributed to inmates of poor-houses, to labourers on relief-works and to paupers in receipt of village relief in the Hoshangabad, Chhindwara and Betul districts. In all districts the main expenditure from the fund was devoted to the supply of seed-grain for the rabi sowings. The assistance thus given to cultivators has been invaluable, as without it the allotments of Government money in the shape of loans for the same object must have fallen far short of the demand for aid, and much of the area devoted to spring crops must have remained unsown. In Chhindwara the cheap grain shop established by the local committee of the fund continued to do business; but the number of ticket-holders availing themselves of the advantages which it offers declined from 589 to 407, a result attributable to the arrival in the market of the early *kharif* crops. Grain received from America was distributed gratuitously (through Missionaries chiefly) at various centres in the Hoshangabad and Narsinghpur districts. The Friends' Foreign Mission at Hoshangabad continued the employment of some 500 people on a relief-work of their own.

(2.) *Government Poor-houses.*

The following table compares the number of poor houses, and their population, in each district, during the past three months :—

District.	Number of Poor-houses.			Number of Inmates.		
	July.	August.	September.	July.	August.	September.
Hoshangabad	3	3	3	1,392	1,348	964
Narsinghpur	3	3	3	1,874	1,664	1,292
Betul	1	1	1	192	349	359
Chhindwara	2	2	2	611	595	585
Nimar	1	1	1	317	283	134
Total	10	10	10	4,386	4,329	3,334

There was thus a considerable decline in the poor-house population during September. This is partly the result of the drafting out of the able-bodied to relief-works and of the weakly to village relief, and partly of a decrease in applications for admission. The Deputy Commissioner of Hoshangabad writes :

“With the improved conditions in the villages Poor-houses are becoming unpopular even to the *habitues*.”

The Chhindwara poor-house is reported to contain 84 "foreigners," of whom 25 are from the Seoni district, 26 from the Balaghat district, 17 from the Hoshangabad district, 9 from other districts in the Central Provinces, and 7 from Bundelkhand and Rewa. The Deputy Commissioner writes :

"The system under which the Police return wanderers coming from villages in the Chhindwara district to their homes (where they are placed upon village relief) has reduced the number of admissions of people belonging to the district. The majority of the inmates belonging to the district either come from the Jagirs, where the village relief system has not been introduced on the same lines as in the *khalsa* or are under hospital treatment."

I issued orders during the month that each poor-house on the line of railway which contained residents of adjoining districts, should send the latter off by rail to the poor-houses nearest to their homes with a view to their being transferred to village relief. The reduction of the population of the Khandwa poor-house is principally due to this cause. The small increase in the Betul poor-house had disappeared by the 4th instant, when the number of inmates had fallen to 221.

The population of the poor-houses, as given above, includes orphans at the head-quarters poor-houses. In a report submitted to the Chief Commissioner on the 4th instant, I gave the number of orphans in the division as 623, and the present total is probably about 650. Thus the population of the poor-houses, excluding orphans, is now about 2,600 only.

The number of deaths reported in poor-houses during September were as under. The Deputy Commissioner of Narsinghpur has given figures for August only :—

Hoshangabad	...	...	...	...	...	No. 88
Sohagpur	...	...	...	...	...	81
Harda	...	...	...	...	...	42
Chhindwara	...	...	...	...	...	85
Amerwara	...	...	...	...	...	8
Betul	...	...	...	...	...	51
Khandwa	...	...	...	...	...	55

On the subject of poor-house mortality, the Deputy Commissioner of Hoshangabad has the following remarks :—

"The condition of the inmates has on the whole been bad, as the following statement, prepared by the Civil Surgeon, shows :—

Name of Poor-house.	Average Population.	In-patients.	Out-patients.	Deaths.	Ratio per mille per annum.
	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.
Hoshangabad	442	207	80	88	238·8
Sohagpur	452	122	199	81	214·8
Harda	177	94	18	42	284·4

"The district death-rate (during September) was 92·5, so that the poor-house death-rate was in all cases more than double the district rate. Everything possible was done to check the mortality, but without any marked success. The people admitted into the poor-houses are those who have wandered from their homes and have run down considerably in physique before they can be found and relieved. They refuse to take relief on the relief-works and try to find some place where they can beg a living. The ordinary *mukaddam*, *kotwal*, or villager relieves them as they pass through, to a small extent, but takes no steps to check their wanderings or to obtain for them permanent relief : and it is only when they are discovered by some Government servant that their cases can be properly dealt with. Often by that time they have become so reduced that it is almost impossible to save their lives."

The Deputy Commissioner of Chhindwara writes as follows :—

"The mortality in the Amerwara poor-house was very high in August ; but there was a marked improvement in September, when only eight deaths occurred. I inspected the poor-house early in September and had little fault to find with the arrangements. Fifty-eight deaths occurred among the ordinary inmates of the Chhindwara poor-house and 27 among

the orphans. The deaths among the orphans are difficult to understand, as the children till they fell sick seemed plump and well and have been so for several months. Fever was very prevalent among them towards the close of the month as well as diarrhoea. Six cases of *cancrum oris* have occurred, one of which proved fatal. As the sickness among children seemed partly due to overcrowding, I have installed 60 of the smaller children in an empty bungalow in the Civil Station, and it is to be hoped that their health will improve. The conservancy arrangements of the poor-house, under Mr. Dongre's supervision, are satisfactory, and I do not consider that the sickness is to be attributed to any neglect of sanitary precautions."

The 51 deaths in the Betul poor-house hospital were "chiefly from bowel complaints." The Deputy Commissioner of Nimar has recorded no remarks on the mortality in the Khandwa poor-house.

(3.) *Kitchens and Relief Centres.*

Leaving out of account kitchens *on relief-works*, the number of kitchens open in each district at the close of September was as under :—

	No.
Hoshangabad	14
Narsinghpur	18
Chhindwara	30 (including 16 "relief-centres" in the Jagirs).
Betul	15
Nimar	12

The Hoshangabad kitchens are all at Police-posts. So are those in the Narsinghpur district; but the Deputy Commissioner writes that many kitchens "at other places" will be started this month. In the Chhindwara district there are no kitchens at Police-posts. At the 16 relief-centres in the Jagirs people are housed in addition to being fed. Fourteen kitchens were opened in the Sausar Tahsil of the Chhindwara district during the month and are in the hands of malguzars, schoolmasters, and municipal committees. Of the 15 kitchens in Betul, 9 are at Police-posts and 6 (all in the Multai Tahsil) are managed by malguzars and schoolmasters. The 12 kitchens in Nimar are at jungly villages (inhabited by Korkus) in the Harsud Tahsil and are managed by private persons. The returns as to the number of persons fed at kitchens are defective. The Deputy Commissioners of Hoshangabad, Chhindwara and Nimar are unable to give the figures. The kitchens in the two last-named districts have been but recently started. The Deputy Commissioner, Betul, shows 683 men, women, and children fed at kitchens of all kinds on the 25th ultimo (of whom 524 were children); but the returns are incomplete. The Deputy Commissioner, Narsinghpur, reports that 1,593 persons were fed at kitchens on relief-works and 1,225 persons at Police-posts. Although their attention has more than once been directed by me to the subject, the Deputy Commissioners of this division have been slow to multiply the number of kitchens, preferring to keep children on the village relief lists. I understand that they are satisfied that (with occasional exceptions and with a reservation as to the Betul district where village relief was defective) the children are properly fed under the village relief system. Indeed, the Deputy Commissioner of Chhindwara writes that :

"In the Chhindwara and Chaurai Station-house areas (where there are no kitchens) the need for these institutions ceased to exist in the beginning of August, when the early kharif crops were cut. At a private kitchen started by a malguzar at Rohna, the numbers fell in August from over 80 to 24, in spite of the fact that no test was applied as to the eligibility of children for relief." "I have recently," he continues, "made a house to house inspection of 3 or 4 villages in the neighbourhood of Mokher, a large village where in face of the rising death-rate I thought it desirable to start a children's kitchen. I was unable to find a single child whose condition gave cause for anxiety or who appeared to need relief, and have therefore abandoned the project."

The Famine Relief Officer of the Multai Tahsil, writing on the 7th instant, records that

"Great difficulty is experienced in inducing people to send their children from one village to a kitchen in another."

In the Sausar Tahsil village relief has only recently been established on a large scale because distress did not declare itself there until the end of July. Fourteen kitchens were opened here during the month, as has already been noted.

(4.) *Village Relief.*

Totals for the last three months are compared below :—

District.	Number Relieved at their Homes in			Percentage of Population on Village Relief in September.
	July.	August.	September.	
Hoshangabad	4,881	6,439	7,786	1.5
Narsinghpur	7,364	10,953	13,708	3.7
Betul	2,955	4,414	15,171	4.4
Chhindwara	638	1,386	6,388	1.5
Nimar	695	1,119	1,531	0.53
Total	16,533	24,311	44,584	...

Betul has risen at a bound to the top of the list, with over 4 per cent. of the population on village relief. Narsinghpur comes second with nearly 4 per cent., and Hoshangabad and Chhindwara are a long way behind with only 1½ per cent. In Nimar, barely a half per cent. of the population are on village relief. The Deputy Commissioner, Hoshangabad, writes :

“With the fall in numbers on relief-works there has been a slow but steady increase in the numbers on village relief.”

In the Chhindwara district a further large increase has taken place since the 25th September chiefly in the Sausar Tahsil, where from the commencement of September a special officer (Mr. Zakir Ali, Extra-Assistant Commissioner) has been revising the lists. The Deputy Commissioner writes :

“I have visited this tahsil and find that this form of relief has now been liberally applied. Distress is at present apparent only among the elderly relatives and young children of the labouring classes and in towns among the weaving population. The standing crops are in excellent condition and no further development need be anticipated.”

The Deputy Commissioner of Betul observes that,

“The number of persons in receipt of relief is greatest in the south of the district, the people in the north being generally in better condition.”

In the Nimar district the small increase which has occurred is due to extension of village relief in the Harsud Tahsil, among the Korkus.

(5.) *General character of Relief Works.*

(a.) *Under the Public Works Department.*—The statistics of the last three months are contrasted below :—

District.	Number of Workers.			Number of Dependents.			Total.		
	July.	August.	September.	July.	August.	September.	July.	August.	September.
Hoshangabad...	34,398	30,511	22,063	6,605	5,531	6,338	41,003	36,042	28,401
Narsinghpur ...	19,720	19,790	10,726	3,108	2,725	2,126	22,828	22,515	12,852
Betul	9,290	7,878	6,810	671	1,358	1,059	9,961	9,236	7,869
Chhindwara ...	14,644	13,106	7,926	1,405	1,507	1,125	16,049	14,613	9,051
Nimar... ..	688	841	1,370	105	228	243	793	1,069	1,613
Total	78,740	72,126	48,895	11,894	11,349	10,891	90,634	83,475	59,786

The fall in the number of workers has been marked, the decrease during the month under report being particularly large. The number of dependents has not decreased in proportion ; but this is probably due to the fact (alluded to by the Deputy Commissioner of Hoshangabad in explanation of the *increase* in the number of dependents in that district in September) that persons and children who are fed

at the Public Works kitchen before admission or before being forwarded to a poor-house are included among dependents in the returns sent in from many of the "charges."

Concerning the diminution in the number of workers, the Deputy Commissioner of Hoshangabad writes :—

"With the exception of the introduction of the new piece-work rules, there has been no pressure brought to induce persons to leave the works. These rules have on the whole worked satisfactorily, and any defects that I have found have been not in the rules but the action of the Officer in Charge. The fall in numbers has been spread over the whole month, but become faster towards its close. The ripening of the early millets, which have yielded a bumper harvest, has induced many to leave the works and to return to their homes."

The Deputy Commissioner, Chhindwara, writes :—

"The decrease in the number of workers is an indication that the labouring classes are beginning to find the usual channels of employment open to them."

The increase in workers in Nimar was caused by the influx of Korkus from the distressed tract in the Harsud Tahsil. Now that village relief has been extended there and that kitchens have been opened they are commencing to return to their homes.

(b.) *Loan Works.*—During the month Rs. 750 were advanced to cultivators as famine loans in the Narsinghpur district. The loan works in the Betul district were brought to a close.

(c.) *Works under District Officers.*—The only works under District Officers were a few minor forest roads in the Hoshangabad district, opened for the benefit of the forest tribes and the deepening of the Punasa tank in the Nimar district. The numbers employed on these works were small.

(6.) *Physical Condition of the People.*

On this subject the Deputy Commissioner of Narsinghpur says :—

"In the more distressed tracts, taking the district as a whole, the physical condition of the mass of people cannot be said to be decidedly reduced and the proportion of emaciated persons is decidedly small."

The Deputy Commissioner of Betul writes :—

"The condition of the poorer classes is bad in the south of the district. Cases of emaciation are rare in the north and centre of the district and in the south the condition of the people is improving."

In the Multai Tahsil, Mr. Standen, the special Famine Relief Officer, has been able to remove the names of 197 persons from the village registers in view of the improvement referred to. In the Chhindwara district, according to Mr. Ryves,

"There has been a decided improvement during the month throughout the Chhindwara Tahsil, and the Additional Tahsildar, Harrai, notices the same thing in the Jagirs under his charge. Early in August *sawa* and then *makka* and *kutki* provided the people with sustenance, with the result that emaciated people are very rare indeed. The Sausar Tahsil, however, differs from the rest of the district in that over the greater part of its area *juari* and *tur* are the staple crops. These ripen in December as sowings are, as a rule, made late, after the cotton has been put into the ground. The condition of the people must therefore tend to deteriorate for another two months to come. Distress did not declare itself in this tahsil until the end of July and it at present only exists to a limited extent. The cultivating classes have not been affected and as it has been possible for most agricultural labourers to earn 2 annas a day weeding *juari* and cotton, the bulk of the labourers are in good condition. There are, however, persons in nearly every village who show signs of want—old people who are a burden on their relations and children of infirm persons who cannot earn sufficient to support them. Such people are now, almost without exception, on the relief registers."

Now that the able-bodied labourers are leaving the relief-works, the condition of the majority of the persons on these works is not, on the average, quite so good as formerly. The Deputy Commissioner of Hoshangabad has given a statement showing the death-rate on relief-works in his district, from which it appears that at Bankheri and Hatwas the mortality is considerable. The piece-workers on these roads are reported to be

"In good condition and equal to those on other works, but many of the task-workers are miserably off for clothes, and the death-rate is no doubt enhanced by exposure and want of shelter. Owing to the large numbers on these charges the hutting arrangements have proved deficient."

These two works will shortly be closed and the task-workers who are weakly will receive house-to-house relief in their villages where they will be better off than on an open road.

(7.) *Mortality.*

Including deaths from all causes, the mortality in August was as shown in the subjoined comparative statement :—

District.	Number of Deaths.		Rate per mille per annum.	
	July.	August.	July.	August.
Hoshangabad	2,130	3,423	51·9	83·4
Narsinghpur	2,298	2,658	75·12	86·88
Betul	2,408	3,801	89·43	141·12
Nimar	1,603	2,096	67·32	87·96

I have not received the Chhindwara mortality return from the Civil Surgeon of that district, although under standing orders a copy thereof is to be sent to me monthly. The Deputy Commissioner reports that deaths numbered 1,731, giving a percentage per mille per annum of 61.

The mortality in the Betul district was excessively high. Only 80 deaths were due to cholera, and the percentage per mille per annum, after deducting these, stands at 138·04. Neither the Deputy Commissioner nor the Civil Surgeon (in his monthly mortality statement) throws much light upon the subject. The Deputy Commissioner confines himself to the remark that "the death-rate is highest in the Southern Circles." The civil surgeon records that fever caused 1,629 deaths and bowel complaints 280 deaths, or, in other words, half the mortality is attributable to these two causes. We must turn to districts whose administrative officers are less chary of utterance in order to get the fuller information which we require. In the adjoining district of Chhindwara (and especially in the Sausar Tahsil) the conditions as to climate, &c., are somewhat similar to those of Betul. Mr. Ryves records that, finding the mortality in the Sausar Tahsil running up during September to an extent which made a death-rate of 123 per mille per annum probable, he personally visited the tahsil and examined the registers of the Sausar Station-house and of the two outposts at Ranakona and Mohgaon, and endeavoured to ascertain the causes of the mortality by checking the deaths of one or two villages on the spot. He gives the results of his enquiry in the following words :—

"The population of the Police-posts inspected is 40,122 and the mortality reported during September 357, giving a death-rate of 106·8 per 1,000 per annum, but in the Mohgaon Outpost Circle it was as high as 147 per cent. This mortality classified according to the ages of the deceased was as follows :—

Age.	No. of Deaths.
0—1 years	53
1—5 "	53
5—10 "	15
10—15 "	18
15—20 "	7
20—30 "	26
30—40 "	17
40—50 "	38
50—60 "	31
Over 60 "	99

"It will be observed that very nearly half the deaths occurred among infants under 1 year of age and among aged people over 60 years of age.

"The causes of death were as follows :—

	No.
Fever	236
Dysentery	34
Other causes	81
Small-pox	2
Accident	2

"It will be noticed that diarrhoea and dysentery, which have been the most fertile causes of death in poor-houses and famine hospitals, play quite a minor part compared to malarial fever. 'Other causes' include lung affections of all descriptions not classed as fever.

"The heaviest mortality in the Mohgaon Circle occurred in the large village of Pipla Narainwar. Here 36 deaths occurred in a population of 3,288, giving a percentage of 130 per thousand per annum. I visited this village and checked the kotwal's register of deaths. I found that the malguzar of this place had for some months been distributing grain to the poor, and that six deaths were those of wandering beggars who had come to the village attracted by this fact. The deaths among residents had occurred among the well-to-do classes with as much frequency as among the poor. The death-roll, for instance, included two Marwaris, a well-to-do Brahmin, a Sunar and five or six Telis, all of them persons in good circumstances, and further enquiries into the deaths among the lower classes failed to elicit one in which privation could be said to have been the determining cause. The malguzar, Ganpat Singh, had in fact taken measures which precluded that supposition. In other villages, namely, Singhpur, Koparwari, Ridhora, Jokiwara and Jam, I made similar enquiries, and found that the deaths in these villages were equally divided between rich and poor.

"To turn to the Chhindwara Tahsil, the Mokher outpost area, with a population 13,118, has a mortality of 189, giving a death-rate of 168 per thousand per annum. In this area Mauza Ekulbehri headed the list with a population of 1,186 and a death-roll of 18. I visited this village and made a house-to-house inspection and found it to contain only one man showing signs of emaciation. He was by no means in bad case, and had been in receipt of relief for more than a month. Nine people were in receipt of relief, of whom two had asked to have their names struck off as they were able to provide for themselves, and did not wish to be classed as 'kangals' longer than was necessary. Examining the register of deaths I found that one was due to dysentery, seven to fever, and ten to other causes, principally lung affections. Two possibly were famine cases, the deceased being mendicant musicians (Mong-bhats) on their way from Nagpur to Chhindwara, who had died of fever. Otherwise mortality appeared to have been most prevalent among the Bhoys, a thrifty set of cultivators, who in this village are all well-to-do. Two of the deceased were farm servants, in regular employ, one a relative of the village carpenter, a well-to-do man, while a woman who gave birth to twins, both of whom died, helped to swell the total. The inhabitants assured me that none of the deceased had been in any straits with regard to food.

"When it is remembered that the above death-rates occurred in the two tracts of this district which were blessed above the others with a bumper harvest in the past year, I do not think that it is wrong to conclude that the present abnormal death-rate is due to causes with which privation has little to do directly. The active causes would appear to be malarial fever of a peculiarly fatal type, and dysentery induced by eating new grain."

The Deputy Commissioner of Narsinghpur, in his remarks on the August return, has recorded that—

"The mortality during the month of August is about the same as it was in the corresponding month of last year, but in the fourth week the mortality appears to have risen very suddenly, as in this week above 970 deaths were reported. Fever was responsible for the greater number of these."

The Civil Surgeon of Nimar, in his special mortality return for August, writes that—

"The present mortality is to be attributed to the advent of the seasonal fevers which set in at this period, and to the prevalence of diarrhoea and dysentery throughout the district—diseases which have been greatly aggravated by the existing scarcity and the free use among the poorer classes of green vegetables and indigestible roots. That these bowel complaints, however, are not altogether due to the latter causes is shown by the fact that I have seen many such cases among well-to-do people in Khandwa, and that there has also been an unusual number among the prisoners in the jail, although their diet has been quite unchanged even in the matter of vegetables and their drinking water boiled."

The Deputy Commissioner, Hoshangabad, writes :—

"So long as the present weather continues I fear that there is no hope of the death-rate falling. The physique of the people has been undermined and they are less able to stand the ordinary ailments of the season."

I have asked the Deputy Commissioner of Hoshangabad and the special Famine Relief Officer, Multai, to undertake house-to-house enquiries in a few villages similar to those made by Mr. Ryves. It seems pretty clear, however, from the facts and opinions above recorded, that the high death-rate in the division is only partly owing to the privations endured by the poorer classes. It is largely contributed to by the mortality among the well-to-do.

(8.) *Stocks and Prices.*

The prices prevailing in the last week of the months of July and August are compared below :—

District.	Seers per Rupee.					
	Wheat.		Juari.		Rice.	
	August.	September.	August.	September.	August.	September.
Hoshangabad	S. ch. 7 12	S. ch. 7 12	S. ch. 8 6	S. ch. ...	S. ch. 7 5½	S. ch. 7 5
Narsinghpur	8 0	8 4	9 0	9 0	7 8	8 0
Betul	7 4	7 4	8 0	8 0	...	...
Chhindwara	7 5	7 5	8 2	7 8	6 5	6 5
Nimar ... ..	...	...	8 8	10 4	...	...

Thus there was little change in the month under report, the exception being in the case of Nimar, where the price of *juari* fell.

The Deputy Commissioner of Hoshangabad records that—

“Food-stocks appear ample, and there is likely to be a sharp fall in prices as soon as the spring crops have been sown and the balance of the grain stored in *bandas* is set free for sale. Early millets have all yielded full crops, thus placing cheap food in plenty within the reach of villagers. The amount harvested has not been sufficient to affect the prices of the more valuable grains, which have remained stationary throughout the month.”

The Deputy Commissioner of Narsinghpur writes that the—

“Food stock does not appear to be insufficient. The rice and *kodon* crops will soon be available to increase the food stock. Prices are a little easier and ought to fall when the demand for seed grain is satisfied and the kharif harvest comes in.”

In Betul “food-stocks have been replenished owing to the cutting of *kutki*, *sawa*, and maize.”

“Prices have remained constant during the month” in Chhindwara, “and will presumably remain so until the demand for seed grain has ceased, and the area under rabi crops becomes known. *Kutki* and *makka*, it is reported, are being exported by Banjaras to the Nerbudda valley districts. Food supplies are now ample, *urad* and *mung* having been added to the crops already gathered.”

The Deputy Commissioner of Nimar remarks that—

“Food stocks are now plentiful, and there has been something like a bumper crop of the minor grains. This district will not be much dependent on imported grains.”

(9.) *Imports and Exports of Grain.*

District.	Imports.		Exports.	
	August.	September.	August.	September.
Hoshangabad	Maunds. 21,136	Maunds. 19,147	Maunds. 5,950	Maunds. 977
Narsinghpur	25,331	11,820	3,148	3,994
Betul	540	1,630	<i>Nil.</i>	<i>Nil.</i>
Chhindwara	Details not given.		Details not given.	
Nimar	40,961	30,091	802	1,855

There was thus a further falling-off of the imports in all districts except Betul. Exports from the Hoshangabad district declined considerably.

(10.) *General Condition and Prospects of the Affected Area.*

The Deputy Commissioner of Narsinghpur observes that—

“The kharif crops are said to be very excellent. The showers of rain which fell towards the close of September have moistened the land so well that the rabi crops will have a good start when they are put down.”

The prospects of the standing crops are good in Betul. “Such crops as have been cut have given a good outturn, especially *sawa*.” No rain had fallen for some days when the Deputy Commissioner wrote, and the preparation of rabi fields, he records, is being actively pushed on.

The Deputy Commissioner, Chhindwara writes—

“Apart from the death-rate there is now little cause for anxiety as to the future, provided that the rabi harvest does not fail. As matters stand, the Chhindwara Tahsil is approaching the time when relief can be withdrawn, while in the Sausar Tahsil the organization of relief appears to be complete. In the Jagirs relief operations will, in all probability, have to be continued in some form or other till the wheat harvest, but the worst appears to be over, and people are voluntarily leaving relief-centres and works for their homes.”

The Deputy Commissioner of Nimar writes as follows :—

“I have lately toured in the Harsud Tahsil, the worst affected part of the district. The early kharif crops have been reaped in abundance. There is no dearth of food grain for consumption. *Juar* will be reaped in the middle of November. It is the general opinion that such good crops have not been known for years past. The immediate result is that prices have improved, but exportation of grain will set in, and prices will not fall very much. Distress ought to cease. Rice will soon be reaped. Grass cutting will also afford a considerable amount of employment. This will soon be followed by the reaping of the *juari* harvest. In the Roshin tract many cases of weakness and emaciation seem due chiefly to disease, as is shown by other members of the same family being in fair condition, and the numerous traces of branding on the body.”

Thus the general outlook is extremely favourable, and the winding up of famine relief operations can shortly be commenced. Orders on the subject have been issued with the Chief Commissioner's approval.

With regard to the Chhindwara Jagirs, arrangements for the prolongation of relief will probably take the form of local works to be constructed by the Jagirdars, with borrowed capital.

(11.) *Changes in the Rate of Wages.*

There is nothing to report under this head, as prices remained stationary in all districts except Nimar. The rate of wage has been lowered in Nimar since the current month began.

(12.) *Crime.*

There were 79 offences against property in Nimar, chiefly thefts and house-breaking—a figure considerably in excess of that recorded for September 1896. In Betul the number of thefts reported “is large, but most of them are not enquired into by the police. People also complain that thefts of grain from their fields are numerous this year.” The number of offences reported during the month in Narsinghpur “was 187 as compared with 299 in the previous month, and 264 in the corresponding month of 1896.”

(13.) *Summary for the Division.*

The aggregate numbers on relief at the end of July and August are compared below :—

Nature of Relief.	28th August.	25th September.
	Numbers Relieved.	Numbers Relieved.
A.—Works	72,126	48,895
B.— <i>Gratuitous Relief</i> —		
1. In Poor-houses	4,239	3,334
2. Other gratuitous relief, including dependents	39,791	60,774
Total A	44,030	64,108
Total A and B	116,156	113,003

A decrease of about 23,000 workers on relief works has been nearly counter-balanced by an increase of about 20,000 persons in receipt of village relief, leaving a nett decrease of about 3,000 persons.

L. K. LAURIE,

Commissioner,

Nerbudda Division.

11th October 1897.

CHHATTISGARH DIVISION.

(1.) *Private Charity.*

During September, the Local Committee at Bilaspur of the Indian Charitable Relief Fund spent Rs. 3,350 in providing inmates of poor-houses with clothing, and Rs. 75 in helping respectable paupers. No other expenditure from the fund was incurred during the month. In the Raipur district, the Committee provided 10,000 families with *khavai* or subsistence till the harvest. The Local Committees of both districts have been actively engaged for some time past in making efficient arrangements for providing needy cultivators with seed for the winter sowings. The allotments will be mainly expended in this direction during the current month. The Deputy Commissioner, Bilaspur, reports that a sum of Rs. 70,000 has been told off by the Bilaspur Local Committee for the purpose. He expects that the whole of this amount will be expended by the 20th or 25th instant. In addition to the Charitable Fund allotments, a sum of Rs. 10,000 each (from the Rs. 20,000 placed recently at my disposal by the Chief Commissioner) has been given to the Deputy Commissioners, Raipur and Bilaspur, for expenditure on advances for rabi seed, while the Deputy Commissioners have also been permitted, under the orders of the Chief Commissioner, to devote the balance of their annual Land Improvement Loans allotments to advances under the Agriculturists Loans Act. It is hoped that these measures will result in bringing under the plough the greater portion, if not the whole, of the normal rabi area. The Deputy Commissioner, Bilaspur, gives the following figures of expenditure from the Charitable Relief Fund from the commencement of operations up to date:—

	Rs.
Head I. (extra comforts)...	12,350
Do. II. (orphans) ...	150
Do. III. (for the respectable poor) ...	1,200
Do. IV. (for agriculturists) ...	183,800

It is explained that a good deal of money spent upon orphans has been included in Head I., a lump sum being assigned monthly to the Bilaspur poor-house, including the orphanage, while no separate account is kept of the expenditure on the two sections of the institution. Missionary Societies continue to give help in both districts. The private poor-house at Bisrampur in the Raipur district continued open during the month, and at Parsabadhar in the same district considerable amounts of grain and food are reported to have been distributed. The Deputy Commissioner, Raipur, has suggested the advisability of getting labour from able-bodied persons in return for the food distributed to them by the Missionaries.

He reports as follows:—

“I had a talk with the Reverend Mr. Hagenstein, and he informed me that he did make an attempt to get labour where possible from those to whom he distributed aid, but that he found difficulty in attaining this object. I arranged for co-operation between him and the Police.”

The aid given by Missionaries in the Bilaspur district is summarised by the Deputy Commissioner as follows:—

“The Reverend Mr. Adams at Bilaspur supports about 375 persons and the Reverend Mr. Gordon distributes rice to 175 persons at Mungeli and to 449 at Setganga. At a kitchen in Mungeli he feeds 50 children twice daily, and he maintains 125 children in his orphanage at the same place. The Reverend Mr. Nottrott at Chandkhuri in the same tahsil provides work for 265 persons.”

The private poor-houses in the Sambalpur district have, as reported last month, all been closed. No special organization for the relief of distress by private charity now exists in this district, nor does it appear to be needed.

(2.) *Government Poor-houses.*

The following table compares the number of poor-houses and their population in each district during the past three months :—

District.	Number of Poor-houses.			Number of Inmates.		
	July.	August.	September.	July.	August.	September.
Raipur	4	6	6	4,170	4,892	4,176
Bilaspur	4	4	4	8,129	6,274	5,006
Total	8	10	10	12,299	11,166	9,182

The number of poor-houses remains unchanged. The population in these institutions has decreased considerably in both districts. In the Raipur district the increase is returned at 716, but it has apparently been larger, since the population of the Dondi-Lohara poor-house was not reported last month. In the Bilaspur district the decrease amounted to 1,268. The Bilaspur poor-house shows a decrease of 626, the number having been reduced to 3,074; of the latter number 866 are orphans, while the patients number 801 in hospital, including orphans. The population of the Pendra and Pandaria poor-houses has now been reduced to 154 and 493 respectively. On the other hand, the population of the Mungeli poor-house has gone up by 201, the figure now returned being 1,285. The numbers drafted from poor-houses on to relief-works and to their homes for village relief are returned as follows :—

District and Tahsil.				Relief Works.	Village Relief.	Remarks.
Raipur District.	Raipur			233	<i>Nil.</i>	
	Drug			14	92	
	Simga			156	58	
	Baloda			466	660	
	Gondia			97	85	
	Dondi-Lohara			Figures not reported.		Excluding 59 children claimed by their parents.
Bilaspur District.	Bilaspur			479	338	
	Pendra			258	126	
	Mungeli			121	210	
	Pandaria... ..			161	336	

The largest amount of drafting was done from the Baloda poor-house in the Raipur district. No persons were drafted to their homes from the Raipur poor-house, and an explanation of this omission has been called for. It is understood, however, that since the 25th September, the date up to which the report is brought, considerable numbers have been sent from the poor-house to their homes for village relief. The figures reported for the Drug poor-house do not represent the total amount of drafting done, as considerable numbers (exact figure not stated) were sent back to the Feudatory States of Nandgaon and Khairagarh, from which they had come.

The road patrol system continues to do good service in the Bilaspur district. The numbers brought in were 207 to the Bilaspur poor-house, 71 to the Mungeli poor-house, and 129 to the Pandaria poor-house. The Deputy Commissioner has stopped the patrol on the Sheorinarayan road, where it was found to be no longer needed. On the other roads it will probably be necessary till about the end of the

current month. I regret to have to report that the poor-house mortality in the Bilaspur district has risen considerably in the past month. The figures for the past four months were as follows :—

June	586
July	814
August	885
September	1,183

This increase in the death-rate has taken place in spite of the greater care which has been exercised in the management of these institutions. During September the number of deaths in the Bilaspur poor-house alone was 557. The poor-houses are, as they should be, collections of the most weakly and emaciated individuals that can be found in the district, and a high rate of mortality in these institutions is only what must be looked for. Persons are still unfortunately received in a more or less moribund condition, while of the rest a large portion, in spite of good nourishment, have never been able to recover from the direct or indirect effects of previous distress, and have, in the end, succumbed. Many persons again die of diseases contracted before entry into the poor-house, which, though accelerated by privation, are not directly attributable to it.

The number of deaths in the poor-houses of the Raipur district has been reported to the Deputy Commissioner by one Sub-Divisional Officer only. I have asked the Deputy Commissioner to take steps so that this information may not be omitted in future. The Police return a total of 380 deaths in poor-houses ; but it may be doubted whether this figure is even approximately correct. It is probable that there has been a general decline in poor-house mortality in this district. For the one poor-house for which information is given, *viz.*, the Simga poor-house, the number of deaths decreased from 144 to 50. The Deputy Commissioner attributes this "to the unremitting care bestowed on the institution by Mr. May, the Officer in Charge, and the improved climatic conditions of the month."

(3.) *Relief Centres.*

The number of relief centres in the Raipur district is reported to have decreased from 26 to 19, owing to the conversion of 7 centres into relief kitchens, while the numbers relieved at these centres fell from 1,654 to 460. The conversion into kitchens is still in progress. In the Bilaspur district there are two relief centres, *viz.*, at Pendri and Takhatpur, where 12 and 21 persons respectively were fed.

(4.) *Relief Kitchens.*

Excluding Public Works Department kitchens, there are 24 relief kitchens in the Raipur district and 37 in the Bilaspur district, the numbers of persons relieved at them being 2,956 and 5,045 respectively. The recipients of this form of relief in the latter district are reported to have been all children, with the exception of 15. Of the 24 kitchens in the Raipur district, 22 are under the management of the Police. In the Bilaspur district the Police are beginning to take over management of the kitchens.

The Deputy Commissioner writes :—

"With one or two exceptions, all these kitchens were started by Famine Officers. The District Superintendent of Police was unable to start work until the extra men promised him were received. Most of these have now arrived, and 10 kitchens have been transferred to Police management. Others will shortly follow. Some, of course, are at places where there is no Police post."

(5.) *Village Relief.*

The number of persons relieved in their villages during the past two months is compared below :—

	August.	September.	Difference.
Raipur	17,010	28,623	+11,613
Bilaspur	71,922	91,018	+19,096

The numbers have gone up very considerably in both districts. In Bilaspur this form of relief was extended to 301 villages for the first time during the month, raising the total number of villages so relieved to 3,613.

The numbers have probably reached their highest point in both districts, and a rapid decline may be looked for in the course of the next two months.

(6.) *General Character of Works.*

(a.) *Under the Public Works Department.*—The statistics of the past two months are contrasted below :—

Districts.	Workers.		Dependents.		Total.		Difference.	
	August.	September.	August.	September.	August.	September.	+	-
Raipur	32,690	33,656	6,501	8,681	39,191	42,337	3,146	...
Bilaspur	40,248	41,445	4,130	4,437	44,378	45,882	1,504	...
Sambalpur	285	682	170	100	455	782	327	..
Total	73,223	75,783	10,801	13,218	84,024	89,001	4,977	...

As in the month of August, the scope for employment in the way of weeding operations in the fields was held to account for a decline in the numbers on relief works, so in September the increase in numbers may, speaking generally, be attributed to the general cessation of those operations by the end of the month. This, however, is a very general statement, and does not account fully for the fluctuations in numbers on each individual work. On some of the works in Raipur there has been considerable decrease in numbers, of which a detailed explanation would have been interesting. On one work in this district, the 2nd Section of the Tilda-Sirpur road, there has been, on the other hand, an altogether abnormal increase which has not been explained, but which may perhaps be sufficiently accounted for by the correction of abuses previously existing on this work. Similarly in the Bilaspur district the fluctuations have been by no means uniform in character. In this district it seems probable that the evil effects of the mistaken and unauthorized introduction of the piece-work system, to which reference was made in the last monthly report, were not all at once recovered from. The fluctuations during the current month will be watched with special interest, as they will afford an index to the dates by which the several works can with safety be closed. In those localities where the harvest is a specially early one, a very rapid falling off in numbers may be looked for. Particular attention is now being directed to the duty of promptly reducing wages on relief works as prices fall, so as to guard against any danger of their keeping labour away from the fields. In order that there may be no delay in carrying out this most important duty, I have authorized Deputy Commissioners to anticipate my sanction in the matter of changes in the rates of wages. In spite of the increase of numbers from 285 to 682 on the Dabra-Khursia road, in the Sambalpur district, it has been decided that the time has now come when this work can with safety be closed, and arrangements will be made accordingly under suitable precautions. This will mean the final discontinuance of all measures of famine-relief in the Sambalpur district.

(b.) *Under District Officers.*—The number of Government works under Civil Agency in the Raipur district fell from 4 to 3, but the number of workers has risen from 564 to 2,314. The Deputy Commissioner explains that the increase is due to a number of persons having been employed by his Civil Officers in weeding operations. This species of employment was considered necessary, it is reported, in some cases where the grant of a loan for the purpose was not feasible, as there was no chance of repayment; and, as the persons employed were those who would otherwise have come on the relief lists under Section 34 of the Famine Code, the arrangement appears to me in every way commendable. In the Bilaspur district there is only one work under Civil Agency, which is now open. This work is in the town of Bilaspur, and consists in filling up an insanitary tank. The number employed on this work was 269.

(c.) *Loan Works*.—Four hundred and eighty-one persons were relieved on loan works in the Raipur district. There were no such works open in the Bilaspur district.

(7.) *Physical Condition of the People.*

The Deputy Commissioner of Raipur reports :—

“The physical condition of the people on works is fair. But there was much illness in the villages. The more open weather, and perhaps the extension of village relief, under Section 34, and at kitchens, has given us a smaller death-rate than in the preceding month, but the figure is still deplorably high. Fever and bowel complaints were prevalent, and the enfeebled physique of many of the small tenants and labourers was unequal to meet the attack. Things ought to improve in the current month, which should see the beginning of regular harvesting and the lessening of exposure.”

• The Deputy Commissioner, Bilaspur, writes as follows :—

“Almost all officers report an improvement in the condition of the people. In Mungeli, Mr. Streatfeild reports that bad cases of emaciation are now rarely met with, and that wandering has almost ceased. Lieutenant Watson writes of the north of Bilaspur Khalsa, ‘The condition of the people is improving, but as yet there are no signs of any decrease in the numbers on relief. There are fewer emaciated persons to be seen and fewer starving wanderers. The rice crop should be a good one, but as a full crop was not sown, I should think the total result will be about 14 annas.’ Lieutenant Beadon writes of the north-western zamindaris, ‘As regards relief measures, there is now very little for me to do. In the last month there has been a wonderful change in the condition of the people, and it is only in the south of Kenda that any real distress exists.’ There are not wanting signs, therefore, that the liberal expenditure on famine relief in this district during the past few months is at length bearing fruit, and I trust that this happy result will be reflected in the district death returns when these come to hand.”

The Deputy Commissioner, Sambalpur, reports that the piece-workers on the Dabra-Khursia road are robust and healthy ; but that the task-workers are weak. The general health of the district is good.

(8.) *Deaths from Starvation.*

No deaths from starvation are reported to have occurred in the Raipur and Sambalpur districts. The Bilaspur report is silent on this subject, but it is believed that in this district also such deaths are now either altogether unknown or at all events most exceptional. The death-rate per mille per annum in the three districts during June, July and August is compared below :—

—	June.	July.	August.
Raipur	109·68	84·	117·24
Bilaspur	137·45	119·04	150·89
Sambalpur	49·	27·	27·

The mortality returns for August show a deplorable increase in both the Raipur and Bilaspur districts. This, it will be remembered, is what was anticipated. Complete returns for September are not yet available ; but it is expected that they will be distinctly lower ; and it may be hoped there will henceforth be a steady tendency towards a return to normal conditions.

(9.) *Food Stocks.*

No deficiency of food-stock is reported to exist anywhere. The price of rice in the past two months is compared below :—

—	August.	September.
Raipur	7½ Seers per Rupee	8½ Seers per Rupee
Bilaspur	7¼ ” ”	10 ” ”
Sambalpur	9½ ” ”	10 ” ”

Prices have fallen everywhere, and the tendency continues to be in a steadily downward direction. The Deputy Commissioner, Raipur, thinks that the bazar price is cheaper than that reported above for September. He writes:—

“For ordinary rice, the price undoubtedly was from 9 to 10 seers at the close of September, and a striking indication of the fact is that customers ceased to frequent the cheap grain shop managed by the Local Charitable Relief Committee, where good rice was sold at 10 seers to the rupee. I have ascertained by personal enquiries from grain merchants and from individuals of the working class what the price of rice is, and have no hesitation in saying that the officer in charge of price current lists has either received mistaken information or else has had too high class a sample of rice in view when he reported 8½ seers as the price: 9 to 9½ seers may be accepted as the true price at the close of the month. If all is well, it should be 11 or 12 seers before the close of October.”

The Deputy Commissioner, Bilaspur, reports that since the close of the month rice is selling at 11 seers per rupee. He expects a further reduction before long owing to the prosperous condition of the crops. The good prospects of the approaching harvest have already caused grain-dealers to open out their stocks more freely with the result that there is a general decline in prices.

There is no reason to fear a deficiency of rabi seed for the winter sowings. The Deputy Commissioner, Raipur, writes that he has every hope of securing adequate rabi sowings.

The Deputy Commissioner, Bilaspur, speaking of the distribution of the allotment made by the District Committee of the Indian Charitable Relief Fund for rabi seed, remarks as follows:—

“In villages where owing to drought no sowing was possible last year, or the year before, some scarcity of seed is anticipated, but seeing how good the rabi outturn last spring was, and how little export there has been, there is no reason to fear that the deficiencies of such villages cannot be met from the abundance of others, if only the means of purchase be provided. Famine Officers have been asked to show special consideration to cases of this kind.”

(10.) *Import and Export of Grain.*

The figures are as under:—

District.	Exports.			Imports.		
	July.	August.	September.	July.	August.	September.
Raipur	26,722	34,290	12,314	15,657	16,726	17,256
Bilaspur	676	398	2,178	34,463	45,729	25,456

These statistics appear to call for no special remark, and no longer possess the same special interest as formerly.

(11.) *General Condition and Prospects of Affected Area.*

A break in the rains about the middle of September, lasting up to the end of the month, was everywhere beneficial, and enabled weeding operations to be completed. A prolonged drought was at one time feared, but general rain early in the current month was most opportune, and the kharif prospects may now be regarded as assured. Once more, as at so many critical junctures throughout the present season, the rain has fallen exactly when it was most wanted. I extract the following from the several district reports:—

Raipur.—“The month has witnessed a distinct improvement. Not only has the reaping of some minor grains such as ‘*kutki*’ and ‘*sawa*’ given relief, but the prospects of the rice harvest and particularly the promise of *kodo*, which has been largely sown, are very good, and this has had the effect of bringing down prices, an incalculable boon to the poor. There are a few groups of villages where the rainfall has not been adequate, and special note is being taken of these. Here and there the ‘*phapha*,’ a sort of grass-hopper or small locust, has done damage to the rice, but these reports are happily not general. Rabi seed will be given more freely from charitable funds wherever such losses are known and wherever the sowings of the kharif were much below the average.”

Bilaspur.—"A break in the rains set in about the 15th September, lasting till after the end of the month. It has been beneficial to the crops and enabled weeding to be finished. Rice is now everywhere in and *dahya* rice in the zamindaris (that sown on land on which brushwood has been cut down and burnt) has been reaped. Recent reports show that the cutting of early (*haruna*) rice is beginning in parts of the khalsa. Heavy and apparently general rain set in on the night of the 3rd October and will be of immense benefit. The rice crops will certainly be above the average, and *kodo* (which has been very largely sown this year) appears to be a magnificent crop. The present rain will moreover enable a large rabi area to be sown. Altogether prospects could hardly be brighter than they are."

Accounts from this district, which have been received since the submission of the monthly report, tend however to show that one particular portion of the Pandaria Zamindari, including about 100 villages, must be regarded as an exception to this generally satisfactory state of things. Prospects in this little area appear to be far from all that could be wished, and special attention will have to be paid to it.

Sambalpur.—"The crops are in good condition. In Sambalpur Tahsil the outturn is estimated at 16 annas, while in Bargarh it is 12 annas. The recent rain was welcomed by all, and there is no doubt now that there will be a splendid crop."

(12.) *Crime.*

The following table shows the state of crime in the Bilaspur district, as regards offences against property :—

	August 1897.	September 1897.	September 1896.
Thefts	251	151	117
House-breaking	228	112	101
Cattle theft and mischief	128	98	40
Total	607	361	258

The decrease is principally due to the special measures taken by way of discouraging the criminal prosecutions of petty thefts committed by starving persons. The orders on this point have now been modified in view of the approaching harvest and every precaution is being taken to guard against the prevalence of any idea of impunity for crop-looting.

The Deputy Commissioner, Raipur, reports as follows on the subject :—

"As I have not received the figures from the Police, I am unable to go in detail into the question of the increase and decrease of crime, but as far as I can judge, it has shown a tendency to decrease. I cannot help anticipating a recrudescence of crime on the ripening of the crops. There is a widespread fear of looting of standing crops, and I am in consultation with the District Superintendent of Police as to preventive measures. This is another reason why we shall be glad to see a reduction in the number of road works, as it is more difficult to keep the workers under surveillance than to provide against organised agrarian crime by villagers residing in their villages."

(13.) *Changes in the Rate of Wages.*

There was no change during the month. But the proposal of the Deputy Commissioner, Bilaspur, referred to in his report, to reduce wages everywhere, except in a few localities, to the 9 seer scale, has been sanctioned since its close. And, as above stated, Deputy Commissioners have now been authorized and instructed to take prompt action in this direction, as may be necessary from time to time, in anticipation of sanction.

(14.) *Employment afforded by Railway Work.*

The Raipur-Dhamtari feeder line gave relief to 2,520 persons in September against 960 in August. This line was taken over as immediate relief in the locality through which it passes was considered necessary. The increase in numbers shows the usefulness of the work in affording substantial relief. It is being carried on under the "new" piece-work rules.

(15.) *Summary for the Division.*

The aggregate numbers on relief in August and September are compared below :—

Nature of Relief.	August.	September.
	Numbers Relieved.	Numbers Relieved.
<i>A.—Works—</i>		
1. Public Works Department ...	73,223	75,783
2. Under Civil Officers, including works done by famine loans and private works ...	4,275	4,764
Total ...	77,498	80,547
<i>B.—Gratuitous Relief—</i>		
1. Poor-houses ...	11,166	9,182
2. Other gratuitous relief, including that of dependents on relief-works ...	104,043	141,603
Total ...	115,209	150,785
Grand Total A and B ...	192,707	231,332

The poor-house population shows a substantial decline, due to the attention paid during the month to the drafting of inmates to relief-works and to village relief in their homes. Gradual, though at present necessarily slow, progress is being made towards the end which we have eventually in view of retaining these institutions purely as hospitals.

The total number relieved in the division has been augmented by the still further extension of village relief during the month. It may be taken that this form of relief has now reached its extreme limit, and a considerable falling off in numbers and expenditure may be looked for in the next report.

(b.) *Action taken to Organize and Complete Measures of Relief.*—Village relief was extended to 301 villages in the Bilaspur district as well as to several in the Raipur district. The organization of the measures of relief has at length been brought to a standard as nearly approaching perfection as is compatible with the necessary imperfect character of the subordinate agency through which it has to be administered. The gradual withdrawal of these measures, which is now in view, is a task demanding the utmost care and watchfulness; but I have every confidence in its being successfully accomplished.

(c.) *Prospects of the Division.*—It will be gathered from the foregoing remarks that the prospects of a rich harvest are now well assured throughout almost the whole of the division, and that the end of this season of distress is coming rapidly into the foreground. The steps to be taken in the direction of closing our special relief operations are now under consideration. A number of considerations, not the least of which is the still high rate of mortality in the division, indicate the need of special caution against allowing this process to be too abrupt. The harvest in Chhattisgarh is generally later than in the more northern districts, and it seems doubtful whether much in the way of directly withdrawing relief can be safely undertaken during the month of October, although measures preliminary to that end are already receiving attention, and the numbers on relief are expected to show a considerable falling off by the end of the month. During November it should be possible to close, one after the other, nearly the whole of the Public Works Department relief works, and by the end of December it is hoped that Government relief of every description will have finally ceased.

The division has been peculiarly unfortunate during the month in the number of Famine Officers of whose services it has been deprived, just when the experience they had gained of their respective charges had made their services most valuable.

Surgeon-Lieutenant Wall and Lieutenant Howe were called away during the month to military service on the frontier, and Lieutenant O'Brien and Mr. Gordon to take up appointments in another Province. All these officers, as well as Surgeon-Lieutenant Mathew, who was recalled to military duty in the preceding month, had done excellent work in the relief of distress, and had gained an amount of useful experience which their successors must necessarily lack. Many of the remaining officers have been incapacitated for longer or shorter periods during the month by illness due to continuous exposure during the monsoon. And it is with feelings of deep regret that I have to report that in the case of one officer, Lieutenant H. Hamilton-Moore, such illness terminated fatally during the month.

The Deputy Commissioner writes of him as follows :—

“It is with much regret that I have to record the death of an officer serving on famine duty in this district, Lieutenant Hamilton-Moore, who died on the 18th September. Lieutenant Moore joined the district early in July, and during the short period he was able to spend in his charge (about six weeks) displayed much zeal and ability in the performance of his duties. He returned to head-quarters about the middle of August ill with dysentery, a disease which I fear was almost chronic with him. The hardships and exposure inevitable on famine duty at this season of the year gave the disease a hold upon him which he could not shake off. It is much to be regretted that he did not submit himself to medical examination before volunteering for famine duty. He was but 24.

All that I personally saw of this young officer's work was full of promise, and I entirely concur in Mr. Cooke's appreciation of the manner in which his duties were performed. He fell a victim, in the most liberal sense, to the devotion to duty which impelled him to expose himself to the hardships and dangers of outdoor work in the rainy season, at a time when he was in need of rest and medical treatment.

A. D. YOUNGHUSBAND,
Commissioner.

The 10th October 1897.

No. F.-1979, dated Bachmarhi, the 20th October 1897.

From M. W. Fox-Strangways, Esq., I.C.S., Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue and Agriculture (Famine).

In continuation of my letter No. F.-1771-A., dated the 20th September 1897, I am directed to submit a statement, compiled from figures received from the Sanitary Commissioner, showing the death-rates per mille per mensem in each district of the Central Provinces during the month of September, as compared with the average recorded death-rate for the month for the past 10 years, and the rates shown in the preceding month.

2. The total number of reported deaths has fallen from 88,275 in August to 87,782 in September, and the rate from 8·35 to 8·30 per mille. The decrease, the Chief Commissioner much regrets to find, is small, and excluding deaths from cholera and small-pox, which carried off 1,374 persons in September against 2,342 in August, there is little difference between the totals for the two months. On more closely examining the figures, however, some encouraging features are apparent. It will be seen that the extremely high figures shown last month have, in all but one case, that of Betul, been sensibly reduced ; thus :—

	Death-rate for August.	Death-rate for September.
Balaghat	11·75	10·07
Seoni	12·29	8·63
Mandla	16·66	11·59
Bilaspur	12·51	11·09
Saugor	11·62	11·30
Raipur	9·86	8·89

In Betul there has unfortunately been a slight rise, from 11·76 to 12·20.

In all these districts, as will have been gathered from the monthly report submitted on the 15th instant, relief in all its forms is now being actively carried on, and Sir Charles Lyall believes that with the progress of the harvests the improvement which the returns show will become more and more conspicuous.

3. On the other hand there has, in the Nagpur country, and in the districts of the Nerbudda division, been a sudden increase in the mortality, which there seems to be no reason to ascribe to the increase of distress, and certainly none to any falling off in the efficiency of relief. For the Nagpur country the monthly death-rate since March last is shown below :—

District.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	September.
Nagpur	1·96	2·67	4·54	4·83	3·92	5·68	6·84
Bhandara	2·94	2·87	4·47	7·02	5·48	6·42	8·90
Wardha	1·97	2·64	4·22	5·58	3·99	6·24	8·96
Chanda	1·78	2·83	3·15	3·59	3·60	4·17	5·80
Deaths from cholera ...	300	1,073	2,294	2,977	1,430	666	536

It will be seen that, starting from normal figures, the rise from April to June was coincident with the development of a widespread epidemic of cholera. On the rains setting in in July the cholera decreased, and the death-rates, except in the severely distressed district of Bhandara, again sunk nearly to normal figures. In August and still more in September there has been a sharp rise.

The Chief Commissioner finds that in Bhandara the Civil Surgeon has specially noted that the excess mortality of the month was due to an unusual prevalence of fever, and that the deaths of children under 15 formed 41 per cent. of the mortality. The Deputy Commissioner of Chanda has also noted the excessive prevalence of fever in a severe form, to which an unusual number of persons in robust health succumbed. The report from Wardha, like that from Nagpur, does not give any sufficient explanation of the excessive mortality : but the latter notices that it occurred particularly in the northern circles adjoining the Satpura Plateau. This country is continuous with the Sausar Tahsil of Chhindwara, in which the Deputy Commissioner, as recorded in the Nerbudda division memorandum, forwarded with the monthly report on the 15th instant, made a special inquiry into the sudden and remarkable rise in the mortality. Mr. Ryves's observations seem to establish the fact that sickness in the form of fever prevailed to a very unusual extent, and also that the disease attacked with fatal effect the well-to-do as well as the poor.

4. Similarly in the Nerbudda division there has been during the last two months, and especially during September, a general deterioration in public health which will be manifest from the figures given below, which show the total death-rate month by month :—

District.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	September.
Narsinghpur	4·03	8·18	7·41	6·48	6·26	7·24	7·86
Hoshangabad	2·91	2·91	7·76	6·15	4·32	6·95	7·72
Nimar	3·48	4·04	5·36	8·40	6·35	7·32	7·89
Chhindwara... ..	2·47	2·57	2·83	4·99	5·24	4·80	7·86
Betul... ..	4·90	4·30.	3·63	6·29	7·45	11·76	12·20

But in several of these months cholera raged, and if deaths due to this cause be deducted the extraordinary mortality of August and September will appear yet more striking, as compared with the comparatively low rates which previously prevailed. The following figures show the monthly rates less cholera deaths :—

District.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	September.
Narsinghpur	3.72	4.58	5.31	5.43	5.87	7.19	7.84
Hoshangabad	2.86	2.88	5.01	4.57	4.25	6.81	7.70
Nimar	3.38	3.91	5.32	6.24	5.93	6.76	7.59
Chhindwara... ..	2.38	2.57	1.96	2.22	4.41	4.60	7.86
Betul... ..	4.51	3.44	2.92	4.20	6.47	11.50	11.62

5. For the Jubbulpore division the figures for September and the preceding months are given in the Commissioner's memorandum forwarded with the monthly famine report.

6. All these indications seem to the Chief Commissioner clearly to point to the existence of what Mr. Fuller calls a "wave of malignant fever," which devastated not only those parts of the Province where distress has been severe, but also those where it has been comparatively slight. They also point to a fact which experience from month to month has gradually been bringing into clearer relief, that the unfortunate people who have died have been those who clung to their villages, gradually exhausting their store of food, and subsisting during the hot weather and rains upon wild fruits, vegetables, seeds and roots. These, it is true, form the ordinary and accustomed food of many millions of the poorer population of these Provinces, but in conjunction with various kinds of grain, and not ordinarily alone. Nothing would induce the majority of these people to leave their villages and come upon the works provided for them. The physical conditions of this Province, especially in the wilder districts like those of the Satpura Plateau, altogether precluded the opening of works within such a distance of each village that the labourer could return to his home at night; and short of such facilities nothing would have availed to bring him to our work relief. This is the explanation, and not any restriction in the wages offered on works of the comparatively small percentage of the population of the distressed districts which has sought relief upon them.

7. These poor people, when the rains came on, were gradually drawing to the end of their resources. The rains produced an abundant crop of various jungle foods; but the privations the poorer classes had undergone rendered these foods the cause of fatal forms of bowel disease, and their weakened frames succumbed to fever and chills. House-to-house relief, as has been fully reported to the Government of India, has been pushed on as actively as was possible under the conditions of the season; this has without doubt saved many thousands of lives, and it is the only way in which they could have been saved. But before the break down in health induced by the rainy season the majority of these people were not fit subjects for village relief, inasmuch as they were all capable of doing some work on the relief works, to which the majority of them refused to resort. The Chief Commissioner has gathered testimony from all sides to the effect that the deterioration noticed among the persons on relief works after the rains set in was due to the departure from those works of the robust, who had been working on them during the dry months, and left them to take up labour in the fields, and their replacement by many thousands of new arrivals who had gone through this course of privation and weakening during the hot weather, but could not be induced, until they had absolutely nothing left, to come upon the works. This point will be more fully elucidated in replying to your recent reference No. ³¹⁸⁷/₃₆₋₃₂ -F., dated the 15th instant, regarding the supposed effect of the piece-work rules on the condition of the people. Sir Charles

Lyall desires me here to say briefly that, so far as his enquiries have gone, he is satisfied that neither the piece-work rules put forth in May last, nor the payment by results rules put forth in August, had anything to do with the deteriorated condition of the people ; that those who left the works in consequence of those rules were the able-bodied, who have fared sufficiently well by means of field labour, while those who have remained on or resorted to the works since the setting in of the rains have in no way been affected by the rules, but have received a wage on the Famine Code system which is amply sufficient for their support. The one striking and ruling feature of the Central Provinces famine from first to last has been the enormous difficulty of inducing people to come upon work relief, though it was provided, the Chief Commissioner believes, as fully as was possible considering the circumstances and character of the country. This being the case, it is only natural, however lamentable, that there should during the unhealthy months of the year be a great mortality among those who clung to their homes till the assistance afforded by Government became of no avail.

8. The last column of the statement shows the deaths from starvation reported during August which are stated to have been verified during the month :—

Name of District.	Cholera.	Small-pox.	Death-rate excluding Cholera and Small-pox.	Death-rate from all Causes.	Average Death-rate of past 10 years.	Excess over Normal.	Difference from last Month.	Deaths verified as due to Starvation in August.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nagpur	193	...	6.58	6.84	3.43	3.41	+1.16	4
Wardha	46	...	8.84	8.96	4.50	4.46	+2.72	...
Bhandara	116	...	8.74	8.90	3.20	5.70	+2.48	2
Chanda	181	1	5.46	5.80	3.23	2.57	+1.63	...
Balaghat	51	1	9.88	10.07	3.28	6.79	-1.68	...
Jubbulpore ... ..	...	...	5.96	5.96	3.71	2.25	+36	...
Saugor ... ..	...	...	11.30	11.30	4.57	6.73	-32	...
Damoh ... ..	...	5	6.76	6.78	4.67	2.11	-48	...
Seoni	7	2	8.61	8.63	3.33	5.30	-3.66	...
Mandla	91	...	...	11.59	3.53	8.06	-5.07	...
Hoshangabad	3	1	7.70	7.72	3.69	4.03	+77	...
Narsinghpur	3	2	7.84	7.86	4.44	3.42	+62	...
Nimar	83	...	7.59	7.89	3.28	4.61	+57	...
Betul	185	1	11.62	12.20	3.59	8.61	+44	...
Chhindwara	1	...	7.86	7.86	3.58	4.28	+3.06	...
Raipur	120	21	8.79	8.89	2.93	5.96	-97	..
Bilaspur	119	10	10.98	11.09	2.68	8.41	-1.42	12
Sambalpur	128	3	2.67	2.81	2.71	.10	-97	...
Total	1,327	47	8.17	8.30	3.47	4.83	-05	18

NOTES OF AN INSPECTION OF FAMINE RELIEF WORKS IN THE
CENTRAL PROVINCES, BY MR. T. HIGHAM, C.I.E., ON SPECIAL
DUTY, FAMINE RELIEF OPERATIONS.

1. After leaving the Bombay Presidency I arrived at Itarsi at 9.30 P.M. on
30th May, and was met by Mr. White,
Executive Engineer, Hoshangabad Division.

Itinerary. On the following day we drove to Shahpur,
in the Betul District, inspecting the Khesla camp in the morning, and, after resting
half way, proceeding to Shahpur in the afternoon. The following morning we
inspected the relief works at Bhaorah on the way back to Itarsi, where we arrived
in the evening, and proceeded by rail to Piparia *en route* for Pachmarhi. On the
morning of the 2nd I went to Pachmarhi, where I had interviews with the Chief
Commissioner, Mr. Fox-Strangways, the Chief Secretary, and Mr. Oliver, the
Chief Engineer, and returning to Piparia the following day arrived at Jabalpur
on the morning of the 4th June. On the following morning I railed out to
Shahpura with Mr. Robertson, the Collector, and Mr. Leavenhorpe, Executive
Engineer, and returning by the Bombay-Jabalpur Road inspected two relief work
charges, extending over 19 miles of road. On the 6th I left Jabalpur by rail for
Kirwi in the North-West Provinces.

2. The relief works in the Central Provinces consist almost exclusively of
road work, that is, either in making new
Character of the relief works. *kutchha* roads, in improving existing roads
and raising them from a lower to a higher

class, or in collecting metalling for future use. The works for which administrative
sanction has been accorded are all of this kind, and as far as I could ascertain no
other is included in the programmes of works that may be undertaken when these
are completed. It is said that there is little possibility of constructing irrigation
works in these provinces that will be of any service, as artificial irrigation is seldom
resorted to for the black cotton soil, and, as a rule, the land suffers more from too
much than from too little water.

3. The general rules and orders for the conduct of relief works by the Public
Works Department are contained in G. O.

G. O. C. No. 498, dated 26th December 1896. No. C-498, dated 26th December 1896.
These instructions are based on those issued
in the North-West Provinces as Circular
No. 18-P.W.D., dated 5th December 1896, most of which have been incorporated
verbatim. It may be noted, however, that paragraphs 48 to 52 of the North-West
Provinces Circular, which direct that each individual digger should have his own
task set out, have been omitted; and it is, on the contrary, declared that it is
practically impossible to measure the amount of work done by each individual
digger, and that fines for short work must necessarily be inflicted on the whole
gang, payments being, however, made to individuals, and children never receiving
less than the minimum wage. In the same paragraph (23), it is directed, however,
that the diggers only will receive short payment for short work, the pay of the
carriers being subject to deduction only when loads have not been properly broken
up (*vide* paragraph 26). In the North-West Provinces carriers are fined as well
as diggers when the outturn of work is very short.

The only earthwork that I saw in progress was on the Bombay-Jabalpur Road
and was carried out on the system described above, the task for the diggers being
90 cubic feet per diem, which appeared to me to be rather light. I will reserve
further remarks on the working of this system for my notes on North-West
Provinces, when I shall have better opportunities of studying it.

4. There is, however, a point to be noted regarding the classification of
workers employed on earthwork. Under

Classification of workers on earthwork. the North-West Provinces system adopted
in these provinces, all adult males and
females employed as carriers receive only the D wage, *i.e.*, the cash equivalent of
14 and 13 chittacks of grain respectively. But under paragraph 35 of the
North-West Provinces Circular, which has been followed almost *verbatim* in the

corresponding paragraph 15 of the Central Provinces Circular, the classification of workers is a matter apart from their remuneration, as expressly stated in the North-West Provinces footnote to paragraph 35. Thus men and women carriers are placed in class B, if they fall within the Code definition of that class, *viz.*, if they are able-bodied labourers, but not accustomed to the kind of work on which employed, even although their remuneration may be limited to the D or minimum wage. This is clearly shown in the form of Gang Register, Field Account Form No. 1, which provides for the numbers of B men other than diggers and of D men being shown separately, though they are bracketed together for a common daily wage in evaluating the amount due to them, and B women other than diggers and D women are similarly accounted for. The practice of entering separately, as in class B, labourers whose normal remuneration is that of class D, unnecessarily complicates the gang register, and if this classification is maintained in the derived forms, the Monthly Famine Statement A submitted to the Government of India shows under class B a number of workers, who, as far as remuneration is concerned, are actually in class B. On the other hand, it must be noted that in accordance with the footnote to this statement (*vide* page 51, Central Provinces Famine Code), all working children are included in class D. The statement, as submitted, therefore affords no indication of the number of adult workers who are normally in receipt of the D. wage.

5. As regards metal-breaking, which is the other principal form of relief work, paragraph 24 of the Central Provinces Circular proposes the following tasks for B workers :—

Workers.	Hard Metal as Basalt.	Ordinary Metal as Sandstone.
	Cub. feet.	Cub. feet.
Men	4.5	6.0
Women	3.0	4.5
Children, 12-16 years	Same as for Women.	

It is directed that for these tasks the B wage shall be paid, but that if less be done the D wage only should be paid. This of course applies only to adults.

In paragraph 26, however, it is said that these tasks are only examples, to be modified at the instance of the Sub-Divisional Officer, in consultation with the Deputy Commissioner, with reference to local conditions, and it is added that this should be on the basis of ensuring to workers wages on the D scale, increasing gradually to the B scale, as the work done approximates to a full day's work. This is somewhat contrary to the direction in paragraph 25 that a B task should be set, the D wage being paid when it is not accomplished. The C class and wage is not recognised in the Central Provinces. The A class, comprising less than 2 per cent. of the whole number of workers, consists almost entirely of the gang mates, who receive 2 pice a day more than the B male worker.

6. In the metal-breaking gangs inspected by me I found that, on the Itarsi-Betul Road, the breakers were as a rule all put into class B, except the very feeble who were given a lighter task, and classed as D. At Khesla the maximum fine for B workers was limited to 2 pice, but the D workers, who formed there but 2 per cent. of the whole, were not fined, and were merely required to do as much work as they could. At Bhaorah the D workers, who formed about 23 per cent. of the adults, were given a task equal to two-thirds of the B task, and were liable to fine, though fines were not imposed on the feeblest. In this sub-division no limit to fines was observed, but the pay of the workers was reduced in proportion to the shortness of the task accomplished. For the five days ending 31st May I found that fines amounted to Rs. 164, the full wages being Rs. 1,924. On the 30th they amounted

to Rs. 64 on Rs. 331, or nearly 20 per cent. Mr. White informed me that this was the only sub-division in which there was no limit to fines, but that the fining was carried out under the close personal supervision of the Sub-Divisional Officer, Mr. Desmond, who exercised the greatest discretion, and levied the fines with such fairness that the works were the most popular in his division, while there was a better outturn of work than elsewhere. No complaints about fining were made to us, the *morale* among the workers, among whom were a great many Gonds, was excellent, and there were many indications of careful and sympathetic management. At both works the small children were employed as carriers in supplying the breakers with stone. In the Jabalpur Division there were seven children's gangs employed in carrying under boy-mates and working briskly. The non-working children were fed, but gratuities are given to the adult dependants, the number of whom was, however, inconsiderable.

On the Bombay-Jabalpur Road the breakers were classed as B and D as at Bhaorah, but the D tasks were one-half instead of two-thirds of the B tasks, and fines, both for breakers and those engaged on earthwork or otherwise, were limited; no worker receiving less pay than the penal wage, or 1 pice below the D wage. It may be noted that in this division the B workers were only about 42 per cent. of the adults. Of the men 78 per cent. were in B class and of the women 23 per cent. These proportions are much lower than found in the Hoshangabad Division, where from 77 to 98 per cent. of the adults were in B class.

The B tasks at all these works were as given in the table in paragraph 5 above, except at Khesla, where the metalling was made from hard boulders, and the B tasks were 3.5 and 2.5 cubic feet for men and women respectively. In Jabalpur Division kunkur for soling was being carried for a distance varying from one to two miles by women. The task set was three cubic feet, divided by the length of the lead in miles per diem.

7. Fines are not separately shown in the accounts, nor do the standard forms provide for this being done. Effect is given to them by reduction in the rate of pay, so that it is only by an examination of the month rolls that it is possible to ascertain the extent of the fining. In the Jabalpur Division I found that when B workers did a short task they were paid in full, but were reduced to the D class in the next pay sheet. If they then did a full task they received only the D wage, but were put up again into class B in the next pay sheet, and so on, but the advantages of this arrangement are not obvious.

I may add here that the form of the gang register on Field Account No. 1, which is identical with that proposed in North-West Provinces Circular No. 18-P. W. D., dated 5th December 1896, appears to me to be open to several objections, but I will reserve comment on it for my report on the relief works in the North-West Provinces.

8. The "officer in charge" of each camp is an official nominated by the Deputy Commissioner, whose services are placed at the disposal of the Public Works Department, and who is posted by the Divisional Engineer to the Sub-Divisional Officer, and works under his direct orders. He is the cashier and general supervisor on the spot, and has one or two sub-overseers according to the size of the charge to assist him in giving out work and classifying the workers. He has a vernacular clerk qualified to act as sub-cashier, and a clerk who can keep accounts in English, the salary of both these men varying from Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 per mensem. There is also a tools-moharrir, who receives from Rs. 8 to Rs. 12 per mensem.

9. Payments are made by the gang-moharrirs, one of whom is employed for every 900 or 1,000 workers. The circular already quoted provides for payments being made daily at first, though it is remarked that they may eventually be made twice a week, and this was the practice on all

the works that I visited. Following the system in the North-West Provinces, the daily wage is fixed at the aliquot number of pice most closely corresponding with the true wage as given in the Ready Reckoner. If the true wage exceed an aliquot number of pice by less than 2 pice that number of pice are given, if the excess is 2 pice or more the next higher aliquot number of pice are paid. This system is unavoidable when payments are made daily, though it is somewhat more in favour of Government than of the worker, and in some cases may for a long period press heavily on the latter. It is less necessary when payments are made only once or twice a week, as the amount due for the period can be calculated on the true wage, payment being made to the nearest pice, which is the practice in Bombay. There is no doubt, however, that the practice of fixing the daily wage at an aliquot number of pice is the more convenient, whatever the interval of payment, and that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. It would, however, be less open to objection if the higher number of pice were paid whenever this exceeded the true wage by $1\frac{1}{2}$ pice or less.

Wages are fixed by the Sub-Divisional Officer in consultation with the Deputy Commissioner, but are not altered for variations of less than 10 per cent. in the price of food grains, and then only after a reference to the Commissioner, except cases of urgent necessity to be immediately reported. In this respect the practice differs from that in Bombay and Madras, where the Tahsildar intimates all variations in the price of food grains direct to the officer in charge, and the corresponding alterations in the rate of wage for each class. At Khesla the workers complained of the low wage, and it appeared that, owing to the joint operation of the 10 per cent. and 2-pice rule, they were being underpaid a pice per diem all round, and the Executive Engineer undertook to get this rectified.

10. It is difficult to form any reliable estimate of the average rates of the value of the work done to the amounts paid in wages or on all accounts. At Khesla I found that 403,161 cubic feet of metalling, mostly from boulders, had been collected, and that after allowing twice the normal rates for excavation, collection of boulders, &c., the amount spent on breaking was Rs. 6.3 per 100, or about double the normal rate. At Shahpur 543,796 cubic feet metalling, of which 76 per cent. was basalt and 24 per cent. sandstone, had been collected at a cost of Rs. 7-1-0 per 100 cubic feet, the normal rate being Rs. 4-10-0. In the Jabalpur Division I found that the wages paid for 205,349 cubic feet yielded a rate of over Rs. 15 per hundred, but I have not noted the lead or normal cost. With so large a proportion of the workers in the D class, the rates must necessarily have been higher than on the other works noted above. These rates exclude expenditure on gratuitous relief, hutting, establishment and other incidental charges. The Local Administration has recently furnished further figures in the Chief Secretary's No. 1149-C., dated 19th June 1897, which are extracted below :—

Sub-division.	Class of Work.	Working Rates for 100 cubic feet.	
		Normal Rates.	Famine Relief Rates.
Nagpur	Quarrying and breaking metal	Rs. A. P. 3 8 0	Rs. A. P. 6 1 0
Bhandara	Breaking metal	1 14 0	2 11 1
	Moorum quarrying	0 8 0	0 9 0
	Earthwork	0 6 0	0 6 9
Chhindwara... ..	Hard moorum... ..	1 0 0	1 6 0

These rates appear favourable, but it is doubtful whether the figures include all the earlier expenditure before the works were in full operation. For special establishment, hutting and other incidental charges an addition of about 20 per

cent. should apparently be allowed. It is probable that the total payments on all accounts will not be less than double the value of the work done at normal rates, but this would be a moderate proportion.

11. Piece-work had not been introduced in the Central Provinces at the time of my visit, but instructions for its gradual introduction had been issued by the Chief Commissioner in G. O. No. 355—3571-A., dated 15th May 1897.

As far as the Hoshangabad district was concerned, it had also been ordered that no new comers to the work were to be given task work unless certified as weak and feeble by the medical subordinate in charge. Several applicants met us on the road who had just been refused task-work in accordance with this order. They were all in very fair condition, and when told that piece-work would be given to them they did not appear to object, though I cannot say whether they have actually taken it.

In a subsequent circular letter No. 385—3822-P.W.D., dated 28th May 1897, the Chief Commissioner pointed out that, while the piece-work system did not admit the existence of *dependants* paid daily wages side by side with the piece-workers, it did admit the existence of *infirm gangs* paid at task-work rates (and if necessary dependants upon persons employed in such gangs) where this might be found requisite in any district in which there was not a work on the task system to which these infirm gangs could suitably be drafted. It was accordingly directed that in any work in which inefficient labour, that is, labour not able to make a sufficient living by piece-work existed to a larger extent than 25 per cent., it would not be worth while to reorganize the work on the piece-work system, except as an optional alternative to the task-work. It was laid down as a cardinal principle of the piece-work system that it should not be introduced when the proportion of weak inefficient labour is large, and also that in introducing it adequate provision should be made for the employment of the inefficient labour, whatever it may be, either on a neighbouring work or in an infirm gang employed on the same work in task-work. I have quoted this order almost *in extenso*, as it shows that one of the main difficulties in connection with piece-work has been foreseen.

In the instructions relating to the introduction of piece-work issued with G. O. No. 355—3571-A., dated 15th May 1897, it is said that it may be possible in some cases to follow the plan adopted for metal-breaking at Nagpur, and which had been proposed by the Commissioner for another work, *viz.*, to select a suitable, substantial and reliable Public Works contractor, who would undertake the position of work agent, arrange the gangers and provide the necessary daily payments, the total work done being measured up and payments made to him weekly or fortnightly. I note this proposal here, but will reserve comment on it until I make my final report.

12. As regards the interference of relief works with the supply of labour to private employers, I have had some correspondence with Mr. Michel, the District Engineer on the Saugor-Katni Railway, who was unfortunately unable to meet me at Katni, as he was engaged on inspections at the other end of the line. Mr. Michel writes:—

“ There is no doubt that the relief camps are prejudicially affecting the supply of labour to our works. As a case in point, at a place called Pahi, 8 miles west of Rithi, a relief work in the form of an earth dam has been engaging some 2,000 people for four or more months. Within 1½ miles of this dam I have large earthwork approaches to the major bridge across the Lallpura Nullah, where I have not been able to get more than about 300 coolies at a time all this time; and now doubt if I shall be quite safe for the floods.

“ Our lowest initial rates for earthwork is Rs. 2-12-0 per thousand for first 100 feet lead, and 6 annas per 1,000 for every 100 feet further lead. The lift rates are :—

						Rs.	A.	P.	
From 5 to 10 feet	...	...	...	...	...	0	8	0	per 1,000.
” 10 to 15 ”	...	...	...	...	...	1	2	0	”
” 15 to 20 ”	...	...	...	...	...	1	14	0	”
” 20 to 25 ”	...	...	...	...	...	2	14	0	”
” 25 to 30 ”	...	...	...	...	...	4	2	0	”

" Fifteen months ago when the people here were in great distress and of poor physique, I made the following note of a type case, where local labour was working for contractors at the above rates :—

Lead, 78 feet	...	{	2 full-grown men ...	}	Completed 100 cubic feet in a day, and would get Re. 0-3-6.
			1 young man of 19 ...		
			1 girl of 15 ...		

Rice was selling at 13½ pies per seer, or 14 seers per rupee ; for the above Re. 0-3-6 they would get 3 seers of rice. Had grain been selling at 18½ seers per rupee, they would have got 1 seer each = 4 seers."

If this party had been working under the famine relief system, one of the men would probably have been put into the B class and the other adults into D, and they would have earned the following:—

	Rate, 14 Seers per Rupee	Rate, 10 Seers per Rupee.
	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
One man, B class	0 1 6	0 2 0
„ „ D „	0 1 0	0 1 6
„ woman, D class	0 1 0	0 1 3
„ girl	0 0 9	0 1 0
Total	0 4 3	0 5 9

According to the rates given by Mr. Michel, the party would have earned 4·4 annas, but these rates were then given to the petty contractors, and the amount actually paid to the labourers was 3·5 annas. It will be seen that at the 14-seer rate (which is, however, a lower rate than contemplated in the Ready Reckoner of the Code, which begins with 12 seers), the party would earn a little more under the Code than they were earning under petty contractors. With the famine rate of 10 seers to the rupee they would earn over 60 per cent. more than the contractor would pay them, because the contract rates do not rise with the price of provisions. The family could not live on the works at the contract rates, but Mr. Michel says that the Loonyas, under the railway initial rates and extra good lift and ead. rates, managed to keep both themselves and their children fat and flourishing even at present grain rates.

It is obvious that the ordinary famine labourer could not earn a subsistence for himself on the railway works during a season of famine prices, but the question remains whether relief works are so attractive as to keep Loonyas and other professional labourers from railway work. Under the system that now obtains in the Central Provinces, a Loonya family, constituted like the family mentioned by Mr. Michel, would not be able to earn any more than that family, viz., Re. 0-5-9, unless indeed the second man took service as a digger, when it would be able to earn Re. 0-6-3. But at contract rates it would be able to earn at least twice as much as the typical famine family, or say seven annas, though it would have to work much harder than on the relief works. On the other hand, the greater freedom and sense of independence would probably induce a preference for contract work, but the scale may be turned in the other direction if the relief works are nearer the home, or if there is no objection to the dependants going to the relief kitchens. With grain at 10 seers to the rupee, one form of work might be about as attractive as the other; but with a higher grain rate the relief work would probably be preferred unless the railway raised its rates, while with a lower grain rate there would be a much stronger inducement to go to the railway.

Mr. Michel tells me that he had agreed with the Deputy Commissioner of Jabalpur that ballast should be broken by famine relief coolies which the railway would take over at normal rates, but that he is so apprehensive of the effect of having a relief camp so close to his own workers that he has asked the Deputy Commissioner to agree to its being considered only as an experiment, to be discontinued if found to draw labour away from the railway works. He also says

that when work was commenced he issued orders that only the suffering local people were to be employed. This was done at the request of the Civil Department, communicated through the Chief Engineer. Mr. Michel considers that this arrangement would have proved satisfactory if Government could have made arrangements to sell grain on the works at a privileged rate of 18 or 20 seers to the rupee, and to assist in this way the local labour. Since the relief works have been started he has been obliged to change his orders and to employ Loonyas and professional labourers of that class.

13. All road works are carried out by the Public Works Department, but there are a number of minor relief works which are managed by the Deputy Commissioners. They are most important and numerous in the Jabalpur and Damoh districts, where the average daily attendance, according to the latest returns shown to me, amounted to 15,000 and 10,000 respectively. The works comprise the construction or deepening of village tanks, diversions of the courses of nullahs which are damaging valuable land, and improvements in the approaches to fords, but the first of these is the principal form of minor relief work. In addition to this advances are made to landlords for petty improvements, such as the embankment of fields, the making of *kutch* wells, and the extirpation of *kans* grass from the black soil land. Each minor work is supposed to employ not less than 500 or more than 2,000 labourers, but there are occasional exceptions, and in one case of a large village tank as many as 5,000 were employed. The works are conducted on the principles laid down for the management of relief works by the Public Works Department in G. O. No. C-498, dated 26th December 1896, with a few modifications, the chief of which are that the gangs are to be of smaller size, consisting of about 20 members, and payments are to be made by the officer in charge. The system of payment by the piece has not been adopted.

14. The Famine Code of the Central Provinces does not contain any section corresponding to sections 31 and 38 of the Bombay Code, or to similar sections in the North-West Provinces, Bengal, Madras and Punjab Codes, under which the officers of the Public Works Department employed on relief works are placed under the orders of the Collector and his assistants in all but purely professional matters. When the necessity for undertaking relief works was first recognised, it was indeed proposed by the Chief Engineer that the District Sub-Divisional Officer should be made over to, and act immediately under the orders of, the Deputy Commissioner, who, under the Famine Code, would delegate to the Sub-Divisional Officer such powers as he might consider desirable. It was, however, subsequently decided in supersession of these proposals to entrust the management of all major relief works entirely to the Public Works Department, *vide* G. O. No. C-498, dated 26th December 1896. The officers in charge of the works are directly under the orders of the Public Works Divisional or Sub-Divisional Officers under paragraph 9 of the instructions issued with the G. O. last quoted, an arrangement which is permissible under section 50 of the Famine Code. But the Deputy Commissioner is kept fully informed of the progress and conditions at each work, the officer in charge regularly submitting to him the weekly returns required under sections 79, 80 and 80-A of the Code. He is also consulted by the Public Works officers in regard to wages and tasks, drafting of labourers from one work to another, opening new works, &c. Under G. O. No. C-154, dated 20th March 1897, an order book (not an inspection book) is kept up for each separate charge at the site of works for the use of officers empowered to give orders to the officers in charge, *viz.*:—

The Executive Engineer or Superintendent of Works.

The Sub-Divisional Officer.

The Deputy Commissioner (when he finds it necessary to interfere).

The Civil Surgeon or Medical Officer on special famine duty (in regard to sanitary matters only).

The Deputy Commissioner's assistants are not authorised to give orders to the officer in charge direct, but are directed to look at the order book and see that orders recorded have been attended to by the officer in charge, reporting to the Deputy Commissioner, for the information of the Executive Engineer, cases in which they have not been complied with. Inspection reports may be written by the Deputy Commissioner and forwarded by him to the Executive Engineer, and there is a prescribed form of Inspection Report for the Revenue Assistants, District Staff and Medical Officers visiting the works. These reports are forwarded direct to the Deputy Commissioner, and are sent on by him, with his own remarks or recommendations, to the Executive Engineer, or in the southern part of the province to the Superintendent of Works, and on these officers the responsibility rests of taking the necessary action.

This arrangement appears to have worked very satisfactorily. The Public Works Department is primarily responsible for the conduct and management of relief works in accordance with the principles laid down in the Famine Code and in supplementary G. Os., and maintains intact its own organisation and discipline, but the Deputy Commissioners are kept fully informed of all that is being done, their advice is taken on all important points, they may, when necessary, issue orders to the officers in charge of the works, while their Revenue subordinates and other members of the District Staff are allowed to visit all works freely, and to report to them the results of their inspections in a form which can be passed on at once to the Public Works officer for any immediate action that may be necessary.

15. The ordinary establishment of the Public Works Department has required considerable strengthening from outside, in order to enable it to cope with the extra work caused by the famine. Two Assistant

Establishment.

Engineers from the Military Works Department and two other Lieutenants in the Royal Engineers have been posted to these provinces, together with three Staff Corps officers, from the 3rd, 6th and 17th Madras Infantry. An Executive Engineer has also been transferred from Coorg. With the assistance of these officers and a general suspension of leave to the regular establishment, the effective management of the relief works has been possible, but the want of more Upper and Lower Subordinates has been much felt here, as in other provinces.

16. The most noticeable points in connection with the relief works in the Central Provinces are the following :—

Concluding remarks.

- (a) The major works, or those under the management of the Public Works Department, consist entirely of road works.
- (b) The system of task work in force in the North-West Provinces, and described in North-West Provinces Circular No. 18-P.W.D., dated 5th December 1896, has been introduced, which involves the total elimination of class C, and as far at least as earthwork is concerned the employment of a greater proportion of workers on the D wage than would be usual under the Code classification.
- (c) The Public Works Department is solely responsible for the efficient management of major relief works, and its officers are not subordinated in any way to the officers of the Civil Department.

As regards (b) the proportion of D workers, though higher than in Bombay, is not so high as in the North-West Provinces, as in the Central Provinces most of the work is metal-breaking, and the general practice is to put efficient metal-breakers into the B class. But both on earthwork and metal-breaking the number actually receiving the D wage is higher than the number returned as in that class, after deducting children. In spite of this there appears to be a unanimous opinion that the condition of the workers has generally and considerably improved since they came to the works. The introduction of piece-work has been sanctioned by the Chief Commissioner for one reason, among others, that "there can be no doubt, and it is a very satisfactory feature of the relief operations, that the general condition of the relief workers has greatly improved," and this opinion was repeated to me by Dr. Mackay, Civil Surgeon of Jabalpur. I found the workers generally in good condition, the worst being those who had been last to come.

The works generally are about 20 miles apart, and a good many of the workers live on or near the works, though there is not much hutting. In many parts the country is well wooded and good shelter is given in the forest. A large proportion of the labourers consists of Gonds and other aboriginal tribes, who are rather tardy in finding their way to the works, but appear afterwards to work well, and to be very amenable to discipline.

It may be added that the *mahwa* flower is reported to have been very abundant in the Central Provinces during the season, and to have been of the greatest assistance in enabling the people, and especially the hill tribes, to maintain themselves when prices were very high, and in supplementing the wages earned on the works.

T. HIGHAM.

Dated Simla, 1st August 1897.

NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES AND OUDH.

No. 1387 of 1897, dated Naini Tal, the 23rd June 1897.

From the Secretary to Government, N.-W. Provinces and Oudh, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Revenue and Agricultural Department (Famine).

SIR,

I AM directed to forward the monthly Famine Statements A and B for these provinces, which give an account of the relief operations up to the 29th May 1897 in eighteen districts officially recognised as distressed, and extra-Code Statement C, which contains particulars in regard to the districts under observation though not officially declared to be distressed.

2. Besides the amounts of advances under the Land Improvement and Agriculturists' Loans Acts shown in columns 11 and 12 of Statement B, Rs.9,20,609 have been advanced under the two Acts in the districts included in Statement C since 1st November 1896. The amounts shown in column 13 of Statement B have been carried in from the previous return, as later figures are not at present available.

I have, &c.,

T. STOKER,

Secy. to Govt., N.-W. P. and Oudh.

NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES AND OUDH.

Monthly Famine Statement A for the five weeks ending Saturday evening, the 29th May 1897.

District.	Area.	Population in thousands.	Affected area.	Estimated population in thousands of column 4.	Number on relief works on the last day of the period under report.												Number on gratuitous relief (excluding dependants on works).				Prices of one or more principal food grains in séra per rupee.						Death rate.			
					Workers.				Dependants.				Total.				Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.	Wheat.	Maize.	Barley.	Millets.		Pulses.				
					Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.								Jowar.	Other.	Gram.	Other.			
																												For the period under report.	For the corresponding period of the previous year.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Agra	Sq. m. 1,856	1,008	Sq. m. 744	285	8,956	8,218	6,705	23,879	48	41	46	135	9,004	8,259	6,751	24,014	1,206	4,224	1,042	6,472	10'25	11'	12'50	10'75	12'	9'75	11'25	2'61	4'11	..
Etawah	1,694	727	271	82	866	747	566	2,179	..	..	..	..	866	747	566	2,179	258	287	75	620	10'12	..	11'50	..	..	9'75	..	2'80	2'67	..
Total, Agra Division ..	8,550	1,730	1,015	347	9,822	8,965	7,271	26,058	48	41	46	135	9,870	9,006	7,317	26,193	1,464	4,511	1,117	7,092	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cawnpore (a)	2,363	1,210	1,219	462	744	1,164	474	2,362	..	..	382	382	744	1,104	856	2,764	2,423	6,058	1,178	9,659	9'87	10'25	12'50	9'25	9'	9'10	12'25	2'33	3'32	..
Fatehpur	1,633	689	582	226	2,866	3,162	1,158	7,166	40	9	1,496	1,545	2,906	3,171	2,654	6,731	2,475	5,123	868	8,466	8'37	..	10'31	..	..	8'37	7'50	4'08	2'91	..
Banda	3,061	706	3,061	705	71,120	90,077	56,574	217,771	1,563	1,763	27,470	90,798	72,683	91,840	84,044	248,567	6,809	18,294	14,574	39,737	..	..	..	..	9'26	10'51	..	..	..
Hamirpur	2,289	513	2,289	513	24,157	38,909	26,791	89,857	530	568	14,240	15,398	24,637	39,477	41,031	105,195	3,297	7,768	3,349	14,414	9'0	10'0	10'62	..	9'12	7'62	2'37	4'35	..	
Allahabad (b)	2,852	1,549	2,428	1,372	71,632	98,945	60,081	230,858	287	534	49,998	50,817	71,919	99,479	110,077	281,475	10,072	28,746	10,877	49,095	9'08	11'	10'56	10'75	7'87	9'37	7'87	2'98	3'92	..
Jhānsi	3,587	683	3,587	683	19,767	28,663	18,503	64,933	432	629	11,852	12,913	20,199	27,292	30,355	77,846	3,459	8,975	6,919	19,353	9'25	..	..	9'93	..	9'25	..	2'73	5'02	..
Jalaun (c)	1,477	398	1,477	398	25,728	34,452	23,667	83,847	261	296	21,038	21,595	25,989	34,748	44,705	105,442	2,717	9,345	2,094	14,156	9'25	10'0	11'18	9'93	8'50	9'25	7'18	2'34	3'72	..
Total, Allahabad Division	17,282	5,755	14,643	4,257	216,044	293,372	187,248	696,634	3,113	3,799	126,474	133,336	219,127	297,171	313,722	830,020	31,312	84,309	30,859	155,480	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mirzapur (including Family Domains of the Mahārāja of Benares).	5,223	1,161	4,307	714	14,718	19,821	5,668	40,207	92	164	7,980	8,240	14,810	19,939	13,648	48,447	5,302	12,022	5,792	23,088	9'50	..	11'37	..	..	10'25	..	..	..	..
Jaunpur	1,550	1,265	271	214	6,929	12,959	544	21,900	..	..	2,534	2,534	6,929	12,959	3,076	22,966	3,535	8,155	3,261	14,941	9'50	..	11'18	..	6'0	9'50	..	3'15	2'44	..
Total, Benares Division ..	6,773	2,426	4,578	928	21,647	32,780	6,212	62,197	92	168	10,514	10,774	21,739	32,948	16,726	71,413	8,637	20,177	9,013	38,027	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

* Not available ; see separate mortality statement for April.

(a) The figures in columns 18-21 include 4,851 persons relieved exclusively from the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund through official agency.
 (b) Ditto 12,331 ditto
 (c) Ditto 4,090 ditto

NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES AND OUDH.

Monthly Famine Statement A for the five weeks ending Saturday evening, the 29th May 1897—(concluded).

District	Area.	Population in thousands.	Affected area.	Estimated population in thousands of column 4.	Number on relief works on the last day of the period under report.												Number on gratuitous relief (excluding dependants on works).				Prices of one or more principal food grains in sérs per rupee.						Death rate.			
					Workers.				Dependants.				Total.				Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.	Wheat.	Maize.	Barley.	Milleta.		Pulses.		For the period under report.	For the corresponding period of the previous year.	Deaths due to starvation.
					Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.								Jadr.	Other.	Gram.	Other.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	Sq. m.		Sq. m.																											
Gorakhpur	4,580	2,994	2,630	1,727	7,798	5,078	2,179	15,055	..	..	..	..	7,798	5,078	2,179	15,055	3,164	7,095	2,149	12,408	10.18	..	12.13	..	7.06	9.93	12.25	2.11	2.31	..
Azamgarh	2,148	1,729	1,130	914	3,927	4,082	1,162	9,171	..	..	..	..	3,927	4,082	1,162	9,171	65	136	223	424	10.25	..	13.12	..	..	10.12	9.82	2.22	1.83	..
Total, Gorakhpur Division	6,728	4,723	3,760	2,641	11,725	9,160	3,341	24,226	..	..	..	..	11,725	9,160	3,341	24,226	3,229	7,231	2,372	12,832	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Lucknow	967	774	967	774	11,881	13,303	4,120	29,304	7	5	5,487	5,499	11,888	13,303	4,120	29,304	4,993	14,147	4,726	23,868	10.37	9.50	12.75	9.50	10.25	9.75	12.12	3.41	3.32	..
Unao	1,736	953	1,736	953	7,073	9,110	2,833	19,016	23	12	4,173	4,208	7,096	9,122	7,008	23,224	4,234	8,904	2,836	16,084	10.25	..	11.50	..	7.00	9.25	8.50	3.08	3.31	..
Rae Bareilly	1,752	1,037	1,752	1,037	7,450	7,779	2,730	17,959	13	29	3,787	3,829	7,463	7,808	6,517	21,788	7,294	4,708	1,419	13,419	9.50	..	..	10.50	..	9.75	..	4.01	4.13	..
Sitapur	2,255	1,075	1,520	703	286	408	85	779	..	..	129	129	286	408	214	908	1,305	2,433	489	4,227	10.50	..	13.	..	..	11.	9.	..	..	..
Hardoi	2,325	1,113	2,325	1,113	26,796	32,781	26,601	88,178	827	1,336	19,911	22,074	27,623	34,117	48,512	110,252	8,882	18,845	10,737	38,264	10.25	..	12.50	..	..	..	..	3.51	2.59	..
Total, Lucknow Division	9,035	4,952	8,300	4,580	63,486	63,381	38,369	155,236	870	1,392	33,487	85,739	64,356	64,793	71,856	190,975	36,508	49,125	20,207	95,840	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total, N.-W. P. and Oudh	43,348	19,586	32,296	12,753	312,694	407,658	242,441	984,351	4,123	6,390	170,521	180,034	316,817	413,048	412,982	1,142,827	71,350	165,353	72,568	309,371	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

* Not available; see separate mortality statement for April.

REMARKS TO ACCOMPANY FAMINE STATEMENT A FOR THE
FIVE WEEKS ENDING SATURDAY EVENING, THE 29th MAY
1897.

AGRA DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poorhouse relief.*—Private subscriptions amounted to Rs. 1,570 in addition to the Rs. 23,700 already collected. Private subscriptions are devoted chiefly to house-to-house relief in Agra city, where less than half the necessary funds are provided by Government. Village relief is distributed at the cost of Government alone by civil officers. The Church Mission Society also relieves about one thousand persons, principally belonging to Agra city, by doles of grain. Five poorhouses were open at the end of the month.

2. *General character of relief works.*—Intermediate works under the Public Works Department, but sixteen works are being carried out under section 65 (a) of the *Famine Code*, and advances have been sanctioned for seventeen more. No more advances of this kind will now be given, owing to the approach of the rains.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Fair. The outbreak of cholera on the works has been stamped out.

4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—None.

5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Stocks sufficient.

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—The number of people on relief of all kinds has risen from 24,000 to 30,000.

7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—*Nil.*

ETAWAH DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poorhouse relief.*—A few wealthy men daily afford relief to the poor. In Act XX. towns and the city relief is given from subscription funds. Relief is also given in district partly from these and partly from Government funds. One poorhouse is open at the headquarters in the district, in which the number of inmates on the 29th May 1897 was 95.

2. *General character of relief works.*—The number of workers on the Etawah-Kálpi road relief works on the 29th May 1897 was 1,689. This increase is due to completion of harvesting.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Generally good.

4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—None reported.

5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Food stock sufficient, and imports considerable.

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—No improvement in the distressed trans-Jumna and Chambal tract can be expected till the rains set in. *Kharif* harvest was poor, and *rabi* almost *nil.*

7. *Changes in rates of wages.*—Rates of wages have fallen everywhere.

CAWNPORE DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poorhouse relief.*—In the numbers relieved by the Charitable Relief Committee are included those relieved from the sum of Rs. 3,000 contributed monthly by Government for the city to the Committee. Increase in numbers on works due to the cessation of harvest and to opening of works under section 65(a), *Famine Code.*

2. *General character of relief works.*—Three road works under Public Works Department management, intermediate system; ten small works under section 65(a) in charge of zamindárs who have taken partly recoverable advances. Labourers in fair condition. Numbers keep down, because there is agricultural work in canal-irrigated villages and in river beds where melons, &c., are grown.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Generally good. Few emaciated persons to be noticed in the villages or among residents of the district in poorhouses.

4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—Nil.

5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Food stocks sufficient; import trade of grain brisk; export slack; good crop of melons and gourds. Mangoes just coming in; crop poor.

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—Severe distress no longer exists; therefore no tracts are coloured dark blue in the map. No reason to expect a considerable increase of numbers on relief. If the rains break well during June, there will probably be no further need of relief works, and village relief will be susceptible of reduction; the poorhouses must remain open for wanderers and homeless beggars until the *kharif* ripens.

7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—Nil.

FATEHPUR DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief village and poorhouse relief.*—Four poorhouses are open. Village relief is given in accordance with the provisions of Chapters V., X., and XIII. Plough cattle money allotted by Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund being distributed.

2. *General character of relief works.*—Road and tank; fourteen works on partly recoverable advance system.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Improving.

4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—Nil.

5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Supplies sufficient.

				Mds.
Import by rail ...	...	...	...	14,498
Export ditto ...	...	...	...	860
				<hr/>
		Excess import	...	13,638
				<hr/>

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—General condition of affected area stationary; prospects further improved by the present extra crops.

7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—No changes.

BANDA DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poorhouse relief.*—Relief Committees of District and Municipal Boards' members and others have been formed, and the funds provided by the Provincial Relief Committee are being usefully utilized. Rupees 16,496-14-10 were disbursed from the Charitable Fund in supplementing village and poorhouse relief in kind and affording relief to respectable persons during the period from 16th April to 15th May 1897. The total number of persons in receipt of gratuitous relief under Chapters V., VIII., and X. of the Famine Code on the last day of the period under report was 34,437, 2,641, and 2,659 as against 25,289, 2,446, and 1,936 respectively on the last day of the preceding four weeks. The expenditure incurred under these heads during the period under notice was Rs. 46,851-11-9, Rs. 8,422-3-2, and Rs. 3,045-2-6 as against Rs. 31,555-10-8, Rs. 5,954-12-3, and Rs. 2,268-9-9 respectively during the preceding four weeks. Three hundred and fifty-two persons were relieved by the police under Chapter XIII., to whom Rs. 28-12-3 were disbursed during the period under notice as against 555 persons and Rs. 43-2-0 respectively during the preceding four weeks.

2. *General character of relief works.*—The general character of large relief works under Public Works Department agency was special repairs to the existing *kachchá* roads, deepening of roadside tanks, and breaking of stone at a quarry; that of village relief works under District Officer was excavation of village tanks and embankments, cleaning of wells and jungles, and village sanitary improvements.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—The physical condition of the people is moderate, as also that of relief workers and inmates of poorhouses; cholera is increasing in the district, but in a mild form. Sanitary precautions and disinfection of wells are receiving constant attention.

4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—No deaths directly due to starvation were reported during the period under notice.

5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—The markets are sufficiently stocked, and importation of grain from out stations continues. About 100,400 maunds of grain were imported into the district during the period under notice, and there is no apprehension of the food stocks of the district running short at present.

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—There has been no improvement in the condition and prospects of the affected area, nor can any be expected till the burst of the monsoon and opening of field work. The distress is rather increasing at present, and the high prices are felt generally.

7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—The scale of wages on relief works remained unaltered during the period under notice.

HAMIRPUR DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poorhouse relief.*—From the Charitable Fund supplementary doles were made to children in poorhouses and on village relief, and allowances for subsistence were made to 9,225 respectable people. Clothing also was distributed. Considerable progress was made in the distribution of money from the same fund for the purchase of plough cattle, and other expenses incident to getting up the *kharif* crops. Village relief was distributed by respectable zamindárs. Five poorhouses were managed by hospital assistants under the control of the Civil Surgeon.

2. *General character of relief works.*—Large relief works were divided into 18 charges—two employed on road works and 16 on tank works. The excavation of 87 small tanks as village works was in progress at the close of the period under report.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Generally fair, and on relief works almost always good. Unfortunately cholera has broken out on several relief works in the north of the district. Energetic precautions have been taken, and so far the ravages of the disease have not been excessive.

4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—No deaths from starvation reported.

5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Food stocks low, but importations continue by road and rail. Supplies sufficient.

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—The entire district is suffering severely from the scarcity. Numbers on relief have risen to nearly 120,000, and, unless the rains are late, should not rise much more.

7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—A rate of 10 *ser*s is still adhered to in calculating wages, and observation shows this to be sufficient, although the price of gram, the staple grain, is 9½ *ser*s to the rupee.

ALLAHABAD DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poorhouse relief.*—No change. The Charity Fund provides 12,331 persons (mostly *parda nashin* women) with monthly allowances. The poorhouse population is only kept down by continually drafting people out on to works or outdoor relief. The number so drafted out during the month was considerably larger than the number in the poorhouses at the end of the period under report.

2. *General character of relief works.*—Mostly roads north of the Jumna and tanks south of it. North of the Ganges and in one tahsil of the Doába they are on the "intermediate" system on a 12-*ser* basis; in the remainder of the Doába code works on an 11-*ser* basis; south of the Jumna, code works, small and numerous, on a 10-*ser* basis.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Greatly improved.
4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—None reported. Death rate has fallen and is now satisfactorily low.
5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Most of the trans-Jumna area is dependent on importation, and, in the Collector's opinion, possesses no stocks at all.
6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—The people are in good heart, and the grants now being made from the Charity Fund will enable even the poorest of the cultivators to sow a good *kharif* area if the rains are favourable.
7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—The only change in system is the substitution of intermediate for code works in one tahsil of the Doába.

JHANSI DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poorhouse relief.*—Almost the whole of the lakh of rupees granted by the Indian Charitable Relief Association for seed grain and plough cattle has been distributed during the month, besides the ordinary relief under heads 1 to 3. Village relief under section 54 has been much expanded in the Lalitpur sub-division. The state of poorhouses remains unchanged.
2. *General character of relief works.*—Roads and tanks managed by Public Works Department. *Bandhiyas*, *bandhs*, tanks, and wells executed by the zamindárs under the control of the Collector on the partly recoverable system.
3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Much better than would be imagined. The excellent *mahua* crop and the vast quantity of relief afforded, together with a healthy season, have secured this.
4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—None.
5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—The food stocks have been largely supplemented by an excellent harvest where irrigation is available. This of course was very limited in extent, but still most of it remains in the district. Imports of food grain by rail during the five weeks were 126,489 maunds, and exports only 1,812 maunds.
6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—Everything will depend upon the rains, which seem to be approaching, whether they continue well on into September.
7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—No changes in the rate of wages. Fining or short work has been more vigorously carried out.

JALAUN DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poorhouse relief.*—Four poorhouses are open. Village relief is given in accordance with the provisions of Chapters V. and X., Famine Code. Very little private relief is given.
2. *General character of relief works.*—Improvement of unmetalled roads and restoration of village tanks.
3. *Physical condition of the people.*—The physical condition of the people is, on the whole, satisfactory.
4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—None.
5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Food stocks are sufficient.
6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—The numbers on relief works will probably decrease from this forward, some going to prepare their fields, and others to purchase bullocks with the money which is being distributed to them from the allotment made by the Provincial Relief Committee.
7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—Nil.

MIRZAPUR DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poorhouse relief.*—The Local Relief Committee distributed Rs. 766 on relief under head I. and Rs. 2,554 under head III. Relief under head IV. is being distributed by officers. Numbers of village relief and poorhouses are steadily increasing in consequence of the termination of the *rabi* harvest and the *mahua* crop.*

2. *General character of relief works.*—Relief works are properly managed.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Good.

4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—None.

5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Supplies sufficient, and imports continue in large quantities.

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—The general condition of the people is not bad, and a change for the better is expected with the advent of the rains, when a large reduction in the numbers is anticipated.

7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—The rates of wages are the same as reported in the last month.

JAUNPUR DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poorhouse relief.*—Relief being given from General Famine Fund. Village relief distributed weekly—in city, through municipal members; Act XX. towns, by *panchayat*; and villages by *patwáris*.

2. *General character of relief works.*—Digging and deepening tanks.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Much the same.

4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—Nil.

5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Sufficient. Imports now exceed exports.

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—Will remain in same condition till rains fall.

7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—Unchanged.

GORAKHPUR DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poorhouse relief.*—These continue the same as previously reported. Numbers in poorhouses and on village relief works are increasing.

2. *General character of relief works.*—Intermediate works in progress; a few more 65 (a) village works have been opened.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Not so good as when last reported; the pinch is being again felt in parts of the district.

4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—None reported.

5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Food stocks ample. Exportation still brisk.

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—Now that the *rabi* harvest is over and prices are higher, scarcity is being felt. Arrangements have been made to supply labour and increased gratuitous help where needed.

7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—Arrangements have been made to open works for weakly gangs on the sliding scale of payment sanctioned in G.O. No. $\frac{1130}{S}$, dated 14th May, 1897.

* But it is a question whether gratuitous relief in this district is not being overdone. Precautionary measures are in hand.

AZAMGAR DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poorhouse relief.*—Village and poorhouse relief has been carried on during the month. Aid has been given from privately subscribed money for clothes and for relief of respectable persons. Over Rs. 30,000 have been distributed in free gift for purchase of cattle and seed.

2. *General character of relief works.*—Roads, tanks, *kankar* collection.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—The physical condition of the people is fair, but lately starvelings have been more frequently seen, and the enlargement of relief operations which has taken place during the month has been very necessary.

4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—Have been *nil*.

5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Stocks are sufficient, but prices have risen decidedly lately.

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—The affected area is amply cared for, and is doing well, I think. Its prospects will greatly improve as soon as rain falls.

7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—Lately there have been no such changes.

LUCKNOW DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poorhouse relief.*—Organization complete; numbers on village relief have decreased, but risen in the city; poorhouse population stationary.

2. *General character of relief works.*—Road making; brick digging; tank digging; village sanitary improvements.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Improved since the harvest was reaped and grain prices were easier.

4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—None reported.

5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Importations of Burma rice and wheat and barley from up-country districts considerable.

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—Still precarious in parts, especially Nigohan and Bijnor parganas. Relief on works will probably be required till end of the month, and village relief till the early crops are reaped or later.

7. *Changes in rate of wages, &c.*—Intermediate system everywhere in force. Grain usually retailed on the works at 11 to 12 *seers*; flour is 12 *chataks* dearer; grain dearest in Mohanlalganj owing to distance of markets.

UNAO DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poorhouse relief.*—Private relief much contracted. Village relief stationary. Numbers in some poorhouses increased, but decreased in one.

2. *General character of relief works.*—There are five works and one drainage work under the intermediate system, and one road work under code system. On the last mentioned numbers have increased rapidly, but, on the whole, there is now a tendency towards decrease.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Smaller cultivators and labourers in a reduced condition, but general population improving. No epidemic diseases. Death rate normal.

4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—None reported.

5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Exportation of grain going on. Stock of *kharif* grains low.

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—No change since last month, but if a delay occurs in the advance of the monsoon, distress will become extremely acute.

7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—During the month certain modifications in the intermediate system were sanctioned, allowing of the formation of weakly gangs to be paid at a higher rate. On the code work the maximum wage is six pice.

RAE BARELI DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poorhouse relief.*—There has been no change in what was reported last month. Relief organization in shape of local and *tahsili* committees and poorhouses works very smoothly.

2. *General character of relief works.*—Tanks and embankments; also improvement of roads. Public Works Department works under intermediate system, with kitchens to feed children.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—On the whole good.

4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—Nil.

5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Stocks are also supplemented to some extent by imports and are sufficient.

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—Condition improving. Extra crops doing well. Prices rising. *Mahua* fruit promises very well. Prospects dependant on the coming rains.

7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—No change in rates of wages.

ŞITAPUR DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poorhouse relief.*—Distribution of money to cultivators for plough cattle and seed grain commenced in the last week of the month. Rupees 61,849 has been drawn for distribution. Under village and poorhouse relief the number on 29th May was 4,227 against 3,999 on 24th April. The slight increase was to be expected.

2. *General character of relief works.*—Road repairing under the intermediate system. Six works were open during the month, having total number of 301 workers, which would have been larger had not many left on Friday and Saturday to attend the Nimkhar fair. Twelve works of digging tanks under the zamindárs were open. The returns of five show 478 workers. Returns of seven have not come in yet owing to a native holiday on Monday.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Continues good in the south part of the district I passed through in the last fortnight. It is better here than in the north of the district.

4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—Nil.

5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Supplies sufficient. Imports, 2,190 maunds. Exports, 79,355 maunds.

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—The district will probably get on without much increase in aid, though the gratuitous relief lists may need a little expansion till the early *kharij* crops come in.

7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—Nil.

HARDOI DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poorhouse relief.*—(a) A local committee has been formed to administer funds remitted by the Provincial Committee as well as those realized locally, and the distribution of relief from these funds continues. Rupees 170,000 have been distributed for the purchase of plough cattle.

(b) Village relief is administered by the special officers appointed for the purpose. The lists have been carefully scrutinized and brought into order. There are four poorhouses—one at the headquarters of each tahsil.

2. *General character of relief works.*—Construction, raising, and repair of roads, and the repairing of tanks [section 65(a)].

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Fair.

4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—Nil.

5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Food stocks sufficient; grain is being imported to some extent.

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—The numbers on relief works have probably now reached their maximum. The opening of *kharif* operations may now be expected to attract labourers and cultivators from the works to their own villages.

7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—Private wages stationary. Those on relief works are regulated according to the Famine Code.

Monthly Famine Statement B for the five weeks ending Saturday evening, the 27th May 1897.

Division.	District.	Maximum number (daily average for three months) for whom relief is estimated to be required in case of serious famine.	Number of persons (daily average for three months) for whom relief was provided in the last programme of relief works.		Numbers for whom relief can be provided on works remaining on programme on date of report.		Expenditure since 1st November 1896.			Advances since 1st November 1896 up to end of month under report under—		Revenue suspended since 1st Nov. 1896.	
			Date of publication of programme.	On large works.	On others.	On large works.	On others.	Date up to which account is made up.	On relief works (excluding gratuitous relief to dependants).	On gratuitous relief (including that to dependants on relief works).	Land Improvement Loans Act.	Agriculturists' Loans Act.	Rupees in thousands.
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
AGRA.	Agra	25,000	1st November 1896.	79,000	...	87,886	779	29th May 1897.	Rs. 8,461	Rs. 51,054	Rs. 31,736	Rs. 19,201	53,
	Etawah	20,000		45,000	845	31,802	1,168		77,421	9,356	24,714	13,815	40,
	Total, Agra Division ...	45,000		124,000	845	119,688	1,947		85,882	60,410	56,450	33,016	93,
ALLAH- ABAD.	Cawnpore	70,000	1st November 1896.	95,000	8,558	70,000	748,813	29th May 1897.	2,96,722	1,36,225	27,932	15,586	432,
	Fatehpur	32,000		47,000	...	30,000	29,390		71,500	91,494	41,500	44,399	250,
	Banda	200,000		240,000	8,000	216,500	160,000		17,27,383	3,36,289	58,943	27,187	350,
	Hamirpur	75,000		147,000	6,000	238,900	35,000		6,46,170	2,07,247	23,293	21,303	187,
	Allahabad	175,000		84,000	50,000	159,850	49,500		16,61,270	4,05,331	16,416	68,178	720,
	Jhansi	75,000		104,000	8,142	161,000	9,107		5,34,351	1,48,074	4,690	6,691	81,
	Jalaun	100,000		115,000	20,914	206,000	17,115		7,50,652	1,76,388	29,670	15,970	275,
Total, Allahabad Division ...	727,000	832,000	101,614	1,082,250	1,048,925	56,88,048	15,01,048	2,02,444	1,99,314	2,295,			
BENA- RES.	Mirzapur (including Family Domains of the Mahārāja of Benares).	60,000	1st November 1896.	43,000	22,847	143,400	30,797	29th May 1897.	*2,27,113	*1,13,631	8,000	29,662	57,
	Jaunpur	60,000		55,000	...	69,300	...		2,83,456	1,00,031	6,600	7,150	62,
	Total, Benares Division ...	120,000		98,000	22,847	212,700	30,797		5,10,569	2,13,662	14,600	36,812	119,
GORAKH- PUR.	Gorakhpur	40,000	1st November 1896.	155,000	...	176,556	43,266	29th May 1897.	2,18,178	77,722	24,549	82,307	113,
	Azamgarh	15,000		253,000	10,000	254,831	8,000		51,265	28,703	14,657	24,270	320,
	Total, Gorakhpur Division ...	55,000		408,000	10,000	431,387	51,266		2,69,443	1,06,425	39,206	1,06,577	433,
LUCKNOW.	Lucknow	80,000	1st November 1896.	60,000	...	141,319	...	29th May 1897.	3,05,830	1,79,944	42,975	80,862	150,
	Unao	50,000		51,000	8,979	115,399	8,979		2,19,732	1,06,065	44,942	60,002	349,
	Rae Bareilly	85,000		67,000	4,000	57,982	10,311		4,22,213	1,35,117	1,00,000	9,000	300,
	Sitapur	40,000		108,000	67,586	87,988	57,971		2,16,208	82,954	31,750	5,520	200,
	Hardoi	150,000		37,000	11,000	147,736	11,400		7,61,511	3,51,017	38,348	64,962	400,
Total, Lucknow Division ...	405,000	923,000	91,565	550,424	88,661	19,25,494	8,55,097	2,58,515	2,20,346	1,399,			
Total, N.-W. Provinces and Oudh...	1,352,000	1,785,000	226,871	2,396,449	1,221,596	84,79,436	27,36,642	5,71,215	5,96,065	4,339,			

* Exclusive of expenditure incurred by the Mahārāja of Benares, which amounted to—

On relief works	Rs. 95,157
On gratuitous relief	19,906
Total ...	115,063

NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES AND OUDH.

Monthly (extra-Code) Famine Statement C for the five weeks ending Saturday evening, the 29th May 1897.

District	TEST RELIEF WORKS UNDER CIVIL AGENCY.							TEST RELIEF WORKS UNDER THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.							POORHOUSE RELIEF.						OTHER GRATUITOUS RELIEF.						Remarks		
	Number open during period under report.	Number of labourers on last day of period under report.				during period.	Expenditure from out-set to date.	Number open during period under report.	Number of labourers on last day of period under report.				during period.	Expenditure from out-set to date.	Number of poorhouses open during period under report.	Number of inmates on last day of period under report.				during period.	Expenditure from out-set to date.	Number in receipt of gratuitous relief on last day of period under report.				during period.		Expenditure from out-set to date.	
		Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.				Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.				Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.			Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.				Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
Dehra Doo .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	Rs. ..	Rs. 8,538	..	..	..	..	..	Rs. ..	Rs. ..	..	..	..	..	..	Rs. ..	Rs. ..	..	..	..	..	Rs. ..	Rs. ..	
Total, Meerut Division	8,538	
Muttra	2	73	35	10	118	510	1,993	3	1,174	684	1,357	3,215	4,959	79,970	1	70	32	38	140	176	1,777	675	1,841	534	3,050	4,077	24,104		
Farukhabad .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	2,352	1	71	4	10	85	368	7,332	2	108	102	90	300	908	11,989	145	541	252	934	1,081	15,473	
Mainpuri (a) .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,042	1	13	10	16	39	150	3,145	52	601	237	890	223	4,647	
Etah .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	25	402	..	..	..	..	..	..	4,538	1	47	24	16	87	37	2,213	179	994	51	1,224	980	5,474	
Total, Agra Division ..	2	73	35	10	118	535	2,395	4	1,245	688	1,367	3,300	5,335	92,782	5	238	168	160	566	1,266	19,124	1,051	3,977	1,074	6,102	6,341	49,698		
Bareilly	1	55	83	48	186	88	88	5	263	201	212	766	615	37,525	2	40	21	22	83	339	4,976	89	122	21	233	233	1,900		
Bijnor .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	*1	35	31	29	95	300	12,990	3	144	152	196	492	1,000	12,330	66	212	85	363	1,068	2,600	* Opened on 4th May 1897.
Budaun .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	4,326	1	112	100	71	283	341	2,897	1	39	30	17	86	186	1,874	..	1	1	2	1	8	
Moradabad .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,388	2	134	140	60	334	290	26,854	4	99	120	106	325	1,016	7,570	61	113	111	285	258	1,878	
Shahjahanpur (b) .. ..	..	210	177	96	486	454	12,381	2	22	17	8	47	525	11,053	4	253	276	203	732	1,425	20,111	279	1,841	306	2,426	59	7,244	† Partly recoverable advances.
Pilibhit	1	31	62	..	93	114	114	4	208	475	271	954	1,160	32,514	3	28	57	75	160	452	6,160	309	626	383	1,314	1,197	5,283		
Total, Rohilkhand Division	2	296	322	147	765	656	18,297	15	774	1,054	651	2,479	3,231	113,839	17	603	656	619	1,878	4,418	52,961	824	2,915	907	4,646	3,316	18,013		

(a) The figures in columns 23-26 include 332 relieved exclusively from the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund through official agency.
 (b) Ditto, 2,426 ditto, ditto, ditto.

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NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES AND OUDH.

Monthly (extra-Code) Famine Statement C for the five weeks ending Saturday evening, the 29th May 1897—(Concluded).

District.	TEST RELIEF WORKS UNDER CIVIL AGENCY.							TEST RELIEF WORKS UNDER THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.							POORHOUSE RELIEF.							OTHER GRATUITOUS RELIEF.					Remarks.		
	Number open during period under report.	Number of labourers on last day of period under report.				Expenditure during period.	Expenditure from out-set to date.	Number open during period under report.	Number of labourers on last day of period under report.				Expenditure during period.	Expenditure from out-set to date.	Number of poorhouses open during period under report.	Number of inmates on last day of period under report.				Expenditure during period.	Expenditure from out-set to date.	Number in receipt of gratuitous relief on last day of period under report.				Expenditure during period under report.		Expenditure from out-set to date.	
		Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.				Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.				Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.			Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.				Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
Benares	Rs. ..	Rs.	Rs. ..	Rs. 2,210	3	263	278	187	728	Rs. ..	Rs. ..	2,202	6,778	2,816	11,791	Rs. 11,919	Rs. 32,051	* Met from private funds.
Total, Benares Division ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2,210	3	263	278	187	728	..	..	2,202	6,778	2,816	11,791	11,919	32,051	
Pastī (a)	13	394	241	126	761	†693	†18,038	3	312	310	303	925	†..	†..	1	55	73	106	234	530	10,527	706	422	299	1,427	243	6,544	† Village relief works ‡ Met from District Board's funds.	
Total, Gorakhpur Division	13	394	241	126	761	693	18,038	3	312	310	303	925	..	..	1	55	73	106	234	530	10,527	706	422	299	1,427	243	6,544	
Kheri .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	251	374	254	879	966	4,175	2	53	46	24	123	†..	1,042	5	56	5	66	†..	3,400	§ From private funds.
Total, Lucknow Division	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	251	374	254	879	966	4,175	2	53	46	24	123	..	1,042	5	56	5	66	..	3,400	
Fyzabad	2	..	..	..	..	435	16,764	..	..	..	..	..	1,656	23,269	3	163	165	111	439	1,182	13,760	400	1,081	899	1,850	261	7,491	
Gonda	26	125	53	68	246	455	16,721	2	429	661	278	1,368	1,894	16,227	2	94	126	84	304	563	9,479	..	..	..	..	..	1,731	
Sultānpur	53	644	372	165	1,181	4,399	30,557	2	447	919	471	1,837	2,956	37,058	2	60	109	47	215	622	7,693	145	657	177	979	1,668	7,428		
Partābgarh	78	1,128	315	202	1,645	4,360	31,628	2	403	859	162	1,424	4,159	41,703	3	122	163	190	475	1,037	9,271	600	2,022	266	2,888	3,743	14,782		
Bari Banki	5	468	365	189	1,022	611	44,334	5	..	..	..	..	523	17,372	4	152	145	91	388	854	13,503	193	373	84	650	1,706	14,513	
Total, Fyzabad Division	104	2,365	1,106	624	4,094	10,280	1,30,994	11	1,279	2,439	911	4,629	11,186	1,35,629	14	591	707	523	1,821	4,248	53,036	1,338	4,133	896	6,367	7,378	45,945		
TOTAL, N.-W. P. AND OUDH	181	3,128	1,793	907	5,738	12,164	1,37,262	35	3,861	4,865	3,486	12,212	20,710	3,48,635	42	1,803	1,928	1,619	5,350	10,452	1,37,290	6,126	18,276	5,697	30,309	28,697	1,56,551		

(a) The figures in columns 23-26 include 1,150 relieved exclusively from the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund through official agency.

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Separate Mortality Statement.

District.	Monthly death rate—	
	For April 1897.	For correspond- ing period of previous year.
Bánda	5.23	1.94
Mirzapur	4.82	2.88
Sitapur —	3.68	2.53

No. 1697-S.-131 of 1897, dated Naina Tal, the 4th August 1897.

From the Secretary to Government N.-W. Provinces and Oudh to all Commissioners of Divisions and District Officers N.-W. Provinces and Oudh (except Meerut and Kumaun Divisions).

SIR,

THE Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner has now visited the chief centres of distress in the provinces, and has concerted with the Divisional and District Officers the measures which have been rendered necessary by the advent of the rains, and the policy which should be pursued, and the further measures which should be adopted, to finally wind up relief operations, provided the rains continue favourable for the remainder of the season. The results of these deliberations are embodied in the notes of conferences which accompany this letter.

2. In many districts relief works have been already closed, and in all they have been substantially reduced. The remaining works have been concentrated at as small a number of centres as possible, and works, such as stone and *kankar* quarrying, which can be carried on during the rains, have been, so far as possible, substituted for the various forms of earthwork hitherto in operation. The Famine Code system of works has been everywhere abandoned, and the intermediate system with full tasks introduced and the rates fixed at either the 12-*ser* or the 14-*ser* scale. Field work of various sorts has opened up with the progress of the rains, and in nearly every locality affords occupation for all the labour seeking employment. It is anticipated that all the works will be gradually deserted, and that few will remain open by the end of August. The early *kharij* crops may be expected to be ripe and coming into consumption by the 15th September, and the last of these Department of Public Works relief works must be finally closed on that date, and the labourers, if any remain, left to find employment in the usual pursuits which will then be open to them.

3. Poorhouses will remain open for the present for the reception of wanderers and of persons unable to labour. As already directed, poorhouse inmates who are able to work should be required to execute a suitable task, and work should be devised and provided for this purpose.

From the end of August or beginning of September steps should be taken to draft back from the poorhouses to their homes, and bring on the village lists, all persons unable to support themselves who have any fixed residence or whose village of origin can be discovered, excepting only those hospital patients who from illness are unable to travel. This operation should be completed by the 15th or 20th of September, and after that further admissions to the poorhouses should be refused, except in cases of obvious necessity. When the village relief is finally closed in any district, any remaining inmates of poorhouses must be paid off with a fortnight's subsistence dole, and be warned that they must thenceforth provide for themselves as they have been accustomed to do. Infirmary patients must be removed to the permanent district hospital or permanent poorhouse where such institution exists. The poorhouse will then be finally closed and the establishment dismissed.

4. It remains to deal with persons in receipt of gratuitous relief in villages and cities (Chapters V. and X., Famine Code.) Commencing from the end of August, the lists should be carefully revised and superfluous names weeded out. These operations should be supervised, where possible, by European agency : at the same time, if prices have fallen, the rates may be reduced under orders of the Commissioner of the division.

The next step will be to strike off whole villages from the relief lists. This process will begin when the early *kharif* is ripe and the new grain in the market. In some places this will take place early in September ; in some places by the middle of that month ; in some places perhaps later. In a few localities where the early *kharif* is inconsiderable and the harvest consists almost exclusively of the later staples, it may be necessary in special cases to retain villages on the lists as late as the middle of October. The decision of such cases is left to the discretion of Commissioners.

Those tracts will be selected for reduction first where the *kharif* is earliest, but it should be complete for every village with an early *kharif* crop by the end of September. If in any village, owing to backwardness of crops or great preponderance of the later *kharif*, it is necessary to postpone final closure, the list can be maintained till the middle of October. But if the rains progress favourably, such cases should be exceptional. As each village is struck off, the recipients then on the list should receive a week's or fortnight's dole at the Collector's discretion, and be warned that they must thenceforth provide for themselves. In this way the relief will carry on the recipients in some cases to the beginning of October, in most cases to the middle of that month. And in exceptional instances to the commencement of November. As the villages are struck off, relief measures will be finally wound up and the special establishments reduced.

In cities relief, as a rule, will be closed at the end of September, the recipients then on the lists being paid off with a week's or a fortnight's dole. City relief committees should be given timely information.

5. The arrangements above described will, His Honour believes, provide for the gradual reduction, and the final closure of relief in the manner calculated to cause the least suffering or inconvenience to those now dependent on State support, and I am to request that they may everywhere be followed, unless sanction is sought for any modification in any special case.

It is impossible to expect that where people have for a considerable period been accustomed to receive gratuitous support at their own homes or in poorhouses, the discontinuance of such support can be effected without inconvenience and a certain degree of hardship to those who are again thrown on their own resources. The longer the relief is continued the greater this difficulty will become, and the Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner believe that in the end the most humane as well as the wisest course is to terminate at the earliest possible moment, after the ripening of the *kharif* harvest, of which the promise is now excellent, arrangements which cannot possibly be maintained in permanence. There is much danger that the continuance of State relief, after the imperative necessity for it had ceased, would tend to weaken the custom and the immemorial duty of private and domestic charity which has been up to the present the resource of the destitute and helpless. It is of the first importance that no impediment should be placed in the way of the return of the community to its old customs and habits of life. Any unnecessary postponement would in the end prove an injury to the classes it aimed at assisting.

In this way the Lieutenant-Governor trusts that relief operations of every kind may be brought to a close on the 15th October at latest.

I have, &c.,

T. STOKER,

Secy. to Govt., N.-W. P. and Oudh.

No. 2385 of 1897, dated Naini Tal, the 21st October 1897.

From the Secretary to Government, N.-W. Provinces and Oudh, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Revenue and Agricultural Department (Famine).

SIR,

I AM directed to forward the monthly Famine Statements A and B for these provinces, which give an account of the relief operations up to the 25th September 1897 in seventeen districts which were officially recognised as distressed, and extra-Code Statement C, which contains particulars in regard to the districts which were under observation, though not officially declared to be distressed.

2. Besides the amounts of advances under the Land Improvement and Agriculturists' Loans Acts and of revenue suspensions shown in columns 11 to 13 of Statement B, Rs. 11,73,269 have been advanced under the two Acts, and revenue to the amount of Rs. 27,92,890 has been suspended, in the districts included in Statement C since 1st November 1896. These figures, though to some extent incomplete, approximate closely to actuals. Relief was distributed over the entire areas of the districts entered in Statement A. The "affected" area represents the extent of more acute distress.

3. Excepting only orphans who still remain on the hands of Government, the last recipients of village poorhouse relief were paid off on or before the 15th October, and all disbursement of State relief has ceased from that date. Henceforth the numbers appearing in returns will be those subsisting on the parting doles which they received when the village lists and poor-houses were closed. A certain amount of assistance is still given to deserving cases from the charitable fund, and active measures have been taken to distribute quinine and other febrifuges very extensively in certain districts, where the exceptionally heavy and continuous rainfall has been followed by malarial fever of unusual prevalence and fatality.

I have, &c.,

T. STOKER,

Secy. to Govt., N.-W. P. and Oudh.

NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES AND OUDH.

Monthly Famine Statement A for the four weeks ending Saturday evening, the 25th September 1897.

District.	Area.	Population in thousands.	Affected area.	Estimated population in thousands of column 4.	Number on relief works on the last day of the period under report.												Number on gratuitous relief on the last day of the period under report (excluding dependants on works).				Prices of one or more principal food grains in séra per rupee.						Death rate.				
					Workers.				Dependants.				Total.				Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.	Wheat.	Maize.	Barley.	Millets.		Pulses.		For the period under report.	For the corresponding period of the previous year.	Deaths due to starvation.	
					Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.								Juar.	Other.	Gram.	Other.				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
Agra	Sq.m. 1,856	1,008	Sq.m. 744	285	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,205	4,347	895	6,447	9'25	14'5	13'75	1'95	13'	8'5	9'5	7'75	2'90	..
Etawah .. .	1,694	727	271	62	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	198	477	90	765	9'37	13'5	11'31	10'31	..	7'87	..	4'26	2'55	..
Total, Agra Division ..	3,550	1,730	1,015	347	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,403	4,824	985	7,212	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cawnpore (a) .. .	2,393	1,210	1,219	463	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,250	3,561	565	5,396	9'31	17'08	12'58	..	..	8'69	10'12	3'67	2'43	..
Fatehpur (b) .. .	1,633	690	582	226	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,283	3,353	1,000	5,636	8'8	..	11'	..	..	8'25	7'5	3'88	2'32	..
Banda .. .	3,061	705	3,061	705	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5,093	14,430	14,851	34,374	..	..	..	..	..	8'44	9'20	3'97	3'84	..
Hamirpur .. .	2,289	513	2,289	513	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,581	3,328	2,705	7,672	8'38	11'44	11'19	9'56	18'25	8'75	7'13	8'93	8'78	..
Allahabad (c) .. .	2,852	1,548	2,852	1,548	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10,228	17,034	9,271	36,533	8'69	11'	10'5	..	..	8'06	..	3'64	2'62	..
Jhansi (d) .. .	3,587	663	3,587	663	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,476	5,056	3,266	9,800	8'44	..	..	10'12	..	8'31	..	5'15	7'09	..
Jalaun (e) .. .	1,480	396	1,480	396	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2,464	6,702	3,851	13,017	8'5	10'62	11'	9'44	8'5	8'5	7'25	9'34	8'05	..
Total, Allahabad Division	17,265	5,754	15,070	4,593	23,375	63,462	35,591	112,428
Mirzapur (including Family Domains of the Maharaja of Benares). (f)	5,223	1,761	4,577	714	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	745	2,410	1,856	5,011	8'25	11'69	10'25	8'62	..	7'94	..	4'51	2'99	..
Jaunpur .. .	1,550	1,265	271	214	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,622	4,416	3,700	9,738	8'75	12'	11'5	..	..	8'25	7'	3'11	1'87	..
Total, Benares Division ..	6,773	2,426	4,346	928	2,367	6,826	5,556	14,749

(a) The figures in columns 18-21 include 3,417 persons relieved exclusively from the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund through official agency.
 (b) Ditto 80 ditto
 (c) Ditto 18,405 ditto
 (d) Ditto 2,590 ditto
 (e) Ditto 1,255 ditto
 (f) Ditto 275 ditto

NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES AND OUDH.

Monthly Famine Statement A for the four weeks ending Saturday evening, the 25th September 1897—(concluded).

District.	Area.	Population in thousands.	Affected area.	Estimated population in thousands of column 4.	Number on relief works on the last day of the period under report.												Number on gratuitous relief on the last day of the period under report (excluding dependants on works).				Prices of one or more principal food grains in sérs per rupee.						Death rate.		Deaths due to starvation.		
					Workers.				Dependants.				Total.				Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.	Wheat.	Maize.	Barley.	Millets.		Pulses.		For the period under report.		For the corresponding period of the previous year.	
					Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.								Jowar.	Other.	Gram.	Other.				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
	Sq. m.		Sq. m.																												
Gorakhpur	4,580	2,994	2,630	1,727	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,410	3,575	941	5,926	9'37	..	11'25	..	9'60	8'62	10'56	3'56	2'69	..
Azamgarh	2,148	1,720	1,130	914	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	125	307	136	568	8'4	13'17	11'	..	..	8'14	7'19	24'62	1'58	..
Total, Gorakhpur Division	6,728	4,723	3,760	2,641	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,535	3,882	1,077	6,494	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Lucknow	967	774	967	774	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4,855	15,742	6,023	26,620	9'5	16'	11'5	10'5	8'	8'25	10'	5'22	2'19	..
Unao	1,778	954	1,778	954	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3,133	6,429	3,343	12,905	9'	14'	11'5	11'	10'	8'5	7'5	4'15	1'89	..
Rae Baroli	1,752	1,037	1,752	1,037	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	311	850	557	1,218	8'5	..	..	10'	..	9'5	..	4'09	1'62	..
Hardoi	2,325	1,113	2,325	1,113	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6,594	17,858	11,465	35,917	10'	15'	13'	..	..	8'	..	4'82	4'99	..
Total, Lucknow Division	6,822	3,878	6,822	3,878	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14,893	40,379	21,388	76,660	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total, N.-W. P. and Oudh.	41,138	18,511	31,515	12,327	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	43,573	109,373	64,597	217,549	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

REMARKS TO ACCOMPANY FAMINE STATEMENT A FOR THE
FOUR WEEKS ENDING SATURDAY, THE 25TH SEPTEMBER 1897.

AGRA DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poor-house relief.*—There were no private subscriptions during the month. Two poor-houses closed on 15th September and one on 30th September 1897. The few orphans and blind, &c., that remain in the poor-house are temporarily maintained by the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund.

2. *General character of relief works.*—The only work that was open at the beginning of September and which was under the Public Works Department was closed on the 14th September 1897.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Fair.

4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—None.

5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Sufficient.

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—All works closed.

7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—Nil.

ETAWAH DISTRICT.

In Act XX. towns and the city relief is given from subscription funds. There is now no poor-house in the district. All the relief works have been closed. The general condition of the people is good. No case of death due to starvation has been reported. Food stocks sufficient. Import of grain has ceased, and export has taken its place. There has been no change in rates of wages.

CAWNPORE DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poor-house relief.*—The decrease in the numbers is due to closure of village relief. Most village relief was closed by 25th September, and the recipients of relief were given a week's or fortnight's dole.

2. *General character of relief works.*—Nil.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Generally good, but fever very prevalent (quinine is now being distributed).

4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—Nil.

5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Food stocks sufficient. New grain (maize and millets) coming into the markets from villages. The exports of grain are about double the imports.

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—Prospects good. *Kharif* excellent, except some damage in places to maize.

7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—No change.

FATEHPUR DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poor-house relief.*—The relief operations in this district were finally closed on the 20th September 1897, when those still on the relief lists and in poor-houses (excluding orphans) were dismissed with a fortnight's dole. Charitable money is being spent now in helping paupers to return to their original position and to start business in life again.

2. *General character of relief works.*—None open.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Fever prevalent in an epidemic form has increased the death rate; but the condition on the whole is fair.

4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—Nil.

5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Stock sufficiently supplied :—

	Mds.
Imports by rail	12,009
Exports „	490
Net imports ...	11,519

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—Much improved. Prospects excellent and assured.

7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—Nil.

BANDA DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poor-house relief.*—Very little private relief is afforded in this district. Distributions from charitable relief fund in supplementing village and poor-house relief, supporting respectable persons, and assisting distressed cultivators under object IV. of the fund during the period from 16th August to 15th September 1897 amounted to Rs. 66,596-10-3. The numbers on village relief lists have considerably fallen, and the village relief is being closed after payment of doles up to 15th October 1897. Those in poor-houses have also considerably fallen, and the poor-houses will be closed on 15th October 1897 with the village relief.

2. *General character of relief works.*—The general character of large relief works under Public Works Department agency that remained in progress during the period under report was construction of dams and breaking of stone at quarries. All these works were finally closed on 15th September 1897.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—The physical condition of people is fair. Fever is prevailing, though not of a very severe type.

4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—None reported.

5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Market supplies are sufficient for the present use of the district, and importations of grain from out-stations continue. No less than 22,200 maunds of grain were imported into the district during the period under notice.

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—The general condition of the district has much improved during the period under report. The early millet crop was good and afforded much help, to the cultivators especially. The standing *kharif* crops flourish and are promising a good harvest. The recent showers of rain have been very beneficial to the standing crops. *Rabi* ploughings and sowings are in progress.

7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—Rates of wages remained unchanged on relief works, which were closed on 15th September 1897.

HAMIRPUR DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poor-house relief.*—Private charity is coming into play again slowly. The Christian Mission at Mahoba supports about 80 orphans and gives doles to many of the poor. The Charitable Fund, besides its usual monthly operations, is now making gifts to cultivators for seed out of the Rs. 50,000 reserved for that purpose. Village relief, except in selected villages, was stopped at the end of the month, the persons then in receipt of relief receiving a fortnight's dole. Five poor-houses were open; few but sick persons and orphans are now in them. All Government relief measures will be finally closed on 15th October.

2. *General character of relief works.*—None.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Were it not for the extensively prevailing malarial fever, the condition of the people would be good. But the poorer classes, subsisting on even coarser food than usual, and tried by the long scarcity, are unable to withstand fever. The death-rate for the month was 8·93 per mille.

4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—No deaths from starvation reported.

5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Stocks replenished by early *kharif* harvest, which is now over. Importations continue. Supplies sufficient.

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—Fever excepted, the condition of the district is improving. The current month will find all classes fully occupied in the various agricultural operations. Crop prospects are fair; a little more rain is needed to make them good.

7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—The price of the staple grain, *viz.*, gram, has fallen slightly, being $8\frac{3}{4}$ *seers* at the end of the month. Early *kharif* grains were much cheaper, but, making deductions for moisture and husk, were hardly equal to gram at 15 *seers* to the rupee. The rate adopted for calculation of relief allowances at the end of the month was 15 *seers*.

ALLAHABAD DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poor-house relief.*—Nothing new about private relief. The numbers in receipt of relief under Chapters V. and X., inclusive of city, have fallen from 43,943 to 33,916, owing to careful scrutiny of village lists and the earlier *kharif* grains coming into market. The numbers relieved in poor-houses have fallen from 3,579 to 579 only, and in State kitchens from 5,227 to 2,038, due to the excellent state of *kharif* crops and the closing of kitchens.

2. *General character of relief works.*—All closed on 15th September 1897.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Generally good.

4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—Nil.

5. *Food-stocks and importation of grain.*—Supplies ample. Imports 40,680 maunds, and exports 2,674 maunds, during period under report.

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—Satisfactory. Prospects most favourable, and all relief will cease by 15th October.

7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—No relief works open.

JHANSI DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poor-house relief.*—Poor-houses have been closed, except for the maintenance of orphans still unprovided for. Numbers on village relief reduced from 19,288 to 9,652. Rupees 14,000 from Famine Relief Fund distributed for purchase of seed grain.

2. *General character of relief works.*—All public works have been closed.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Fair.

4. *Deaths due to starvation.* None.

5. *Food stocks and importation of grain:*—

						Mds.
Imports	...	...	...	...	...	30,047 $\frac{3}{4}$
Exports	...	...	...	...	...	1,995 $\frac{1}{2}$

Prices have fallen somewhat during the month, and the reaping of the early millets has augmented the stock of food available, and cheapened the cost of living.

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—General prospects are good. The *kharif* crop is so far excellent, and early grains have already come on the markets. *Juar* has not yet been cut, but there is every prospect that the crop will be a good one.

7. *Changes in the rates of wages, &c.*—Nil.

JALAUN DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poor-house relief.*—In those villages where there are now stocks of grain from the early *kharif* harvest in the threshing floors, the villagers have been directed to look after their poor. In other villages, being chiefly those in which there is little or no *kharif* crop, State relief will be given so as to tide over the period till the last week of October. There is now only one poor-house open.

2. *General character of relief works.*—There are no relief works in progress.
3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Considerably affected, owing to the excessive prevalence of malarial fever.
4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—One was reported, but it has not been verified. The abnormal mortality of the month was chiefly due to the excessive prevalence of malarial fever induced by the extraordinary character of the rainfall. The highest death rate has been recorded in that portion of the district where distress was least marked, and where there was practically no distress last year. Next come those reporting circles which include that portion of the district that suffered most from waterlogging.
5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Food stocks, supplemented by importation, are sufficient.
6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—Prospects are, on the whole, favourable, though the pinch of distress is still felt in a number of villages. *Taqavi* is very urgently needed.
7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—The allowances made to those gratuitously relieved at their homes have been reduced in consequence of the low prices at which early *kharif* grain is sold in the markets.

MIRZAPUR DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poor-house relief.*—The local relief committee distributed Rs. 300 under object I. and Rs. 7,975 to 4,855 persons under object III. The numbers in poor-houses and on village lists have considerably fallen, and these will be closed at the end of the month.
2. *General character of relief works.*—Only one work under the partly recoverable advance system was open, on which there were a few persons ; all the other works are closed.
3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Good.
4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—None.
5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Sufficient.
6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—The general condition of the affected area is good. With a full *kharif* harvest and the bright prospects of the *rabi* crop, the condition is much improved, and it is hoped that by the time the *rabi* crop is reaped all traces of famine will disappear.
7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—In Dudhi and the Robertsganj tahsil the rate of wages was calculated at 16 *ser*s a rupee ; elsewhere the staple was 12 *ser*s.

JAUNPUR DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poor-house relief.*—Relief given from the Charitable Relief Fund. Admission to poor-houses was closed on 1st, and they were finally closed on 30th September. Final dole in non-affected tracts was given on 11th September. In affected area payment gradually restricted and final distribution on 30th September.
2. *General character of relief works.*—None.
3. *Physical condition of the people.*—With a few exceptions here and there, normal.
4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—None.
5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Stock of Indian corn and early rice ample, and grain still being imported.
6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—The district has now resumed its normal condition almost, and when the later rice ripens next month, will be absolutely normal.
7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—Unchanged.

GORAKHPUR DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poor-house relief.*—Where relief continued, the system was the same during the month, but all relief operations were closed before the 30th.
2. *General character of relief works.*—None.
3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Is much improved.
4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—None.
5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Food stocks sufficient. Early rice entering market.
6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—Standing crops flourishing. Prospects promising. Prices falling.
7. *Changes in rates of wages &c.*—None.

AZAMGARH DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poor-house relief.*—All public village and poor-house relief has now stopped. Private relief continues.
2. *General character of relief works.*—No relief works.
3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Greatly improved. The famine is over. The death rate is high, but this is due to fever and malaria. It is lower than it was in August, and October will show a further decrease. Last year there was no rain, and so no malaria and very little fever.
4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—None.
5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Supplies are sufficient. There is very little importation. The crops of the district are very good.
6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—The famine is over. The crops are excellent. Good rain has lately fallen, which ensures a bumper later rice crop, and *rabt* sowings under the most favourable conditions.
7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—Wages are about normal.

LUCKNOW DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poor-house relief.*—Organization complete. Numbers in poor-houses have decreased considerably, while those on gratuitous village relief have temporarily increased.
2. *General character of relief works.*—Nil.
3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Fair, but malarial fever has proved fatal in many cases to persons already weakened by insufficient food. Quinine will be distributed on receipt from Aligarh jail. Meanwhile a grant has been made for purchase of quinine from charitable relief funds.
4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—None reported.
5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Markets well stocked. Imports and exports of grain considerable. Early *kharif* being generally reaped, with a fall in the prices of coarser grains.
6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—General condition of affected area improving. Prospects excellent.
7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—Nil.

UNAO DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poor-house relief.*—Private charity extending. Village relief is being rapidly closed, only one poor-house now open.
2. *General character of relief works.*—Nil.

3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Rapidly improving.
4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—None reported.
5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Importation ceased ; exports of maize beginning.
6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—The *kharif* is now assured and should be a bumper crop. The early crops are being harvested. Prospects for *rabi* good.
7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—*Nil*.

RAE BARELI DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poor-house relief.*—No relief is now being given in this district. There is only one poor-house at Rae Bareli open, while the others were broken up as follows :—Salon poor-house on 24th September 1897, Digbijai-ganj on 28th September 1897, and Dalmau on 30th September 1897.
2. *General character of relief works.*—*Nil*.
3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Condition of people is better.
4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—*Nil*.
5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Food stocks sufficient, and import of grain continues.
6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—General condition and prospects of affected area are now good. Early *kharif* has been good, and late *kharif* promises excellently.
7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—None.

HARDOI DISTRICT.

1. *Private relief, village and poor-house relief.*—Village and poor-house relief have been gradually contracted during the month, and finally closed on 30th September. The expenditure of money from the Charitable Relief Fund has similarly been contracted and stopped, except in the case of orphans and cultivators in certain areas damaged by floods.
2. *General character of relief works.*—None.
3. *Physical condition of the people.*—Fair ; fever prevalent.
4. *Deaths due to starvation.*—None reported.
5. *Food stocks and importation of grain.*—Food stocks sufficient ; new grain available :—

					Mds.
Imports	...	...	...	...	2,084
Exports	...	...	...	...	3,015

6. *General condition and prospects of affected area.*—Prospects of *kharif* crops good ; distress diminishing.
7. *Changes in rates of wages, &c.*—Private wages stationary. Relief works closed.

NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES AND OUDH.

Monthly Famine Statement B for the four weeks ending Saturday evening, the 25th September 1897.

Division.	District	Maximum number (daily average for three months) for whom relief is estimated to be required in case of serious famine.	Number of persons (daily average for three months) for whom relief was provided in the last programme of relief works.		Numbers for whom relief can be provided on works remaining on programme on date of report.		Expenditure since 1st November 1896.			Advances since 1st November 1896 up to end of month under report under—	Revenue suspended since 1st Nov. 1896.		
			Date of publication of programme.	On large works.	On others.	On large works.	On others.	Date up to which account is made up.	On relief works (excluding gratuitous relief to dependants).	On gratuitous relief (including that to dependants on relief works).	Land Improvement Loans Act.	Agriculturists' Loans Act.	Rupees in thousands.
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
AGRA.	Agra	25,000	1st November 1896.	79,000	...	75,602	...	25th September 1897.	Rs. 15,696	Rs. 92,994	Rs. *28,736	Rs. *26,114	162,
	Etawah	20,000		45,000	845	31,146	...		83,373	14,510	28,948	13,885	66,
	Total, Agra Division ...	45,000		124,000	845	106,328	...		99,069	1,07,504	57,684	39,999	228,
ALLAHABAD.	Cawnpore	70,000	1st November 1896.	95,000	8,558	66,000	748,090	25th September 1897.	3,00,612	1,74,298	30,406	28,247	667,
	Fatehpur	32,000		47,000	29,670	36,000	29,390		84,060	1,57,724	47,500	83,559	704,
	Banda	200,000		240,000	8,000	139,620	155,000		25,13,334	7,26,961	60,915	2,12,662	1,094,
	Hamirpur	75,000		147,000	26,833	234,314	26,833		8,34,724	3,35,938	39,072	56,075	813,
	Allahabad	175,000		84,000	49,500	120,000	49,500		21,21,261	7,40,718	19,601	1,43,440	1,495
	Jhānsi	75,000		104,000	9,107	140,000	9,107		7,05,346	2,95,759	7,335	18,052	220,
	Jalaun	100,000		115,000	20,914	168,000	17,115		9,47,576	3,05,388	33,655	1,24,970	1,078,
	Total, Allahabad Division ...	727,000		832,000	152,582	903,934	1,035,035		75,06,913	27,36,786	2,38,484	6,67,005	6,071,
BENARES.	Mirzapur (including Family Domains of the Mahārāja of Benares).	60,000	1st November 1896.	43,000	22,847	133,900	36,806	25th September 1897.	†4,01,481	†2,57,780	22,150	73,954	301,
	Jaunpur	60,000		55,000	1,099	69,300	...		3,40,807	2,04,215	7,000	14,930	294,
	Total, Benares Division ...	120,000		98,000	23,946	203,200	36,806		7,42,288	4,61,945	29,150	88,884	595,
GORAKHPUR.	Gorakhpur	40,000	1st November 1896.	155,000	43,266	174,310	26,515	25th September 1897.	3,07,188	1,47,125	33,194	1,00,002	414,
	Azamgarh	15,000		253,000	10,000	246,534	8,000		96,817	1,10,625	15,876	44,506	675,
	Total, Gorakhpur Division ...	55,000		408,000	53,266	420,844	34,515		4,05,621	2,35,635	49,070	1,44,490	1,113,
LUCKNOW.	Lucknow	80,000	1st November 1896.	60,000	...	125,513	...	25th September 1897.	5,64,854	2,60,760	53,725	1,24,840	300,
	Unao	50,000		51,000	8,979	113,162	8,979		2,79,837	2,04,928	76,558	84,216	778,
	Rae Bareilly	85,000		67,000	4,000	49,080	8,674		4,78,156	2,40,610	1,16,000	12,500	338,
	Hardoi	150,000		87,000	11,000	122,930	11,400		9,82,594	6,44,502	56,830	87,859	963,
	Total, Lucknow Division ...	365,000		215,000	23,979	410,685	29,053		23,05,441	13,50,800	3,03,113	3,09,415	2,379,
	Total, N.-W. Provinces and Oudh ...	1,312,000		1,877,000	254,618	2,043,991	1,135,409		1,10,59,332	48,92,670	6,77,501	12,49,793	10,386,

* Decrease on last return due to the exclusion of certain advances made in October 1896 and hitherto included in the local returns.

† Inclusive of expenditure incurred by the Mahārāja of Benares, which amounted to—

													Rs.
	On relief works	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,28,775
	On gratuitous relief	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	40,723
	Total	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,64,498

NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES AND OUDH.

Monthly (extra-Code) Famine Statement C for the four weeks ending Saturday evening, the 25th September 1897.

District.	TEST RELIEF WORKS UNDER CIVIL AGENCY.								TEST RELIEF WORKS UNDER THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.						POORHOUSE RELIEF.						OTHER GRATUITOUS RELIEF.						Remarks.		
	Number open during period under report.	Number of labourers on last day of period under report.				Expenditure during period.	Expenditure from out-set to date.	Number open during period under report.	Number of labourers on last day of period under report.				Expenditure during period.	Expenditure from out-set to date.	Number of poorhouses open during period under report.	Number of inmates on last day of period under report.				Expenditure during period.	Expenditure from out-set to date.	Number in receipt of gratuitous-relief on last day of period under report.				Expenditure during period under report.		Expenditure from out-set to date.	
		Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.				Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.				Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.			Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
Muttra							Rs. 2,041							Rs. 95,234							Rs. 688	Rs. 1,474	300	735	101	1,134	1,829	36,447	* Met from Municipal funds.
Farukhabad							2,352							7,855							688	16,601	72	392	135	599	276	21,191	
Mainpuri														1,042								3,338					2,087	17,168	
Etah (a)							935							4,538								2,354	101	419	68	588	791	10,958	
Total, Agra Division ..							5,323							108,669							688	24,267	473	1,544	304	2,321	4,983	85,764	
Bareilly							88							45,371	1	32	13	30	75	561	7,027	88	124	4	216	802	4,462		
Bijnor														14,307	3		2	5	7	626	18,650	222	547	290	1,059	1,149	6,943		
Budaun							4,326							4,313	1	39	2		41	396	3,525	29		2	31	2	11		
Moradabad							1,388							30,487	4	7	4	6	17	472	12,619	223	279	281	783	1,091	4,559		
Shahjahanpur							11,381							12,522	3	102	169	156	427	2,404	31,191	93	209	167	461	915	12,364		
Pilibhit (b)							447							27,595	1		1	7	8	460	7,548	558	1,891	610	3,059	1,306	12,664		
Total, Rohilkhand Division ..							17,630							134,595	13	180	191	204	575	4,919	80,580	1,213	3,050	1,349	5,612	5,755	41,003		
Benares														2,209	2	172	152	88	412	†	†	3,116	5,800	2,456	11,372	15,419	75,478	† Met from private funds.	
Total, Benares Division ..														2,209	2	172	152	88	412			3,116	5,800	2,456	11,372	15,419	75,478		

(a) The figures in columns 23-26 include 70 relieved exclusively from the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund through official agency.
 (b) Ditto 1,121 ditto ditto ditto.

NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES AND OUDH.

Monthly (extra-Code) Famine Statement C for the four weeks ending Saturday evening, the 25th September 1897—(concluded).

District.	TEST RELIEF WORKS UNDER CIVIL AGENCY.							TEST RELIEF WORKS UNDER THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.						POORHOUSE RELIEF.						OTHER GRATUITOUS RELIEF.					Remarks.					
	Number open during period under report.	Number of labourers on last day of period under report.				Expenditure during period.	Expenditure from out-set to date.	Number open during period under report.	Number of labourers on last day of period under report.				Expenditure during period.	Expenditure from out-set to date.	Number of poorhouses open during period under report.	Number of inmates on last day of period under report.				Expenditure during period.	Expenditure from out-set to date.	Number in receipt of gratuitous relief on last day of period under report.				Expenditure during period under report.	Expenditure from out-set to date.			
		Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.				Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.				Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.			Men.	Women.	Children.				Total.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29		
Basti						Rs.	Rs.																						† Village relief works.	
Total, Gorakhpur Division						Rs.	Rs.																							
Kheri														10,428	3	54	68	58	180	687	1,802								3,513	
Sitapur							563									1	28	19	13	60	438	11,720	127	410	33	570	3,269	19,681	‡ From transfer to list of districts under observation, i.e. from week ending 19th June 1897, previous to which expenditure incurred was—	
Total, Lucknow Division							563							10,428	4	82	87	71	240	1,105	3,522	127	410	33	570	3,269	23,194			
Fyzabad						410	18,004													695	20,522	795	1,389	649	2,833	717	11,221	Rs. 219,826		
Gonda							19,020						841	18,946						460	12,141					1,625	6,550	Gratuitous relief .. 91,196		
Sultānpur						475	33,502							42,418						627	11,184	35	297	2	334	91	15,671	Total .. 3,11,022		
Partāgarh						9,901	45,226						32	45,851						463	14,062	153	538	25	716	1,593	30,209	‡ Met from charitable funds.		
Barā Banki						742	48,763							18,674						145	16,873					1,836	22,738			
tal, Fyzabad Division						11,528	1,64,517						873	1,50,123						2,300	74,782	983	2,224	676	3,883	5,771	86,389			
TOTAL N.-W. P. AND OUDH						11,528	2,09,093						873	1,06,024	19	434	430	360	1,227	9,102	1,86,395	5,612	13,023	4,818	23,758	35,404	3,22,863			

(a) The figures in columns 23-28 include 334 relieved exclusively from the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund through official agency.
 (b) Ditto 88 ditto ditto ditto ditto

NOTES OF AN INSPECTION OF FAMINE RELIEF WORKS IN
THE NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES AND OUDH, BY MR. T
HIGHAM, C.I.E., ON SPECIAL DUTY.

1. My tour in the North-Western Provinces commenced at Kirwi, in the Banda district, where I arrived from Jabalpur on the night of the 6th June, and where I met Mr. Cruickshank, Commissioner of the Allahabad division, Mr. Ferard, Collector of Banda, and Mr. C. G. Palmer, Superintending Engineer, Famine Relief works. On the morning of the 7th we inspected the Diwanganghat tank work, and a somewhat similar work was visited in the afternoon. On the morning of the 8th we visited the Gali tank, and in the evening went on by rail to Allahabad, inspecting *en route* the poor-house and some petty village works at Manickpur. On the afternoon of the 9th I went to Jasra, accompanied by Mr. Fuller, Collector of Allahabad, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Sutherland, the Executive Engineer, Mr. Dupuis, Sub-Divisional Officer, and Mr. Meares, the Sectional Officer. We here inspected the work on three village tanks and a village circle camp. The 10th and 11th were spent in Allahabad, when Mr. Palmer gave me much information about the relief works. I left Allahabad on the night of the 11th by rail for Unao where I arrived the following morning, after being met by Colonel Pulford, R.E., Superintending Engineer at Cawnpur. We were met by Mr. Bruce, the Deputy Commissioner, who accompanied us in the afternoon to a large drainage cut that was being executed as a relief work on what is called the modified intermediate piece-work system, which I saw here in operation for the first time. In the evening we went on to Lucknow, where I was the guest of the Commissioner, Mr. Hardy. No works were inspected on the 13th, which was Sunday, but on the following morning I went with Mr. Hardy and Colonel Pulford to the Machhi Bhawan, where a large and useful relief work was in progress. In the afternoon I drove with Colonel Pulford and the Executive Engineer, Mr. MacDowell, to the Chinhat tank, about 7 miles from Lucknow. The works at Machhi Bhawan and Chinhat were both being conducted on the "modified intermediate system" which is in force throughout the Lucknow division, excepting the Hardoi district. Colonel Pulford and I left Lucknow by the night train for Sandila, in the last named district, and on the following morning inspected a relief camp on the Sandila-Mandwan road, about 8 miles out from Sandila railway station. This work was conducted on what is called the Code system, which was in force in Bundelkhand and South Allahabad. On our return we met the Collector of Hardoi at Sandila. We left in the evening for Lucknow, and on the evening of the 16th I revisited the Machhi Bhawan for the purpose of seeing payments carried out. On the following morning I left Lucknow for Gorakhpur, and arrived in the evening, accompanied by Mr. Heinig, the Superintending Engineer, who met me *en route*. I remained at Gorakhpur for two days as the guest of Dr. Hoey, the Collector.

On the 18th I met the Commissioner, Mr. Alexander, and the Executive Engineer, Mr. Holme; the latter explained to me the system of piece-work in force in this and the Azamgarh district, and we visited a work in progress in Gorakhpur. On the morning of the 19th Dr. Hoey drove me out to the Amipur Nallah bunds works, which were being carried out on the Gorakhpur piece-work system, and we met there the Commissioner and the Superintending and Executive Engineers. I left Gorakhpur in the evening of the same day for Bankipur, and so passed from the North-Western Provinces into Bengal.

2. The relief works in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh consist principally of tank and road works. The former are of two kinds, the formation of a reservoir in hilly or uneven country by the construction of an embankment across the natural drainage line, and the construction or clearance of village tanks or ponds. Works of the former class are carried out in Bundelkhand, where the country is well adapted for them. Wherever they can be made, they strengthen the position of the adjacent villages, as a certain amount of irrigation can be effected from them, and a supply of water is impounded for use of the cattle. The embankments form excellent relief works, as there is a long lead for the earthwork, and a high proportion of carriers to diggers can be

effectively employed. Whatever advantages may be claimed for such works, they cannot, of course, be regarded as in any sense remunerative, and the indirect benefits derived from them, if expressed in money, would bear a very small proportion to the actual outlay incurred on them. They can only be regarded as works of improvement such as a liberal landlord might undertake for the benefit of of his tenants after a year of unusual prosperity, but which Government would only be justified in undertaking in seasons of adversity, when its first care is to find employment for the labouring community. In the South Allahabad district, road works were at first started, but owing to a severe outbreak of cholera in March, it was decided to break up the large camps, and to draft the labourers in small companies to petty village relief works in the vicinity of their homes, and consisting principally in the excavation of new village tanks, or in the clearance and deepening of old ones.

A statement is appended showing the number of road, tank and other works under the Public Works Department in each district and other particulars for the week ending, 27th February 1897, when the numbers were at a maximum. The numbers of workers in the seventh column include dependants in the districts officially recognized as distressed. From this it will be seen that there were 283 relief charges altogether, of which 214 were roads, 52 tanks, and 17 other works. Of these 283 charges 55 were test works in districts not officially declared as distressed, the particulars for these and the true relief works being as shown below :—

Class of works.	Number of works.	Total number of works.	Average number on each charge.	Approximate area of affected taluks in square miles.	Average area in square miles covered by each charge.
Test works in districts not officially recognised as distressed.	55	75,201	1,367	15,426	281
Relief works in districts officially recognised as distressed.	228	1,235,048	5,417	33,843	148

The average number on each regular relief work was thus 5,417 of whom about 24 per cent. were dependants. The average area served by each charge in the distressed districts was 148 square miles, and if it be assumed that these districts were divided into a number of regular hexagons, each of this area, with a relief work in the centre of each hexagon, the maximum distance of any village from a relief work would be 7.5 miles, or the length of the semi-diagonal or side of the hexagon, while the distance between work and work would be 13 miles. Of course the distribution was not as regular as this, and the average distance of villages from works will probably have been nearer 10 than $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

The new Fatehpur branch of the Ganges Canal, with its distributaries, was in progress in the Cawnpur and the Fatehpur districts, and work was carried on partly ordinary public works principles and partly as relief works.

There were no large encampments on any of the works that I saw, as in Bombay, but a certain amount of shelter is provided for those who come from long distances, many of whom however find shelter in the neighbouring villages. When the village is not more than four or five miles distant, the workers generally return to their own homes of a night, but for greater distances they remain on or near the work.

3. The normal system of famine relief works in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh is that prescribed in the Local

The normal North-Western Provinces system of relief work.

Government's Circular No. 18, Public Works Department, dated 5th December 1896,

which has been briefly referred to in my notes on the Central Provinces, where the same system has been followed with very slight modifications. It was generally referred to by the North-Western Provinces officers whom I met as the Code system, to distinguish it from other systems that have been more lately introduced in these Provinces, which will be presently

referred to ; but it differs so considerably from what is contemplated in the Famine Codes that it will be more convenient to call it the "original North-Western Provinces system."

I understand that it was formulated on the experience gained in 1896 on the relief works which it was then found necessary to institute in Bundelkhand. The essential features of the system are :—

- (a) Class A is practically and class C absolutely abolished, all adult workers, with the exception of a very few who received special pay at A class rates as mates, water-carriers, &c., being classed either as B or D. There is a nominal classification in paragraph 35 of the Circular which has no reference to wages and which it is unnecessary to consider, the true or actual classification on which wages depend being as prescribed in paragraph 59. Under this classification all diggers are placed in class B and all carriers in class D. Under the Code, men in class B are entitled to 19 and women to 17 *chataks* of grain a day, but the circular allows only 16 *chataks* to a woman digger, who thus receives an allowance intermediate between that of a B and that of a C woman under the Code. The difference is of slight importance as practically no woman digs. All women therefore and all men who are unable or unwilling to dig are placed in class D, and are entitled to the minimum or D wage, *viz.*, 14 *chataks* for a man, 13 for a woman. Working children are divided into two grades, grade I. including children over 12 and under 16 years of age, and grade II. those over 7 and under 12. The wage for grade I. is 10 and for grade II 6 *chataks* of grain, although according to the North-Western Provinces Famine Code the maximum and minimum wages for working children are 15 and 10 *chataks*.
- (b) The daily wage for each class is fixed at an aliquot number of pice, most closely approximating to the true value of the grain equivalents noted above in (a) at the current rate for calculating the cash equivalents. This rate is fixed by the Engineer in the first instance in consultation with the Collector and is not to be altered for variations of less than 10 per cent. in the price of food grains, and then only after previous reference to the Commissioner, except in cases of urgent necessity to be immediately reported. If the exact money equivalent of the grain wage exceeds the nearest aliquot number of pice below by two pice or more, the next highest aliquot number of pice is given, if the excess is less than two pice, the aliquot number of pice next below is given.
- (c) A daily task is marked out for each digger, and a party of carriers is assigned to him. If the deficiency of work is slight, the digger only is fined, and if it is considerable, the digger and all adult carriers are fined, under the idea that the influence of the women, who are generally related to the carriers, will bring about a reformation.

4. From paragraph 3 (a) above it will be seen that the great majority of the adult workers receive the D or minimum wage, and also that all children are paid only the minimum wage. This deviation

from the scale of individual wages prescribed in the North-Western Provinces Famine Code has been explained at some length in paragraphs 55 and 56 of the Circular, but it will suffice to quote here the latter part of paragraph 56.

"There are different scales of wages, and in making a selection several points have to be considered. Special care must be taken that the joint wages of a family, while sufficient for subsistence, shall not be greater than unskilled labourers can earn elsewhere. Otherwise all labour will be attracted from other work on to the relief works. This result would be undesirable."

In further explanation of the system of classification and tasking adopted, it is stated in paragraph 45 of the Circular that experience has shown

"That the fillers and carriers are far too numerous for the diggers."

"The people must, however, be taken as they come, and the diggers must be distributed in the proportion they happen to bear to the fillers and carriers." "Under the system of wages laid down in the Code, a man's income is very greatly increased by bringing all his women and children on to the works. The Indian peasantry are very much alive to their own direct interests and there is no reason to suppose that there will ever be much difference in the proportion of men to women and children. As a rule, then, it is safe to omit all calculations as to lift and lead in any work done by famine labour under this system of wages."

This is a very clear statement of the case for the North-Western Provinces system, which has now been adopted with very slight modifications in the Central Provinces and Bengal. Briefly it may be said that many of the people who flock to the works can do nothing but carry, that the scarcity of diggers renders it impossible to give them fair carrying tasks or tasks that are often anything more than nominal, and that having regard to the members of each family that swarm to the works, the minimum wage is sufficient for all who cannot dig.

This argument, as thus stated, applies with full force only to earthwork. It may be stated somewhat differently for the collection of road metal, but in the North-Western Provinces there is comparatively very little of this form of relief work.

5. As regards (b) and (c) of paragraph 4 I have referred to the practice of pice wages in paragraph 9 of my notes on the Central Provinces. At the time of my tour the basis of conversion was 10 seers to the rupee in the Allahabad and 12 seers in the Lucknow Civil Division, and I give separately the scale of wages for full, short and very short tasks which I found in force in these two divisions.

I.—Allahabad division—basis, 10 seers to rupee. Full task, 80 cubic feet.

Task done in cubic feet.	Mates.	Diggers.	Adult carriers.		Children.		Remarks.
			Men.	Women.	12-16.	7-16.	
Over 70	Pice. 9	Pice. 7	Pice. 5	Pice. 5	Pice. 3	Pice. 2	
Over 60, not over 70 ...	8	6	5	5	3	2	
Over 50, not over 60 ...	7	5	4*	4	3	2	* Below dependant's wage which is: men 5 pice, women 4 pice.
Under 50	6	4	3	3*	3	2	

For a full task or over 70 cubic feet the mate receives 2 pice more than the digger, or an A wage, and for all shorter tasks also 2 pice more than the digger.

For a full task the digger receives B wage, but for short work is paid gradually down to 4 pice, which is 1 pice below the D or minimum wage.

The men and women carriers receive the same pay all down the scale beginning with 5 pice or the D wage. Under the grain scale, the man is entitled to 14 and the woman to 13 *chataks*, but under the pice system and on a 10 seer basis their wages in pice are equal: this is an accident. It will be seen that the mate and digger only are fined when the task is not over 70 cubic feet, but when it is not over 60 cubic feet the carriers are fined also, and their wages fall to 1 pice below the Code minimum, and in the case of men to 1 pice below the dependant's wage. For very short tasks the carriers are again fined, with the result that the wage is reduced to 3 pice, or 2 pice below the Code minimum for men. A task of less than 50 cubic feet is, however, very rare. Children are not fined; but, as already pointed out, the children of grade I. receive the minimum Code wage for children, and children of grade II. the equivalent of 6 *chataks* of grain, or on the 10 seer basis 1 pice less than the children's minimum according to the Code.

II.—Lucknow Division—basis, 12 seers to rupee. Full task 100 cubic feet.

Task done in cubic feet.	Diggers.	Adult carriers.		Children.		Remarks.
		Men.	Women.	12-16.	7-12.	
Full task of 100	6	5	4	3	2	
Between 75 and 100	5	5	4	3	2	
Between 50 and 75	4*	4*	3*	2	1	* Penal or dependant's wage.

In this Division there is a slight difference in the management, and for special reasons the mates are paid separately (see paragraph 10 below). On the 12 seer basis there is a difference, as shown in the wage of the man and woman carrier. Here also the digger only is fined for a moderate short outturn of work, but when less than 75 per cent. of the task, the digger is fined two, and all carriers one pice. The orders of which I obtained a copy are thus worded, but I am not sure whether the children are fined. The scale does not provide for a task of less than 50 cubic feet, and the orders direct that in the rare case of so short a task special enquiry should be made and proper action taken accordingly.

6. I visited works conducted on this system at Kirwi in the Banda district and at Jasra in the Allahabad district of the Allahabad Division, and near Sandila in the Hardoi district of the Lucknow Division.

Tasking the diggers.

As shown in the preceding paragraph, the full task for diggers is ordinarily 80 cubic feet in the Allahabad Division, and 100 cubic feet in the Lucknow. This difference is fully accounted for by the difference in the soil. At the Diwanganghat tank, near Kirwi, the full task was as low as 60 cubic feet, and I was told that the average was not more than 45 cubic feet at this work, the soil being excessively hard. Mr. Palmer told me that he had for a long time been unable to get higher tasks than 60 cubic feet in Bundelkhand, but that the efficiency of the diggers had improved, and he had been able to raise the full task to 80 cubic feet. I consider this a light task, as the soil did not appear harder than that in the Central Provinces where the full task is 90 cubic feet.

The tasks are set out for each digger in such a way that he can clearly see what he has to do in order to complete a half, three-quarters or full task. When the task is short in a few pits only, the workers in those pits are fined separately, but when there is short work in all pits, the reduction of wages is made on the whole gang. In the Lucknow Division payments and fines are in all cases made on the pit, unless the diggers in two or more pits combine, when the work done by them is all measured up together, and payment made according to the total.

7. In all the works visited by me fines were treated as reductions in the rate of pay, and were not shown separately as deductions from pay at the full or normal rates. In the Allahabad Division there were orders that the latter course should be adopted, as showing more distinctly the amounts of the fines imposed, and Mr. Palmer told me that this was the practice in many parts of the division, but it was not so on the works inspected.

Fines.

In the Lucknow Division fines are never separately shown, as such, though the system of initial accounts adopted renders it an easy matter to ascertain the daily amount of the fines or deductions from normal pay. Thus at Sandila I found that the wages at normal rates for a full week was Rs. 1,774, the actual payments being Rs. 1,581, showing Rs. 193 as fines, or nearly 11 per cent. The average task during same period had been 75 per cent. of full task. The short payments were not however due entirely to fines, but partly to half-day absences. The question whether fines should be shown separately in the initial accounts or whether effect should be given to them by merely reducing the rates of pay is one that will be considered in my final report.

The rules for fining in both divisions are excellent. Leniency is enjoined at first, and in case of persistent default enquiry into its cause and the dismissal of the mate rather than continued fining ; but otherwise a strict enforcement of the task, which is in all cases moderate.

8. The gang register in use in the Allahabad Division, and prescribed in the Circular No. 18, dated 5th December 1896, which has also been adopted in the Central Provinces, appears to me to be open to

Gang Registers and Muster Rolls. several objections. It does not show the details of the daily musters, but only an abstract, nor does it show the amount earned daily by and paid to each individual worker. Another great objection is that it has to be maintained in duplicate, one copy being used for each alternate day, so that the record on the work is not continuous. These are all matters of great importance in checking the musters and enquiring into complaints. In the Lucknow Division a greatly improved form of gang register and muster roll has been introduced, in which all these defects are remedied, and the system has also been adopted of giving a ticket to each worker when first brought on to the gang register, showing the number of his gang and his own number in it.

9. The officer in charge of the works is generally, as in the Central Provinces, a man of the position of a Naib Tahsildar or other employé in the Civil Department, whose services are placed at the disposal of the Superintending Engineer, by whom he

Officer in charge of work and his establishment. is posted on the requisition of the Executive Engineer. He is the cashier and general supervisor on the spot, and is assisted by work agents or sub-overseers who set out the tasks and measure up the work, and by clerks or moharrirs, as in the Central Provinces. For every three or four charges there is appointed an Inspecting Officer, of the upper subordinate class, whose duty it is to visit each charge in succession for the purpose of instructing and checking the work of the work agents, making necessary arrangement for tools and plant, assisting in aligning new work, and correcting all faults in organization, &c. The inspections of superior officers will be presently referred to.

10. Payments are made in the North-Western Provinces daily, except on Sundays. The advantages and disadvantages of daily payments will be considered in my final report, and it will suffice to note

Payments. here how they are in practice made. There is no independent cashier, as in Bombay or Madras, but, as in the Central Provinces, the payments are made through the gang moharrirs. In the Allahabad Division the system is the same as described in my notes on the Central Provinces, and detailed instructions for the daily routine have been drawn up by Mr. Palmer, the Superintending Engineer. In the Lucknow Division a somewhat different system is followed as the payments to each gang are made directly by the mate, who receives the exact amount required from the jemadar, an official corresponding to the moharrir in Allahabad Division and Central Provinces. The mates in Lucknow Division are a superior and more intelligent class than has been obtainable in Bundelkhand and they are paid a higher wage as works establishment, varying from Rs. 5 to 8, and not as daily labourers. The procedure followed will be best understood from the copy of the detailed instructions for payments which are appended to these notes. When I was at Lucknow, the Commissioner expressed the greatest satisfaction with the working of this system. On the morning of the 16th I revisited the Machhi Bhawan works at Lucknow with Colonel Pulford, for the purpose of seeing payments made. We went without notice and at 9.30 A.M. ordered all labour to be paid at once, or three hours before the ordinary time. At time of our arrival the sub-cashier was engaged in making up piles of two-anna pieces and 1 pice. On the order being given for payment the jemadars came to the office and received as many of these piles as would cover the amounts to be paid by their mates. Each then counted out and put into a separate bag the exact amount due to each of his ten mates, in some cases having a mate to assist him. The diggers on this work each received 7 pice if he did a maximum task, as most of them did, and the practice was to put a two-anna piece into each bag for each digger, and the balance

of the amount required in pice. The total amount in each bag was then written on a slip of paper which was put into the bag, and when all bags had been filled, the jemadar returned the balance of cash made over to him to the sub-cashier. When this had been done, the mates were summoned, and paraded in groups of ten outside the office. The jemadars then made over the bags to the mates, each of whom opened his bag, counted the money, and signed the slip inside, which was returned by him to the jemadar as his receipt. All this took about an hour, during which the labourers remained at work. The jemadars and mates then returned to the works accompanied by the officer in charge, work agents, &c., and the signal was given for payments to be made. Each gang then repaired to its own flag, and the mates went round paying to each member the amount due. Each digger received a two-anna piece giving one or two pice back as change, accordingly as he was entitled to seven or six pice and the other workers received the pice due to them. Amounts unclaimed were returned by the mates to the jemadars who returned them to office as arrears unpaid. The whole of the payments were completed in half an hour or by 11 A.M. There were over 2,000 labourers on this work, but the payments could have been made almost as quickly with 5,000, as there would have been a proportionate increase in the number of jemadars, mates, &c.; but of course the larger the attendance the less close is the supervision during time of payment that can be exercised by the officer in charge and his assistants. I do not think that this system can be improved on.

11. In addition to the workers must be considered the number of dependants who accompany them to the works. The proportion of these to the workers varies considerably; but from a statement prepared for me by Mr. Palmer I find that the total number of dependants during the 8 months ending May 1897 in the Allahabad division (in which the North-Western Provinces system now under consideration is most extensively employed) amounted to 17,306,796 units, the number of workers during the same period being 71,289,165. The percentage of dependants on workers was over 24 per cent., which agrees very closely with the experience in Bombay and Central Provinces. Of this number 90 per cent. were children, $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. women, and $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. men. Under the North-Western Provinces Circular already quoted the male adult dependants are entitled to 12 and the female to 10 *chataks* of grain, the allowance for children not in arms and under seven being 3 *chataks*, while one pice is given to the mother for all infants in arms. Under Appendix E (2) of the North-Western Provinces Famine Code the allowance for children not in arms is 5 *chataks*. The cash wage for dependants under the North-Western Provinces circular is as follows:—

Class.	Basis 10 seers to rupee.	Basis 12 seers to rupee.
Adult males	Pice. 5	Pice. 4
Adult women	4	3
Children not in arms	1	1
Children in Arms	1	1

In Bombay children not in arms received two pice, and, as shown in paragraph 5 of my notes on that Presidency, the attendance was very high as long as cash wages were paid. In North-Western Provinces only one pice has been paid, but even with this low wage the attendance of small children has been very great. On many of the works, including those seen by me in the Banda district, kitchens have been introduced, and a ration is given in lieu of a cash wage, consisting of a "khichari" of rice and *mung dal* in the proportion 1 *chatak* of rice to $\frac{1}{2}$ a *chatak* of *mung dal*, which makes 3 *chataks* of cooked food, one such meal being given in the morning and one in the evening. One *chatak* of ghi is added to every seer of raw material, and melted and mixed in with the "khichari" after it is cooked. Sometimes barley *suttu* is substituted for rice as a change, and for not more than two days in the week. Kitchens have not been started at every work where this.

North-Western Provinces system is in force, but only where they have been ordered by the Collector. On the smaller or village works in South Allahabad they have been considered unnecessary, and throughout the whole of the Hardoi district, where the North-Western Provinces task work system obtains, the children are not fed, but receive the pice wage. I understand that the feeding costs about 5 *pie* per head, and is thus more expensive to Government than the cash wage, as the numbers in attendance do not appear to have fallen off on the works where kitchens have been introduced. But here, as in other provinces, it seems to be generally the opinion that if Government is to undertake the maintenance of dependant children, it should be in the form of a cooked ration and not of a daily wage, and, as might be expected, the condition of the children is much better on works where the former system has been adopted than on those on which the pice allowance is made.

12. I have endeavoured in the preceding paragraphs to give a general idea of the essential and accidental features of the North-Western Provinces system of task work before considering its merits and disadvantages. It is in my opinion a far simpler and more workable system than

Advantages and disadvantages of the original North-Western Provinces system of task work.

that which has been contemplated in the Famine Code, and what is of great importance is much more easily understood by the people, especially when the payments are made daily in pice. Its chief drawback appears to me to be that it tends to perpetuate the evil of a want of diggers which has been put forward as the justification of the system. I have already said that I considered the digging tasks rather light, but nevertheless the digger is the hardest worked man in the gang, and as far as I could learn no one was particularly anxious to be classed as a digger. It is true that he nominally receives two pice a day more than a carrier, but, as will be seen from the wage tables in paragraph 5 *supra*, he alone of all the gang is fined when the task is short, but not very short, and as a general rule therefore he receives only one pice more than the carrier and is inclined to grumble when he finds that he is the only man fined. Although an increased outturn on the part of the digger is the great desideratum, no encouragement is given to him to do more than the task, and however much he may do, he cannot receive more than the B wage, although this would be permissible under Section 108 (11) of the North-Western Provinces Famine Code. There is on the other hand a temptation to do less than the task. Referring again to the wage tables for Lucknow Division, in paragraph 5 *ante*, suppose that the digger completes a task of 75 instead of 100 cubic feet. He will lose one pice, but each of the carriers will receive the same wage in either case, although the carrying task will be reduced by 25 per cent. when the digger does no more than 75 cubic feet. It is conceivable that by a mutual arrangement the carriers might agree to take turns in making up to the digger the pice that he loses by doing only a three-quarter task, so as to receive an easy task all round. I do not mean to say that this is done, but if we regard a party in a pit as all of one family (which is very often the case), with perhaps one or two dependants who are sure of their dole however short the task, it is obvious that the difference to the whole family when a three-quarter task is done in place of a full one is one pice only. As already noted in paragraph 7, I found that the average task done at Sandila was exactly 75 per cent. of a full task. This average was struck on a whole week's work when the average daily attendance was 4,438 workers, the average number of diggers employed daily being 865. I did not go into this question as carefully on other works visited, but I think that on all the task done was generally that which involved the fining of the digger only, and certainly full tasks were the exception.

The outturn of the diggers, or work for the carriers, might also be increased by putting on diggers capable of doing a reduced task. The custom is to have a uniform task for diggers, and this involves employing as diggers only able-bodied adults who are capable of doing a full task. It may be accepted that women should not be made to dig on task work, though I have seen many women diggers on piece-work. But there are many weakly men employed as carriers who would be quite capable of digging a short task, and who might be so employed, still receiving a D wage. Two of such men might be given the full task between them, and although their joint wage would exceed that of a B digger doing the same work, it would be cheaper to employ them in this way than as

carriers in excess of requirements. Similarly the ranks of the carriers might often be relieved of strong boys, between the ages of 12 and 16, who would be quite capable of doing half tasks. There will always be a difficulty in preventing the proportion of carrier to diggers becoming excessive. It is really part of the system that it should be high, so that the carriers' task may not exceed that which may be fairly imposed for a mere subsistence wage. But when a suitable proportion has been determined, the tendency is for it to be exceeded. The principle that "the people must be taken as they come, and the diggers must be distributed in the proportion they happen to bear to the fillers and carriers," may be carried too far. In many cases I found the proportion excessive, owing either to the non-attendance of diggers or to the accession of additional carriers, and no attempt had been made to rectify this even when some improvement was quite possible. This is of course the business of the sub-overseers of the work, who are not always intelligent enough to make the necessary adjustments; but I doubt if their attention has ever been very prominently directed to matters of this kind.

In spite of these criticisms of minor details I consider that this system has been suitable to the conditions obtaining throughout the late famine. Employment was freely offered to all who came, and in order to keep off those who had sufficient resources of their own, reliance was placed rather on a very low wage than on a high task. If the carrying tasks were in many cases lighter than they should be, they could not, on any works that I saw, be regarded as merely nominal, and although the people worked without much energy or spirit, they had enough to do to keep them actively moving throughout the working hours. The question however naturally arises whether it would not be better to restrict the numbers on the works to the more efficient members of the families that flock to them, to give them fuller tasks, to pay them a higher wage, and to rely on their supporting therewith in their own homes all the less efficient and non-working members.

13. This question, which is one of the most important that can be raised in connection with the policy of relief works, has not escaped the attention of the Government of the North-Western Provinces, which, having led the way in the introduction of the simpler system of task work that has been described, proposed in its letter No. 417-S., dated 14th December, to the Secretary to the Government of India a further deviation from the strict orders of the Famine Code, in the form of a system of piece-work, intermediate between the ordinary system of contract in the Public Works Department and the Famine Code system of task work. It was proposed that work should not be given out to regular contractors, or to men of the Chuprassie class or relatives of petty officials, but rather to piece-workers or gangers, such as village *pattidars*, employing not more than 200 persons. The gangers would be required to reside on the works and deal directly with the workers, who under such headmen would be in a position to insist on a fixed proportion of the rate being paid to them. In giving out the works the wages (*i.e.*, the rate) to be paid to the workers was to be specified, and it was considered that ordinarily 20 per cent. of the rate would be a sufficient remuneration to the piece-worker for his own labour, interest on capital, and incidental expenses, such as baskets and perishable stores. No piece-worker was to be allowed to execute work to the value of more than Rs. 1,000 per mensem, while any one who could not do work to the value of Rs. 150 in a month was to be discharged. The rates to be paid were to be the ordinary contract rates, enhanced, in view of the high price of food, by 25 to, in particular cases, 50 per cent., *i.e.*, from Rs. 2 per 1,000 cubic feet of earthwork to Rs. 2-8-0 or Rs. 3. The system was not to be introduced into nine specified districts where acute distress existed, and in which the Code rules were to be strictly followed.

This system has been called the *Intermediate* system, but to avoid confusion with a system more lately established I propose to call it the "special contract system." It differed from the ordinary system of petty contract essentially in this, that the piece-worker or contractor was to pay his workers at a definite rate on the quantities of work done, and for which he himself received payment, he retaining

for his services, &c., the difference between the amount paid to his workers at this rate, and the amount that he would receive from Government at a rate 20 per cent. higher. These proposals were heartily approved by the Governor-General in Council, as intimated in Government of India letter No. 255-F., dated 16th January, 1897.

14. This system does not appear to have had a very extended trial, and at the time of my visit had been altogether abolished in favour of a later modification which will be presently described. I understood that it had been introduced only in the Faizabad, Barabanki, and Gorakhpur districts, and in one or two others in which distress had not reached an acute stage. It was found that men of the class of village *patidars* would not come forward as piece-workers or gangers, and in practice the work was given out to regular contractors, but subject to the essential condition that the workers should be paid at a definite rate per 100 cubic feet of work measured up. The system thus resembles that which has been proposed in the Central Provinces, and referred to in paragraph 11 of my notes on those Provinces. In the Faizabad and Barabanki districts works were thus given out to a well-known and capable local contractor, Durga Singh, whom I had an opportunity of meeting when at Lucknow. He told me that he employed 7,000 workers in Faizabad, 4,000 in Barabanki, and more men in other districts. He was paid at the rate of Rs. 3-0-0 per 1,000, and undertook to pay Rs. 2-8-0 per 1,000 or 4 annas per 100 to the workers, the lead being 50 feet and the lift 2 feet. The general proportion of men on the works were 40 per cent., women and children together amounting to 60 per cent. The total profit made by him on these works amounted to Rs. 1,500, and was paid by him as a donation into the Famine Relief Fund. The rate paid to the workers was not sufficient for subsistence in the case of the weaker workers. He was willing to continue taking such contracts, but Government decided to abolish the system. Test works were for a short time carried out on a similar system in parts of the Gorakhpur district not officially recognized as distressed; but here the rate paid to the workers was $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas per 100 cubic feet only, or Rs. 1-9-0 per 1,000, the contractors receiving Rs. 2-7-0, and being required to carry out the dressing and breaking of clods (estimated at 8 annas per 1,000) out of the margin, and to supply the necessary tools and baskets.

The reasons assigned for the discontinuance of this system were that only the strongest workers could earn a living wage at the rates paid them, and that they were often unwilling to admit weak individuals into the gangs, while the contractor could not be expected to entertain more of them than were required for dressing and other light work. This is the great difficulty that presents itself in all forms of true piece-work; but even if it could have been met in any way by supplementary arrangements, some hesitation was probably felt at the idea of extending a system which threw so much into the hands of middlemen, and depended so much on their integrity and capacity.

15. This system was soon superseded under the orders contained in a Resolution of the Government of the North-Western Provinces, No. ⁷⁵³₈₋₇₃, dated 16th March 1897, by what has been since called the "modified intermediate system." The following is an extract from the Resolution:—

"Under this modified system no contractor or middleman is employed. The work is laid out, supervised, and measured, and payments are made by Government officials; and tools, where necessary, are supplied by Government. But the work will continue to be treated and paid as piece work, not as task work under the Famine Code. No dependants will be recognized, and the payments will be in accordance with the amount of work actually done."

"The rates and tasks will be so graduated as to enable an ordinary labourer or family of labourers to earn what the average family now earns in the shape of both wages and gratuitous doles (to dependants) combined. The discontinuance of Sunday labour makes it necessary to arrange for labourers earning in week days enough to provide for themselves and dependants on Sundays also."

The system upon which payment is to be made for this piece-work and the rates to be paid are set forth in paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Resolution, and in

a table appended thereto. The system about to be described follows so closely these instructions that it is unnecessary to repeat them here. I would observe however that they refer to a task to be given to a party of workers (100 cubic feet in ordinary soil) which is called indifferently a "full" and an "ordinary" task, and to a higher task, carrying a higher wage, which is called indifferently a "full" and a "maximum" task. As the former of these tasks must be compared with what has been called the full task in describing the original North-Western Provinces task work system, it will save confusion to refer to it hereafter as the *full* task, and to call the higher task the *maximum* task, so that for the words "ordinary" and "full" in the table appended to the Resolution, the words "full" and "maximum" should be substituted respectively.

16. I saw no works on the modified intermediate system in the Allahabad division, but Mr. Palmer told me that it Modified intermediate system in practice. was in force in the northern part of the Allahabad district and in Fattehpur and Cawnpur ; that is to say, in parts where the distress was not very acute and where the grain rate is 12 seers to the rupee. He also gave me a table of the wages paid under this system, which is identical with that which I found in force in the Lucknow division. It will be sufficient therefore to consider this in comparison with the table (II.) of wages in the same division given in paragraph 5 of these notes.

Task in cubic feet.	NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES TASK WORK.			MODIFIED INTERMEDIATE.		
	Diggers.	Carriers.		Diggers.	Carriers.	
		Men.	Women.		Men.	Women.
Maximum 125	Pice. ...	Pice. ...	Pice. ...	Pice. (a) 7	Pice. (c) 5	Pice. 5
Full 100	(b) 6	(c) 5	(c) 4	(b) 6	(d) 4	(c) 4
Three-quarter task 75	(c) 5	(c) 5	(c) 4	(c) 5	(e) 3	(d) 3
Half task 50	(d) 4	(d) 4	(d) 3	(e) 3	(f) 2	(e) 2

(a) Code A wage.
(b) Code B wage.
(c) D or minimum wage.

(d) Dependant's or penal wage.
(e) One pice below penal wage.
(f) Two pice below penal wage.

A pit is given to a working party consisting ordinarily, or for road work with a lead not exceeding 50 feet, of one digger and two carriers, and if the full or 100 cubic feet task is completed, the digger receives 6 and each of the carriers 4 pice, making 14 pice or $3\frac{1}{2}$ annas in all. If either carrier is a male, the wage received by him is one pice less than under the regular North-Western Provinces task work system, or one pice below the minimum or D wage. If only a three-quarter task is done the carriers are fined as well as the digger, and not the digger only as in the original North-Western Provinces system, and it will be seen that a male carrier is fined down to one pice below the dependant's or penal wage, and a woman down to the penal wage of her sex. If less than a three-quarter task is done every worker is again fined a pice, the digger and a woman carrier getting one pice, and a man carrier two pice less than the penal wage, or than would be received under the North-Western Provinces task work system.

So far therefore the workers are much worse off under the new than under the old system, more especially as I understand that in practice less margin is allowed under the former, *i.e.*, a task of 95 cubic feet would be regarded as a three-quarter task, whereas under the old system it would generally be taken as a full one. But under the modified system the workers are allowed to earn a higher wage than under the North-Western Provinces system on performance of a fuller or maximum task (125 cubic feet), when the digger receives what

under the Code would be an A, and a woman carrier a C wage. The male carrier, who receives less than a D wage for the full, gets that wage for a maximum task, but this is no more than he gets for a full task on the original system. All but the male carrier can earn a higher wage than under the North-Western Provinces system, but there is no minimum wage, or if there is, it does not exceed the amounts shown on the last line of the table. It is said that the half task of 50 cubic feet is always done, and there are no orders as to what wage should be fixed when this is not the case.

Both systems contravene sections 92 and 93 of the North-Western Provinces Famine Code, under which in cases of short work the daily payment must not fall short of the D or minimum wage. Under the North-Western Provinces system the limit is generally the dependant's or penal wage, and under the modified system it may be one or even two pice below this. The terms of the Government Resolution referred to hardly cover this abolition or lowering of a minimum limit, as the case of short tasks is not considered, but the scale of wages is proportionate to the work done, and this was the obvious intention of the Resolution, the basis of the wage table being that work was to be paid for by the piece at the rate, for the soil and lead under consideration, of $3\frac{1}{2}$ annas per 100 cubic feet. As a matter of practical convenience and to avoid pies and complicated calculations the piece is measured in units of 25 cubic feet and the payments are made in aliquot number of pice; but the principle of the wage table is that payments shall be made in strict proportion to the work done, and in this sense the system may be called a system of piece work. It may be added that for longer leads than 50 feet additional carriers are added, who receive the carriers' wage, the extra wages thus paid being tantamount to an increase of the rate per 100 cubic feet; but the payments are still in proportion to the work done.

17. It is obvious however that the system is not piece work of the kind contemplated in the extracts from the Resolution of the Government of the North-Western Provinces, which have been quoted in paragraph 15 above, under which the working members of a family shall have an opportunity of earning enough to support the non-working members. It will be seen from the table in the preceding paragraph that by great industry a family of three may earn 18 pice a week more under this system than under the North-Western Provinces system; but this is very little more than would be paid to them under the latter as the Sunday wage, and out of the margin of 3 or 4 pice they are expected to maintain for seven days the dependants of the family, both adult and children, who under the North-Western Provinces system receive a subsistence wage. On the other hand, if they fail to complete a maximum task, and still more so if they fail to complete a three-quarter task, their weekly earnings are very much less than under the North-Western Provinces system.

The idea that workers under the modified system could earn enough to support the non-working children has in fact been given up, and kitchens had been established for the latter on all the works visited by me, and may, I understand, be introduced wherever considered necessary by the Divisional Officers. Nothing is done however for the adult dependants, but on other works these seldom form more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the number of workers.

18. The intermediate system does not solve the difficulty incidental to all systems of paying by results which is caused by the presence on the works of many who are unable by their own labour to earn a living wage, nor does it render it any easier to find work for carriers when diggers are scarce. In the latest instructions issued by the Superintending Engineer I find the following:—

“Ordinarily it will be found that the proportion of carriers above described will be sufficient to meet the numbers seeking employment on this class of work. When however more women and children come for work than can be employed in the sanctioned proportions, one extra carrier to each digger may be allotted at the usual rate. No one asking for work and willing to earn a day's wage should be refused employment.”

Such an order as this is probably necessary, but the introduction of superfluous carriers involves an increase in the amount paid with no corresponding increase in the quantity of work done, and the work then is no longer piece work in any sense.

As regards feeblers who are clearly unable to earn a living at piece work task, special gangs have been formed in cases which are either untasked or are set lighter tasks than the able-bodied, but are paid at the same rates if their tasks are accomplished. This plan had been adopted at Machhi Bhawan.

19. This modified intermediate system is generally referred to as piece work, but I think that for the reasons given above it may more properly be regarded as a development and improvement of the North-Western Provinces system of task work which it very closely resembles. It is in effect nothing but task work with a higher maximum and a lower minimum wage than had previously been allowed, though the maximum is not higher than allowed by the Code to workers of the A and C class. It very closely resembles the system contemplated in the Famine Code, only instead of an arbitrary *à priori* classification of workers, before they are set to work, into the four classes A, B, C and D, all men who say they can dig are put into class B, and all others into class D, and they are given an opportunity of earning the wages of class A and class C respectively by performing the maximum task. The essential difference is that there is no minimum wage or a very low one, but even this is permissible under the Codes of some Provinces (*e.g.*, section 79 of the Bombay Code) though not under section 92 and 93 of the North-Western Provinces Code. On the whole it is much less favourable to the workers than the original North-Western Provinces system. It must however be remembered that it has only been introduced into districts where distress was not acute and the conditions of employment were intentionally made more stringent.

20. I visited three different works conducted under this system, and was struck by the great difference in the *morale* or spirit of the workers as compared with that seen on the works under the North-Western Provinces system. At two of them the maximum task was almost invariably accomplished, while in the third, to which I shall refer at greater length presently, an attempt to work it had been steadily maintained, which was not successful because owing to the hardness of the soil the task was perhaps a little too high. But in all the workers were working with spirit and energy and the contrast was very great with what I had seen on the works under the older system. It was somewhat difficult to account for the difference, for whereas on the latter works the prospects of losing a pice did not appear to stimulate the workers to doing a full task, on the former the prospect of earning an additional pice made them active and energetic. No doubt the difference is partly due to the fact that the distress was generally less acute in one case than the other, and that the people were in better heart. But I think a more potent reason will be found in comparing the wage tables that I have placed side by side in paragraph 16. It has been already found out how the digger only suffered under the North-West Provinces system where but a three-quarters task was done, but under the modified system the whole party suffers, and the influence of the carriers, who are mostly women, is brought to bear on the diggers. The same influence is at work under the stimulus afforded by the prospect of earning the maximum wage, the difference between the wage for a 75 and 125 per cent. task being two pice for every member of the party.

21. Having now shown the strong points of the modified system, I will venture to call attention to what appear to me to be its defects. There is a great want of elasticity about it. It is considered essential that the tasks set for each party should be uniform, and the parties have to be adapted to the task instead of

the task to the party, which involves the breaking up of family groups. The system of tasking by the pit which is followed is therefore by accident only a system of tasking by the family. The advantage claimed for the pit system is that each party is paid according to its own work, and does not suffer for the idleness of others. This is no doubt an advantage, and the officers in the North-West Provinces have devoted great care and attention to the organization of this system which cannot be too cordially acknowledged, and have proved that tasking by the party (consisting often of only three individuals) and daily payment to each individual direct is at least practicable. But there are disadvantages. A larger establishment of mates and muharrirs or jemadars is required, and the extra cost thereof is the least of the evils involved in increasing this class of establishment. The system may be necessary in some cases, but paternal administration of this kind is inelastic and somewhat demoralizing. I noted that in several cases three or four out of a gang of 10 diggers had of their own accord clubbed their pits, and when the gangs are as small as in the Lucknow division, consisting only of 10 diggers, tasking by the gang should be possible. Under the party system the occasional absence of one of the party causes difficulties which would be minimised if the gang were dealt with as the unit.

The task is regulated by the number of diggers in the pit or gang, and all others are obliged to carry. At Unao I observed a gang of 10 diggers and 30 carriers in which the average task per digger over a period of 11 days had been 105 cubic feet per diem. They had evidently been trying their hardest to work up to 125 cubic feet, but the soil was too hard. If however one of the carriers in each pit had been allowed an extra *phaorah*, and to spend part of the day in digging 20 cubic feet, there would probably have been no difficulty in working up to the 125 cubic feet, and this is no doubt what would have been done if the work had been carried out as true piece work, without arbitrary distinctions between digger and carrier. But it would have been easier still if the gang had been tasked as the whole. Ten diggers would have been allowed, but the gang, if free to do so, would have put two of the ablest carriers on to the digging, and so completed the full task of 1,250 cubic feet which would have been carried by the remaining 28 carriers.

22. The Commissioner of Lucknow and Colonel Pulford both expressed an opinion that the modified intermediate system could not safely be introduced in the districts where distress was most acute. The difference between the original North-Western Provinces and the modified intermediate system is however one of degree more than of kind, and I do not see why the latter could not be adopted in all districts with some slight modifications. Under it the non-working children are now fed, and the full task is the same for the same wage under both systems. The only disadvantage to which the worker is put under the intermediate system is that he loses the Sunday wage, that he has to support his own adult dependants, and that in the case of short tasks he is liable to fines that will reduce his wage below the penal or dependant allowance. In cases in which it was necessary it would however always be possible to grant the Sunday wage and the dole to adult dependants, just as it has been possible to permit kitchens for dependant children as an adjunct of the intermediate system. As regards fines it would always be possible to adopt a wage table in which the wages for short tasks should not fall below any assigned limit, but in which a wage higher than the normal would be allowed for a maximum task, which is the best point in the intermediate system, and all in favour of the worker. I do not however mean to suggest that this minimum limit would be desirable. In my opinion judgment and discretion in the imposition of fines or in reductions of wage are of far greater importance than a minimum wage. The proportioning of the wage to the amount of the completed task which takes place under the intermediate system, contravenes, as said before, paragraphs 92 and 93 of the North-Western Provinces Famine Code, but is permissible under section 79 of the Bombay Code and is recommended by many experienced Famine officers. In districts where distress is very acute and the people very enfeebled it would be better to reduce the task than to fix a minimum wage, but as it is the principle to open relief works before the people become

enfeebled, it would seem that what is wanted in districts in which distress is most acute is a greater number or an earlier opening of relief works rather than a relaxation of the conditions under which employment is offered. For these reasons I consider that the modified intermediate system, with some slight improvements perhaps in respect of the point noted in paragraph 21, might very well be adopted in supersession of the original North-Western Provinces system, of which it is but a more highly systematised form.

I may add here that the two systems run so closely on the same lines that the forms of initial accounts, method of payment and other details of management already described in paragraphs 6 to 10 of these notes, are practically common to both, so that it is unnecessary to refer to them further.

23. I have now described three different systems of relief work in force in the North-Western Provinces, *viz.*, the original North-Western Provinces system, the old intermediate or special contract system, and the modified intermediate system. After leaving the Lucknow Division I found a fourth system in force in the Gorakhpur Division which was one of true piece work. This system had been worked out by the Executive Engineer (Mr. Holme) in communication with the Commissioner (Mr. Alexander) and in general conformity with the instructions contained in the North-Western Provinces Resolution No. 753/S.—73, dated 16th March, 1897, though apparently without reference to those contained in the table appended to that Resolution, with the result that instead of paying individual workers a daily wage according to the task done, payments are made to the digger only at a fixed rate per 100 cubic feet outturned, and the amount is distributed by him between himself and the carriers, who are usually members of the same family. The daily task is limited to 125 cubic feet.

Relief works were opened in the Gorakhpur district about the middle of January, on the original North-Western Provinces system; but in some parts not officially recognized as distressed the special contract system was tried on test works, as already stated in paragraph 14 of these notes. The attendance on the works fell off during the month of March owing to harvest operations, and as the *rabi* had been a good one, it was decided to discontinue working on the original North-Western Provinces system and to introduce the new piece-work system throughout the district at the end of March, as labourers were returning from their harvests.

24. The system may now be briefly described. The digger brings his own carriers, generally members of his family, and is paid for the work done at the rate of 3 annas per 100 cubic feet, up to a limit of 125 cubic feet. The wages paid in Lucknow Division corresponded to a rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ annas per hundred, but the soil is softer in Gorakhpur, and it has been found in practice that a man seldom brings more than one carrier with him for a short level of 50 feet, to which this rate applies. For the harder soils a rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ annas per hundred is allowed, and when the level exceeds 50 or the lift exceeds 5 feet, an extra rate is allowed. On the Amipur Road I found that one anna per 100 cubic feet was being paid for every extra chain of lead. The rates include rough dressing and the breaking of clods, but for finished dressing a rate of Rs. 1-3 is paid per 100 running feet of road, which includes the dressing of the top width of 24 feet and of the two side slopes.

The work set out for each digger is equal to 900 cubic feet or roughly seven maximum daily tasks. When the task is given out to him, he is supplied with a ticket, a counterfoil of which remains with the sub-overseer, on the face of which is written his name, the date he comes on to the work, the number of the chain given to him, and the rate per hundred cubic feet to be paid. Measurements are recorded daily by the sub-overseer in a regular measurement book, and payments are made at noon of the following day, the measurements and amounts paid being noted on the back of the ticket, which lasts till the task is complete. The payments are made to the digger only who pays his own carriers, generally.

members of his own family. Women very frequently dig, and make up gangs and parties of their own sex. No mates are employed for mustering and one jemadar on Rs. 12 a month with three or four mates is found to be sufficient for the supervision of 500 workers. A nominal muster roll of diggers is kept up, and the number of men, women and children working with each is shown daily for purposes of the returns, but their names are not entered. The village from which each digger comes is also noted. When the aged or feeble have applied for work, it has been possible to give them light dressing work. There are no kitchens, nor is anything paid to dependants in the Gorakhpur district, but I understand that non-working children are fed in the adjoining Azamgarh district, where the same system is in force.

25. The principal work which I saw conducted on this system was a road embankment near the Amipur Nallah, where earth was being carried for a mean lead of 900 feet. There was therefore a scarcity, and not, as usual, a dearth of carriers, but under the piece-work system the workers adapted themselves to these abnormal conditions. The number of units employed during a period of five days was as follows :—

3,742 men.
4,151 women.
1,287 children.
<hr style="width: 100px; margin: 0;"/>
9,180
<hr style="width: 100px; margin: 0;"/>

The number of diggers was 1,736, and the work done per digger amounted to only 60 cubic feet, or not half a maximum task. This was because more than this could not be carried away. The diggers spent a good part of their time in carrying, or else weakly persons were put on to dig, and the strong men carried. I saw several women digging on this work. The carriers did a very full task, each carrying 14 cubic feet over a lead of 900 feet, or 126 cubic feet for one chain. In some of the pits 120 to 124 cubic feet were excavated per digger, but carriers were then in proportion of 8 to 1. The carriers were not above the average type of cooly as seen on famine works, and the weight of an average basket full of earth did not exceed 15 seers. At the rates paid the amount earned by each worker would have averaged about one anna five pie, and this was well earned. Some of the workers came from a village 22 miles off, and a great many from villages 12 or 15 miles distant, and generally brought their non-working children with them, although there was no kitchen or dole for them.

26. The Commissioner gave me the following figures showing the average wage paid per unit relieved on the Rudrapur-Gola Road :—

Period.	System.	Units relieved.	Wages paid.	Rate per unit.
28th December to 4th February.	Old Intermediate	Number. 14,831	Rs. 1,567	A. P. 1 8
28th January to 10th April ..	Old North-Western Provinces task work.	225,016	16,376	1 2
10th April to 15th May ...	Piece work... ..	61,964	5,175	1 4
	TOTAL	301,811	23,118	1 2

The payments under old intermediate appear to have included the contractor's profit. The payments under the North-Western Provinces task-work system included the Sunday wage, and allowing for this the rate per working day would have been Rs. 0-1-4, or exactly the same as under the piece-work system. The units under the piece-work system included, however, a far higher proportion of men, as will

be seen from the following table, in which the total number of workers and dependants throughout the Gorakhpur district for the weeks ending 27th February and 12th June are given.

Distribution of workers.						Week ending 27th February. Task work.	Week ending 12th June. Piece work.
Men	...	...	...	...	...	80,575	39,164
Women	...	...	...	...	...	65,546	27,915
Children	...	...	...	...	...	63,811	10,561
Total workers						219,932	77,640
Dependants	...	...	...	...	...	2,089	...
Children	...	...	...	...	...	35,262	...
GRAND TOTAL						257,283	77,640

The rate per *male unit* was therefore very much lower under the piece-work system than with task work, while there was a greater increase in the quantity of work outturned. In the month of February the average task per worker was 18 cubic feet, in the month of May it had risen to 38 cubic feet.

The table last given is interesting as indicating that one effect of the introduction of piece work has been a notable increase in the proportion of men and a great decrease in the proportion of children. It is the general experience that with task work the men stop at home and send the women and children to get what they can on the works; but it would seem that when payments are made by results the men are willing to come forward, and leave the women and children to do the home work. I should mention that Mr. Holme gave me the result of a census which he had recently taken on all works in the Gorakhpur provincial division, from which it appeared that out of 6,895 diggers 1,105 were Luniahs, and it is for the purpose of not making the work too attractive to men of this class that the task has been limited to 125 cubic feet per diem. The average outturn per digger in the month of April was 96, and in May 112 cubic feet.

The Commissioner and the Executive Engineer both considered that the results of introducing piece work were very satisfactory. The advantages of the system are so obvious that it is unnecessary to state them here. It may, of course, be said that the system would be inapplicable when distress is very acute, and almost the whole of the labouring population come on to the works, but both before and after this stage is reached there must be a stage intermediate between it and that at which no relief works of any kind are required, and for this intermediate stage at least piece work of the kind described appears to be eminently suitable.

27. I have now described four different systems of relief work which have been tried in the North-Western Provinces period. The case of ordinary earthwork only has been considered because almost all the relief works in the North-Western Provinces are of this class, but each system can, of course, be adapted to other classes of work. I have obtained from Mr. Palmer a carefully drawn-up circular containing detailed instructions for the organization of gangs on the modified intermediate system for the collection and breaking of road metalling, which has been one of the principal forms of relief work in Bombay, Madras, and the Central Provinces, and which will be a very useful form in the North-Western Provinces if relief works have to be continued through the rains. The plan proposed is that the ablest-bodied men are to be employed in getting and sizing the stone from the quarries, and to be classed as B, receiving a B wage for full task. All other men and all women will be employed as breakers and classed and paid as D, so as to correspond with the carriers on earth-work. Children will be employed partly on breaking, and partly in carrying spawls to the work. The outturn of the breakers will depend on the hardness of

the stone, but the instructions are that the gangs should be so constituted as to turn out ordinarily about 160 cubic feet, the number of breakers being fixed with reference to the hardness of the stone. The wage table is then made up as follows, on the 12 seer basis :—

Task in cubic feet.	Mates.	Getters.	Breakers.		Children.	
			Men.	Women.	12—16.	7—12.
Maximum; over 180... ..	Pice. 8	Pice. 7	Pice. 6	Pice. 5	Pice. 3	Pice. 2
Full 140 to 180	8	6	5	4	2	2
Short 100 to 140	7	5	4	3	3	2
Very short 60 to 100	6	4	3	2	2	1

If the quantity is under 60 cubic feet the stone is to be kept over for next day's work and no wages given, even when work is stopped by heavy rain. This practically abolishes altogether the minimum wage.

The instructions do not state clearly whether the workers are to be paid according to the outturn of the gang as a whole or by that of sections, but it would in many cases be difficult to divide the gang into sections, as the getters do not always work independently.

28. As regards the actual cost of work done I find that during the eight months ending May 1897 over 640 millions of cubic feet of earthwork had been executed in the seven districts constituting the Allahabad Division at an average rate of Rs. 7.95 per 1,000. This is exclusive of payments to dependants and miscellaneous items, but is the average rate deduced from workers' wages.

The rates varied for different districts, as in margin, and depended very much on the character of the works. In the Bundelkhand districts many of the works consisted of tank embankments, where the soil was very hard and the lead very long, but the works are so numerous and various that it is impossible to give any idea at present of the rates which the cost bears to the actual value of work done.

The efficiency of the relief work must not, however, be considered only with reference to the value of the work done, but account should also be taken of the cost of relief per unit attending the works. The following figures relating to the operations in the same seven districts and for the same period of time, viz., eight months ending May 1897, will be interesting :—

<i>Workers employed (one day units).</i>						
Men ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	22,206,433
Women ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	29,642,983
Children ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	19,439,749
Total workers						71,289,165
Total dependants						17,306,796
<hr/>						
Rs.						
Amount paid in wages ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	52,18,685
Gratuitous relief of dependants ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	3,92,120
Miscellaneous expenses ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	4,64,030
Total outlay						60,74,835

Whence—

	Rs.	A.	P.
Average wage per worker unit	0	1	2
Average wage per dependant unit	0	0	4½
Average wage per unit of workers and dependants ...	0	1	0

Percentages of total outlay.

Workers' wages	85·9
Gratuitous relief	6·5
Miscellaneous expenses	7·6

The average wage per unit relieved, that is, workers and dependants, was tolerably constant, varying from 12·8 pies in the Allahabad to 11·65 pies in the Banda district, the exact average for all districts being 12·16 pies.

The average rate per dependant unit is low as for the greater part of the period the non-working children received only one pice. Had kitchens been established all the time, the dependant rate would have averaged about two pice.

The miscellaneous expenses include all work charged: establishment, expenditure, other relief labour on conservancy and water arrangements, hutting, baskets, &c.

The cost of all earthwork, excluding charges for gratuitous relief and miscellaneous expenses in the Gorakhpur and Azamgarh districts during the month of February 1897 has been reported as averaging Rs. 3-11-11 and Rs. 3-2-8 per thousand; and with the introduction of the piece-work system this rate has probably been since reduced. The wage per working unit as shown in paragraph 26 agreed closely with that in the Allahabad division. The earthwork rates in the Lucknow Division are intermediate between those of the Gorakhpur and Allahabad Divisions. The causes of high rates are hard soil, great length of lead, payments under the older North-Western Provinces system with but slight reference to results, acute distress, and a high price of grain. These causes all existed in the Allahabad Division to a greater extent than in the Lucknow Division, and in Lucknow to a greater extent than in Gorakhpur.

29. As regards the extent to which famine relief works have interfered with the supply of labour for private enterprise I had an opportunity of discussing the subject at Gorakhpur with Mr. Neville and Mr. Edwards, the Assistant Agent and District Engineer of the Bengal and North-Western Railway Company. Mr. Izat, the Agent, was not at Gorakhpur at the time of my visit, but Mr. Neville has stated the difficulties which the Company has experienced in procuring labour since relief works have been in progress in two demi-official letters from which I make the following extracts:—

“As regards railway work in the Gorakhpur district the average rate paid under ordinary conditions for earthwork in banks does not exceed Rs. 1-12-0 per 1,000 cubic feet for banks up to 5 feet in height, and above that an additional rate of one anna per foot is fixed. These rates cover lead, as the side widths are laid out in a fixed relation to the heights.

“In sandy soil we have been able to get low banks thrown up at Rs. 1-8-0 per thousand.

“Last year the Bhatni-Turtipur Branch was done at the above rates, and the works on the Salimpur-Burhaj Branch were started on them, and progressed fairly well till March, when labour deserted. The cause of this desertion has been attributed to certain famine works which were started a few miles to the west. The work was left standing till the end of May, nor has it been possible to resume it with a lower initial rate than two rupees, and at that rate labour is scarce. Difficulty has also been experienced as regards labour for the open line in the district.

“The contractors are petty contractors or local zemindars.

“Mr. Edwards, from whom I have the above information, also tells me that during the *rabi* harvest labour difficulties only last as a rule about ten days.

“There has also been difficulty in obtaining skilled labour this year, especially bricklayers.

"I understand that in Chupra there is plenty of labour to be obtained this year although there are heavy famine relief works in the district, but the contractors require an initial rate of Rs. 1-14-0 which is slightly higher than usual. Labour has, I understand, been imported on a considerable scale from the Chupra district for the Ganges-Gogra-Doab and Hajipur-Katihar lines.

"As regards the former the schedule rates on which earthwork was started were Rs. 1-8-0 per thousand in ordinary soil for banks up to four feet in height, and one anna extra for banks over four feet. These rates had to be increased last March, when it was found that sufficient labour was not attracted by them, and the present rates are Rs. 2 per 1,000 in the Ballia district and Rs. 1-12-0 in the Azamgarh district where local labour is more plentiful. The enhanced rates have, as a rule, proved sufficient to attract labour, but for more heavy banking in Turtipur station yard coolies had to be imported from Chupra. These for the most part deserted after a few days, and generally throughout the line there has been considerable difficulty in keeping labour on the works. The difficulties experienced this season are attributed chiefly to the unusually large emigration of professional diggers (Looniahs and Chamars) from the districts, which took place last October and November as soon as the distress began. Large numbers are said to have been recruited by agents for the Assam-Bengal Railway. Emigration to a considerable extent takes place in ordinary seasons after the rains, but owing to the distress this season this was more than usually the case. The nearest relief works north of the Gogra were at Shahgunge in the Jaunpur district, but it is uncertain to what extent they draw labour from Ballia and Azamgarh districts.

On the Hajipur-Katihar line the schedule rates were not increased, but very great difficulty was experienced in obtaining labour, and practically a working season was lost to the railway on this account. The cause of this difficulty is due to the famine with its high prices, and to the existence of famine relief works which afforded a more attractive field for labour than that offered on the railway. Efforts have been made to import labour from Chupra, Durbhanga and Mozaffarpur districts, but with little or no effect. There has been incessant desertion of coolies after receiving advances, and contractors have had a bad time of it in consequence.

Mr. Izat writes me that what appears to him to be required about relief works is that there should be a rule that no able-bodied person, man or woman, should be employed on relief works or receive relief within 20 or 30 miles of their homes. Big works like railways or canals should be provided to give work to the able-bodied, and they should be drafted off to them away from their homes. People who are starving or in distress for food, he adds, will not think twice about going 20 miles to get work and food. This was the rule in the Bombay famine in 1875, and worked well, and it is necessary to prevent the people being pauperised and the public funds wasted."

30. In considering this statement of the difficulties which the Bengal and North-Western Railway Company has experienced, it is hardly necessary to include among them the necessity for increasing their rates, which has been a consequence of the prevalence of high prices. It is possible that if no relief works had been started, the Company's earth-work might have been carried out by labourers of the professional class at ordinary rates, but, as stated in paragraph 12 of my notes on the Central Provinces, the District Engineer on the Saugor-Katni Railway admitted that ordinary labourers, of whom there is usually a large proportion on all earth-works, could not get a subsistence on the works at the normal contract rates, though the Looniahs could, "at extra good lift and lead rates." If no relief works had been started at all, the Company would therefore have had to raise the rates, unless it was able to obtain an adequate supply of purely professional labourers. It is admitted however that there was an unusually large emigration of labourers of this class in October and November, long before relief works were started.

The competition which the Railway had to face was therefore not that of the relief works, but of the Assam-Bengal Railway. It is not known whether special inducements or high rates were offered by the Assam-Bengal Railway, but even if they were not, the Looniahs naturally preferred to transfer their services to districts in which prices of grain ruled lower, so that an increase in the contract rates in the distressed districts was an inevitable consequence of the ordinary laws of supply and demand, wholly uninfluenced by the relief works subsequently started. And for this reason it is unnecessary to consider here the case of the Hajipur-Katihar line where the difficulties experienced were apparently due to the fact that the the schedule rates were not increased. Moreover, this line lies outside the North-Western Provinces.

In the case of the Salimpur-Burhaj Branch the complaint is that it was impossible to complete it at the rates given on the Bhatni-Turtipur Branch in the previous year, viz., an initial rate of Rs. 1-12-0, or in the case of sandy soil with a

low bank only Rs. 1-18-0. Even at these rates, however, work progressed fairly well until March, when the harvest operations were in progress, after which the works were deserted until the end of May, and it was not possible to resume them with an initial rate of less than Rs. 2 and at that rate labour was scarce.

It has, however, been shown that at the end of March piece-work was introduced on all relief works in the Gorakhpur district at an initial rate of 3 annas per hundred or Rs. 1-14-0 per thousand cubic feet, and that this was subject to a limit of 125 cubic feet as the daily task for a working party of two or three individuals, who could thus earn no more than Rs. 0-3-9 between them as a maximum, the average earning being considerably below this, and amounting only to Rs. 0-1-4 per worker. It must also be remembered that after the introduction of piece-work no dependants received relief in Gorakhpur. It is true that the rate of Rs. 0-14-0 per thousand on the relief works all went to the worker, whereas some portion of the rates offered by the Railway were intercepted by the petty contractors; but under all the circumstances I do not think that the Railway Company could reasonably object to a contract rate of Rs. 2, and at that rate the competition of the relief works would certainly not have been very severe. That the relief works have to some extent affected the supply of labour to the Railway is probably true. It has been mentioned in paragraph 26 of the notes that at the end of May nearly one-sixth of the diggers on the relief works in the Gorakhpur district were of the Looniah class. Probably some of these would have gone to the Railway if the relief works had not been open, but it can hardly be said that they were prevented from doing so by the higher rates offered on the latter. If the Railway contract rate were Rs. 2, the attractions of the Railway and relief works would have been about equal, and a number of professionals would still have gone to the latter, not because they could earn more money on them, but because they happened to be nearer their homes or for some other private reason more convenient. If there were any difference in favour of the relief works, it must have been small, and a difference of some kind is almost inevitable as long as the object of a relief work is to give a living wage to all who resort to it, while that of the Railway Company is to get a given quantity of work done at a minimum cost.

As regards the Ganges-Gogra-Doab Railway it appears that a slight enhancement of the contract rates has sufficed to attract labour. There have been no relief works in the Ballia district, and in Azamgarh local labour is said to be plentiful even with a rate of only Rs. 1-12-0, and in spite of the existence of relief works.

The suggestion made by Mr. Izat as to the policy that should be followed in opening relief works will be more conveniently considered in my final report, and I will only remark here that the great difficulty in most provinces is to find big works like railways and canals for the employment at long distances from their homes of all able-bodied men and women, and that if they were all drafted to these works, it would either be necessary to pay them at rates sufficient for the support of themselves and those left at home, or to bring the latter on to gratuitous relief, for it would be impossible to get any work out of them when separated from the able-bodied men and women of their families.

31. The system of petty village works in the South Allahabad district referred to in paragraph 2 of these notes deserves a more extended notice, for the arrangements under which large bodies of labourers were suddenly broken up, drafted in small portions to the neighbourhood of their own villages, and then found in employment, form an interesting incident in the recent famine administration of these provinces. Each charge comprises several petty works, mostly deepening of village tanks, within a radius of three or four miles, for which there is one central camp and officer in charge. Four such charges make up a group under a visiting inspector of the Upper Subordinate class, and four of these groups again form a Circuit under a Sectional Officer, who inspects all the charges at short intervals, and prepares an inspection report in duplicate, one copy of which goes to the Sub-divisional Officer, and the other to the Superintending Engineer direct. There are in all four such circuits, comprising together 64 separate charges in the Allahabad district, in which the average number of workers employed daily during the month of May was 180,000.

32. The relief works under Civil Officers in the North-Western Provinces are village works of a petty kind, such as the improvements of existing tanks, or the excavation of new ones, construction or repair of field embankments, filling up hollows at village sites, etc. The total number of workers thus employed throughout the North-Western Provinces and Oudh on the 29th May amounted to 12,164 only. For many of these works advances are given to the village proprietors or they are undertaken on the understanding that a suitable proportion of the cost shall be repaid within a given time. In some cases however the work is undertaken by the District Officers solely for the sake of finding employment, and without any prospect of recovery. The cost of the work to be done is estimated beforehand, and the work is made over to the Lambardars who employ the labourers in the village and are required to pay them at fixed rates. No regular register of attendance is kept up, but the works are inspected about once a week by the Circle Inspectors, and the numbers present are noted for purposes of the famine returns. The amount finally paid is limited to that due for the quantity of work executed at the rate prescribed. The cost of a single work seldom if ever exceeds Rs. 500. I saw two or three of these works, but not enough to enable me to form any opinion of their value as supplementary relief works. In the case of real improvements which the landlords are desirous of undertaking, and for which they are willing to refund the cost, they are of course very useful, although I understand that in such cases the tendency is to get the work done as cheaply as possible, by employing the most efficient labour available, rather than to afford relief to those most in need of it. When the original cost is not to be recovered at all, the work is said to be often given not to those who are least able but to those who are the least willing to go further afield, or to attend regular relief works. Apart from the value of the improvements effected, these works can never be very useful as a means of relief, and when the cost is not to be recovered, it is a question whether they should not be kept in reserve, as works that may be undertaken under circumstances similar to those which necessitated the disposal of large gangs of labour, and their employment in petty village works in the Allahabad district.

33. The total number of relief workers employed in the north-West Provinces including those on test work amounted to 1,089,954 during the week ending 27th February 1897 when it was a maximum.

Establishment.

In addition to this there were 234,473 dependants who were either paid or fed on the works. With exception of about 15,000 on works under the Civil Officers all these workers were employed on works under the Public Works Department. The strain thrown on the establishment was immense, but the principal change in the normal arrangements was the appointment of Mr. C. G. Palmer as an Additional Superintending Engineer in charge of the relief works in the seven districts comprising the Allahabad Civil Division, the works in the remainder of the Jhind Circle Buildings and Roads Branch comprising the Benares and Gorakhpur Public Works Division remaining under the general supervision of the Superintending Engineer, Mr. Heinig. The average number of workers in the Allahabad Civil Division during the week ending 5th June amounted to 702,025, with 133,560 dependants, and an arrangement of this kind was absolutely necessary. The relief works in the Meerut and Lucknow Civil Divisions, were managed by the existing Public Works staff, under the Superintending Engineers of the 1st and 2nd Circles, Mr. Alexander and Colonel Pulford. The ordinary staff of Divisional and District Engineers and Surveyors, supplemented by eight officers of the Royal Engineers, temporarily transferred from the Military Works Department, has been employed in the general superintendence and management of the works, but was quite insufficient for the effective inspection of all the relief camps or charges. This has been arranged for by the deputation of a number of Staff Corps Officers who have volunteered for famine duty, and receive a deputation allowance of Rs. 300 a month. At the time of my tour there were seventeen of these officers on famine duty in the North-West Provinces. They are called Inspecting or Sectional Officers, and are constantly visiting all the relief works in their respective circles, where they prepare reports in a prescribed form dealing with the arrangements for future work, for the reception of new comers, and for

conservancy, water supply, shelter and food supplies, etc. They report also on all complaints and difficulties that are brought to their notice, and the results of their examination of the gang registers and of the checks made on the musters, measurements and accounts. A copy of each report is forwarded to the District Engineer, and a second to the Superintending Engineer.

I have heard but one opinion among both Civil and Public Works Officers as to the value of the work done by these Staff Corps Officers. They are not long in acquiring the necessary technical knowledge and a keen interest in the work, and their energy and activity have been invaluable. It would be out of place for me to express any opinion on the merits of those whom I had the opportunity of meeting, or whose names were favourably mentioned to me by others; but I must refer to the high appreciation with which I found their services were generally regarded, because in the case of a recurrence of such a widespread famine as this of 1896-97 it will be to the officers from the Staff Corps that we must look as the next line of reserve, behind the officers that may be spared from the Military Works Department, on which reliance must be placed for supplementing the numerical deficiency of Engineers in the Public Works Establishment. By their aid and that of the officers transferred temporarily from the Military Works Department the slender Public Works Establishment of the North-West Provinces has been able to successfully undertake the management of this enormous system of relief works.

The Upper subordinates of the Department have been employed as Visiting Inspectors, their principal duty being to go from charge to charge, and see that work is being properly set out and executed, to check the work and measurements of the sub-overseers or work agents, and to make necessary arrangements for tools, etc. The permanent Upper and Lower subordinate establishment was of course quite insufficient for these duties and had to be supplemented by such temporary men as could be found possessed of the necessary qualifications.

34. The actual practice in the North-Western Provinces has happily deviated in one other respect from the strict language of the Famine Code, in giving a wide power of control over the details of management of relief works to the officers of the Public Works Department. The duties of these officers are laid down in paragraphs 30 to 40 of the Code, the first seven paragraphs dealing with the duties of the Chief Engineer and the remainder with those of the Engineer or other officers in charge of a relief work.

The officer in charge is, as stated in paragraph 9 of these notes, not an Engineer, and the Code makes no reference to the duties or responsibilities of the Superintending Engineer and Public Works Divisional and Sub-divisional Officers. In practice however the whole organization of the relief works system has been entrusted to the Superintending Engineers and the Public Works officers serving under them, subject only to the general control of the Commissioners, who are consulted before any important order is issued, and to that of the Chief Engineer and Secretary to Government in the Public Works Department. I was struck, after reading the Code, with the wide discretion given to the Superintending Engineer in all matters of detail, but at the same time observed that the Public Works Officers in all grades were in close touch with the Civil Officers, and that the latter have every opportunity of exercising an effective general control. The division of labour between Civil and Public Works Officers which has been maintained is really imperative when relief works have to be organised on the scale that has been necessary in the North-Western Provinces, and the training and experience which the Public Works Officers in all grades have had during the present famine will render it very desirable that their services should be as fully utilized in future, and that they should be given as free a hand should the necessity again arise.

35. The relief operations in the North-Western Provinces have been more extensive and prolonged than in any other Province, having really commenced in 1896, and the length of these notes is due to the fact that no less than four different systems have been introduced, all of

Concluding remarks.

which deviate in some degree from the strict letter of the Provincial Famine Code. One of them, the special contract system, had been abandoned before I visited the Province, but the other three, the original North-Western Provinces system, the new intermediate and the Gorakhpur piece-work system, were all in full operation during my tour. The first of these has been adopted almost in its entirety in the Central Provinces and in Bengal, and all Provinces are following the lead given by the Government of the North-Western Provinces in the substitution, when practicable, of some form of piece work for the Code system of task work. In the Province itself, however, less progress has been made in the introduction of piece work than I had expected to find, and the new intermediate system, whatever its merit, is but a highly systematized form of task work, in which there is no minimum wage, or in which fining is permitted in proportion to the deficiency of work done. The Gorakhpur system is true piece work, inasmuch as the payments made depend entirely on the quantity of the work done, and are wholly irrespective of the constitution of the working party, but the limitation of the daily task, however necessary it may have been, has resulted in the average daily wage being no higher under this system than any other (although more work may have been done for it), and no better opportunity has been given here than elsewhere for the working members of a family to earn enough for the support of themselves and their dependants who are either unable to work at all or can perform but a nominal task.

It has been felt apparently that there are difficulties in the way of the adoption of such a system of piece work as will fully accord with the conditions proposed in the extracts from the Resolution of the 16th March 1897, which have been quoted in paragraph 15 of these notes; but there is no doubt that the new intermediate and piece-work systems which have been adopted are a great advance on the Code system, and have been carefully adapted to the conditions of the districts in which they have been introduced.

The leading characteristics of the administration of relief works by the North-Western Provinces appear to me to be that while on the one hand the greatest pains have been taken to ensure a subsistence wage for every one who may apply for it and is willing to do some work, on the other matters have been so arranged that the wage shall not ordinarily be in excess of that required for mere subsistence, even if it fall below the minimum prescribed in the Famine Code.

In pursuance of the former side of this policy works have been opened in all directions, the system of daily payments has been universal, the tasks have been so marked out that every individual digger knows what he has to do and what he has to pay for it, and carriers have been freely employed on all works, whatever their proportion to the diggers. On the other hand the daily wage for all but the diggers has been reduced to the Code minimum and fines for short work have been permitted even below this limit, the wage for working children has been less than contemplated in the Code, while for non-working children only one pice is allowed (except where kitchens have been introduced) and in many cases the dole to dependants has been altogether abolished. The general cost of relief has thus been restricted to little more than one anna per unit of workers and dependants and to less than five pice per worker unit. The object of this policy has been not only to reduce the cost of relief to the minimum absolutely necessary for the subsistence of those applying for it, but also to make the works as unattractive as possible to those not in real need of relief, or who might obtain employment elsewhere. When the scarcity of able-bodied diggers prevents a full task being given to all, the latter object can only be attained by offering a minimum wage; but under more favourable conditions a fuller task may be set on the excellent plan lately adopted under which a higher wage can be earned by the performance of a higher task, a possibility which removes the most serious objection to the original North-Western Provinces system. The introduction of that system was a new departure which can only be judged by the result, but as far as I can ascertain there is no evidence that the average wage earned by the families that have flocked to the relief works in these provinces have been insufficient to maintain them in good bodily health throughout this long period of distress.

T. HIGHAM.

Simla, 18th August 1897.

APPENDIX I.

Instructions by Colonel R. R. Pulford, R.E., Superintending Engineer, II. circle P. W., regarding payment and distribution of wages on Famine Relief Works.

As a rule wages should be paid daily at 12 o'clock noon according to muster rolls taken between 2 o'clock and 4 o'clock on the previous day.

There is no necessity for the officer in charge to carry out with his own hands each and every one of the operations connected with the distribution of money into the bags belonging to the several gangs. Some officers whom I have seen have sat up till a late hour counting the money and placing it in the bags. This is waste of power. The ordinary practice is for money to be sent out from the Civil Treasury either in boxes containing pice done up in bundles containing 32 pice each or in bags containing 50 rupees worth of silver and copper. In any case, if this is not so, the first thing for the officer in charge to do, is to have the money, on arrival in his camp, counted out before him and made up into bags of Rs. 50 each. The next step is for him to call up the Jamadar Moonshis of his charge and the two work agents, each of whom is responsible for and has charge of five Jamadar parties containing ten gangs each. This should be done at 9 o'clock of the day on which the wages are to be distributed. Each Jamadar should have his *Goshwara* or abstract of the money due to each of his gangs calculated from the muster roll of the day before. Ordinarily the wages due to a gang will not be more than Rs. 5 and the total wages due to a Jamadar's party of 10 gangs will not be more than Rs. 50. One bag, therefore, of Rs. 50, already prepared as above, will ordinarily suffice for one Jamadar. Each Jamadar should therefore be given one of these bags of Rs. 50, and he should be told to distribute it into his gang bags according to the amounts set forth in the *Goshwara* or abstract of the day. When he has done this, each Jamadar should have in his hands a balance equal to the difference between the Rs. 50 and the total of his ten gangs. If this is so, all the officer in charge has to do is to check the balance and take the receipt of the Jamadar, which should be entered at the foot of the abstract itself. The 10 small gang bags should now be put into the large Jamadar bag, which should be tied up. If the distribution is to be made next day, the bag should be sealed and placed in the charge of the Treasury Guard. As a rule, however, the distribution of the money into the bags should be done on the morning of the day on which the wages are to be paid out. This is the second step. The third step is the distribution of the money in the bags to the mates. The Jamadar should take his big bag containing the 10 small ones to some central point of his party and should there assemble his 10 mates. To each of them he will then give his corresponding bag of money. From the *Goshwara* he can see how much each mate ought to have in his bag, and he should therefore, when giving each bag to each mate, tell him what ought to be in the bag, then make him open the bag, count the contents, and if correct, make him sign for the amount, opposite the number of his gang in the *Goshwara* abstract. The money is now ready for distribution, the Jamadar has acknowledged and signed for the wages of his party, and the mates have counted, acknowledged, and signed for the wages of their gangs. This being done, the mates should be sent to their respective gangs where their flags are; and on arrival there, should collect their gangs, make them sit down, and at once distribute the wages in accordance with the muster roll of the day before. On works in which there is an interval for rest from 12 to 2 it should be a standing order that the gangs assemble on their respective flags at 12 o'clock, and there await the arrival of their mates. In any case the time fixed for the distribution of the wages amongst them should be 12 o'clock. The hours for beginning and stopping work should be intimated by some form of drum, gong, or bugle. The money having been distributed, the mate should remain at his flag until the Jamadar in charge of the party comes round. At each gang he will check the distribution which has just been carried out, should ask if there are any complaints of non-payment or short payment to any of the coolies present. He should then check the balance, if any, which

remains over after the distribution. The reasons for a balance should be enquired into and noted. If the balance is due to absence of any coolie, his name should be taken down with the amount due to him and should be entered on the back of the *Goshwara*. All such balances should be collected at once by the Jamadar, and after he has visited and verified the distribution of wages amongst his 10 gangs, he should proceed to the head-quarters of the officer in charge, whose coming he should await. The officer in charge will, on arrival from the work where he has been supervising the distribution of the wages, take each Jamadar's account, place any balances in his treasure chest, and enter in a book kept for the purpose the details of the coolies who have not been paid. The money thus put aside should be kept as a separate account, from which he will pay any of the absentees who may come to claim their wages. Under ordinary circumstances, it will be easily possible, if the above system is carried out, to pay wages to all the coolies of a charge every day before 2 o'clock. Finally, the wages having been distributed, the mate should take the muster of the people present, and should then communicate the abstract to his Jamadar for entry in the daily *Goshwara* form. These abstracts are then made up by the Jamadar by the end of the day, and everything is ready for the work of distributing the wages into the bags, as above explained, next morning. The muster rolls should always remain in the custody of the mates. In cases where a mate is unable to read and write, he must be assisted in the work of registering and distribution by his Jamadar.

R. R. PULFORD, Col., R.E.,

Superintending Engineer,

Lucknow, 24th December 1896.

2nd circle. P.W.

APPENDIX II.

Statement showing the number of charges and other particulars on the Public Works Department Famine Relief Works, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, during the week ending the 27th February 1897.

Division.	District.	Number of Charges.				Total No. on works in District (daily average).	Approximate area of affected Taluks of Districts in square miles.	Average number of Workers in charge.	Average number of square miles covered by a charge.	Remarks.
		Roads.	Tanks.	Mixed, &c.	Total.					
AGRA.	Muttra	3	..	..	3	25,018	422	8,339	140	Test Works.
	Agra	6	..	3	9	25,797	744	2,866	82	Test Works. Ditto. Ditto.
	Etah	3	..	..	3	845	239	281	79	
	Farukhabad	3	..	..	3	375	688	125	229	
	Mainpuri	1	..	..	1	136	211	136	211	
	Etawah	3	..	..	3	17,647	285	5,882	95	
Total for Agra Division		19	..	3	22	69,818	2,589	3,173	117	
ROHILKHAND.	Bareilly	5	..	..	5	4,682	214	936	42	Test Works.
	Bijnor	2	..	..	2	3,616	1,867	1,808	933	Ditto.
	Budaun	1	..	..	1	898	200	898	200	Ditto.
	Moradabad	3	..	..	3	4,998	2,282	1,666	760	Ditto.
	Pilibhit	5	..	..	5	7,159	420	1,431	84	Ditto.
	Shahjahanpur	6	..	..	6	2,983	1,188	497	198	Ditto.
Total for Rohilkhand Division		22	..	..	22	24,336	6,171	1,106	280	
FYZABAD.	Fyzabad	6	..	..	6	1,839	1,727	306	287	Test Works.
	Gonda	5	..	..	5	1,691	1,231	338	246	Ditto.
	Sultanpur	5	..	1	6	6,955	1,708	1,159	284	Ditto.
	Partabgarh	4	..	..	4	13,723	1,443	3,430	360	Ditto.
	Bara Banki	7	..	..	7	14,959	1,740	2,137	248	
Total for Fyzabad Division		27	..	1	28	39,167	7,849	1,398	280	
LUCKNOW.	Lucknow	11	1	2	14	85,354	967	6,096	69	Test Works.
	Unao	9	..	1	10	49,062	1,736	4,906	173	
	Rai Bareilly	9	2	..	11	77,382	1,762	3,034	159	
	Sitapur	10	..	..	10	48,921	1,520	4,892	152	
	Hardoi	19	..	..	19	121,523	2,325	6,396	122	
	Kheri	2	..	..	2	283	1,585	141	793	
Total for Lucknow Division		60	3	3	66	382,525	9,886	5,795	149	
BENARES.	Mirzapur	9	..	..	9	38,354	4,100	4,261	455	
	Jaunpur	6	4	..	10	59,120	271	5,912	27	
	Total for Benares Division		15	4	..	19	97,474	4,371	5,130		230
GORAKHPUR.	Gorakhpur	11	1	..	12	36,663	2,630	3,055	219	
	Azamgarh	4	1	..	5	7,084	1,130	1,416	226	
	Total for Gorakhpur Division		15	2	..	17	43,747	3,760	2,573		221
1ST ALLAHABAD.	Cawnpore	10	3	..	13	95,000	1,219	7,307	93	
	Fatehpur	3	..	2	5	13,108	582	2,621	116	
	Allahabad	5	22	5	32	182,598	2,423	5,706	75	
	Total for 1st Allahabad Division		18	25	7	50	290,706	4,229	5,814		84
2ND ALLAHABAD.	Jalaun	11	..	2	13	90,457	1,477	6,958	113	
	Jhansi	7	..	..	7	45,740	3,587	6,534	398	
	Lalitpur	2	..	..	2	12,894		6,447		
	Hamirpur	7	4	..	11	43,239	2,289	3,930	208	
	Banda	11	14	1	26	170,146	3,061	6,544	117	
	Total for 2nd Allahabad Division		38	18	3	59	362,476	10,414	6,143		176
Grand Total		214	52	17	283	1,310,249	49,269	4,929	174	

BENGAL.

Agriculture.—No. 568 T.—R. (Fam.). Darjeeling, the 7th June, 1897.

From M. Finucane, Esq., Secretary to the Government of Bengal, to the Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Revenue and Agricultural Department.

SIR,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1191/7-14 F., dated the 4th May 1897, and in reply to say that the letter under acknowledgment was forwarded to the Commissioners of the Patna, Presidency and Chota Nagpur Divisions for report. The reports of these officers have been now received, and copies* are herewith submitted for the information of the Government of India.

* (1) Letter No. 1230F.G., dated the 18th May 1897, from the Commissioner of the Patna Division.

(2) Letter No. 409F., dated the 2nd June 1897, from the Commissioner of the Chota Nagpur Division, with enclosures.

2. The Government of India draw attention to, and comment on, the four following points in connection with the administration of famine relief in these Provinces :—

- (1) the large proportion of the people in receipt of gratuitous relief,
- (2) the great number of relief works open in some districts,
- (3) the alleged competition of the Government relief works with private works,
- (4) the introduction of the piece-work system.

The Government of India do not appear to be satisfied that famine relief administration in Bengal is being carried out either in accordance with the provisions of the Code, or on the best and most economical principles under any one of its main heads, and they desire to be assured "that State relief is being given in strict accordance with the prescribed tests and conditions of the Code, that all persons able to work and in want are required to work as a condition of relief, and that gratuitous relief in villages is restricted to the classes specified in article 42 of the Code." They further enquire whether the importance of the elementary principle of the Famine Code, namely, "that for those who are able to work the safest and most efficacious form of State help is to provide them with work," is sufficiently recognised by the District Magistrates of Saran and of other districts in which the numbers in receipt of gratuitous relief bear an excessive proportion to the numbers employed on relief works.

3. In replying to these observations and queries of the Government of India, I am at the outset to invite attention to the following remarks made by the Commissioner of Patna in paragraphs 7 and 8 of his report :—

"In the concluding sentences of this paragraph the Government of India enquire whether the provisions of the Famine Code in respect of gratuitous relief are understood and carried out in Bihar. I can assure you with the fullest confidence that this is the case. My admonitions from the first have been incessant, and I have constantly drawn attention to the point. I can say from my personal knowledge that every District and Sub-divisional Officer has laboured from the first to prevent waste of money or undue liberality in the distribution of gratuitous relief, and the inspection and supervision of the circle officers have been unceasing. Here and there a weak or incompetent circle officer has been too generous, but I am fully persuaded that on the whole gratuitous relief has been administered with proper strictness, and that the exceptions have been very few indeed.

"In paragraph 4 it is asked whether, in particular, gratuitous relief has not been overdone in Saran, and why the numbers have not been reduced since my report of the 7th April. The answer is simple : in the first place I have already explained that we must accept for Saran a larger proportion of the population on gratuitous relief than elsewhere. Secondly, anything that Mr. Earle could have done was prevented by the sudden and dangerous illness which has driven him away on medical certificate in the midst of his work. It is disheartening to read, in the language of the Government of India, a suggestion that the provisions of the Code are not being applied, and that many persons who are able to work

are still being gratuitously relieved. The Collector of Saran has under him nearly 70 Circle Officers, and it seems to have been assumed that, because Mr. Earle found fault with one or two, there may be a general slackness of administration in this district. This is hardly a fair deduction."

In my letter No. 778 (Fam.), dated 18th March 1897, and in other communications, the Lieutenant-Governor assured the Government of India that he had personally satisfied himself, by inspection on the spot, that the principles of the Famine Code are thoroughly understood by his officers in Bihar and elsewhere, and that they are being applied vigorously, economically and successfully. He repeated this assurance in his speech in the Supreme Council on the 26th March 1897. These assurances have been supported by the observations of every one who has visited the famine districts in Bihar and written on the subject of famine relief there, and in view of all this His Honour cannot but regret that, though he is convinced no such result was intended, yet the effect of the Government of India's letter has been, in the words of the Commissioner of Patna quoted above, "disheartening" to the Commissioner himself and his officers. Sir Alexander Mackenzie can only repeat his assurance that relief is being properly administered to the best of his own and his officers' abilities, and after a wide experience of other provinces he has every reason to think that the district staff in Bengal is, in point of capacity, zeal and energy, in no way inferior to the staff in any province in India.

4. Turning to the questions raised in your letter, I am now to submit the following remarks on each of them separately :—

(I.) As to the largeness of the numbers on gratuitous relief compared with the numbers of those on relief works, the Commissioner of Patna has offered explanations in detail in paragraphs 5 to 8 of his report, and the Lieutenant-Governor accepts these explanations as reasonable and sufficient.

It is true that the numbers in receipt of gratuitous relief are large compared with the numbers on relief works; but where the supervising agency is strong and the circle organization is complete, as His Honour hopes and believes is the case in Bihar, and fitting objects of gratuitous relief can be searched out in their villages and distinguished from those who are not fit objects of such relief, Sir Alexander Mackenzie thinks it better to give relief in that form to suitable recipients, rather than to compel them to crowd on to relief works where they will do little or no work, and will only impede the enforcement of discipline and the exaction of a reasonable task from those who are able to labour, thus receiving what is practically gratuitous relief under the guise of wages for labour.

The Commissioner of Patna asserts positively that the recipients of gratuitous relief in Bihar are generally fit objects of such relief as defined in the Famine Code, and his assertion is supported (if such support were required) by the observations of Mr. James, who, writing of Champaran, remarks in page 25 of his notes (of which copies have doubtless been submitted to the Government of India) as follows :—

"We drove to see a relief work * * * and then watched the distribution of gratuitous relief. * * * All present were obviously suitable objects of relief, being composed principally of helpless men, poor women with a number of small children, and weakly men and boys. A very large proportion were afflicted with unsightly goitre, and a very few bore unmistakeable evidence of privation."

Of Darbhanga he writes—

"The Charge Superintendents [who are nearly all of them European gentlemen], besides looking after the works, on each of which is a person in charge, see gratuitous relief distributed in their presence, and visit the villages in order to assure themselves personally that no improper names have been entered in the lists or inadvertently omitted."

Page 30.

and generally—

"Unquestionably from what I see the organization of Government relief, whether on works under the Public Works Department or Civil Agency or by means of gratuitous relief in villages, has been absolutely successful in preventing distress and saving life in Bihar."

As the Government of India are aware, Sir Alexander Mackenzie has laid great stress from the beginning on the necessity for a strong establishment,

the country has been mapped out into circles of about 30 square miles each, there is a responsible officer appointed to each circle, whose main duty is by personal investigation in the villages to prepare and constantly check and scrutinise the lists of recipients of gratuitous relief, and over every ten circles there is a European Relief Superintendent whose duty it also is to constantly examine these lists and see gratuitous relief distributed as far as possible in his own presence.

5. The largeness of the numbers in receipt of gratuitous relief in the Chota Nagpur Division is explained in the Commissioner's report hereto annexed, and, as in Saran, is partly due to the absence of male working members of families. Mr. Forbes is, however, taking measures to have the numbers reduced if possible.

6. As regards the Nadia and Khulna districts of Lower Bengal, it is reported by the local officers that women cannot in these districts be induced to come on to relief works, and as the men have hitherto not been permitted to earn more than a bare subsistence for themselves, female members of their families had to be put on the gratuitous relief lists, but labour is exacted from them in the former district so far as possible in the shape of paddy-husking or twisting jute string. In Nadia there has recently been a large and sudden increase in the numbers gratuitously relieved, and there is reason to fear that gratuitous relief is, owing to the insufficiency of the supervising establishment, being too freely given in that district. The matter attracted the Lieutenant-Governor's attention immediately the figures were reported, and he has deputed additional officers to scrutinise the lists.

7. The numbers gratuitously relieved in Bhagalpur and the Sonthal Parganas were small on the dates mentioned in your letter, because distress in those districts had not at that time become acute; while in Puri the numbers reported as gratuitously relieved are somewhat misleading, as charitable relief was being given in that district from funds locally collected before the present scarcity had begun, which were not credited either to Government or to the Provincial Committee.

8. The Lieutenant-Governor is disposed to think that the smallness of the numbers on gratuitous relief compared with those on relief works is not necessarily an indication of economical administration, but it may be under certain circumstances an indication of the reverse, for in the famine of 1873-74, in which relief is now universally admitted to have been administered on a lavish scale, the numbers

<p>* Sir Richard Temple's Minute, dated 31st October 1874, chapter V.</p>	<p>nominally on relief works on 15th June 1874 were 1,770,732, while only 404,903, or 25 per cent. of that number, were in receipt of gratuitous relief.*</p>
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9. As the Government of India surmise, there is no conflict of opinion between the Government of Bengal and themselves on the question of principle. Sir Alexander Mackenzie entirely accepts the principle laid down by the Famine Commissioners that the labour test should be strictly enforced, and he has lost no opportunity of impressing on all his officers the necessity of insisting on its enforcement at all costs in the case of those who can labour; but, as the Famine Commissioners have pointed out, the system is only applicable to those from whom labour can reasonably be expected, and he thinks with the Famine Commissioners that it is possible for an efficient staff of officers to control with success the grant of gratuitous relief on the basis of personal enquiry and knowledge of each applicant among destitute persons to whom the labour test cannot be applied. He believes that this is being done in Bihar with a degree of efficiency and economy that has never before been attained either in these provinces or elsewhere.

10. (II.) The second point to which the Government of India call attention is the great number of relief-works open in some districts. It is pointed out that the scattered character of the relief works must greatly add to the difficulty of supervision, and it is said that there is evidence in the district reports that inaccurate and fraudulent measurements not unseldom occur on the works at present open in Bihar. It is suggested for the consideration of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor that greater resort might be had to large works professionally managed by the Public Works Department. There can be no question, it is added,

that the general experience elsewhere in this and in former famines is all in favour of large works professionally controlled whenever the number of persons seeking relief is large. On this point I am to invite

This Government Resolution No. 5133 Agri., dated the 10th December 1896.

This Government Letter No. 5183 Agri., dated the 12th December 1896.

Government of India's reply No. 8—F/45—14, dated the 22nd December 1896, paragraph 8.

attention to the correspondence noted in the margin. It will be in the recollection of the Government of India that in paragraph 8 of my letter No. 5183, dated 12th December last, an expression of their views was solicited on the questions of drafting off relief labourers to major works, and of the stage at which they might be most conveniently employed upon village works near their homes, and that this Government was informed in reply, in paragraph 8 of Mr. Ibbetson's letter No. 8—F/45—14, dated 22nd December 1896, that the matter was one of administrative detail which must be left entirely in the Lieutenant-Governor's hands.

On receipt of Mr. Ibbetson's letter, His Honour issued the following instructions on the matter to all Commissioners :—

"The Government of India have left to the discretion of the Lieutenant-Governor the question, mentioned in paragraph 27 of the Resolution, of drafting off labourers at the earliest stages to the larger works.

"Sir Alexander Mackenzie is disposed to think that where the major works are within reasonable distance of the homes of the labourers, the latter should be drafted off to them as soon as adequate arrangements have been made for their employment and hutting, those who prefer to return to their homes daily in the neighbourhood of such works being allowed to do so, and that professional able-bodied labourers especially should be drafted off to such works as soon as possible, but that for those who are unaccustomed to labour or unable or unwilling to move long distances from their homes, work should be provided near their villages. Where zamindars or others undertake village works and pay for them, they may be left to exercise their own discretion as to the time for carrying them out. The advantages of keeping such works in reserve for the hot weather months may at the same time be pointed out to the parties who undertake works of this class. The question whether relief-work labourers should be drafted off to the major works at the early stages is one, however, on which it does not seem necessary to lay down a hard-and-fast rule, and the Lieutenant-Governor leaves it to the discretion of local officers to insist on able-bodied labourers being drafted off or not to the major works, as may be found most convenient and practicable. It is to be remembered that tanks cannot ordinarily be excavated or deepened in the rainy season."

It will be seen that the Commissioner of Patna reports that in practice it has been found impossible to concentrate labourers on large works, because (1) except professional labourers the relief labourers will not go into camp taking their families with them ; (2) because of the numerical weakness of the Public Works staff in Bengal—a defect to which the Lieutenant-Governor is endeavouring to supply a remedy ; and (3) because, as the Government of India surmise, there are not many large works available for the employment of large numbers in the distressed parts of Bihar.

The Lieutenant-Governor agrees with Mr. Bourdillon in thinking that when relief operations are taken in time, and the people have not been allowed to drift into a state of emaciation before they crowd on to the works, the difficulty of securing correct measurements and of the strict enforcement of tasks is not so great as is sometimes alleged. His Honour thinks with Mr. Bourdillon that the work is being done with surprising correctness in Bihar, more cheaply and with less speculation than has before been the case. It is, as Mr. Bourdillon points out, too late now to introduce any general change in the system hitherto followed. According to all past experience, the numbers should steadily decline soon after the rains set in, and the Lieutenant-Governor hopes that this will be the case this year. It is, however, possible, as relief has been more economically administered on this than on previous occasions, that the people may not have available means of subsistence other than those afforded by relief works to the same extent as before, and that therefore the numbers may not decline so rapidly as in previous years of scarcity. Any attempt to force the labourers to move long distances from their homes, and to compel them to live in camps under the heavy rains of Bengal, would, in Sir Alexander Mackenzie's opinion, lead to disastrous results. It would probably cause great mortality both from starvation and disease.

11. Sir Alexander Mackenzie doubts whether the experience of former famines, so far as these provinces are concerned, is all in favour of large works professionally controlled, as stated in paragraph 5 in your letter.

The Famine Commissioners say in paragraph 128 of their report, Part I.—

“It is not necessary, and may often be undesirable, to offer every one work close to his door; but on the other hand it is unreasonable to expect people to travel great distances in order to obtain relief, or to make such a journey a condition precedent to their being received on relief works, and we think such a test should not be applied.

In the Orissa famine of 1896 relief works were undertaken by the Public Works Department, but the famine-stricken people would not come to the works, and starved in their homes rather than seek employment at a distance.

Page 47, Part III., of the Famine Commissioners' Report.

The experience of the famine of 1874 in Bihar, as regards the difficulty and danger of forcing the people to take long journeys as a condition precedent to relief, was the same as in the present year. On this subject Sir Richard Temple wrote thus—

“The Gunduk embankment indeed being very favourably situated in respect to distressed tracts, did attract almost as many labourers as could be advantageously entertained—45,000. But the Sone Canal and the Northern Bengal Railway never received the desired complement. The highest numbers of labourers on these works may be thus stated :—

Page 95 of volume II. of the papers relating to the famine in Bengal and Bihar, 1873-74.

Sone canal	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	41,000
Northern Bengal Railway	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	22,000

Unsuccessful attempts were made to induce bodies of labourers from Saran to resort to the Sone canal and from the south of the Ganges, Monghyr and Sonthalia to the Northern Bengal State Railway. Frequent injunctions were sent to the local authorities to send labourers to that railway, but without much result.”

“In those tracts where the majority of the population have to be supported for a time by the State, the principle of employing the people on works in their villages, and close by their own doors, assumes great practical importance. It would be very difficult to employ such vast numbers advantageously on any lines of road or other considerable public work that could be devised. Or if such object were in any degree compassed and accomplished, this could be done only by taking the people away from their homes, which process, however suitable for able-bodied or professional labourers, would be very detrimental to the feeble classes who have to be entertained on relief works. Fortunately the worst tracts abounded in old tanks needing fresh excavation, and in sites for new tanks [as they do now]. Scarcely a village was devoid of these humble but useful works, on which the health, almost the life, of both man and beast depended. Here then was an opportunity of improving the rural water-supply of the country in a manner that may be beneficially felt for more than one generation of men. The scheme also fitted in perfectly with the circle system. Accordingly the circle officers took charge of the tanks.”

Page 8 of volume II. of the papers relating to the famine in Bengal and Bihar, 1873-74.

Again in the famine of 1877-78 in the North-Western Provinces, relief works were carried out under the professional supervision of the Public Works Department. They were harshly and badly managed, and this was one of the causes that contributed to the great mortality that ensued.

Famine Commissioners' Report, Part III., page 199.

12. As regards the experience of the present famine in Bengal, it has been already remarked that there were at first no large works available in Bihar, with the exception of a few large tanks. For some time back surveys of large works have been prepared, e.g., the extensions of the Tirhut systems of railways and canals in Champaran and Muzaffarpur. All small works have been closed within a distance of five miles of these major works, and numbers of persons are employed on them, though not to the extent of which they are capable. Tank works will necessarily have to be closed everywhere when the rains set in, and employment will have to be found for relief labourers on roads and on these major works. If, contrary to expectations, it is found that the numbers on relief works do not diminish after the commencement of the rains, as it may not then be possible to employ all the labourers on tanks and roads near their homes, the question may arise whether it will not be necessary to force the people away from their villages

to railways and canals. Having regard to this contingency, the Lieutenant-Governor would be glad if particulars could be furnished of what the experience of other provinces has been, especially on the following points:—

- (1) How were the people induced or compelled to concentrate themselves on large works at a distance from their homes?
- (2) Were all village works closed within a certain distance from the larger works; if so, within what distance?
- (3) Did the labourers move away from their villages with their families; if so, to what distances?
- (4) Did they move away from their villages before their physique got reduced, and did they arrive on the works in a fit state to do a reasonable task?

13. (III.) The third point noticed in your letter is the alleged competition of Government relief works with private works, with special reference to the complaint of the East Indian Railway authorities that they cannot obtain labour for the Mogulsarai-Gaya line. This matter had already attracted the Lieutenant-Governor's notice, and is referred to in paragraph 12 of his Resolution No. 181 T.—R. (Fam.), dated the 6th May 1897 (relating to the introduction of the piece-work system), where it is said:—

“A cardinal principle to be borne in mind is that the rates should be so fixed as not to attract labour for which there is a demand by private individuals or companies who are willing to pay a reasonable wage; but here it must be remarked that cases have come to the knowledge of Government in which private persons and companies taking advantage of the present necessities of the people have offered to employ famine labour, but only at rates that were inadequate at current prices to yield a bare subsistence to the labourers, thus leaving nothing for their women and children. In such cases the private individuals or companies concerned should be asked to raise their rates to what are deemed to be reasonable and sufficient to provide the labourers with at least a bare subsistence. When the wage offered by private persons or companies is sufficient to give the labourers a bare subsistence or more, care must be taken that Government relief works do not compete with them.”

One of the cases referred to in the extract quoted is that of the Mogulsarai-Gaya line, on which the rates at first offered were reported to be ludicrously inadequate, being only Re. 1-4 per 1,000 cubic feet, including the profits of the contractors. The Railway authorities were asked to raise their rates, and on their doing so, instructions were given to close relief works within a zone of five miles of the line.

The Commissioner of Patna requests that particulars of any complaints of this kind that may have reached the Government of India may be furnished to him.

14. (IV.) Lastly, the Government of India desire to be informed what conclusion has been reached as to the introduction of the piece-work system. The information asked for has been furnished since the date of your letter, in the Resolution of this Government dated 6th May. A separate letter on the subject, of this date, is being submitted to the Government of India.

I have, &c.,

M. FINUCANE,

Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

No. 1230F.G., dated Bankipore, the 18th May 1897.

From J. A. Bourdillon, Esq., C.S., Officiating Commissioner of the Patna Division, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Revenue Department.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 239 of the 13th instant, forwarding for report copy of a letter from the Government of India, No. 1191F. of the 4th instant, in which several observations have been made on your letter forwarding my reports on famine relief operations during the month of March last, and several questions are asked.

2. The following explanations are submitted in compliance with the above request. The paragraphs referred to are those of Mr. Holderness' letter.

3. *Paragraph 3.*—The reason why during the month of March the number of persons on relief works retrograded or remained stationary is not far to seek. In the first place, the cutting of the *rabi* crop drew away many labourers. Secondly, the showers of rain which fell at intervals over all the division during that month gave a great stimulus to agricultural operations, and many thousands of labourers were employed in ploughing or digging up the land, in sowing early rice, *moong*, *china* and *janera*, and in the re-sowing of indigo. Lastly, in accordance with custom, there was a good deal of labour employed

My No. 812 of the 22nd March, paragraphs 18, 22, 37, 43, 49, 52, 56.

My No. 912 of the 7th April, paragraphs 16, 29, 41, 52, 63, 64, 69, 75, 82, 84, 86.

by private persons, especially in Darbhanga, in deepening tanks, in repairing embankments, and so forth. These facts are all mentioned in their proper place in my fortnightly reports, and I venture to quote in the margin for easy reference the numbers

of paragraphs in my reports in which they are mentioned. The statements referred to were all based on passages in the district reports, which accompanied my reports for the Division.

4. As regards the rise in gratuitous relief, it is due to two causes—first, that in all districts, with the exception Shahabad, the Collector first turned his attention to relief works, and that the preparation of lists of persons who were to receive gratuitous relief (which was itself a work of much time and labour) was made subordinate thereto. Secondly, it is due to the fact that in some districts, particularly in Saran, necessitous persons long held out against the receipt of charity, and have only availed themselves of it as their slender stores ran out, or as their neighbours ceased to be able to support them. These facts, especially the first, will be made clear by a reference to the statement appended to this letter, which shows the number of persons respectively on gratuitous relief and on relief works on the last Saturday of each month. The numbers are taken from the *Calcutta Gazette*, with a few corrections subsequently made by the Collectors, and they include, in Saran and Darbhanga, the figures for the Hutwa and Darbhanga Raj, which are too large to be neglected. It will be seen that the proportion on gratuitous relief, except in Shahabad and Darbhanga, rises steadily as the circle organization is developed. In Darbhanga, the Collector was at first unable for want of establishment to open all the relief works he wished to open, and in the interim he had to distribute gratuitous relief, the proportion of which decreased as more relief works were opened. In Shahabad it will be in the recollection of Government that owing to the failure of the Sub-divisional Officer to give notice of the state of affairs in the Bhabhua sub-division, the people deteriorated a good deal, and it became essential to start gratuitous relief without waiting to develop the system of relief works. In Champaran the administration of gratuitous relief was organized later than elsewhere, hence the rapidity of the rise. The above remarks explain the reason of the *rise* in the proportion of those on gratuitous relief.

5. I next turn to explain the *relative largeness* of the figures. In the first place I desire to point out that the figures being those for *persons*, and not for adult and male units, they are rather misleading. It is obvious that an immense number of those who receive gratuitous relief are women and children, who would in any case be in the receipt of gratuitous relief in a year like the present, and if it is intended to discover from the figures whether there are persons in receipt of gratuitous relief who ought to be on relief works, this large class should be eliminated. It is impossible, however, to do so, and I mention the point as one to be borne in mind only.

6. The disproportion of gratuitous relief to relief workers is largest in Shahabad. It has just been pointed out that in the Bhabhua sub-division of this district it was rather late before relief began, and therefore the people had deteriorated a good deal: secondly, in this district, as in Saran, a large number of the adult males are away in search of work, and their families have no breadwinner; the number this year is larger than usual: lastly, an unusually large proportion of the population are crippled and paralysed from the use of *khesari dāl*. In Saran the figures are high because of the large numbers of men absent in search of work. I have already reported elsewhere that at the time of the census of 1891,

when I was Collector of the district, I found that 80,000 adult males were away from their homes in February. In Muzaffarpur the proportion is high because the Collector at first insisted on the exaction of severe tasks on his relief works, and thus to a certain extent persons have come on gratuitous relief who would not have done so had they been able to support themselves on relief works at first.

7. In the concluding sentences of this paragraph the Government of India enquire whether the provisions of the Famine Code in respect of gratuitous relief are understood and carried out in Bihar. I can assure you with the fullest confidence that this is the case. My admonitions from the first have been incessant, and I have constantly drawn attention to the point. I can say from my personal knowledge that every District and Sub-divisional Officer has laboured from the first to prevent waste of money or undue liberality in the distribution of gratuitous relief, and the inspection and supervision of the circle officers has been unceasing. Here and there a weak or incompetent circle officer has been too generous, but I am fully persuaded that on the whole gratuitous relief has been administered with proper strictness, and that the exceptions have been very few indeed.

8. In paragraph 4 it is asked whether, in particular, gratuitous relief has not been overdone in Saran, and why the numbers have not been reduced since my report of the 7th April. The answer is simple; in the first place I have already explained that we must accept for Saran a larger proportion of the population on gratuitous relief than elsewhere. Secondly, anything that Mr. Earle could have done was prevented by the sudden and dangerous illness which has driven him away on medical certificate in the midst of his work. It is disheartening to read, in the language of the Government of India, a suggestion that the provisions of the Code are not being applied, and that many persons who are able to work are still being gratuitously relieved. The Collector of Saran has under him nearly 70 Circle Officers, and it seems to have been assumed that, because Mr. Earle found fault with one or two, there may be a general slackness of administration in this district. This is hardly a fair deduction.

9. In paragraph 5 the Government of India enquire why so many works are open in some districts of Bihar. I myself was most anxious at first to open a few large works in each district in preference to many small ones, but I have long since been obliged to recede from that theoretical position. The reasons are threefold. First and foremost it has been found in practice that the Behari raiyat will not leave his home; whatever may be the case in other provinces, it has been found here that, except the professional labourers, the relief workers will not go into camp taking their families with them. Every labourer in the province, except the absolutely destitute, has some spot which he calls home, where his few petty possessions are collected, and this he will not leave until the last extremity. Again, going a little higher in the social scale, in a large number of cases the adult males of the family are away, leaving one man with the women, the children and the aged, to look after the cattle and the house and the fields; it is impossible for him to go to any work from which he cannot return by nightfall. Where actual famine has established itself, and all bonds of home, family and society are broken, it may be that the people crowd to relief works abandoning everything, but where relief has been taken in hand in due time, as in Bihar, and this stage has not been reached, the people will not abandon their homes for distant relief works, and to enforce the rule that a few large works only shall be opened would bring about the very consummation which it is our object to avoid, viz., a great deterioration in the condition of the people, large numbers on gratuitous relief, and eventually a rush to the relief works of large numbers from many of whom no task could be exacted.

10. In the second place, owing to the numerical weakness of the Public Works Department staff in Bengal, and the extraordinary difficulty of finding subordinates with professional qualifications, it has been found difficult, even up to this late stage of the proceedings, to open many large works. It will be remembered that, owing to the abnormally high prices, distress declared itself in the present scarcity at a much earlier date than on previous occasions, and

District Officers had to start works as best they could with such agency as they had at their command. In these circumstances it is obvious that large works requiring professional knowledge were out of the question, and the difficulty was met by opening simple works where they were most urgently required. Later on, when the experience of the Government of the North-Western Provinces in Bandelkhand became known, and it became apparent that the assistance of the Public Works Department must be largely sought, every effort was made to organise large works, and Public Works divisions were constituted. But so great have been their difficulties in securing staff, that even now, in spite of their exertions, the number of works under the Public Works Department agency is small as compared with those directly under the District Officer. In some districts, moreover, especially Darbhanga, there are no large works to open.

11. I will only add, before leaving this part of my subject, that if District Officers had been compelled to wait till large works could be organised and commenced, a serious collapse would have occurred: large numbers would have been brought on gratuitous relief, and the condition of the relief workers, when the works did open, would have been seriously lowered. Few things in the history of the present scarcity have been more deserving of praise than the readiness, vigour and intelligence with which District and Sub-divisional Officers, aided by their District Engineers, attacked the unwonted task of organising and administering relief works.

12. As regards the difficulty of securing correct measurements and the strict enforcement of tasks, I venture to think too much has been made of remarks in the various reports. At first, of course, matters were in some confusion, which was increased by more than one change of system; but for many weeks past the "pit gang" system has been in force and is working thoroughly well; it is so simple that the work can be tested by anyone, and scores of works are in effect tested every day. It would be absurd for me, or for anyone, to say that the measurements returned, and the outturn and cost rate deduced therefrom, are mathematically correct, but I am convinced that, except in a few bad cases where the falsification is fraudulent, which must occur occasionally in every crisis like the present, the work is being done with surprising correctness, more cheaply and with less speculation than has ever before been the case.

13. It is suggested by the Government of India that in Bihar greater resort may be had to large works professionally managed by the Public Works Department. In reply, I venture to point out that if rain falls at the usual time, as may be expected, we are now within measurable distance of the time when the numbers of relief workers will begin to decline, and that any general change of system at this stage is to be deprecated; secondly, I do not think that the Public Works Department are prepared to take over many more works; and thirdly, the large works which are now being opened out on the recently sanctioned piece-work system will fully occupy all their available officers, and will go far to meet the suggestion in Mr. Holderness' letter. I would, therefore, ask that no change be introduced in our existing arrangements.

14. In conclusion, it is said that the East Indian Railway have complained that they cannot obtain labour for the construction of the Moghulsarai-Gaya Railway on account of the labouring classes preferring relief works. Before I answer this complaint or make the searching enquiry which the Government of India suggest, I would ask that I may be supplied with a definite statement of the case, especially indicating in what localities the alleged effect has been observed. Meanwhile I would make the following general remarks. In South Bihar railway works are open in Shahabad, Gaya and the east of Patna, and in the south of the Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga districts in North Bihar. In Gaya and East Patna there are no relief works open, and in South Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga the nearest works are many miles from the railway. There can, therefore, be no question of competition in those localities, and yet in all there is the same difficulty about labour. In the south of Shahabad there are a few works near one part of the railway line, but the dearth of local labour is felt, I believe, along its whole extent.

15. The truth is that the rate offered has been everywhere too low, and it is to that circumstance, and not to the competition of relief works, that the absence of labour is due. The rate offered at first to *contractors* on the Moghul-sarai line in the Shahabad district was, I believe, as low as Re. 1-4 for 1,000 cubic feet, and out of this the contractor has to make his profit. I am informed that this rate is below the sanctioned rate of the District Board and yet grain is at least twice its usual price. In these circumstances it is not surprising that no labour was obtained, and the authorities have had to raise their rates to Rs. 2-8 in order to give them all possible assistance. The only relief work which was within 5 miles of the line has been closed, but even now the numbers are not rising fast.

16. As regards piece-work I have, so far, little information as to the actual working of the system, for it was not in fact effectively commenced much before the 1st instant. The works on which the introduction of this experiment has been sanctioned are mentioned in your Resolution No. 181 of the 6th instant, and I have also directed its introduction into certain works in the Saran district. In Samastipur the Collector has decided to leave things as they are.

17. As an early reply was asked to the letter of the Government of India, the above has been written without reference to District Officers, but they will now be supplied with a copy of Mr. Holderness' letter, and anything they may submit, which may be deserving of special notice, will be communicated to you hereafter.

Statement showing for each district the numbers on gratuitous relief and relief works, and their relative proportions, on the last Saturday of each month.

District.	February 27th.		March 27th.		May 1st (for April).		Percentage of gratuitous relief to relief works.		
	Relief works.	Gratuitous relief.	Relief works.	Gratuitous relief.	Relief works.	Gratuitous relief.	February 27th.	March 27th.	May 1st
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Shahabad	1,225	4,740	7,523	17,209	7,563	23,295	386.93	228.75	308.01
Saran	31,535	7,156	16,566	27,739	29,352	49,387	22.69	167.44	168.08
Champaran	130,804	39,447	106,836	57,590	72,027	67,052	30.15	53.9	93.09
Muzaffarpur	27,875	*...	29,915	28,353	54,245	59,707	...	94.77	110.07
Darbhanga	105,864	77,230	112,671	70,772	147,915	86,260	72.95	62.81	58.31

* The correct figures have been asked for, but have not been ascertained. None were reported for the *Calcutta Gaz. &c.*

No. 409F., dated Ranchi, the 2nd/3rd June 1897.

From A. Forbes, Esq., C.S.I., Commissioner of the Chota Nagpur Division, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Revenue Department.

In reply to your No. 241 T.R./Fam., dated 13th ultimo, forwarding for report letter No. 1191/7-14 F., dated 4th idem, from the Government of India, on the subject of the large proportion of persons on gratuitous relief to that on relief works in the Manbhum district, I have the honour to submit as follows :—

2. In paragraph 3 of the letter from the Government of India the figures relating to Manbhum for the week ending 17th April were as follows :—

Relief workers.	Dependants.	Otherwise relieved.	Percentage of 3 to 1.
1	2	3	4
3,927	Nil.	4,874	124.4

Since then there has been a further marked increase in the proportion of persons on gratuitous relief in the district referred to, as will be seen from the following figures for the week ending 15th May :—

Relief workers.	Dependants.	Otherwise relieved.	Percentage of 3 to 1.
1	2	3	4
4,031	Nil.	7,383	183·15

3. The explanation given by the Deputy Commissioner is to the effect that as the scarcity becomes more felt and new centres for gratuitous relief are opened, private charity contracts, and the professional beggars and cripples come with a rush upon the hands of the relief officers of Government. He points out that according to the census of 1891 there were 11,000 "mendicants," besides upwards of 4,000 persons classed as "blind," "deaf" and "lepers" in his district, and he argues that before any comparison of the kind made can be instituted, persons of this description who are on relief should be deducted from the gratuitous relief totals. For the rest Mr. Maguire says that although he cannot be certain that all who can work are made to work as a condition of receiving relief, yet he believes that such is now the case in his district. At the same time he adds the following qualification :—

"It is really very difficult to decide if any particular man or woman is incapable of earning his or her living, and the decision has often to be left to the police or the local committee, who have rarely any experience and who generally give the benefit of the doubt in favour of giving relief. * * * There are, however, many women who are left with children, having been, as they say, deserted by their husbands. But many wives and children are no doubt sent to get gratuitous relief who have not been deserted. It would require a much larger establishment than it would be worth while paying for to enquire into all these cases."

4. What Mr. Maguire says with reference to the number of women and children who have been left—I will not say deserted—by their husbands is no doubt true. The whole of this division, and especially the districts of Manbhum and Hazaribagh, are a chief recruiting ground for the Assam tea-gardens, and the number of able-bodied men who have left these districts in search of work, both as registered emigrants under Act I. of 1882 and otherwise, has been abnormally large during the last few months.*

* I have asked the Deputy Commissioners for figures, but have not yet received them.

Mr. Herald, the Deputy Commissioner of Hazaribagh, is experiencing a similar difficulty in regard to the families of such absentees. He writes that in almost every village he finds a certain number of women and children able to work, but without male diggers willing to take them into their gang. He says :—

"These persons are a 'dead loss' to any gang by reducing the average earnings per head, and unless they are in a gang there is no work which they can do. They can carry, but not dig. They form a very considerable proportion of those who require relief, being the rejected members of the garden recruited families or of families whose males have gone to Burma or elsewhere this year. It is the comparatively large number of them which makes the difficulty. In a village there may be 15 males and 40 females really requiring relief. Out of the 40 females only perhaps one-half will be connected with the males, who *will refuse to work* if they are required to work along with the others."

5. I am quite aware of the difficulty referred to above in the two districts in question, but at the same time I feel bound to say that I do not feel so certain as Mr. Maguire appears to be that the requisite test has been sufficiently applied in the Manbhum district; for, as I have lately pointed out to the Deputy Commissioner, there were several places shown in his last fortnightly returns where there were considerable numbers on the gratuitous lists, but no works open, or, where open, the numbers at work were so small as to lead to the inference that many of those on the gratuitous list ought to be sent to the work. I noticed this matter in paragraph 5 of my No. 331F., dated 21st—22nd ultimo, to your address, forwarding my report for the three weeks ending

15th ultimo. Since then the Deputy Commissioner has personally visited all but one of the places referred to, and is taking measures to have sufficient work offered and the gratuitous lists properly scrutinised at each place. It should be remembered, however, that this latter operation is necessarily much more difficult in districts like Manbhūm, where distances are great and the staff comparatively small, than in those where distress is more concentrated and the staff *quā* area much more numerous. I may here note that the works open on the 29th ultimo are reported by the Deputy Commissioner to be seventeen in number as against nine at the time of my visit to the district two months ago, and Mr. Maguire reports that six others are to be opened immediately, and he is prepared to open seven more whenever necessary. I agree with the Deputy Commissioner in thinking that these will suffice.

6. I may here mention that in view of the fact that the *mahua* crop is over, I have thought it advisable to raise the rates of piece-work generally throughout the division from Re. 1-4, Re. 1-9 and Re. 1-14 for "soft," "medium" and "hard soil" respectively, to Re. 1-9, Re. 1-14 and Rs. 2-3. In order to meet the case of the heavier gratuitous lists, I suggested to Government that I should be allowed in such cases to open separate works on special rates for D class labourers. This, however, His Honour considered objectionable, and I was directed in your telegram of the 28th ultimo that such persons should have light work found them on daily wages, or that I could raise the piece-work rates where necessary, and pay by results. I have issued orders accordingly to the Deputy Commissioners of Manbhūm and Hazaribagh, and have also directed them to offer to raise the above rates to the standard rates sanctioned by Government (Re. 1-12, Rs. 2-4 and Rs. 2-12) wherever the gratuitous lists are heavy, on condition that the relief workers consent to admit a certain number of such D class persons into their gangs. These measures will, I hope, have the desired tendency. In Palamau and the other two districts the effect of absentee males has not been felt to the same extent as in Manbhūm and Hazaribagh, and I have asked the Deputy Commissioners to report to me any case in which they wish to adopt similar measures. I enclose a copy of my Nos. 381F. and 382T., dated 29th ultimo, conveying these orders.

7. I have omitted to say above that the Deputy Commissioner of Manbhūm also draws attention to the fact that a considerable number of persons, which he computes roughly at between 2,000 and 3,000, are employed in his district on village works of improvement for which the zamindars have taken loans from Government. These persons should, Mr. Maguire claims, be added to the other "relief workers" in striking a percentage. This seems reasonable.

MEMORANDUM.

On 27th instant, I telegraphed to Government with reference to the sudden and large increase in the numbers on gratuitous relief in Manbhūm, asking permission to open a separate work for D class workers at each place where the numbers on gratuitous relief appeared excessive, at rates 50 per cent. higher than the piece-work rates in force, in order to enable the gratuitous lists to be weeded of all persons fit for light work. The following orders have been received in reply :—

Telegram, dated 28th May, from Bengal Revenue, to Commissioner of Chota Nagpur.

"The Lieutenant-Governor considers it objectionable to open separate works at special rates for D labourers. They should have light work found them in dressing off the piece-work and get daily wages, or you can raise piece-work rates where necessary, and pay by results."

2. The principle to be followed in any place where the numbers on gratuitous relief are quickly rising and becoming unmanageable or excessive will therefore be to endeavour to keep the list down (a) by drafting off all persons fit for any work, and employing them on daily rates in levelling and patting the earthwork, or (b) by offering the gangs on the

relief works an increase in rates up to the full standard rates sanctioned by Government (viz., Re. 1-12 for soft soil, Rs. 2-4 for medium soil, and Rs. 2-12 for hard soil), on condition that they admit a certain number of such weakly persons into their gangs, or where considered necessary, by a combination of both the above measures (a) and (b).

29th May 1897.

A. FORBES, *Commissioner*.

No. 381F., dated Ranchi, the 29th May 1897.

Memo. by—A. FORBES, ESQ., Commissioner of the Chota Nagpur Division.

COPY forwarded to the Deputy Commissioners of Manbhum Hazaribagh for information and guidance, in continuation of this office memorandum No. 371F., dated 28th instant.

2. I think that the time has now come for relaxing the test conditions hitherto in force, with a view to helping the labouring population and their dependants to tide over the next few weeks. I therefore wish that the orders of Government may be construed in a liberal manner, especially in the matter of classification of soils. I note that the soil of the districts in this division may, as a rule, be taken to be "hard," occasionally "medium," but very seldom, if ever, "soft."

No. 382F., dated Ranchi, the 29th May 1897.

Memo by—A. FORBES, ESQ., Commissioner of the Chota Nagpur Division.

COPY forwarded to the Deputy Commissioners of Palamau Lohardaga Singhbhum for information, in continuation of memorandum No. 371F. 372F. (Singhbhum), dated 28th instant.

2. The above orders are intended to apply primarily to the districts of Manbhum and Hazaribagh, where the numbers on gratuitous relief are in places quickly rising and causing anxiety. I do not consider that, so far, this is the case anywhere in your district, and I request that you will not take action in the manner directed in paragraph 2 of the above memorandum without first reporting (by telegram* or letter) to me for orders.

* To Palamau only.

No. 2353/7—26F., dated Simla, the 28th June 1897.

From T. W. Holderness, Esq., I.C.S., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

SIR,

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 568-Fam., dated 7th June 1897, in which the reasons are explained why in the famine administration of the Province of Bengal an unusually large proportion of the persons relieved are in receipt of gratuitous relief and why an unusual number of relief-works are open in some districts.

2. The Government of Bengal will see from a despatch recently received from the Secretary of State which has been communicated to Local Governments for information, that the Secretary of State also has noticed the large proportion of persons gratuitously relieved in Bengal and in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh as a feature of famine administration which requires explanation, and that the "undesirability of giving gratuitous relief on an excessive scale early in the season" is touched on. Since the despatch was written, the proportion of persons gratuitously relieved in Bengal has risen from 43 per cent. to 54 per cent. Instead of relief workers being in a majority and the gratuitously relieved in the minority, the reverse is the case. So exceptional a state of things obviously required explanation, and the Government of India could not have avoided the necessity of calling attention to the matter, as they did in my letter of the 4th May.

3. As regards the explanation which is given in your letter and its enclosures, the Government of India consider that the existence of certain exceptional circumstances in Behar, especially in those districts in which the proportion of persons gratuitously relieved is largest, has been more or less made out by the Commissioner of the Patna Division. Of Shahabad it is explained that in the Bhabua sub-division relief began rather late and the people had deteriorated; also that an unusually large number of the population of the sub-division are crippled and paralysed, and that many of the able-bodied adult males are absent in search of work. Of Saran it is said that large numbers of men habitually migrate to other districts for some months in the year in search of work. In both cases the explanations given are of considerable weight. Nor have the Government of India ever doubted the vigilance of the Commissioner of the Division, or the earnestness of the district officers under him, to make their famine administration thoroughly efficient in all respects. But making full allowance for these exceptional circumstances, the Government of India are still inclined to think that in Behar persons have been placed on the gratuitous relief lists who, though not able-bodied labourers, are still capable of some labour: and they are strengthened in this opinion by the Commissioner's remarks regarding Shahabad and Saran in his report for the three weeks ending the 1st May. Of Shahabad he writes:—

“Gratuitous relief is still very large in this district. Since the date of my last report I have been in correspondence with the Collector on the subject, and he urges strongly that the peculiar circumstances of the district, which have more than once been detailed before, justify the high figures. However, a remark in the report now under review shows that the classification of labour in this district is not the same as that adopted elsewhere. Mr. Windsor says that all his labourers are B class, and that none of them are so weakly as to require to be set a special task. As it is certain that many such weakly persons must be in existence, and as the numbers on daily wage are too small to allow of their all being included in that category, the inference is irresistible that many of those who are now in receipt of gratuitous relief ought to be working as D class labourers. On the other hand, the Collector reports that he has carefully checked the gratuitous relief lists, and found that they are satisfactory. The point will be further discussed with Mr. Windsor.”

Of Saran he writes:—

“The numbers on gratuitous relief are again still very large, and Mr. Chapman, who has just taken charge, is disposed to think that it has been somewhat overdone in some parts of the district. I have little doubt of the fact and hope that by close scrutiny he will be able to keep the numbers down. It is significant that there are very few D class labourers.”

These remarks appear to justify the apprehensions expressed in my letter of the 4th May, as they show that the same apprehensions were felt by the Commissioner.

4. The Government of India are glad to learn that there is no conflict of opinion between them and the Government of Bengal on the question of principle, and that the Lieutenant-Governor entirely accepts the principle laid down by the Famine Commissioners that the labour tests should be strictly enforced. But from the Commissioner's remarks as to the absence of Class D labourers from the relief-works in the Saran and Shahabad districts and from the distinction drawn in paragraph 4 (I.) of your letter between persons “able to labour” and persons who can do “little or no work,” the Government of India cannot but infer that the principle might be more completely observed in practice. Say the Famine Commissioners—

“If only those who can be employed profitably on works are so employed, a great mass of people will be thrown on the Government demanding gratuitous relief, but absolved from all necessity for showing that they are really in want.”

It is this undesirable result that the Government of India are anxious should be avoided. Unquestionably the employment of inefficient labourers on relief works will tend to increase the cost of the work. But relief works are not an end in themselves. They are undertaken in order to provide employment and wages, and it is sacrificing too much to outturn results to admit to such works only able-bodied labourers. This is not the principle which was approved by the Famine Commissioners, nor does it commend itself to the Government of India; and they trust that the inquiries initiated by the Commissioner, who was himself struck by the figures of these districts, have ended by bringing the practice there into better accord with the intentions and instructions of the Famine Commission.

5. As regards the districts outside the Patna Division in which the numbers on gratuitous relief are excessive, the case of the Nuddea district is the most serious. Up to the end of March the numbers on gratuitous relief were kept within moderate limits. Since then they have mounted very rapidly with no corresponding increase in the numbers on relief works. The population of the affected tract is returned at 478,000 persons, and on this population the numbers relieved in the first week in June in their homes exceeded 13 per cent., with a further 2 per cent. of dependants gratuitously relieved on the works. The attention of the Government of Bengal has been separately directed to these remarkable figures, and the result of the suggested enquiry by the Commissioner of the Division will be awaited.

	Workers.	Depend-ants.	Gratuitously relieved.
27th March ...	6,857	1,739	6,807
1st May ...	17,084	8,291	26,527
15th May ...	18,190	6,436	16,214
22nd May ...	19,805	7,699	52,393
5th June ...	20,471	10,696	60,160

With regard to Manbhum, the Government of India share the doubts of the Commissioner of the Division whether in admitting persons to gratuitous relief the requisite test has been sufficiently applied by the Deputy Commissioner. The verdict of the "police or the local committee" as to whether a particular man or woman is incapable of work does not seem sufficient or satisfactory.

With regard to Khulna, the Collector's statement that since the introduction of the piece-work system the numbers in receipt of gratuitous relief have fallen very largely cannot be reconciled with the returns. The numbers gratuitously relieved at the beginning of June exceeded 6,000 against 5,360 on the 1st May. Both in Khulna and in Nuddea the piece-work system was expected to have the effect which the Collector of Khulna describes, and it is disappointing to find that this result has not yet followed. The Government of India are aware that the restriction of home relief within moderate limits is made difficult in Lower Bengal by the reluctance of the women to attend relief works. But as no question of *purdah* or caste or social position is, it is believed, involved, such objections should be most closely and strictly scrutinised.

6. The second question of famine administration discussed in your letter is the number of small relief works opened in the distressed districts, especially in the Patna Division. It is explained that it has been found in practice impossible to concentrate labourers on large relief works because (1) excepting professional labourers the relief labourers will not go into camp taking their families with them; (2) because of the numerical weakness of the Public Works staff in Bengal; (3) and because there are not many large projects available for the employment of large numbers in the distressed parts of Behar. A doubt is also expressed whether the experience of former famines of Bengal is all in favour of large works, or in favour of relief works being placed under the professional supervision of the Public Works Department. It is added, however, that as tank work will be impossible during the rains, major works may have to be opened, should it be found necessary to find employment for the people during the rains. In view of this contingency, information is asked as to the experience of other provinces in concentrating relief labour on large works.

7. The Government of India share the hope of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal that the numbers of the relief workers will rapidly decline soon after the rains set in, especially as the season has begun well. This process will no doubt be hastened by the closing of village tank works, and the enforced concentration of labour on roads and large works. The enclosed copy of circular instructions which have been lately issued in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, will explain to the Government of Bengal the arrangements which have been made in those provinces to stimulate the dispersal of the labourers and to provide work suitable for those who still remain. Similar measures have been taken by the Government of Bombay with good results. Mr. Higham, who has inspected the relief works in both provinces, will be able to

No. 1208/S 131, dated 27th May 1897.

give the Government of Bengal detailed advice on the four points mentioned in paragraph 12 of your letter, and he has been directed to do so.

8. The expediency of placing relief works under the immediate direction of the Public Works Department, if the strength of the latter is numerically sufficient, is a matter on which in the opinion of the Government of India there need be no hesitation. This method of management is deliberately recommended in paragraph 129 of the Famine Commission's report after full examination of the experiences of the Orissa famine of 1866, of the Behar famine for 1873 and of the still greater famine in Southern India in 1877-78, and the soundness of the Commissioners' recommendation has been amply verified by the course pursued in this present famine in all provinces except Bengal. The relief works recommended by the Famine Commission should each be "capable of employing a considerable number of persons for a considerable period" and "if possible, one such work should be opened in each sub-division of a district in which severe distress prevails." It is remarked in your letter that the Famine Commission do not recommend a distance test. But they did not recommend that thirty or forty works should be opened in a sub-division, and that relief should be brought close to every man's door. The reluctance of the Behar ryot to camp on a relief work with his family is not peculiar to Behar. It has been found in other provinces, but it is overcome in seasons when the need for relief becomes urgent and when relief is not offered close at hand. It appears to have been overcome in the Behar famine of 1873-74, as Sir R. Temple stated in his evidence before the Famine Commission that "the works were generally arranged

Q. 167, page 47, Appendix II., to Famine Commission's Report.

so as to be just beyond one day's march from the homes of the people, so that the relief labourers could not manage to go home at night. This was considered essential to the enforcement of the distance test. The people dislike going to any considerable distance from their homes: they do not so much mind leaving their homes so long as they are encamped within a march of two or three days." The Government of India have little doubt that the Famine Commission, in holding it to be "unreasonable to expect people to travel great distances in order to obtain relief," and in also recommending that there should be one relief work in a sub-division, drew the same distinction as Sir R. Temple drew in his evidence before them. Whether this be so or not the present famine has unmistakably shown in all the provinces that a moderate distance test is essential if the public expenditure is to be kept within reasonable bounds, and relief restricted to persons who really need it and are willing in obtaining it to undergo certain inconveniences.

9. But while clear on the question of principle the Government of India fully recognise that in the exceptional circumstances obtaining in Behar, where no large projects were ready and the Public Works establishments were weak, small and numerous works under the management of the civil staff were a necessity, at all events in the first stage of the famine. No blame therefore attaches to the Commissioner of the Patna Division or to his subordinates. On the contrary they deserve all credit for the efforts they have made to rigorously supervise these works and to exact proper tasks. But the practical difficulty which has occurred in Behar in conforming with the principles laid down by the Famine Commission indicates that proper lists of famine relief projects have not been kept up in the Behar districts. This is one matter in which prevision and provision are clearly needed against the next famine, and the earlier completion of the larger projects on which relief workers are now to be engaged in Behar would have insured, according to experience elsewhere, better and thriftier application of relief.

10. With regard to paragraph 13 of your letter, I am to say that particulars of any complaints made by railway authorities to the Government of India as to the effect of relief works in preventing them from obtaining labour will be communicated to the Government of Bengal.

I have, &c.,

T. W. HOLDERNESS,

Deputy Secretary to the Government of India.

Agriculture.—No. 652T.R., (Fam.).—Darjeeling, the 21st June 1897.

From M. Finucane, Esq., Secretary to the Government of Bengal, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Revenue and Agricultural Department.

SIR,

IN continuation of this Government's letter No. 299T.R., (Fam.), dated the 19th May 1897, I am directed to submit, under section 29 of the Bengal Famine Code, the following report on relief operations in this province during the month of May. This report has been delayed in consequence of the report of the Patna Division having been delayed in transit by the interruption of traffic on the Northern Bengal State Railway. The information furnished in this report, for the Patna Division, is for the four weeks ending 29th May, the previous report having dealt with the five weeks ending 1st May; the portions relating to the other Divisions are for the five weeks from the 25th April to 29th May, inclusive. The rainfall during the period under report is shown in a separate statement hereto annexed. I am to submit herewith a copy of the report of the Commissioner of the Patna Division, No. 1272F.G., dated the 25th May 1897, with enclosures, for the first half of May.* Copies of his report, No. 1367F.G., dated the 11th June 1897, with enclosures, for the second half of May, will be forwarded from Calcutta as soon as that report is printed. I am also to enclose famine maps of the districts of Manbhum, Palamau, Hazaribagh, Nadia, Murshidabad, Sonthal Parganas and Puri. A consolidated map of the Patna Division, showing the areas affected, and a famine map of the districts of Khulna, will be submitted later. As the affected area in the district of Bhagalpur continued unaltered, no map has been submitted by the local officers for the period under report.

2. *Patna Division.*—There is nothing of importance to report with regard to the districts of Patna and Gaya, both of which continued to be in a satisfactory condition. Prices were almost stationary, except that there was a slight rise in the price of rice, and public health and the condition of cattle were normal. The poor-house at Bankipore was still open, but of the 123 inmates only about one-fourth belonged to the Patna district, and the rest were waifs from other districts. In Gaya, there were four poor-houses and two kitchens giving food to wanderers and others, the average daily number fed in the latter half of May being 515; charitable relief committees were at work in every thana and outpost, but all the reports received show that the number of persons in need of relief was small, and that in every case the funds locally raised had been sufficient to meet local requirements. In the remaining five districts of the Patna Division in which relief operations are in progress on an extensive scale, the month of May was marked by a rise in prices, which was greatest in Saran and in the Bettiah sub-division of Champaran, and by an increase in the numbers on relief works and gratuitous relief. The following paragraphs deal with the main features of relief in these districts.

3. *Rainfall and prospects of crops.*—The rainfall in the several districts is shown in the statement hereto appended. Besides local showers, there was general rain in North Bihar on the 12th and 13th, and again between the 20th and 22nd of the month, and it is reported to have been wholly beneficial. The outturn of *cheena*, which was being harvested, was generally good, and sugarcane and the *bhadoi* crops are reported to have been doing well.

4. *Area and population affected.*—The only change reported under this head was in Champaran. Although there was no great alteration in the area seriously affected, the landless classes were everywhere in considerable distress on account of the very high prices, and as relief measures, in the shape of relief works or gratuitous relief or both, were in progress in all thanas, the Collector has now shown the whole district as affected.

* Not printed.

5. *Numbers on relief.*—The numbers and percentages of population on relief are shown below from the first half of April :—

District.	10th April.		1st May.		15th May.		29th May.	
	Numbers on relief.	Percentage on population of affected area.	Numbers on relief.	Percentage on population of affected area.	Numbers on relief.	Percentage on population of affected area.	Numbers on relief.	Percentage on population of affected area.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Shahabad	32,638	8.77	30,858	8.7	30,941	8.11	33,488	8.76
Saran	57,189	3.85	78,957	5.57	84,247	5.94	89,220	6.29
Champanan	147,414	9.48	139,079	8.94	163,871	10.54	192,975	10.37
Muzaffarpur	88,692	5.34	113,952	6.86	139,165	8.38	124,415	7.49
Darbhanga	216,656	9.54	234,175	10.48	249,175	11.15	270,961	12.12
Total	542,589	7.39	597,021	8.23	667,399	9.21	711,059	9.41

The numbers given in this table are as shown in the weekly telegraphic reports published in the *Calcutta Gazette*, corrected up to date. The number in Muzaffarpur for the 29th May shows a falling off as compared with the number on the 15th idem, but the number of relief workers, taken with the average daily number on gratuitous relief in the last week of May, as shown in Famine Statement A (relief works 60,071 + gratuitous relief 82,515 = total 142,586) was larger than the corresponding numbers for the first half of May (relief works 50,838 + gratuitous relief 78,369 = total 129,207). In all other districts the numbers were increasing. The smaller percentage for Champanan, as compared with that of the 15th of the month, is due to the increased area and population now shown as affected; there was an increase in the actual total numbers.

6. *Relief works.*—The number of works open on the 29th May was as follows :—

	Under civil officers.	Under the Public Works Department.	Total.
Shahabad	10	...	10
Saran	37	12	49
Champanan	55	29	84
Muzaffarpur	82	25	107
Darbhanga	132	47	179
	316	113	429

The total number of works at the end of April was 373, of which 276 were under civil officers and 97 under the Public Works Department. The reasons which led to so large a number of works being opened, and the Lieutenant-Governor's views on this subject, were stated in paragraphs 10 to 12 of my letter No. 568T.R., (Fam.), dated the 7th June 1897.

The following statement compares the numbers on Government relief works at the end of May with those at the end of April :—

District.	Men, women and children taken together.				Average daily number of adult male units.					
	1st May.		29th May.		Half-month ending 1st May.			Half-month ending 29th May.		
	Number.	Percentage on population of affected area.	Number.	Percentage on population of affected area.	Task-work.	Daily wage.	Total.	Task and piece-work.	Daily wage.	Total.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Shahabad	6,948	1.82	9,447	2.47	5,556	811	6,367	4,761	1,051	5,812
Saran	23,094	1.63	24,177	1.71	11,790	2,704	14,494	13,512	3,125	16,637
Champanan	70,947	4.56	101,211	5.44	49,010	12,344	61,254	51,939	11,242	63,181
Muzaffarpur	58,385	3.21	60,071	3.62	33,219	10,685	43,904	34,131	11,540	45,671
Darbhanga	127,873	5.7	147,414	6.59	73,875	21,280	95,155	82,851	27,986	110,637
Total	282,047	3.9	342,320	4.53	173,350	47,824	221,174	186,994	54,944	241,938

The numbers on Government relief works increased in all districts. The following table shows the results of task-work, as regards outturn, wages and cost, in the second half of May, in comparison with those in the corresponding period of April :—

District.	AVERAGE DAILY WAGE OF ADULT MALE UNIT.				AVERAGE OUTTURN OF WORK PER ADULT MALE UNIT ON TASK-WORK.		COST RATE PER 1,000 CUBIC FEET.	
	Second half of April.		Second half of May.		Second half of April.	Second half of May.	Second half of April.	Second half of May.
	Task-work.	Irrespective of task.	Task-work.	Irrespective of task.				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	A. P.	A. P.	A. P.	A. P.	C. ft.	C. ft.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.
Shahabad	1 6	1 10	1 6½	1 11½	38	46	2 7 7	2 1 10
Saran	1 3½	1 6	1 3	1 6½	32.9	29	2 9 5	2 12 5½
Champanan	1 6½	1 8	1 8	1 8	31	36	3 1 7	2 15 8
Muzaffarpur	1 5	1 8	1 4	1 8	56.8	54	1 10 2	1 9 3
Darbhanga	1 6	1 6	1 6.8	1 6½	39.29	40	2 7 0	2 6 7

The wages earned during the two periods do not show much difference. There was a satisfactory increase in the average daily outturn per male unit, and a consequent decrease in the cost rate per 1,000 cubic feet of earthwork in the district of Shahabad. Mr. Toogood, the Public Works Department Superintendent of Relief Works, who was lately on tour in this district, reported that the measurements were unimpeachable, and that the work was being very well done. Owing to the small numbers of workers, measurements and payments were made for the individual task, and the Commissioner reports that, as the system was working well, he has decided not to interfere with it. The falling off in the outturn and the increase in cost rate in the district of Saran were due mainly to the facts that most of the works under Civil Officers were tanks far advanced, in which the lead and lift were very long, and that the number of women employed as carriers was very large. The proportion of females to males on task-work was greatest in this district, being 216.14 females for every 100 males.

7. *Piece-work system.*—The system of piece-work had been introduced during the course of the month only in the districts of Champaran, Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga, on the major works noted on the margin. The District Officers concerned have not found it possible to report fully on the working of the new system. The following table shows the results as far as can be gathered from the statistics furnished :—

District.	Works.	Average daily number of male units employed.	Average daily outturn per male unit.	Average daily wage earned by each male unit.	Cost per 1,000 cubic feet.
1		2	3	4	5
Champaran	Week ending 8th May	2,826	C. ft. 46	A. P. 2 5	Rs. A. P. 3 4 5
	" " 15th "	4,949	57	2 2	2 6 4
	" " 22nd "	11,088	53	2 3	2 10 8
	" " 29th "	11,589	58	2 4	2 8 11
Muzaffarpur	" " 8th "	302	} Not reported.		
	" " 15th "	1,236			
	" " 22nd "	1,035			
	" " 29th "	1,899			

The piece-work system had so far proved successful in Champaran. The sanctioned rate on the Tribeni Canal was Rs. 2-8 per 1,000 cubic feet for a lead up to 50 feet and lift up to 3 feet, with five annas per 1,000 cubic feet for every additional 5 or 6 feet of lift. The Collector writes :—

"This form of work is found to be much more popular with the labourers than task-work, the main reason being that if they fall short of what under the latter system would be the full task, they are paid exactly for what they do, and not be fined in a way they do not understand. The people have left the civil works accordingly, and this is what we wished them to do, as the canal will be a very useful work. Another advantage they find is that when necessary the men can go off to cultivate their fields, and leave the rest of the family to do what they can, the women doing the digging when the soil is soft. On task-work this sort of thing would disorganise the whole gang, and the task could hardly be graduated suitably so as to give the gang a fair chance of earning the full wage. The Executive Engineer, Mr. Sealy, reports that he has observed no cases in which the people are unable to earn enough for their support by piece-work. The average proportion of carriers to diggers on the canal is reported to be $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 1, the lead and lift being moderate. If this be so, each digger excavates on the average 170 cubic feet per diem, but there are many professional labourers on the work who accomplish considerably more than this under the stimulus of payment according to results. We should have to give work to the latter class under any system, as there is no competing private employment for them. Mr. Still, the experienced Charge Superintendent of Hardih, informs me that he has watched the work closely, and finds that non-professional labourers also work hard all day and late in the evening. He states that no old women and comparatively few children are seen on these works. The piece-work system appears to be working satisfactorily, and I feel sure that it will prove a great saving of expense to Government, without diminishing relief given to those really in distress. It is very much simpler to work than the task-work system, and easy of check. There is nothing to fear from false muster rolls, wrong classifications, or cheating of the workers, through the system of fines. The labourers know pretty well what they ought to get, and it is not necessary to pay them the exact amount until after the measurements have been checked by superior officers."

8. *Private relief works.*—Private works continued to give employment to a considerable number of people in need of relief. In Shahabad, the Sabar tank employed 3,075 adult male units with 260 dependants on the 29th May. Besides this, there were several tanks and irrigation channels which, it is stated, in all employed more than 3,000 persons. The Gaya-Mogulsarai railway (line

in this district has not drawn large numbers, notwithstanding that the railway authorities have raised their rate to Rs. 2-8 per 1,000 cubic feet, and that all relief works in the neighbourhood have been closed for some time. The total

Week ending 1st May	...	10,231
Ditto 8th "	...	10,827
Ditto 15th "	...	13,215
Ditto 22nd "	...	11,140
Ditto 29th "	...	10,661

weekly numbers employed on the railway are noted on the margin. In Saran, the Hatwa Raj had eight works open, employing a daily average of 3,439 adult male units, and the Collector estimates that an additional number of nearly 3,000 persons

were employed on works carried on with loans given by Government. In Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga, the Darbhanga Raj continued to maintain works which employed a daily average of 2,243 labourers in the former district, and

*Muzaffarpur	...	2,634
Darbhanga	...	16,534

12,036 in the latter district, on 29th May. The decrease, as compared with the number at the end of April* is believed

to have been due to large advances given out by the Maharajah.

9. *Poor-houses and kitchens.*—The following table shows the number of Government poor-houses and kitchens that were open in May :—

District.	Poor-houses.		Kitchens.		Total average daily number relieved in poor-houses and kitchens.
	No. of poor-houses.	Average daily number of inmates.	No. of kitchens.	Average daily No. fed.	
1	2	3	4	5	6
Shahabad	3	...	4	...	798
Saran	2	128	...	...	128
Champanan	7	1,002	12	997	1,999
Muzaffarpur	6	255	54	9,436	9,691
Darbhanga	9	895	3	53	948
	27	2,280	73	10,486	13,564

At the end of April there were 25 poor-houses and 42 kitchens maintained by Government. Out of the total number fed in kitchens in Muzaffarpur, 7,284 were children. The Hatwa and Darbhanga Raj poor-houses continued to do good work.

10. *Gratuitous relief.*—The following table shows the average daily numbers on gratuitous relief in the last week of May, and the amounts of the average daily doles, in comparison with the corresponding figures at the end of April :—

District.	1st May.		On 29th May.		Average dole per adult unit.	
	Total number.	Percentage of population of affected area.	Total number.	Percentage of population of affected area.	Second half of April.	Second half of May.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Shahabad	22,517	5.08	23,667	6.19	A. P. 0 10	A. P. 0 10
Saran	50,849	3.59	59,674	4.21	0 7	0 7½
Champanan	66,895	4.30	88,110	4.73	0 11½	0 11½
Muzaffarpur	69,049	4.16	82,515	4.97	0 9	0 8½
Darbhanga	78,003	3.49	92,228	4.12	0 9.42	0 9½
	287,313	3.9	346,194	4.58	...	...

In consequence of the inevitable increase of distress which must continue

	*Percentage of population on—	
	Relief works.	Gratuitous relief.
Shahabad ...	2.47	6.19
Saran ...	1.71	4.21
Champaran ...	5.44	4.73
Muzaffarpur ...	3.62	4.97
Darbhanga ...	6.59	4.12
Whole division ...	4.53	4.58

* These percentages have been calculated on the figures given in columns 5, 10, and 11 of Famine Statement A.

till the breaking of the monsoon rains, the numbers on gratuitous relief increased everywhere, the percentages being as given on the margin in comparison with the percentages on relief works. A report on the proportion of people on gratuitous relief has already been submitted to the Government of India in my letter No. 568 T.R.,/(Fam.) dated the 7th June 1897, and it is unnecessary to recapitulate here what was said in that communication. In his report for the second half of May, the Commissioner writes that he feels confident that no material reduction will be found possible in the proportions given above.

The following are extracts from letters addressed to the Commissioner of the Patna division by the Collector of Muzaffarpur on the same subject :—

“It is a mistake to suppose that the gratuitous list has been swelled at the expense of the relief works. There is a certain minimum in these districts, not a small number, who can never go on to relief works. The only question in regard to these is how long can they live without gratuitous relief, and they are not *parda-nashins* who can be relieved from the Charitable Fund.

“That relief works did not increase in proportion was due to their being able to find work outside famine relief works, and that by insisting on the execution of the fixed task they were not encouraged to turn from private employment to famine works.

“The proportion of persons receiving gratuitous relief to relief work labourers is not a sufficient test of efficiency of famine administration. Percentages in famine work, as in criminal statistics, can only serve to draw attention to points calling for explanation; they cannot in themselves be made the basis of praise or censure. This has been thoroughly well accepted in criminal administration, and has got to be accepted in famine administration also.

“The fact is in the crowded population of a Bihar district there is an irreducible minimum which must come on Government hands in a severe famine or must die. We have kept these off our hands as long as we dared do so. These are not people who ever have been or could be labourers. They are those suffering from infirmities and the very old and very young, who have no one who is bound by custom or law to support them. Possibly the denseness of the population in these districts (902 to the square mile) may cause their proportion to the total population to be unduly large, though I am unable to say that this is so. Then the population of the affected area is probably about 2½ millions. Hence a certain number must come on our hands even if there were no relief.

“The relief works numbers have been kept down partly owing to the effective organisation and the care which has been taken to train the famine officers as far as was possible in their duties before sending them out, but principally owing to the untiring energy and devotion of the Charge Superintendents and the Public Works Department Officers, who have constantly inspected the works and seen that the task imposed by Government was as far as possible exacted. The result has been that the people who have not hitherto had any need of Government assistance, finding that the works are not a happy picnic party, have kept away. All the while the people have been carefully watched by the Circle Officers and Charge Superintendents, and their condition proves that so far they have been perfectly well able to do without Government assistance.”

11. *Physical condition of the people, &c.*—The physical condition of the people and public health were generally good. There were cases of cholera and small-pox; but these are usual at this season. The death-rate in the affected tracts of Shahabad for April was 3.20 against 2.37 for the whole district. The high rate is reported to have been due principally to the prevalence of small-pox and fever. There was no death from starvation. The condition of cattle was normal.

12. *Loans.*—The season for loans for village works under the modified rules under the Land Improvement Loans Act is well-nigh over. The following table shows the loans of this class actually made :—

District.	Up to 31st March 1897.	From 1st April.	Total.
1	2	3	4
Shahabad	Rs. 1,950	Rs. 11,250	Rs. 13,200
Saran	9,952	5,046	14,998
Champaran ... ..	...	5,991	5,991
Muzaffarpur	3,100	2,562	5,662
Darbhanga	1,412	11,981	13,393
Total	16,414	36,830	53,244

As regards loans under the Agriculturists' Loans Act, at the date of the report enquiries on applications were being pushed on, and the amounts actually advanced were as follows :—

Shahabad	Rs. 13,398
Saran	52,793
Champaran	3,378
Muzaffarpur	4,688
Total	74,257

The figure above given for Champaran does not include the amount advanced in the second half of May, which the Collector had not been able to ascertain. In Darbhanga no advances had actually been made up to the end of the period under report.

13. *Food-stocks, importation of grain, and prices.*—The following table shows the imports and exports since the second half of November in all districts of the Patna Division, including Patna and Gaya, as far as this Government is aware :—

Half month ending—	Imports.	Exports.
1896.	Mds.	Mds.
28th November	155,757	193,596
12th December	116,316	226,189
26th December	176,725	148,550
1897.		
9th January	303,426	196,409
30th January	468,288	196,617
13th February	289,425	107,564
27th February	262,344	76,892
13th March	277,227	83,640
27th March	347,503	75,003
Carried forward	2,397,011	1,304,460

Half month ending—	Imports.	Exports.
Brought forward... ..	Mds. 2,397,011	Mds. 1,304,460
1897.		
10th April	420,044	95,701
1st May	657,050	156,505
15th May	469,408	113,223
29th May	488,082	149,966
Total	4,431,595	1,819,855

Shahabad and Patna are the only districts in which the imports exceeded the exports, the imports consisting chiefly of rice, and the exports of the new *rabi* crops. The falling off in imports in the first half of May was due to an accumulation of grain at the Mokameh Ghât between the 6th and 13th May, owing to the inability of the Bengal and North-Western Railway to cope with the traffic. This obstacle has since been removed. The north of the Bettiah sub-division of Champaran is now almost entirely dependent on imported supplies which consist mainly of rice and paddy from Calcutta. It is stated that American maize has also found its way to some of the markets in the interior of the district of Champaran. The food supply is being kept up by importation, and no deficiency is reported from any district. Prices, however, as already observed, rose in all the districts, the most marked increase being in Saran and North Champaran. In Saran barley and *rahar* rose from 13 seers 9 chitaks to 11 seers 7 chitaks per rupee, and wheat from 11 seers 2 chitaks to 9 seers 15 chitaks per rupee. The following extract from the Champaran Collector's report for the second half of May describes the position as regards prices in that district :—

“At the former centre (Motihari) prices have not changed much except that barley has risen from 13 seers 2 chitaks to 12 seers 5 chitaks per rupee, and a general tendency to rise is observable. Common rice is selling at 8 seers, and Burma rice practically at the same rate. At Bettiah the prices of common and Burma rice, which rose sharply to 7 seers 5 chitaks and 8½ seers respectively in the second week in May, have maintained the same high level ever since, and barley, gram and *rahar* have all risen in price and are considerably dearer than at Motihari. At Ramnagar, where common country rice was last returned at six seers, there does not now appear to be any more in the market, and the price of Burma rice has risen from 7½ seers to 7¼ seers. At Bagaha both common and Burma rice are returned at 7½ seers against 8 seers a fortnight ago. In the northern markets generally, the price of rice is about the same as at Ramnagar and Bagaha. Barley is quoted as selling at 12 seers, but there is no quotation from several of the markets.”

14. *Cost.*—The total expenditure in the Patna division, up to the end of May, so far as is known, is reported to have been Rs. 37,80,233, of which Rs. 26,33,491 have been spent on relief works, and Rs. 10,94,510 on gratuitous relief. The Commissioner says, however, that these amounts do not include large sums outstanding and unadjusted.

15. *Chota Nagpur Division.*—There was general rain in the Chota Nagpur division during the week ending 1st May. Since that date there were a few showers, except in Palamau which had only .05 of an inch in the week ending 8th May, and no rain during the remainder of the period under report. The heaviest fall is reported from Singhbhum. The weather was on the whole favourable for ploughing and sowing, and the Commissioner states that the most pressing matter at the date of his report was the question of granting advances to cultivators for the purchase of seed and cattle, and a sum of Rs. 60,000 has recently been allotted to this division by the Board of Revenue, in addition to what was granted before. The present prospects of the coming crops are reported to be quite up to the average. There was a continued rise in the prices of rice during the month, but those of other food-grains were generally steady. Mr. Forbes writes :—

“The pressure of the continued high prices is making itself distinctly more felt week by week, especially in the Manbhum, Hazaribagh and Lohardaga districts. In Palamau,

although prices there are higher and stocks have been much lower than anywhere else, it is evident that the effect is not telling upon the people in so marked a manner as in the other districts. The reason no doubt is that the people of Palamau have more forest products to fall back upon, and besides this the outturn of *rabi* has been better there than in the eastern part of the division."

In view of the rising prices and of the lapse of time since the gathering of the *mahua* flower, the Commissioner has ordered the piece-work rates to be raised throughout the division from Re. 1-4, Re. 1-9 and Re. 1-14 for soft, medium and hard soil respectively, to Re. 1-9, Re. 1-14 and Rs. 2-3 per 1,000 cubic feet. The piece-work system has been in force too short a time to permit of the results being known. The public health was generally good. Cholera is, however, reported from parts of Palamau, Manbhum and Hazaribagh. Cattle-disease is reported from Palamau.

In the report for April it was stated that rice was selling in three markets in

Palamau.			S.	CH.
Wheat	...	...	8	7
Barley	...	...	11	4
Gram	...	...	9	10

Mahua rose from an average of 27 seers in the first half, to 23½ seers in the second half of the month.

Palamau at between 5 and 6 seers the rupee; and that the lowest price recorded was a little over 9 seers. During the week ending 29th May rice was sold in four markets at between 5 and 6 seers, and the lowest price recorded was below 8 seers. The average prices of other food-grains were as noted on the margin. The causes of these exceptionally high prices appear to be that stocks of food-grains were running very low, and that importation was impeded by the difficulties of transport from a great distance. The Deputy Commissioner reports that the labourers on the works were unable to procure food at the markets in the neighbourhood of the works, and that all consignments of imported rice were whipped up, as soon as exposed for sale, by pack-bullock traders from the interior of the district. Early last month it became evident that the supply of food-grain for the relief operations could not be left entirely in the hands of traders, who, it was found, were much hampered by the difficulty of obtaining carts to transport the grain collected at Baroon. It was, therefore, decided, on the recommendation of the Commissioner, that 17,500 maunds of Burma rice should be imported by Government for the wages of relief workers and for gratuitous doles, and about 15,500 maunds obtained from two Calcutta firms were despatched *via* Gaya. Assistance was rendered to the grain-dealers in securing carts at Baroon, with the result that while in the three weeks ending 5th May only 2,158 maunds of rice were imported into Palamau under the bounty system, making a total of 7,516 maunds during the past three months, the quantity imported by the traders between the 16th and the 29th May alone amounted to 5,044 maunds. Further advances made to grain-dealers during the period under report amounted to Rs. 26,800, making a total of Rs. 51,300. As already observed, notwithstanding the high prices the numbers on relief works have not increased considerably. On the 24th April there were 18 relief works open with 2,665 labourers. On the 29th May the number of works was 16 and the number of relief-workers 3,045. But, in addition, about 3,570 persons were employed on 19 works carried on by local zamindars, and more found employment on 13 works opened by the Maharaj Kumar of Chota Nagpur in pargana Tori, for which returns have not been received. The daily average number on gratuitous relief at the end of the month was 1,971 against 1,672 in April. Besides this, it is stated that the Local Relief Committee (whose report, however, deals with the first half of May) were giving relief to 888 persons in return for work done, *viz.*, for cotton-spinning, cloth-weaving, paddy-husking and *sattoo* pounding, and to 225 persons who were doing no work.

There was no change in the affected area in Manbhum. The price of rice in this district ranged from about 8 to 10 seers per rupee in the second half of April; on the 29th May rice sold in one market at less than 7 seers, and the average for the district may be taken at from 7½ to 8 seers the rupee. Mahua is reported to have risen from 42 to 31 seers per rupee. The imports aggregated 47,128 maunds and the exports 1,901 maunds. The number of works open on 29th May was 20, against 11 on the 24th April. There

was no great increase in the number of relief workers, the number at the end of the period being 3,971 against 3,484 on 24th April; about 3,000 persons are reported to have been employed on private works carried on with loans made by Government. But the number on gratuitous relief increased from 4,861 on 24th April to 7,383 on 15th May, and to 11,969 on the 29th May. Orders have been issued for a careful scrutiny of gratuitous relief lists. Three kitchens have been opened on the Grand Trunk Road for the distribution of cooked food to travellers.

In the district of Hazaribagh the *mahua* harvest is over, and the outturn, estimated at 10 annas, should suffice for the food of the cultivating classes until the next *bhodoi* crop. The imports of food-grains aggregated 45,371 maunds, and there were practically no exports. Prices remained fairly steady except in the case of rice, which sold at from 6½ to 8 seers per rupee. The number of public works carried on as test-works was 49 against 35 in April. The largeness of the number of works opened is explained in the following extract from the Deputy Commissioner's report for the first half of May:—

“They (the Charge Superintendents and the Sub-divisional Officer of Giridi) all make the same report. They find the relief operations, the road work or kitchen, fairly well attended, but only by persons living in the immediate neighbourhood. When they visit places five or six miles distant, they find persons who require relief, but who refused to go the distance named to get relief. It must be given them in their village or not at all. Frequent reports of such a nature agreeing with my own experiences would point to the absence of real distress were it not the fact that many of the people (and specially the children) are discovered to be in an emaciated condition, showing they were not getting a proper quantity of nourishing food. To deal with such obstinate cases we have no option but to give in to them. Hence there has been a large increase in the number of petty works, sections being opened at several places on each road instead of starting at one end and carrying the work and the camp of relief workers right through.”

The average daily number of test-workers was 1,828 against 1,678 in the week ending 24th April. The *mahua* harvest is believed to have prevented a greater increase. A considerable number of persons were employed on private works undertaken with loans given by Government. The number of kitchens increased from 19 to 26, and the average daily number receiving cooked food or dry doles in them was 3,494 against 1,006 at the end of April. The Deputy Commissioner writes:—

“We have gathered together all the waifs and strays, the beggars and cripples, who have always lived upon public or private charity. These we feed at the kitchens.”

The number employed by the Local Relief Committee on cotton spinning and weaving increased from 689 in April to 993 in the last week of the period under report.

With regard to Lohardaga it is stated that the Deputy Commissioner still finds little or no indication of actual distress, although there can be no doubt that the pressure of high prices is being increasingly felt by the poorer classes. It is reported that there was a decidedly greater demand for work than existed a month before, that applications for loans were largely made by agriculturists, that a sum of Rs. 4,000 allotted from the Charitable Fund was being quickly expended, and that a much larger sum could be made use of with great benefit in this manner. Work was provided on a road undertaken from the District Fund, and the Maharaja of Chota Nagpur employed a considerable number of labourers on a tank. There were two kitchens, opened by Relief Committees from funds subscribed locally, one at Ranchi and the other at Lohardaga, and the number being fed in them was 664.

Exports from Singhbhum are ceasing, only 1,500 maunds having been exported during the latter half of May, and the price of rice was below 8 seers in two markets, and nowhere above 10 seers per rupee. The Deputy Commissioner apprehends distress in two small areas in Porahat and the Kolhan, but full particulars have not yet been furnished to Government.

16. *Presidency Division*.—Rain fell in the districts of the Presidency division during the period under report, as shown in the appended table; and in conse-

quence, agricultural prospects are everywhere good. But more rain was wanted in the Chuadanga sub-division of Nadia, in Jessore, and in the affected parts of the district of Khulna. Prices rose except in parts of Murshidabad (where they were

	Price of Common Rice.		
	End of April.		End of May.
Nadia ...	S. 8 to 8	S. CH 10	Seers. $7\frac{1}{2}$ to $8\frac{1}{4}$ per rupee.
Khulna ...	9		7 to 8 "
Murshidabad ...	8 to $8\frac{3}{4}$		$8\frac{1}{4}$ to $8\frac{1}{2}$ "
Jessore ...	9 to 11		$7\frac{1}{2}$ to 9 "

almost stationary), and importation generally increased. The district of the 24-Parganas continued to give no cause for anxiety. In the other districts the poorer cultivators are reported to have been badly in want of seed-grain, and steps are being taken to supply the want by means of loans under the Agriculturists' Loans Act, and by gifts from the Charitable Relief Fund. Public health was on the whole good, cholera having almost disappeared except in some parts of

Khulna and Murshidabad. The condition of cattle was also satisfactory.

The total affected area in the district of Nadia remained unaltered, but, as indicated in the map, distress deepened in some tracts which were before slightly affected. The general condition is thus

Nadia.

described by the Collector :—

"The general state of the affected tract has undoubtedly deteriorated during the period under report. The only redeeming feature in the situation is that the prospects of the *aus* crop are good. On the other hand, the necessity of attending to cultivation, a form of labour which does not supply any immediate relief, has brought a large number of the poorer cultivators into the direst straits. There can be no doubt that it was only by undergoing a great amount of privation that a large number of men who would otherwise have been attending the relief-works have been able to cultivate their fields. * * Both *aus* and *aman* are doing well over the greater part of the district, with the exception of portions of the Chuadanga sub-division where more rain is badly required. I estimate that the area under *aus* this year is far above the normal, but as a set off to this must be taken into consideration the fact that as a general rule the fields, owing to lack of seed, have been very thinly sown."

There were 26 relief works open against 14 in April, and the total number employed on the 29th May was 20,101 against 18,051 on the 24th April. So far the piece-work system had been introduced only on one work in this district, the rate paid being Re. 1-15 per 1,000 cubic feet, and is reported to be working fairly well. The Collector, Mr. Garrett, reports that the relief works are being

	Dependants.	Otherwise relieved.	Total.
*1st May ...	9,385	20,085	29,470
8th " ...	6,436	16,214	22,650
15th " ...	7,699	52,393	60,092
22nd " ...	9,625	63,821	73,446
29th " ...	10,696	60,160	70,856

carried out in an orderly and systematic manner, and that tasks are being rigidly exacted. There was a sudden and very large increase in the numbers on gratuitous relief,* the average daily number in the last week of May being 53,444 against 32,763 in the week ending 24th April. The increase attracted the Lieutenant-Governor's attention as soon as it was shown in the weekly telegraphic report, and steps were at once taken to strengthen the

establishment under the Collector, with a view to the gratuitous relief lists being carefully scrutinised. Orders have also been issued for kitchens to be established, if possible, so as to feed the non-working children of relief workers on the spot, instead of giving them money to take to their parents. The Collector thinks that the disparity between the numbers on relief works and those on gratuitous relief was due to the fact that a large number of labourers had been employed on field operations, leaving their families and dependants to be gratuitously relieved by Government. The Commissioner has been directed to go to the affected areas and enquire into the matter. A few weavers are being employed on weaving cloth, and women are employed on jute-twisting and cotton-spinning.

The most important feature in this district is the failure of stocks of rice, mentioned in this Government's report for April. Sanction has been accorded to the grant of loans up to Rs. 70,000 to stimulate the importation of grain. The Collector of Murshidabad reports that, in consequence of the improved prospects

of the crops, grain-dealers in the Rarh country (the upland of Murshidabad from which supplies were drawn for Nadia, but were recently stopped) have again commenced selling off their stocks, and it is to be hoped that some of this grain will find its way to the adjoining district of Nadia.

There was no change in the area of acute distress in the district of Khulna, but test works had been opened in an additional area of about 25 square miles with a population of 11,000 in Satkhira thana. It is reported that in consequence of the rise in the price of rice the condition of the people in the distressed area changed considerably for the worse. Burma rice is now being imported and sold at 8 seers per rupee. The number of relief works (31) was the same as in April, but in May all these works were conducted on the piece-work system, at a rate of Rs. 2-4 per 1,000 cubic feet. In the latter half of April, when task work was still in force, the average daily number of dependants in the last week of the month was 668 against 2,945, the average daily number of task-workers.

The average daily number of dependants in the week ending 26th May was 42 against 4,109, the average daily number of piece-workers in that week. The total number of relief-workers on the 26th May was 4,809 against 3,764 on the 24th April. Although the number of dependants of relief-workers is now small, the total number on gratuitous relief has increased, being 6,163 at the end of May against 5,360, the daily average in the week ending 24th April. But this number appears to include respectable men and *parda-nashin* women relieved from the Charitable Fund, which should have been shown separately from the numbers relieved by Government. Many of those shown on gratuitous relief are employed on jute-twisting, paddy-husking, &c. Two poor-houses have been opened in this district.

The area affected in Murshidabad remained the same as before, but its general condition had improved. *Boro* paddy, grown on an estimated area of 3,000 acres in the Kandi and Jangipur subdivisions, has been harvested and is reported to have yielded a bumper crop. The Collector writes :—

“The prospects of the *bhadoi* crop are everywhere favourable. The result has been that the mahajans who have hitherto been holding back in the hope of a further rise in prices are now disposing of their stock as rapidly as possible. Over the greater part of the district there has been a fall in the prices of rice of at least half a seer in the rupee, although in portions of the Daulatabad, Goas, Jallangi and Nowada thanas, which are far removed from the Rarh, the price of common rice is still as high as from 7½ to 8 seers per rupee. Agricultural operations are in progress all over the district, and the number on relief and test works have fallen off in consequence. Weeding of paddy, indigo and mulberry is giving employment to a large number of persons in the fields, while owing to the improved prospects of the cocoon crop, the cocoon-rearers, who form a large proportion of the population of the Sadar, are finding employment in their houses. Although there has been no diminution of the distress since my last report was written, but rather the reverse, future prospects are far more favourable, and it may be expected that after the end of July, when the *aus* rice will be in the market, there will be a rapid fall in prices, and the measures taken for the relief of the distress may be gradually relaxed.”

“Sowing of *amun* has commenced in the Kandi sub-division, and in the Kalantar is nearly finished, while the sowing of the *aus* has been practically completed all over the district. In a few cases in the Nowada, Barua and Saktipur thanas, I have heard of land likely to remain unsown for want of seed, not because there was any lack of seed in the district, but because the raiyats had not the means to purchase it.”

Six relief works and five test works were open, against four relief works and two test works in April. The piece-work system was introduced on the 26th May, the sanctioned rate being Re. 1-9 per 1,000 cubic feet. The total number of workers employed on the 29th of May was 3,808 against 3,517 in the beginning of May. The Collector reports that the tanks undertaken by private individuals with loans given by Government will have been completed about the middle of June, and that this fact and the cessation of agricultural operations will probably result in a large increase in the number of relief workers. The number shown on gratuitous relief is 4,732, but the expenditure was met entirely from charitable funds locally raised. In this district private charity plays a most prominent part. Maharani Sarnamayi alone gives daily doles of rice to about 5,000 persons. Other private persons also are distributing doles on a smaller scale in Berhampore and

elsewhere. Agricultural advances are being given at rates varying from twelve annas to one rupee per bigha.

The district of Jessore has hitherto been only slightly affected, and the relief found necessary has been confined to gratuitous relief from charitable funds, and to the grant of loans or gifts for the

Jessore.

purchase of seed or cattle. In the report of the local officers for the first half of the month, it was stated that about 40 per cent. of the cultivable area of the district was then still unsown for want of seed-grains. A sum of Rs. 27,057 has since been advanced under the Agriculturists' Loans Act, and Rs. 9,312 from the Charitable Relief Fund have been distributed in small gifts to the poorest class of cultivators. It is now stated that little land is left unsown, but that more rain is wanted to save the newly-sown crops, which are reported to be withering. Reports of distress have been received from the Magura sub-division, and the Collector has ordered test works to be opened there.

17. *Bhagalpur Division*.—The prices of food-grains continued to rise slowly; there was an increase in the imports by rail, but agricultural prospects were everywhere good. In Monghyr, Purnea and Malda no relief operations except from charitable relief funds were in progress; in ordinary years the Collectors of these districts find difficulty in placing loans under the Land Improvement and Agriculturists' Loans Acts, but this year they are reported to be anxious for allotments, and it has not been found possible to give the Collectors of Monghyr and Purnea more than one-third of the amounts for which they had applied. Public health was generally good, except that sporadic cases of cholera occurred in the affected tracts in the Sonthal Parganas; and the condition of cattle was normal.

Acute distress in Bhagalpur was, as before, confined to the north of the district, but owing to early and copious rainfall agricultural prospects are excellent, and have considerably reduced

Bhagalpur.

present pressure and the chances of continuance of distress for any length of time. Mung (*Phaseolus Mungo*) has been cultivated to a much greater extent than in ordinary years, and is expected to yield a bumper crop. The harvesting of this lentil, which has commenced, gives employment to large numbers of women and children, and the men are busy ploughing, digging, weeding and transplanting for other crops. The general result has been a great decrease in the numbers in receipt of relief from Government, and the Collector hopes to be able to close all relief works in the district when the monsoon bursts. At the end of April eleven relief works were open in North Bhagalpur, and the number of workers was 18,965. In the first half of May the number of works was raised to 13, but was afterwards reduced to 10. The total number of relief workers on the 29th May was 7,313. This remarkable decrease is reported to have been due in some measure to the substitution of the piece-work for the task-work system, which took place on the 24th May; but this change was made at a time when plentiful rain and harvesting work were drawing off labourers to the fields, and as the period under report closed shortly after, the local officers have not found it possible to state definitely the results of this important administrative change. In the Sadar and Banka sub-divisions distress was not acute. Three test-works were open, one in the Sadar and two in the Banka sub-division, but were not largely attended. Many private relief works continued open throughout the district. Gratuitous relief from public funds was confined to North Bhagalpur. The total number in receipt of this form of relief on the 29th May was 2,740 against 3,413 at the end of April. In addition to this, large numbers were in receipt of charitable relief from private individuals, and about 19,000 persons are stated to have been relieved in North and South Bhagalpur from the funds of the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund. It is reported from the Banka sub-division that the demand for loans was very great, and that the petty cultivators were without the means to purchase seed.

Acute distress was felt in the Deoghur sub-division of the Sonthal Parganas; test works were opened in the latter end of February, but were not then attended. The winter rice and Indian-

Sonthal Parganas.

corn crops had been bought and exported up-country, but the people were

subsisting on the mahua crop, which yielded about 10 annas. In May, the exhaustion of this source of food-supply, combined with the high prices, drove the poorer people to seek relief, and sanction has recently been accorded to the opening of relief works. The whole of the sub-division, comprising 954 square miles with a population of 284,115, is reported to be affected, and the local officers estimate that relief will have to be given to about 8,710 persons, but that the intensity of distress is not likely to continue long.

The addition of the Deoghur sub-division has brought the total area now affected in the Sonthal Parganas to 1,321 square miles with a total population of 377,115 persons. Sugar-cane, the only standing crop in the affected area, has been benefited by the general rain, which has enabled cultivation for other crops to be commenced. As in April, five relief works were open in the Jamtara sub-division, on one of which the piece-work system has been introduced; and in the Deoghur sub-division there were 11 relief works, all conducted on the piece-work system. But the local officers, as in the district of Bhagalpur, have not yet found it possible to report specially on the results of this system, as desired by Government, nor have they furnished figures for the same period for both sub-divisions. The arrangements in the Deoghur sub-division were not complete at the date of report. The total number on the relief works in the Jamtara sub-division is stated, for the 21st May, to have been 3,232; while in the Deoghur sub-division the number of relief workers for the whole fortnight is shown at 3,622, which gives a daily average of 258. Private relief works continued to afford employment to a considerable number in the Jamtara sub-division. The number on gratuitous relief in this sub-division on the 21st May was 689, against 1,046 on the 24th April. A kitchen was opened at Jamtara for the aged and children. From the Jamtara and Deoghur sub-divisions, as well as from the rest of the district, where there is as yet no such distress as to require relief measures on an extensive scale, it is reported that many raiyats have consumed their seed-grain and sold their cattle. Rupees two thousand have been granted from public funds for agricultural loans in the Jamtara sub-division, and two thousand more from the Charitable Relief Fund.

18. *Rajshahi Division*.—There was copious rain in both the affected districts of this division, Rajshahi and Pabna. In Rajshahi the outturn of the *boro* or spring paddy, which occupied a total area of 116,600 acres or about 182 square miles, is estimated at 16 annas; and the present prospects of the *aus* or autumn paddy, which has this year been sown in a larger area than usual, are reported to be excellent. The numbers employed on the two test works in this district fell off considerably, the average daily number employed in the last week of May being 438 against 781 at the end of April, and the Collector has issued orders for one of the works to be closed. The people find more remunerative employment in the fields and on private works, and the Commissioner thinks that although the prevalence of famine prices must continue to cause some distress requiring charitable relief, the district of Rajshahi may now be classed as distinctly outside the famine line. In Pabna agricultural prospects are reported to be good, but there has been a marked rise in the price of common rice which in some places sold at six seers the rupee although imports are increasing. Another important feature of the period under report is that from the middle of the month women began to come to the test works, although many native gentlemen had assured the Collector that no pinch would induce females of this district to come to a Government relief work. The public health and the condition of cattle were generally good.

19. *Orissa Division*.—The affected area in the district of Puri is now shown at 365 square miles with a population of 102,000, but a further report on this matter has been called for from the local officers. There was very little rain throughout the period under report, but on the 30th May a heavy shower fell in Malud, Parikud and Satpara, and replenished the supply of water which had commenced to fail; the cultivation and sowing of rice is reported to be going on briskly. Food-stocks have been kept up by importation which, as previously reported, is aided by advances to the grain-dealers given from public funds. There were fifteen relief works and five test works open, as in April, and the number employed on them on the 29th May

was 4,604 (exclusive of figures for the Khurda sub-division, which have not been received against 2,874 on the 24th April. Besides this, the ordinary District Board road under construction in the affected area employed a daily average number of 460 persons, and a considerable number of labourers continued to find employment on the work carried on by the Raja of Parikud. Gratuitous relief in this district is given from certain funds raised by public subscriptions before the present scarcity. There was an outbreak of cholera in an epidemic form and of small-pox in certain parts of the affected area. The condition of cattle was generally good. Loans under the Agriculturists' Loans Act are in great request in this district, as elsewhere.

As regards the other districts of Orissa, the condition of Balasore and Angul continued satisfactory, while in Cuttack there were only isolated cases of distress requiring gratuitous relief, and it is reported that the total number in receipt of this form of relief in the district at the end of May was 2,306. The rainfall in Cuttack was, however, much below the normal, and much *beali* or autumn rice sown in anticipation of rain was, at the date of the report, beginning to wither.

20. *Burdwan Division*.—In the district of Bankura, the prevailing high prices, combined with the partial failure of the last season's crops, caused distress in thana Gangajalghati and the northern part of thana Sonamukhi. The total affected area is reported to be 400 square miles with a population of 178,000. The last rice crop in this area was an almost total failure, the outturn being estimated at 4 annas in Gangajalghati and at not more than one or two annas in the affected portion of Sonamukhi; the crop of 1895 was also poor. Towards the middle of May the price of common rice rose to 8 seers in Gangajalghati and 9 seers in Sonamukhi. The latest report shows the average price at 9 seers. The Collector reports that he has himself seen persons in the Gangajalghati area who showed signs of suffering from insufficient food. The classes in need of relief are reported to be—

- (a) the respectable poor, mostly widows, who usually live on the charity of their friends;
- (b) orphans;
- (c) sick and disabled poor persons who usually live by begging;
- (d) small cultivators.

The number of lepers in this district is large. The resources of private charity have failed, and these lepers, with such members of their families as are unable to work, have to be relieved gratuitously; the local officers are of opinion that while the labourers will probably obtain ordinary employment when the monsoon sets in, gratuitous relief will rather increase than diminish until September. Test works were started on the 19th May; nine were open at the close of the period under report, and the number of labourers employed on them on the 31st May was 8,689. Arrangements have also been made for the distribution of gratuitous relief, and the total number in receipt of this form of relief on the 31st May was 3,521. In addition to this 582 persons were relieved from the Charitable Relief Fund.

Heavy showers of rain fell over the greater part of the affected area, benefiting the sugar-cane, which is a crop of some importance in this district, and enabling the sowing of rice to commence. There is a great demand for loans for seed and cattle; funds for the purpose have been placed by Government at the Collector's disposal, and gifts are being given from the Charitable Relief Fund to distressed cultivators who are unable to furnish adequate security for loans. Public health was fair, and the condition of cattle normal.

21. *Dacca and Chittagong Divisions*.—There is nothing of importance to report with regard to the Dacca and Chittagong Divisions. The stress of high prices is felt by the very poor and by some of the more respectable classes in these divisions as elsewhere, but no necessity for opening Government relief works has been reported. Such aid as is required is being given from the charitable relief funds and by private individuals.

I have, &c.,

M. FINUCANE,

Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

Statement of rainfall in the affected and threatened districts in May 1897.

	Week ending—				Total.	Normal.
	8th May.	15th May.	22nd May.	29th May.		
	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.
Bankura :—						
Sadar... ..	...	·05	1·55	1·28	2·88	3·87
Maliara	·18	·07	·57	1·48	2·30	...
Khatra	·42	1·05	2·25	1·48	5·20	...
Sonamukhi ... ..	...	...	·07	·33	·40	...
Gangajalghati	·12	...	·99	·84	1·95	...
Raipur	·20	·58	·91	2·71	4·40	...
Indas... ..	·93	...	·45	·60	1·98	...
Vishnupur ... ..	...	...	·90	·90	1·80	4·79
Kotalpur	·73	...	...	1·98	2·71	...
Onda ... ..	...	...	2·29	·41	2·70	...
Nadai :—						
Sadar... ..	1·51	Nil.	·79	·68	2·98	5·83
Kushtia	2·99	·11	1·48	·44	5·02	7·19
Meherpur	2·38	·37	1·04	·67	4·46	5·82
Chuadanga	·76	·19	1·85	·04	2·84	...
Ranaghat	1·14	...	·90	·48	2·52	5·26
Murshidabad :—						
Sadar... ..	2·12	·05	1·93	·52	4·62	5·54
Kandi	1·57	·35	2·99	1·35	6·26	4·55
Jangipur	1·18	...	·56	·15	1·89	5·00
Jessore :—						
Sadar... ..	1·04	1·71	·45	·31	3·51	7·35
Jhenida	1·56	·37	·70	...	2·63	6·53

The following falls were recorded in the week ending 1st May :—

	Inches.		Inches.
Bankura :—		Murshidabad :—	
Sadar	·88	Sadar	·55
Raipur	·45	Kandi	·70
Maliara	·51	Jangipur... ..	·21
Khatra	·04	Jessore :—	
Gangajalghati	1·45	Sadar	1·27
Onda	·63	Jhenida	2·15
Kishunpur	1·09	Magura	1·01
Indas	1·06	Narail	·40
Nadia :—		Bangaon	1·50
Sadar	·73	Khulna :—	
Kushtia	·46	Sadar	2·53
Meherpur	1·15	Bagirhat	·26
Chuadanga	1·00		
Ranaghat	1·85		

Statement of rainfall in the affected and threatened districts in May 1897.

	Week ending—				Total.	Normal.
	8th May.	15th May.	22nd May.	29th May.		
	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.
Jessore, cont. :—						
Magura	3·87	·45	·56	·62	5·50	7·95
Narail	1·47	·29	·50	·67	2·93	6·79
Bangaon	1·38	·11	...	1·41	2·90	5·88
Khulna :—						
Sadar... ..	2·09	Nil.	·71	Nil.	2·80	6·62
Bagirhat	1·59	Nil.	1·31	Nil.	2·90	6·94
Satkhira	2·87	Nil.	·32	·40	3·59	6·28
Rajshahi :—						
Sadar... ..	2·13	·34	1·16	1·52	5·15	5·44
Nator	2·46	·39	·99	5·00	8·84	6·82
Naogaon	·68	·02	·78	1·57	3·05	5·35
Pabna :—						
Sadar... ..	4·46	·06	2·21	·35	7·08	6·95
Sirajganj	3·65	·34	5·44	1·16	10·59	7·27
Shahabad :—						
Sadar	Nil.	Nil.	·26	Nil.	·26	1·80
Saran :—						
Sadar... ..	...	·29	...	Nil.	·29	1·52
Sewan ... ..	...	1·20	...	·07	1·27	1·84
Gopalganj ... ..	...	·34	·11	·65	1·10	2·64
Champanan :—						
Sadar... ..	Nil.	·29	·21	·34	·84	2·50
Bettiah ... ..	...	·72	·20	·70	1·62	2·68
Barharwa ... ..	...	·91	·51	·06	1·48	...
Ramnagar ... ..	...	·21	·05	·50	·76	...
Bagaha ... ..	...	·29	·24	·96	1·49	...
Muzaffarpur :—						
Sadar	Nil.	·90	·38	1·16	2·44	2·72
Sitamarhi ... ..	...	1·00	...	1·35	2·35	2·66
Hajipur ... ..	...	·82	...	·31	1·13	1·99

Statement of rainfall in the affected and threatened districts in May 1897.

	Week ending—				Total.	Normal.
	8th May.	15th May.	22nd May.	29th May.		
Darbhanga :—	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.
Sadar... ..	·06	1·56	·15	1·04	2·81	2·58
Madhubani	·10	·68	·48	·97	2·23	2·35
Samastipur ... ..	...	·62	·56	·32	1·50	2·96
Bhagalpur :—						
Sadar... ..	...	·85	·18	·72	1·75	2·59
*Madhipura ... ..	...	·83	·90	1·26	2·99	4·06
Supaul ... ..	...	1·66	2·05		3·71	3·89
Banka	·03	...	...	...	·03	2·68
Sonthal Parganus :—						
Average for district...	·45	·16	·20	·47	1·28	3·65
Cuttack :—						
Sadar... ..	·14	...	...	...	·14	4·20
Jajpur	·26	...	·22	1·31	1·79	4·49
Kendrapara	·61	...	·02	...	·63	3·91
†Puri :—						
Sadar... ..	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	2·58
Khurda	·94	...	Nil.	Nil.	·94	3·51
Hazaribagh :—						
Sadar... ..	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	·37	·37	2·34
Giridih ... ..	...	·88	Nil.	·96	1·84	2·29
Lohardaga	Nil.	·09	Nil.	·49	·58	2·81
Palamau	0·5	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	·05	1·22
Manbhum :—						
Sadar... ..	·51	Nil.	·30	1·53	2·34	3·57
Gobindpur	·08	...	·27	·49	·84	1·96
Singhbhum :—						
Sadar... ..	·20	·50	·70	2·59	3·99	3·89
Chakradharpur	·70	...	...	·14	·21	...
Ghatsilla ... ..	...	·30	·15	3·89	4·34	...

* The total rainfall for Madhipura shown in the Collector's half-monthly reports is 2·29, but it is stated that since the close of the period under report a further heavy fall of 2·35 inches has been recorded at Bongong.

† On the 30th May there was a heavy shower, the fall recorded being 1·40 inch at Satpara and 1·50 at Parikud.
N.B.—In Chota Nagpur there was general rain in the week ending 1st May, the recorded falls being :—

	Inches.		Inches.
Hazaribagh :—		Manbhum :—	
Sadar	2·47	Sadar	·50
Lohardaga	1·77	Gobindpur	·36
Palamau	·35		
		Singhbhum :—	
		Chaibassa	1·38
		Chakradharpur	·78

Monthly Famine Statement A for the five weeks ending Saturday evening, the 29th May 1897.

District.	Area.	Population in thousands.	Affected area.	Estimated population in thousands of area in column 4.	Numbers on Relief Works on last day of month.					Numbers on gratuitous relief.	Price of one or more principal food-grains in seers per rupee.					Monthly death-rate.		Deaths due to starvation.
					Class A.	Class B.	Class C.	Class D.	Total.		Common rice.	Barley.	Khassi.	Marua.	Maize.	In the district.	In the affected area.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
PATNA DIVISION.																		
	Sq. miles.		Sq. miles.								S. CH.	S. CH.	S. CH.	S. CH.	S. CH.			
Shahabad	4,373	2,063	1,632	382	...	9,348	...	99	19,447	23,667	8 0	...	11 12	...	...	2 37	3 20	Nil.
Saran	2,656	2,467	1,512	1,416	...	22,430	...	1,747	24,177	59,674	8 8	11 13	...	...	...	1 96	1 77	Nil.
Champaran	3,531	1,860	3,531	1,860	...	60,459	...	40,752	101,211	88,110	8 0	12 5	...	...	9 13	2 27	2 27	Nil.
Muzaffarpur	3,004	2,711	1,861	1,660	...	44,363	...	18,708	60,071	82,515	7 8	12 0	...	...	...	9 8	1 99	1 99
Darbhanga	3,335	2,801	2,940	2,234	...	141,182	...	6,232	147,414	92,228	7 8	...	...	11 0	9 12	1 87	1 97	Nil.
Total for the Division	16,899	11,902	11,466	7,552	...	277,782	...	64,538	342,320	346,194	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
CHOTA NAGPUR DIVISION.																		
Palamu	4,912	596	4,912	596	...	3,045	...	...	3,045	1,971	7 9	...	...	...	...	1 73	1 73	Nil.
Manbhum	4,447	1,193	3,373	991	...	3,971	...	...	3,971	11,969	7 8	...	...	...	...	2 59	2 64	Nil.
Total for the Division	9,059	1,789	8,285	1,587	...	7,016	...	...	7,016	13,940	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
PRESIDENCY DIVISION.																		
Nadia	2,793	1,644	927 75	478	...	11,882	...	8,719	20,101	53,444	8 3	...	...	...	...	2 44	2 19	Nil.
Khulna	2,077	1,177	467	276	...	4,748	58	3	4,809	6,163	8 0	...	...	...	...	1 78	2 25	Nil.
Murshidabad	2,141	1,250	167	95	...	3,808	...	...	3,808	4,732	8 8	...	...	...	...	2 25	(Not reported).	Nil.
Total for the Division	7,014	4,071	1,561 75	849	..	19,938	58	8,722	28,718	64,339	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
BHAGALPUR DIVISION.																		
Bhagalpur	4,226	2,032	600	325	...	7,313	...	...	7,313	2,740	7 8	...	...	{ 12 0	...	2 2	2 2	Nil.
Sonthal Parganas	5,470	1,754	1,321	377	...	3,490	...	...	3,490	951*	8 13	...	...	{ 8 13	...	2 2	2 1	Nil.
Total for the Division	9,696	3,786	1,921	702	...	10,803	...	...	10,803	3,691	7 8	...	...	{ 7 8	...	...	...	...
ORISSA DIVISION.																		
Puri	2,473	945	365	102	...	4,604	...	...	4,604	...	{ 10 0	...	...	...	...	2 36	2 5	Nil.
Grand Total	45,141	22,493	23,598 75	10,792	...	320,143	58	73,260	393,461	428,164	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

* This has been taken from the weather and crop telegraphic report for the week ending 31st May.

Monthly Famine Statement B for the five weeks ending Saturday evening, the 29th May 1897.

District.	Maximum number for whom employment on relief works is estimated to be required in case of serious famine.	Number for whom relief was provided in last programme of relief works.		Number for whom relief can be provided by works remaining on programme on date of report.		Expenditure since 1st April 1897.			Advances since 1st April 1897 up to end of month under—		Revenue suspended.
		On large works.	On small works.	On large works.	On small works.	Date up to which account is made up.	On relief works.	On gratuitous relief.	Land Improvement Loans Act.	Agriculturists' Loans Act.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
PATNA DIVISION.											
Shahabad	12,000	10,249	3,862	5,138	2,406	29th May	Rs. 36,842	Rs. 61,890	Rs. 11,250	Rs. 13,398	Nil.
Saran	84,971	42,891	7,677	36,494	791	...	64,933	105,547	9,097	52,793	Nil.
Champan*	130,000	212,609	87,700	165,000	60,000	...	361,107	199,342	3,064	3,378	Nil.
Muzaffarpur	300,000	79,906	95,919	71,823	72,595	...	216,515	153,246	2,562	4,688	Nil.
Darbhanga	351,964	138,478	213,486	73,959	130,302	29th May	298,242	100,074	9,306	...	Nil.
Total for the Division ...	878,935	484,124	408,644	352,414	266,094	...	977,639	620,099	35,279	74,257	Nil.
CHOTA NAGPUR DIVISION.											
Palamau	87,372	18,792	68,580	18,792	65,443	29th May	19,384	6,749	18,876	...	Nil.
Manbhum	120,000	52,379	69,325	52,379	69,325	Ditto	9,398	12,167	9,755	...	Nil.
Total for the Division ...	207,372	71,171	137,905	71,171	134,768	...	28,782	18,916	28,631	...	Nil.
PRESIDENCY DIVISION.											
Nadia	38,289	51,064	34,381	39,251	27,894	29th May	184,111	126,004	28,800	20,572	Nil.
Khulna... ..	10,480	...	6,525	...	3,560	Figures not correctly furnished.		...	...	...	Nil.
Murshidabad	51,806	17,440	36,792	16,056	30,873	29th May	14,960	1,110	7,888	8,259	Nil.
Total for the Division ...	100,575	68,504	77,698	55,307	62,327	...	199,071	127,114	36,688	28,831	Nil.
BHAGALPUR DIVISION.											
Bhagalpur	25,000	13,689	7,981	13,689	7,981	29th May	59,368	7,783	...	17,512	Nil.
Sonthal Parganas†	40,498	2,845	46,755	2,845	43,523	21st "	6,246	885	5,250	...	Nil.
Total for the Division ...	65,498	16,534	54,736	16,534	51,504	...	65,614	8,668	5,250	17,712	Nil.
ORISSA DIVISION.											
Puri	7,000	...	6,000	...	4,000	29th May	...	...	1,000	3,290	64,533‡
GRAND TOTAL	1,259,380	640,333	684,985	495,426	518,693	...	1,271,106	774,797	106,848	124,090	64,533

* The figures given in column 3 for Champan include 21,200 to be employed on railways. The works so far undertaken have been largely outside the programme; hence the large proportion shown as still unexhausted in columns 5 and 6.

† These figures are for the Jamtara sub-division only. Figures have not been furnished for the Deoghur sub-division.

‡ This has been done without the orders of Government. An explanation has been called for.

§ This has been done without the orders of Government. An explanation has been called for.

No. 2681/7—33-F. Simla, the 9th August 1897.

From T. W. Holderness, Esq., I.C.S., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Revenue Department, Department of Revenue and Agriculture (Famine).

SIR,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1449 (Fam.), dated 22nd July 1897, submitting the report for June on relief operations in the Bengal Presidency.

2. The number of persons on relief on the 26th June was 702,841* against 821,625 on the 29th May. Since then the numbers have further fallen, the total being 582,493 for the week ending 24th July.

*Relief Workers.	Gratuitously relieved.	
29th May, 393,461	428,164	
26th June, 264,790	438,051	
24th July, 186,458	396,035	

3. The substitution of piece-work for task-work conducted under the ordinary rules of the Famine Code in some districts of Bengal and on two or three large works in Behar is perhaps the most important feature of the June reports.

The remarks on the results of the piece-work system contained in paragraph 8 of your letter seem to be based on later information than is given in the district reports. It is there stated that in the Muzaffarpur district the people have now taken kindly to piece-work. No mention of this is made in the report of the Collector of Muzaffarpur. In the Sonthal Pargannas and in Puri, according to paragraphs 18 and 20 of your letter, the piece-work system has reduced both the number of relief labourers and of dependants. In Champaran and Darbhanga the average wage earned by the workers is said to be less than was anticipated, and no material reduction in gratuitous relief is expected by the Collector of Darbhanga to result from the change of system.

4. If, as the Commissioner of Patna appears to anticipate, the relief works with a continuance of favourable rains will close for the most part in August, the question of substituting piece-works for task-works on a large scale is not of great importance. In the North-Western Provinces and Oudh and the Central Provinces the change has helped to stimulate the return of the people to agriculture and in this way has been beneficial. And but for the prospect of relief works closing in Behar at an early date, the Government of India would be disposed to press for the adoption there of similar measures.

5. The matter of gratuitous relief in the Province of Bengal is under separate consideration and nothing need be said on the general question in this place. I am however to say that the Government of India have read with much satisfaction the very proper orders which the Lieutenant-Governor has passed to curtail the numbers in receipt of relief at their homes in the districts of Nuddea, Manbhum and Khulna.

I have, &c.,

T. W. HOLDERNESS,

Deputy Secretary to the Government of India.

NOTES OF AN INSPECTION OF FAMINE RELIEF WORKS IN BENGAL,
BY MR. T. HIGHAM, C.I.E., ON SPECIAL DUTY, FAMINE RELIEF
OPERATIONS.

1. My tour in Behar commenced at Bankipur, where I arrived on the morning of Sunday, the 20th June, and remained until the evening of the 22nd as the guest of Mr. Bourdillon, the Commissioner of Patna, who kindly arranged a programme for my tour, and gave me much interesting information regarding the relief works. I arrived at Muzaffarpur before daybreak on the morning of the 23rd, and was met there by Mr. Maude,

Itinerary.

the Collector, and Mr. Disney, the Executive Engineer. I saw the poor-house here and a few small civil works (tanks), but owing to the holiday and rain there was very little labour on them. My train left before noon, and arrived at Motihari about 3 P.M., where I was met by Mr. Macpherson, the Collector of Champaran, who took me the same afternoon to the Belra tank, a relief work about 9 miles distant, which was being carried out by the Civil Officers. Lieutenant Kaye, the Inspecting Civil Officer, also accompanied us. Heavy rain fell while we were inspecting this work which continued without interruption for nearly 48 hours. On the afternoon of 24th I went on with Mr. Macpherson by rail to Bettiah, and on the following evening we drove to the Pursa Factory, where the night was passed. On the morning of the 26th we went together to Ramnagar, 17 miles further on, inspecting on the way the Malaya Tola Bank, which is a relief work under Civil Officers. At Ramnagar we met Mr. Toogood, the Superintendent of Works, Mr. Still, the Civil Officer, Mr. Sealy, Executive Engineer, and Mr. Jolly, the Assistant Engineer. After breakfast we inspected the relief works on the Trebeni Canal, which are being conducted on the piece-work system by the Public Works Department. We left Ramnagar on the following morning (Sunday), returning to Bettiah, and taking train to Motihari, where we arrived late in the evening. On the morning of the 28th Mr. Macpherson drove me to Dhaka, about 17 miles out, where we inspected the Dhaka Canal relief works which is being carried out by the Public Works Department on the task-work system, under Lieutenant Biddulph, R.E., the Sub-divisional Officer, Mr. Toogood and Mr. Stawell, the Executive Engineer, accompanying us from Motihari. We returned the same evening, and I left by the night train for Laheria Serai (next Darbhanga), where I arrived on the following morning, and proceeded at once, accompanied by Mr. Mills, Superintendent of Works, and Mr. Long, the Executive Engineer, to inspect the Chakla tank about 4 miles distant, a relief work which is being carried out by the Public Works Department. Later on the same day I had an interview with His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, whom I accompanied on the following morning (29th) on an inspection of the Sakri-Jainagar Railway which is being carried out as a relief work by the Public Works Department on the piece-work system, Lieutenant Close, R.E., being the Sub-divisional Officer. On the 1st July, Mr. Mills took me by rail to Kamtoul, where we met Mr. King and his brother, Managers of the Darbhanga Raj, who showed us a small relief work (tank), that was being executed by the Raj. We afterwards inspected the great Hira Patti tank, which is a relief work on the task-work system, under Mr. Banerji, Executive Engineer, Madhubani Division, who met us on the work. We returned to Darbhanga in the afternoon, and I halted there the following day, leaving during the night for Mokameh, where I arrived on morning of the 3rd July and left Bengal by the night mail for Bellary in Madras Presidency.

2. The relief works in Bengal consisted at first almost entirely of village tanks and road work. More recently

Character of the relief works.

canal and railway works have been opened by the Public Works Department. The principal canal is the Trebeni, on which there are three sections, about 20 miles to the north of Bettiah. I did not see the plans or estimates for this work, which have been prepared by Mr. Buckley, Superintending Engineer, Sone Circle, but was informed that the total of the estimate amounted to over Rs. 30,00,000, of which not more than Rs. 4,00,000 would be spent on earthwork suitable for famine labour. If there is an assured supply and a good command this should form a very valuable protection work, as it traverses the north or worst part of the Champaran district, immediately bordering on the Nipal Terai. It is contemplated that it should be completed as a famine protective work, but it has not yet been sanctioned as such by the Government of India, and until the estimate is submitted I can express no opinion on its merits. There is a second and smaller canal in the Champaran district, called the Dhaka Canal, and another in Muzaffarpur district, comprising five sections, called the Bagmati-Lakhandai Canal. The railway works consist of the Sakri-Jainagar branch, in four sections, in the Darbhanga district and the Bettiah-Bagaha railway in Champaran. All these works, with the exception of the Dhaka Canal, are being done by piece-work, and to them may be added the Baya Nulla cut in Muzaffarpur district, which is also being done by

piece-work. The village tanks and road works are being carried out entirely by task-work. Some of the tanks are of great size, as much as 800 by 500 feet, and it is hoped that they will somewhat strengthen the position of the villages to which they belong in future seasons of drought by securing a constant supply of water for the cattle, and by means of the lift irrigation that can be effected on the margin, while in some cases it is proposed to stock them with fish. Directly such works will of course be entirely unremunerative and they will benefit only the people in the adjoining villages, but they are often the most useful works that can be proposed, and under the system that has been developed in Bengal, under the guidance of Mr. Glass, Chief Engineer, they are a very convenient form of relief work, as the tasks can be so easily adapted to the capacities of separate families. Road works are more generally useful and are numerous, but in some districts they have been kept somewhat in abeyance, under the idea that they should be reserved as far as possible for the rainy season, when the tank works will be drowned. It may also be noted that road work in Behar consists of earthwork only, as there is no stone which can be broken into metal—a principal form of relief work in other provinces. Broken brick is the only material for metalling roads. As shown in the statement appended out of 262 works in the Shahabad, Champaran and Darbhanga districts, no less than 151 were tanks, of which 110 were in Darbhanga. The number of tanks in Saran and Muzaffarpur districts has not been noted.

3. A noteworthy feature of the relief works in Behar is the extent to which they are carried out by the agency of the Civil Officers, rather than by the Public Works Department, and the smallness of the average attendance on each work, as is shown by the following table :—

District.	Number of works.		Average number of male units for week ending 12th June.		
	Under Civil Officers.	Under Public Works Department.	Under Civil Officers.	Under Public Works Department.	Total.
Shahabad	9	...	6,860	...	6,860
Saran... ..	40	12	14,392	2,652	17,044
Champaran	54	28	69,301	27,907	97,208
Muzaffarpur	86	27	38,712	10,201	48,913
Darbhanga	139	46	68,642	36,861	105,503
TOTAL	328	113	197,907	77,621	275,528
Average number on each work ...	...	...	603	637	625

The number of male units in Bengal is obtained by reducing the women and children to male units according to the proportions of their respective wages. The actual daily numbers of workers in the districts included in the table above for week ending 12th June was 334,055, or 21 per cent. in excess of the number of male units, so that the average number of *workers* on each work may be taken at 756.

The low proportion of works under Public Works Department to works under Civil Officers is explained in paragraph 11 of a note on the evolution of relief works in the Patna Division, which Mr. Bourdillon, the Commissioner, kindly wrote for my information, and which is appended to these notes. It appears that under reduction schemes which were introduced in Bengal a few years ago, the Public Works Department was almost entirely restricted to irrigation. In the General Branch there were but four Executive Divisions—two at Calcutta, one at Darjeeling, and one at Chota Nagpur, and there were two Executive

Engineers—one at Dhaka and one at Bankipur, who under the title of Inspectors of Works controlled the operations of the District Board Engineers, to whom practically all public works other than irrigation had been entrusted. When it had become apparent that relief works would be required on a large scale, two temporary circles were formed, each under the charge of a Superintendent of Works. The services of the District Engineers of Muzaffarpur and Champaran were temporarily placed at the disposal of the Public Works Department, and as many Engineers as could be spared were also taken from the Irrigation Branch, while seven Royal Engineer officers were temporarily transferred from the Military Works Department. With the staff thus formed canal and railway projects have been worked out and started, and the larger and more important of the works under Civil Officers have been taken over. The smallness of the average attendance at each work is due to the fact that so many of the works are very small, the excavation or clearance of village tanks being, as before stated, the principal form of relief-work.

4. It will be seen from Mr. Bourdillon's note that in Bengal, as in the Central Provinces, the North-West provinces Circular No. 18-P. W., dated 1st December 1896, has been accepted almost in its entirety as the basis of the system of task-work, and incorporated, with a few modifications, in the instructions issued by the Government of Bengal with its Resolution No. 420-M. P. I., dated 25th January 1897. The principal difference is in paragraph 40 of the instructions, in which it is pointed out that in Bengal the women and children do not greatly out-number the men as in the North-West Provinces, and that under such conditions it will not be sufficient to task the digger, but that the task should be exacted from the gang as a whole. Task tables were accordingly prepared showing the average daily outturn of work that might be expected from every member of a gang in which care had been taken to establish a correct proportion between the numbers of carriers and diggers. Subsequently these task tables were supplemented by a very helpful set of instructions contained in a note, dated the 15th March 1897, by the Chief Engineer of Bengal :—

“On the manner of laying out tanks for famine relief works, and on the method of determining the proportion of carriers to diggers under the varying conditions of lead and lift in the construction of tanks and roads.”

In this note the system of fixing the task according to the number of male units in the gang was given up, and it was directed that the task should, in the first place, be exacted from the diggers, but that the number of carriers in the gang should be strictly limited, according to the rules given, to what was necessary for carrying away the earth excavated by the diggers. It was also directed that the task should not be fixed for the whole gang as had been proposed in the orders issued with the Resolution of the 25th January, but that the gang should be subdivided into separate pit gangs who are willing to work together, the wages and fines of each pit gang being separately calculated and made over for disbursement to the headman nominated by the gang. The number of diggers in a pit on tank work is usually four, the number of carriers depending on the lift and lead, but the average number of diggers and carriers in a pit gang may be taken at 20, three gangs being under the charge of one mate.

5. The essential difference between the systems of task-work obtaining in Bengal and in the North-West Provinces is that in the latter, owing to the normal excess of carriers, the people are taken as they come, and the carriers are distributed in the proportions they happen to bear to the diggers, and so have often but a nominal task to perform, whereas in the former it has generally been found possible to adapt the number of carriers to the outturn of work by the diggers, and to give every carrier as well as every digger a full task. In this respect the Bengal practice resembles that in force in the Bombay Presidency, where no great difficulty has been experienced in finding a full task for all carriers.

It will also be noted that in Bengal the unit of tasking is the pit gang or a sub-division or section of a full mate's gang, and is thus intermediate between the

unit adopted in the Central Provinces and Bombay, which is the full gang, and that in some parts of the North-West Provinces, which is the individual digger.

6. There is also a slight difference on some works between the methods of classifying the workers in Bengal and the North-West Provinces. In the latter all adult carriers, whether men or women,

receive normally the D wage, diggers only receiving the B wage. In Bengal all women and the men who are weakly are paid the D wage, but in some cases strong adult males receive the B wage whether actually employed on digging or not. The B class therefore often includes diggers and able-bodied carriers. The reason for this is that under the strict system of proportioning the carriers to the diggers that is followed in Bengal, it is often necessary to take off a digger and turn him into a carrier, and *vice versa*, so that an able-bodied male may be employed at one time as a digger and at another as a carrier. Thus the B class in Bengal includes actual and potential diggers, whereas in the North-West Provinces it consists of actual diggers only.

I have said that all women, being but carriers only, receive the D wage, but they are not all returned as in the D class. In paragraph 4 of my notes on the Central Provinces it has been shown that the classification of workers adopted for the daily and monthly returns is not that upon which wages depend; the same practice obtains in Bengal and is due in both Provinces to the distinction that has been drawn in paragraph 35 of the North-West Provinces Circular No. 18-P. W. D., dated 1st December 1896, between a classification by capacity and a classification by wages. The famine returns of the North-West Provinces do not show the classification of workers, but in the Bengal returns three classes have been regularly shown—Class B, Class D, and Special. The last class includes those who receive a daily wage irrespective of task, because the work on which they may be employed cannot be conveniently tasked. From the appended abstract of Famine Statement D for the five districts in the Patna Division in which relief works are in progress during the week ending 15th May, it appears that the average wage per male unit in the special gang amounted to 1·566 annas against 1·534 annas, the average wage per male unit of the task gangs, and these rates agree so closely that the gangs are probably similarly constituted as regards the proportions in each in receipt of the B and the D wage.

It will be seen from the same statement that children have also been classed in B and D, though such a classification of children is unnecessary where there is no gradation of wages. The classification shown in the famine returns for the week referred to for these five districts is compared in the table below with what is approximately a true classification in accordance with the wages normally payable :—

Sex, etc.	Classification in Famine Returns.			Wage Classification.	
	Class B.	Class D.	Special.	Class B.	Class D.
Men	546,008	59,564	257,689	803,697	59,564
Women	533,426	105,371	171,150	...	809,947
Total adults ...	1,097,434	164,935	428,839	803,697	869,511
Children	211,281	52,035	61,691	Unclassed. 325,007	
Grand Total ...	1,290,715	216,970	490,530	1,998,215	

According to the wage classification it appears that out of 1,673,208 adults, not less than 869,511, or 52 per cent., were in the D class—a fact which is not brought out by the famine returns. The percentage was probably higher than this, for in the table it has been assumed that all men in the special gangs were in the B class, whereas it is probable from what has been said above that no inconsiderable number of them were paid the D wage.

7. From the table in the foregoing paragraph it will also be seen that the proportion of men to the total number of adults is about 52 per cent., so that they out-number the women, and it is this favourable condition that renders it possible to give every carrier a full task. On tank work, too, it is possible to adjust the task pit gang to the constitution of the gang, as different pits require different proportions of carriers to diggers. Thus in a typical tank of 300 by 200 feet, and 12 feet deep, divided into pits 20 by 20 feet, if it be assumed that 4 diggers are required in each pit, the number of carriers required, according to Mr. Glass's instructions and diagrams, will vary from 12 to 28, according to the position of the pit, *i.e.*, the number of carriers required for each digger will vary from 3 to 7. When it is necessary to put a gang containing say 4 diggers and 12 carriers into a pit for which a larger proportion of carriers are required, say 7 to 1, this is accomplished by taking off 2 diggers and making them carry, and it is for this reason that all able-bodied males who can dig, whether actually employed on digging or not, receive the B wage. It is thus partly in consequence of the higher proportion of males, and partly on account of the number of tank works, that such full tasks can be set in Bengal, and that a far more elastic system of tasking, which will adapt itself to the constitution of the family gangs, is possible than elsewhere.

Earthwork tasks.						8. The full task set for diggers in Bengal is as follows :—
Soft soil ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	200 cubic feet.
Medium soil...	...	...	...	...	...	125 " "
Hard ,, ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	83 " "

The average task for a carrier is 75 cubic feet over a lead of 100 feet. The soil in Bengal is very soft, and it may perhaps be considered that a task of 200 cubic feet is not higher here than one of 100 cubic feet in the North-West Provinces, but however this may be there is no doubt that the carriers are much more heavily tasked here than elsewhere, and that they have to work as hard as the diggers, though it may be right that they should not be paid as well, as all can carry but only a few can dig. It will be noted, therefore, that although Bengal has followed the North-West Provinces in paying a D wage only to the carriers (excluding the stronger men who can dig on occasion) a much fuller task is exacted from them, and it cannot be said in favour of the low wage that the carriers, being taken as they come, do only a nominal task.

9. Of course these full tasks have not always been realised. There are three ways by which they are reduced. Sometimes the full task is not exacted from motives of leniency, sometimes the work is overmeasured, and sometimes carriers are distributed in excess of requirements. In works conducted under civil agency it might be expected that at first all these causes would come into play, the works being so numerous and the staff at the disposal of the Civil Officers so untrained and inexperienced. There is no doubt that this was the case, and that the work was often overmeasured or the men undertasked, but the results attained have been so closely scrutinised by the Collectors and the Commissioner that defects were remedied and a rapid improvement effected. In the case of works under the Public Works Department, after initial difficulties had been surmounted, very nearly full tasks have been realised. In illustration of these remarks I will now refer to a few works on the task-work system that I inspected.

10. The first of these was the Belra tank, in Champaran district, which I visited on the 23rd June and on which work was being carried out by the Civil Department. Owing to the rain and Jubilee holidays the attendance on the work was small, but on the 19th there had been 1,843 workers. The full task for diggers was 200 feet, but on this and I believe other civil works full rates are paid if the deficiency is not more than 12½ per cent., that is, full rates are paid for a task of not less than 175 cubic feet and in the case of new comers 150 cubic feet are accepted as a full task for the first week.

The wage scale was as follows :—

Task in cubic feet.	Diggers and strong carriers.	Weak male carriers.	Women.	Children.	
				12—16.	10—12.
175 or over	7	Pice. 6	Pice. 5	Pice. 4	Pice. 2
Less than 175, but not less than 125	5	5	4	3	2
Less than 125	3	3	3	3	2

The grain rate was not noted, but these wages correspond to a rate of $10\frac{1}{2}$ seers to the rupee.

Males who are not strong carriers and cannot dig received 6 pice for a full task.

Mates receive 10 pice a day, and there is one for every four gangs, and they are fined when the gangs do short work.

Lieutenant Kaye told me that on road work, where it was necessary to encourage diggers, 8 pice were paid for a full task to all actual diggers, the male carriers receiving 6 pice, but on tank work 7 pice were paid to all diggers and strong carriers.

Dependants were paid as follows :—

Adult males	Pice. 5
„ women	4
Children under 10... ..	1

but adults were only allowed to remain on the work pending their transfer to the gratuitous list, except in the case of women required to look after children.

The Sunday wages are—

Adult males	Pice. 6
„ women	5
Big child	4
Small child	2

It will be seen that the wage for a full task for all but diggers and able-bodied carriers is the same as the Sunday wage, and that all adult workers receive less than the dependant's wage when they do a very short task.

As far as I could ascertain the diggers had done their full task of 200 cubic feet during the day, but the carriers were greatly in excess, being nearly 12 to 1 instead of 7 to 1 as required by the tables.

The officer in charge was a native non-commissioned officer who was quite new to the work, and not very intelligent. Lieutenant Kaye has, however, supplied me with particulars of this work from the commencement, from which it appeared that while the reported outturn per digger had been 183 cubic feet, the true outturn according to final measurements had been only 147 cubic feet. This difference is no greater than might be expected when the aggregates of small measurements were not properly checked, but a real task of 147 cubic feet cannot be considered a very light one, and as full wages were paid for 175 cubic feet the tasks were not very short. As to carriers I found that the average proportion throughout the work had been 9.6 to 1, whereas under Mr. Glass's table 6 should have sufficed. The 200-foot task should therefore have been carried out by 1 digger and 6 carriers, giving an average of 28.6 cubic feet per carrier, whereas the actual average had been 18.2. The mean lead was 180 and mean lift 10 feet. The actual cost per 1,000 cubic feet worked out to Rs. 5-2-7, and the average

wage per male unit to 1 anna 7 pie. If full tasks had been executed throughout from both diggers and carriers the cost would have been about Rs. 3-4-6 per 1,000.

In this work therefore something less than two-thirds of a full task had been attained, but the actual task was still a very fair one, as the people were not a very sturdy lot, and there appeared to be no professional earth-workers among them.

I inspected another tank work under civil agency at Malaya Tola on the 26th. Here the full digger's task had been reduced from 200 to 150 cubic feet on account of the soil being hard, but at time of my visit sand had been cut into and the soil appeared no harder than at Belra tank. The diggers were paid 8 pice, and *all* male carriers 6 pice, other wages being as before, but it was a small work employing only about 400 workers. The wages for 19th at full rates would have amounted to Rs. 327-3, but the payments amounted only to Rs. 26-5-6, so there had been a good deal of short work, even with the task reduced as above. There were five carriers (four women and a boy) to each digger, which was right according to the tables, but with the digging task reduced to 150 cubic feet the proportion should have been reduced to four to one to ensure a full carrying task.

11. The Dhaka Canal is being carried out by task-work under the Public Works Department, Lieutenant Biddulph, R.E., being the Sub-divisional Officer in charge. This work is interesting, because in the section inspected by me the lead was under a 100 feet, with a lift of about 5 feet, for which two carriers per digger would have fully sufficed, but it had here been necessary to put on three owing to an excess of carriers, and not to insist on a full carrier's tank as on the tank work. The wage scale was as below on a $9\frac{1}{2}$ *seer* basis :—

Task per digger in cubic feet.	Diggers.	Men carriers.	Women carriers.	Children.	
				12—16.	10—12.
190 cubic feet or over	8	6	5	4	2
Less than 190	5	5	4	3	2
Less than 170	3	3	3	2	2

The full task is 200 feet, but a margin of five per cent. only is allowed. Here the digger gets the B wage and the male carrier the D wage, all women getting D wage as usual. The fine on the digger for a short task is very heavy. It will also be seen that the big children are fined down to 2 pice, and that as at Belra all are fined below the penal wage for a very short task, but at Belra a very short task was less than 125 cubic feet, whereas at Dhaka it was anything below 170 cubic feet. The tasks appear therefore to be much more stringently enforced than on the civil works, or at least less margin is given, and there is of course less chance of over-measurement.

The Collector told me that the Sub-divisional Officer had objected to putting a number of famine labourers that had been sent to him on to this work, as to do so would cause an increase in his earthwork rates, but that he found work for them on a tank close by. The question was discussed during my visit. Lieutenant Biddulph was evidently very unwilling to still further increase the proportion of carriers to diggers, or to take on those who could not do an average task, but he promised to make special gangs, and get what work he could out of them. It was evident, however, that the carrier difficulty is sometimes felt, even in Bengal, and except that the very short task was fixed at a higher percentage of the full task the system in force on the Dhaka Canal differed in no respects from the North-West Provinces system of task-work.

12. I visited two more Public Works Department works which were nominally on the task-work system, *viz.*, the Chakla and Hira Patti tanks. In both of them, however, a variation of pure task-work has been introduced which has the effect of converting it into piece-work, or payment in direct proportion to the outturn. A task is given to each gang according to the number of diggers, at the rate of 200 cubic feet per digger, and if completed during the day is measured up and paid for the following morning. If not completed it is not measured up until the following day. Any work done on the second day in excess of the original task is not measured unless sufficient to complete the second day's task, in which case the two days' full tasks are paid for, and there is no fine, the deficiency in the first day's task being made good by the extra work done on the second. If, however, a gang took five days to complete three daily tasks the members would only receive payment at the wage fixed for each for three days, though it might be employed for five days, and an automatic system of fining according to the deficiency of the outturn is thus established. I was told that this system was in force throughout the Darbhanga district, both in the works under Public Works Department and those under civil agency, and that it was in fact first introduced on the former by Mr. Blackwood, the system being called by his name. At Chakla tank a gang included about six pits. I found that here the payments were made to the gang through the mate, and not to each pit gang separately, though the pit measurements are separately recorded, but the officer in charge does not go beyond the gang in distributing payments. Fines are therefore made on the gang and not on the pit, but this was almost immaterial, as it was said that in practice the daily tasks were always completed and every one paid in full, and that if the work in any pit was not completed the whole of the gang combined in clearing it off. As far as I could judge from an examination of the accounts on the work this was the case, and the total of the daily payments corresponded very closely to the full wages of the number of men employed. The workers on this tank were distributed in close accordance with Mr. Glass's tables, and the tasks done by the carriers were very high. In one average pit taken at random I found 22 carriers to 3 diggers, and 600 cubic feet was carried by them for a horizontal lead of about 200 feet and a lift of 20 feet.

In working under the system described a difficulty may occur when the strength of the gang varies on two consecutive days and payment is only made for one day. No one could tell me on which day's muster payment would be made in such a case, but the tasks are so generally completed that the difficulty does not appear to have arisen in practice.

13. The occasional variations in the strength of a pit gang sometimes disturbs the adjustment of the task, though when payment is made on the full gang, and not on the pit, this difficulty is not very serious. On the Hira Patti tank I found, however, that it was the custom to vary the task daily according to the actual number of people in the pit, as a table had been made out by the Executive Engineer, Mr. Banerji, showing the outturn due from each worker on the assumption that the prescribed proportions of carriers to diggers was observed. Thus, if one man out of a gang of 25 were absent, the task for the pit was reduced by 4 per cent., and it was left to the diggers and carriers to arrange details between themselves. As there were generally two or three male carriers in the pit, who were able to dig on occasion, this arrangement worked very satisfactorily. The task was fixed daily in terms of the depth to be excavated, the area of a horizontal section through the pit being constant, and a length of bamboo was given to the headman in the morning showing the depth to be excavated.

At this tank I found the attendance on 29th May to be as follows:—

100 diggers.
165 male carriers.
493 women.
17 big children.
6 small children.

Counting the children as half adults there were thus 670 carriers to 100 diggers, or 6·7 carriers per digger, which was no higher than allowed by the tables. The carrying tasks here were very full. At one pit I found seven women who had to carry 200 cubic feet for a horizontal lead of 140 feet with a lift of 20 feet, and here as at Chakla tank it was the regular thing for the full task to be accomplished.

13. Before leaving the subject of tank task-work in Darbhanga reference may be made to the abstract of Famine Relief Task-work accounts in Darbhanga. Statement D which is appended, in which the figures for the week ending 15th May relating to tank work only have been given. From these figures it would appear that 11,912,000 cubic feet of earth-work were completed by 357,035 male units, giving an average task of 33·36 cubic feet per male unit per diem, at an average rate of Rs. 3·05 per 1,000. This is the way that rates are generally reckoned in Bengal, where the work done by all the tasked workers is rigorously scrutinised; but it will be seen from the statement that no less than 114,759 male units were employed on daily wage irrespective of task. These include all the recipients of the Sunday wage which will probably account for over 60 per cent. of the whole. Of the balance some were employed in water carrying, others in dressing and other miscellaneous work that could not be tasked, but it is obvious that these gangs should be included in considering the actual cost of work done. Including them the total number of male units becomes 471,494, and the outturn of work per male unit 25·25 cubic feet, which is still a very high outturn for tank work. The rate becomes Rs. 3·89 per thousand, and the average payment to each male unit 1·57 annas, or little more than the wage of a male of class D.

These figures include works under both Civil and Public Works agency. For the week in question the outturn per male unit was considerably higher on the former than the latter, but this is probably due to the Public Works tanks being generally larger than the others. Unless all particulars of lift and lead are given it is impossible to compare the outturn per male unit, but the figures that I have analysed indicate that as full tasks are exacted on the Civil as on the Public Works tanks in Darbhanga.

14. It will thus be seen that full tasks are very rigorously exacted in Bengal, and that wherever possible, as on tank work, the greatest care is taken to fully task the carriers, and to restrict the proportion of carriers to diggers to a minimum, so as to make the average outturn per male unit as high as possible. Extraordinary attention is paid to this question of outturn per male unit. The Superintendent of Works, Darbhanga, prepares daily a table of all the works in progress in his circle, showing for each all the information given in the appended abstract of Famine Relief Statement, and something more. The outturn per tasked male unit and the cost per 1,000 cubic feet is shown for each work, and if the former is low or the latter high explanations are called for. This is prepared in duplicate daily, and one copy is forwarded to the Chief Engineer and a second to the Commissioner, and I understand that the figures are closely scrutinised by both officers, and explanations called for when necessary. I have one copy of this statement which includes 124 works and occupies six large sheets of paper. I presume that similar statements are sent by the Superintendent of Works, Champaran, but am not sure whether this is the case. In works under civil agency the same close scrutiny is exercised, and I was told by the Collector of a civil work in Darbhanga where bogus entries in the muster rolls were detected owing to the strict scrutiny exercised on the outturn rates per male unit, with the result that the official concerned was dismissed. I doubt whether fraud of this kind could have been detected by this scrutiny in any other Province that I have visited, and in all others I have found the greatest difficulty in readily obtaining such figures as I have given in the appended statement. The half monthly famine returns in the Calcutta Gazettes give this and much other information, and the narrative reports afford evidence of the close attention paid by all officers to the tasking and outturn of work. I believe it may safely be said

that in no other Province are the full tasks for a minimum wage as heavy or as fully worked up to as they have been in Behar. This is partly due to the high proportion of men to other workers and to the character of the works, which, as a rule, permit the employment of a high proportion of carriers, but a great deal is undoubtedly due to the vigilant attention paid to the daily outturn from each male unit.

15. Nor can it be said that the task-workers receive a higher wage than elsewhere. The appended statement shows that the total wages paid during the week ending 15th May to the tasked and

Average wage per male unit.

special gangs amounted to Rs. 1,54,358, or 1.54 annas per male unit, the rate for each individual worker being 1.24 annas. In paragraph 28 of my notes on the North-West Provinces it was shown that the average wage paid to 71,289,165 workers had amounted to 1.17 annas, and if we assume that the average daily wages of men, women and children were in the proportions of 6, 4, and 2½ respectively, the corresponding number of male units will have been 49,734,984, and the average rate *per male unit* 1.68 annas. The actual rates of course depend partly on rates in force for the conversion of grain equivalents, and this must be borne in mind in all comparisons, but I do not think it will greatly affect that now made, and it may be said that in both Provinces the average pay of the male unit has been between six and seven pice with the conversion rate varying from 9 to 12 seers to the rupee.

16. The high tasks and low wage in Bengal have probably kept away from the relief works all who were able to support themselves by other means, but it

Effect of high tasks in restricting the numbers on the works.

may be thought that they have also tended to exclude those who were physically too weak to carry out the task demanded, though not helpless enough to be made recipients of gratuitous relief. There is no doubt that such persons are unwelcome on the Bengal relief works. Almost all the officers that I met, both Civil and Public Works, expressed very freely the opinion that they should not be allowed on the works, and that it would be far less demoralising to place them on the gratuitous relief list than to lower the task standard down to their incapacity. This was an abstract opinion only, for which there is a good deal to be said, but which it is unnecessary to discuss at present, for I was told that in practice no one was refused admission to the works, and that endeavours were made to provide light employment for weakly individuals, who were drafted into the special gangs in which there is no tasking. I think it probable, however, that the indirect effect of high and rigorous tasking is to prevent people of this class coming to the works. It may be that, when it is found that the weaker members of a family are unable to earn full wages on the works, the abler-bodied attend the works, and leave their weaker relatives to do the home work in the villages, and this would be a very desirable arrangement; but, on the other hand, it may be thought that these weak persons, finding no place for themselves on the works, are gradually forced on to the gratuitous relief list of the villages to which they belong, especially as the numbers of those on these lists have been in a much higher proportion to the numbers of those workers than in other Provinces. During my tour, therefore, I endeavoured to see as many as possible of the people on village relief, who were called in from the neighbouring villages for my inspection. I saw about 600 of these people at Bettiah, Dhaka and Motihari, and when at Darbhanga accompanied His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor in an inspection of other gangs in that district. I should have seen more, had not arrangements been altered owing to bad weather. I can, however, very confidently assert that among all those inspected by me there was not an individual who was fit to be sent to the works, or to be given only the most nominal task. There were indeed at each place visited a great number of applicants for gratuitous relief, equal to or exceeding the number of actual recipients, and among these I noticed several, principally women, who were quite capable of performing a moderate task on the works. But of these applicants only a very few, including only the worst cases, were accepted, and it must be supposed that the others eventually found their way to the works, or were supported by their relatives. I do not think that any persons had been brought on to the gratuitous relief lists who were able to work for some time pre-

vious to my visit, and believe that any who might have been so brought on at an earlier stage, before relief works had been opened in the neighbourhood (as had been the case at Dahka), had all been discharged and sent to works as soon as these were available. On the other hand I certainly formed an impression that there was a smaller proportion of weakly and feeble workers in the Bengal gangs than I had seen elsewhere, where the carriers were less rigorously tasked, and where the payments were not directly proportioned to the work done. This was perhaps to be expected, and it must always be difficult to fix the exact degree of incapacity which may be admitted to or ought to be excluded from the works. The great number of separate relief works in Bengal and their nearness to the villages from which the workers come constitute, I think, a strong and special reason for insisting on a high task with a low wage, as the valuable distance test is practically inoperative on all these small works. If the works had been further away from the homes of those attending them, it would perhaps have been advisable to lower the task entitling to the low wages actually paid, and to have provided a higher wage for the full tasks actually demanded on the principle followed in the North-West Provinces modified intermediate system and other forms of piece-work.

2. I have hitherto been considering the task-work system in force in Bengal, but piece-work had been introduced shortly before my visit on a more extensive and unrestricted scale than in other Provinces,

Piece-work in Bengal.

and is in force on the works mentioned in paragraph 2 of these notes. The introduction of the system was authorised in Bengal Government Resolution No. 181-T.R./Famine, dated 6th May 1897, in which the advantages and disadvantages of piece-work and the precautions to be adopted in connection with it have been very clearly stated. It was proposed to pay a certain rate per 100 cubic feet of earthwork, irrespective of the constitution of the working party, which is the system in force in Gorakhpur, which has been described in paragraph 24 of my notes on the North-West Provinces. The only essential variation from that system is that no maximum task or limit to the daily earnings has been fixed. The object in view was to enable the working members of an ordinary family to earn as much between them as would suffice for the support of themselves and the non-working members, so that the latter might be kept away from the works, and it was thought better to fix low rates than to impose a maximum limit to the daily task, or to the amount that such a family could earn daily, and to rely on the low rate for preventing the works becoming unduly attractive to purely professional earthworkers. The initial rates proposed for a lead of 50 and lift of 3 feet were :—

			Rs.	A.	P.	
Soft earth	...	...	1	12	0	per 1,000 cubic feet.
Medium earth	...	...	2	4	0	„ „
Hard earth	...	...	2	12	0	„ „

These are the standard rates, with rice selling at nine seers to the rupee. Discretion was, however, left to local officers to increase or reduce them having regard to local conditions, and especially to rise and fall in prices. An additional 3 annas 1,000 cubic feet might be allowed for every additional 50 feet of lead or 3 feet of lift.

18. The first-piece work that I visited was on the Trebeni Canal. The arrangements here for giving out piece-work on the pit gang system were as complete as could be desired. The canal in the section visited has a bed-width of 80 feet, which was marked out on the ground by two parallel lockspits; an intermediate lockspit marking the centre line. Cross lines were then laid down at intervals of 10 feet, and pits were thus formed on each side of the centre line, with an area in plan of 40 feet by 10 feet or 400 square feet. The cutting of the slopes was to be left to the last, but an outer lockspit was made on each side along the edge of the future 1 to 1 slope, so that the distance at any one point between the two outer lockspits for each half-width showed to the workers at once the depth to which they were to dig. The work done was measured daily. A line was stretched across the pit at ground level and the distance to the bottom of the pit measured. Every quarter of a foot so measured represented 100 cubic feet done up to date, and the difference between the total

thus measured, and the total recorded on the previous day, is the work done during the day, for which payment at the rate prescribed is made on the spot, it being the rule here as on most other works in Bengal to make daily payments. The rates paid were 4 annas per 100 cubic feet for the first 4 feet in depth, $4\frac{1}{2}$ annas for the next 4 feet, 5 annas for depths between 8 and 12 feet, and so on. The initial rate was thus Rs. 2-8-0 per 1,000, or a little higher than the rate prescribed in the Resolution for medium soil, but the rate for rice was about 8 seers for the rupee. The surface soil was very hard, but the underlying soil in which most of the work was done appeared to me to be quite as soft as I had seen in works where the diggers were doing 200 cubic feet for them, and the rate given was, I think, somewhat more liberal than contemplated in the Resolution.

19. The following figures have been abstracted from a very detailed record which had been maintained for one week Analysis of the returns for Trebeni Canal. in one section of the canal :—

Average daily attendance—

Men	...	...	...	...	...	841
Women	...	...	...	...	...	608
Children	...	...	...	...	...	364
				Total	...	<u>1,813</u>

Number of dependants at home—

Men	...	...	...	...	...	293
Women	...	...	...	...	...	532
Children	...	...	...	...	...	554
				Total dependants	...	<u>1,379</u>

Total number of workers employed for one day during week—

Diggers	...	...	...	...	...	2,990
Others	..	...	...	...	...	7,041
				Total	...	<u>10,031</u>
Male units	...	...	...	...	...	<u>8,188</u>

						Cubic feet.
Work done	...	...	...	...	...	298,100
Average task per digger...	...	...	...	...	...	100
Ditto male unit	...	...	...	...	...	36
						Rs.
Total amount earned @ Rs. 2-8 per thousand...	...	...	...	...	...	745 $\frac{1}{4}$
Average earning per male unit ...	...	...	...	...	...	1·45 annas.
Average number of days in the week each worker was present = $\frac{10,031}{1,813}$ ...	...	...	...	...	...	= 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ days.
Average earning per male unit per week	...	...	...	...	...	8 annas.
Number of pits or working parties	...	...	...	...	...	504
Average number in party	...	...	...	...	...	3·6
Number of working parties with a Looniah gangman...	...	...	...	...	...	172
Total number employed under Looniah gangman	...	...	...	...	...	3,381
Male units in Looniah gangs	...	...	...	...	...	2,673
						Cubic feet.
Work done in Looniah gangs	...	...	...	...	...	125,800
Average task per male unit in Looniah gangs	...	...	...	...	...	47

	Rs.
Total amount earned in Looniah gangs	314½
Average earning per male unit... ..	1·88 annas.
Average number of days in week each worker was present... ..	6
Average earning per male unit per week	11¼ annas

The number of dependants said to have been left by the workers at their homes was obtained by actual enquiry in each pit, and must be taken for what it is worth. It may be noted, however, that no dependants received relief on the works.

The average task of the 100 cubic feet per digger and 36 cubic feet per male unit done during the week is very small and the earnings have been proportionally low. The week was not a typical one in this respect, either because work was interrupted by rainfall or because the greater part of the digging was in very hard soil. The Collector has supplied me with another statement showing the progress from the commencement, or for nine weeks ending 12th June, from which it appears that in all 392,354 had been employed for one day on the whole canal, equivalent to 323,680 male units, and that the work done amounted to 18,302,704 cubic feet, for which Rs. 47,429 had been paid. This gives an outturn of 53·45 cubic feet per male unit, and an average earning of 2·3 annas. If we assume that 30 per cent. of the workers were diggers, which is the proportion shown above, the outturn per digger will have been 155 cubic feet. The average lead is said to have been 68 feet with a virtual lift of 10 feet. It is difficult to say, however, what the exact task per digger has been, because on piece-work the diggers and carriers change about, and extra diggers are put on or taken off with every variation in the lead or in the hardness of the soil. The duty of the digger can hardly, however, have been less than 155 cubic feet, for if we assume that more diggers were employed the work done by the carriers will have been very excessive, if the average lead and lift given is correct.

In giving the figures for the selected week I have assumed that the work was all paid for at the rate of 4 annas per hundred, but it is probable that some was paid for at the 4½ or 5 annas rate, in which case the earnings per male unit will be somewhat higher than shown. But in the figures for the whole canal up to 12th June the actual payments have been taken, and it will be seen that the average earning per male unit has been 2·3 annas, which is the Code rate for a male in class B when the grain rate is 8 seers to the rupee, and as no dependants were on the works, it is presumed that the workers have been able to maintain them on this wage.

20. Returning again to the detailed statement it will be seen that the work has been given out to small parties, containing on an average from 3 to 4 workers, similar to those working under the intermediate system in the Lucknow division, North-West Provinces. Out of these 504 parties, 172 or more than one-third had Looniah gangsmen or diggers. It does not follow that over one-third of the workers were Looniahs, but as it is only usual to take the names of the headmen of the pit the proportion is not given in the detailed statement. In going over the work I was struck by the number of Looniahs who were digging for carriers of other castes, and it appears that while Looniahs came forward in large numbers as headmen of the pits they associated with themselves women and children as carriers who belong to the ordinary cultivating classes. In one pit I saw two old women of the dhobi caste working alone, one of whom was digging and the other carrying. On enquiry it appeared that the headman of the pit was a Looniah who had not come to work that day, but these two women were earning what little they could in his absence. I saw many other cases in which the only Looniahs in the gang were the headmen.

Some of the working parties performed phenomenal tasks, but as a general rule they only worked for two or three days, and then went away. It is said that

such parties used to work by moonlight. The most noteworthy tasks are the following, which I have extracted from the detailed statement :—

Caste.	Party.			Total work done.	Days at work during week.	Task per diem.
	Men.	Women.	Children.			
Looniah	1	2	...	Cubic ft. 900	2	450
Do.	1	3	...	900	2	450
Rajput	1	1	1	1,400	4	350
Not stated	1	2	...	1,300	3	433
Looniah	2	...	...	1,800	6	300

These tasks are very high, but only in one case did the party work for six days in the week, and it is probably true that when a family has earned enough to keep itself for two or three days it keeps away from the works. I find, moreover, that out of the 504 parties of which a detailed record has been maintained, there were only 22 in which the average daily earnings exceeded three annas per worker, and out of these only 11 were Looniah. In the preceding paragraph it has also been shown that the outturn per male unit of all the 172 gangs which had Looniah headmen amounted to 47 cubic feet, the general average for the week being 36 cubic feet, while the general average for all workers up to 12th June has been 53 cubic feet. It was stated that the percentage of Looniah was unusually high at the time of my visit, as many of the ordinary cultivators had returned to their fields on account of the rain, which, on the other hand, had been so heavy as to prevent the Looniah from digging for saltpetre, upon which industry many of them had up till then been engaged. Allowing, however, for a few exceptional cases, I do not think that professional earthworkers have taken undue advantage or received an excessive wage on these works, though there is probably a higher proportion of them on ordinary task work.

21. Up to the time of my visit it had not been found necessary to make special arrangements for women and children and weakly men who could not find a place in the piece-work gangs, but the possibility of finding employment for any that could be struck off the gratuitous relief lists was discussed. At my suggestion the Executive Engineer, Mr. Sealy, agreed to try the experiment of putting them on to a separate section of the work, upon which diggers would be employed at suitable piece-work rates for digging only, as many carriers being told off to each digger as may be considered sufficient for the carrying to be done, due regard being paid to the capacity and condition of those thus awaiting employment. These carriers would receive the ordinary carrier's or D wage, and be subject to fine if they did not do all the work required of them. All the incentives of piece-work will thus be held out to the diggers, but they will have nothing to do with the carriers, who will be paid independently. It remains to be seen whether such an arrangement will work satisfactorily in practice. I observe from the famine report of the Collector of Saran for the fortnight ending 26th June, that a similar system had been introduced in that district by Mr. Twidell, on the Masrakh-Nagara road. The diggers were paid at the rate of Re. 1 per thousand cubic feet, the number of carriers was not limited, and each received fixed daily wage, a man getting one anna, a woman three pice, and a child two pice. These are considerably below the Code minimum rates or D wage, but the Collector (Mr. Chapman) remarked that he was insisting on the famine wage being paid and on the number of carriers being restricted to three for each digger. As regards the latter point it is not, however, very clear how the number of carriers can be limited, if a sufficient complement of diggers be not forthcoming, though the plan is perhaps the best that can be suggested for attracting a sufficient proportion of adult males, and may perhaps induce some of the women to dig, as they do very frequently on piece-work.

22. I visited another example of piece-work on the first section of the Sakri-Jainagar Railway. This differed from the Piecework on the Sakri-Jainagar Railway. work on the Trebeni Canal inasmuch as the work was not given out to single diggers, or parties of three or four individuals, but to gangs, containing from 60 to 200 workers. The work was set out in lengths of ten chains, a length on each side of the centre line being given out to one gang. Payments are not made on the pits or to section of a gang, but on the measurements for a whole length, and to the headman who is chosen by the gang. The officer in charge has thus no concern with the payments made to individual workers. It is said that this system works satisfactorily, and that the workers are all content and make no complaints, the distribution of the total payment being arranged among themselves. This may be true, but if so, the fact indicates a power of combination which is not generally found among famine-relief workers, and it may be inferred that the work is largely in the hands of professional diggers. This was undoubtedly the case in the first section when I found that between the 11th May and 15th June the number of men employed for one day was 27,760, with only 13,440 women and 2,478 children, so that there were more than twice as many men as women and children, which is a pretty sure indication of a high proportion of professional labourers. The average earnings were 2·6 annas per male unit, whereas the average on task-work does not exceed 1·6 annas, but the outturn of work was 70 cubic feet per male unit.

In the third section I ascertained that the proportion of men was less, being only 56·3 per cent. on the whole number of workers, the figures for the same period being 14,274 men, 10,242 women and 847 children; the average earnings per male unit amounted to 1·75 annas, and the outturn of work about 58 cubic feet. In the 2nd section the proportion of men to other workers and the average earnings and outturn per male unit were intermediate between those given for the 1st and 3rd sections. In the 4th section the women and children out-numbered the men, the figures being 31,136 men, 28,334 women and 5,919 children, so that the men formed only 47·6 per cent. of the whole. Unfortunately the earnings per male unit in this section cannot be stated accurately, as there was a serious mistake in the figures supplied to me, in consequence of which the average earnings worked out to 0·96 annas only. I asked that further enquiry should be made, the result of which has been since communicated to me, and I find that the average earning per male unit was about 1·3 annas, and the daily outturn 43 cubic feet. As the corrected figures have not been supplied in full detail, the true rates may be a little more or less than these, but the error will be small.

23. The inference from these figures is that the professional element was strong in the first section, but less and less in the succeeding sections, in two last of which the workers were probably all of the ordinary famine type. In the 1st section the workers earned a high wage, but full work was done for it, there were no dependants' or Sunday wage, and the proportion of working children was small. Further remarks on the Sakri-Jainagar Railway piece-work. The papers given me do not show whether the men who performed the highest task worked continuously or only for a few days at a time, a point which must always be considered in connection with piece-work earnings. It is probable, moreover, that these workers had the usual proportion of women and children dependent on them, who did not come to the works as they might have done under the task-work system, and that the real cost per unit relieved was, like the cost of unit per work done, not excessive. The advocates of piece-work must have the courage of their convictions and be prepared to pay a higher rate of wage *per unit on the works* than under the task-work system, and it may be considered that the average rate earned in the 1st section was not very excessive, it being remembered that there was no maximum limit to the task. It should be added that the rate per hundred cubic feet was 3½ annas in this section, and only 3 annas in the others, and it is possible that this extra rate was not very closely adjusted to the conditions of the work, so that the 1st section was unduly favoured in this respect.

Another conclusion that may be drawn from the figures given is that the higher the proportion of men on the work the higher is the daily earning per male unit. The number of male units is calculated as explained in paragraph 3 with reference to the wages normally paid to men, women and children, which in this case were taken as 7, 5 and 3 pice, respectively. Thus a man counts as one unit, a woman $\frac{7}{5}$ ths and a child as $\frac{7}{3}$ ths of a unit, and within certain limits these proportions are probably in approximate accordance with the working capacity of each class, so that within these limits the work done per male unit should be the same, whatever the proportions of men, women and children. The higher outturn shown per male unit when the proportion of men is high is probably not due so much to this limit being exceeded as to the fact that the higher the proportion of men the stronger is the infusion of a professional element, that is to say, the workers of a more expert class. Be this as it may it will be seen that in the 3rd section the average wage was 1.75 annas and the male percentage 56.3, whereas in the 4th it was only 1.3 annas with a male percentage of 47.6. In this section the workers did not earn the average wage, 1.6 annas per male unit, which has been paid on task-work in the Darbhanga district (where the average male percentage is about 46.4), and if this is not due to the rate per 100 cubic feet being too low, with reference to local conditions, it may be inferred that under the rates given for piece-work on this railway the earnings per male unit are less than under the task-work system whenever the males form much less than 50 per cent. of the number of workers.

24. Piece-work has also been introduced in the Darbhanga Raj, all the relief works in which are conducted on this system. The people are allowed to form their own gangs, the numbers in which range from about 15 to 40. The initial rate paid is $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas per 100 cubic feet, and it is found that the daily earnings vary from 1 anna 4 pie to 1 anna 9 pie per head, and that the numbers of men and women are about equal. I visited one small tank at Kamtoul which was just being completed, a few labourers only being employed in dressing on a daily wage, the men receiving $2\frac{1}{2}$ and the women $1\frac{1}{2}$ annas each. Mr. King, the Manager, told me that even at these rates people preferred piece-work to a daily wage.

25. Bengal is the only province in which I have seen true piece-work, in which no maximum limit has been fixed for the daily task. Although it has been adopted at many works, it has not been long enough in force to enable a certain conclusion to be formed as to the extent to which it may be resorted to for famine relief works, or as to whether it is really necessary to impose a maximum limit to the task. The objection to a maximum limit is that in practice it is very difficult to impose one without maintaining as complete and full a record of the attendance as is necessary in task-work, and if it be assumed that the working members of a family are to be allowed to earn enough for the support of those that do not come to the works, their earnings should be limited only by the amount of work they can turn out, and experience appears to indicate that however great this may be for a particular day or two, it will not in the long run pass a certain limit. On the other hand, it may be said that if the rates are so adjusted as to allow an ordinary relief worker to earn as much as or a little more than can be earned on task-work, professional workers will be able to earn more than they can on railways or other works which are not being carried out by Government. When such works exist within a reasonable distance this point certainly requires consideration, but if a limit is ever imposed it should not be on the daily task, but on that for a week, or other suitable period. Thus, if a seven days' task is given out, the workers should be free to complete it in five and go away for two days, but new work should not be given out to them until after the seventh day.

Even in Bengal piece-work has not been introduced under the circumstances most favourable to its success, for it has followed, instead of preceding, task-work. If piece-work is to be fairly tried it should be in the earlier and not in the later stages of distress, and it will always be far easier to change from piece-work to task-work than *vice versa*. In spite of this difficulty I think there are indications

that in Bengal piece-work has proved as attractive as task-work, though with the full tasks executed on the latter the difference has been more in name than in anything else.

It must, I think, also be admitted that, although piece-work may give all the relief wanted, it will frequently be found that it is itself insufficient as distress deepens, and an excessive proportion of women, children and feeble men come to the work. In such cases piece-work must be converted into task-work or must be supplemented by task-work for the feeble gangs, some such arrangement being made as that referred to in paragraph 21, *ante*.

26. I have now described the task-work and piece-work systems which I saw in Bengal. In other matters the procedure on relief works follows very closely that laid down in North-West Provinces Circular No. 18:P. W., dated 1st December 1896.

Other details of management of relief works.

In particular the system of daily payments and piece wages obtains, and all officers in Bengal are as much impressed with the importance of daily payments as are those in the North-West Provinces. I understood that on the Sakri-Jainagar railway bi-weekly payments are made, and it is possible that this is the case on some other piece-works, where daily payments are less necessary (though they are made on the Trebeni Canal), but on task-work daily payments are universal.

The form of gang register originally in use was that prescribed in North-Western Provinces Circular No. 18-P. W., dated 1st December 1896, to which reference has been made in my notes on relief works in those Provinces. It was soon found out however that a daily muster roll was necessary, and this has been added, resembling that in use in the Lucknow division. But the register is still kept in duplicate, one copy being used on each alternate day, so that the record is not continuous, which is I think an unnecessary and very inconvenient arrangement.

Fines are not brought to account as such, effect being given them by reducing the wage, or in the case of task-work on the Blackwood system by withholding payments until tasks are completed. I found, however, on analysing the accounts for 10 days ending 10th June in the two Darbhanga and Muzaffarpur divisions that the full payment to workers at normal rates amounted to Rs. 43,487, while the amount paid was Rs. 40,851, so that the actual amount of fines or deductions was Rs. 2,636, or a little over 6 per cent. only, which indicates how fully tasks are worked up to.

Dependants receive cash wages in almost all cases, the rates being 5 pice for men, 4 pice for women, 2 pice for children under 10 years of age, and 1 pice for children in arms. It may be noted children are not classed as workers unless over 10 years of age, the limit in all other provinces that I have visited being 7 years. As observed in paragraph 6 of my notes on relief works in the Bombay Presidency, this limit is there considered too low, and it has been suggested either that the Bengal limit should be adopted, or that it should be left to the discretion of the officer in charge to decide what children should be admitted as workers between the ages of 7 and 12.

In spite of this high limit of age the number of children-dependants on the Bengal relief works is very small, compared with other provinces, though the works are generally so close to the villages that they could be brought to and fro without difficulty. From the appended statement it will be seen that the number of dependants on the works for the districts and week therein noted was 173,193 only, of whom 160,163 were children, the number of workers being 1,998,215, so that the proportion of dependants was little over 8 per cent. of the workers. The average payment to each child was 3·7 pie and to each adult 10 pie.

27. One of the great difficulties in Bengal has been that of finding suitable men for the charge of works. In other provinces, except Madras, the officers in charge are usually men of the Naib-Tahsildar and Kanungo class, nominated by the Civil Officers, but in Behar, where there is a permanent settlement, there were not many men of this class forthcoming. The difficulty is increased by the great number of the charges, though many of them

Officers in charge.

are so small that they can be very easily supervised. The services of a number of European non-commissioned officers have been placed at the disposal of the Government of Bengal, and they have been employed as officers in charge. Many of these have done well, but it would be preferable to have men better acquainted with the language and people. In some cases native non-commissioned officers have been employed, but great difficulty has been found in getting suitable men for the supervision of so many separate works.

28. I heard no complaints when in Bengal of the interference of the relief works with the supply of labour to private employers. The planters are not in a position in a year like this to employ much outside labour. Complaints were, I believe, made when the relief works were first opened that they drew off men from the railways, such as the Hajipur-Katihar and the Mogulserai-Gya lines. The former I have referred to in paragraph 30 of my notes on the relief works in the North-West Provinces, and I understand that in the latter all difficulty ceased with a slight enhancement of the railway rates, and a lowering of those paid on the relief works. The Sakri-Jainagar branch and Bettiah-Bagaha extensions are being carried out by the Public Works Department as relief works, so that all difficulty in respect of them has been avoided. I venture to think that whatever may have been the case when relief operations were first started, they cannot have seriously affected the supply of labour to the railways since full tasks have been so rigorously enforced. The daily wages are, moreover, so low that if labourers have been attracted from the railways it can only have been because the rates paid on the latter were too low for a season of famine prices.

29. It has already been stated in paragraph 3 that the majority of the relief works have been carried out by Civil Officers, and that the Public Works Department came later into the field, and had to be to a considerable extent reorganized for the purpose. Mr. Bourdillon has explained in the appended note how the organization of relief works fell in the first instance almost entirely on the Civil Officers, and how difficult it was even at a later stage to transfer much of the burden to the officers of the Public Works Department, and it has been inevitable that even in the case of the works so transferred, the Civil Officers have concerned themselves more with the control and scrutiny of details than has been necessary in other Provinces in which the management of relief works has from the first been left mainly in the hands of the Public Works Officers. The Civil Officers started under great disadvantages, but they were assisted in laying down the lines of relief operations by Mr. Glass, the Chief Engineer, who devoted considerable time to drawing task tables and detailed instructions for giving out task-work, which have been very useful.

Many mistakes were no doubt made at first, but, as stated in paragraph 9 of these notes, unsparing efforts were made to detect and rectify them, and as far as I have been able to form an opinion, the works latterly carried out under Civil Officers will compare not unfavourably with those which have been entrusted to professional agency. The officers in both departments have been working almost side by side, and although this has involved some overlapping of duties they have been able to compare notes and to secure a tolerably uniform standard of tasking, while in the management of the works under them they have been engaged in a friendly rivalry. Under the special circumstances of the case no better arrangement was possible, but if relief operations of such magnitude should ever again be necessary, I cannot but think that here as elsewhere it would be better that the Civil Officers should be as far as possible relieved of all responsibility for the details of the management of relief works, if the Public Works Department should then be in a position to assume it. It might then be found possible to do at the beginning what has now been done near the final stage of operations, and start a few large and useful public works at a few centres to which distressed labourers could be drafted, and on which piece-work could probably at first be successfully introduced, leaving village tanks and other petty works in the neighbourhood of the labourers' homes to be undertaken, if necessary, later on. This would relieve the Civil Officers of a mass of petty details in connection with the management of

the relief works, which would be relegated entirely to professional officers, and would leave the former more time for the other important duties which are so pressing in time of famine, especially that of village inspections, the results of which will probably always furnish a more reliable indication of the extent to which the relief works are fulfilling their main object than can be gained by the superintendence of the works themselves. All this, however, depends upon the Public Works Department being in a position to assume their duties at the outset, and this will involve a reorganization of the Department as at present constituted in Bengal which it may be undesirable on other grounds to carry out. The present arrangements were deliberately introduced a few years ago as the most suitable for Bengal, and it is not my intention to criticise them, or to say more than that even if well adapted for ordinary times they have placed the Province at a certain disadvantage where extensive famine relief operations were required, however successful may have been the efforts made to minimise it.

30. As regards establishment I have already explained in paragraph 3 of these notes how two temporary Public Works Circles were formed for the superintendence and charge of relief operations, and how officers were drafted from the Irrigation Branch and District Engineers temporarily transferred to the Public Works Department for employment in the new circles. In addition to this seven Royal Engineer officers were temporarily transferred from the Military Works Department for employment in the relief works, as in other Provinces the want of a strong staff of Upper Subordinates was much felt. The services of sixteen Military Officers were placed at the disposal of the Government of Bengal, and they were employed under the Civil Officers in the supervision of the civil relief works and in other relief operations. As far as I could ascertain these officers have been found as useful in Bengal as they have been in the North-West Provinces, and their services have been as fully appreciated. I have already mentioned that non-commissioned European officers have been largely employed as officers in charge of relief works, but I have not been able to ascertain the number.

31. I was struck more in Bengal than in any other Province with the number of different famine returns which were required from both Public Works and Civil Officers. They are undoubtedly very useful and I found them more informing than most of those that I was able to obtain elsewhere, but their preparation must have been a very serious tax on the establishment and on the time of the superior officers. Many of them overlap the district returns which are published in the Calcutta Gazette, being all weekly, whereas the Public Works accounts are made out for 10 days' intervals. I cannot but think that it would be possible to give all essential information in fewer returns, not only here, but in other Provinces.

32. The relief works in Behar present several points of interest. Owing to the inadequate strength of the Public Works Department the relief works directly under Civil Officers were more numerous and in the aggregate much more extensive than in other Provinces, especially in the earlier stages of operations, and it was necessary for this and other reasons stated in paragraph 2 to rely principally on small village works, generally tanks. These are admirably suited for task workers in one way, as the great variations in the lift and lead render it possible in adopting the pit or family gang system to adapt the task for each working party to the proportions of the diggers and carriers constituting it. These small works have, however, great disadvantages of their own, as more establishment is required, supervision of numerous and scattered works is more difficult, discipline is less easy to enforce, and the works are so close to the villages that the useful distance test is practically inoperative. Moreover, the real value and utility of these works is very small, if considered with reference to the great expenditure incurred on them.

The task-work system in Bengal is based upon that which has been introduced in the North-West Provinces, under which all carriers receive the minimum or

D wage, but local conditions have led to a few modifications, so that on some works able-bodied men who, though capable of digging, are employed as carriers, receive the digger's wage, and on most an effort is made to give the carriers as full a task as the diggers, as it is found unnecessary to take the former as they come without reference to the conditions of lift and lead. Another important variation is that the unit of task is the pit gang or section of a full gang, consisting generally of 4 diggers with the proper complement of carriers, and is thus intermediate between the whole gang unit in the Central Provinces and in some parts of the North-West Provinces, and the single digger parties, consisting of three or four workers only, which is the unit in the Lucknow division. The Blackwood system of task work in force in the Darbhanga district is a further modification which I have seen nowhere but in Bengal, though something of the same kind has been proposed for road metalling works in the North-West provinces to which allusion has been made in paragraph 27 of my Notes on the relief works in those Provinces. This system is practically equivalent to piece-work with a maximum limit to the amount that can be earned daily (which is no greater than that due to the "full task" under ordinary task work), and involves the abolition of a minimum wage.

The tasks executed in Bengal are generally heavier than elsewhere, though the wages paid to the workers are, under similar scales of grain prices, no higher than in the North-West Provinces. As regards the diggers the heavier tasks are in a great measure due to the greater softness of the soil, which renders comparison difficult, but as regards the carriers there is in my opinion no doubt that on most works heavier tasks are taken from them than in other provinces. This is partly due to the fact that the proportion of male adults on the relief works is higher than in other provinces, and to the greater facilities for employing a high proportion of carriers afforded by the large tank works, but also to the extraordinary attention which is paid by all officers to the tasking and to the daily outturn of work per male unit.

A distinguishing feature of the relief operations in Bengal has been the high proportion of persons on gratuitous relief to the numbers on the works, and it has been supposed that this is in a measure due to the severity of the tasks exacted on the works. The subject has been discussed in paragraph 16 of these notes, but it may be added that as shown in paragraph 26 the number of dependants receiving relief on the works has been very small, the proportion being lower than in any other province except Madras.

Another interesting point in the relief works of Bengal is the experiment that has been made in unlimited piece-work. Although the system of payment by results has been introduced on a more extensive and unrestricted scale in Bengal than elsewhere, it has not been in force long enough to enable a definite conclusion to be drawn as to its value, especially as it has been tried under the disadvantage of succeeding the task-work system to which the people had been accustomed in this and the previous famine. In this and in other matters the Bengal Government has not hesitated to deviate from the strict letter of the Code and from the practice adopted in other provinces with the object of adapting the relief operations more closely to the exigencies of local conditions, and the variations thus introduced will be found of great interest in the consideration of future policy for famine relief works.

T. HIGHAM.

Simla, dated 4th September 1897.

APPENDIX I.

Notes on the Evolution of Relief Works in the Patna Division, 1896-97.

Test works were first undertaken in the Bhabhua sub-division of the Shahabad district on the 22nd October 1896, and in Darbhanga during the last week of that month. Others were opened in Patna in the first week of November. In Champaran and Muzaffarpur they commenced in the second and in Saran in the last week of November.

2. At first no tables were available for fixing tasks or calculating the grain equivalent, and district officers used those given in Appendices IV. to VII. of the Bengal Famine Code.

3. At the Souepur Conference on the 20th November, presided over by the Lieutenant-Governor, Mr. Mills, then Inspector of Works, Behar Circle, was requested to draw up tables of tasks and wages, but the tables he produced were not sufficiently simple and were soon withdrawn.

4. On the 5th and 6th December another Conference of the local officers was held at Muzaffarpur, which was attended by Messrs. Finucane and Glass, and the latter was requested to draw up a scale of tasks. It was also decided that large works should be placed under the Public Works Department, smaller works being left to the district officers. Ten large schemes were noted as likely to be taken up by Public Works Department officers. Just at this time local officers were supplied with copies of North-West Provinces Government Resolution of the 20th October 1896 on the Bundelkhand famine.

5. Mr. Glass's tables were published by Revenue Department Circular No. 74 on the 31st December 1896, which also circulated the North-West Provinces Resolution No. 18-P.W. of the 1st December 1896. Mr. Glass and I made a tour together through Champaran, ending at Muzaffarpur, where on the 15th January I had summoned the Collectors of North Behar to meet us. The North-West Provinces Resolution just quoted, which advocates exacting the task from diggers only, was fully discussed and adopted by all. Mr. Glass on returning to Calcutta, prepared and published Government Resolution No. 420-M.P.I. of the 25th January which, with slight modifications, was a reproduction of the North-West Provinces Resolution of the 1st December, and advocated a task from diggers only. We considered that we had at last found ground, and effect was given to this system everywhere.

6. At this time, however, the Lieutenant-Governor was away on tour in Orissa, and on his return the resolution was partly revised and the "diggers only" system was abandoned in favour of large gangs. This was done on the 5th February, the same number and date of the Resolution being maintained. This change was condemned by all local officers and by the Lieutenant-Governor himself after he had made a tour in North Behar (March 1st to 6th), and at the Darbhanga Conference it was decided to take a middle course and adopt the system of small gangs called the "pit gang system." These orders were promulgated by Mr. Glass's letter No. 1661-M.P.I. of the 16th March, and they have been in force ever since.

7. On the 22nd February Government circulated the correspondence between India and the North-West Provinces Government about the "petty piece-work" or "intermediate" system, and after the opinions of local officers had been taken a Resolution was issued in the Revenue Department, No. 181 of the 6th May, sanctioning a modified version of this system in certain cases. I had, however, obtained sanction before this, and piece-work started in this Division about the 1st May.

8. There are now therefore three systems of relief works under Government now going on, *viz.* :—

- (1) *Civil Agency Works* under the Collector and his Charge Superintendents. There being an officer in charge at each work with agents and some sorts of sub-overseers under him. These are all on the *task-work* system with "pit gangs."
- (2) *Public Works Department* agency works also on the pit gang system. These are regularly supplied with complete Public Works Department establishment, and all are meant to be major works under the Code.
- (3) *Public Works Department* agency works—*Piece-work*—

Besides all these, the Darbhanga Raj has relief works of its own on a system of piece-work very like that which we have now adopted.

9. The piece-work projects are as follows as far as my information goes :—

Champaran.—Trebani Canal, 3 sections ; Dhaka Canal ; Bettiah-Bagaha railway.

Muzaffarpur.—Bhagmati Lakhandi Canal ; Baya Nullah Cut.

Darbhanga.—Sakri-Jainagar railway, 3 sections.

10. The number of civil agency works in the week ending 12th June, which is the latest for which I have complete information, the civil agency works were 328 to 113 under the Public Works Department, and the average number of male units employed daily was 197,907 to 77,621.

11. For this disproportion there are several reasons—

- (a) The Public Works Department were not brought into the scheme of relief so early as the district officers with their civil agency works.
- (b) The Public Works Department cadre in this province is starved, and subordinates are *not to be had*, so that it was quite impossible for the Department to take up the works they would otherwise have undertaken, except after great delay.
- (c) Meanwhile civil agency works had grown up everywhere, and many had advanced very far, so that there were real difficulties in the way of taking over and giving over charge—one of which is the difference in the accounts and forms.
- (d) It was found very difficult to find suitable works for the operations of the Public Works Department. Many of the works now open under them are really small enough to be under the Collector, and it was also found that several comparatively small works near their villages were more suitable than large works which necessitated people abandoning their houses and going some distance for labour.

Bankipur, 22nd June 1897.

J. A. BOURDILLON,
Commissioner.

APPENDIX II.

Famine Relief Statement D for Patna Division, week ending 15th May 1897.

District.	Number of Works open.		AGGREGATE NUMBER OF PERSONS ON TASK WORK.									Aggregate Number of Persons on Daily Wage irrespective of Task.					Dependants.		
			Class B.			Class D.			Total number of male units.	Total work done in thousand cubic feet.	Total amount paid in rupees.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Male units.	Amount paid in rupees.	Adults.	Non-working children.	Amount paid in rupees.
	Tanks.	Other works.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Men.	Women.	Children.												Men.	Women.	Children.	Male units.	Amount paid in rupees.	Adults.	Non-working children.	Amount paid in rupees.
Shahabad ...	2	7	11,870	16,354	9,551	...	...	...	28,828	1,222	2,717	4,366	2,292	1,096	6,562	757	12	10,425	159
Saran ...	...	40	<i>(a)</i> 21,779	<i>(a)</i> 47,682	41,599	466	1,862	208	<i>(a)</i> 75,817	2,094	6,184	12,735	7,270	15,989	20,534	1,938	7	10,242	160
			<i>193</i>	<i>164</i>	...	..	...	...	<i>316</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Champanan (b)	39	39	117,865	100,333	53,099	48,586	86,788	41,526	347,122	11,973	35,073	46,990	34,300	14,898	79,137	8,353	4,685	48,266	1,107
			<i>15,637</i>	<i>15,391</i>	<i>6,035</i>	...	...	...	<i>29,699</i>	<i>1,712</i>	<i>4,105</i>	<i>1,219</i>	<i>317</i>	<i>224</i>	<i>1,538</i>	<i>219</i>	<i>Nil.</i>	<i>Nil.</i>	...
Muzaffarpur (c)	117		105,928	78,315	35,618	3,151	4,453	1,507	187,410	10,068	15,895	59,126	24,250	9,645	81,308	8,276	2,205	24,705	826
			<i>5,478</i>	<i>2,240</i>	<i>228</i>	<i>149</i>	<i>8</i>	...	<i>7,420</i>	...	...	<i>966</i>	...	...	<i>966</i>	...	...	...	...
Darbhangā (d)	110	65	288,566	290,742	71,414	7,361	12,268	8,794	555,210	21,154	54,613	134,472	103,038	20,063	219,651	20,552	6,121	66,525	1,443
	110		<i>185,771</i>	<i>190,619</i>	<i>51,681</i>	<i>4,187</i>	<i>3,187</i>	<i>4,554</i>	<i>357,035</i>	<i>11,912</i>	<i>36,323</i>	<i>69,723</i>	<i>54,822</i>	<i>9,823</i>	<i>114,759</i>	<i>10,004</i>	<i>5,856</i>	<i>48,788</i>	<i>1,156</i>
Total ...	319		546,008	533,426	211,281	59,564	105,371	52,035	1,194,387	46,511	114,482	257,689	171,150	61,691	407,192	39,876	3,030	160,163	3,695

(a) Includes a few class A workers as shown by figures in italics below.
 (b) The figures given include labourers, &c., on piece-work, as shown by figures in italics below.
 (c) The figures given exclude labourers, &c., on piece-work, shown separately by figures in italics below.
 (d) The figures in italics below relate entirely to tank work, and are included in the main figures.

No. 876 T.R./ (Famine), dated Darjeeling, the 26th October 1897.

From M. Finucane, Esq., Secretary to the Government of Bengal, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Revenue and Agricultural Department.

SIR,

In continuation of this Government's letter No. 751 T.R./ (Famine), dated the 17th September 1897, I am directed to submit, under section 29 of the Bengal Famine Code, the following report on relief operations and the condition of affected tracts in this province during the four weeks ending the 25th September 1897. A statement of rainfall and the usual Famine statements A and B are hereto appended. I am also to submit copies of the two half-monthly reports* of the

† Bankura, Khulna, and Champaran.

Commissioner of the Patna division for the period above-mentioned. Famine maps of the districts noted on the margin† are also enclosed. As relief works were open at the end of the period embraced by this report in the district of Champaran only, a map of that district is submitted, and it is not considered necessary to submit the maps of the other districts of the Patna division in which all relief operations have been closed.

PATNA DIVISION.

2. *Rainfall, prospect of crops, prices, &c.*—Copious rain fell at the beginning of September, and enabled the transplantation of winter rice to be completed throughout the division. It was followed by fine weather, varied by occasional showers. This weather, which continued till about the end of the period under report, was exactly what was required for the growth of the winter rice and the maturing and harvesting of the *bhadoi* crops. The rainfall was heavier in those parts of Champaran (western part of the Bettiah sub-division), Muzaffarpur (Sitamarhi subdivision), and Darbhanga (Madhubani sub-division) in which the previous rainfall had been insufficient. The heavy rain of the first week of September was followed by floods in the northern part of the trans-Gangetic districts, but they did much less harm to the *bhadoi* than good to the winter rice. The *Hathiya* asterism, which is the critical period for the great winter rice crop, commenced on the 25th September and closed on the 7th October. Towards the latter end of this period, from the 2nd to the 6th October, copious rain fell all over the division in varying but sufficient volume. The Commissioner, writing on 14th October, says :—

“In these circumstances nothing could be more prosperous than the present agricultural outlook. The *bhadoi* crop has proved more than an average all over the division (except perhaps in the district of Patna), even though it was damaged by floods in South Bihar; the *aghani* rice bids fair to be well above the average, if not a bumper crop, everywhere, and the moisture for the *rabi* is everywhere ample, and sowings have already begun.”

The heavy rain which has fallen since Mr. Bourdillon wrote may, however, have the effect of delaying the *rabi* sowings to some extent. On the whole the climatic conditions and prospects of the crops are as good as they can well be, and far better than could have been reasonably anticipated.

Prices fell steadily, and on the 14th October the Commissioner wrote :—

“Instead of being from 85 to 100 per cent. above the normal rate, they are now from 25 to 35 per cent. above the average. The coarser grains are cheap and plentiful, and the rise in exports in many districts shows that the *bhadoi* has been more than the people require for present consumption.”

* Not reprinted.

The following table shows the improvement in prices since the second half of August, the figures shown representing the quantity obtainable for a rupee :—

District and Recording station.	28th August.		11th September.		25th September.	
	Indian corn.	Marua.	Indian corn.	Marua.	Indian corn.	Marua.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Patna—						
City	Seers. 10 to 11	Seers. 14 to 15	Seers. 10 to 12	Seers. 14½ to 16	Seers. 12 to 14	Seers. 16 to 17
Barh	8½ to 9½	12	9½ to 11	10 to 15	10 to 12½	15 to 16
Bihar	5 to 8	8 to 13	8 to 11	8 to 13	8 to 12	10 to 13.
Gaya—						
Sadar	S. ch. 9 4	S. ch. 13 0	S. ch. 11 8	S. ch. 11 0	S. ch. 13 0	S. ch. 13 8
Jahanabad	8 12	...	10 2	12 8	11 7	13 3
Aurangabad ... ..	...	...	...	...	13 4	13 4
Nawada ... ..	...	12 8	12 4	14 0	11 8	13 0.
Shahabad—						
Arrah	10 8	...	12 0	...	12 0	...
Buxar ... ..	...	...	10 0	...	10 0	...
Sasaram ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...
Bhabhua ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...
Saran—						
Chapra	10 0	13 0	12 0	13 0	15 8	19 0.
Siwan	11 7	13 2	15 8	16 3	15 10	18 0
Gopalganj	13 3	15 6	19 5	17 8	18 2	18 2.
Champan—						
Motihari	10 8	...	13 0	...	19 4	...
Bettiah	12 8	13 8	12 8	...	19 0	...
Ramnagar ... ..	...	13 0	10 0	15 8	13 0	...
Bagaha ... ..	...	...	17 0	...	17 0	...
Muzaffarpur—						
Sadar	13 8	17 0	14 0	19 0	16 0	19 0
Hajipur	10 8	14 0	12 0	18 8	13 12	17 4
Sitamarhi	13 0	13 0	16 0	19 0	16 0	19 0
Darbhanga—						
Sadar	14 4	18 0	14 0	18 0	14 0	18 8
Samastipur	12 0	16 0	16 0	21 0	...	...
Madhubani	16 15	17 8	17 8	19 8	16 4	17 8

3. The figures in the above statement show that except in a few places

—	Imports.	Exports.
First half month ...	Mds. 2,54,165	Mds. 67,054
Second ,,	2,24,401	87,001
Total	4,78,566	1,54,055

The figures for July and August are—

—	Imports.	Exports.
July	9,79,105	3,01,628
August	7,82,602	1,47,270

prices fell considerably, and since the rainfall during the Hathiya asterism there has been a further improvement in certain parts of the division. The figures as to imports and exports for the two half months, including the districts of Patna and Gaya, are given on the margin. Imports have fallen off, while exports from every district except Saran have begun to increase. This turn of affairs was most marked in the district of Champaran, which has at last resumed its normal state of being an exporting district, having imported only 504 maunds in the first half of the month and nothing in the second half, while it exported 1,992 maunds during the former and 4,969 maunds during the latter period.

4. *Area and population affected, and numbers on relief.*—During the period under report Government relief operations were at first contracted and afterwards finally closed throughout the division except in certain parts of Saran and in the western part of the Bettiah sub-division of Champaran, where four sections of the Tribeni Canal were kept open for a few days. In this tract the crops were very backward. The Commissioner, who visited it recently, writes that he saw winter rice being transplanted there as late as the 12th September, and that what *bhadoi* there was, other than *bhadoi* rice, was at least a fortnight behind that in the south of the district.

The following table shows the numbers in receipt of relief on the 11th and 25th September in comparison with previous figures—

District.	29th May.		12th June.		29th June.		10th July.		31st July.		14th August.		28th August.		11th September.		25th September.	
	Numbers on relief.	Percentage on population of affected area.	Numbers on relief.	Percentage on population of affected area.	Numbers on relief.	Percentage on population of affected area.	Numbers on relief.	Percentage on population of affected area.	Numbers on relief.	Percentage on population of affected area.	Numbers on relief.	Percentage on population of affected area.	Numbers on relief.	Percentage on population of affected area.	Numbers on relief.	Percentage on population of affected area.	Numbers on relief.	Percentage on population of affected area.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Shahabad ..	33,488	8.76	30,801	8.06	22,094	5.72	23,347	6.11	23,861	6.24	21,163	5.54	17,518	4.58	4,394	1.15	564	.14
Saran	89,220	6.29	84,813	5.98	68,879	4.86	67,008	4.73	79,327	5.6	75,601	5.33	53,616	5.00	22,844	1.61	3,490	.24
Champaran..	192,975	10.37	194,927	10.47	142,283	7.64	110,253	5.92	65,989	3.54	48,839	2.62	41,449	2.22	20,685	1.11	2,608	.14
Muzaffarpur	124,415	7.49	116,137	7.00	104,064	6.26	113,273	6.82	101,938	6.14	95,316	5.74	68,208	4.10	20,065	1.20	41	.002
Darbhanga ..	270,961	12.12	279,354	11.56	234,623	9.70	245,266	10.97	174,521	7.81	129,525	5.79	105,480	5.14	61,242	2.84	732	.08
Total ..	711,059	9.41	706,032	9.3	571,943	7.6	559,142	7.4	445,636	5.9	370,444	4.90	286,271	4.2	129,230	1.73	7,435	.09

The percentages for the period now under report have been calculated on the population of the area previously shown as affected.

5. *Relief Works.*—Relief works in the district of Shahabad had been closed before the commencement of the period now under report. The following table

shows the number of works open at the end of August in the four northern districts, and the dates when they were closed :—

District.	Total number of Works open on 28th August.	When the Works were closed.	Number of Works left open.
1	2	3	4
Saran	29	Closed during first half of the month ... 23 18th September 6	Nil.
Champaran	35	Closed during first half of the month ... 20 Closed during second half of the month 11	4
Muzaffarpur... ..	43	Closed during first half of the month ... 42 19th September 1	Nil.
Darbhanga	53	Closed during the first half of the month 19 Closed during second half of the month 34	Nil.
Total	160		4

As already stated, the four works kept open in Champaran consisted of four sections of the Tribeni Canal intended to afford relief to the needy in a backward tract in the Bettiah sub-division, from which distress had not yet disappeared. In order, however, to accelerate the departure of relief workers, the rate was reduced from Rs. 2-8 per 1,000 cubic feet to Rs. 2-3 from the 15th September. A further reduction of 5 annas was made with effect from the 1st instant. As is shown by the telegraphic report for the week ending 11th October, all Government relief operations have since been closed in this division.

6. *Piece-work system.*—With regard to the Tribeni Canal in Champaran, recently visited by him, Mr. Bourdillon writes :—

“I found the piece-work system on the Tribeni Canal working admirably, whether among the full task people, the weakly gangs, or the intermediates. All were satisfied, the work was easily controlled and checked, and the cost is less than it would have been under similar conditions by the task work system.”

7. *Private relief works.*—The two Hatwa Raj works in Saran were closed on the 3rd September. The Darbhanga Raj relief works in the district of

31st July	6,918	Darbhanga employed a daily average of 670 persons in the first week of the period under report, and 149 persons in the second : by that time in four of the seven circles of the Raj, works had been closed ; and the remaining circles have since been closed. Although there have been no relief works in the district of Shahabad since the week ending 7th August, the numbers employed on the Moghalsarai Railway have not risen considerably.
7th August	5,183	
14th „	5,461	
21st „	3,527	
28th „	3,654	
4th September	4,526	
11th „	5,000	

(No later information has been furnished.)

8. *Poor-houses and kitchens.*—The following table shows the number of poor-houses open at the end of August, with the dates on which they were closed :—

District.	Number of Poor-houses open at the end of August.	Dates of Closure.
1	2	4
Shahabad	2	Sasaram poor-house closed on 11th September. Bhabhua poor-house transferred to the Charitable Fund on 22nd September.
Saran	2	One in the first half of the month and the other on 21st September.
Champanan	7	Three on 15th and four on the 25th September.
Muzaffarpur	6	One in the first half of the month, four in the beginning of the second half, and one on 26th September.
Darbhanga	8	Four at the end of the first half of the month, three by 18th September, and one on 25th September.
Total	25	

The numbers of inmates had gradually dwindled and were very small when the poor-houses were closed. Those who remained up to the last moment received valedictory donations from the Charitable Relief Fund generally at Rs. 2 per adult and Re. 1 per child.

The following statement gives the figures of kitchen relief, and the numbers who received gratuitous relief in other ways :—

District.	Number of kitchens open.			Average daily number of persons relieved gratuitously in each fortnight.						Percentages—					
				At kitchens.			In all ways.			Of total relieved at kitchens to total relieved.			Of children to total relieved at kitchens.		
	28th August.	11th September.	25th September.	28th August.	11th September.	25th September.	28th August.	11th September.	25th September.	28th August.	11th September.	25th September.	28th August.	11th September.	25th September.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11.	12	13	14	15	16
Shahabad	4	14	12	408	697	295	17,879	4,397	564	2.2	15.8	52.3	37.0	60.2	43.7
Saran	48	41	29	8,435	6,523	3,414	48,864	20,854	4,485	19.2	31.2	76.12	98.2	95.9	92.41
Champanan	99	87	10	10,584	8,945	624	29,175	16,252	1,239	36.2	55.02	50.4	53.3	52.4	48.4
Muzaffarpur	73	43	2	13,273	5,089	108	47,971	19,790	282	27.6	25.7	38.2	88.1	86.1	38.3
Darbhanga	53	73	5	15,451	15,444	1,702	65,478	48,843	1,753	23.6	31.6	97.09	88.2	81.2	77.02
Total	277	258	58	48,151	36,696	6,143	204,367	110,136	8,323	..	..	..	..	..	..

Kitchen relief was finally closed in all the districts in the last week of the period under report.

9. *Gratuitous relief.*—The average daily numbers gratuitously relieved during the week ending 25th September have been shown in column 10 of the table given in the preceding paragraph. Most of them were persons relieved in kitchens. The distribution of dry doles was practically closed in Shahabad before the commencement of the period under report, while in Darbhanga no relief of this kind was given after the 18th September. In Champanan and Muzaffarpur all gratuitous relief ceased on the 25th idem. The only tracts in which the distribution of doles continued beyond that date are two circles near Darauli in the Siwan sub-division.

and in the flooded tract and the Narwar circle in the Gopalganj sub-division of the district of Saran. All relief operations in this district were closed at the end of September.

10. *Public health and condition of cattle.*—Public health during August was not so good as in previous months. In the Bhabhu subdivision of Shahabad fever prevailed in a severe form. In Champaran a bad type of diarrhœa was prevalent, as well as dysentery reported to be due to the consumption of unripe fruit and raw grain. In Darbhanga fever prevailed in the south of the district. The condition of cattle was normal.

11. *Closing of relief operations.*—With the close of active relief operations, the special establishments entertained for famine relief have been for the most part discharged. The only work now in progress is that of adjusting the accounts and of preparing final reports for the preparation and submission of which full instructions have been issued by the Lieutenant-Governor. With regard to the work of the Charitable Relief Committees, Mr. Bourdillon writes :—

“The operations of the District and Local Committees of the Charitable Relief Fund are almost complete, and they have been specially busy during the past fortnight in distributing valedictory doles, in the shape of money, clothing and blankets, to those who were the very latest recipients of Government relief at kitchens and poor-houses, &c. This work is now almost done, and their accounts will soon be closed.

12. *General remarks by the Lieutenant-Governor on administration of famine relief in the Patna Division.*—As the Commissioner, with the Lieutenant-Governor's consent, does not intend to submit any more fortnightly famine reports, and his final report will probably not be completed before the end of December, Mr. Stevens takes this opportunity to express his concurrence in the opinion already expressed on more than one occasion by Sir Alexander Mackenzie, namely, that the administration of famine relief in the Patna Division (which is in this respect out of all comparison the most important of all the divisions in these Provinces) has been eminently satisfactory.

The salient points of the present famine relief administration and the more important conclusions suggested by it may be summed up here. They are—

- (1) That while it was made cause for reproach to this Government by the Famine Commissioners that the extent and intensity of distress were not gauged or foreseen with anything like approximate accuracy in the previous famines of 1866 and 1874, on the present occasion the areas

Vide paragraphs 92 and 94 of the Report of the Indian Famine Commissioners, Part I.

likely to be affected, the extent and intensity of distress, were all forecasted with a very near approach to correctness. The cost of alleviating the distress has been well within the estimates.

The following table compares the forecasts of the numbers likely to require Government relief in the Patna Division, submitted to the Government of India in my letter No. 447 Agri.(Fam.), dated the 16th February 1897, with the actuals so far as now known :—

Month.	Probable daily numbers likely to require relief by Government according to estimates in round numbers.	Actual maximum number in round numbers relieved in any one day.
1	2	3
December 1896	} Actuals were given.	69,000
January 1897		333,000
February „	400,000	415,000
March „	500,000	496,000

Month.					Probable daily numbers likely to require relief by Government according to estimates in round numbers.	Actual maximum number in round numbers relieved in any one day.
1					2	3
April	1897	...	...	...	600,000	597,000
May	"	...	...	...	750,000	711,000
June	"	...	...	...	600,000	706,000
July	"	...	...	...	400,000	559,000
August	"	...	...	...	300,000	370,000
September	"	...	...	...	200,000	139,000

N.B.—The figures in column 3 are taken from the Commissioner's fortnightly reports and those in column 2 from paragraph 6 of my letter No. 447 Agri., dated the 16th February 1897.

(2) That though the rainfall was very nearly as short in 1895-96, and even worse distributed than in 1873-74, and though the failure of crops was consequently as great as in that year, yet the total cost of relief operations in the whole Province to Government to the end of September, as reported by the Accountant-General and the Examiner of Public Works Accounts, Bengal, has been less than $\frac{1}{8}$ th part of that incurred in the famine of 1873-74.

(3) That there has been no mortality from starvation, and the people have been kept in such good case that they were able to return, and did return, to their normal pursuits of their own accord, and without compulsory closing of works, as soon as the *bhadoi* harvest was reaped, and the prospects of the coming winter rice harvest were assured.

(4) That the greatly reduced cost of the present famine relief operations compared with that of the operations of 1874 is due primarily to the policy wisely adopted, and courageously persevered in, of absolute non-interference with private trade (which has thus been proved for the first time and beyond question to be capable of meeting any emergency that is ever likely to arise), and in a secondary degree to greatly improved methods and knowledge of famine relief administration, both in the exaction of adequate tasks on relief works as tests of distress, and in the careful selection of fit objects of gratuitous relief.

(5) That it has also been shown as one of the results of the operations now brought to a close, that by the extension of railways and the general advance in material prosperity during the past quarter of a century, the power of the people, even in Bihar, to resist calamities of season has greatly increased since 1874-75. Not only was the failure of local crops as great as any on record, but the general distress throughout India was unprecedentedly extensive, and prices were higher than had ever previously been known. The power of resistance in these unfavourable conditions was surprising to those who knew the people best.

(6) That the zamindars of Bihar, the indigo-planters and other persons of affluence, and especially the Maharaja of Darbhanga, have been conspicuous for their unbounded liberality and charity, and willing co-operation with the officers of Government in meeting distress.

13. There has necessarily been much suffering among the people during the past year, which they have borne with most praiseworthy patience, but they have now emerged from the battle against starvation, if not without wounds, at least without deaths, and returned to their normal pursuits. They have the

prospects of a bumper harvest before them, and, as the Commissioner of Patna remarks :—

“The strain, stress and anxiety of the last year will very soon be (if it is not already) no more than a dark dream almost obliterated by the pleasanter recollection of an ideal monsoon closed by a magnificent final downpour.”

14. The hearty thanks of the Bengal Government are due to the Commissioner of Patna, to each and every one of the District Officers of the famine districts, to their subordinates, to the officers of the Public Works and Medical Departments and of the District Boards, to the indigo-planters and zamindars and other men of affluence in Bihar, who have all in their several degrees performed their duties under trying circumstances to the entire satisfaction of Government.

CHOTA NAGPUR DIVISION.

15. During the whole of the period under report the weather throughout the Chota Nagpur Division was all that could be desired, except that the rain which fell in the week ending 25th September was insufficient in Palamau and Singhbhum. In the rest of the division the fall during that week was exactly what was wanted for the winter rice. In the two districts mentioned, however, there were heavy* falls of rain during the weeks ending 2nd and 9th October, and the prospects of the winter rice are now everywhere favourable. The *bhadoi* has been a full crop in all the districts of the division except Manbhum, where breaks in the rains in June and July had a very injurious effect, and some damage is also reported to have been done by insects in certain parts of the district. The Deputy Commissioner, Mr. Maguire, is of opinion that the outturn of the *bhadoi* harvest has been generally good, and estimates the outturn of early rice at 15 annas over an area of 149,400 acres out of a total cultivable area of 1,347,118 acres in the district. The outturn of the ordinary *bhadoi* crops is estimated by him at 14 $\frac{2}{3}$ annas over an area of 198,800 acres.

The Commissioner doubts the correctness of these estimates, which he thinks to be far above the truth. Mr. Forbes, the Commissioner, draws attention to the fact that the *bhadoi* crop represents but a comparatively small portion of the total food-supply of the Manbhum district. While in the Hazaribagh and Lohardaga districts, the areas under *bhadoi* crops were approximately 4.5 and 6.1 annas of the whole cultivated area, in Manbhum the *bhadoi* area came to only 2 annas.

There was a further steady improvement in prices throughout the division. According to the telegraphic report for the week ending 25th September, the price of rice was 6 to 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ seers the rupee in Palamau, 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ seers in Manbhum, 7 to 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ seers in Hazaribagh, and 8 seers at Ranchi, and 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 16 seers in the interior of the district of Lohardaga. The prices (in seers per rupee) of the new *bhadoi* food-grains quoted for the 25th September are :—

—	Week ending			
	2nd October	9th October.		
	Inches.	Inches.		
*Palamau—				
Sadar ... ..	.54	2.40		
Balumath	3.70	2.03		
Hussanabad	—	2.97		
Garhwa	—	5.80		
Singhbhum—				
Chaibassa ... ..	.01	1.90		
Kalikapu ... ..	.16	3.20		
Ghatsila ... ..	.10	1.82		

—	Indian-corn.	Marna (<i>Eleusine corocana</i> .)	Gundli (<i>Panicum miliare</i> .)	Sawan (<i>Panicum tormentaceum</i> .)
	S. CH.	S. CH.	S. CH.	S. CH.
Manbhum	21 8	25 0	...	...
Palamau... ..	26 0	20 0	24 0	28 0
Hazaribagh	17 0	18 0	...	...
Lohardaga (for 15th September) ...	16 8	11 7	21 4	...

There was a very heavy increase in the death-rate in all the districts in the month of August, especially in Hazaribagh and Lohardaga, as shown in the following table :—

Districts.	Total Deaths from Cholera.			Total Death-rate per 1,000 of the Districts.		
	June.	July.	August.	June.	July.	August.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Lohardaga	42	703	5,832	2.22	3.72	12.53
Hazaribagh	315	1,470	3,600	3.03	5.34	10.51
Manbhum	2,113	1,953	1,225	4.00	4.08	4.48
Palamau	749	1,088	1,314	3.59	4.17	6.43
Singbhum	112	146	380	2.00	2.6	6.62

The increased mortality was chiefly due to an epidemic of cholera which was very severe in the districts of Hazaribagh and Lohardaga. The Commissioner has reported by telegram that the epidemic and high mortality have now abated and that remedial measures have been duly taken by the deputation of special medical officers, by the disinfection of wells and by the distribution of medicines. Mr. Forbes writes :—

“Independently, however, of cholera there has been a marked increase, as in Manbhum, for instance, where, although the deaths from cholera have notably fallen off since June, the death-rate has still been increasing. This is no doubt due in a great measure to the general lowering of system among the labouring classes owing to want of proper food, and the consequent diminished power of resistance against attacks of fever and other ordinary diseases. I fear that the effects of this will continue to be felt for some time to come.”

It was reported in paragraph 12 of my letter, No. 751 T.—R./Fam., dated the 17th September 1897, that Government relief operations in the district of Palamau had been closed on the 31st August. The Commissioner reports that no bad results ensued. In Lohardaga and Hazaribagh relief works and gratuitous relief by doles were closed on the 31st August and 4th September respectively. In the district of Hazaribagh two kitchens were kept open at Giridih and at Barhi on the Grand Trunk road, and a poor-house at Hazaribagh. The kitchen at Giridih has now been closed, some 165 persons still continuing to receive cooked food at the other two places. In Lohardaga some kitchens were likewise left open, of which eight supported by Government and four from charitable funds were still open on the 25th September, attended by 1,022 and 1,093 persons respectively ; but the Deputy Commissioner intended to close these on the 30th idem.

Relief works in Manbhum were tentatively closed by the Deputy Commissioner on the 31st August, but the principal works had to be reopened under the orders of the Commissioner. On the 11th September 4,647 labourers (including 649 on daily wages) were employed on 26 works which had been reopened at reduced piece-work rates amounting to Re. 1-4 per 1,000 cubic feet for soft and medium soil, and Re. 1-9 for hard soil, in place of Re. 1-14 and Rs. 2-3 in force previously. On the 25th September there were altogether 36 works open with 13,891 labourers, and on 31 of these the lower rate of Re. 1-4 per 1,000 cubic feet was in force. The rates have since been further reduced at an initial rate of 15 annas per 1,000 cubic feet, and the Commissioner writes that he cannot conceive that the people will continue to take work in large numbers at this rate any longer than they are forced by urgent necessity to do so. It is stated that the reduced rate was in force

generally on the 29th September; the numbers on the works since that date have been :—

2nd October	8,804
9th October	7,347

Mr. Forbes has thought it necessary to keep the works open until the upland rice harvest is in full operation and new rice is available about the end of the third week of the present month. The distribution of doles of gratuitous relief was discontinued generally on the 31st August, but kitchens were kept open and were attended by 3,287 persons on the 25th September. The Lieutenant-Governor was at first doubtful regarding the necessity of keeping relief works open in Manbhum after they had been closed in other districts, and requested the Commissioner to visit the district and report on the subject after personal enquiry on the spot. The Commissioner accordingly reports thus :—

“There is the broad fact that the *bhadoi* crop represents but a comparatively small portion of the total food-supply of the Manbhum district. This was pointed out in paragraph 21 of my last Annual General Administration Report for the Chota Nagpur division, where I showed that while in the neighbouring districts of Hazaribagh and Lohardaga, the areas under *bhadoi* in 1896 were approximately 4.5 annas and 6.1 annas of the whole cultivated areas in those two districts, the *bhadoi* area in Manbhum came to only about 2 annas, and had been even less than this (*viz.*, 1.7 annas) during the three preceding years. In other words, the *bhadoi* in Manbhum, as a means of support to the people, goes less than one-half as far as in Hazaribagh, and not one-third as far as in Lohardaga.

“Taking these facts in conjunction with the shrinkage in the coal trade and the late great depression in the important lac industry in Manbhum (see paragraphs 46 and 49 of my last General Administration Report), I do not think that the large demand for work at this moment in that district is at all a matter for surprise; and I cannot agree with Mr. Maguire's diagnosis of the present situation, nor do I think with him that the relief operations in that district can be peremptorily stopped with safety. As I have already informed Government, the rates have now been still further reduced to an initial rate of 15 annas per 1,000 cubic feet, and I cannot conceive that the people will continue to take work in large numbers at this rate any longer than they are forced by urgent necessity to do so. I may also mention that, in order to remove the possible expectation of a further grant of valedictory doles, I telegraphed to the Deputy Commissioner on the 30th ultimo to say that no more doles would be allowed (except to persons on the kitchen lists and in the Pokhria Circle, where none have yet been given).

“The latest detailed reports that I have received from the Deputy Commissioner are for Monday, the 27th ultimo. They show that the reduced rate (of 15 annas) was introduced on that date at 8 out of the 36 works. There were then 12,657 persons (= 11,412 male units) at work, showing a falling off of 1,234 persons (= 1,107 male units) since the 25th idem. The reduced rate was probably in force everywhere by the 29th ultimo, and the opinion to which I still hold is that we must await the further result of this practically starvation wage before deciding on what date all operations can safely be closed. * * * * To my mind the only reliable index to the necessities of the case is whether the people will accept work or not at a lower rate than has probably ever been known in this district. I am fully aware of the desirability of not continuing relief measures a day longer than absolutely necessary, and of the responsibility I incur of now doing so in opposition to the expressed opinion of the District Officer, but I cannot shut my eyes to stubborn facts. What these during the past month have been is shown by the large attendance on the reduced rates which have been in force during that month. For the present we can only await the result of the still further reduction. It is possible that, as suggested by Mr. Maguire, the works will have to be kept open until the end of the third week of the current month. If I find that I can close them safely sooner, I will of course do so.”

In view of the fact that large numbers have sought employment and remained on the works at the very low rate allowed of 15 annas per 1,000 cubic feet for earthwork, the Lieutenant-Governor cannot any longer doubt that Mr. Forbes was right in keeping them open as he did. As, however, the early rice is now being reaped, relief works are no longer required, and it has been ascertained by telegram they were closed on the 23rd instant.

PRESIDENCY DIVISION.

16. Throughout the Presidency division the rainfall has been sufficient and well distributed, and the prospects of winter rice are excellent, while the outturn of the *bhadoi* has been generally good. New *aus* rice has come into the market

and prices have fallen. Public health was generally good. Relief operations were closed in the district of Murshidabad on the 31st August, and in Jessore on the 4th September.

In the district of Nadia, famine had practically disappeared at the end of August. Only one relief work was kept open after the beginning of September, and this was closed on the 11th of that month, when the number attending it had dwindled to 25. Except at four poor-houses, gratuitous relief was also closed on that date. It was considered safe not to close the poor-houses until it was certain that the stopping of the doles would not lead to cases of starvation. It was, however, soon found that there was no marked increase in the numbers in the poor-houses, and they were accordingly closed on the 18th September, when the total number of inmates was only 23.

The outturn of the *aus* and jute has been good, but, as stated in previous reports, these crops are not of much importance in this district. The price of new *aus* rice is reported to have been 10 to 11 seers the rupee. The importation of Burma rice decreased, but there was no want of food-grains in the affected area, which at the close of the period under report stood at 367 square miles with a population of 210,000. There were only two relief works open in the beginning of September, and these were not largely attended and were finally closed at the end of the first fortnight. Gratuitous relief was continued, the average daily number gratuitously relieved in the week ending 25th September being 2,879; this number includes the inmates of six poor-houses which were kept open during the month mentioned. On that date the number of inmates of the poor-houses was 46 men, 293 women, and 521 children. Poor-houses were closed on the 20th instant.

BHAGALPUR DIVISION.

17. The *bhadoi* has been a good crop in the Bhagalpur and Sonthal Parganas districts, and the rain which fell in September and in the beginning of October has rendered the prospects of the winter rice secure. Prices have fallen considerably. In Madhipura and Supaul in the district of Bhagalpur the price of *marua* on the 25th September was 25 seers the rupee, and the Deputy Commissioner of the Sonthal Parganas, reporting on the 29th idem, says that Indian corn is now selling at 24 seers the rupee at Dumka, 17 to 22 seers at Deoghur, and 14 to 16 seers at Jamtara. Government relief operations had been closed before the beginning of the period now under report commenced; but during the period some relief from the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund was given in both districts.

BURDWAN DIVISION.

18. With good and general rainfall the prospects of the *aman* or winter rice in the district of Bankura were good, and the price of common rice fell from 8 seers 8 chitaks the rupee at the end of August to 10 seers 3 chitaks on the 25th September. Gratuitous relief from Government funds was closed in all the affected tracts on the 15th September, but relief works were continued in order to afford employment to needy labourers. Relief operations in the Sonamuckhi charge, with an area of 141 square miles and a population of 75,489 persons, were closed altogether on the 24th September, and all relief works in the remainder of the district were closed on the 29th idem. There was then still a large number (7,817) of labourers on the works, but a colliery proprietor, Babu Ram Bandhu

Chatterji of Kenchka in the Laltora outpost, who had spent over Rs. 5,000 upon works of relief, undertook to spend Rs. 6,000 more (either in cash or its value in rice) in carrying out further works during October and November, and thus rendered it possible for the Collector to close the Government relief works.

ORISSA DIVISION.

19. The prospects of winter rice in all the districts of the Orissa division are good, and prices have fallen. The telegraphic report for the week ending 18th October shows that the prices of common rice in that week were :—

				S.	CH.		S.	CH.	
Cuttack	...	...	...	13	13	to	15	12	per rupee.
Puri	...	...	...	9	0	to	13	0	"
Balasore	...	...	...	12	0	to	17	0	"
Angul	...	...	...	18	0	to	20	0	"

In Puri there was heavy and general rain, and crop prospects are excellent in all parts of the district. Eight relief works which were open in the beginning of the month were closed between the 10th and 13th September. On the 11th September the total number of relief workers was 2,082, but it appears that this comparatively large number was due to unnecessarily high rates of wages paid by the Collector, in spite of orders from the Commissioner and Government to reduce them. On that date the total number on gratuitous relief was 1,354. This form of relief was continued for another week, the number in receipt of doles on the 18th being 582, and was then stopped.

RAJSHAHI, DACCA AND CHITTAGONG DIVISIONS.

20. There is nothing of importance to report with regard to these divisions. The rainfall has been generally sufficient, and prospects of winter rice are good.

21. *General remarks by the Lieutenant-Governor on administration of famine relief in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.*—As famine relief operations are now everywhere closed, the Government of Bengal does not propose, unless the Government of India direct otherwise, to submit any more monthly reports. All the final reports reviewing famine operations for their several divisions are not expected from Commissioners before the end of the current calendar year, so that the final Provincial Report cannot in all probability be submitted to the Government of India before the end of January next.

By that time Mr. Stevens will have relinquished charge of the administration of these provinces to the permanent Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Alexander Mackenzie. He therefore deems it his duty to say here that as Member of the Board of Revenue he had no share in initiating the administration of famine relief by Government, which, under the Famine Code, lies outside of the Board's functions. The organisation was full and complete and the greater part of the work had been done when he assumed charge of the administration. He has at the same time had exceptional opportunities of forming an unbiassed judgment both before and after he assumed charge of the office of Lieutenant-Governor; and he has no hesitation in recording his emphatic and decided opinion that the administration of famine relief in these provinces has been eminently successful. In operations of such vast extent, and with an agency hurriedly got together to meet a widespread calamity of the kind, it was inevitable that mistakes should be made, but in Mr. Stevens' opinion the mistakes made in the operations now brought to a close

have been wonderfully few, and such as there have been were promptly rectified by the controlling authorities.

If the perfection of famine relief administration consists, as His Honour thinks it does, in saving life at a minimum of cost to the State, without demoralisation of the people, and without rendering them unwilling or unable to resume their normal occupations on the earliest advent of favourable seasons, Mr. Stevens believes that it has been attained in a high degree in the operations now brought to a close.

In paragraph 14 above the Lieutenant-Governor has specially recorded his high appreciation of the services rendered by the Commissioner of the Patna Division and of the officers who served under him, because it was in that division that the calamity now tided over was most severely felt, and it was there that the strain of labour and anxiety was greatest; but His Honour desires me to say that the remarks made in that paragraph apply likewise to the other Commissioners and Collectors of districts in which relief operations were undertaken and to their subordinates, and that they too are entitled to the cordial thanks of Government for the ability, zeal and devotion with which they have performed their anxious duties in their respective charges. Sir Alexander Mackenzie, having laid down the general policy and plan of operations to be followed in meeting distress, left the execution in details largely to local officers, who reported progress in full fortnightly to Government. Their reports were carefully scrutinised by Government; when necessary, attention was promptly called to defects, and instructions were issued to meet various contingencies as they arose.

Much reliance, however, was necessarily placed on the local officers, since it is obviously impossible that the central authority of a province can adequately direct all the details of operations at once so vast and so minute as those of general famine relief. Under such circumstances it is inevitable that some allowances must be made for the idiosyncrasies of individual officers. Making such allowances the Lieutenant-Governor considers that the results have conclusively established the wisdom of the policy adopted by the Government. Zamindars and persons of wealth and influence in nearly all of the affected districts have been conspicuous by their charity and by their active co-operation with Government in meeting distress.

I have, &c.,

M. FINUCANE,

Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

Statement of Rainfall in the affected and threatened Districts in September 1897.

RAINFALL IN INCHES.

Table with columns for STATIONS, days (1st to 31st), Total, and Normal. Rows include districts such as BANKURA, NADIA, MURSHIDABAD, JESSORE, KHULNA, RAJSHAHI, DINAJPUR, BOGRA, PABNA, PATNA, and SHAHABAD, each with sub-stations and their respective rainfall measurements.

Statement of Rainfall in the affected and threatened Districts in September 1897—(concluded).

STATIONS.	1st.	2nd.	3rd.	4th.	5th.	6th.	7th.	8th.	9th.	10th.	11th.	12th.	13th.	14th.	15th.	16th.	17th.	18th.	19th.	20th.	21st.	22nd.	23rd.	24th.	25th.	26th.	27th.	28th.	29th.	30th.	Total.	Normal	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	
SARAN {	Chupra	0.09	0.39	0.31	0.13	0.10	..	..	0.14	..	..	..	..	..	0.05	..	0.03	0.03	0.01	..	0.47	0.02	0.02	..	0.04	..	..	0.71	..	..	2.51	6.94
	Gopalganj ..	0.13	0.35	1.31	1.44	..	..	1.13	..	..	..	..	..	0.56	..	2.17	0.03	..	..	3.63	0.31	..	0.37	..	..	..	..	..	..	12.79	7.28	
	Siwan	0.35	1.15	4.10	..	..	..	..	..	0.80	..	..	..	..	1.00	0.40	..	0.67	..	..	0.25	0.22	..	1.35	..	..	0.18	..	..	10.27	8.57	
CHAMPARAN .. {	Motihari ..	0.03	0.35	3.06	0.35	..	0.09	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0.81	2.51	0.89	0.18	0.03	0.29	0.29	0.04	0.08	0.08	..	..	..	..	..	9.94	9.45	
	Bettiah	1.09	4.12	0.32	0.11	1.30	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1.99	1.26	0.61	0.02	0.21	0.09	1.14	0.03	0.01	..	2.26	..	0.41	..	..	..	14.92	9.58	
	Bagaha .. ..	..	3.01	7.28	0.25	0.10	2.71	0.04	..	..	0.44	..	..	..	0.43	0.84	0.74	1.82	..	1.01	..	..	..	0.09	..	..	1.35	..	..	20.26	10.99	
	Ramnagar ..	0.03	2.76	3.00	0.04	0.10	4.42	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3.09	1.03	2.27	0.57	0.05	..	3.41	..	..	0.11	..	..	..	..	..	..	21.02	..
MUZAFFARPUR {	Sadar	0.19	2.09	0.82	0.63	0.32	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0.08	..	1.21	0.09	..	..	0.03	..	0.29	0.04	0.08	0.08	..	..	0.36	..	..	6.42	8.92
	Sitamardi ..	2.07	1.30	0.93	0.58	0.21	0.12	..	..	..	..	..	0.32	..	1.20	0.78	0.84	..	..	1.50	0.19	0.18	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10.12	8.97	
	Hajipur	0.22	0.26	0.10	1.05	0.20	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0.07	0.40	..	..	..	0.52	..	0.03	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2.85	7.48
DARBHANGA .. {	Sadar	1.34	1.07	0.14	2.01	1.93	0.21	1.63	..	0.34	..	..	..	..	0.43	..	..	..	..	..	..	0.05	0.12	..	0.41	..	..	..	..	..	9.68	8.94
	Samastipur ..	0.78	0.95	0.69	0.56	0.53	0.32	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0.38	1.25	..	..	0.41	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0.12	0.27	..	5.95	8.10
Madhubani ..	0.59	1.79	0.12	1.52	0.61	0.12	1.98	0.05	..	..	..	..	..	0.05	..	0.92	0.13	..	1.10	0.22	..	0.06	0.04	..	0.05	..	..	0.31	..	..	9.61	9.52
BIJAPUR .. {	Madhipura ..	0.90	0.63	1.53	0.90	0.76	0.12	0.92	0.30	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0.60	..	..	..	..	0.13	0.43	..	..	0.23	0.29	..	8.04	10.22
	Sunaul	0.18	0.33	0.54	2.00	1.61	0.07	1.01	..	..	..	..	..	0.45	..	0.07	0.56	..	..	..	..	0.02	0.02	0.80	..	..	0.15	0.81	..	9.12	9.59	
	Bhagalpur ..	0.95	2.71	1.28	0.96	0.01	..	..	..	0.03	0.02	0.03	..	..	0.01	0.03	..	0.04	0.82	0.01	4.20	..	0.06	1.91	0.01	..	..	..	0.02	..	13.10	7.37
	Banka	0.15	4.15	0.40	0.95	..	0.40	0.35	..	..	..	..	..	..	0.40	..	..	..	0.40	..	..	..	0.23	0.40	0.23	..	..	0.15	..	..	8.21	8.36
SONTHAL PAR-GANAS. {	Dumka	1.28	0.75	..	0.66	1.74	..	..	0.03	..	0.59	0.30	..	..	0.12	0.10	..	1.79	..	2.29	..	0.76	..	0.24	0.36	0.10	..	..	0.03	..	11.19	9.53
	Rajmahal ..	1.42	3.52	0.22	1.29	..	..	..	0.58	..	..	0.02	..	..	2.49	0.37	..	0.86	0.10	..	..	0.28	1.20	0.19	1.30	..	0.46	0.03	..	14.33	11.13	
	Godda	2.05	2.40	0.45	0.92	..	..	1.35	0.87	..	0.06	..	..	0.10	0.41	..	..	0.30	..	..	..	..	0.45	0.63	..	..	..	0.01	..	..	10.71	8.87
	Pakaur	2.38	0.32	0.70	0.60	0.05	1.83	2.34	1.12	..	0.15	1.75	0.28	..	0.32	..	0.70	0.19	..	13.13	12.28
	Deoghur	2.50	2.72	0.83	0.73	0.24	0.25	0.15	0.04	0.34	..	0.50	0.46	0.22	0.06	9.04	8.23
	Jamtara	0.80	..	..	0.05	..	0.10	0.13	..	0.02	0.08	0.15	..	..	0.06	..	..	0.46	..	..	2.70	0.95	0.20	0.15	..	..	..	0.75	0.30	..	8.35	7.83
CUTTACK .. {	Sadar .. ..	..	..	..	0.02	1.50	0.07	0.65	0.70	0.60	0.50	0.25	..	..	..	0.03	0.13	..	0.15	0.10	..	0.86	0.43	0.31	..	0.70	..	..	..	7.00	11.07	
	Kendrapara ..	..	0.02	0.06	0.34	0.02	1.63	0.45	1.23	0.42	0.28	0.35	..	0.03	..	..	1.13	1.81	0.02	0.08	0.27	0.02	0.13	1.37	0.11	0.06	0.47	..	..	10.33	10.05	
	Jajpur .. ..	..	..	..	0.16	..	0.75	0.18	0.97	0.10	0.33	0.51	..	..	..	0.45	..	..	..	..	..	0.20	0.04	0.50	0.58	..	..	..	..	..	4.79	9.39
Banki .. ..	..	0.01	..	0.04	..	4.45	0.18	0.27	1.36	0.40	0.35	0.44	0.12	0.02	..	0.03	0.23	0.37	..	0.19	0.10	..	0.24	0.57	0.62	0.14	..	..	..	10.13	9.72	
PURI {	Puri .. ..	..	0.01	0.14	0.72	0.95	0.07	0.04	0.33	0.17	0.12	0.10	0.56	0.67	..	..	0.86	..	0.03	..	0.35	0.01	0.09	1.10	0.04	0.20	..	..	..	6.59	10.36	
	Khurda .. ..	..	..	0.36	..	0.24	4.28	0.25	0.34	0.93	0.62	0.18	..	..	..	0.81	..	..	..	0.14	..	..	0.16	0.10	0.44	..	..	..	..	..	10.92	..
Bhanpur	0.15	0.09	0.43	0.54	0.14	0.16	0.19	0.30	2.85	1.21	0.20	0.58	0.02	0.20	0.13	0.54	..	..	..	0.01	0.03	..	0.53	0.08	1.00	1.22	0.07	0.07	..	11.64	10.16	
HAZARIBAGH .. {	Sadar	2.62	0.11	0.45	0.15	0.50	..	..	0.19	0.06	0.10	0.06	0.02	..	..	0.39	0.02	0.08	0.80	0.01	0.87	0.60	0.95	0.34	..	0.07	..	..	0.03	..	8.10	8.76
	Giridih	2.06	0.61	0.07	0.87	0.03	..	0.12	0.07	0.05	..	0.11	0.05	..	..	0.83	..	..	1.11	..	1.02	0.70	0.12	0.63	0.48	..	..	0.53	..	..	8.46	8.42
LOHARDAGA .. {	Ranchi	0.12	1.05	0.09	0.04	0.45	0.30	0.19	0.24	0.04	0.19	2.04	..	0.13	0.91	0.11	0.17	0.10	0.13	0.15	..	8.45	9.62
	Lohardaga ..	2.33	0.08	0.10	0.58	0.27	0.30	..	0.10	0.16	0.40	0.05	..	..	0.07	0.37	0.02	..	..	..	..	0.47	1.25	1.84	1.53	0.44	0.04	..	..	0.20	12.86	9.45
PALAMAU .. {	Daltonganj ..	1.34	0.18	2.00	0.26	1.31	0.05	0.33	0.56	0.44	0.02	1.46	0.01	0.02	0.18	0.18	..	0.36	..	9.90	7.79
	Balumath ..	0.10	..	0.10	..	2.00	..	..	..	0.50	..	..	..	..	..	1.30	0.05	..	..	..	..	..	..	1.00	..	..	..	..	..	2.45	7.50	9.43
MANBHUM .. {	Purulia	0.02	..	..	0.52	1.45	0.04	0.40	0.27	0.08	1.47	0.15	..	..	..	0.96	0.08	..	..	0.40	1.75	..	..	1.19	0.10	..	..	..	0.48	0.05	9.39	8.04
	Gobindpur ..	0.75	..	..	0.62	0.50	0.30	0.08	0.10	..	0.28	..	..	..	..	0.24	0.65	..	..	3.93	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0.27	..	..	7.81	7.42
	Raghunathpur	0.18	0.20	0.20	0.05	..	0.10	0.05	0.02	0.04	0.07	0.15	0.10	0.33	1.49	7.74
SINGBHRUM .. {	Chaibassa ..	0.16	..	0.02	..	0.03	0.93	0.61	1.07	0.63	0.16	0.04	..	0.05	..	0.06	0.06	..	0.01	..	..	0.77	..	..	0.02	0.05	0.01	..	..	..	4.62	8.05
	Chakradharpur	0.28	0.07	0.19	0.73	0.62	0.04	0.05	0.67	0.07	1.45	0.25	0.14	..	0.03	4.61	5.51	
Ghatela	0.33	0.38	..	0.68	0.58	0.12	0.32	0.50	0.53	0.46	0.07	0.21	4.18	8.61		

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(Figures for these days not received.)

Monthly Famine Statement A for the four weeks ending Saturday evening, the 25th September 1897.

District.	Area.	Population in thousands.	Affected area.	Estimated population in thousands of area in column 4.	Numbers on Relief Works on last day of month.					Numbers on gratuitous relief.	Price of one or more principal food-grains in seers per rupee.					Monthly death-rate.		Deaths due to starvation.
					Class A.	Class B.	Class C.	Class D.	Total.		Common rice.	Indian corn.	Marua.	Barley.	Peas.	In the district.	In the affected area.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
PATNA DIVISION.																		
Shahabad	Sq. miles. 4,365	2,063	Sq. miles. 1,632	382	...	...	...	...	...	564	S. CH. 8 4	S. CH. ...	S. CH. ...	S. CH. ...	S. CH. 9 0	3-81	4-29	Nil.
Saran	2,651	2,466	49	43	...	...	...	...	...	4,485	10 0	16 6	18 4	...	...	3-89	3-89	Nil.
Champanan	3,531	1,860	700	275	...	1,328	...	41	1,369	1,239	10 4	19 4	...	...	...	4-50	4-50	Nil.
Muzaffarpur	3,005	2,713	1,851	1,660	...	...	...	34	34*	282	9 0	...	...	13 0	...	2-40	4-15	Nil.
Darbhangha	3,335	2,801	2,940	2,417	...	82	...	26	108	1,753	9 8	15 0	18 0	...	...	3-6	3-3	Nil.
Total for Division	16,887	11,903	7,172	4,777	...	1,410	...	101	1,511	8,323	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
CHOTA NAGPUR DIVISION.																		
Manbhum	4,147	1,193	3,373	991	...	13,891	...	...	13,891	3,460	8 0	16 0	...	...	...	4-48	4-78	Nil.
PRESIDENCY DIVISION.																		
Khulna	2,077	1,177	367	210	...	...	...	...	...	2,879	{ 10 0 } to { 11 0 }	...	...	...	...	2-72	2-38	Nil.
BURDWAN DIVISION.																		
Bankura	2,621	1,070	1,053	413	7,817	...	...	...	7,817	...	10 3	...	...	...	...	1-92	1-87	Nil.
Grand Total	25,732	15,343	11,965	6,391	7,817	15,301	...	101	23,219	14,662	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

* The figure is for 19th September 1897, all works being closed.

Monthly Famine Statement B for the four weeks ending Saturday evening, the 25th September 1897.

District.	Maximum number for whom employment on relief works is estimated to be required in case of serious famine.	Number for whom relief was provided in last programme of relief works.		Number for whom relief can be provided by works remaining on programme on date of report.		Expenditure since 1st April 1897.			Advances since 1st April 1897 up to end of month under—		Revenue suspended.
		On large works.	On small works.	On large works.	On small works.	Date up to which account is made up.	On relief works.	On gratuitous relief.	Land Improvement Loans Act.	Agriculturists' Loans Act.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
PATNA DIVISION.											
Shahabad	12,000	10,249	3,862	2,493	1,317	25th Sept.	Rs. 52,767	Rs. 1,62,322	Rs. 19,755	Rs. 51,267	Rs. Nil.
Saran	84,971	42,891	7,677	20,512	791	Ditto.	1,65,975	3,14,859	13,860	2,31,806	Nil.
Champanan	130,000	212,600*	87,700	108,000	37,000	Ditto.	7,22,774	5,26,415	5,869	1,92,395	Nil.
Muzaffarpur	300,000	79,906	95,919	66,280	39,325	Ditto.	4,70,105	4,57,497	10,159	1,76,624	Nil.
Darbhanga	351,964	138,478	213,486	46,552	77,486	Ditto.	17,78,660	8,28,173	18,448	Nil.	Nil.
Total for the Division ...	878,935	484,124	408,644	243,837	155,939	...	31,90,281	22,89,266	68,091	6,52,092	...
CHOTA NAGPUR DIVISION.											
Manbhum	120,000	52,379	69,325	(Not reported.)		25th Sept.	92,276	61,287	32,748	41,712	Nil.
PRESIDENCY DIVISION.											
Khulna	10,480	...	6,525	...	1,846	Ditto.	53,032	78,291	24,695	58,131	Nil.
BURDWAN DIVISION.											
Bankura	24,770	35,921	303,783	10,990	97,002	Ditto.	46,032	50,960	5,000	20,498	Nil.
Grand Total	1,034,185	572,424	788,277	254,827	254,787	...	33,81,621	24,79,804	1,30,534	7,72,733	...

* This includes about 20,000 persons on railway embankments.

PUNJAB.

Imperial Monthly Famine Statement A for the four weeks ending Saturday evening, the 29th May 1897.

DISTRICT.	Area in square miles.	Population in thousands.	Affected area in square miles.	Estimated population in thousands of col. 4.	NUMBERS ON RELIEF WORKS ON LAST DAY OF MONTH.						Numbers on gratuitous relief.	PRICE OF ONE OR MORE PRINCIPAL FOOD-GRAINS IN SEERS PER RUPEE.						MONTHLY DEATH-RATE OF DISTRICT.		Deaths directly due to starvation.
					Class A.	Class B.	Class C.	Class D.	Working children.	Total.		Wheat.	Gram.	Maize (Indian Corn).	Bajra (Bulrush Millet).	Jowar (Great Millet).	Barley.	Normal of month.	Actual of month.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	14a	14b	14c	15	16	17	18
Hissar ...	5,217	776	3,763	544	5,514	29,011	526	2,981	9,416	47,448	19,799	10½	10¼	...	9½	10¼	13¼	} See note on reverse of Statement.	} See note on reverse of Statement.	Nil.
Rohtak ...	1,797	590	1,467	452	...	1,247	...	3,748	1,683	6,678	3,733	10 to 11	10 to 10½	...	8	10 to 11	13½ to 14			Nil.
Gurgaon ...	1,984	669	558	198	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11	10¼	...	9	11	14			Nil.
Delhi ...	1,290	638	616	381	...	188	33	278	268	767	1,044	(Flour) 12	...	...	...	...	(Flour) 12			Nil.
Karnal ...	2,660	683	2,123	499	2,948	143	...	131	662	3,884	3,631	(Flour) 11	(Flour) 9	(Flour) 7½	...	...	(Flour) 11½			Nil.
Umballa ...	2,540	1,033	1,755	718	...	1,672	93	51	315	2,131	1,920	11 to 12½	10 to 12	11 to 12	...	...	...			One.
Ferozepore .	4,302	886	3,375	732	...	113	...	173	74	360	2	...	11½	...	...	...	11½			Nil.
Gujrat ...	2,051	760	562	155	1,458	1,150	493	193	513	3,807	1,256	(Flour) 11-82	...	...	...	...	...			Nil.
Total ...	21,841	6,035	14,219	3,679	9,920	33,524	1,145	7,555	12,931	65,075	31,385	...	...	...	...	...	...	One.		

Death-rate for April 1897.

	Normal.	Actual.
Hissar	29	29
Rohtak	29	20
Gurgaon	35	22
Delhi	40	25
Karnal	35	24
Umballa	30	22
Ferozepore	28	24
Gujrat	20	19

REMARKS TO ACCOMPANY IMPERIAL FAMINE STATEMENT A
FOR THE FOUR WEEKS ENDING SATURDAY EVENING, THE
29TH MAY 1897.

HISSAR.

CLIMATIC conditions were generally seasonable. The first half of the month was distinguished by a rapidly increasing daily temperature and fine cool nights. During the second half of the month dust-storms have been constant. One of the most violent of these was followed by a little rain which did not affect the temperature. Rabi harvesting operations were brought to a close and kharif sowings were vigorously pushed on in canal villages. Large quantities of "chaitu" or early bajra and jowar have been sown and are even now being cut for fodder. The prospects of the crops in these villages are so far good. The un-irrigated tracts have no crops whatever and it is impossible to say whether the rains will be favourable or not.

The condition of the majority of the people has declined further although there is still no cause for grave anxiety. The people have been reduced by lack of drinking water, want of food and by indulgence in jungle fruits and other un-nutritious products. The death-rate has risen as it always does at this time of year, but is still not above the normal.

The relief works open during the month have provided sufficient employment for all applicants.

The programme of proposed works will provide employment up to the 15th July next.

Gratuitous relief in villages is effective. Private charity is also freely bestowed by a few people in the different large centres. The poor-houses have become popular at last and the numbers of inmates are kept down with great difficulty by insisting on all who can doing some work.

On the whole wages on relief works have fallen by nearly one pice per worker per day owing to the fall in the price of barley.

More grain was imported during May than in any previous month since the famine began. But barley from the Punjab has largely taken the place of *jowar* from Sind.

ROHTAK.

Poor-houses.—An experimental poor-house was opened at Jhajjar, but the attendance was small, and people requiring relief as paupers refused to go to it. It had therefore to be closed.

Private subscriptions.—Rupees 40,000 have been allotted to this district from the Provincial Charitable Relief Fund.

Out of this sum cheap shops for food-grain have been opened, but have not been as successful as was expected. The greater part of this money will be used in making grants for the purchase of seed and plough bullocks to indigent cultivators for the coming kharif harvest.

Rupees 2,519 have been spent from the District Fund on gratuitous relief, and Rs. 266 have been subscribed by private individuals during the month. These private subscriptions were given and used for supplying water in places where watering cattle was difficult.

Relief works.—There are 25 relief works in progress—in Tahsil Rohtak 4, in Tahsil Jhajjar 16, and in Tahsil Sampla 5.

The arrangements are working well. During the month seven tanks in Tahsil Jhajjar have been completed; there is no necessity for providing additional works at present, as the works in the programme are sufficient to afford relief.

Health of people.—The health of the people continues to be good, and there have been no deaths directly due to starvation.

Food-stocks.—The reserve of food-grains is reported to be sufficient for present requirements, and importations are on the increase.

Prospects of harvests.—The rabi crops on irrigated lands were harvested in April. Cotton, indigo and jowar continue to be sown in canal villages. The condition of the extra rabi is good. In Sampla Tahsil the area sown is 236 acres, in Tahsil Jhajjar 287 acres, and in Tahsil Gohana 1,115 acres.

The rainfall during the month has been—

Tahsil Sampla	...	...	...	...	1.30
„ Rohtak	...	...	...	...	0.95
„ Gohana	...	...	...	...	0.41

Wage rate.—There was no change in the rate of wages during the month, as the price of the staple food-grain remained stationary. The average wage rate during the month was—

Workers	...	...	...	...	1 anna.
Children and dependants	...	...	...	...	3 pies.

GURGAON.

There were slight showers on 23rd and 24th May in Gurgaon and Rewari Tahsils. Rabi harvest operations have ceased. The villages in poor circumstances have been inspected by Revenue Officers, and the question of suspensions aggregating Rs. 18,925 is now under consideration.

New grain is being brought to the market and prices have fallen.

Gratuitous relief was given from funds received from the Charitable Relief Committee in Rewari to 117 persons, and in Farrukhnagar to 101 as a weekly average. Private subscriptions support 77 persons in Gurgaon and 35 in Sohna daily.

Subscriptions of a total value of Rs. 323-14-0 were received during the month.

Famine works have been temporarily closed since the 8th May 1897. If the rains do not set in as early as usual it may possibly be necessary to re-open them. In the meantime no labourers have returned to work.

No deaths were reported from starvation. The labourers were in good health up to the day they left the works.

The works on the sanctioned famine programme which have not been taken in hand can employ 14,153 labourers for three months.

DELHI.

Private relief by the aid of funds from Relief Committee has been increased, as the artisan class in the city is feeling the scarcity more than ever. The kitchens at

Delhi, Ballabgarh and Najafgarh are meeting a real want, though no one who is fit to work is received. Earth-work for the Delhi-Agra Chord Railway and earth-digging near the city are the only relief works. The physical condition of the people is fair. Importation of grain has been steady, wheat coming from Chandausi (North-Western Provinces), and rice from Burma. The prospects of the affected area depend entirely on the coming monsoon. The death-rate does not appear to have been affected by the scarcity.

KARNAL.

The present state of the Famine Subscription Fund is as follows :—

	Rs.	A.	P.
Balance from last month	15,689	13	1
Subscriptions collected locally during the month	383	0	0
Total	16,072	13	1
Amount expended on gratuitous relief in villages and towns	1,276	2	9
Balance	14,796	10	4

Besides the above 1,610 persons were given gratuitous relief daily in villages from district funds.

As remarked in past month's report there has been no necessity yet for establishing poor-houses in this district.

The two large works in progress in this district on the Nardak Rajbaha and the Kaithal Branch of the Sarasuti Canal are sufficient for the present to afford ample employment to the famine-stricken.

The health of the people continues to be fairly good.

There was a general rainfall throughout the district during the month, but hail did a good deal of harm to extra rabi crops. Prices have slightly fallen. The yield on irrigated areas has been average, but very poor on unirrigated lands.

The quantity of grain imported into the district during the month amounted to 2,516 maunds only.

There has been a decrease in the number of labourers employed on the Kaithal Branch, as the Purbias employed there left in a body for Patiala in hope of getting work there, as they have for some time been dissatisfied with the low wage given. On the Nardak Rajbaha the number of labourers increased owing to the harvest having been reaped. The effect of the distress is chiefly felt in this tract. There was no change in the rates of wages, which were paid under Section 166 of the Punjab Famine Code.

No deaths directly due to starvation occurred during the month under report. The children's kitchen started on the Nardak Rajbaha during the last month worked satisfactorily. The cost per head of those fed in the kitchen was 6 pies.

UMBALLA.

Private relief.—Private relief has been afforded in Umballa City and Cantonment from funds allotted by the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund Committee, and also in rural tracts. Rs. 1,000 have been appropriated for each of four tahsils, the money being distributed in bounties of Rs. 4 to parva nashins, widows, &c. Some of the allotted money has also been appropriated for the spinning establishment managed by the lady missionaries in Umballa City.

Village relief.—A system of gratuitous relief as contemplated by the Code has now been organised in the four distressed tahsils. There are 1,695 persons on the registers, and zaildars are employed as distributing agents. The relief is given in cash form.

Poor-house relief.—There is none. The one poor-house which was established at the head-quarters of one tahsil has not had inmates.

Relief works.—The only relief works now in progress are tanks. A staff is maintained to keep tanks open in each tahsil, but the works are few and far between. The physical condition of the people gives no cause for anxiety. Food-stocks have been improved by the grain derived from the spring harvest, but the district has no reserve, and depends mainly on imports by rail, which are, after Delhi and Hissar, perhaps the most extensive of any of the districts in the division.

The general condition and prospects of the affected area have undergone a change for the better. The harvesting of the rabi has had more effect than was anticipated. A fall in prices was caused, and though the fall was not great it has had considerable effect on the demand for relief work. Famine wages offer less attraction, and menial communities would not be tempted far from home by a relief work. The zamindars have all taken in some quantity of food-grain, and the attitude of the district is one of expectancy. The question of the extension of the relief works need not be considered until the monsoon has declared itself one way or the other.

Change in rates of wages.—The scale of wage was calculated on maize sold at 11 seers per rupee during May 1897, while during April the rate was 10 seers per rupee.

A case occurred in which an old woman who had been some time begging in villages was found dead in a wood. Death was due to disease and want of food. Beyond this case no deaths directly due to starvation have been traced.

FEROZEPORE.

Only one relief work was opened during the month. More were not considered necessary as the people were engaged in harvesting, and the Agwah Canal (which is not a relief work) provided employment for a large number of people. Five poor-houses have been kept open, but they are seldom patronised. The condition and health of the people generally are good. Cases of small-pox have been reported in the district. Stocks of food-grain are sufficient. The imports of grain during the month amounted to 18,631 maunds, and 74,326 maunds were exported. The prospects of the affected area are good, but much depends on a good rainfall. Wages were calculated at the rate of 11½ seers to the rupee. No deaths due directly or indirectly to famine.

GUJRAT.

Gratuitous relief under Section 140 A of the Punjab Famine Code is given daily to 512 people.

There is no village relief, nor is there a poor-house. None were considered necessary.

Physical condition of the people good. There is no distress at present. Those on works are not in real need of relief. The work is being made a convenience of by people who are not in distress. The numbers on works decreased somewhat. The labourers are not likely to leave of their own accord, as this is a slack season for field work and the works are at the doors of the majority. By a small amount of bodily labour a family can easily earn about Rs. 8 per mensem. The majority of these workers come from within a radius of eight miles. Orders have therefore been issued authorising the Commissioner of Rawalpindi to close the works when and in the manner in which he thinks no harm will be caused by the sudden withdrawal of the means of subsistence.

Prospects of kharif crops fair. Changes in the rates of wages were made at every fall in prices.

The death-rate is below normal. The health of the people is very good.

Food supplies are sufficient and no importation of grain. Crops have been cut, but the produce of rabi, 1897, is much below the average. Prospects of the affected area depend on good rain.

Imperial Famine Statement B for the four weeks ending Saturday evening, the 29th May 1897.

District	Maximum number for whom relief is estimated to be required in case of serious famine.	NUMBERS FOR WHOM RELIEF WAS PROVIDED IN LAST PROGRAMME OF RELIEF WORKS.			NUMBERS FOR WHOM RELIEF CAN BE PROVIDED BY WORKS REMAINING ON PROGRAMME ON DATE OF REPORT.		EXPENDITURE SINCE APRIL 1ST 1897.	ADVANCES SINCE APRIL 1ST UP TO END OF MONTH UNDER		REVENUE SUSPENDED.		
		Date of Gazette.	On large works.	Others.	On large works.	Others.		Date up to which account is made up.	Rupees omitting 000s.		Rupees omitting 000s.	
									On relief works.			On gratuitous relief.	Rupees omitting 000s.	Rupees omitting 000s.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Hissar	6,000	Last programme submitted with Punjab Government letter No. 364 S., dated 10th July 1896.	8,000	12,000	4,900	10,487	29th May 1897	308.6	62.1	Nil	Nil	318.7
Rohtak	5,000	Ditto	2,500	8,000	2,753	19,187	Ditto	22.3	8.6	Nil	Nil	199.7
Gurgaon	7,000	Ditto	1,000	15,000	557	6,524	Ditto	2.4	0.2	Nil	Nil	Nil
Delhi... ..	5,000	Ditto	...	8,000	3,650	5,394	Ditto	4.9	2.3	Nil	Nil	6.5
Karnál	8,500	Ditto	6,500	10,000	16,800	19,342	Ditto	35.5	9.2	Nil	Nil	Nil
Umballa	8,000	Ditto	5,000	13,500	12,196	14,395	Ditto	7.2	3.5	Nil	Nil	73.7
Ferozepore	23,000	...	9,000	7,200	4,500	3,093	Ditto	2.27	.03	Nil	Nil	Nil
Gujrát	16,800	Last programme submitted with Punjab Government letter No. 364 S., dated 10th July 1896.	...	6,000	50,000	595	Ditto	50.0	5.3	Nil	Nil	Nil
							Total ...	433.17	91.23	Nil	Nil	598.6
NOTE.—The expenditure under the headings in columns 9 to 12 during 1896-97 was as follows:—								Hissar	311.7	36.3	1.4	6.4
								Rohtak	18.8	13.0	4.6	8.3
								Gurgaon	11.0	0.4	3.9	8.1
								Delhi	17.3	3.4	1.0	17.0
								Karnál	49.2	4.7	2.4	19.6
								Umballa	31.0	2.2	5.4	14.4
								Ferozepore	23.8	1.0	24.4	6.7
								Gujrát	352.8	53.0	Nil	Nil
							Total	815.6	114.0	43.1	80.5	

No. 1834 S. Dated Simla, 14th October 1897.

From M. W. Fenton, Esquire, Revenue Secretary to Government, Punjab and its Dependencies, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Revenue and Agricultural Department.

SIR,

IN continuation of my letter No. 1461 S., dated the 15th September, I am directed to submit, for the information of the Government of India, the Monthly Famine Report of the Punjab, for the month of September 1897, in the form of the two prescribed Statements, A and B, and the accompanying map.

2. As relief works have now been closed in all districts and gratuitous relief has also ceased everywhere no further monthly reports will be submitted. A kitchen poor-house is still open in Delhi City at the cost of municipal funds, and it is not considered necessary to direct its closure so long as the Committee wish to keep it open, nor does it seem necessary merely on account of the continuance of this form of relief to submit a monthly report for October. Some expenditure on establishment and winding up operations will doubtless be incurred in October, but the amount will, it is believed, be trifling.

I have, &c.,

M. W. FENTON,

Revenue Secretary to Government, Punjab.

Imperial Monthly Famine Statement A for the four weeks ending Saturday evening, the 25th September, 1897.

DISTRICT.	Area.	Popula- tion in thou- sands.	Affected area.	Esti- mated popula- tion in thou- sands of col. 4.	NUMBERS ON RELIEF WORKS ON LAST DAY OF MONTH.						Numbers on gratuitous relief.	PRICE OF ONE OR MORE PRINCIPAL FOOD-GRAINS IN SEERS PER RUPEE.						MONTHLY DEATH-RATE OF DISTRICT.		Deaths directly due to starva- tion.		
					Class A.	Class B.	Class C.	Class D.	Work- ing Child- ren.	Total.		Wheat.	Gram.	Maize (Indian corn).	Bajra (Bulrush Millet).	Jowar (Great Millet).	Barley.	Normal of month	Actual of month.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	14a	14b	14c	15	16	17	18		
Hissar ...	5,217	776	3,763	544	2,271	154	38	...	360	2,823	731	10	10	...	11	11	12½	} See reverse of this Statement.	} See reverse of this Statement.	Nil.		
Delhi ...	1,290	638	18	192	660					Nil.
Karnál ...	2,660	683	2 123	499	1,214*	210					Nil.
Total ...	9,167	2,097	5,904	1,235	2,271	154	38	...	360	4,037	1,601	...	...	...	...	...	...			Nil.

* Work is carried out on the intermediate petty contract system.

Death-rate for August 1897.

	Normal.	Actual.
Hissar	27	46
Delhi	30	27
Karnal	34	37

REMARKS TO ACCOMPANY FAMINE STATEMENT A FOR THE
FOUR WEEKS ENDING 25TH SEPTEMBER 1897.

HISSAR.

Heavy rain fell on the last two days of August in the Hissar and Hansi Tahsils, but the fall in other parts of the district was light. A break of fourteen days followed. The heat during the day gradually rose till it became intense, and if the break had continued much longer the results would have been serious. But the rains set in again on the afternoon of the 13th September and the whole district received an ample supply during the next 48 hours. The normal annual average of the five chief reporting stations in the district is 16·13 inches, while since 1st June 1897 the average works out to 18·34 inches. Rabi sowings were extensively carried out during the month and the kharif crops progressed most favourably. Locusts visited the district in large hordes and efforts were everywhere made to destroy the young insects when hatched. As a rule these were successful, but wherever the people themselves refused to respond readily to the call of the district authorities no little damage was done.

The physical condition of the people is still poor, but has slightly improved.

Prices showed a tendency to fall at the beginning of the month, but hardened again owing to the large export of grain to the frontier and the impressment of transport animals. As soon as the impressment ceased the people began to bring in their grain freely to the markets and during the last few days there has been a distinct fall in the price of all staples except gram, which is largely in demand for sowing. Imports have fallen off very much and now only balance the exports.

The death-rate continues to rise and fever has been terribly prevalent all over the district during the month. Cholera reached the town of Hissar early in the month and is only now beginning to show signs of abatement.

The relief works open during the month fell off in number and the attendance gradually declined. The last work to remain open closed on the 25th September. There is now no necessity for relief works in any part of the district.

Gratuitous relief in villages has been effective, but was stopped, as far as Government funds were concerned, in the beginning of the month. The work was continued, however, by the District Charitable Fund Committee, as although there is now no probability of any one dying of hunger, there would have been great distress had the District Committee not come forward.

Very little private charity has been bestowed during the month.

The poor-houses at Hissar and Sirsa were closed during the month. There is now no poor-house open in the district. As far as Government relief is concerned the famine in this district is over.

KARNAL.

The present state of the Famine Subscription Fund is as follows :—

	Rs.	A.	P.
Balance on 1st September 1897	15,981	5	2
Subscriptions collected locally during the month	180	0	0
Total	16,161	5	2
Expenditure on gratuitous relief	328	11	11
Refunded to Provincial Committee from amount allotted to this district under Head III. as being in excess of requirements.	7,895	0	0
Total	8,223	11	11
Balance in hand	7,937	9	3

Besides the above, Rs. 364-11-8 was expended on gratuitous relief distributed to the women and children of the Kanjars under trial at Karnal.

The only work in progress in this district was the Nardak Rajbaha, which has been closed as a famine relief work from the 1st October 1897.

The health of the people continues good.

There have been good rains in the district during the month, which have greatly improved the prospects of kharif crops.

Three thousand two hundred and thirty-two maunds of grain were imported during the month.

DELHI.

Private relief from charitable funds continues to be given, but proposals to reduce this immediately are under discussion, as the Committee suspect that it is not always reaching the right people.

The municipal kitchen is still open. Relief is thus given to 500 or 600 persons daily. The physical condition of the people is fair. Food-stocks are sufficient.

Exports of grain continue.

The prospects of the harvest are very good. Damage has been caused by locusts locally.

Imperial Famine Statement B for the four weeks ending Saturday evening, the 25th September 1897.

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District.	Maximum number for whom relief is estimated to be required in case of serious famine.	NUMBERS FOR WHOM RELIEF WAS PROVIDED IN LAST PROGRAMME OF RELIEF WORKS.			NUMBERS FOR WHOM RELIEF CAN BE PROVIDED BY WORKS REMAINING ON PROGRAMME ON DATE OF REPORT.		EXPENDITURE SINCE 1ST APRIL 1897.		ADVANCES SINCE 1ST APRIL UP TO END OF MONTH UNDER		REVENUE SUSPENDED.	
		Date of Gazette.	On large works.	Others.	On large works.	Others.	Date up to which account is made up.	Rupees omitting 000s.		Land Improvement Act.	Agricultural Loans Act.	Rupees omitting .000s.
								On relief works.	On gratuitous relief.	Rupees omitting 000s.	Rupees omitting 000s.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Hissar	50,000	Last programme submitted with Punjab Government letter No. 1611 S., dated 29th September 1897.	25,400	22,400	No report received since submission of revised programme.		25th September 1897.	713·0	119·0	...	5·00	318·7
Delhi	7,000	Ditto	19,200	24,000	...	...	Ditto	13·3	7·1	...	14·0	75·0
Karnál	8,500	Ditto	3,200	12,300	...	...	Ditto	70·9	16·1	...	27·6	48·7
Rohtak	Relief works closed ...	...	...	...	...	...	Ditto	46·0	18·0	...	...	199·7
Gurgaon							Ditto	2·4	0·2	...	...	...
Umballa							Ditto	12·1	8·7	...	...	73·7
Ferozepore							Ditto	5·4	·04	...	...	44·7
Lahore							Ditto	3·4	...	...	...	89·8
Gujrát							Ditto	59·1	6·2	...	...	77·8
Total ...												
NOTE.—The expenditure under the headings in columns 9 to 12 during 1896-97 was as follows:—								Hissar	311·7	36·3	1·4	6·4
							Rohtak	18·8	13·0	4·6	8·3	
							Gurgaon	11·0	0·4	3·9	8·1	
							Delhi	17·3	3·4	1·0	17·0	
							Karnál	49·2	4·7	2·4	19·6	
							Umballa	31·0	2·2	5·4	14·4	
							Ferozepore	23·8	1·0	24·4	6·7	
							Lahore	55·9	2·2	7·0	19·1	
							Gujrát	352·8	53·0	Nil.	Nil.	
							Total ...	871·5	116·2	50·1	99·6	

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3 A

NOTES ON THE FAMINE RELIEF WORKS IN THE PUNJAB, BY
MR. T. HIGHAM, C.I.E., ON SPECIAL DUTY, FAMINE RELIEF
OPERATIONS.

1. The Punjab was not included in my tour of inspection of famine relief works. I proposed at one time to visit this province last of all, or on my return from the Madras Presidency, but my tour had extended so far into the rainy season that I was advised that the principal relief works in the Punjab would be practically closed before I could arrive there, and with the approval of the Government of India I returned to Simla without visiting this province. I have, however, obtained a certain amount of information about the works that have been in progress there, which may be conveniently recorded in the present note.

Province was not personally visited.

2. Relief works in the Punjab at the beginning of June were confined to seven districts, as in margin, of which the first five belong to the Delhi Civil Division, the sixth to the Jullundur, and the seventh to the Rawalpindi Division. Works were closed in the Gujrat district on the 19th June, and the number of relief workers employed at the end of that month in the Ferozepore, Umballa and Delhi districts were under 1,000 in each. Relief works have been carried

Distressed districts.

Hissar.
Rohtak.
Delhi.
Karnal.
Umballa.
Ferozepore.
Gujrat.

out by the Public Works Department in the Hissar, Rohtak, Karnal and Gujrat districts, the works in Hissar being more important and more numerous than those in all other districts put together. Petty works under the civil authorities have also been carried out in other districts, but they had all been closed before the 1st June.

3. The works carried out by the Public Works Department were works of public utility, the most important being the Ghaggar Canals in the Hissar and the Jhelum Canal in the Gujrat district.

Character of the relief works.

The latter is a project which has already been sanctioned by the Secretary of State as a productive public work, but its construction has been held in abeyance pending the completion of the Chenab Canal for want of funds. Relief workers were, however, put on to sections of the proposed main line, and work done by them will reduce, *pro tanto*, the amount of excavation to be done when the construction of the canal is put in hand. The Ghaggar Canals form a project which has been under consideration for some years in the Punjab, and for which detailed plans and final estimates had fortunately been completed shortly before distress was declared. It consists of two canals taking out from the right and left banks of the Ghaggar river about 12 miles below Sirsa, which after crossing the Hissar-Bikanir boundary run for some miles in Bikanir territory, the aggregate length of the two channels being about 100 miles, of which 54 miles are in Bikanir. The project is one which will probably be remunerative, and will certainly be very useful and beneficial in protecting a large area of land in the valley of the Ghaggar. The Bikanir Darbar has agreed to contribute its fair share towards the cost. The canals were completed on famine relief principles during the season of distress and I understand that water is now flowing in them. The works in both British and Bikanir territory were carried out under the superintendence of the officers in the Punjab Irrigation Branch, Public Works Department, and afforded relief to great numbers, the average number employed in the Hissar district being over 15,000 and in Bikanir over 6,000 daily for nearly six months. These canals were situated in the very part of the district in which distress was most acute, and thus formed an admirable relief work. In addition there were other canal works, consisting of cuts for cutting off long loops in the old Western Jumna Canal, one of which was carried out in the Umballa and one in the Hissar

district, and an important new distributary, called the Nardak Rajwana, in the Karnal district. These works were all carried out by the officers of the Irrigation Branch, but there were two other works in the Hissar district, which were carried out by the officers of the General Branch. These were the principal relief works in progress, and all of undoubted utility, but there were in addition various petty works carried out by Municipalities and District Boards. The Deputy Commissioner of Hissar, Captain Dunlop-Smith, has informed me that 250 village tanks were excavated and enlarged in that district under the supervision of the civil officers. The following extract from his letter is interesting :—

“Our plan of campaign in this district was to start only major works in charge of Engineers at the beginning of the famine in November last. The people all howled for tanks from the beginning, but I refused to start them on anything like a general scale till the beginning of the hot weather, when the major works began to give out, and it was desirable to avoid hordes of labourers being camped together. The result is that now the major works have all been finished or are drawing in; out of a rough daily average of 70,000 on relief works all but 20 per cent. are on tanks. This policy of keeping the tanks to the end has been completely vindicated. The work itself is good, as it is very remunerative to, and appreciated by, the people, and now it is keeping them close to their homes, so that they can start work on their fields as soon as the rain comes.”

4. The Superintending Engineer, Colonel Jacobs, states that,

“People came from considerable distances to the works on the Ghaggar canals, as far as 50 miles in some cases. When another relief work, the Ranjir cut, about 50 miles off, was started some 2,000 labourers left the Ghaggar works to go there because it was near to their homes. When operations were at full height on the Ghaggar canals about 90 per cent. lived on the works. *Sirkhis* were supplied to them, and they made little huts of these and the branches of trees. The villages were very small and far between, and the country very jungly. Wolves visited the camps and bit children, some of whom died, but the workers lived on in these huts. The people will leave their homes when really hard up, but not otherwise. When works were opened close to a village all the village turned out to work, but when that work was completed and another was opened farther away only those continued to come to the work who were really hard up.”

5. In the Hissar district applicants for work on first arrival were put into class A or class B according to their appearance, but very few professional labourers joined the works. As the work progressed the labourers were redistributed into their proper classes according to their capacities. A man doing the full A task or over receives the A wage, and so on. Workers were thus promoted from a lower to a higher class for good work, and degraded from a higher to a lower for short work, but the Deputy Commissioner says that from 50 to 60 per cent. of the workers all over the district were permanently in class B. Nursing mothers were always given the A wage.

The unit for tasking was as in Bengal, the subgang of two to four diggers with the necessary complement of carriers. At first these subgangs were formed according to code classes A, B, or C, all workers in an A gang receiving an A wage, but in hard soil, when it was found that the diggers could not keep the carriers fully employed, the A wage was latterly given to the diggers only. Practically, however, the mass of the workers were in the B class, and and when the B task was not done the minimum or D wage was paid, though in some cases when the B task was nearly done the C wage was allowed. The wage was very rarely reduced by fines below the D or minimum limit. There were very few labourers in the D class, the proportion being generally less than 2 per cent. of the whole. They included merely those who were quite feeble, but not infirm enough to be entitled to gratuitous relief as dependants. They were put into the gangs as extra carriers, in addition to the normal proportion.

6. The tasks for diggers in class A varies from 75 cubic feet in the hardest soil to as much as 225 cubic feet in soft soil, the B task being generally 80 per cent. of this. I have no details of the average task actually exacted from the carriers, most of whom received the B wage,

but the standard task tables of the Punjab Famine Code prescribe a much higher task for carriers than those of any other Provincial Code, though it is not, in my opinion, excessive, or more than has been actually exacted during the present famine throughout Bengal. I am unable to say, however, whether the carriers' tasks actually exacted in the Punjab were higher or lower than those contemplated on the Punjab Code.

7. I have obtained the following working statistics for the five weeks ending 3rd July 1897 relating to the Working statistics on Ghaggar Canals. Ghaggar Canals :—

Attendance in British territory—

					Worker units.	Dependant units.
Men	...	...	...	...	118,972	1,566
Women	...	...	...	...	132,335	2,060
Children	...	...	...	...	32,095	51,668
Total					283,402	55,314
Male units	...	...	...	...	230,259*	...
Child units	...	...	...	...	...	59,984

*1 Man 1 male unit.
 1 Woman $\frac{1}{2}$ " "
 1 Child $\frac{1}{3}$ " "

Percentage of male adults 42.

Payments were as below :—

Item.	AMOUNT PAID.		Percentage on item 1 of up to date outturns.
	Five weeks ending 3rd July.	Up to date.	
Labourers' wages	Rs. (a) 38,921	Rs. (b) 3,68,889	...
Sunday wage, &c.	2,843	12,069	3.27
Work charged establishment	8,297	32,565	8.83
Hutting...	4,518	28,493*	7.72
Miscellaneous	11,036	34,783	9.43
Gratuitous relief	4,230	47,381	12.84
Total	69,845	(c) 5,24,180	(d) 42.09

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
British territory	27,518	2,63,722	3,52,469	33.65
Bikanir "	11,403	1,05,167	1,71,711	63.27

Sunday wages, &c., include all wages paid when no work is done, as on day of arrival, wet days, &c.

Other items form a much higher percentage on the labourers' wages in Bikanir than in British territory. The excess percentage on all items except gratuitous relief, hutting special establishment and miscellaneous expenses amounted to nearly as much in Bikanir as in British territory, though the expenditure on wages in the former was only 40 per cent. of that in the latter. The work in Bikanir was managed and paid for by the State, the duties of the Public Works officers being mainly confined to supervision of the work.

The value of work done, calculated at normal rates, was as follows :—

				During five weeks.	Up to Date.
In British territory	...	...	...	Rs. 16,491	Rs. 1,74,275
„ Bikanir „	...	...	...	7,236	70,120
			Total	23,727	2,44,395

The total value of work done up to date was therefore 66·24 per cent. of the amount paid as wages paid to labourers, this proportion being practically the sum in both British and Bikanir territory. If the cost of gratuitous relief and other items are included the actual value of work done may be taken as 46·65 per cent. of the total expenditure incurred, the proportion in British territory being 49·44.

According to some figures in a note recorded by the Chief Engineer the value of work done to end of April amounted to 80 per cent. of the wages paid to labourers. The reduction of this rate to 66·24 on the up to date figures to 3rd of July is due to the great falling off on outturn during the months of May and June, when much of work consisted of clearing, and when the heat is greater than in almost any other part of India, and there are perpetual sandstorms night and day which come up from the Bikanir desert. Free labour does not work at all in these parts at this season of the year, and would certainly not be attracted by the normal rates annexed, which are those payable in the cold weather.

The normal rate for channel excavation on the Ghaggar Kalals is Rs. 2-12 per 1,000 cubic feet, but the average rate, including work on embankments, is about Rs. 3, while the actual cost of labourers' wages has been about Rs. 4-12. As famine labourers cannot ordinarily do more than 60 per cent. of the tasks executed by able-bodied professional labourers this rate is not excessive, especially when the conditions of the climate in May and June are considered.

The average wage per male unit employed in British territory during the five weeks ending 3rd July was $\frac{27518}{230259} = 1$ anna 10 pie, the grain rate during this period being 10 seers to the rupee. On this basis the code wage for a B male is 1 anna 11 pie, so that practically the B wage was paid all round, and the cost of relief per male unit was high compared with the average in Bengal or North-Western Provinces.

The cost of relief to dependants in British territory during the five weeks was $\frac{1911}{5984} = 0\cdot5$ anna per child unit. Relief was at first given in the form of cash doles, children receiving half an anna, and male adults 5 pice. The numbers were so great that it was deemed advisable to open kitchens, the immediate effect of which was a great reduction in number, as they were very unpopular. In Bikanir gratuitous relief was always given in cash.

8. Particulars of three other works under the officers of the Irrigation Department have been given in the Chief Engineer's note already referred to.
Other works in Delhi Civil Division.

Particulars.	Hansi Canal Cut off Hissar District.	Abdullapur Cut off Umballa District.	Nardak Rajbaha, Karnal District.
Total number of workers or day units ... ..	...	123,143	289,546
Total number of male units	4,758	103,979	219,609
Percentage of male adults	43	46	44
	Cubic feet.	Cubic feet.	Cubic feet.
Total quantity of work done... ..	208,485	3,839,000	11,072,000
Average work done per male unit	43.8	42.9	58.9
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Total wages, including Sunday wage	630	11,915	31,502
	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
Average wage per male unit	0 2 1½	0 1 10	0 2 3
Rate per 1,000, excluding Sunday wage and exclusive of dressing, &c.	3 0 0	2 10 5	2 7 0

The average wage per male unit is high compared with that paid in Bengal or North-Western provinces, as almost all workers were placed in the B class, but the outturn of work was very good, and the cost of wages per 1,000 cubic feet of earthwork was but little above the normal rate. It will be noted that in all the works in this part of the Punjab the proportion of male adults varied from 42 to 46 per cent. of the total number of workers.

9. The relief works in the Delhi Civil Division were entirely under the control and management of the officers of

Works in Delhi Division under the control of Public Works officers. the Public Works Department. It was originally contemplated that, in accordance

with the Famine Code, the work should be managed by the district officers, the duties of the Public Works officers being confined to their proper professional work. This was the arrangement originally recommended by the Chief Engineer, but when His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor visited the works in January, he found that the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, and Superintending Engineer were unanimously in favour of leaving all arrangements in the hands of the Public Works Department, a conclusion in which His Honour concurred. Orders were passed accordingly, and the works were managed from start to finish entirely by the Public Works officers, native officials belonging to or nominated by the Civil Department being placed under their orders. I understand, however, that the management of kitchens was undertaken entirely by the civil officers.

10. The Jhelum Canal works in the Gujrat district were started on a different system, as the entire control of the work

Jhelum Canal works. was vested in an Extra-Assistant Commissioner, the responsibility of the officers

of the Public Works Department being strictly confined to the supervision of the setting out of the work, the supply of necessary tools, the formation of the labour gangs after classification, the fixing of the tasks and the measurement of the work done. This arrangement was introduced on the suggestion of the Superintending Engineer, Chenab Circle, who considered that the Public Works officers would not have time to attend to the duties of a famine officer, though they would be willing to render every possible assistance in the way of professional supervision. As in the Delhi Civil Division the Public Works Department was, in the first place, very unwilling to undertake the management of the works.

11. Work was commenced on 25th December, 1896. The labourers were almost all put into the A or B class, but the members of both these classes appear to have at first received the same, or A wage irrespective of classification. Feeble labourers who could do no more than a nominal task received the D wage. There were no workers in class D. The initial task set was 40 cubic feet per worker, the average lead being 200 feet and lift 4 feet. This task was heavy for relief workers of the ordinary type, but not for workers who were all receiving the A wage, and who should therefore have belonged to the class of able-bodied professional labourers.

It would not have been excessive for ordinary relief workers if reduced by one-third or to 26 cubic feet per worker, but during the first five weeks the average outturn was 9·3 cubic feet only, or less than a quarter of the task assigned, and the cost of earthwork for wages paid, and exclusive of all incidental charges, amounted to over Rs. 14 per thousand. The average wage per worker during this period was 1·65 annas, and there was practically no fining. Under these conditions the work became very popular and was overcrowded. The work was then reorganised, and during the next five weeks better tasks were obtained, the daily outturn per unit rising to 17·1 cubic feet, though the lift was increasing, and the cost of wages fell to Rs. 8·2 per 1,000 cubic feet. It was then found convenient to transfer the charge of the works to the Public Works Department, which became responsible for the management from the 7th March to the 19th June (when they were closed), or for a period of 15 weeks. During this period the improvement which had been manifested during the five weeks ending 6th March continued, the average task per worker during the 15 weeks rising to 19·1 in spite of a considerable increase in the mean lift, while the average wage per worker fell, in consequence of a stricter system of fining, to 1·29 annas, and the working rate per 1,000 to Rs. 5·24, which was not much above the value of the work done at normal rates. Taking the whole period from the commencement until the work was closed on the 19th June, or for 25 weeks, the average outturn per worker was 14·7 cubic feet per diem, the cost of the wages paid working out to Rs. 8·26 per 1,000, and the average daily wage being 1·54 anna per working unit. This is for the labour employed on the earthwork only. The final rate, including all expenditure, including gratuitous relief, working out to Rs. 12·79 per 1,000, the average normal rate for the work if executed by ordinary contract being estimated at Rs. 5·8 per 1,000 cubic feet. Details of these other items are as follows :—

	Amount in Rupees.	Percentage on item (1).
(1) Wages to labourers on earthwork	2,49,416	...
(2) Labourers employed on general and conservancy duties ...	6,948	2·79
(3) Dependants on workers	51,580	20·58
(4) Gratuitous relief under section 140-A, Punjab Famine Code	7,776	} 3·17
(5) Paid to sick persons	142	
(6) Hutting and miscellaneous charges	49,375	19·80
(7) Work charged establishment	21,251	8·52
Total expenditure ...	3,86,488	54·96

12. It will be seen that the payments to dependants exceeded 20 per cent. of the amount paid to the workers, which is extraordinarily high. In the statement of Dependants on Jhelum Canal from which these figures have been obtained all adults who were put in class D, i.e. old and infirm members or dependants

or the working families who did work of no account, have all been included among the dependants, and not, as elsewhere, among the workers, but the payments made to them have not been shown separately, though the total number of these a lult day units is given as 148,716, some of whom would of course have been true dependants. Apart from this, however, the number of non-working children was excessive, amounting to 1,195,564 day units or 45·66 per cent. on the number of day unit workers, which was 2,618,440. This is a remarkably high percentage, for in no province has it exceeded 25 per cent., and in the Punjab itself, including the Gujrat district, the average percentage has been very much less. As relief works in this district were closed on the 19th June, it may reasonably be inferred that distress was less here than elsewhere, and that the relief given to dependants was therefore unduly liberal, although under the present code little discretion appears to be allowed in this matter, and there is no restriction on the percentage of dependants to whom relief may be allowed. On going into details it is found that during the five weeks ending 30th January the number of non-working children was 59,963 against 125,952 workers, or 47·6 per cent. This proportion increased in the four succeeding weeks, attaining a maximum in the week ending 27th February when there was an average daily attendance of no less than 20,794 non-working children against 27,741 workers of all kinds, or almost exactly 75 per cent. In the following week kitchens were established in two sub-divisions, and this was followed by an immediate reduction in the proportion of non-working children, though it had not fallen to less than 20 per cent. until the week ending the 3rd April. The average proportion during the fifteen weeks following the introduction of kitchens was 26 per cent.

The expenditure on hutting and miscellaneous charges was also high on this work. In regard to the former the Commissioner reported at the end of January that—

“Hutting is ready in a double line for roundly 4,000 people, but as far as I could judge, and in this all are agreed, probably not over 2,000 use the huts put up for them. Much hutting does not seem wanted, the neighbouring villages seem so charitable in giving shelter.”

Hutting is very necessary when the people have to reside on the works, but there is no doubt that it may often be overdone if huts are erected much in advance of the demand for them.

The cost of special establishment bore a proportion of 8·52 per cent. to the amount paid as wages to earthwork labourers, or about the same as on the Ghaggar Canal works.

13. When the Jhelum Canal work was started almost all who came were offered the highest wage permissible under the Famine Code; there was no restriction on the number of dependants, and no attempt was made to enforce full tasks. All this, even the leniency shown at first in the matter of tasks, was in accordance with the Famine Code, except that the proportion of labourers in the A class appears to have been excessive. It was soon found, however, that the only effect of this liberality and leniency was to attract people to the works who had no intention of working, and probably many others who were in no need of relief, and that the expenditure on such a system would be enormous in proportion to the value of work done. The same mistake appears to have been made initially on the Ghaggar Canals, where, according to the note recorded by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor on the 18th January, the cost of earthwork was originally six times the normal cost, though it was afterwards explained that this included many special and incidental charges. As this work was from the commencement under whole-time Public Works officers the classification and tasking were from the outset stricter than on Jhelum Canal, though perhaps not as strict as they should have been. On both works, however, the initial mistakes were soon realised, and persistent efforts were made to improve matters, the tasks eventually realised comparing favourably, as far as comparison is possible, with those obtained in other provinces, while the cost of the earthwork was

often little below normal rates. The wages paid were higher than has been found necessary in the North-Western and Central Provinces and in Bengal, when reduced to the same grain rate, but the Punjab followed the Famine Code in regarding the minimum or D wage as that which should be paid only to individuals who were too weakly to be tasked at all, all workers doing a fair task work eventually receiving something like a B wage, whether employed as diggers or carriers, and with the tasks eventually attained these wages were not very excessive.

14. The question however suggests itself whether both these works, the Jhelum and the Ghaggar Canals, might not with great advantage have been carried out by piece-work from start to finish. I know of no works on which the conditions were, *primâ facie*, more favourable for such an experiment.

I believe it is true that in both districts, Hissar and Gujrat, and especially in the latter, distress was, however widespread, far less acute than in the North-Western and Central Provinces, in parts of which piece-work would have been hardly possible. I understand that when works were started the people were in fair condition and with so much work available, and so many able to work, no other relief was possibly required than that afforded by employment. For on both these canals there was plenty of employment of the most useful kind for as many as were willing to work. Both works have been recommended as likely to prove directly remunerative, apart from their value as protection against famine, and when once sanctioned and started the greater the progress at reasonable rates the less the ultimate actual cost to the State. If the amount expended on these works had been expended under the piece-work system, the result would have been that the value of the work done would have been greater, while the amount distributed to the labourers would not have been less, or would indeed also have been greater by the saving in cost of special establishment. When the work is of a comparatively useless kind, the former consideration has less force, but the characteristics of both these works is that the ultimate cost to Government will not materially exceed the difference between the actual expenditure and the value of the work done at normal rates. It may indeed be said that if the amount spent on these works had been distributed only between those who were willing to attend them as piece-workers, many of those in real need of relief would not have received it, and that a large number of workers would be more or less professional labourers attracted from remoter parts where there was no acute distress. The latter difficulty can be easily guarded against, and as regards the former it may be noted that in the Jhelum Canal relief was given to 2,694,196 workers and 1,344,280 dependants, of whom 148,716 were adults. The sum paid as wages to the workers amounted to Rs. 249,416, while the dependants received Rs. 51,580, or a little over 20 per cent. on this amount. If the work had been carried out on the piece-work system from the beginning, these workers might easily have increased their earnings by 20 per cent. and with the increase would have been able to support this army of dependants, the numbers on the works would have been reduced by nearly one-third, there would have been a great saving in the cost of establishment and of incidental expenses, and the wholesale demoralisation caused by what is little better than a system of gratuitous relief would have been wholly avoided. To say that the workers if offered an opportunity of earning enough for themselves and their dependants would either not exert themselves to earn so much, or after earning it would not apply any portion thereof to the support of the dependants, is to say that they would act contrary to their own time-honoured and most firmly established custom, and this is so doubtful that it cannot but be regretted that under such favouring conditions the experiment should not have been tried.

15. On the Ghaggar Canal the conditions appear to have been equally favourable, and indeed the Superintending Engineer, Colonel Jacob, has expressed an opinion that almost all the relief required would have been afforded if these canals

On Ghaggar Canals piece-work, if not the ordinary contract system, might have been adopted.

had been carried out by the officers of the Irrigation Branch under the ordinary petty contract system. He writes as follows :—

“The possible corruption of all the native staff is what makes the famine work so difficult, and the whole task of prevention hangs on the European sub-divisional officer. Our case should therefore be to simplify. One great advantage of piece-work over the present system would be to simplify, therefore piece-work is incomparably better, yet it will be quite spoiled if Government, in its rage for statistics, will have the people daily counted, and these elaborate returns sent in. Every additional man put on as mate, mistri, &c., retains something of what should go to the people.

“It is for this reason I so far prefer working with petty contractors. I do not say it can always be done, I admit that it is not possible, but in a case like the Hissar district, where the people never got emaciated or pulled down, but were all strong and in good health throughout, and where we had lots of petty contractors who have worked with us for years, and whom we have thoroughly in hand, I am perfectly sure that we could have relieved every bit of distress in this way with only the addition of a few poor-houses and kitchens in a few places.

“Of course there would have been more trouble with these contractors, but these known men whom we have employed for years, and who expect to be employed for years more, would be so much more amenable than new men who knew they would soon be sent adrift, and who had therefore to do their cheating sharp.

“These contractors know how to marshal the men, get the best work out of them, measure up, &c. We should make them of course take all able to work, but many who came to famine works and played at working would not work with contractors, but would be fed by the wages of their stronger relations.

“I don't think this kind of work would do except with your own contractors, nor would it do if the people were much weakened at any time. All I contend is that the Hissar work could have been run on these lines, with great profit to Government, with perfect famine relief for the district, and with far less effort and friction, and above all without the disorganising of the native system of relief among themselves.

“Without poor-houses, work-houses, &c., natives in ordinary times care for their poor far better than the European does with all his appliances. Any breaking up of their system would be a terrible calamity, but the Famine Code system goes far to break it up, and is most objectionable in consequence. Far better that the strong should work for and support the weak. The piece-work system will be a great improvement on the daily wage, but it partakes of some of its disadvantages, and if my suggestion could have been carried out it would dislocate nothing.

“For instance in Hissar I would have undertaken to run the whole thing, if I had been allowed, on the lines I have stated, the civil authorities to be critics and judges, to step in at once when they saw that distress was not being met, or where any deterioration in general health or strength was apparent. With critics like this watching us with keen eyes, knowing that they would be called to account if they allowed the people to suffer, what fear would there have been.”

This is a forcible statement of the case for carrying out relief works under either a contract or piece-work system, and by preference the former, put forward by an officer who is specially qualified to form a sound opinion on the point. It is indeed doubtful, as he himself admits, whether conditions in acutely distressed districts would often justify the employment of contractors, though in certain cases such men would be the most efficient agents that could be employed, and I think it not improbable that in the particular cases of the Ghaggar and Jhelum Canals the provision of employment for all in the ordinary manner, through the agency of well-known and reliable contractors, would have afforded nearly all the relief required. Opinions will however probably differ as to the expediency of using the agency of contractors, but there are at least many indications that the conditions in both the Hissar and Gujrat districts were especially favourable for the introduction of piece-work.

16. Piece-work would probably have been tried from the outset in both these

districts were it not for the restrictions of the Punjab Famine Code. In this as in all the other provincial codes the only system contemplated on relief works is the task-work or daily labour system, and no discretion is given, even to the Local Government, to authorise the introduction of any other system. It may be noted, however, that in the case of the Ghaggar Canals the Punjab Government proposed in its letter No. 01038-I., dated 20th October 1896, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Public Works Department, that the construction of these canals should, at least in the first instance, be carried on as an ordinary public work, and not as a

famine relief work. It was said that "the project will afford employment for numbers of able-bodied men and their families who, under the pressure of impending scarcity, may be expected to flock to the work from adjacent villages, and will thus render it unnecessary to start other works of a less useful character," and it was anticipated that, if the work were thus carried out on the ordinary public works system, the expenditure would not exceed the value of the work to be done, at normal rates. The Government of India, however, replied in their letter No. 234-I., dated 3rd November 1896, that the grants under head "43.—Minor Works and Irrigation" in the current or subsequent years would be insufficient to meet the expenditure proposed, and that therefore any work which it might be necessary to carry out immediately upon the project should be regarded as undertaken solely to give relief to a famine-distressed district, and should be carried out under the conditions of the Punjab Famine Code. Funds could thus only be made available for this work under the condition that it was classed as a relief work, and carried out in accordance with the instructions of the Famine Code, under which piece-work is not permissible. The result has been that owing to the inability of the Government of India to increase the grants for ordinary public works, the Local Government was forced to carry on this work as a relief work, that is to say on a wasteful and demoralising system which was in its opinion hardly required in this tract, however necessary it might have been to provide employment.

17. As has been explained in the notes on other provinces the disadvantages of the code or daily labour system have been so great as to induce all Provincial Governments to consider the expediency of substituting piece-work for task-work wherever practicable. On the initiative of the Government of the North-Western Provinces the proposal that piece-work might, under certain precautions and conditions, be permitted on relief works was heartily approved by the Government of India as intimated in their letter No. 255-F., dated 16th January 1897. The later modification of these proposals made in North-Western Provinces Circular No. 753—73-S., dated 26th March 1897, was forwarded by the Government of India for information to Local Governments and Administrations under Circular No. 20—91-2-F., dated 19th April 1897, and as a result piece-work in some form or another has been introduced in all provinces, though not until the later stages of operations were reached. Had piece-work been recognised at an earlier stage as falling within famine relief principles it is very probable that almost all the relief works in the Punjab would have been started on this system. I understand that piece-work was introduced towards the end of operations on the Jhelum Canal and the Nardak Rajbaha, and that the result was a great gain in economy and efficiency. Some statements in regard to the Jhelum Canal indicate that the work done by 41 working parties during three days when paid by the piece exceeded the work done by the same parties in the same time when in receipt of a daily wage by as much as 90 per cent.

18. The foregoing particulars regarding relief works in the Punjab have been obtained from official reports and from communications received from some of the officers employed on them. As I did not personally visit the works I am unable to describe them in greater detail, but the information given will suffice to show generally to what extent the Punjab system of working differed from those in other provinces. It will be seen that the Punjab did not follow the practice adopted in the North-Western and Central Provinces and in Bengal, under which all labourers who could do no more than carry received only the minimum or D wage, but that, as in Bombay, the classification and tasking of labour was in close accordance with the system prescribed in the famine codes, although the workers, in some cases, appear to have been initially too highly classed, and excessive leniency was shown in the enforcement of tasks. By degrees, however, mistakes of this kind were rectified, and after the first two months the tasks ultimately realised were full tasks, even with reference to the high wage paid to the carriers. The works in the Hissar district were almost from the first entirely under the management of the Public Works officers and the same arrangement was ultimately made in Gujrat, although originally a civil famine officer was in charge of the works, and exercised sole control over the classification, payments, &c.

Concluding remarks.

Distress in the Punjab was less widespread and of shorter duration than in other provinces, and even where it existed was probably less acute. The relief works required were therefore fewer in number, and it was fortunately possible to start works of great public utility, which would have been started sooner or later even if there had been no famine, as desirable and remunerative projects. The Jhelum Canal will probably be started as a productive public work next year, and the work recently done on it will be all to the good. The Ghaggar Canals have been completed, and will soon be earning revenue, an area of over 6,000 acres having been actually irrigated since they were opened. In this province the real cost to the community of relief operations will therefore have been little more than the difference between the expenditure actually incurred and the value at ordinary or normal rates of the work done. This difference would undoubtedly have been much smaller than it actually is, with but little if any diminution in the extent of the relief afforded, if the works could have been carried out from the beginning either under the ordinary contract system or by the method of departmental piece-work, as the workers would have done more for the wages actually paid them and the large amount distributed in the form either of cash doles or cooked rations to the dependants that flocked to the works would have been given to the working members of their families in exchange for more work done. It is in consequence of the fact that in the existing Famine Codes piece-work is not recognised as in accordance with famine relief principles that a great opportunity was lost of testing its efficiency as a means of relief in a province in which all the circumstances were exceptionally favourable.

14th October 1897.

T. HIGHAM.

BURMA.

No. 266-1S-10, dated the 11th June 1897.

From the Secretary to the Financial Commissioner, Burma, to the Revenue Secretary to the Government of Burma.

I am directed to send herewith returns in forms Appendices VI. and VII. Burma Famine Code, for Upper Burma, for the period of five weeks ending the 29th May 1897.

2. The whole of the Meiktila district has now been shown as an affected area and the corresponding figure for population has been entered in column 5 of Appendix VI.; in other respects the estimates of affected area and population are the same as those given last month.

3. The numbers on relief works show slight increases in both Meiktila and Myingyan while the numbers on gratuitous relief have decreased in Myingyan and increased in Meiktila. Cultivation of the early wet weather crops, sessamum, and cotton, is progressing satisfactorily, but as yet there has not been any general exodus from the works.

4. The death rate reported from Meiktila is the same as that given last month, while the Yamethin rate has increased. Cholera is still prevalent in both districts. The Myingyan death-rate shows a considerable decrease, but the accuracy of the figures is very doubtful as cholera has now assumed an epidemic form in the district. In fact owing to the absence of an adequate agency for recording deaths, the death rates for all three districts can only be considered as estimates.

5. Rice continues to be exported from Lower Burma to Upper Burma; the total amount exported up to 29th May being 65,199 tons.

6. The figures in columns 4 and 5 of Appendix VII. relating to Myingyan have been brought into agreement with the last programme of relief works which was prepared on 1st April 1897. The figures in columns 9 and 10 represent the expenditure during the current financial year, and those in column 12 the amount of agricultural advances granted from the present year's allotment.

7. Further details are given below for each district separately.

Meiktila.—Gratuitous relief has been regularly distributed through the agency of "Local officers." "Longyis" (waist cloths) and "tameins" (petticoats) bought out of the amount allotted to the district by the Charitable Famine Fund Committee have also been distributed, and the most needy cultivators have been presented with sums of Rs. 5 each from the same source to enable them to buy seed for the early crops of sessamum, cotton and Indian corn. Cultivation of these crops is in progress. The physical condition of the people remains much the same as hitherto. No deaths from starvation have been reported. Rice is still being imported in fairly large quantities, but not so freely as before, and the supply at the relief works at Yegyo camp near Mahlaing has not always been regular. The price of paddy has risen from Re. 1 to Rs. 1-4 per local basket; price of rice has not yet risen, but it probably will very shortly and when it does the rate of wages will have to be increased.

Yamethin.—Rs. 20,055 have been given out from the allotment from the Charitable Famine Fund Committee to 2,621 families to enable them to make a fresh start in life. Hitherto the rains have been abundant and agricultural operations are everywhere in full progress. Sessamum and maize have been sown in most places and in some the young plants are already above ground. The large mortality is chiefly due to cholera; no deaths were due directly or indirectly to famine.

Myingyan.—Relief works are being carried on at two places, Taungtha and Yônzin; at the former about 10,000 persons and at the latter 2,000 persons are employed. Those cultivators whose presence is absolutely necessary at their homes have left the works, but these are comparatively few. Maung Po Kin, one of the two Civil Officers on the works, has broken down and is unfit for duty, and the other is now ailing.

Gratuitous relief continues to be distributed regularly. A thugyi in Kyaukpadaung is being criminally prosecuted for embezzling the money made over to him as local officer to distribute as gratuitous relief.

Large quantities of clothing purchased with Charitable Relief Funds have been distributed to relief workers by Civil and Camp Officers, and Circle Inspectors have also made a distribution to the persons on their gratuitous relief lists. Gifts to distressed cultivators to enable them to purchase sessamum seed continue to be made; the distribution was stopped for a time owing to the unfavourable character of the rainfall at the beginning and in the middle of May.

Cholera still continues in Kyaukpadaung and has reappeared in Pagan. It has also broken out in the villages surrounding the two famine camps, in both of which it is now prevalent. A considerable number of deaths have been reported both from the villages and the camps. Every effort had previously been made in the camps to secure cleanliness, a pure water supply, and the segregation of affected persons, and it only remains to continue the efforts. Attempts are being made to cleanse some of the worst villages and a Myook has been deputed to personally superintend the work.

The attempts to induce relief workers to migrate to Mandalay have been unsuccessful as the Public Works Department rates are not sufficiently attractive and the people are afraid of cholera and fever.

Very favourable rain fell in the district during the first few days in June, and agricultural prospects, and the supply of fodder and water for cattle have very greatly improved. The serious outbreak of cholera is really the only depressing feature in the situation.

APPENDIX VI.

Monthly Famine Statement for the five weeks ending Saturday evening, the 29th May 1897.

(Vide Section 43 of Code.)

District.	Area.	Population.	Affected area.	Estimated population of column 4.	NUMBERS ON RELIEF WORKS ON LAST SATURDAY OF MONTH.					Numbers on gratuitous relief.	PRICE OF ONE OR MORE PRINCIPAL FOOD-GRAINS IN SEERS PER RUPEE.			Monthly death-rate.	Deaths due to starvation.
					Class A.	Class B.	Class C.	Class D.	Total.		Rice.	Maize.	Peas.		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	Sq. miles.		Sq. miles.								S. C.	S. C.	S. C.		
Meiktila	2,178	216,673	2,178	216,673	...	4,110	...	...	4,110	1,023	8 12	14 3	22 15	42	Nil.
Yamethi	5,497	206,557	909	51,000	...	...	...	...	...	363	9 13	...	...	46.32	Nil.
Myingyan	2,774	352,037	1,873	260,071	...	10,290	...	...	10,290	3,267	10 5	Jowar. 13 1	18 7	27.12	Nil.

APPENDIX VII.

Monthly Famine Statement for the five weeks ending Saturday evening, the 29th May 1897.

(Vide Section 43 of Code.)

District.	Maximum number for whom relief is estimated to be required in case of serious famine.	NUMBER FOR WHOM RELIEF WAS PROVIDED IN LAST PROGRAMME OF RELIEF WORKS.			NUMBER FOR WHOM RELIEF CAN BE PROVIDED BY WORKS REMAINING ON PROGRAMME ON DATE OF REPORT.		EXPENDITURE SINCE 1ST APRIL 1897.			ADVANCES SINCE 1ST APRIL UP TO END OF MONTH UNDER		REVENUE SUSPENDED.
		Date of last programme.	On large works.	Others.	On large works.	Others.	Date up to which account is made up.	Rupees.		Land Improvement Act.	Agricultural Loans Act.	Thousand Rupees.
								On relief works.	On gratuitous relief.	Thousand Rupees.	Thousand Rupees.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Meiktila	20,000	31-3-97	19,168	3,100	22,503	3,100	29-5-97	43,516-15-1	2,282-2-8	...	42	...
Yamethin	20,000	6-4-97	11,846	3,352	11,846	3,352	29-5-97	40-13-0	1,631-7-6	...	21	..
Myingyan	20,000	1-4-97	39,171	8,166	35,905	8,166	29-5-97	96,348-8-0	3,523-14-4	...	38	..

No. 185-1—S.—10, dated Rangoon, the 9th October 1897.

From the Secretary to the Financial Commissioner, to the Revenue Secretary to the Government of Burma.

I am directed to send herewith returns in forms, Appendices VI. and VII., Burma Famine Code, for Upper Burma, for the period of 4 weeks ending Saturday, 25th September 1897.

2. The estimates of affected area and population are the same as those given last month; but although it has not been considered advisable as yet to declare any of the affected areas free from famine, there is no doubt that considerable portions of the formally declared areas in all 3 districts are now free from famine and self-supporting. The numbers on relief works have decreased considerably, but in addition to the numbers shown in Appendix VII., there are 805 persons from the Meiktila Division employed on relief works in the Mandalay district. The rainfall during September was on the whole favourable, and large areas have been sown with paddy, jowar and late sessamum. Anxiety is now beginning to be felt in all three districts regarding the standing crops on unirrigated land, as rain has now held off for some time and is badly needed. The situation hinges on the later rains as regards unirrigated lands which of course form by far the largest portions of the districts: if good rain falls during the present month, the late crops will be successful and famine will disappear; if it does not, the late crops will fail or at best give a poor outturn, and it is probable that famine will continue. The prospects of crops on irrigated lands in Meiktila and Yamethin are good, as all the irrigation tanks are full.

3. All three districts are now free from epidemic disease of any kind, and the death-rates of all have decreased. The death-rate reported from Myingyan is probably unduly low.

4. The exports of rice from Lower to Upper Burma up to the end of the period of report amounted to 106,578 tons. The price of paddy has fallen very largely in Rangoon and Lower Burma generally, and consequently the price of rice has fallen in the affected districts: a further fall has taken place since the period dealt with in this report, so that present prices are lower than those given in Appendix VI.

5. During the month an additional sum of Rs. 38,000 was distributed as Agricultural advances in the Myingyan district.

6. Further details are given below for each district separately.

Meiktila.—Gratuitous relief was distributed as usual during the month at the houses of the distressed under section 57 of the Famine Code. The numbers on the list are being gradually reduced. Rs. 20,000 were distributed in sums of Rs. 5 each to poor cultivators out of the Charitable Relief Fund. The Railway line in Meiktila town and the Circular Lake Road were the only relief works open. "C" wages were paid at these works and the number of relief workers gradually decreased, but the works were not absolutely deserted even at these low rates. There is only a little earthwork remaining to complete the Lake Road, and in order to ensure its rapid completion the Commissioner ordered the "B" rate of wages to be given towards the end of the month: it is probable therefore that the numbers on this work will increase somewhat till it is closed. The people on relief works and in the district continue to be on the whole in good physical condition and no deaths from starvation have occurred. The Deputy Commissioner anticipates that the crops of paddy and jowar over the greater portion of the district will be poor, unless good rain falls during October.

Yamethin.—The general condition of the affected area has greatly improved and prospects are much brighter. Standing crops are healthy and in good condition, but more rain is still required. Recommendations have been made for the abolition of two out of the three Famine Circle Inspectorships.

Myingyan.—The Meiktila-Myingyan railway earthwork is approaching completion and the number of relief workers is decreasing. Relief workers are also being employed on the Kanna tank which, it is anticipated, will afford employment up to December 1897. The health of the relief workers and of the other inhabitants of the district is good, there being no epidemic disease during the month. The later crops were in excellent condition during the whole of September, but rain was beginning to be wanted at the end of the month, and as none had fallen up to the 5th instant, anxiety was beginning to be felt for the safety of the crops.

APPENDIX VI

Monthly Famine Statement for the four weeks ending Saturday evening, the 25th September, 1897.

(Vide Section 43 of Code.)

District.	Area.	Population.	Affected area.	Estimated population of column 4.	NUMBER ON RELIEF WORKS ON LAST SATURDAY OF MONTH.					Number on gratuitous relief.	PRICE OF ONE OR MORE PRINCIPAL FOOD-GRAINS IN SEERS PER RUPEE.			Monthly death-rate.	Deaths due to starvation.
					Class A.	Class B.	Class C.	Class D.	Total.		Rice.	Maize.	Peas.		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	Sq. miles.		Sq. miles.								S. C.	S. C.	S. C.		
Meiktila	2,178	217,104	2,178	217,104	...	357	...	...	357	725	9 13	28 7	17 8	2.5	Nil.
Yamethin	5,497	206,557	909	51,000	...	...	...	...	...	163	9 3	...	...	1.5	Nil.
Myingyan	3,144	352,037	2,244	260,017	...	1,450	11,344	...	12,794	4,570	9 14	13 4	19 6	1.0	Nil.
												Jowar.			

APPENDIX VII.

Monthly Famine Statement for the four weeks ending Saturday evening, the 25th September, 1897.

(Vide Section 43 of Code.)

District.	Maximum number for whom relief is estimated to be required in case of serious famine.	NUMBER FOR WHOM RELIEF WAS PROVIDED IN LAST PROGRAMME OF RELIEF WORKS.			NUMBER FOR WHOM RELIEF CAN BE PROVIDED BY WORKS REMAINING ON PROGRAMME ON DATE OF REPORT.		EXPENDITURE SINCE 1ST APRIL 1897.			ADVANCES SINCE 1ST APRIL UP TO END OF MONTH UNDER		REVENUE SUSPENDED.
		Date of last programme.	On large works.	Others.	On large works.	Others.	Date up to which account is made up.	Rupees.		Land Improvement Act.	Agricultural Loans Act.	Thousand Rupees.
								On relief works.	On gratuitous relief.	Thousand Rupees.	Thousand Rupees.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Meiktila	20,000	31-3-97	19,168	3,100	19,721	3,100	25-9-97	128,134-6-11	9,738-5-8	Nil.	42	Nil.
Yamethin	20,000	6-4-97	11,846	3,352	11,846	3,352	25-9-97	40-13-0	4,760-4-0	Nil.	30	Nil.
Myingyan	20,000	1-4-97	39,171	8,166	26,893	8,166	25-9-97	360,875-10-4	11,479-11-1	Nil.	98	Nil.

MADRAS.

MONTHLY FAMINE STATEMENT A.

For the period ending Saturday the 29th May 1897.

Districts.	Area.	Population in thousands.	Area affected.	Estimated population for area in column 4 in thousands.	Numbers on relief works on the last day of the period including weavers.			
					Class A.	Class B.	Class C.	Class D.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<i>Circars.</i>								
	Sq. miles.		Sq. miles.					
Ganjám ...	8,369	1,897	2,678	908	...	16,413	3,011	...
Vizagapatam ...	17,242	2,803	928	455	...	14,662	92	...
Gó dávari ...	7,858	2,079	911	42	...	500	...	...
Total ...	33,469	6,779	4,517	1,405	...	31,575	3,103	...
<i>Deccan.</i>								
Kurnool ...	7,514	818	2,700	340	1,941	81,680	8,162	571
Bellary ...	5,975	900	3,963	518	2,098	94,600	2,522	...
Anantapur ...	4,886	709	4,517	584	198	34,931	2,442	97
Cuddapah ...	8,731	1,272	2,244	391	2,033	49,811	10,917	...
Total ...	27,106	3,699	13,424	1,833	6,270	261,022	24,043	668
Grand Total ...	60,575	10,478	17,941	3,238	6,270	292,597	27,146	668

Districts.	Numbers on relief works on the last day of the period including weavers—cont.		Number on gratuitous relief.	Prices of principal food-grains in seers of 80 tolas per rupee.			Monthly death-rate.	Deaths due to starvation.
	Details not reported.	Total.		Rice.	Cholam.	Rag		
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
<i>Circars.</i>								
Ganjám	19,424	28,159	10·9	...	12·1	*...	*...
Vizagapatam	14,754	2,295	9·0	13·4	13·9	...	...
Gó dávari	500	...	9·6	14·9	14·1	...	...
Total	34,678	30,454	...	...	...	...	...
<i>Deccan.</i>								
Kurnool	92,354	9,278	9·0	12·7	15·4	...	...
Bellary	99,220	16,478	8·7	11·8	15·3	...	...
Anantapur	37,668	10,994	9·1	13·0	16·5	...	...
Cuddapah	62,761	7,149	8·6	13·5	17·8	...	...
Total	292,003	43,899	...	...	...	...	...
Grand Total	326,681	74,353	...	...	...	...	...

* Figures not available.

Area affected—Condition and prospects of.—The affected area has increased from 16,374 square miles to 17,941. The increase is due to the inclusion of the Bhadrachalam taluk of Gódvári district, the correction of estimates, and the gradual absorption of unaffected tracts within the area of distress.

Agricultural operations were carried on to but a limited extent in the affected districts.

The condition of cattle, especially the poorer sorts, remains critical in the Deccan districts, owing to want of pasturage and fodder. Forest reserves have been thrown open to free grazing, and fodder has been imported, with the help of the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund Committee, from Kistna and the south.

No improvement in the condition of the affected areas occurred during the month, nor will prospects brighten unless and until the south-west monsoon is established.

2. *Nature of works.*—As before, the work given consisted mainly of road construction.

3. *Operations under the Loans Acts.*—In addition to the numbers employed on State relief works, about 22,000 persons are reported to have been employed on land improvement works, for which Rs. 1,28,000 were disbursed during the month as shown in the subjoined table :—

Districts.	Land Improvement Loans.								Number of wells.		Estimated number of labourers employed.
	For wells.				Other purposes.				Com-pleted.	Under con-struction.	
	Accepted.		Disbursed.		Accepted.		Disbursed.				
	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<i>Circars.</i>											
Ganjám ...	...	RS. ...	...	RS. ...	116	11,710	78	8,440	...	...	500
Vizagapatam.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total ...	...	...	...	...	116	11,710	78	8,440	...	...	500
<i>Deccan.</i>											
Kurnool ...	47	12,340	*28	*10,930	11	1,240	11	1,190	...	92	3,260
Bellary ...	37	9,998	5	5,243	727	70,940	724	73,645	...	124	11,394
Anantapur ...	168	23,345	97	16,240	146	20,140	89	10,102	8	829	6,254
Cuddapah ...	7	955	11	1,305	6	940	6	940	1	31	140
Total ...	259	46,638	141	33,718	890	93,260	830	85,877	9	1,076	21,048
Grand Total .	259	46,638	141	33,718	1,006	104,970	908	94,317	9	1,076	21,548

* Incomplete.

4. Wages have been calculated on prices varying from 11·0 to 14·5 seers to the rupee. Workers were mainly in receipt of the B wage, which averaged about As. 1-6 for a man. Nearly all of those on C wages are weavers.

5. *Gratuitous relief.*—Owing to the organization of village relief with money doles for those who, by caste, are prevented from attending kitchens, the number on gratuitous relief increased to 74,353. The number on such relief was excessive only in Ganjám, where the conditions are peculiar.

6. *Prices.*—The price of dry grains rose during the month, especially in the Circars and was in every affected district above the scarcity rate, being 27 per cent. above the scarcity rate in Bellary.

7. *Imports and exports.*—The activity of trade is shown by the subjoined figures :—

Districts.	Imports and exports by rail.			
	April.		May.	
	Imports.	Exports.	Imports.	Exports.
	I. Mds.	I. Mds.	I. Mds.	I. Mds.
Ganjám	4,300	21,800	6,000	25,200
Vizagapatam	46,300	6,200	57,900	5,200
Kurnool	18,700	8,400	13,800	5,100
Bellary	65,200	13,600	53,100	23,500
Anantapur	17,520	41,450	16,135	31,699
Cuddapah	26,595	13,394	10,848	15,311

The large exports from Ganjám and Anantapur continue ; in the former, they are said to be due to the necessity of fulfilling outstanding contracts ; in the latter, they are due to demands from Bombay, and this explanation probably accounts for the high rate of exportation also from Bellary and Cuddapah. In Bellary the exports are more than counterbalanced by imports, and in the other three districts there are considerable tracts not yet brought within the affected zone, or only slightly affected.

8. *Condition of the people.*—The condition of the people was on the whole fair, except in Ganjám. The low condition of the people in this district was due partly to the repugnance, more unreasonable among the Uriyas than elsewhere, to accept State relief, and partly to the want of accurate information and reliable officials in the zemindaris, of which this district is largely composed.

9. *Mortality.*—The following table shows the deaths in April 1897, and in the period October—April 1896–97, and the average rates for the same periods. Figures for May are not yet available :—

Districts.	Number of deaths reported.			
	During April.		From October to April.	
	1897.	Average.	1897.	Average.
Ganjám	3,200	1,765	19,182	13,401
Vizagapatam	2,314	2,078	17,288	19,935
Kurnool	1,110	1,582	7,962	10,251
Bellary	1,585	1,384	9,927	9,795
Anantapur	977	907	7,443	6,808
Cuddapah	1,757	2,470	13,829	16,745

The excessive mortality in Ganjám is ascribed to cholera and small-pox.

FAMINE STATEMENT B.

For the period ending Saturday the 29th May 1897.

Districts.	Maximum number for whom relief is estimated to be required in the case of serious famine.	Number for whom relief was provided in programme of famine relief works.			Maximum number for whom relief can be provided by works remaining in programme on date of report.	
		Date of programme.	On large works.	Others.	On large works.	Others.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Circars.</i>						
Ganjám	317,800	8th April 1897.	354,398	113,586	353,768	112,442
Vizagapatam	388,200	28th Mar. 1897.	279,688	137,423	279,688	134,040
Gó dá veri	201,000	Do.	395,000	100,000	395,000	100,000
Total	907,000	...	1,029,086	351,009	1,028,456	346,482
<i>Deccan.</i>						
Kurnool	163,000	13th April 1897	522,795	93,977	502,646	92,947
Bellary	180,000	Do.	324,866	56,564	299,961	54,691
Anantapur	141,800	Do.	156,411	49,454	149,879	48,044
Cuddapah	253,800	Do.	182,174	94,094	171,073	92,832
Total	738,600	...	1,186,246	294,089	1,123,559	288,514
Grand Total	1,645,600	...	2,215,332	645,098	2,152,015	634,996

Districts.	Expenditure since 1st April up to the latest day for which figures are available.			Advances given since 1st April up to the end of period, under		Revenue suspended beyond current official year.
	Date up to which expenditure is known.	On relief works.	On gratuitous relief.	Land Improvement Loans.	Agri-culturists' Loans Act.	
	8	9	10	11	12	13
<i>Circars.</i>						
Ganjám	29th May 1897.	RS. 2,000	RS. 4,000	RS. 8,000	RS. 8,000	...
Vizagapatam... ..	Do.	25,000	3,000	...	...	...
Gó dá veri ... ..	..	*	*	*	*	...
Total ... ..	...	27,000	7,000	8,000	8,000	...
<i>Deccan.</i>						
Kurnool	29th May 1897.	159,000	6,000	30,000	4,000	...
Bellary	Do.	197,000	12,000	171,000	22,000	...
Anantapur	Do.	59,000	3,000	52,000	8,000	...
Cuddapah	Do.	93,000	2,000	3,000	...	...
Total ... ..	...	508,000	23,000	256,000	34,000	...
Grand Total ... ..	...	535,000	30,000	264,000	42,000	...

* Information not available.

STATEMENT A.

For the period ending 31st July 1897.

Districts	Area.	Population in thousands.	Area affected.	Estimated population for area in column 4 in thousands.	Numbers on relief works on the last day of the period including weavers.		
					Class A.	Class B.	Class C.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<i>Circars.</i>							
	SQ. MLS.		SQ. MLS.				
Ganjám	8,369	1,897	5,800	1,684	5,649	28,151	20,160
Vizagapatam	17,242	2,803	4,619	1,943	...	13,956	4,809
Górávari	7,858	2,079	911	42	...	155	...
Total ...	33,469	6,779	11,330	3,669	5,649	42,262	24,969
<i>Deccan.</i>							
Kurnool	7,514	818	4,019	512	2,281	144,493	19,370
Bellary	5,975	900	3,963	518	530	152,245	5,804
Anantapur	4,886	709	4,517	584	2,204	61,303	4,113
Cuddapah	8,731	1,272	2,244	391	2,123	92,221	10,257
Total ...	27,106	3,699	14,743	2,005	7,138	450,262	39,544
Grand Total ...	60,575	10,478	26,073	5,674	12,787	492,524	64,513

Districts.	Numbers on relief works on the last day of the period including weavers—cont.		Number on gratuitous relief.	Prices of principal food-grains in seers of 80 tolas per rupee.			Monthly death-rate.	Deaths due to starvation.
	Class D.	Total.		Rice.	Cholam.	Ragi.		
	9	10		11	12	13			14	15	16
<i>Circars.</i>								
Ganjám	1,370	55,330	45,733	8·3	...	9·9	...	...
Vizagapatam	3,037	21,802	32,619	7·5	10·9	11·1	...	...
Górávari ... ..	...	155	728	8·5	11·7	11·6	...	...
Total ...	4,407	77,287	79,080	...	...	...	...	...
<i>Deccan.</i>								
Kurnool	4,652	170,796	51,962	8·2	13·7	10·4	...	...
Bellary ... ..	...	158,579	48,328	7·7	9·5	12·8	...	...
Anantapur ... ..	...	67,620	16,674	8·2	10·8	14·5	...	...
Cuddapah ... ..	...	104,601	18,343	8·1	11·0	14·5	...	...
Total ...	4,652	501,596	135,307	...	...	...	...	...
Grand Total ...	9,059	578,883	214,387	...	...	...	...	...

Area affected—Condition and prospects of.—The area affected increased from 23,351 square miles to 26,073 square miles. The increase, which occurred in Ganjam alone, is due to the absorption of hitherto unaffected tracts within the area of distress.

Dry crops were cultivated to a considerable extent in all the affected districts, but the rainfall was insufficient to permit of wet cultivation to any appreciable extent.

The condition of cattle continued poor in the Deccan districts, and considerable mortality was reported from parts; the rains at the close of the month will revive pasture.

As noted in the last report, the condition of the country at the end of June gave cause for much anxiety, owing to the sudden cessation of the monsoon. For fully a month, from the middle of June till near the close of July, the Presidency was practically without rain, and prospects were decidedly gloomy. Towards the end of the month, the fall recommenced, but the rain was everywhere partial, and no steady general downpour was received. The fall in the Circars was, however, fair, and the outlook in that portion of the Presidency is moderately hopeful, though the season does not promise to be a good one. The future of the Deccan is still a matter of speculation; good showers were indeed received in parts, but they were purely local, and large areas, especially in some of the worst affected tracts, received a wholly insufficient amount of rain. The position of unprotected dry crops in the Deccan was in many cases critical.

2. *Nature of works.*—As before, the work given consisted chiefly of road construction and repair.

3. *Operations under the Loans Acts.*—In addition to the numbers employed upon State relief works, about 13,000 persons are reported to have been employed on land improvement works, for which Rs. 2,55,000 were disbursed during the month as shown in the subjoined table :—

Districts.	Land Improvement Loans.								Number of wells.		Estimated number of labourers employed.
	For wells.				Other purposes.				Com- pleted.	Under con- struc- tion.	
	Accepted.		Disbursed.		Accepted.		Disbursed.				
	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<i>Circars.</i>											
Ganjam ...	...	RS. ...	...	RS. ...	23	RS. 3,970	20	RS. 1,450	...	...	...
Vizagapatam..	...	...	1	100	11	1,075	11	1,075	...	4	...
Total ...	...	...	1	100	34	5,045	31	2,525	...	4	...
Kurpool ...	55	17,680	53	10,350	553	92,065	538	70,595	...	246	2,555
Bellary* ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Anantapur ...	117	17,602	136	17,637	38	4,900	49	6,135	10	998	4,630
Cuddapah ...	29	6,475	28	4,112	3	580	3	480	2	63	480
Total ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

* Report not received. Rs. 1,44,000 disbursed during the month.

4. *Wages* were calculated on prices varying from $8\frac{1}{2}$ to $13\frac{1}{2}$ seers to the rupee. The majority of workers were in receipt of the B wage. Nearly all of those on the C wage were weavers.

5. *Gratuitous relief.*—The numbers on this form of relief increased to 214,387. The increase was due to an improvement in the organization of village relief, and to the withholding of the monsoon and the consequent rise in prices. The proportion of those on gratuitous, as compared with other, relief was large in the Circars, where the conditions are peculiar, and the rise in prices was most marked.

6. *Prices.*—The price of all grains rose considerably throughout the affected area, though towards the end of the month the price of ragi in one district returned to its level at the commencement of the month. Staple grains were available only

at rates much above the scarcity rate, the most marked case being that of cholera in Bellary, which at the close of the month was over 60 per cent. dearer than the scarcity rate.

7. *Imports and Exports.*—The course of trade is shown by the subjoined figures:—

	Imports and exports by rail.			
	June.		July.	
	Imports.	Exports.	Imports.	Exports.
	I. MDS.	I. MDS.	I. MDS.	I. MDS.
Ganjám	14,000	18,000	26,600	10,100
Vizagapatam	88,000	1,800	136,100	2,600
Kurnool*	11,400	5,600	25,300	5,700
Bellary	61,500	25,000	180,200	29,200
Anantapur	11,516	21,528	40,041	46,645
Cuddapah	7,126	16,614	25,194	24,580

* Figures incomplete for June and July.

Imports were large into Vizagapatam and Bellary. Exportation was considerable from Bellary, Anantapur and Cuddapah. This was due to high prices in, and consequent large demands from, Bombay. A considerable proportion of the exports consisted of Mysore grain.

8. *Condition of the People.*—The condition of the people was on the whole fair, though cholera was very prevalent in the Circars. Distress was much intensified by the lateness of the season and the consequent rise in prices. The result was a large increase in the numbers on relief.

9. *Mortality.*—The following table shows the deaths in June 1897 and in the period, October—June 1896–97, and the average rates for the same periods:—

Districts.	Number of deaths reported.			
	During June.		From October to June.	
	1897.	Average.	1896–97.	Average.
Ganjám	7,263	1,855	21,683	17,415
Vizagapatam	4,361	2,625	25,176	25,199
Kurnool	1,498	1,426	10,996	13,263
Bellary	2,012	2,262	13,793	13,863
Anantapur	1,207	980	9,858	8,794
Cuddapah	1,998	1,714	18,229	20,518

The excessive mortality in Ganjám during both periods is ascribed to cholera and small-pox, and in Vizagapatam, during the month, to cholera.

FAMINE STATEMENT B.

For the period ending 31st July 1897.

Districts.	Maximum number for whom relief is estimated to be required in the case of serious famine.	Number for whom relief was provided in programmes of famine-relief works.			Maximum number for whom relief can be provided by works remaining in programme on date of report.	
		Date of programme.	On large works.	Others.	On large works.	Others.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Circars.</i>						
Ganjám	317,800	8th April 1897.	354,398	113,586	342,593	101,541
Vizagapatam... ..	888,200	29th March 1897.	279,688	137,423	274,844	125,182
Gó dá vá ri	201,000	Do.	395,000	100,000	395,000	100,000
Total	907,000		1,029,086	351,009	1,012,437	326,723
<i>Deccan.</i>						
Kurnool	163,000	13th April 1897.	522,795	93,977	427,097	72,468
Bellary	180,000	Do.	324,866	56,564	215,052	41,668
Anantapur	141,800	Do.	156,411	49,454	119,421	41,127
Cuddapah	253,800	Do.	182,174	94,094	128,010	78,499
Total	738,600		1,186,246	294,089	889,580	233,762
Grand Total	1,645,600		2,215,332	645,098	1,902,017	560,485

Districts.	Expenditure from 1st April up to the latest day for which figures are available.	Advances given since 1st April up to the end of the period under		Revenue suspended beyond current official year.			
		Date up to which expenditure is known.	On relief works.		On gratuitous relief.	Land Improvement Loans.	Agri-culturists' Loans Act.
		8	9		10	11	12	13
<i>Circars.</i>							
Ganjám	31st July 1897.	RS.	RS.	RS.	RS.	...	
Vizagapatam	Do.	1,67,000	1,44,000	14,000	39,000	...	
Gó dá vá ri	Do.	1,15,000	60,000	2,000	94,000	...	
Total		2,000	1,000	...	...	...
		2,84,000	2,05,000	16,000	1,33,000	...	
<i>Deccan.</i>							
Kurnool	31st July 1897.	8,77,000	1,37,000	1,48,000	1,15,000	...	
Bellary	Do.	9,53,000	77,000	3,44,000	1,33,000	...	
Anantapur	Do.	3,40,000	21,000	1,04,000	79,000	...	
Cuddapah	Do.	5,07,000	38,000	11,000	1,000	...	
Total		26,77,000	2,73,000	6,07,000	3,28,000	...	
Grand Total		29,61,000	4,78,000	6,23,000	4,61,000	...	

STATEMENT A.

For the period ending 25th September 1897.

Districts.	Area.	Population in thousands.	Area affected.	Estimated population for area in column 4 in thousands.	Numbers on relief works on the last day of the period including weavers.		
					Class A.	Class B.	Class C.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<i>Circars.</i>							
	SQ. MLS.		SQ. MLS.				
Ganjám	8,369	1,897	3,524	1,067	1,395	3,054	6,028
Vizagapatam	17,242	2,803	2,487	1,096	...	2,660	3,218
Gó dávari	7,858	2,079	911	42	...	...	...
Total ...	33,469	6,779	6,922	2,205	1,395	5,714	9,246
<i>Deccan.</i>							
Kurnool	7,514	818	4,019	512	507	49,410	13,487
Bellary	5,975	900	3,863	517	246	39,630	11,541
Anantapur	4,886	709	4,517	584	199	41,093	4,203
Cuddapah	8,731	1,272	2,244	391	...	11,463	10,835
Total ...	27,106	3,699	14,643	2,004	952	141,596	40,066
Grand Total ...	60,575	10,478	21,565	4,209	2,347	147,310	49,312

Districts.	Numbers on relief works on the last day of the period including weavers—cont.		Number on gratuitous relief.	Prices of principal food-grains in seers of 80 tolas per rupee.			Monthly death-rate.	Deaths due to starvation.
	Class D.	Total.		Rice.	Cholam.	Ragi.		
	9	10		11	12	13			14	15	16
<i>Circars.</i>								
Ganjám	1,341	11,818	9,973	8.1	...	11.6	...	...
Vizagapatam	189	6,067	511	7.7	11.2	13.8	...	...
Gó dávari	26	26	712	8.5	11.7	11.9	...	...
Total ...	1,556	17,911	11,196	...	...	...	...	...
<i>Deccan.</i>								
Kurnool	7,937	71,341	16,351	8.5	12.5	14.1	...	...
Bellary	1,725	53,142	20,843	7.9	13.0	15.4	...	...
Anantapur	894	46,389	8,346	8.4	12.3	16.0	...	...
Cuddapah	662	22,960	5,256	8.3	12.5	16.1	...	...
Total ...	11,218	193,832	50,796	...	...	...	...	...
Grand Total ...	12,774	211,743	61,992	...	...	...	...	...

Area affected—Condition and prospects of.—The area affected fell from 22,963 square miles to 21,565; the decrease was mainly due to the elimination of tracts in Ganjám and Gó dávari.

The rainfall during the month was good and general. Agricultural operations were largely extended, and prospects brightened. The season in all the affected areas is expected to be a good one, though the outturn of ragi and gingelly in the Northern Circars was generally poor.

Cattle improved in condition in the Deccan, and pasture was generally ample.

2. *Nature of Works.*—As hitherto, the work given consisted chiefly of road construction and repair.

3. *Operations under the Loans Acts.*—In addition to the numbers employed on State relief works, about 6,000 persons are reported to have been employed on land improvement works, for which Rs. 30,207 were disbursed during the month as shown in the subjoined table :—

Districts:	Land Improvement Loans.								Number of wells.		Estimated number of labourers employed.
	For wells.				Other purposes.				Completed.	Under construction.	
	Accepted.		Disbursed.		Accepted.		Disbursed.				
	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<i>Coarc.</i>											
		RS.		RS.		RS.		RS.			
Ganjám ...	...	...	...	...	33	2,200	32	4,280	...	...	50
Vizagapatam	3	1,400	3	700	6	1,380	6	1,380	...	7	...
Total ...	3	1,400	3	700	39	3,580	38	5,660	...	7	50
<i>Deccan.</i>											
Kurnool ...	16	3,705	11	2,930	9	1,725	11	1,840	...	272	3,425
Bellary ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	*7,434	...	...	350
Anantapur...	12	7,833	48	9,868	...	...	...	...	25	1,150	1,927
Cuddapah ...	†10	2,220	7	765	7	1,010	7	1,010	3	51	270
Total ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5,972
Grand Total	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,022

* Includes advances for wells also.

† Incomplete.

4. *Wages*—were calculated on prices varying from 9 to 15½ seers to the rupee. The majority of the workers, which consisted of agricultural labourers and petty ryots accustomed to labour, but not to the labour required on works, was in receipt of the B class wage. Many of those on the C class wage were weavers. Wages were calculated not upon the price of the staple grain, but on the combined price of the staple and cheapest grains.

5. *Gratuitous relief.*—The numbers on gratuitous relief fell to 61,992. The decrease was due to the improvement in the season.

6. *Prices*—fell considerably in all districts except Ganjám and Gódvári as shown below :—

	Ganjám.		Vizaga- patam.	Gódvári.		Kurnool.	Bellary.	Anantapur.		Cuddapah.	
	Rice.	Ragi.	Ragi.	Cholam.	Ragi.	Cholam.	Cholam.	Cholam.	Ragi.	Cholam.	Ragi.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<i>Monthly average.</i>											
August ...	7.7	10.4	12.4	11.7	11.7	9.9	9.2	10.2	13.6	10.3	14.5
September ...	7.9	11.0	13.8	11.6	11.9	11.4	11.3	11.1	15.1	11.8	15.7
Scarcity rate ...	10.2	15.0	14.0	14.0	14.0	15.0	15.0	15.0	16.0	15.0	16.0

At the close of the month, the price of ragi had fallen in Anantapur and Cuddapah to the scarcity rates.

7. *Imports and Exports.*—The course of trade is shown by the subjoined figures :—

Districts.	Imports and exports by rail.			
	August.		September.	
	Imports.	Exports.	Imports.	Exports.
	MDS.	MDS.	MDS.	MDS.
Ganjám	51,800	3,300	39,900	2,300
Vizagapatam	83,400	14,100	70,100	2,200
Kurnool	24,600	3,400	6,700	3,700
Bellary	114,500	33,900	92,600	22,200
Anantapur	24,833	24,278	17,981	11,839
Cuddapah	13,680	13,243	10,275	17,680

Gross imports were large in Ganjám, Vizagapatam and Bellary. Exportation was considerable from Bellary, Anantapur and Cuddapah, but much of this is believed to be Mysore grain. Exportation was fostered by high prices in Bombay.

8. *Condition of the People.*—The condition of the people was, on the whole, fair, though Bhadráchalam continued to give cause for anxiety. A large number of deaths from cholera were reported; the District Surgeon of Ganjám considers that many of the deaths set down to cholera were due to “famine diarrhœa.” The decrease in the numbers on works was mainly due to the improvement in the season.

Grain continued to be imported by Government into the Bhadráchalam taluk, the ordinary roads being impassable owing the heavy rains, and the high floods in the Gódávári preventing native craft from ascending the river.

9. *Mortality.*—The following table shows the deaths in August 1897 and in the period October—August 1896–97, and the average rates for each period :—

Districts.	Number of deaths reported.			
	During August.		From October to August.	
	1897.	Average.	1896–97.	Average.
Ganjám	5,060	3,413	34,135	20,924
Vizagapatam	4,982	3,352	35,808	31,597
Gódávári... ..	Information not available.			
Kurnool	3,437	1,795	16,794	16,655
Bellary	4,028	2,052	20,887	18,262
Anantapur	1,497	1,235	12,856	11,379
Cuddapah	2,607	2,069	22,064	24,461

Cholera was the cause of nearly two-thirds of the excess deaths in Ganjám during August, and of nearly half the excess deaths in Vizagapatam, Kurnool and Bellary.

FAMINE STATEMENT B.

For the period ending 25th September 1897.

Districts.	Maximum number for whom relief is estimated to be required in the case of serious famine.	Number for whom relief was provided in programme of famine-relief works.			Maximum number for whom relief can be provided by works remaining in programme on date of report.	
		Date of programme.	On large works.	Others.	On large works.	Others.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Circars.</i>						
Ganjám	317,800	23rd July 1897.	406,000	114,000	389,376	104,614
Vizagapatam	388,200	10th do.	327,000	196,000	320,395	187,946
Gó dávari	201,000	30th do.	395,000	100,000	395,000	99,928
Total	907,000		1,128,000	410,000	1,105,271	389,488
<i>Deccan.</i>						
Kurnool	163,000	21st July 1897.	489,000	180,000	369,345	153,598
Bellary	180,000	11th do.	548,000	84,000	408,259	72,365
Anantapur	141,800	14th do.	161,000	55,000	112,915	45,803
Cuddapah	253,800	11th do.	245,000	89,000	186,378	66,495
Total	738,600		1,443,000	408,000	1,076,897	338,261
Grand Total	1,645,600		2,571,000	818,000	2,182,168	727,749

Districts.	Expenditure from 1st April up to the latest day for which figures are available.	Advances given since 1st April up to the end of the period under				Revenue suspended beyond current official year.	
		Date up to which expenditure is known.	On relief works.	On gratuitous relief.	Land Improvement Loans Acts.		Agri-culturists' Loans Act.
<i>Circars.</i>							
Ganjám	25th Sept. 1897.	RS.	RS.	RS.	RS.	...	
Vizagapatam	Do.	2,60,000	3,35,000	19,000	74,000	...	
Gó dávari	28th Aug. 1897.	1,62,000	1,12,000	6,000	1,37,000	...	
Total		2,000	5,000	...	...	...
		4,24,000	4,52,000	25,000	2,11,000	...	
<i>Deccan.</i>							
Kurnool	25th Sept. 1897.	RS.	RS.	RS.	RS.	...	
Bellary	Do.	14,94,000	2,56,000	1,73,000	2,14,000	...	
Anantapur	Do.	9,20,000	1,65,000	2,66,000	3,16,000	...	
Cuddapah	Do.	5,98,000	53,000	1,39,000	1,56,000	...	
Total		8,33,000	85,000	* 18,000	7,000	...	
Grand Total		38,45,000	5,59,000	5,96,000	6,93,000	...	
		42,69,000	10,11,000	6,21,000	9,04,000	...	

* Incomplete.

No. 2794/206—2-F., dated 18th August 1897.

*From T. W. Holderness, Esq., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India
Department of Revenue and Agriculture, to the Secretary to the Government
of Madras.*

I am directed to forward, for the information of His Excellency the Governor in Council, a copy of "Notes on the inspection of famine relief works in the Madras Presidency," by Mr. T. Higham, C.I.E., the officer deputed* to report on famine relief works in the several Provinces in which famine operations are in progress.

* Government of India (Revenue) Resolution No. 20/157—1-F., dated 12th May 1897.

2. Mr. Higham's notes show that on the relief works inspected by him in the Madras Presidency the method of tasking the workers is more lenient than that prevailing in other Provinces, owing to the deductions made for distance, weakness and excessive tasks, and to the suspension of fines for insufficient work. He also remarks on the extensive powers to grant reductions of task and to lower the gang classification exercised in some districts by subordinate officials. In paragraph 33 of the notes Mr. Higham states that at the time of his visit to the Presidency, orders were under issue by the Government of Madras for enforcing greater strictness in these respects, though he had not actually seen them. With your letter No. 661 of 2nd August 1897, a copy of Madras G. O. No. 616, dated 24th July 1897, has been received, which directs that the four-fold classification of works be reverted to, reduces the gratuitous dole to the amount of the ration allowed to Class D relief workers, and cancels the restrictions on fining for short work laid down in paragraph four of the G. O. No. 216, dated 30th March 1897. These instructions, however, do not touch on the subject of reductions of the standard tasks, and the Government of India will be glad to learn how the Government of Madras propose to deal with this matter, and also to be favoured with any observations which His Excellency the Governor in Council may wish to make on Mr. Higham's report.

3. In paragraphs 17, 19 and 26 of the notes it is suggested that the table of standard tasks appended to the Madras Famine Code should be revised. A similar suggestion was made in the last paragraph of my letter No. 2,266 of the 14th June 1897. I am to commend the matter to the attention of the Government of Madras, as on the correctness and practical utility of the standard scale of tasks depends in a large measure the successful management of relief works.

4. In paragraphs 25—31 of the notes the relations of the officers of the Public Works Department employed on relief works with the district revenue authorities are discussed at length, and it is shown that the practice in the Presidency in this respect does not correspond with that of other Provinces. The Government of India will be glad to learn the views of the Government of Madras on this very important matter, and they would particularly invite attention to the remark in paragraph 31 of the notes as to the great loss in power involved in the limited authority assigned to the Public Works Department in the control and management of relief works. They may say on the experience of other Provinces that, although the civil authorities may be competent to manage relief works on a small scale, a really serious famine, involving provision of work for great masses of people, and throwing heavy and multifarious duties on the district civil authorities, requires the full utilization of the Public Works Department. They recognize that in the control of relief works the latter Department must be required to conform to the special requirements of the Famine Code, and to subordinate to these the ordinary departmental methods of conducting work. But they are assured from the experience of other Provinces that this can be secured, and that at the same time larger powers can most advantageously be given to the Department of Public Works than appears to be the case in Madras.

NOTES ON AN INSPECTION OF FAMINE RELIEF WORKS IN THE
MADRAS PRESIDENCY, BY MR. T. HIGHAM, C.I.E., ON SPECIAL
DUTY, FAMINE RELIEF OPERATIONS.

1. I visited the Madras Presidency after completing my tour in Bombay, the Central Provinces, the North-West Provinces and Bengal, leaving the latter Province on the 4th July by rail from Mokameh, and arriving in Bellary on the evening of the 6th. On the following morning I met the Honourable Mr. Le Fanu, the Famine Commissioner, who kindly arranged a programme for my tour through the Deccan districts. I did not consider it necessary to visit the Vizagapatam and Ganjam districts, in which the total number of relief workers did not then exceed 60,000, though there were nearly 400,000 in the Cuddapah, Kurnool, Bellary and Anantapur districts.

On the morning of the 8th I left Bellary with Mr. Stuart, the Collector, and Mr. Clerk, the Executive Engineer of the district, for Hola-Harri, 21 miles distant, inspecting on the road two relief charges, comprising together about 9,000 workers. On the following day we went on, through Alur, to Nemakal, inspecting relief works all along the road; and on the 10th we went on to Guntakal, which lies just outside the Bellary and within the Anantapur district. At Guntakal I met Mr. Shipley, Collector of Anantapur, and Mr. Romilly, the Executive Engineer; and on the evening of the 10th, we visited together a road work about four miles from Guntakal. On returning to Guntakal I met Mr. De Winton, the Superintending Engineer, and we went on together the following morning by rail to Maddi Khera, in the Kurnool district, where we were met by Mr. Elwin, the Collector, and Mr. Johnstone, the Executive Engineer. After inspecting together some works in the neighbourhood we went on by rail in the night to Belamchera, in the same district, and inspected some road works there on the following morning. In the afternoon I returned with Mr. De Winton to Guntakal, whence we proceeded by rail during the night to Muddanura, in the Cuddapah district, where we arrived early in the morning of the 13th, and were met by Mr. Murray, the Executive Engineer of the Cuddapah district. After inspecting the Muddanura tank work I went on by rail to Madras, where I had an interview on the 14th with the Honourable Mr. Crole, Senior Member of the Board of Revenue, and President of the Madras Famine Charitable Fund. On the 15th I returned to Cuddapah, where Mr. De Winton and Mr. Murray were awaiting me, and where I met also Mr. Tate, the Collector, and Surgeon-Colonel King, the Sanitary Commissioner, and we inspected together a relief work (road-metalling), two or three miles out of Cuddapah. We left Cuddapah by the night train, Mr. De Winton and Mr. Murray leaving us *en route*, and Dr. King accompanying me as far as Adoni, where we met Mr. Le Fanu on the 16th. I left Adoni and the Madras Presidency, early in the morning of the 17th *en route* for Simla.

2. The relief works in progress in the four districts visited consisted almost entirely of road work, that is, of the earth work required for repairing old roads and making new ones, and the collection and laying of metalling either on old metalled roads in disrepair or on roads not hitherto metalled. The only other works, with the exception of some town works in Cuddapah were for the construction or clearance of irrigation tanks and channels. The following statement shows the number of different works in progress or immediately about to be started during the second fortnight in June, and the number of labourers employed as reported on the 24th of that month:—

District.	NUMBER OF WORKS.		ATTENDANCE ON 24TH JUNE.	
	Road.	Others.	Roads.	Others.
Bellary	25	4	96,751	8,843
Anantapur	33	8	55,328	3,004
Kurnool	36	6	69,659	5,307
Cuddapah	17	11	53,896	27,920
Total	111	29	275,634	45,074

The number of irrigation works was considerable only in Cuddapah, where they included some new channels on the Kurnool-Cuddapah Canal. It is said that there is not much opening for tank works in the Deccan, where the rainfall is ordinarily so scanty that tanks would be of little use, the only eligible sites having for the most part been already occupied. If the distress in these tracts continues, all that is proposed is to open more road works, and I was informed that there would be no difficulty in doing this, though it was certain that there would be a great difficulty in subsequently finding funds for the maintenance of the roads to be newly made or metalled.

3. The relief works are so arranged as to be generally within six or seven miles of the affected villages. It is said that the people cannot possibly be induced to leave their villages and reside on the works, though, in the absence of any other than road works, portant works, the assertion does not appear to have been very fairly tested.

4. I understand that relief works in the Deccan were originally carried out in strict accordance with the provisions of the Madras Famine Code. The gangs were classified as therein directed, and an attempt was made to enforce the standard tasks laid down in the Code, fines being freely imposed in proportion to the deficiency in the executed tasks and without any minimum wage limit. At the time of my visit, however, this had all been changed, and the works were being conducted in accordance with the later instructions issued in Madras Government G. O. No. 216-Revenue, dated 30th March 1897, and supplementary directions contained in the Board of Revenue resolution No. 278, dated 3rd April 1897.

5. The orders of Government on the subject of the classification of the works, as contained in paragraph 2 of the G. O. quoted above, are to the effect that—

Classification of gangs as ordered in the G. O.

“All persons seeking employment on relief works should, until further orders, be placed as a rule in class A or class B. The very weak, those who can do only nominal work and who will not resort to kitchens, may, however, be placed in class C.”

The Board of Revenue in paragraph 2 (d) of their Resolution issued the following direction :—

“The C class of worker is abolished, except for the very weak, who do only nominal work and will not resort to kitchens. This abolishes the D class of relief worker as well.”

The orders quoted above were referred by the Government of Madras to the Government of India for approval in their letter No. 296, dated 4th May 1897, but the Government of India, in their letter No. 2266/116-5-F., dated 14th June 1897, declined to sanction the proposals to place all the very weak who only do nominal tasks in Class C instead of in Class D, and to place in the B class workers who, being unaccustomed to hard manual labour, were unable to a B task, and who under the Famine Code should be put into class C. The orders of the Government of India had not, however, been communicated to the Collectors at the time of my visit, and when I met the Famine Commissioner at Adoni on the 16th July and mentioned these orders to him, he told me that he had not up till then heard of them.

6. In practice, however, the orders of the G. O. have not been carried out, and the present actual classification may, subject to a few trifling exceptions, be described in a few words: all are in class B. In Bellary and Cuddapah districts I came across special gangs of very weak persons, who were either wholly untasked or given but a nominal task, and found them all in class B. There was no one in class C, and the wages due to this class were only quoted in Bellary as being the rest-day wage. The D wage is also quoted, but merely as the minimum wage below which a worker must on no account be fined, and down to the limit of which he is not to be fined for more than one week continuously. I saw only one

work in Anantapur, but understood from the Collector that in that district the orders of the Local Government are more strictly followed, and the weakly gangs are put into C class and receive the C wage. The rest-day wage in this district is paid at the D rate. The practice in Kurnool will be presently described—see paragraphs 11 and 12, *infra*.

As to class A, I found in Bellary that men and women employed on ramming, although classed as B, were allowed to receive the A wage, not as a matter of course, but if the ramming were well done to the satisfaction of the Public Works subordinate in charge. This was simply by way of encouraging the rammers to put their backs into the work, but there were no A class workers properly so called. In Kurnool I found one gang which was classed as A, which is referred to in paragraph 12 below, but with an occasional exception of this kind no one is at present put into any class but B. I was unable to obtain any explanation as to why the weakly gangs or the weak members of gangs were placed in this class, which does not appear to have been contemplated in the G. O. already referred to.

7. We have next to consider the method of tasking the gangs. The entries in the gang register show in separate columns for each gang the number of men, boy adults, nursing mothers (with whom are included women in an advanced stage of pregnancy), other women, and finally children under 12. Boy adults, or boys between the ages of 12 and 16, are shown separately, because, although under the Madras Code such boys are entitled to the pay of adults, they are more lightly tasked, in accordance with paragraph 3 (1) of the G. O. already referred to. The system is to reduce all the members of the gang to their equivalents in child-units, which is the unit of tasking. Thus:—

	Units.
A man is taken as four units.	—
A boy adult	3 or 4
A nursing mother	1½
Other women, including girls, from 12 to 16 ...	2
Children under 12	1

On the basis of these equivalents the strength of the gang is then expressed in a separate column in the register in terms of child-units, and normally the number of such units, multiplied by the task per child-unit (*vide* Form F, page 66, Madras Famine Code) should give the task for the gang. It is obvious that if A, B and C classes were recognised, the registers would have to exhibit the number of men, boy adults, nursing mothers, other women and children under each class, each having its appropriate equivalent. This would greatly complicate the form, but the difficulty is at present avoided, because all workers (even those that do but a nominal task) are now put into the single class B.

8. In practice, however, the task for the gang is not that obtained by the normal calculation referred to above. Before the task for the day is finally fixed certain deductions in task made under G. O. No. 216. the task for the day is finally fixed certain reductions have to be made, in accordance with the instructions contained in paragraph 3 (ii.), (iii.) and (iv.) of the G. O. of March last. A copy of this G. O. was forwarded to the Government of India for information with Madras Government letter No. 296, dated 4th May 1897, but specific approval of their instructions in regard to the reduction of tasks was not applied for, as the regulation of tasks is of course a matter entirely within the control of the Local Government. I propose to show, however, how these instructions have worked in practice, and it will be convenient to consider them in the reverse of the order in which they appear in the G. O. under reference.

9. Beginning then with the order relating to reduction of tasks on account of distance (paragraph 3 (iv.) of the G. O.), it may be remarked that in no work visited by me had much shelter been provided for the labourers at or near the works, and I was told that the people could not be induced to leave their homes for the night, and preferred walking to and from their villages night and morning, even when these were as many as seven miles away. This is

hardly to be wondered at when such liberal allowance is made for the work performed in the journey, a walk of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles being regarded as the equivalent of an hour's work. The time allowed for walking to and from a village a mile from the works is thus 48 minutes, or exactly one-tenth of a working day of eight hours. After the column showing the number of child-units in the gang register, there is therefore a column showing the reduction to be made for distance, in which is entered a fraction of which the denominator is 10, and the numerator the average distance in miles from the work of the villages from which the members of the gang have come. When the work is close up to the doors of the village no deduction is made, but in such a case the whole village of course turns out to the work. But for a village a mile distant, a deduction of 10 per cent. is made from the number of units before striking the task, and so in proportion for greater distances. Deductions of 50 per cent. on this account are common enough, and in some registers I saw deductions of 70 per cent.

This practice, whatever its justification, opens of course another door for fraud. The distances are probably very roughly and liberally calculated, the benefit of any doubt being given to the gang. Thus on the 19th July we mustered a gang of 107 individuals (No. 40) for which a deduction of 30 per cent. had been made for distance, and the Collector discovered that 18 of the members had come from a village alongside the work. It may be added that, although in all provinces, except Bombay (where the labourers at present all reside on the works), the majority of the labourers come every morning from villages as far distant from the works as those in the Deccan, it is only in Madras that any deduction from the task is made on this account.

10. The next reduction of task to be considered is that on account of weakness. Paragraph 3 (iii.) of the G. O. runs as follows:—

Weakness reductions.

“(iii.) *Weakness*.—The case of weakly gangs should also be met by a reduction of the task, and not of the class or wage. The Government has already pointed out in its orders No. 43, dated the 26th January 1897, and No. 108, dated the 19th February 1897, that Collectors can do this under section 107, and Divisional Officers* should freely exercise this power so as to suit the tasks to the capacity of weakly coolies till these recover their health, when the full task of their class should be demanded.”

* The term Divisional Officer in Madras refers to a Revenue Officer, with the powers of an Assistant Collector, and not as in many parts of India to the Executive Engineer of a Public Works division.

I have already noted that in Bellary and Cuddapah districts it is the practice to form weakly gangs, who are nevertheless put into class B. Similar gangs in Anantapur are, I understand, placed in class C. Apart from this, however, there are in many gangs certain weak individuals belonging to the families of other workers, and who are, very properly, allowed to remain in the gangs. In Bellary I found a gang in which a deduction from the number of units was made on this account, and as long as it is accepted that persons who are unable to work should nevertheless be entitled to a full B wage there is no objection to this practice, and it is immaterial whether such individuals remain in the gang of their own village or are drafted to a special invalid gang. But deductions on account of weakness are not always made in this manner.

11. Some time ago, I think in May last, the Civil Surgeon of Kurnool inspected a number of gangs of relief labourers, the average number in each gang being 100. He found in each a certain number of weakly persons, and after tabulating the results he declared that those in which the proportion of weak individuals exceeded 10 per cent. should be classed as in *low* condition, while those in which the percentage was 10 or under should be classed as *fair*. For gangs in *low* condition he directed that the task should be reduced by 20 per cent., while for *fair* gangs a reduction of 10 per cent. was to be made. The report did not specify the minimum percentage which would entitle a gang to the 10 per cent. reduction, but among the gangs inspected and classed as *fair* was one in which the weak members consisted of two women and two children, that is, 4 per cent. of the whole. The Civil Surgeon circulated a copy of this report to his medical subordinates on the relief works, mostly men of the Hospital Assistant class, and directed them to make similar examinations, and that the tasks should be reduced in accordance with the results.

Weakness deductions in Kurnool district.

12. This wholesale system of reduction for weakness was brought to my notice on the first occasion of my inspecting a gang in the Kurnool district, at Maddikhera, on the 11th July. I there found Weakness deduction in Kurnool continued. a *low* gang from whose task a deduction of 20 per cent. had been made on account of weakness. The Collector, Mr. Elwin, who was present, informed me that under the orders referred to, which had emanated from the Civil Surgeon of the district, and to which, therefore, he had made no objection, every gang in the district had been declared either *fair* or *low*, and the task had been reduced for each, either by 10 or 20 per cent. The gang then under examination was No. 13, and was composed as follows :—

					Units.
9 men	...	...	...	=	36
16 adult boys	...	...	...	=	32
10 nursing mothers	...	...	...	=	15
1 pregnant woman	...	...	...	=	1½
41 other women	...	...	...	=	82
23 children	...	...	...	=	23
100					190

The Hospital Assistant was called and directed to pick out the weak members, who were as below :—

					Units.
2 nursing mothers	...	...	...	=	3
12 women	...	...	...	=	24
1 man	...	...	...	=	4
3 adult boys	...	...	...	=	6
4 children	...	...	...	=	4
22					41

These individuals were said to be suffering generally either from jaundice or anæmia. The Hospital Assistant said that he examined all his gangs in accordance with the orders received, of which he produced a copy, on the 30th May last, and that the existing classification of *low* or *fair* had been made on the basis of that examination, and there had been no subsequent examination, nor had he orders to repeat these examinations periodically. We endeavoured to ascertain whether the members of gang No. 13, who were put before us as weak, were the same individuals as those upon the strength of whose condition the gang had been classed as *low* six weeks before, but the Hospital Assistant failed to produce the papers.

In this particular case it would appear, on the authority of a Hospital Assistant, that 22 per cent. of the gang were in a weakly condition, but it is obvious that in such cases the percentage should be struck on the child-units and not on the individuals. The weakly units were 41 out of 190, or about 16 per cent. only, but the invalids were certainly capable of doing some work ; and if their own tasks had been reduced by 50 per cent., it would only have been necessary to reduce the task of the whole gang by ½ or 8, instead of by 20 per cent. But it must be borne in mind that under the orders that I found in force this reduction of 20 per cent. would also have been made if 11 individuals of the gang, say 6 nursing mothers and 5 children, or 14 out of 190 units, had been declared below *par*.

On the following morning I inspected a gang employed on the excavation of a well which had then been carried down to a depth of about 22 feet. The bottom was in fairly hard rock, and the officer in charge had decided that, as the work was of a special character, the gang should be composed of selected individuals, and should be classed as A. A so-called A task was given, but I was unable to understand upon what basis it had been calculated, and a careful analysis showed that it was a very light task, even for B workers. However, it appeared that this gang of selected workers had on the 30th May been classed as *low* on account probably of a few weakly individuals having been found among the

carriers. It thus happened that, while the whole gang were entitled to the A wage on account of the diggers being picked men, they were entitled to a reduction of 20 per cent. of their task, because six weeks before a few weak individuals had been found among the carriers. This order of the Civil Surgeon seems to me very ill-considered, especially when regard is paid to the subordinate agency by which alone it could be carried out.

13. The system of wholesale reductions on account of weakness of gangs is not confined to the Kurnool district, for I was informed that in Cuddapah reductions of one-third or one-half the task are made when gangs are reported weak. In the only two works which I inspected in this district, no deductions from the strength of the gangs had been made on account of weakness, though separate gangs of weakly individuals had been found. I have, however, obtained a register for one of these works (the Muddanura tank) for the 14th June, from which I have abstracted the following particulars :—

Number of gangs.	Work on which employed.	Men.	Boy adults.	Nursing mothers, &c.	Other women.	Children.	Total.	Child-units.
21	Earthwork on bund	403	291	...	796	517	2,007	4,303
4	Watering and tamping	83	51	...	168	68	370	838
2	Carrying drinking water	32	20	...	201	20	273	590
	Total working gangs	518	362	...	1,165	605	2,650	5,731
2	Nursing mothers, &c., employed on "breaking clumps."	...	...	117	27	23	167	239
3	Weak gangs, untasked	99	...	...	275	48	422	994
	Grand Total	617	362	117	1,467	676	3,239	6,964

The gangs on the first three lines were employed on work, although only those on the first were actually tasked. Those on the last two lines, comprising 589 individuals out of 3,239, or 1,233 units out of 6,964, *i.e.*, nearly 18 per cent., had only nominal work to do, but all received the B wage.

As regards the 21 gangs actually employed on earthwork, I find that deductions from the full task, varying from 40 to 70 per cent., and averaging about 50 per cent., were made on account of distance, and that further deductions, varying from 20 to 30 per cent., were made for "other causes," which are not specified. These could hardly have included "weakness" with 18 per cent. of the units drafted to weakly gangs, and were probably on account of time spent in reorganizing the gangs, as there is a note on the form that this had been in progress during half the day. The full task per digger had been fixed at 80 cubic feet per diem, but after reductions from all causes, the average task actually set was less than 21 cubic feet, and the work of the carriers was lightened in proportion. At this rate the cost of the earthwork, including allowance for the rest-day wage, would work out to Rs. 53 per thousand cubic feet, though the normal cost would probably not have exceeded Rs. 6.

14. I now come to the case of deductions made on account of "excessive tasks" and will again quote the G. O., paragraph 3 (ii.)—

Deductions for excessive tasks.

(ii.) "Excessive tasks.—When the task prescribed appears to be excessive the case should be met by a reduction of the task under section 107, not by reducing the class of the gang

under section 97. A similar reduction should be made when gangs turn out short work owing to the absence of tools, or to inexpertness in the handling of tools. It is well to point out here that 'Collector' in section 107 includes Divisional Officers,* and that the 'Engineer Officer in charge' means the 'Overseer in charge.'

* See footnote on paragraph 10.

An instance of the way in which this order has worked in practice came to my notice when at Belamchera on the 13th July. I found that the tasks for some gangs employed on breaking metal was 0·8 cubic feet of metalling per child-unit per diem. This appeared to me to be a very low task, especially as I had found a task of 1·75 cubic feet, or more than double, on the road work inspected on the 10th in Anantapur district. According to the district task tables the correct task would have been 1·3 cubic feet. On enquiry it appeared that the task originally set had been 1·3 cubic feet, but that it was subsequently reduced (previously to the issue of the new G. O.) to 1·1 cubic feet for some reason that has not been placed on record. The register showed that this task had been pretty regularly accomplished, though fines had occasionally been recorded. Then came the G. O. of March last, which was circulated by the Collector early in May, and under which fining practically ceased as will be presently shown. Since then the task has been twice reduced, first to 0·9 and then to 0·8 cubic feet, under the authority of Mr. Ghose, the Divisional Officer.

Mr. Ghose, who was present, informed me that the Overseer in charge had represented to him that it was quite impossible for him to get the full tasks out of the workers, and that they must either be fined, or the tasks reduced, and he had therefore authorised their reduction, under the authority given to him by the order quoted. I asked him if he himself considered the task short, and he said he could not set aside the Overseer's statement, though the Collector and I found on examining the register that the first falling off in the outturn when the task was 1·1 cubic feet did not occur until the practice of fining had ceased, that the reduced task of 0·9 cubic feet had been done without difficulty when first set, the outturn subsequently falling without satisfactory reason being forthcoming. At the time of our visit the task of 0·8 cubic feet, which was also carried out for some days, was no longer worked up to, the task on the 11th being 17 per cent. deficient, and but for the visit the task would probably by this time have been reduced to 0·7 cubic feet or lower. Mr. Ghose himself admitted that he had in March last got a task of 1·3 cubic feet out of a gang at Alupur, although no deductions whatever had there been made on account of weakness or distance, as in the case of the gangs at Belamchera, and if he had more carefully examined the register I do not think he could possibly have approved such gratuitous reductions.

15. Mr. Ghose told us that he had personally authorised reductions of the task on two works, and that indeed he had

Reduction of tasks by Overseers in charge under general sanction of the Divisional Officer.

only visited two works since the issue of the G. O. But I have since seen a copy of a Circular No. 489, dated 11th May 1897, issued by him as Divisional Officer

direct to all the Overseers in charge of relief works within his division, explaining in greater detail the G. Os. of March last. A copy of this Circular to which I must again presently refer is appended, but paragraph 4 may here be quoted *in extenso* :—

"(4.) From sub-paragraph (ii.) of the G. O. it appears that the intention of Government is to regulate and adjust the task by decreasing it and increasing it till an exact task which a gang can turn out regularly has been ascertained. In doing this, Overseers should not change the class of the gang, but alter the unit of task. This requires the sanction of the undersigned, *but as he cannot always be on the spot to accord the necessary action, a general sanction is hereby accorded*, and they are informed that their daily work sheets will be carefully scrutinised to guard against any abuse of it. The undersigned hopes to see that before long, with a careful working of this system, every gang will be able to turn out its allotted task."

The words in italics are mine. The Overseers to whom this Circular was addressed are Upper Subordinates in the Public Works Department, and they have been given *carte blanche* to reduce the tasks at pleasure, without any reference whatever to the Sub-divisional or Divisional Public Works Officers, who are their

departmental superiors, but who have themselves no power whatever to increase or reduce a task, except with the sanction of the Collector. It will thus be seen that tasks can be reduced by Hospital Assistants and Overseers in charge, in some cases with and in others without the approval of the Revenue Divisional Officers until they are whittled away to almost nothing.

16. Having thus described the actual practice which has sprung up, under the G. O. of March last, in connection with the reduction of tasks, I proceed to the question of fines. I understand that when

Fines. the works were first started, fining without any reference to a minimum wage was rigorously enforced, even although representations had been made by some of the Public Works Officers that the standard tasks of the Code were in some cases excessive. The latest rule in the subject is contained in paragraph 4 of the G. O. as below :—

“4. *Fining*.—Finning should be resorted to only in clear cases of malingering or of insubordination; and even then not so as to reduce the wage below that of the D class, nor for more than one week continuously, without the special permission of the Divisional Officer.”

This rule, read as it must be, with the instructions for reduction of tasks in paragraph 3 of the G. O. and with other Resolutions of the Board of Revenue has, rightly or wrongly, been taken to prohibit the fining of a gang for short work, and to restrict the practice to cases of individuals who have been clearly guilty of malingering or insubordination. This is clearly shown in paragraph 7 of the Circular by a Divisional Officer referred to in the preceding paragraph. As a result the practice of fining has ceased almost entirely, and the Overseers in charge are afraid to fine. They prefer to meet short work by reduction of task, with the inevitable result that the successive reductions become necessary. On one work I found a case in which a small fine had been imposed, but only the day before, and the Assistant Engineer at Belamchera told me that he had recently ordered a fine for very short work. But beyond this I could get no trace of a fine, and was told by both Civil and Public Works Officers that the practice had ceased. Apart from the unwillingness of the subordinates in charge to show fines in their accounts, it must be admitted that the tasks after all deductions have been made are so low that the gangs can hardly help completing them.

17. I have now shown how the full task of a gang is determined, and the reductions which are in practice made. Task tables. It remains to consider the task tables in which the normal task per child-unit is given.

A table of standard tasks has been given in Form F, Appendix III., of the Madras Famine Code, but it is difficult to criticise it, because the data on which it is based have not been given, and for the same reason it is difficult to say what modifications should be made in the tabular tasks when the constitution of a gang differs widely from that assumed. The table is not in a practical form, or it would show separately, as do the tables of other Codes, the tasks for diggers and carriers. Subsidiary task tables have been prepared in each district by the Executive Engineer, which are in greater detail, but have the same defect in not distinguishing between the task of the digger and the carrier, or in road metalling between the carrier and the breaker. The following is a comparison as far as is possible of the tasks set forth in these district tables, with the standard table of the Code :—

Nature of task.	Code standard.	Bellary.	Kurnool.	Cuddapah.
<i>Earthwork.</i>	Cub. ft.	Cub. ft.	Cub. ft.	Cub. ft.
Sandy loam. Lead up 60 feet. Lift to 6 feet	11·85	9·00	9·00	6·5 (a)
Black cotton soil ditto ...	10·95	7·50	7·70	5·88 (a)
Gravelly soil, hard	10·13	6·0	4·70	4·50 (a)

(a) The Cuddapah earthwork rates are for a lead up to 150 feet. The tasks given are for a child-unit of B class.

Nature of task.	Code standard.	Bellary.	Kurnool.	Cuddapah.
<i>Metalling.</i>				
	Cub. ft.	Cub. ft.	Cub. ft.	Cub. ft.
Stone easily procurable and broken :—				
Lead—				
0—300 feet	1.88	1.7	1.7	1.7
3—4 furlongs ... ..	...	0.6	0.8	0.6
Stone easily procured, but hard to break :—				
0—300 feet ... ..	...	1.2	1.3	1.2
3—4 furlongs ... ..	...	0.5	0.6	0.5
Stone hard to procure and break :—				
0—300 feet ... ..	...	0.8	0.8	0.8
3—4 furlongs ... ..	...	0.3	0.4	0.3

It will be seen that the Code standard tasks are higher than those now enforced, which agree *inter se* pretty fairly. From several notes taken on the works, I am inclined to think that the standard tasks are too high, but that the district tasks are too low; but without actual experience of the working capacity of the Deccan cooly it is difficult to speak with confidence.

I noted many cases, however, in which a much higher task per unit might have been attained, if more attention had been paid to the distribution of diggers or breakers and carriers. As a general rule the carriers were very under-tasked, often doing only 50 per cent. of a fair task. In some cases this is unavoidable, but it was not so in the cases noticed. This was of course the fault of the Overseer in charge, but if the task tables were drawn up on a sounder principle, not only could a far higher task per unit be realized, but the men in charge would be greatly assisted in making the most advantageous disposition of the workers.

18. It is difficult to say what proportion the amount paid as wages bears to the value of the work done. The accounts are not kept in a manner in which this can be shown readily and without difficulty. I obtained, however, certain registers taken at random in the Bellary district, from which the following results have been abstracted relating to the breaking of road metal :—

Number of gangs.	Number of workers.	Percentage of deductions.	Task performed.	Amount paid in wages.	Rate per 100 cub. ft.	Normal value of work done at 3—12 per cent.	Remarks.
			Cub. ft.	Rs.		Rs.	
16	Not noted.	Not noted.	1,329	139	10	...	11-seer basis.
7			258	45	17	...	
20			790	147	18—12	...	
			2,377	431	18	89		8.75 seers.
14	428	56	90	42	42—6	...	Ditto.
31	1,049	56	296	103	34—12	...	Ditto.
			2,763	684	35—5	104	

Reducing all results to the basis of 8.75 seers to the rupee, the cost of wages was thus more than six times of that of the normal value of work done. For a basis of 11 seers it would have been a little more than five times.

It may be noted that the gangs on the last two lines of the table consisted entirely of women and a very few children. The men are so few in number that they are usually employed on earthwork or consolidation, and in many cases metalling has been collected simply for the purpose of finding employment for the women.

To the rates given above, one-seventh should be added to allow for the rest-day wage. It would be one-sixth if full rates were paid on the rest-day, but the rate paid is either the C or D wage. Something should be added too for the cost of feeding dependants in the kitchen, but this is not charged direct to the work, and the amounts are not recorded. Probably 5 per cent. would be a sufficient addition on this account.

As regards earthwork I have already noted in paragraph 13 a case in which the cost of earthwork was Rs. 53 per 1,000 cubic feet, but this was no doubt an extreme case. I have notes of two other cases in which the rates were Rs. 27-2-0 and Rs. 16-5-0, excluding rest-day wage, the deductions for all causes amounting to 60 per cent. in each case. The normal rates are said to have been Rs. 7 and Rs. 5 respectively, and if this is correct the working rates are reasonable, when allowance is made for the deductions. But the normal rates appear to have been overstated. The lead and lift are not given for the Rs. 7 rate, but in the case of the Rs. 5 rate the lead is recorded as 25 and the lift as 2. It is not certain whether the unit here is the foot or the yard (both are used in Madras), but even if it be the latter Rs. 5 would be a high rate.

19. In connection with the Madras task tables it should be mentioned that they are based on the assumption that a woman will do twice the work of a child and a man four times. In the Bombay Code it is assumed that the work done by man, woman and child will be in the proportions 3, 2 and 1, and this is I think more in accordance with general experience. It was often observed to me that a woman would do as much work as a man at metal breaking, and it may safely be assumed that, either at this work or carrying, a woman will do not less than two-thirds of a man's task. If the child-unit task is correct, the man's task in Madras is therefore too high, but it may be that the tasks were originally worked out for men, and reduced to the child-unit by dividing by 4. In this case the tasks for women and children are too light. In practice, however, very few men are employed either in metal breaking or in carrying, but one difficulty in applying the Madras task tables lies in this questionable assumption that the ordinary famine male labourer can do twice as much work as a female.

20. Each relief work is nominally under the charge of an Upper Subordinate of the Public Works Department. When the charge is a large one he has a Lower Subordinate under him to look after the measurements, &c., and in some cases the Upper Subordinate has charge of two camps, with a Lower Subordinate at each as an assistant. He is responsible for all miscellaneous expenditure, but has nothing whatever to do with the payment of labour. For this purpose an imprest is given by the Executive Engineer to the Tahsildar who supplies under cover of it the necessary cash to a paymaster who is appointed by the Collector. The muster rolls or pay sheets are made over to this official, whose time is mainly occupied in paying the gangs. The rates of payment to be entered in these pay sheets is intimated from time to time to the subordinate in charge by the Tahsildar. In the Kurnool district these rates are based, not on the market rate of the "grain equivalent," but on the market one of all the items in the annual return of the Code. I did not ascertain the practice in this respect in other districts, but believe that it is left to the discretion of the Collector to adopt either alternative. Payments are supposed to be made twice a week, but I was told that there are frequently delays, owing to the paymaster not being kept in funds.

or in small coin by the Tahsildar, to his not being able to get through his work, or to delay in the submission of the pay sheet by the subordinate in charge. The Public Works Department is responsible only for delay due to the last of these causes.

Referring again to the Circular by the Assistant Collector in Kurnool appended to these notes, it will be seen that in paragraph 7 thereof strict orders were issued to paymasters to take no notice of any orders to impose fines on gangs, and that fines on individuals were to be enforced only when the Overseer had distinctly entered in the remarks column that the individual concerned had been found to be malingering or insubordinate. On a representation by the Executive Engineer, the Collector subsequently modified this order in his Circular No. 218/F, dated 30th June 1897, so far as it prohibited the fining of the whole gangs for malingering or insubordination; but he insisted, as he was of course justified in doing, that the reason for the fine should be clearly indicated on the pay sheet by certain distinguishing letters. To this there can be no objection, but the practice of giving a paymaster any discretion in enforcing fines imposed by the officer in charge of the works is certainly open to objection.

The system of making all payments by means of a subordinate in the Civil Departments on works in charge of the Public Works Department has been extolled to me as an excellent safeguard against jobbery. The principle of exciting friction and jealousies between subordinate officials does not commend itself to me as an efficient safeguard against collusion that may be substituted for the more direct checks exercised elsewhere, and as long as reliance is placed on these jealousies, there is always the danger that they may be simulated wherever collusion is most rampant. I will reserve further remarks on this subject, however, for my final report.

21. Piece-work has not been introduced in the Deccan, but I was informed by Mr. Crole that the Government had just sanctioned its introduction in Ganjam and Vizagapatam, where the local officers have made out a very strong case. It was said that the people there were very anxious to be given piece-work, though they could not be induced to attend works conducted on the task-work system. The proposal was at first objected to by the Board of Revenue as contrary to the Famine Code, but it is satisfactory to know that a fair trial is now to be given to it.

22. The number of dependants on works is much smaller in proportion to the number of workers than in other provinces. The weekly returns show no dependants at all before the week ending 6th March, when they amounted to 3,439 against 51,272 workers, or less than 7 per cent. For the week ending 17th July the number was 19,011 against 442,893 workers, or little over 4 per cent. Even these numbers include some who are not dependants of the workers, as in many cases the kitchens are placed near a large village and persons are fed there who have no direct connection with the works. About 95 per cent. of the dependants are children. Cash payments are almost unknown, but a cooked ration is distributed. The ration for adults consists of a cake of cholom, or mixed cholom and ragi, containing 25 tolahs or 10 ounces of grain, served with a sauce formed of the other items detailed in section 122 of the Code. This ration is given morning and evening, so that an adult receives 20 ounces of raw grain a day. Children receive on an average half this amount, that is, a ten-ounce cake is made up morning and evening for every two children on the roll. In practice the smaller children get less than half and the bigger ones more than half a cake. I found in many kitchens that many, both of the adults and children, were unable to eat more than their ration when offered them out of the surplus, and Mr. Stuart, Collector of Bellary, told me that he often made this experiment, and found a great many refused any additional ration.

It has recently been pointed out by the Government of India that the Madras ration for dependants and others in receipt of gratuitous relief is excessive, the allowance of grain in other Codes being 16 ounces only for adults. In Bombay children receive only 6 ounces. Dr. King, with whom I discussed this point, remarked that the Bombay ration is expressed in terms of flour and not of raw

grain, and that, when allowance is made for this, the Bombay ration expressed in grain could be increased by 10 per cent. He also observed that the Bombay ration allows $\frac{1}{2}$ an ounce of ghi for adults and $\frac{1}{4}$ of an ounce for small children among "other items," and I understood him to say that, if the Bombay scale were accepted in its entirety, it would not be inferior to the present Madras allowance. It may be noted, however, that the minimum flour allowance for an adult female in Bombay is only 14 ounces.

The kitchens on the works are entirely under the control of the Collector, by whom a Superintendent is appointed. The Overseer in charge and the Public Works Department have nothing whatever to do with the management of the kitchens, nor does the expenditure incurred on them appear in the Public Works accounts.

In considering the high wages paid to workers in this Presidency, the fact that the proportion of dependants is so low must be taken into account, as in other provinces it varies from about 10 to 25 per cent. It is said that only the lowest castes can be induced to send their children to kitchens, and that they are very unpopular. This has been the experience at first in all other provinces, but where kitchens are well managed I think the prejudice against them has gradually given way, and if non-working children are to be relieved at all, kitchens are doubtless preferable to a cash wage.

23. I asked Mr. Le Fanu if there had been any complaints from private employers that the relief works interfered with the supply of labour. He mentioned three cases in which such complaints had been received from small employers, and said that it was found in each case that the wages offered by the employer were about the same as, or not more than a pice higher than, the wage earned on the works, but that the latter was preferred, because private employers would not pay anything to the weaker members of the family or to dependants. In all these cases he had offered to send as many labourers as required, and to allow the weak members and dependants to remain on the works, but when the offer was made it was said that the men were no longer required. The only other complaint that Mr. Le Fanu could remember was one from the Railway Office at Vizagapatam to the effect that relief works were preventing labour from coming to the railway works, but enquiry showed that there are no relief works within 13 miles, while the local labour was at the time receiving extravagant wages of from 6 to 8 annas a day in collecting grass for private persons, and would on this account not be likely to go to the railway.

24. As far as I could ascertain there are no relief works of any importance conducted wholly by the Civil Officers. At first a few works were started under the supervision of the Local Fund Engineers, but they were eventually made over to the officers of the Public Works Department.

25. It is, however, hardly correct to say that the relief works are under the control of the Public Works Officers, except as regards matters of purely technical detail, or even that these officers have any control over their own subordinates, who are in charge of or employed on the relief works. These men have to take their orders from many masters—the Collector, the Assistant or Deputy Collector, the Tahsildar or his Assistant, the Civil Surgeon of the District, and even, as shown above in paragraph 12, from the Hospital Assistant engaged on the works; and they are responsible to their own departmental superior only for the safe custody of the tools and plant, the submission of certain daily returns, copies of which have also to go to the Revenue Divisional Officers, and for work being outturned in accordance with the specification. They are allowed to propose reductions of task to the Revenue Divisional Officer, and, as has been shown, in some cases to reduce them of their own accord under cover of a general sanction to that effect, but it is useless for them to recommend any reductions to their own superior.

officer in the Public Works Department, who has no authority whatever to modify the tasks, except after a reference to the Collector. Nor are these men, although in charge of the work, in any way responsible for the payments to the labourers, which are made by an independent official belonging to the Civil Department, and advisedly removed entirely from their control. Their whole sense of responsibility is weakened by the uncertainty as to whom they are responsible to, or as to who are responsible to them.

The Executive and Assistant Engineers are in no better position. They are out of order if they attempt to give any orders on the work relating to tasks or fines, though such orders may be freely given by others who have had no experience whatever in the organisation of large bodies of labourers. They too have to serve two masters, to take their orders from the Collector on all points not strictly professional, and from their departmental superiors on all other points, it being left to everyone to interpret in his own way what is meant by "strictly professional."

26. The position of the Superintending Engineer is still more anomalous. If there is one officer more than any other upon whom Government might rely to control relief works in simultaneous progress in several districts, to assign to each officer and subordinate in the Public Works Department his proper duties and place in the chain of responsibility, to introduce uniformity where uniformity is desirable, and to sanction variation where circumstances demand variation, it is the Superintending Engineer. In Madras, however, the Superintending Engineer is allowed no voice in these matters. Take for instance the question of tasking. I have already stated that the task table of the Code is not in my opinion based on sound and workable principles, and it might be considered the first duty of a Superintending Engineer to rectify this. I find that, as long ago as last March, the Superintending Engineer attempted to do this, as regards earthwork, on the occasion of a large work being started in the Cuddapah district, and to introduce the system of tasking the diggers which is in force in every other province that I have visited. He sent detailed instructions on this and other matters connected with the work to the Executive Engineer, who sent them on to the Collector for approval of the non-professional points involved. The Collector forwarded the proposals to the Board of Revenue for orders after expressing his own personal approval. The orders of the Board are contained in Resolution No. 415-A., dated 13th June 1897. In this Resolution the merits of the system proposed were admitted, and it was acknowledged that Government in paragraph three (i) of G. O. No. 216 of 1897 had recognised the necessity of fixing the task according to the number of diggers and not according to the total number in the gang. But it was objected that it was impossible to carry out the system proposed, and undesirable to add to the complexity of the existing rules for the conduct of works by introducing the proposed system. The Board concluded by observing "that the Superintending Engineer issued orders to the Executive Engineer to introduce a system totally at variance with the provisions of the Famine Code, without consulting the Collector, although the proposed system involved several points of a non-professional nature." The Board was "glad to note, however, that the Executive Engineer thought fit to consult the Collector in the matter."

I am not concerned here to answer the Board's objection to the introduction of the better system of tasking, which has been adopted without any difficulty whatever in every other province in which relief works are in progress. It is sufficient to point out how this effort of the Superintending Engineer to introduce an improved system was met by something very like censure. Other instances of this have come to my notice, but it is unnecessary to adduce them here.

The exclusion of the Superintending Engineer from all control of his own Public Works staff, except in "technical matters," has been emphatically asserted in paragraph 9 of the G. O. of March last, in which it is even directed that the details of the Public Works establishment should be seen and passed by the Collectors before they are sent up to the Board or Government for sanction. The control of the Superintending Engineer is practically confined to such matters as

the section to be adopted for a tank embankment, or the size of the ring through which broken metal is to pass.

27. It may be said that the position to which the officers of the Public Works Department are relegated is in accordance with that assigned to them in section 24 of the Madras Code, and that the duties of a Superintending Engineer in time of famine

Rules of the Famine Codes on the relation of Public Works to Civil Officers.

are merely those which are recited in section 42. I do not propose to consider here the language of section 24 of the Code, but will merely observe that it is repeated almost word for word in the corresponding sections of the Codes of other

* Bombay, sections 31 (d) and (e) and section 38.

Bengal, section 22.

North-West Provinces, section 27.

Punjab, section 49.

provinces*, excepting Burma and the Central Provinces. But notwithstanding this, in all these other provinces, the Superintending Engineer, acting in direct communication with the Commissioner, is in practice the officer who controls the organization and

management of all relief works which have been made over to the Public Works Department. In Bombay his duties are already laid down in section 37, and whatever doubts there may be as to the position of other Public Works officers under sections 31 and 38, his authority in respect of all the matters referred to in section 37 is unquestioned. In Bengal the responsibilities of the Superintending Engineer, as far as the Code is concerned, are limited to the matters stated in section 93, corresponding very closely to section 42 of the Madras Code. But in practice two Superintendents of Works, with the powers of Superintending Engineers as defined in the Public Works Code, have been specially appointed for the control of the relief works under the Public Works Department, and the Chief Engineer himself has devoted the closest attention to the all-important question of tasking and has drawn up the admirable and helpful instructions on the subject which have been issued by the Local Government in the Public Works Department for the general guidance of all officers engaged on relief works. In the North-West Provinces the duties of the officers of the Public Works Department are laid down in sections 30 to 40 of the Famine Code, and as there defined are not more extensive than in the Madras and Bengal Codes, but in actual practice the whole of that important section of famine policy which relates to relief works has been formulated and controlled in the Public Works Department, the Chief and Superintending Engineers have been consulted by the Local Government at every stage, and a generous and real authority has been accorded to them, which has been exercised in close and harmonious co-operation with the Civil Officers.

In the Punjab the duties of Superintending Engineers have been defined in section 56 of the Code, which corresponds very closely with section 37 of the Bombay Code. When relief operations were first started, it was proposed by the Chief Engineer himself that the duties of the Public Works Staff should be confined to purely professional matters, but it was soon found that this was not practicable, and when work was started in the Ghaggar Canal, it was decided by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor; on the unanimous representation of the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner, that the whole of the arrangements should be under the direct control of the Superintending Engineer, for reasons recorded in paragraph 3 of Sir Dennis Fitzpatrick's note on the Ghaggar Canals Relief Works, dated 18th January 1897. I have received a communication from the Deputy Commissioner at Hissar from which I infer that this decision has had the happiest results.

28. It will thus be seen that in the four provinces in which the position of the Public Works Officers in relation to the Collector is defined in language identical with that of section 24 of the Madras Code, and in which the results attained

Interpretation of terms "Technical" and "Professional."

on relief works certainly do not compare unfavourably with those accomplished in Madras, a very much wider authority has been accorded to the Superintending Engineer than is allowed in the latter province. The explanation of this is that in all other provinces a wider interpretation has been given to the words "*matters which are not of a merely technical nature*" and "*points strictly professional.*" If

there is one matter that may be deemed professional, it is the organization and management of large bodies of more or less untrained labourers with what is often a wholly untrained subordinate staff; if there is one matter which is merely technical, it is the proportioning of tasks under varying conditions, and in variously constituted gangs to the capacity of the gang or the individual worker. My tour has given me exceptional opportunities for appreciating the difficulties which attend the management of large relief works on the principles laid down in the Code, and I can conceive no task which more severely taxes the capacities and energies of the best engineer.

29. In one respect the action which has been taken by the Madras Government is justified by positive enactment of the Famine Code which appears to be peculiar to Madras. In section 107 it is laid down that modifications in the standard task may be made by the Engineer Officer in charge of the work, *subject to the sanction* of the Collector. This is an amplification of the more general direction that the Collector's decision shall be accepted in all matters relating to the employment and wages of labourers which is not to be found in the Codes of other provinces in which this direction is contained. In section 37 (*f*) of the Bombay Code, the Superintending Engineer is required to "maintain an equal standard of tasks and uniformity of procedure in setting tasks for the various kinds of work," and there is a similar provision in section 56 (*e*) of the Punjab Code.

Power given in Madras to the Collector and his Divisional Officers in regard to tasks.

In Bengal the rules for tasks are set forth in sections 64 to 66, the language of which implies that the tasks are to be determined by the Local Officers, though as before stated detailed instructions for their guidance have been drawn up by the Chief Engineer, and issued by the Local Government in the Public Works Department. In the North-West Provinces the same practice obtains.

It may be added that under paragraph 3 (*ii.*) of the Madras G. O. No. 216-Revenue, dated 10th March 1897, it has been lately ruled that the word "Collector" in section 107 includes Divisional Officers, and that the "Engineer Officer in charge" means the Overseer in charge. The practical effect of this ruling has been shown in paragraphs 14 and 15 of these notes.

30. It need hardly be said that the relations between the Civil and Public Works Officers in this province are very strained, and in a state of high tension all along the line. The friction that exists is very detrimental.

Friction engendered by the present regulations.

I have heard both sides, and have come to the conclusion, not that there are faults in both sides, but that both are in the right. As long as the sole responsibility for the management of relief works is vested by the express enactment of Government in the Civil Officers, those officers cannot but resent the interference of officers of other departments. As long as the officers of a specially trained and independent department are called in to assist in the management of such works, they cannot but resent the ignoring of their authority in matters which they rightly deem to be of a professional nature, and the loosening of all the bonds of departmental organization and discipline. It is an unfortunate but natural result of the existing regulations that the friction excited is greatest between those officers who are the most capable and energetic, and who take the most serious view of their own individual duties and responsibilities.

31. During the interview that I had with the Famine Commissioner on the 16th, I expressed surprise at the great loss of power involved in the limited authority assigned to the Public Works Department in the control and management of relief works, whereby very heavy duties and responsibilities were thrown on the Civil Officers in addition to those incidental to other sections of famine administration, such as village relief, agricultural advances, the distribution of the charitable fund, &c., &c. He told me in reply that this had been done advisedly, and he mentioned instances in previous famines in which particular members of the Public

Views of the Famine Commissioner on the relation of the two departments.

Works Department had shown themselves very hard and unsympathetic in the management of relief works. I venture to think, however, that even if the management of relief works were more distinctly recognized as a special function of the Public Works Department, the idiosyncrasies of its individual members would be better controlled by their own departmental superiors than by officers of other departments. It is the particular business of Engineers to adapt means to ends, and if the principles that should guide them in the management of relief works were set forth in all necessary detail by the head of their own department, and adherence to their principles were enforced by the usual methods of departmental discipline, I see no reason why relief works in Madras should not be as efficiently and sympathetically managed by the officers of the Public Works Department as they have been in other provinces. As far as I could ascertain, the work of the Public Works Department, as a department of Government, has been confined to the preparation of estimates, the provision of funds, and the supply of the necessary tools and plant.

32. The Public Works Department has hitherto supplied all the Engineer Officers required in connection with relief works. This has been done by drafting officers from unaffected districts in which ordinary operations have been as far as possible contracted, but if distress should extend to other districts there will probably be some difficulty in providing officers. Upper Subordinates have also been freely transferred from other districts, and others who are entertained by Local Funds have also been posted to relief works, but it has been necessary in addition to employ a few temporary men who have done fairly well. The greatest difficulty has been experienced in regard to Sub-Overseers and Head Maistris. Most of these have been entertained temporarily, but the supply of competent men was not equal to the demand.

Concluding remarks.

33. The distinctive features of the administration of relief works in Madras are as follows :—

- (a) All workers are put in the B class and receive the B wage, including even those who can perform only a nominal task, except in Anantapur, where they are put in the C class. A few workers receive the A wage, but the number is insignificant. Dependants also receive a larger ration than in other provinces.
- (b) The large reductions made in normal tasks on account of distance, weakness, or incapacity, and the almost total suspension of the practice of fining.
- (c) The exclusion of the Superintending Engineer from all effective control over the management of relief works, and especially over the system of tasking.

The orders of the Government of India have already been passed on (a), and I have nothing to add to the remarks already made in regard to (c).

As regards (b), Mr. Le Fanu informed me that the proposals for reduction of tasks, &c., to which effect was given by G. O. No. 216, dated 30th March 1897, were originally made by him in view of the great heat to which the labourers in the Deccan would be exposed during the months of April and May, or until the setting in of the monsoon winds.

He had subsequently proposed that these orders should be modified in the direction of greater stringency as soon as the monsoon sets in. I have seen a G. O. of the Madras Government in this sense, in which it was proposed to increase all tasks by 25 per cent., and give smaller reductions on account of distance after the monsoon had commenced, and officers were warned to be prepared for telegraphic instructions to this effect. I understood from Mr. Le Fanu when I met him on the 16th that these instructions had just issued, although I have not seen a copy of them. It may therefore be hoped that fuller tasks may be exacted in future.

The numbers on relief works, including dependants, have increased from 166,723 for the week ending 1st May (when the effects of the G. O. of March

last would probably have become appreciable) to 461,904 for the week ending 17th July. It is impossible to say how much of the increase has been due to the great reductions in task, which in many cases have become almost nominal, and how much to the failure of the monsoon and extension of the distressed area.

The large proportion of women and children to men on the Madras relief works, and the fact that the majority of the works are road work, have no doubt increased the difficulty in keeping the workers fully employed and in setting a fairly high task. In this connection it must be remembered that in the Madras returns boys between the age of 12 and 16 are included among the men, and that women include girls of the same age, so that under *children* only those under 12 years of age are shown. In other provinces boys and girls between the age of 12 or 16 are shown as children.

The numbers of individuals receiving gratuitous relief, including dependants on the works, have hitherto been less in Madras than in other provinces, excepting Bombay and the Punjab. The following are the figures for the week ending 17th July:—

Provinces.	Number of workers.	Dependants on works.	Gratuitous and special relief.	Total columns 3 and 4.	Percentage of column 5 on column 2.
Madras	442,893	19,011	209,202	228,213	51.5
Bombay	245,982	61,821	50,989	112,810	45.9
Bengal	258,172	14,239	449,061	463,300	179.5
North-West Provinces and Oudh ...	428,255	80,815	452,280	533,095	124.5
Punjab	65,156	7,809	13,308	21,117	32.4
Central Provinces	340,104	52,762	160,254	213,016	62.7

The low proportion of dependants and the unpopularity of the kitchens has already been referred to in paragraph 22.

T. HIGHAM.

Dated Simla, 28th July 1897.

APPENDIX.

CIRCULAR. *Tour Dis. No. 489 of 1897.*

The following circular is issued to Overseers in charge of relief works in this division.

2. Government has, in its order No. 216, dated the 30th March 1897, laid down fresh rules for the management of relief works, and these must be acted up to by every Overseer, and for that purpose the accompanying extract of paragraphs 3, 4 and 9 is communicated to them for their guidance.

3. They will observe that the work to be given to the different gangs must be suited to their composition, and this is clearly shown by examples in sub-paragraph (i.) of paragraph 3.

From the second portion of the same sub-paragraph, it is clear that Government intends that one man should be equivalent to two women and equivalent to four children. No allowance is apparently to be made for nursing mothers or girls, who must be strictly considered to be capable of turning out two units of work.

The only exception made is in favour of boys between 12 and 16, who are to be reckoned as two or three units, according to their capacity, but are to be paid the full wages of a man.

4. From sub-paragraph (ii.) of the G. O., it appears that the intention of Government is to regulate and adjust the task by decreasing it and increasing it till an exact task which a gang can turn out regularly has been ascertained. In doing this, Overseers should not change the class of the gang, but alter the unit of task. This requires the sanction of the undersigned, but as he cannot always be on the spot to accord the necessary action, a general sanction is hereby accorded, and they are informed that their daily work sheets will be carefully scrutinised to guard against any abuse of it. The undersigned hopes to see that before long, with a careful working of this system, every gang will be able to turn out its allotted task.

5. Sub-paragraph (iii.) provides for the same latitude being extended to the case of weakly gangs.

6. Sub-paragraph (iv.) allows for a reduction being made from the task on account of distance on works where accommodation has not been provided. The scale laid down is an abatement of an hour's work for every $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, or in other words a reduction of $\frac{1}{3}$ for every $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, taking the working day to be eight hours from 7.30 a.m. to 2 noon and 2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

7. From paragraph 4 of the G. O. it is clear that Government does not wish fines to be imposed for short work. It should only be resorted to in clear cases of malingering or insubordination; and as no entire gang can hardly be said to be in a body lazy or insubordinate, the fining of entire gangs is practically abolished. The names of the lazy and contumacious characters, however, should be noted down by the Overseer, with a view to imposing individual fines, and that not beyond the extent to which the gang would otherwise be fined for short work, for the Code contemplates fining only for short work (*vide* section 28, Appendix VI.).

The undersigned has strictly ordered the paymasters to take no notice of any orders to impose fines on gangs. They have, however, been instructed to impose fines on individuals only in such cases where the Overseer has entered in the remarks column that such individual has been found to be malingering or insubordinate.

Such fines imposed on contumacious or lazy characters should not allow of their wages being reduced below D class, nor should it continue for more than a week continuously without the sanction of the undersigned previously obtained in writing.

8. Overseers will see from the spirit of the G. O. now issued that it has the effect of cancelling the circular issued to them by the late Executive Engineer to the effect that Revenue Officers have no concern with scrutinizing tasks, mustering gangs, check measuring work, &c., for the G. O. gives full control of the works to the Revenue Divisional Officers.

9. Overseers are strictly ordered to carry out these instructions to the very letter, and failure to do so will be reported to the Collector, with a view to the matter being brought to the notice of Government.

(Signed) GHOSE,
Acting Head Assistant Collector.

Camp Allagadda; dated 11th May 1897.

NOTE.—Since the issue of this circular G. O. No. 284-Press, dated 1st May 1897, ordering that nursing mothers and women in an advanced stage of pregnancy should be treated as equivalent to $1\frac{1}{2}$ units has been received, and Overseers should carry out the above order at once.

(Signed) GHOSE,
Acting Head Assistant Collector.

BOMBAY.

Monthly Famine Statement E for the five weeks ending Saturday evening, the 29th May 1897.

District.	Area in Square miles.	Population in thousands.	Affected Area in Square miles.	Estimated Population, in thousands, of col. 4.	NUMBERS ON RELIEF WORKS ON LAST DAY OF MONTH.						Numbers on gratuitous relief.	PRICE OF ONE OR MORE PRINCIPAL FOOD-GRAINS IN POUNDS PER RUPEE.		
					Class A.	Class B.	Class C.	Class D.	Working children.	Total.		Jowári.	Bájri.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Poona	5,349	1,068	2,987	488	2,052	10,401	3,027	774	4,964	21,218	15,335	18-80	16-30	
Sátára	4,825	1,225	4,095	1,162	491	4,283	2,024	151	2,670	9,619	2,063	17-72	15-37	
Bijápur	5,627	796	5,627	796	2,257	18,393	11,382	2,080	13,365	47,477	16,854	20-40	...	
Khándesh... ..	10,700	1,430	10,700 (but area specially affected 1,700).	1,430 partly, but 250 specially.	963	6,284	2,487	2,512	4,227	16,473	5,383	16-50	...	
Sholápur	4,542	750	4,542	750	11,908	41,221	8,548	948	21,974	84,599	32,027	20-25	17-20	
Ahmednagar	6,645	888	6,645	888	1,655	2,722	16,058	8,543	7,435	36,413	16,151	18-27	15-20	(Wheat) 14-20
Násik	5,817	843	5,817	843	2,072	9,450	1,377	364	3,070	16,333	6,514	18-07	16-60	(Nágli) 18-37
Belgaum	4,674	1,013	1,642	353	1,146	3,590	927	611	3,251	9,525	3,478	21-00	19-00	(Rice) 16-00
Total	48,179	8,013	42,055	6,710	22,544	96,344	45,830	15,983	60,956	241,657	97,805	18-88	16-61	(Wheat) 14-20 (Nágli) 18-37 (Rice) 16-00

J. MONTEATH,
Chief Secretary to Government.

REMARKS TO ACCOMPANY MONTHLY FAMINE STATEMENT IN
FORM E, FOR THE FIVE WEEKS ENDING SATURDAY THE
29TH MAY 1897.

(a) *Private relief*.—Private relief from the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund is given in all the affected districts. Besides other forms of relief, advances are being made from the fund to the poorer agriculturists for the purchase of seed, fodder and cattle to enable them to carry on their field operations. Rs. 54,199 were utilised for this purpose in the Sholapur district alone during the month of May. In the Bijapur district, the municipalities of Ilkal, Guledgudd, Bagalkot, and Bijapur continue to give gratuitous relief, and the last three municipalities have opened small relief works for the poor within their limits.

(b) *Village relief*.—The numbers given in column 12 of Statement E include dependants on relief-workers as well as other persons relieved gratuitously in villages and in poor-houses on the last day of the period under report. Village relief was given during the month in 516 villages in the Sholapur district and in 773 villages in the Poona district. In Bijapur the monthly total of numbers gratuitously relieved in villages was 357,410 inclusive of village servants and 9,399 persons relieved by municipalities. The number so relieved in Satara was 195 on the average. The number in receipt of this kind of relief in the Nasik, Dindori, Peint, Malegaon, Sinnar, Igatpuri and Niphad Talukas of the Nasik district on the 29th May 1897 was 762.

(c) *Poor-house relief*.—Two more branch poor-houses were opened during the month under report at Muddebihal and Talikot in the Bijapur district.

(d) *General character of relief works*.—Concentration of labour on large and useful works is being continued as far as possible. The works carried on by recipients of takavi advances in the Bijapur district continue to provide employment for large numbers of people.

(e) *Physical condition of the people*.—The physical condition of the people on relief works and of the general population of the affected tracts continues satisfactory except in the hilly tracts of Poona, Ahmednagar and Satara, where some cases of reduced condition have been noticed. Cholera continued to prevail during the month in parts of Bijapur, Satara and Sholapur, and the requisite preventive measures were taken.

(f) *Deaths (if any) from starvation*.—One such death is reported to have occurred in the Ahmednagar district. The Collector has been asked to furnish a detailed report regarding it.

(g) *Food-stocks*.—Generally sufficient, except in a few isolated villages in the Bijapur district where it is reported that the supply is failing.

(h) *Importation of grain*.—Generally sufficient. In Khandesh grain is being imported more freely than before, and in Ahmednagar importations from Mysore and other places continue. Karbi and grass grown in Belgaum are being imported into the Bijapur district in large quantities.

(i) *General condition and prospects of affected areas*.—The numbers of people on relief works decreased during the month in all the affected districts, except the eastern part of Poona, where there was a rise due to drafts from Sholapur, cessation of harvest work and completion of many tagai works, which afforded employment to agricultural labourers. The general decrease in numbers was due to the opening of kitchens, concentration of labour on large works and more rigid exaction of tasks, and also to the commencement of agricultural operations. The outbreak of cholera on certain relief works in Bijapur and Satara also led to a decline in numbers. In Satara the poorer people are, it is reported, near the end of their resources, and cattle are beginning to suffer seriously in some places. Grants from the Charitable Fund as well as subsistence advances under section 143 (2) of the Code are being made to the smaller cultivators in the hilly tracts of this district as

well as in those of Poona and Ahmednagar. In order to relieve the suffering cattle, the grass collected by Government agency is being advanced as tagai or being purchased by Collectors from the Charitable Relief Fund for supply gratis to the poorer cultivators. In Sholapur where the numbers both of relief-workers and dependants are still high the Collector reports that real distress is greater than was at first imagined, that considerable numbers from the adjoining native states have come on the relief works, and that the cultivators of the district who had emigrated early in the season to the Berars with their cattle are now returning with few cattle and no money and have recourse to the relief works. In Bijapur a good fall of rain during the month improved the water supply. In Sholapur the deficiency of water supply increased in many places and steps were taken to improve the supply from the allotment sanctioned for the purpose.

(j) *Changes in rates of wages.*—In Poona, Bijapur, Khandesh, Ahmednagar, Nasik and Belgaum, there were no fluctuations of any importance in the rates of wages given. In Sholapur there was a gradual though slight rise in prices due rather to a feeling of uncertainty as to future prospects than to insufficient stocks. The rates of wages on relief works in Sholapur varied from 2 annas 5 pies to 1 anna 2 pies. A copy of the statement showing the rates of wages in Satara is appended.

J. MONTEATH,
Chief Secretary to Government.

Monthly Famine Statement F for the five weeks ending Saturday evening the 29th May 1897.

District.	Maximum number for whom relief is estimated to be required in case of serious famine.	NUMBERS FOR WHOM RELIEF WAS PROVIDED IN LAST PROGRAMME OF RELIEF WORKS.			NUMBERS FOR WHOM RELIEF CAN BE PROVIDED BY WORKS REMAINING ON PROGRAMME ON DATE OF REPORT.		EXPENDITURE FROM 1ST APRIL 1896.			ADVANCES FROM 1ST APRIL 1896 UP TO END OF MONTH UNDER		REVENUE SUSPENDED.
		Date of last programme.	On large works.	On other works.	On large works.	On other works.	Date up to which account is made up.	Rupees, omitting 000.		Land Improve-ment Act.	Agricultural Loans Act.	Rupees, omitting 000s.
								On relief works.	On gratuitous relief.	Rupees, omitting 000s.	Rupees, omitting 000s.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Poona	102,467	14th January 1897	56,114	8,346	45,381	8,346	29th May 1897.	272	63	284	3	
Sátára	75,000	...	88,272	...	72,547	...	Do. ...	235	28	303*	1*	5
Bijápur	108,658	20th January 1897	72,818	7,393	4,405†	6,800†	Do. ...	883	179	931	30	
Khándesh	45,000	1st February 1897	58,702	16,004	42,035	16,004	Do. ...	340	47	157	18	
Sholápur	120,000	30th March 1897	104,562‡	18,000‡	100,000‡	18,000‡	Do. ...	987	186	358	9	
Ahmednagar	100,000	20th June 1896...	23,549	10,746	36,413		30th April 1897.	834	20§	636	50	
Násik	58,000	26th May 1897 ...	278,636	...	94,700	...	15th May 1897.	286·5	53	142·3	5·9	
Belgaum	352,578	5th November 1896	168,074		168,074		30th May 1897.	35	8	391*	1*	
Total	961,703	...	682,653	60,489	359,068	49,150	...	3,872·5	584	3,202·3	117·9	5
			168,074		204,487							

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* Up to 30th April 1897.
 † According to a revised programme which has been submitted for sanction, relief can be provided for 204,000 people for a period of six months.
 ‡ The Collector reports that the figures in these columns are exclusive of the figures for 12 works in progress, the revised estimates of which are under preparation.
 § The Collector reports that the expenditure on relief of dependants has not been separately accounted for, and that the expenditure on kitchens is not known. The figure entered in this column represents the expenditure incurred on gratuitous relief in villages.

Monthly Famins Statement E for the four weeks ending Saturday evening the 25th September 1897.

District.	Area in Square miles.	Population in thousands.	Affected Area in Square miles.	Estimated Population, in thousands, of col. 4.	NUMBERS ON RELIEF WORKS ON LAST DAY OF MONTH.						Numbers on gratuitous relief.	PRICE OF ONE OR MORE PRINCIPAL FOOD-GRAINS IN POUNDS PER RUPEE.		
					Class A.	Class B.	Class C.	Class D.	Working children.	Total.		Jowári.	Bájrí.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Sholápur ...	4,542	750	4,542	750	3,693	32,794	9,173	785	14,561	61,006	33,969	14-66	13-55	
Ahmednagar ...	6,645	888	6,645	888	3,512	7,596	29,399	11,228	12,944	64,679	34,363	15-47	13-70	(Wheat) 12-45
Poona ...	5,349	1,068	2,987	488	1,357	7,275	2,592	170	2,629	14,023	35,286	14-65	13-90	
Sátára ...	4,825	1,225	4,825	1,225	219	3,518	2,523	171	2,087	8,518	7,042	16-17	15-01	
Násik ...	5,817	843	5,817	843	277	1,399	263	65	369	2,373	1,942	14-97	14-22	(Nágli) 15-47
Khándesh...	10,700	1,430	10,700 (but area specially affected 1,700).	1,430 partly, but 250 specially.	79	379	185	118	344	1,105	508	15-00	...	
Bijápur ...	5,627	796	5,627	796	2,132	19,214	19,481	2,215	18,986	62,028	24,802	18-87	...	
Belgaum ...	4,674	1,013	1,642	353	1,654	12,588	1,750	602	7,611	24,205	4,001	20-75	...	
Dhárwár ...	4,603	1,051	857	157	The works in this district are carried out on the modified system of intermediate piece-work.					2,499	923	19-35	...	(Wheat) 14-20 (Rice) 15-07
Total...	52,782	9,064	43,642	6,930	12,923	84,763	65,366	15,354	59,531	245,998	142,836	16-65	14-07	(Wheat) 13-32 (Nágli) 15-47 (Rice) 15-07

* No classification has been reported for this number.

J. MONTEATH,

Chief Secretary to Government.

Monthly Famine Statement F for the four weeks ending Saturday evening the 25th September 1897.

District.	Maximum number for whom relief is estimated to be required in case of serious famine.	NUMBERS FOR WHOM RELIEF WAS PROVIDED IN LAST PROGRAMME OF RELIEF WORKS.			NUMBERS FOR WHOM RELIEF CAN BE PROVIDED BY WORKS REMAINING ON PROGRAMME ON DATE OF REPORT.		EXPENDITURE FROM 1ST APRIL 1896.	ADVANCES FROM 1ST APRIL 1896 UP TO END OF MONTH UNDER		REVENUE SUSPENDED.			
		Date of last programme.	On large works.	On other works.	On large works.	On other works.		Date up to which account is made up.	Rupees, omitting 000.		Land Improvement Act.	Agricultural Loans Act.	
									On relief works.				On gratuitous relief.	Rupees, omitting 000a.	Rupees, omitting 000s.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
Sholápur	120,000	20th August 1897	104,562	18,000	100,000	18,000	25th Sept. 1897.	2,129	509	370	217	124	
Ahmednagar	100,000	20th June 1896	23,549	10,746	70,241	...	31st Aug. 1897.	1,498	191	657	213	105	
Poona	102,467	August 1897 ...	105,530	8,346	73,692	8,346	25th Sept. 1897.	494	303	408	177	...	
Sátára	75,000	...	88,272	...	70,087	...	Do. ...	320	51	380	124	33	
Násik	58,000	17th August 1897	351,130	...	91,000	...	15th Sept. 1897.	439	74	152	47	...	
Khándesh	45,000	1st February 1897	58,702	16,004	42,035	16,004	25th Sept. 1897.	446	62	163	88	...	
Bijápur	108,658	17th May 1897 ...	201,349	7,500	94,174	7,025	Do. ...	1,969	410	931	316	282	
Belgaum	352,578	5th November 1896	168,074	...	168,074	...	Do. ...	270	18	*414	*21	...	
Dhárwár	54,740	18th June 1897 ...	107,135	26,801	102,825	26,801	Do. ...	25	16	194	67	6	
Total	1,016,443	...	1,208,303	87,397	812,128	76,176	...	7,590	1,634	3,669	1,270	550	

* Up to the end of August 1897.

J. MONTEATH,

Chief Secretary to Government.

REMARKS TO ACCOMPANY MONTHLY FAMINE STATEMENT E
FOR THE FOUR WEEKS ENDING SATURDAY THE
25TH SEPTEMBER 1897.

(a) *Private relief.*—Private relief from the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund was continued during the month in all the affected districts. The disbursements according to the latest reports are shown below :—

District.	Period.	Amount.
Sholapur	Month of August 1897	Rs. 56,628
Ahmednagar (exclusive of five talukas)	Month of September 1897	46,220
Poona	From 1st to 15th September 1897	1,555
Satara	From 1st to 18th September 1897	11,200
Nasik	Month of September 1897	13,308
Khandesh	Do.	800
Bijapur	Do.	70,295
Dharwar	Do.	332

Out of the amounts disbursed in Sholapur, Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Dharwar, Rs. 50,343, Rs. 43,739, Rs. 48,348 and Rs. 100 respectively were given under head IV. to the poorer agriculturists to enable them to purchase seed, cattle and fodder.

(b) *Village relief.*—The numbers of people on village relief during the month under report increased in all the districts except Nasik and Dharwar. In the former district the number relieved on the 25th September 1897 was 668 against 1,432 on the 28th August. The number of villages in which such relief was given rose from 926 to 957 in the Poona district and from 575 to 584 in the Sholapur district. The increase or decrease in the daily average numbers in the several districts during the period under report as compared with the numbers during the preceding month is shown below :—

Sholapur	+ 3,216
Ahmednagar	+ 5,401
Poona	+ 10,141
Satara	+ 2,020
Nasik	— 506
Khandesh	+ 81
Bijapur	+ 1,472
Belgaum	+ 198
Dharwar ... ..	...

Since the close of the month, however, the numbers have considerably fallen in all the districts owing to improvement in general prospects and lower prices.

(c) *Poor-house relief.*—There were seven central poor-houses in the Ahmednagar district during the month under report, and two additional central and seven branch poor-houses were started in the Bijapur district and one additional central poor-house in the Sholapur district. Poor-house relief was also continued in the Nasik and Satara districts.

(d) *General character of relief works.*—Two road works were closed and one new road work was opened in the Bijapur district. With this exception there was no change of any importance in the works in progress which consisted of railway, tank, or canal, earth-works, road construction or improvement and metal collection.

The numbers on works are now rapidly decreasing and labour is being concentrated on large central works, which will also be closed as soon as sufficient private employment is available.

(e) *Physical condition of the people.*—Slight cholera prevailed during the month in the Sholapur, Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Belgaum districts. The general health of the people on the works and of the children fed in kitchens continued to be satisfactory. The number of persons found with scorbutic symptoms was much smaller than the number during the preceding month.

(f) *Deaths (if any) from starvation.*—One such death is reported from the Ahmednagar district. An Extract from a letter from the Collector of that district, No. 10617, dated 16th September 1897, furnishing details about the death is appended.

(g) *Food-stocks.*—Generally sufficient.

(h) *Importation of grain.*—The imports of grain continued during the month in all the affected districts though to a less extent than in the preceding month. In some places new grain is also being brought into the market.

(i) *General condition and prospects of affected areas.*—The rainfall during the month was abundant, but in some places it was so heavy as to cause slight damage to standing kharif crops. The prospects have considerably improved and the crops, which had survived the long droughts of July and August, are generally thriving. In the western tracts the outturn of kharif crops is expected to be very good, and in the eastern tracts, except in a few places in which the seedlings were entirely killed by drought, a fair harvest is assured. Rabi sowings, which were commenced during the month in all the districts, are being rapidly pushed on. The resources of the cultivators have been supplemented as far as practicable with tagai advances and grants from the Charitable Relief Fund to enable the largest possible area to be sown with rabi crops. The supplies of fodder and water are abundant and the condition of the cattle has improved to an appreciable extent. The prices of food-grains are steadily falling, and the strain on the resources of the people having considerably abated, measures are being taken to close the relief operations in the several districts on dates fixed according to local circumstances.

(j) *Changes in rates of wages.*—In most of the affected districts the rates of money wages have fallen owing to a decline in the prices of food-grains. The rates in Sholapur varied from 3 annas 5 pies to 1 anna 8 pies and in Ahmednagar from 2 annas to 1 anna 3 pies.

J. MONTEATH,

Chief Secretary to Government.

No. 2755/205-2 F., dated Simla, the 16th August 1897.

From T. W. Holderness, Esq., I.C.S., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Revenue and Agricultural Department, to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay.

I am directed to forward for the information of His Excellency the Governor in Council a copy of "Notes on the Inspection of Famine Relief Works in the Bombay Presidency," by Mr. Higham, C.I.E., the officer deputed* by the

Government of India to report on the management of relief works in all Provinces in which famine operations are in progress.

2. The report speaks in high terms of the efficiency of the system under which relief works are conducted in the Bombay Presidency, and the Governor-General in Council has read with much pleasure the summary of Mr. Higham's observations contained in the final paragraph.

3. Two or three points are brought to notice by Mr. Higham on which the Government of India would be glad to learn the views of the Government of Bombay. These are :—

- (1.) The wage at which children should be admitted as workers. (Paragraph 6.)
- (2.) The advantage of payment by individual tasks or by the task of the gang. (Paragraph 9.)
- (3.) The best mode of classifying workers. (Paragraphs 8, 11, 15 and 18.)
- (4.) The best method of dealing with idle workers, whether by placing them in the lowest class, or by classifying them according to their apparent physical capacities and levying fines for short work. (Paragraphs 11 and 13.)
- (5.) The necessity or non-necessity for revising the provisions of the Bombay Famine Code which regulate the relations of the Public Works Department and the civil authorities in the control and management of works. (Paragraphs 24 and 25.)

The Government of India do not think it necessary at this stage to discuss these points at length, but they generally concur with Mr. Higham that as much varied experience has now been gained it is desirable to secure greater uniformity in matters of practice, and to determine which one of several usages in force in different districts is the best. In particular the Ahmednagar expedient of placing all relief workers in the lowest class, with the offer of a small bonus should the minimum task be exceeded, appears to the Government of India to require stronger justification than that the people of this district are exceptionally indolent. Its financial results, according to the figures given in paragraph 15 of the notes, are bad, and it is not a system which appears likely to result in good work. The whole question of classification requires careful examination, and the matured opinion of the Government of Bombay will be of great value to the Government of India.

NOTES ON AN INSPECTION OF FAMINE RELIEF WORKS IN THE
BOMBAY PRESIDENCY, BY MR. T. HIGHAM, C.I.E., ON
SPECIAL DUTY IN CONNECTION WITH FAMINE RELIEF
OPERATIONS.

1. My tour in the Bombay Presidency commenced on the 18th May, when I left Bombay for Mahableshwar, meeting Mr. Joyner, Superintending Engineer, Central Division, *en route* at Poona, and arranging with him the programme of a tour through that division, which comprises five affected districts, Poona, Sholapur, Ahmednagar, Nasik, and Khandeish. Want of time prevented my contemplating a visit to the Southern Division, comprising the Bijapur, Satara, Belgaum, and Dharwar districts, in the first two of which only were the relief operations of considerable magnitude. At Mahableshwar I had interviews with His Excellency the Governor, the Honourable Mr. Nugent, Member of Council, the Honourable Mr. Spence, Commissioner, the Honourable Mr. Monteath, Secretary to Government, and the Honourable Mr. Thomson, Chief Engineer and Secretary to Government, Public Works Department. I left Mahableshwar on the afternoon of the 21st, arriving at Poona the following morning, when I proceeded at once by rail to Kharkala, accompanied by Mr. Joyner and Mr. Davidson, Executive Engineer, Poona district, and visited two of the three relief camps in the neighbourhood, one at Kharkala, and the other about 6 miles distant at Kaneh, the work in progress at

each being the collection of metalling for the Bombay-Poona Road. We returned to Poona in the evening, and on the following Monday, which was a holiday on the relief works, being the Queen's Birthday, I railed out with Mr. Joyner to Pomalwari, proceeding thence by road to Indrapura, about 15 miles from the station. On the following morning we were joined by Mr. LeQuesne, Executive Engineer, Poona Irrigation Division, and visited the works at the Shetphul Reservoir, about 8 miles from Indrapura, and returning to Pomalwari in the evening, went on to Barsi Road station, and on the following morning inspected the relief works in the neighbourhood of the Barsi-Pandharpur Light Railway. I here met Mr. Morrison, Collector of Sholapur, Dr. Standish, the District Medical Officer, and Mr. Godboli and Mr. Clifton, Executive Engineers, Sholapur, the latter being in charge of the railway relief works. Mr. Joyner and I left in the evening for Ahmednagar, where we were met at daybreak of the 27th by Mr. Woodburn, the Collector, and Mr. Hatherley, Executive Engineer, Ahmednagar district, and drove out at once to the Kapurwadi Reservoir, which is being undertaken as a relief work for the purpose of improving the water-supply of Ahmednagar and the cantonments. On the 28th we proceeded by rail to Belapur, again accompanied by the Collector, Mr. Woodburn, and by his Assistant, Mr. Percival, and visited a camp about 4 miles from the station, where road-metalling was being collected, after which Mr. Joyner and I went on by rail to Munmar, where I met Mr. Stewart, Assistant Collector, and Mr. Strange, Executive Engineer, Nasik district, and also Mr. Partik, Executive Engineer, Khandeish district. On the following morning we inspected a large camp near Munmar, where the collection of road-metalling was in progress, and I afterwards met Dr. Clarkson, the Sanitary Commissioner, who had kindly come down from Bombay to meet me. During the night I left Munmar for Itarsi, in the Central Provinces. In the course of my tour I thus visited four road-metalling works, two large irrigation reservoirs, and one railway camp, and had the advantage of meeting all the Executive Engineers and many of the civil officers of the division.

2. The relief works originally started in this Presidency consisted almost entirely of roads or road-metalling works.

Character of the relief works originally started and proposed for the future. At the time that relief operations were instituted larger projects had not been prepared, and irrigation works have hitherto proved so unremunerative directly, that the construction of new works of this class had not been very seriously contemplated. The road works had moreover what was at first considered an advantage in providing small relief works at no great distance from the affected villages. The collection of road-metalling is not, however, a very satisfactory form of relief work. The supervision of so many small and detached camps distributed over a large area is costly and difficult, the majority of the people are not accustomed to this kind of work, and above all the effective demand is soon more than covered. On the Bombay-Poona Road the metalling collected is sufficient to meet all probable requirements during the next ten years, and a stock has been collected on other lines of communication, for the metalling and subsequent maintenance of which the requisite district funds are not likely to be forthcoming for many years. The Superintending Engineer and his officers therefore lost no time in preparing estimates for more important and useful works, principally in the form of irrigation tanks or reservoirs. Although such works have not been financially successful in the Deccan, they are nevertheless indirectly very beneficial, as has been shown in the case of the Nira Canal, constructed as a famine work in 1877, which completely protected last year an area of about 30,000 acres, in which there has been in consequence no distress and no necessity for relief works. It was considered therefore that if large sums of money had to be expended on relief works, it would be better to spend it on useful works of this class than to waste it in the collection of road-metalling, much of which would probably never be required at all, while much more would lie unused for many years. Mr. Joyner informed me that altogether fifty irrigation schemes have been considered in his division, of which thirty-four have been examined more or less in detail. Of these eighteen have been submitted to the Government of Bombay and thirteen have been already sanctioned and are under execution, while orders on the remainder are shortly expected. There

remain sixteen projects which are either unsuitable or of which the final detailed surveys cannot be completed in time to be of immediate use. There are besides sixteen schemes which have not been considered in any detail at all, some of which are at present under investigation, while others are of no promise or would be of little use for relief works.

The normal cost of the irrigation projects that have been submitted is about Rs. 75,00,000, of which Rs. 22,00,000 is for work that would be suitable for relief purposes. Increasing this by 75 per cent. to meet the extra charges inevitably involved in the execution of public works on relief principles, the value of the work available for relief purposes may be taken at Rs. 38,50,000, and allowing an average outlay of Rs. 3 per worker per mensem, this would suffice for the employment of 320,000 workers for a period of four months. As will be shown later on the actual cost of relief works exceeds the normal cost of the work done by much more than 75 per cent., but this seems a fair proportion to be aimed at, and an under-estimate is for present purposes an error on the side of safety.

In addition to these irrigation projects there is the light railway from Barsi Road to Pandharpur (32 miles), and its extension from Pandharpur to Sangola (18 miles). These are now in active progress. There is also the length of the Tapti Valley Railway from Amalner to Dhurramgaon which has been reserved for famine relief purposes, and on which operations have commenced in the Khandeish district, though not very actively. Mr. Joyner estimates that these railways will between them give work for 324,000 labourers for four months. Altogether there appears to be plenty of work to employ relief labour on in the Central division for about six months from the 1st of June, and it is possible that some other useful works can be proposed if necessary.

3. One great advantage of these larger works is that supervision will be more efficient and concentrated. There is however another advantage. It has already

Advantage of large works.

been said that the works originally started provided employment at a reasonable distance from the affected villages, but this is now realised by Civil and Public Works Officers alike as a real disadvantage. It is thought by all that the works have been much too popular, and that the labour test alone is under the Code system of working quite insufficient as a test of the urgency for relief. People who still have considerable resources of their own are not unwilling to supplement them by what they can get from relief works when this can be done by merely attending daily with their families at works within four or five miles of their villages. So strongly has this been realized that it is now often the practice to insist that no applicants should be received on the new relief works who have come from a distance of less than ten miles, but that they should be drafted to other and more distant works, though I am not aware that this has been authorised by a Government order. There is, however, an order that when camps have been provided residence in them should be made a condition of relief of any kind at the works where the camps are. This practice and the closure of many petty works have tended to reduce the number of applicants for admission to relief works. The total number of relief workers on the 10th April in the Central division was 203,265, of whom 18,724 only were employed on irrigation and railway works. On the 15th May the total number had been reduced to 194,556, but the number on irrigation and railway works had risen to 77,028, employed on 23 charges. The drafting from the smaller works was still in active progress during my tour, so that the petty works may be gradually closed before the advent of the rains. These figures indicate that although the opening of the new works may have checked further increase in the number of relief labourers, there is no great difficulty in inducing all who are really in need of assistance to migrate to them.

4. One of the most striking features of the relief works in the Deccan is the complete arrangement of the camp. Except

Camp arrangements.

where the labour is being continually shifted forward as the work progresses, the huts are of very ample size and substantial character, laid out in streets with great regularity, so that the encampment has the appearance of a well-ordered village. All camp arrangements are carried out in

close accordance with Appendix IV., Bombay Famine Code. The cost of such encampments is considerable, hutting alone costing on an average about eight annas per head, but in cases, like irrigation reservoirs, in which all the labour will be located on the same spot for some months and has to be accommodated during the night, such expenditure must be regarded as necessary.

5. The proportion of dependants to workers stood as high as 40·3 per cent. for the whole Bombay Presidency in the week ending 3rd April 1897. These dependants are mainly children who form at least 90 per cent. of the number. All children under seven, but with not less than two teeth in each jaw, received as much as two pice a day, so that the presence on the works of two or three children under seven makes a considerable addition to the earnings of a family, which are further enhanced by the wages paid to children over seven who are only nominally workers. It was said that many parents who did not come to the works at all sent their children in charge of other women. During the month of April therefore the system of cash payment was abandoned in favour of a cooked ration, consisting of a cake of jowari flour, &c., corresponding to the Code allowance of 6 ounces per diem, with a little pulse, &c. This change was very unpopular, and resulted in an immediate falling off in the number of dependants. Mr. Morrison, Collector of Sholapur, showed me a statement from which it appeared that in one case the number of dependants had actually risen to 70 per cent. of the number of workers, and that this fell sharply to 8 per cent. on the introduction of kitchens, though in the course of two or three weeks it rose again to 24 per cent., which is near the average. The percentage for the whole of the Bombay Presidency fell rapidly from 40·3 for week ending 3rd April to 26 per cent. for week ending 22nd May, and this proportion has since remained remarkably constant, the percentage for week ending 26th June 1897 being 25·7. It is found that the cooked ration costs little if anything less than the two pice formerly allowed, but under the new system the number of dependants is very largely reduced, and there is also said to be a great improvement in the condition of the children. The objection of the parents to the kitchens does not appear to be very deep-seated, though they would no doubt prefer to receive the money allowance. They are, however, very sensitive and suspicious about the children. At both Shetphul and Munmar my visit to the kitchens was followed by a general stampede of all the workers, on a rumour that we were engaged in poisoning the children. They were soon reassured, but at another camp I found 1,200 workers and no non-working children, as they had all been removed a few days before in consequence of a hospital assistant having been sent out to the camp. It may be inferred from all this that many of the parents are not in very urgent need of relief for their children, but for those that are the kitchen is the more appropriate form of relief.

6. Whether non-working children receive an allowance or a cooked ration their presence on the works is considered very objectionable. In the case of sucklings this cannot be prevented, but those who are able to run alone get into everyone's way, and prevent others working, especially their elder brothers and sisters. It is also difficult to distinguish the working from the non-working children, and so to insist on the former working. At most works therefore it is now the practice to keep the non-working children in the kitchen shed or in an enclosed playground adjoining, and to appoint a few adults to look after them. This had been done at Shetphul with great advantage to the work, but there was only one such enclosure for five separate camps. The Executive Engineer was going to erect another at the other end of the work, but probably a third will be required in an intermediate position, so that the parents may have no difficulty in visiting their children during the meal hours, and may never have them very far out of sight. On the Barsi railway works no attempt had been made to segregate the non-working children and the result was very marked in the general confusion that prevailed, as compared with works in which the separation had been effected. It may be remarked that in this camp arrangements had been made for distributing the food from the kitchens to the children on the works. This arrangement was made as the workers were being continually moved and appeared to work satisfactorily.

In connection with this question the Public Works officers represented that some discretion should be allowed them as to the age at which children should be admitted as workers. The Bombay Code fixes the age at seven years, and in many camps the Collector had objected to children over this age being placed on the list of dependants. It is urged, however, either that the age limit should be raised to ten years, as it is in Bengal, or that it should be left to the discretion of the works officer in charge to admit as workers only children who really will work, and to relegate others, even if over the age of ten, to the kitchen. As the minimum wage of a working child is one anna, or twice that of a child dependant, this would be felt as a punishment, and the children on the work would be induced or compelled by their parents to work. I have seen many children barely over seven years who were model little workers, setting a good example to all around them, but there are others much older who are incorrigible idlers, and who are merely brought on to the works so that their parents may draw on their behalf the working wage.

7. I now come to the important question of the classification and tasking of the workers, and it will be convenient to consider

Road-metalling works.

in the first place the works for the collection of road-metalling, partly because this was until lately the principal form of relief work in the Bombay Presidency, many charges being engaged on it even at the time of my visit, and partly because it is a class of work for which no rules or tasks have been laid down in the Bombay Famine Code, although it has been largely resorted to in this Presidency and in the Central Provinces. As already observed, the majority of the people are not used to this kind of work, and it is undoubtedly less suitable for them than ordinary earth-work, because every man, woman and child of the labouring classes is so well accustomed to the work of carrying a load either of earth or water on the head, for which they may be said to have an inherited muscular system, developed by constant exercise. But though the breaking of metalling is not popular, it is found that both women and children become fairly expert at it after a little practice, and its unpopularity is perhaps not altogether a disadvantage. In many cases it is the only useful work that can be found, it is well adapted for small camps distributed over a long line of road, and it possesses the great advantage that the tasks actually set, whether for gangs or individuals, can be clearly defined and the work done accurately measured. In all the works that I saw in Bombay the workers were divided into gangs containing about 50 people, each gang having its own mukaddam or mate, who receives from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 annas per diem. The gangs were ranged in parallel lines, the day's work of each being exhibited in a small heap in front of the worker, and these heaps being collected so as to form a central stack, the additions to which are measured day by day, so as to show the ten day's work of the gang. For every four gangs there is a karkun or moharir who writes up the muster rolls, records the progress and the wages due, but the measurement of the stacks is conducted by work agents of the sub-overseer class who are responsible for bringing the quantities collected on to the proper returns.

8. The classification of the gangs was originally carried out as far as possible on the lines laid down in the Famine Code, but, as will be shown, the present practice

Classification of gangs on road-metalling.

is not uniform, and there is a tendency to paying all workers more or less in accordance with the work done, subject to a minimum wage. As a general rule there are no women in class A, as women can seldom be regarded as professional stone-breakers, and the few men of this class are not employed in stone-breaking but in the harder and more skilled labour of quarrying the stone by blasting and picks. They form therefore a special class, generally receiving the A wage in return for a full task, or for keeping a certain number of breakers supplied with stone. In some cases they are, I understand, paid by the piece, and in others receive, as specially trained and capable workers, something higher than the A wage, the whole work of the gangs depending on their exertions. The adult breakers, whether men or women, are usually classed as B, and have a task set them. Many of the B men are however employed in sledging the larger stones outturned from the quarries, so as to break them up into spawls for the breakers. In some cases weavers and others have been classed as C, and given a smaller task than the

B workers, but the present more general practice is to class all able-bodied workers as B, and to fine them for a short outturn. The D workers consist of mothers nursing young children (though these receive an A wage until the child is five or six weeks old), very old men and women, and weak persons incapable of performing a fair task. For this class either a very light task is set or they are untasked and are simply required to do what work they can. The nursing mothers receive the wages of their class when the child is over five or six weeks old, and two pice on account of the child until it has teeth in both jaws, after which they receive food on the work until they can walk, when they are sent to the kitchen. Children over seven are set small tasks, and are often employed in carrying spawls to the breakers. In some cases the B, C, and D workers are ranged in separate B, C or D gangs; in others the gangs contain workers of all classes, each individual being set his appropriate task.

9. Opinion is divided on the question whether payment should be made according to the task done by individuals

or on the aggregate task of the gangs.
 Payment by individual tasks or the task of the gang.

Some officers prefer the former, which is called the ticket system, but the majority appear to prefer the latter. At Karkhala the ticket system was in force. Each worker's pile was gauged by the mohurir at the end of the day, and he was allowed the full wage of his class, the so-called minimum, or D wage, or the penal wage (one pice below the D wage) according as it was judged that a full task, more than half or less than half the task had been performed. The gauging at Karkhala was done by the eye, the general result being checked by the result of the measurement of the day's stock by the sub-overseer or work agent, and it was said that the agreement was sufficiently close, and that both the karkuns and workers soon became expert at this rough gauging. In other places each pile is actually measured in small baskets or pans, so many baskets being required, but this is a very long and tedious process. The system is a good one, inasmuch as it prevents a man suffering from the idleness of other members of the gang, and is readily understood, but it throws too much power into the hands of unscrupulous karkuns and makaddams. Mr. Davidson tells me, however, that he has found it to work more satisfactorily than the gang system, which he had formerly adopted, and that it was now in use throughout his district.

10. The gang system was in force at Munmar. Under this system the daily task for the gang is fixed on the aggregate

The gang system.

of the tasks set for the component members, which in all gangs varies according to sex and age (children having smaller tasks than adults), and in mixed gangs varies with the class, sex and age. In the Central Division payments are as a rule made only once a week, a matter which will be referred to later on, and the actual progress for the week is compared with the normal aggregate task for six days. The amount due to the workers at full rates is then reduced as a rule proportionally to the deficiency, and the amount so reduced is distributed among them, either rateably or at the discretion of the works officer or subordinate in charge among the known and recognised defaulters, some discrimination being generally exercised in this respect.

11. At the road-metalling works near Belapur, in the Ahmednagar district,

Belapur system of tasking.

I found another system in force, which is, I understand, peculiar to the sub-divisional charge. In this district, as indeed generally, it is complained that under the Code system it is most difficult to get higher tasks out of the people than will suffice to ensure them the D wage, and that when B or C tasks are set they are not performed, the workers preferring being fined down to the D limit. In this sub-division this position was accepted, and a scheme of tasking was drawn up accordingly, which has been fully approved by the Collector. Under it a D task is set to all breakers, as follows :—

	Per diem.
Men, 54 baskets* per week	= 9
Women, 36 baskets per week	= 6
Children, 21 ,, ,, ,,	= 3½

* A basket being equal to one-third of a cubic foot.

If these tasks were performed the adult workers received the D wage in full, and the children the wages prescribed for them in the Code. If there was a deficiency the gang was fined at the rate of one pie for each basket short, and the amount of the fine was distributed among the adult workers. If there was a surplus the gang received a bonus of one pie for every basket in excess, which was distributable among the adult workers. The children were not liable to fine or eligible for bonus.

This system was introduced on the 17th April, and I was able to examine the figures for four weeks. As to fines, the average daily attendance in three different charges amounted to 5,361 persons, and the fines for the same period averaged Rs. 34 per week, giving an average fine of 1·2 pie per head *per week*. The bonuses during the same period amounted to Rs. 4-4-7, or practically *nil*. The workers may thus be said to have just done their minimum task, but to have made no effort whatever to exceed it.

Before this system was introduced the workers were divided into A, B, C, and D classes, and for five weeks preceding the 17th April, 6,737 workers were fined Rs. 292, or an average of 8 pie each. Previously to that the works had been under another sub-divisional officer, and the fines appeared to have been much heavier and to have averaged as much as 1½ annas per week.

On the 24th April the sub-divisional officer (Mr. Ralph) carefully observed the work done by seven men, six women and six children, who were kept steadily to work for eight hours (from 7 to 11 A.M. and 2 to 6 P.M.), with the result that the average outturn for the day was—

						Baskets.
Per man	7·7	cubic feet...	...	...	...	= 23·1
„ woman	5·4	„ „	...	...	...	= 16·2
„ child	2·0	„ „	...	...	...	= 6·0

The minimum tasks set on the strength of this experiment were therefore very moderate, except perhaps in the case of the children.

12. The tasks required in breaking metalling vary with the quality of the stone and the size of ring prescribed, but the following were noted, the unit being the cubic foot in all cases :—

Tasks for breaking metalling.

Site.	CLASS A.		CLASS B.		CLASS C.		CLASS D.		CHILDREN.	
	Men.	Women.	Men.	Women.	Men.	Women.	Men.	Women.	16 to 12.	12 to 7.
Karkhala, Poona district	10·0	...	8·0	6·0	(a)	(a)	(b)	(b)	(a)	(a)
Ahmednagar district...	8·0	7·0	6·0	5·25	4·0	3·5	3·0	2·0	2·0	1·0
Khandeish district ...	7·5	5·0	5·62	3·75	3·75	2·5	(b)	(b)	2·0	1·0

(a) Not noted.
(b) No fixed task.

A men are now practically never employed on breaking. The stone used at Karkhala and in Ahmednagar is trap, broken to 1½ ring, but it was generally larger than this at Karkhala. In Khandeish boulders are used, and the tasks for the men employed in collecting and splitting the boulders are as follows :—

						Cubic feet.
A men	...	...	...	...	...	16
B „	...	...	...	...	...	12
C „	...	...	...	...	...	8

At Belapur the quarrymen were paid A, B, or C class wages accordingly as they quarried 100, 80, or 60 cubic feet of solid stone, and hammermen accordingly

as they split 150, 120, or 90 cubic feet of spawls, equivalent to 100, 80, or 60 cubic feet of solid stone. Women carriers are required to carry 20 seers = 23 cubic feet metal, six miles daily, returning with empty baskets, *i.e.*, for a lead of 1 furlong to make 48 trips.

13. The practice in regard to fining is not uniform, nor have any special rules been made on the subject either by Government or the Superintending Engineer. At Karkhala and in some other sub-divisions fines are limited to the amount that will reduce the wage to one pice below the D wage, or to the penal wage. In others less than the D wage is not given, but in others fines are levied in proportion to the deficiency of the work, though only under the special order of the Engineer or subordinate in charge of the work when this would reduce the amount paid below penal wage. In the muster rolls and day-books that I examined on the works I found no case of fine that would have the effect of reducing the pay below this limit or even below the D wage. Much is left to the discretion of the Engineer or upper subordinate in charge of the work, but the general tendency appeared to be to avoid fining as much as possible, and to meet repeated deficiencies in outturn by transfer to a lower class.

14. It is the practice at almost all works to make payments only once a week, though in some cases payments are made bi-weekly. Fines are therefore imposed with reference to the deficiency on six days' work, and not on that for a single day, which the worker has the opportunity of making up on the following day. The wage rate for each class is communicated to the officer in charge by the tahsildar from time to time, in accordance with the rise or fall of market prices, and is worked out to the nearest pie. The amount due for the week or half-week is also calculated to the nearest pie, but the amount actually fixed is to the nearest pice. This practice of making payments only once a week is at variance with article 82 of the Bombay Code, but it is urged that more frequent payments would be a very heavy tax on the slender establishment, and that the people themselves are quite contented with a single payment in the week. I reserve an opinion on this point until I have seen what is the practice in other provinces.

15. To return to the question of breaking metal. It is obvious that the system referred to in paragraph 11 *supra* of giving a minimum wage and imposing a minimum task must result in very high working rates, although if the value of the outturn be disregarded, as it may be in works of an almost useless character, it reduces the cost of relief to a minimum. The effect of a low task on the rates is well shown from some figures given me by the Executive Engineer, Khandeish division. With jowari at 16 lbs. to the rupee, the cost of collecting and breaking 100 cubic feet of metalling would be:—

	Rs.	A.	P.
With all workers in A class and doing a full task ...	5	2	10
Workers in A class, but doing only half task, and paid down to D wage	6	15	4
All workers in B class and doing full B task ...	5	11	6
Workers in B class, but doing only half task, and paid down to D wage	9	4	6
All workers in C class and doing full C task ...	6	15	2
Workers in C but doing half task, and paid down to D wage	12	1	8

The normal cost of 100 cubic feet metalling in this district is from Rs. 3-8-0 to Rs. 3-12-0 only. It is thus clearly shown how the effect of a reduction in class is to increase the working rate, and how this is further increased by short tasks, as long as prices are not proportional to the deficiency but are limited by the minimum wage.

16. The following figures show the actual cost of collecting and breaking up 1,036,849 cubic feet of metalling, at eight different works in the Khandeish district :—

	Rs.	Per 100 cubic feet.	Per cent. of wages.
Numbers of workers employed	876,234		
Workers' wages, including Sunday wage...	Rs. 83,582		
Average wage per unit	0-1-6		
Wages per 100 cubic feet outturned	8-0-6		
Charges for establishment	4,240	0-41	5-01
Charges for tools and plant	1,486	0-14	1-78
Gratuitous relief	14,906	1-44	17-83
Water supply	1,253	0-12	1-50
Hutting	2,962	0-29	3-56
Total incidental charges	24,847	2-40	29-68
Labour charges, as above	83,582	8-03	100-00
Grand Total	1,08,429	10-43	129-68

The normal cost being from Rs. 3-8-0 to Rs. 3-12-0, the ultimate cost may be taken at merely three times the real value of the work, though the rate would be reduced to Rs. 9 if gratuitous relief were excluded. The number of dependants was 319,557, so that the average cost per head was about 8 pie. These appear to be fairly typical figures of the cost of collecting road-metalling in this Presidency.

17. As regards earthwork the Code system of classification is systematically adopted. The gangs comprise workers of all four classes, but the D class are not tasked, but employed on clod-breaking and other miscellaneous work. The task for the gang is the task set for the diggers, who are selected from the A and B male members of the gang, each being assigned a digging task in accordance with the excavation tasks in the well-arranged table of standard tasks given in Appendix III. of the Bombay Code, the task for the gang being the aggregate of the tasks given to the individual diggers. The carriers for the gang are then selected from the three classes A, B, and C, the carrying task of each individual being the task of his class for the given lift and lead, as found in the same table, the number of carriers being so arranged that their aggregate task shall equal or nearly equal the tasks set for the diggers. No great difficulty has been found in this Presidency in thus equating the tasks of the diggers and carriers, as in the large tank and railway works that have now been started there is plenty of work for the carriers. I was told that the standard tasks laid down in the Code had been found appropriate, and were regularly worked to, but I was unable to test this on the works visited. At Shetphul, where the gangs appeared to have been very carefully constituted, the principal work in progress was the excavation of rock in the trench under the dam, which was of a character that could not be fairly or accurately tasked, but the workers were all working actively and energetically and were kept very fully employed. All arrangements at this work were excellent. At the two other large earthworks visited the gangs were being reconstituted, and were not in full working order. On my return from Madras however I met Mr. Joyner at Sholapur, and obtained from him a copy of the gang register for three days ending 16th July on the Kuradvadi section of the Barsi-Pandharpur Light Railway, from which I have extracted the following results :—

Excavation.

Kind of soil.	No. of gangs.	No. of diggers.	Task per digger.	Full task for gang.	Task actually set.	Task done.	Remarks.
				c. foot.	c. foot.	c. foot.	
Black soil... ..	5	26A 1B	120 90	2,730	2,765	2,455	1 gang on 15th and 4 on 16th.
Soft muram ...	5	30A	80	2,400	2,392	2,108	3 gangs on 14th and 2 on 15th.
Average muram ...	2	16A	60	960	964	798	1 gang on 15th and 1 on 16th.
Total ...	12	73	...	6,090	6,121	5,361	

The number of diggers are the total number employed for a day; thus for soft muram the actual number of diggers in each gang was 6. The deficiency in tasks was not followed by fine as it occurred mainly on the 15th when work was interrupted by rain, but partly on 16th, which was a pay day. On the 14th full tasks were accomplished. I understand from Mr. Joyner that the diggers' tasks are easily worked up to and are considered light, and that they have been recently increased on some works by about 30 per cent., so that the Code A tasks are now taken from B workers.

Carrying.

The total number of carriers employed for the removal of the 6,090 cubic feet which formed the full task of these gangs was 590 against 73 diggers. The average lead was 45 feet, with a lift not exceeding 5 feet. Details are as follows:—

						A child units.	
A	{	Men	...	...	...	87	261
		Women	...	...	...	176	352
B	{	Men	...	...	...	72	162
		Women	...	...	...	58	87
C	{	Men	...	...	...	58	82
		Women	...	...	...	48	48
		Small children	...	...	...	91	68
					Total	590	1,060

No D workers are shown in the register, as they are untasked. Mr. Joyner says they are very few in number, and were perhaps mustered in separate gangs. It will be seen that all other classes are represented, and the large proportion of A class among the carriers and especially of A women is remarkable. These were all given and performed an A task, but it may be doubted whether so many were really able-bodied professional labourers.

We may assume that the children employed were on the average of the B class, and that, in accordance with the notes in the last column of Appendix III. of the Bombay Code, they may be regarded as equal to three-fourths of a child unit of the A class. The total number of child units of A class will then be, as shown above, 1,060, and the quantity to be carried per unit becomes $\frac{6,090}{1,060} = 5.75$ cubic feet for a lead of 450 cubic feet. The task for an A male unit will have been three times this, or 17.25 cubic feet, but according to Appendix III. the standard task for this lead is 22 cubic feet. The carriers therefore appear to have been undertasked by over 20 per cent., according to the standard task table, which is probably due to the omission of fractions in the tabular tasks, and in the tasks for intermediate leads derived from the tables, and also to minimum tasks having been set for all children, or less than one-third of the male adult task,

assumed in the Code. I consider, however, that the standard task is itself much too light, for 22 cubic feet carried 450 feet is equivalent to 99 cubic feet with a lead of 100 feet, and at this rate 10 able-bodied professional carriers would be required per 1,000 cubic feet for every 100 feet of lead, the normal rate for which in Bombay does not, I believe, exceed 8 or 10 annas. As regards carrying therefore the standard task table certainly appears to be light.

The wages paid to the workers in this case, calculated on the basis of 20 lbs. grain to the rupee, amounted to Rs. 72-3-2 for 5,361 cubic feet of earth-work, or about Rs. 13·5 per 1,000. The normal cost at ordinary contract rates would probably not exceed Rs. 6 per 1,000.

18. The figures given in the preceding paragraph for earthwork on the Barsi-Pandharpur Light Railway indicate that out of a strength of 663 workers no less than 335, or nearly 50 per cent., were of the A class. This is, however, quite exceptional, and I have already suggested that the classification was incorrect. The following table shows the proportions of the various classes for the whole Presidency, and for the Sholapur and Ahmednagar districts on the 29th May 1897 as reported in Monthly Famine Statement E:—

Class.	Bombay Presidency.	Sholapur District.	Ahmednagar District.	PERCENTAGES.		
				Bombay.	Sholapur.	Ahmednagar.
A	22,544	11,908	1,655	9·33	14·08	4·55
B	96,344	41,221	2,722	39·86	48·72	7·48
C	45,830	8,548	16,058	18·96	10·10	44·11
D	15,983	948	8,543	6·61	1·12	23·47
Children	60,956	21,974	7,435	25·24	26·00	20·41
Total	241,657	84,599	36,413	100·00	100·00	100·00

It will be seen that more than half of the A workers in Bombay Presidency are in the Sholapur district (in which the railway lies), but that even here the A workers are but 14 per cent. of the whole, while for the whole Presidency they are but little over 9 per cent. On the other hand the bulk of the workers in the Ahmednagar district are of the C or D class. I have already stated that in the Belapur sub-division the whole of the workers were put into the D class, while the general complaint in this district was that people could not be induced to do more than a minimum task and were quite content to do it for a minimum wage. The tendency has therefore been to avoid fining by putting the workers into the lower classes, which must be the explanation of the larger proportions of C and D classes in this district.

The table shows that over the whole Presidency 42·9 per cent. of the workers were in classes A and B, but it does not follow that this percentage received the A or B wage, as in the event of short tasks the earnings of several will have been reduced to the C or D wage. In Ahmednagar the A and B classes constituted together only 12 per cent. of the whole.

19. These figures are interesting with reference to the recent contention of the Government of Madras that the C and D wages are inadequate for the proper support of labourers who do any work at all. Sufficiency of the Code wage. When at Munmar I asked the opinion of Dr. Clarkson, the Sanitary Commissioner, on this point, and showed him the representation of the Madras Government, as contained in their letter No. 296, dated 4th May 1897. I especially mentioned to him how large a proportion of the labourers in the Ahmednagar district were receiving only C or D wages, though I was not at the time aware that the proportion was as high as shown by the figures given in the preceding paragraph.

Dr. Clarkson in reply said that he was quite unable to say what were the conditions in Madras, but that as far as the Bombay Presidency was concerned, he remarked emphatically that there had been nothing to indicate to him or his officers that the wages given were insufficient, or that there had been any deterioration in the physical condition of the coolies who came to the works, either in Ahmednagar district or elsewhere. A similar opinion had been previously expressed to me by Dr. Standish, Medical Officer in the Sholapur district, whom I met at the Barsi Road, and who had had frequent opportunities of examining the gangs in that district. Both officers were careful to state that they did not know to what extent the people were dependent on the works, or whether they had any supplementary resources of their own.

20. Another point connected with the remuneration of labour is the extent to which the relief works interfere with the supply of labour to private employers. The Executive Engineer of Khandeish informed me that Mr. Middleton, agent of Messrs. Purves & Co., who have taken the Contract for the Bombay and Baroda section of the Tapti Valley Railway, had offered to take as many men as would go to him, at the following rates :—

.. Excavation and short lead—		Annas per hundred.
Earth ... ..	...	5
Soft muram ... ..	...	6

increasing by 1 anna per hundred for every 5 feet of lift.

The labourers on the Takhri Road works were asked to go at these rates and refused. The relief works were then closed and out of 2,000 only 800 went to the railway, the remainder going to their homes. The distance to the railway works was 30 or 40 miles, but this was not further from their homes than the Takhri works had been. The Executive Engineer offered to pay expenses in transit for all the men who went.

Just as I was leaving Munmar, Mr. Stewart, Assistant Collector, Nasik, told me that the District Engineer at Munmar had complained to him that his men left the railway for the relief works, but that he had obtained no particulars from him.

Mr. Ralph, the sub-divisional officer at Belawal, informed me that 1,053 men had left his works for the Godavari Valley Railway, of whom 500 returned to the works saying that they received only 3 annas per hundred cubic feet from the petty contractors who were paid 6 annas, and that women and children were not allowed to work. This was but the statement of the men who returned which has not been verified, and must be taken for what it is worth.

I do not propose to discuss this question very fully at present, but it appears almost unavoidable that relief works should be more attractive than railway work when prices are ruling very high. Railway contractors do not raise their rates with every rise in the price of grain, and are hardly disposed to raise them at all in seasons of dearth, when the demand for employment is keen. Nor will they give half an anna a day for every non-working child that accompanies its parents to the work, or 1 anna a day to every child over seven years of age who can carry a basket, or a living wage for every infirm dependant adult. Nor will they make payments for work that has not been done, in consideration of unavoidable interruptions, such as rainfall, or for the sake of giving rest for one day in seven. If relief works were carried out by piece-work it might be possible to compare the remuneration of labourers employed on such works and of those serving under private contractors, but at present such a comparison is hardly possible.

21. All relief works in Bombay have been carried out on the Code system of task work, but shortly before my tour commenced the Local Government had called for the opinions of the Public Works officers on a proposal to introduce piece-work, in general accordance with the principles laid down in North-Western Provinces, in the Resolution, No. 753, dated 16th March 1897.

These opinions had not been formulated at the time of my visit, but all the Public Works officers with whom I discussed the subject were in favour of the introduction of a system of gang piece-work, in which no intermediate contractor should be employed, but each gang should earn according to the amount of work done. The general opinion also was that there should be a maximum limit to the payments to be made to individuals, though no suggestions were made as to the most convenient practical method of imposing this limit. I understand that since I left the Bombay Presidency piece-work has been actually introduced in some works. Mr. Joyner has informed me that the local Public Works and civil officers consider it a success, but that sufficient experience has not yet been gained to justify a confident opinion, and he is himself doubtful whether many of the workers succeed in earning a living wage at the rates in force, though it is probable that after a time they may succeed in doing so.

22. The relief operations in the Central Division are almost entirely in the charge of the Public Works officers. In Sholapur district an average number of 13,080 workers attended works in charge of the Civil Department during the month of December last, while the number on Public Works was 26,145 only. But the principal civil works were transferred to the Public Works, so that in January the numbers were 848 and 42,340 for Civil and Public Works respectively, while after the month of March there were no civil works open in this district. In the Khandeish district, however, the average daily number on Civil Department relief works in month of June stood at 10,577 against 16,882 on Public Works, the numbers standing at 3,999 and 13,595 respectively in May, after some works had been transferred to the Public Works Department. In Nasik district no civil relief works have been opened at all, and in Ahmednagar the maximum average daily numbers have been only 57 and 1,727 in the months of March and May respectively. Except in Khandeish therefore the works under civil officers have been very few and unimportant, and have been restricted to places where it was inconvenient to place them under the charge of the Public Works Department. In this respect the practice differs greatly from that which obtained in the famine of 1876-77 as shown by the following figures for Central division.

Department.	AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE DURING EIGHT MONTHS ENDING	
	June 30th, 1877.	June 26th, 1897.
Civil Department	42,693	6,823
Public Works Department ...	99,513	129,301
Total on relief works	142,206	136,124
Dependants on works	9,191	56,162
Grand Total	151,397	192,286

23. The foregoing table shows that the total numbers of workers on relief works in 1896-97 did not differ greatly from those in 1876-77, but that there was a considerable increase in the number of dependants.

Comparison of prices in 1876-77 and 1896-97.

Prices appear however to have been much lower in the latter than in the former year, the average for the seven months ending May 1877 and May 1897 being approximately as follows:—

District.	AVERAGE NUMBER OF lbs. SOLD FOR ONE RUPEE DURING SEVEN MONTHS ENDING	
	31st May 1877.	31st May 1897.
Poona	21.5	17.6
✓Sholapur	19.0	19.0
Ahmednagar	24.9	19.1
Nasik	28.4	17.4
Khandeish	29.7	17.6

24. The larger relief works in the Presidency are placed in charge of the special civil officers whose duties are defined in sections 90 and 92 of the Bombay Code. They are appointed by the Collector, and are usually natives holding subordinate appointments in the Revenue Department, such as clerks, or candidates for appointments of a higher class. With reference to the direction in section 90 in only one of the works visited did I find that the special civil officer in charge was invested with summary powers as a Magistrate, and he possessed them before being posted to charge of relief works. The Collectors with whom I discussed this subject said that they did not consider that such powers were necessary, and that they had declined to recommend their being granted. As far as I could hear, these special civil officers were performing the duties required of them satisfactorily, though many of them had been very helpless in the first instance, and until they had been taught their work by the Public Works officer or subordinate attached to the work. I found however a very strong feeling among all the Public Works officers regarding the position which these men occupied on the relief works under their control. It was said that as they were appointed and dismissed by the Collector they considered themselves independent of the Public Works Department, and were not very ready to recognise the authority of the officers of that department. They were frequently inclined to be obstructive, and either on this account or from sheer timidity, would often hesitate to comply with orders from officers responsible for the works until they had communicated with the Collector. I did not consider it very necessary to enquire very closely into these complaints, though they were made in every district that I visited, but it seems very natural that difficulties of this kind should arise when works are put in the nominal charge of men of this class, who, however well fitted they may be for the special duties assigned to them in section 92 of the Bombay Code, have had no experience in the organisation and management of large bodies of labourers. Many of the works are under the immediate supervision of Assistant Engineers of the Public Works Department, or experienced upper subordinates of very good position, and the co-ordinate or independent position and authority which is given to or assumed by the special civil officer is not unnaturally resented by them. I need not do more than note here the dissatisfaction which is felt on this point, as it is but part of the more general question of the responsibilities and authority of the Civil and Public Works officers respectively in connection with the execution of famine relief works.

25. As part of the same question may be noted the strong objection expressed by the Public Works officers to the whole of section 38 of the Code, with the exception perhaps of clause (d), especially when this is read in connection with section 39 (a) under which the Executive Engineer of the district is held jointly responsible with the Collector that relief works do not fail in their object. It was urged by all, from the Chief Engineer downwards, that when once large relief works have been started the responsibility for these being carried in accordance with the instructions and spirit of the Famine Code should rest entirely with the Public Works Department, and that the legitimate authority and influence of the Collector in respect of such works could

be effectively exercised without subordinating all the officers of the Public Works staff to officers of somewhat corresponding rank in the Civil Department. Here again I will reserve my opinion for the present, and will only observe that although the anomalous and not very clearly defined position in which Public Works officers are placed by the language of the Code has undoubtedly in some cases produced a good deal of friction and unpleasantness, this has on the whole been much less than might have been anticipated—a result which is due to the good sense of the Civil and Public Works officers concerned. The Famine Code, in section 38 (c) and elsewhere ignores the existence of the Superintending Engineer, but in practice the whole work of designing relief works and controlling their management is entrusted by Government to the Superintending Engineer, and all questions in dispute between Collectors and Executive Engineers are as a rule settled by him and the Commissioner, working in harmonious co-operation. Subject to this control, the Collectors appear to have been generally willing to give the Executive Engineers a free hand in the management of relief works, and to have abstained from vexatious interference, while the Engineers on the other hand have endeavoured as far as possible in all cases to meet the views and wishes of the Collector.

In the lower ranks the friction has probably been greater, but however indefinite or unsatisfactory may be the language of the Code in defining the relations between the Civil and Public Works officer, I think that in practice each has been content to leave to the other the duties that naturally belong to him, and that both have worked together, shoulder to shoulder, in this famine campaign. In thus bearing testimony to the good spirit and feeling that has prevailed generally between the two departments, I do not mean to say that the provisions of the Code bearing on this relation are not in need of amendment. That is a question to be considered at leisure later on, but I think it may fairly be said that this cordial co-operation has been attained, not in consequence but in spite of the instructions that are contained in section 38 and other parts of the Code, and by the mutual and creditable forbearance of the officers concerned in both departments.

26. The famine has naturally put a great strain on the Public Works Department in the matter of establishment all over India. In Bombay the stress as regards engineers has been met by restricting leave and by transferring a few officers from Sind, where expenditure has been as far as possible curtailed, to the Deccan, and the services of two Royal Engineer officers have also been placed at the disposal of the Government of Bombay. What is most wanted here as elsewhere for relief operations is an increase in the staff of reliable and experienced upper subordinates. The best of these would be employed in sub-divisions, in the superintendence of the works on two or more charges, while others would be placed in subordinate charge. Five upper and three lower subordinates have been transferred from the Military Works Department to the Bombay Public Works Department, but when the services of such men are required in all the famine-stricken provinces in India much assistance cannot be relied on from this source, and Bombay is the only Province to which such transfers have been made. The Chief Engineer also informed me that great difficulty had been experienced in obtaining cashiers or paymasters for the various charges. These officials are required to furnish security to the amount of Rs. 1,000, but the duration of the appointments is so uncertain and the work is so hard and unpopular that it is difficult to get men of the class that can furnish this security to come forward.

27. It has been my object in these notes to direct attention to those features in the management of relief works in this Presidency which it seems desirable to compare with the practice in other provinces,

Concluding remarks.

and I have abstained as far as possible from making any criticisms or recommendations. In conclusion, however, I must observe that the relief works appear to have been conducted in as close conformity with the provisions of the Famine Code as has been possible. It is true that in many matters of detail the practice varies in almost every Public Works division, if not in every sub-division or large charge. This is partly due to the Superintending Engineer or principal controlling officer having been himself very fully employed in the preparation of

new projects, and partly to his own desire to give as much freedom as possible to his divisional officers, leaving each to work out for himself what appeared to be the best method. But now that this varied experience has been gained and large works have been started at which labour will be concentrated, greater uniformity on the most approved lines will be possible. The most noticeable feature in the administration of these relief works has been the gradual substitution of large and useful for scattered and almost useless works, and the success even at this season of the year which is attending the efforts to draw the people to these larger works, and to make them reside on them. It is indeed possible that the works have been too popular, and that for nine months many attended them who were not absolutely without other resources. But there must be an intermediate stage between that in which relief works are altogether unnecessary and that in which a large section of the population is entirely dependent on them, nor can there be any objection on principle to people whose own resources are too slender to entirely support themselves and their families supplementing them by attendance on relief works. The difficulty is to draw the line that will admit these, but exclude those who are really capable of supporting themselves. The first duty of maintaining the health and vitality of the labouring classes has been successfully accomplished in the face of the evils of cholera and plague which threatened on every side, and if the works were at first too popular, so as to attract many who might have kept away from them, the mistake has been on the right side and the Local Government has been prompt to rectify it by the various measures that have been taken, and especially by the arrangements that have been made for opening large and beneficial works which will give employment to those who really need it, but are not likely to attract those who do not. It may safely be said that if unfortunately the present distress should be prolonged the Bombay Government are, as far as relief works are concerned, in a better position to satisfactorily meet it now than they were when operations commenced, whether regard be paid to the intrinsic utility of the works to be executed, or their efficiency as a means of famine relief.

DATED SIMLA ;

26th July 1897.

T. HIGHAM.

No. 81 Foreign (Internal) of 1897, dated Simla, the 8th June 1897.

From the Right Honourable the Governor-General of India in Council to the Right Honourable Lord George F. Hamilton, Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India.

MY LORD,

In continuation of our despatch No. 63 (Internal), dated the 12th May 1897, we have the honour to forward copies of famine statements* for April regarding affected States in Rajputana and Central India, and of other papers, as described in the attached list, which gives recent information as to relief operations. The more important figures for the last three months are summarised in the following tables:—

RAJPUTANA.

(Area 127,600 square miles : Population 12,220,000.)

State.	Affected area in square miles.	Population of affected area.	On relief works.			On gratuitous relief.			Remarks.
			Feb.	March.	April.	Feb.	March.	April.	
Bhartpur ...	1,325	440,000	14,711†	9,165†	10,995†	619	337	360	† Nearly all on ordinary public works.
Bikaner ...	18,750	587,000	13,038	11,350	7,779	2,756	4,266	3,439	
Dholpur ...	1,200	291,000	5,104	5,124	4,017‡	292	419	582	‡ About half on ordinary public works.
Jaisalmer ...	16,000	115,000	971	813	906	11	11	50	
Marwar ...	6,000	235,000	5,281	4,507	4,064	1,180	1,212	1,240	
Total ...	43,475	1,668,000	39,105	30,959	27,161	4,858	6,294	5,671	

* Not printed.

CENTRAL INDIA.

(Area 78,200 square miles : Population 10,319,000.)

State.	Affected area in square miles.	Population of affected area.	On relief works.			On gratuitous relief.			Remarks.
			Feb.	March.	April.	Feb.	March.	April.	
Gwalior ...	4,200	771,000	27,539	42,923*	47,405*	6,998	6,968	12,003	* Inclusive of 20,420 on the Guna-Bara railway.
Baghelkhand.	12,000	1,778,000	64,430	100,910†	115,053†	3,844	2,438	3,511	† Inclusive of 37,180 in March and 54,000 in April on relief works opened by subordinate Ilakadars of Rewa.
Bundelkhand	9,940	1,428,000	66,662	63,995	39,155	10,344	9,642	8,758	
Total ...	26,140	3,977,000	158,631	207,828	201,613	21,186	19,048	24,272	

According to the latest telegraphic returns, the numbers were:—

	On relief works.	Under gratuitous relief.	Total.	Remarks.
Rajputana ...	25,968*	7,291	33,259	* Includes 2,710 on ordinary works in Dholpur, and 9,899 on ordinary works in Bhartpur.
Central India...	225,131†	24,962	250,093	† Includes 54,000 on relief works opened by subordinate Ilakadars of Rewa.

2. In Rajputana the rabi harvest was fair to good, except in the Tonk pargana. The harvesting operations caused a considerable temporary decrease in the numbers under relief. There has been a fairly general, if moderate, fall in the prices of nearly all food-grains; but it is improbable that prices will approach the normal until the prospects of the kharif crop are secured. The arrangements for famine relief appear to be, on the whole, satisfactorily conducted. The works, opened or ready to be opened, are believed to be sufficient for all requirements, and the general condition of the people has improved. Emigration has practically ceased. The number of emigrants from Jaisalmer has been large, but even in ordinary years a very large proportion of the population leave the State during the cold weather months; some to graze their cattle in the direction of Malwa, and others in search of employment in Sind, where high wages are generally obtainable on canal works or on field labour on canal-irrigated lands. In the past season there were over 20,000 emigrants, most of whom are believed to have gone to Sind. No complaints on the subject of immigration have, however, been received from that province. The emigrants are now returning to prepare their lands for the kharif sowings, and arrangements have been concerted for providing relief where required. Such operations in Jaisalmer are hampered by the extreme scarcity of drinking water; in this respect, the position was somewhat improved by the fall of an inch of rain towards the end of April.

Surgeon-Lieutenant Wall, of the Indian Medical Service, was deputed in the middle of May to assist the Political Agent in the Eastern States of Rajputana in matters connected with famine relief. He immediately visited the southern portion of Bhartpur where conditions are worse than in the north of the State. He found everything in satisfactory order and reported that there was no distress and that none need apparently be anticipated, as ample work was being offered at reasonable wages.

Speaking generally, it may be said that there is an improvement in conditions and prospects in Rajputana, except in the Tonk State as to which the last report indicates that, unless the rains are punctual and adequate, distress may become widespread.

3. In Central India the position is still very serious.

The April returns for Bundelkhand showed, as anticipated by the Political Agent, a large decrease in the numbers on relief in the southern states accompanied by an increase in the northern; the net decrease was nearly 25,000, or about 39 per cent. of the total. The figures have risen again now that the rabi harvesting and the collection of the mohwa flowers have been completed, but it appears reasonable to hope that, in the southern half of the Agency, the worst is now over.

In the north the distress is growing more and more acute: a selected European Assistant Surgeon was sent to Nowgong early last month to assist Captain Ramsay. In Baghelkhand there is no material change. The Political Agent reports that supplies are sufficient and that there is no deficiency of fodder or pasture; but the mohwa crop unfortunately suffered from cloudy weather. There has been no recrudescence of cholera.

Famine relief operations in Gwalior appear now to be satisfactorily and systematically conducted. The percentage of population under relief throughout the affected area in Gwalior was 4.89 in the week which ended on the 15th May: in the previous week the similar percentage in 18 distressed districts of the North-Western Provinces was 4.98. The Darbar have recently brought back to their own territory and provided employment for over 6,000 persons who were found on relief works in the North-Western Provinces. A large number of immigrants from British India and other Native States are under relief in Gwalior.

Colonel Barr is able to report that arrangements have been made for famine relief in the Alampur pargana of the Indore State which will, in his opinion, prove adequate.

4. In Hyderabad the numbers on relief works at the beginning of May were just under 24,000; in the second week of May they fell to under 18,000; but in the third week there was a rise to over 27,000, and for the weeks which ended on the 24th and 31st May, the totals, including 1,410 and 2,812 on gratuitous relief, were 28,475 and 40,537. There was reason to apprehend that the relief operations undertaken by the Nizam's Government were extravagantly managed. We accordingly called for information under specific heads and await the Resident's reply. In the meantime Mr. Chichele-Plowden has transmitted a summary prepared by Mr. Dunlop, Senior Member of the Board of Revenue under the Hyderabad Government, who has charge of famine matters. Relief works, estimated to cost over 2½ lakhs, are in progress; orders have been issued for opening others, estimated to cost Rs. 68,000; and a programme of other works is maintained. Mr. Dunlop is of opinion that, as soon as the monsoon breaks, relief works will practically be closed; he adds, however, that His Highness's Government are fully prepared to meet any contingency. The large exports of grain from the Nizam's territories to the Bombay Presidency have continued; prices in Hyderabad are now rising to the Bombay level.

We have, &c.,

(Signed)	ELGIN.
"	G. S. WHITE.
"	J. WESTLAND.
"	J. WOODBURN.
"	M. D. CHALMERS.
"	E. H. H. COLLEN.
"	A. C. TREVOR.

No. 93 Foreign (Internal) of 1897, dated Simla, the 29th June 1897.

From the Right Honourable the Governor General of India in Council to the Right Honourable Lord George F. Hamilton, Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India.

MY LORD,

In continuation of our dispatch No. 81 (Internal), dated the 8th June 1897, we have the honour to forward copies of famine statements* for May regarding affected States in Rajputana and Central India, and of other papers, as described in the attached list, which give recent information as to relief operations. The more important figures for the last three months are summarised in the following tables :—

RAJPUTANA.

(Area 127,600 square miles. Population 12,220,000.)

State.	Affected area in square miles.	Population of affected area.	On relief works.			On gratuitous relief.			Remarks.
			March.	April.	May.	March.	April.	May.	
Bhartpur ...	1,325	440,000	9,165†	10,395	9,899†	387	360	348	† Almost all on ordinary public works.
Bikaner ...	18,750	587,000	11,350	7,779	6,509	4,266	3,439	3,673	
Dholpur ...	1,200	291,000	5,124	4,017‡	4,343‡	418	582	658	‡ About half on ordinary works. § On State works 662—515 being employed on the Chabra section of the Guna-Bara railway. On private works 2,056.
Jaisalmer ...	16,000	115,000	813	906	1,409	11	50	94	
Marwar ...	6,000	235,000	4,507	4,064	5,394	1,212	1,240	1,269	
Tonk ...	595	114,000	63	Nil	2,718§	1,302	1,906	1,953	
Total ...	44,070	1,782,000	31,022	27,161	30,272	7,596	7,577	7,995	

CENTRAL INDIA.

(Area 78,200 square miles. Population 10,319,000.)

State.	Affected area in square miles.	Population of affected area.	On relief works.			On gratuitous relief.			Remarks.
			March.	April.	May.	March.	April.	May.	
Gwalior ...	4,200	771,000	42,923	47,405	58,090†	6,968	12,003	13,188	† Inclusive of 14,000 on the Guna-Bara railway.
Baghelkhand	12,000	1,778,000	100,910‡	115,053‡	124,000‡	2,438	3,511	4,556	
Bundelkhand	9,940	1,428,000	63,995	39,155	57,126	9,642	8,758	7,028	‡ Inclusive of persons relieved by subordinate Ilakadars of Rewa.
Total ...	26,140	3,977,000	207,828	201,613	239,216	19,048	24,272	24,772	

HYDERABAD.

(Area 82,697 square miles. Population 11,537,000.)

State.	Affected area.	Population of affected area.	On relief works.		On gratuitous relief.		Remarks.
			April.	May.	April.	May.	
Hyderabad ...	8,500	1,102,000	24,000	31,417†	Nil	374‡	† Inclusive of 1,489 on ordinary works. ‡ Exclusive of 3,523 non-working children.

2. In Rajputana, the condition of the people for the most part continues good. In the Bhartpur State, owing to a good rabi harvest, the famine is practically at an

* Not printed.

end, Elsewhere the new crop has put money into the pockets of the cultivators, has caused a fall in prices, and is enabling many poor people to tide over the season of distress. Rain fell slightly in Bikaner and Tonk during the month, and preparations are being made for the autumn sowings. Food-stocks are generally sufficient; where this is not the case, grain is freely imported. In Dholpur distress is said to prevail, but not famine. Adequate relief measures have been adopted. The action of the Darbar in the matter has been creditable.

3. In Central India the condition of the people varies from moderate to good, except in parts of Bundelkhand where it is bad as the rabi harvest and mohwa crop more or less failed. From Panna acute distress is reported. This State is somewhat inaccessible, and the orders issued by the Darbar for the relief of distress have been neglected by the subordinate officials. Steps are being taken to remedy this. Numbers of Rewa subjects, found on relief works in the neighbouring districts of the North-Western Provinces, have been brought back and given relief in their own State. The total of Gwalior subjects thus recalled exceeded 9,000 on the 9th of June.

4. The Hyderabad Government maintain that no famine, properly so called, prevails within the Nizam's territory. The condition of the people is good. Relief, where needed, is obtainable. Food-stocks are sufficient. In the Lingsugur district the loss of cattle from want of fodder has been considerable, but recent rain will have improved the pasture. The people are now occupied in preparing their lands for the monsoon sowings.

5. According to the latest telegraphic returns received up to the 23rd June 1897, the numbers were—

—	On relief works.	Under gratuitous relief.	Total.	Remarks.
Rajputana	26,828*	8,476	35,304	* Inclusive of about 10,000 on ordinary works.
Central India	185,899†	24,464	210,363	† Allowing for about 50,000 on works maintained by subordinate Ilakadars of Rewa.
Hyderabad	16,601	714	17,315	

These figures indicate a net decrease of over 16 per cent. as compared with the numbers under relief at the end of May. There was good rain in every Agency in Central India during the week, and a fair fall in many parts of Rajputana.

We have, &c.,

(Signed)

ELGIN.

G. S. WHITE.

J. WOODBURN.

M. D. CHALMERS.

E. H. H. COLLEN.

A. C. TREVOR.

No. 114 Foreign (Internal) of 1897, dated Simla, the 28th July 1897.

From the Right Honourable the Governor-General of India in Council to the Right Honourable Lord George F. Hamilton, Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India.

MY LORD,

In continuation of our despatch No. 93 (Internal), dated the 29th June 1897, we have the honour to forward copies of famine statements for June and of other papers, as described in the attached list, regarding affected States in Rajputana and Central India, and Hyderabad. The more important figures for the last three months are summarised in the following tables. The general situation has greatly

improved in July, and particularly in the last fortnight. There has been adequate rain throughout practically the whole of Rajputana and Central India, and during the last week there have been moderate to good falls in the distressed portions of Hyderabad.

RAJPUTANA.

(Area 127,600 square miles. Population 12,220,000.)

State.	Affected area in square miles.	Population of affected area.	On relief works.			On gratuitous relief.			Remarks.
			April.	May.	June.	April.	May.	June.	
Bhartpur ...	1,325	440,000	10,395*	9,899*	7,051*	360	348	398	* Almost all on ordinary public works.
Bikaner ...	18,750	587,000	7,779	6,509	4,839	3,439	3,673	2,018	† About half on ordinary works.
Dholpur ...	1,200	291,000	4,017†	4,343†	4,568	582	658	1,267	‡ Including 228 children fed gratuitously and 23 on ordinary works.
Jaisalmer ...	16,000	115,000	9.6	1,409	1,753‡	50	94	181	§ On State works 662—515 being employed on the Chabra section of the Guna-Bara Railway. On private works 2,056.
Marwar ...	6,000	235,000	4,064	5,394	5,932	1,240	1,269	1,342	|| On private works 1,974.
Tonk ...	750	134,000	<i>Nil.</i>	2,718§	4,120||	1,906	1,953	3,351	
Total ...	43,925	1,802,000	27,161	30,272	28,263	7,577	7,995	8,557	

CENTRAL INDIA.

(Area 78,200 square miles. Population 10,319,000.)

State.	Affected area in square miles.	Population of affected area.	On relief works.			On gratuitous relief.			Remarks.
			April.	May.	June.	April.	May.	June.	
Gwalior ...	4,200	771,000	47,405	58,090*	42,014	12,003	13,188	10,497	* Inclusive of 14,000 on the Guna-Bara Railway.
Baghelkhand	14,500	1,778,000	115,053†	124,000†	34,205‡	3,511	4,556	5,166	† Inclusive of about 54,000 persons relieved by subordinate Ilakadars of Rewa.
Bundelkhand	9,940	1,428,000	39,155	57,126	46,934	8,758	7,028	6,667	‡ Exclusive of persons relieved by subordinate Ilakadars of Rewa; no accurate return of these is to hand.
Total ...	28,640	3,977,000	201,613	239,216	123,153	24,272	24,772	22,330	

HYDERABAD.

(Area 82,697 square miles. Population 11,537,000.)

Affected area in square miles.	Population of affected area.	On relief works.			On gratuitous relief.			Remarks.
		April.	May.	June.	April.	May.	June.	
9,000	1,219,000	24,000	31,417*	12,493†	...	374‡	1,463§	* Inclusive of 1,489 on ordinary works. † Inclusive of 925 on ordinary works. ‡ Exclusive of 3,523 non-working children. § Exclusive of non-working children.

2. In Rajputana the monsoon rains, which broke in the middle of June, ceased again almost immediately, and many persons who had left the relief works to attend to agriculture were shortly forced to return. In Jaisalmer and Marwar the rise in numbers under relief in June was largely due to the annual reflux of emigrants who had taken their cattle to distant grazing grounds. Finding themselves on return unable to prepare their lands owing to the holding off of the rains, they were obliged to resort to the relief works. In Tonk the continued high prices

and the late arrival of the monsoon caused an increase in distress. In Bikaner the numbers in receipt of relief have fallen, but the first kharif sowings proved a failure. The figures for Dholpur indicate a marked increase of distress, but a good rainfall in the second week of the current month has improved the position. In Bhartpur, as intimated in the Viceroy's monthly famine telegram of the 11th July, distress is now practically at an end, and a telegram from Rajputana, dated the 26th July, reports that in Marwar scarcity is at an end for the present, the labourers under relief have left, and the earthwork on the proposed railway extension from Balotra to Shadipali is being carried on as an ordinary work.

3. In Central India the arrangements for relief remain unchanged. The rainfall in the middle of June called many persons away from relief works to attend to autumn sowings, and the numbers under relief have considerably decreased. Colonel Barr considers that, owing to the recent rain, Bundelkhand and Baghelkhand will be free from anxiety for the next month at least. In Gwalior there was a slight outbreak of cholera in June: those who left the State in the earlier part of the year have now returned to their lands. Since January last nearly a thousand masonry wells have been completed or started in the affected area with funds advanced by the Darbar. The action of the Darbar has given a great impetus to the construction of similar wells by zamindars and cultivators without aid from the State. Much attention is being paid to protective irrigation works; 243 *bands* have been started as relief works, and most of these have been completed; five inundation channels, with an aggregate length of 23 miles, have also been constructed as relief works.

4. The numbers in receipt of relief in Hyderabad have fallen 60 per cent. There was good rain at the commencement of June in the affected area, except in Parendah, and sowings were generally commenced; subsequently the rains held off, and, except in two talukas of the Lingsugur district, the position became very unsatisfactory. The kharif crop was endangered, and cholera is prevalent throughout the country, though the relief camps are reported to have escaped. Slight rain fell about the 12th July, and the falls of the last few days have considerably improved prospects in the affected area; prices, however, continue high, and the mortality among cattle and the weak condition of the surviving animals are causing anxiety. The Nizam's Government have made a fresh allotment of two and a half lakhs of rupees for immediate relief.

5. According to the latest telegraphic returns, the numbers under relief were—

—	On relief works.	Under gratuitous relief.	Total.	Remarks.
Rajputana	12,930*	6,646	19,576	* Inclusive of 3,474 on ordinary works, but exclusive of Marwar and Bhartpur (see paragraph 3).
Central India	73,175	20,519	93,694	
Hyderabad	11,561	1,366	12,927	

These figures indicate a net decrease of over 70,000 as compared with the numbers under relief at the end of June.

We have, &c.,

(Signed)

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ELGIN.

G. S. WHITE.

J. WESTLAND.

J. WOODBURN.

M. D. CHALMERS.

E. H. H. COLLEN.

A. C. TREVOR.

No. 67 (Famine), dated Simla, the 8th September 1897.

From the Governor-General of India in Council to the Right Honourable Lord George F. Hamilton, Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India.

MY LORD,

In paragraph 4 of Your Lordship's despatch No. 81 (Revenue), dated 20th May 1897, concerning the famine and famine operations in India, our attention was directed to the large number of persons placed on gratuitous relief in Bengal and the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, and to the undesirability of giving gratuitous relief on an excessive scale early in the season.

2. Before the receipt of Your Lordship's despatch the subject, as will be seen from the famine correspondence weekly forwarded by us, had, as regards Bengal, engaged our attention, and we had been in communication on the matter with the Local Government. We had not discussed the subject with the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh as we were satisfied from the Local Government's monthly famine proceedings, and from the prompt measures taken on several occasions by Sir A. P. MacDonnell to reduce the numbers relieved gratuitously in their homes when such relief appeared to have been too liberally given by the district officers, that strict vigilance in this respect was being exercised.

3. We now forward for Your Lordship's information a copy of the reports* made by the two Local Governments on the point raised in Your Lordship's despatch, and a copy of our reply* in each case. With regard to the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, it will be seen from the Local Government's letter that the high ratio of 41 per cent. which the numbers on gratuitous relief bore to the total number receiving relief in those provinces in the first week of April was due to a temporary decrease of nearly half a million in the relief work population, owing to harvesting operations and the substitution of piece for task-work in the less distressed districts. If the ratio is struck on the March figures, or again on the May figures, when the relief work population again rose to close upon one million, the percentage is found to be only 33. We agree with Sir A. P. MacDonnell that a percentage of 33 for gratuitous relief of all kinds is not excessive if regard be had to the exceptional intensity of the distress in a large portion of the provinces. We also agree with the Lieutenant-Governor that a distinction requires to be drawn between gratuitous relief given at the relief works to incapable dependants of relief labourers, or gratuitous relief given in poor-houses, and gratuitous relief in the homes of the people. In the two former classes of gratuitous relief a self-acting test of distress is in operation, namely, residence on the works in one case and residence in the poor-houses in the other. In the case of gratuitous relief in the homes of the people there can be no such test, and the personal discernment and discretion of the relieving officer have to be exclusively relied on. The letter of the Local Government will show Your Lordship the precautions which Sir A. P. MacDonnell has from the first taken to keep this form of relief within the narrowest limits compatible with the preservation of life. In the first week of April the percentage of persons gratuitously relieved in their

* Banda 3·5 per cent.
Allahabad 2·0 per cent.
Jhansi 1·7 per cent.
Jalaun 2·8 per cent.
Hardoi 2·3 per cent.

homes to the total population did not exceed 3·5 per cent. in the Banda district,* and in four other districts where distress was nearly as severe as in Banda it did not reach three per cent. It is the Lieutenant-Governor's intention to dis-

continue gratuitous relief throughout the provinces by the end of the present month, as the early grain crops which promise well will by that time be ripe, and prices are expected then to fall.

4. The high proportion borne by the numbers receiving gratuitous relief in their homes to the total population and to the relief work population in the Bengal districts has occasioned us much perplexity. After attentively considering all that

* Not reprinted.

the Government of Bengal has urged in explanation of the figures, we have come to the conclusion that there is now no cause for uneasiness as to the administration of this form of relief in Behar. The special establishments employed in the Behar districts for famine work are strong, and they minutely supervise the gratuitous lists. The numbers on the lists in Behar have of late declined considerably, and the Local Government, anticipating a substantial fall in prices, proposes to entirely discontinue such relief by the end of the present month. In some districts outside

† 31st July	431,752
7th August	351,638
14th August	303,574
21st August	273,830
28th August	238,987

Behar gratuitous relief was given for a short time on an excessive scale, but this has now been rectified. In the whole province the number of persons† on gratuitous relief in their homes has fallen during the last five weeks from 431,752 to 238,987. In the Nuddea district alone the number has fallen from 58,257 to 9,490.

We have, &c.,

ELGIN.
G. S. WHITE.
J. WESTLAND.
J. WOODBURN.
M. D. CHALMERS.
E. H. H. COLLEN.
A. C. TREVOR.

REPORT ON THE MANAGEMENT OF FAMINE RELIEF WORKS,
BY MR. T. HIGHAM, C.I.E., LATELY ON SPECIAL DUTY IN
CONNECTION WITH FAMINE RELIEF OPERATIONS.

1. On my arrival at Bombay on the morning of 15th May, on return from privilege leave, I received a telegram from the Government of India, informing me that I had been placed on special duty for the purpose of visiting relief works in progress under different local Governments, and directing me to await further orders in Bombay. On the 17th I received a copy of the Resolution of the Government of India, Department of Revenue and Agriculture (Famine), No. 20-F.—157-I., dated 12th May 1897, and other subsidiary instructions, in accordance with which I visited a number of typical relief works in the Bombay Presidency, and afterwards in the Central Provinces, in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, in Bengal, and in the Madras Presidency. Particulars of my tour in each province have been given in the inspection notes which have already been submitted to the Government of India, advance copies having also been forwarded to the Local Governments concerned. Burma and the Punjab were not visited, the former being too far away, while relief works in the latter were practically at an end by the time that I left the Madras Presidency. I arrived at Simla on the 21st July, and remained on deputation until the 1st of August, when I resumed my ordinary duties in the Public Works Department.

2. In the notes already submitted on the relief works in each province information has been given regarding the various matters mentioned in the second paragraph of the Resolution already quoted. In the present report I propose to collate many of the particulars that have been given in the inspection notes, and to offer such suggestions for the future management of relief works as have occurred to me in the course of my enquiries.

3. The first question to be considered is that of the classification of famine labourers, and the rates of wages that should be paid to them. The directions prescribed in the Famine Codes are that adult labourers are to be divided into four classes as follows :—

- A.—Able-bodied persons accustomed to labour of the kind required on ordinary works, *i.e.*, professional labourers.
- B.—Able-bodied persons accustomed to labour, but not labour of the kind required on ordinary works, *i.e.*, labourers, but not professional.
- C.—Able-bodied persons not accustomed to labour, *i.e.*, able-bodied, but not labourers.
- D.—Persons not able-bodied, but fit for light employment on relief works, *i.e.*, weakly.

Each class is divided into two sub-classes—for men and women, and there are thus eight distinct classes according to which both tasks and wages are regulated.

In addition there are two classes of children, for each of which a different wage and task is prescribed. In many cases I found that the children were also sub-divided into classes A, B, and C, and the task-tables of some of the Codes are framed on the assumption that the children are so sub-divided.

The task-tables in the Madras Code have been drawn up on the supposition that each gang shall consist of workers of the same class, *i.e.*, that there shall be A, B, and C gangs, the task for which will depend on the number of child units in the gang, the task for a child unit being given in the table. I understand that the gangs were originally formed in this way, but at the time of my visit all the gangs were treated as belonging to class B, and great simplicity was thus gained, though with a loss of efficiency, economy and discipline, as the system involves paying all workers on a uniform wage scale, irrespective of their capacities. In Bombay, where the Code system has been adhered to more closely than elsewhere, the gangs were made up by families or villages, and included labourers of all classes, the task for the gang being the total of the tasks for the individual diggers included in it, as given in the standard task table, while the number of carriers was so proportioned that the total of the tasks of the individual carriers as obtained from the same table might be approximately equal to the total of the digger's task.

4. The classification prescribed by the Code is of use only for the purpose of determining the task and wage. In some of the monthly Famine Returns (*e.g.*), those of Bengal, Central Provinces, Bombay, and the Punjab, the numbers in each class are recorded, but even if the initial classification is correctly made, the exhibition of the numbers of men, women, and children in each class involves an amount of labour and a complication of the returns which is hardly justified by the value of the information given for statistical purposes. As a matter of fact, however, the figures that have been submitted are wholly unreliable and worthless for all purposes of comparison. It has been pointed out in paragraph 4 of my notes on the Central Provinces and paragraph 6 of those on Bengal, that the classification shown in the monthly Famine Returns of those provinces bears no relation to the actual classification upon which wages have been regulated, and in the case of the Central Provinces the returns are also affected by the fact that children are not shown separately, but are all included in class D. In Bengal the returns are complicated by the introduction of a new or special class, which includes all workers who are not regularly tasked. In the North-Western Provinces the Famine Returns do not show any classification of labourers at all. Apart from all this the classification is by no means uniform in different provinces. In Madras children from the 12 and 16 years of age are all included in the returns of adults, as men or women, according to sex, whereas in other

provinces they are returned as *children*. In Bengal children below the age of 10 years are not admitted as workers, whereas in other provinces the minimum limit of age for working children is 7 years. Such statistics of the number of men, women, and children in the different classes are therefore quite useless for purposes of comparison, for not only does the system of classification vary in each province, but the returns when submitted are not always in accordance with the actual classification in force, according to which wages have been regulated.

The elaborate system of classification contemplated in the Codes is very unsuitable for relief-works, and may be said to have broken down everywhere.

It has been followed as faithfully as possible in Bombay and the Punjab, but even in these provinces the tendency has been to classify according to the actual

Code system of classification requires modification. outturn of work, or in other words, to determine the class by the task achieved, instead of adjusting the task to the class. In some cases this is done by putting all at first in a low or the lowest class, and transferring those who do more than the task prescribed for this class into a higher one, or in some way or other paying them a higher wage; in others the workers are put into a high class, and if their tasks are short are either transferred to a lower class or fined, so that the wage is brought down to that of the class below. In short, the system of an *a priori* classification of workers before they are put to work, according to their apparent condition or antecedents, has given way to one in which the determination of the class and wage practically depends on the qualification of the worker as proved in practice. There is little advantage in the Codal distinction between a worker of class B and one of class C if the lower wage given to the latter is nearly proportional to the lower task assigned to him, and it is simpler in every way to say at once that if a man can perform the B task he will receive the B wage, and that if he is unable to do more than the C task he will receive the C wage.

6. In other provinces the Code system of classification has been given up altogether. The Government of Madras proposed to put all persons capable of doing any task at all into either class A or class B, and to reserve class C for those who fall under the code definition of class D and are unable to do more than a purely nominal class, thus abolishing one class altogether. The actual practice on the relief works visited by me went further than these proposals, and in fact all the workers, including those who could not be tasked at all, were placed in class B, so that there was but one class.

A departure in an opposite direction from the strict letter of the Code was introduced by the Government of the North-Western Provinces with the object of simplifying the classification, and was promptly adopted with unimportant variations in the Central Provinces and in Bengal. Class A was nominally retained for a few workers of special qualifications, but the rest of the workers were divided into two classes, the wages of which were the Code wages of classes B and D. All men who were diggers were paid as class B, and all other adults, that is, the whole body of carriers, received the wage of class D, which is the minimum wage contemplated in the Code. The reasons which have been put forward in justification of this system are stated in paragraph 4 of my notes on the relief works in the North-Western Provinces, and it is unnecessary to repeat them here; but it may be remarked that while the task given to the carrier on the D wage in the North-Western Provinces is in most cases very light, it is, as a rule, by no means light in Bengal, where an almost identical system of classification has been adopted.

7. The proposals of the Government of Madras were not accepted by the Government of India, on the ground that they involved paying a higher wage to individuals belonging to the non-labouring and weakly classes (*i.e.*, classes C and D) than was contemplated in the Famine Codes, or than had been found necessary in

other parts of India. My provincial notes show indeed that the practice in most provinces has gone further in the opposite direction than was perhaps realized by the Government of India when these orders were passed, and that in the North-Western Provinces, in the Central Provinces, in Bengal and to some extent also in Bombay, class C has been eliminated by absorption into class D rather than into class B, while the numbers of workers actually in receipt of the D wage have been much greater than indicated in the Famine Returns.

The system of classification initiated by the Government of the North-Western Provinces has never been formally sanctioned by the Government of India in supersession of that prescribed in the Famine Codes. The North-Western Provinces Circular No. 18-P.W., dated 1st December 1896, in which this system was first formulated, was indeed forwarded to the Government of India as a collection of rules, based on the experience gained in the Bundelkhand famine of 1896, which had been drawn up in the Public Works Department, for the guidance of officers employed on relief works, and as such it was circulated to other provinces for information. It may thus be said that the rules as a whole were tacitly and provisionally approved at a time when famine relief operations were in full progress all over the country, and when much was necessarily left to the discretion of the Local Governments. The value of the rules has since been amply demonstrated by the excellent results attained under them, and the readiness with which they have been adopted almost without modification in two other provinces. But the fact that under these rules all who were unable to dig, that is, the great majority of relief workers, would be entitled to no more than the D or minimum wage, and would in case of short tasks be liable to fines which would still further reduce the wage, was not very prominently brought forward in the new rules, and it cannot be said that this method of classification has been formally and finally approved by the Government of India in supersession of that prescribed in the Famine Codes.

8. I do not propose to discuss here the sufficiency of the wage of class D as a pure subsistence wage, which has been disputed by the Government of Madras, but assuming it to be sufficient, the question to be considered is whether the fourfold classification of the Famine Code should be given up, and whether we should put into this class, which will be entitled to what may be considered an adequate subsistence wage, all relief workers who are capable only of carrying, or of any other task that may be easily acquired after a little practice by all who come to the works, such as metal-breaking; and whether we should offer a higher wage only to those more expert and able-bodied labourers who are able to handle a pick or *phaorah*, or to undertake other tasks which are beyond the capacity of the majority of the workers, but upon the performances of which the effective employment of this majority depends. This simpler system of classification differs entirely from that prescribed in the Famine Codes, which apart from its greater complication is open to the objection that it pre-supposes on the part of the official who makes the initial classification a knowledge of the antecedents of each individual, or a power of judging his physical condition, which the officers in charge of works cannot often be expected to possess.

9. The arguments in favour of this simpler system of classification have been stated with sufficient fulness in paragraphs 4 and 35 of my notes on the famine relief works in the North-Western Provinces, and so long as the average task for the carriers, or, speaking more generally, for all workers who are put into class D, is not in excess of what may be legitimately expected from those who may be put into this class, these arguments may I think be accepted. But in the absence of a simple and definite standard for the task of worker in class D there is a danger that under favouring conditions the task may be excessive, and either that the workers may be insufficiently paid at the D wage when regard is paid to the work taken out of them, or that they may be unable to perform the task, and will therefore either receive less than even the D wage, or will be indirectly prevented from coming to the works. On the other hand, there is also a danger, in the absence of such a standard, that the task for workers of class D may tend to

become lighter than by proper arrangement is really necessary, so that the cost of the work done will be greatly increased, while the workers will be demoralized by the lightness of the task assigned to them.

If a satisfactory standard task can be proposed, I consider that the North-Western Provinces system may safely be accepted as the basis for the future classification of relief workers, but I would also recommend that *wherever circumstances will permit* the workers in this class D shall be afforded an opportunity, similar to that which is now given them under the "modified intermediate system" in those provinces, of earning a somewhat higher wage on the performance of a task in considerable excess (say 25 per cent.) of the standard. I will explain presently how this can be arranged in practice. I think that for reasons given in paragraph 20 of my notes on the relief works in North-Western Provinces the *morale* of the workers will be greatly improved whenever the stimulus of this extra wage can be given, and that if we place the great body of the workers on what we consider to be only a bare subsistence wage, the minimum wage of the present Famine Codes, we should, whenever we can, give them the opportunity of earning a small extra pittance by doing a proportionate amount of extra work. This opportunity of earning an extra wage is not however an essential, though it may be a desirable, addition to the original North-Western Provinces system, and its adoption as part of the task-work system of the portion may be left to the discretion of the local authorities.

10. The adoption of the North-Western Provinces system of classification therefore depends upon the determination of a standard task for the worker in class D, or, in the case of earthwork, for the average carrier unit. Fortunately this is not as difficult a matter as may at first sight appear. The task for a digger varies within a very wide range on different works and often indeed on the same work, according to character of the soil and the expertness of the workers, and in its determination a wide discretion must be given to the local officers. But in India almost all the labouring classes, and especially the women and children, who form the majority of the carriers on relief works, are so well accustomed to carry loads on their heads that one is almost as expert in this work as another, while the character of the soil does not greatly affect the determination of the task. It is affected only by two considerations, the variations in the length of lead and height of lift, and the general physical condition of the people. The former of these can be eliminated by the adoption of a rational formula for the determination of the "*reduced lead*," which is a matter for experts, and there remains only the second. If the physical condition of the people were the same everywhere, we might fix a standard task for the carrier unit in terms of the "*reduced lead*," which might be adopted all over India. This is hardly possible, but the correction required on account of physical condition should not vary greatly, if at all, within the same district, or even within the same province, and there will probably be little difficulty in fixing for each province a standard task for the carrier unit which should be lowered or raised only under the direct orders of some high authority, such as the Superintending Engineer or the Commissioner.

I have appended to this report a note on the task for a carrier unit which is submitted as a contribution to the future discussion of this subject, and will at least serve to explain more fully what has been said above in regard to it. On this subject of tasking I have only to add that the Bengal and Punjab practice of fixing the task for the sub-gang, comprising generally about four diggers with the necessary complement of carriers, appears to me preferable to the system of setting the task either for a whole gang or for the individual digger and his party.

11. In the case of road-metalling works the determination of a standard task for the worker in class D is not so easy, as it will depend on the quality of the stone. It must therefore be left to the local engineers to determine the number of breakers required for a given quantity of road-metal, somewhat in the manner proposed in the instructions referred to in paragraph 27 of my notes on relief works in the North-Western Provinces.

12. If the principles stated in three preceding paragraphs are accepted, we may now proceed to consider the question of the future classification and wages of relief-workers. I would propose to divide all adult workers into three classes, which for the present may be called X, Y and Z, so that they may not be confused with the classes under the existing notation. For the sake of brevity these classes may be called respectively Special, Digger and Carrier, though in the case of the two last these terms will not quite accurately connote the work that they will be required to perform.

Class X, or the Special class, will include all workers of special qualifications, of whom a certain number will be required on the work that cannot be attracted by the wage paid to members of class Y or class Z. It will include generally only mates in charge of the gangs, *kahars* for supplying water to the workers, and specially expert quarrymen. No more men should be entertained in this class than are absolutely necessary for the proper prosecution of the work, and as a general rule they should not exceed a certain percentage on the number of workers, which will vary according to the character of the work, and should be prescribed by high authority. Ordinarily the wages paid to this class should not exceed that prescribed under existing Codes for a male in class A, *i.e.*, the cash equivalent for 21 *chatuks* of grain, which will be the normal wage of the class. It may, however, be left to the discretion of the Commissioner or Superintending Engineer to sanction a higher wage, on sufficient reason being shown, for particular classes of workers or on particular works.

Class Y, or the Digger class, will ordinarily comprise all able-bodied male workers who are capable of performing a full digger's task, but more generally all able-bodied men who are required to perform tasks, whether in quantity or kind, which are beyond the capacity of those who will be relegated to class Z. Thus on road-metalling operations class Y will include men employed in ordinary quarrying operations, or on sledging or breaking up the larger blocks of stone from which spawls are supplied to the breakers; and also all those employed on consolidation, when the rammers used are not of very light weight. Men in class Y may occasionally be employed on work usually given to those in class Z, *i.e.*, on carrying or on breaking road-metalling when circumstances render this necessary, as for instance in the case of earthwork with a very long lead in which the diggers can excavate more than the carriers can remove, or in the case of road-works when the stones to be broken lie close at hand, and require no quarrying or slicing, so that practically all the workers are breakers or carriers. In all such cases, however, a worker in class Y should be required to perform a task 50 per cent. in excess of that set for a unit in class Z, or he will otherwise be ineligible for the Y wage. The Y wage and task should, however, only be allowed in such cases when the worker has been originally admitted into class Y, and is put on work ordinarily given to class Z temporarily, or as a matter of convenience. When the work is of such a character that proper employment on work ordinarily given to men of class Y cannot be regularly found for all of this class that come to the work, the number actually required for this work would be selected for this class, the remainder, which should include the weakest workers, being relegated to class Z and given the Z task and wage.

The wage for class Y will be that of a male in class B under present Codes, *i.e.*, the cash equivalent for 19 *chataks* of grain.

Class Z, or the Carrier class, will include the majority of the workers, the worker men and those unable to dig, and almost all the women and big children. On earthwork they will be employed as carriers and sometimes on dressing and tidying up. On road-work they will act either as carriers or breakers. Members of this class may sometimes be employed on digging, as suggested in paragraph 12 of my notes on relief-works in the North-Western Provinces, but in that case they should be given a half task, *i.e.*, two of them should be counted as a digger unit, and they should receive only the Z wage.

The wage of class Z might be that of a woman in class D under present Codes, that is, the cash equivalent of 1² *chataks* of grain.

13. It seems to me unnecessary to make distinctions within these classes between men and women as regards either wages or tasks. There will probably never be any women in class X or class Y, but if a woman is required in either of these classes, and can do the work and task required from the male, she should be allowed the wage of the class. Nursing mothers might also be enrolled in class X until the child has two teeth in either jaw, but they would be employed and tasked as carriers, although receiving the X wage, no allowance being made for the child. As to class Z the Code wages for present class D are the cash equivalent of 14 *chataks* for a man and 13 *chataks* for a woman, but in practice under the system of paying to the nearest pice the wages of a man and woman in this class are often identical. Thus, as shown in paragraph 5 of my notes on North-Western Provinces, the wages are identical for a grain rate of 10 seers to the rupee, but a man gets one pice more than a woman when the grain rate is 12 seers to the rupee. Even at the latter rate the wage of the man has been reduced to that of the woman where the intermediate system is in force, as shown in paragraph 16 of the same notes, the intention being to pay a uniform rate to the carriers per 100 cubic feet, irrespective of sex. Considering that the majority of adults in class Z will generally be women, and that the men will, as a rule, be old and feeble and unable to perform a higher task than a woman, I would recommend that all be paid at the money value of 13 *chataks* of grain. In further justification of this rate I would also propose to include in this class all children between the ages of 12 and 16, which is the present practice in Madras and is permissible also under section 73 of the Bombay Code. Children of this age require as much nourishment as adults, and should as a rule be able to do as full tasks as the average of this class. In Madras the task for a woman is fixed at that of two small child units, and it is assumed that girls between 12 and 16 can perform the same task, and that boys of the same age are equal to 2 or 3 child units according to age and physique. If the standard task for a carrier unit is moderate, as it should be, I think it may be assumed that it will not be beyond the capacity of children of this age, and we shall eliminate the present difficulty of deciding what individuals are below and above the age of 16. By bringing their big children into the adult class we render it the less necessary to pay the males in this class more than the women, for if the males have big children belonging to them, the aggregate wages of the family will often be slightly higher than under the present North-Western Provinces scale.

14. There will then be only one class for children, *viz.*, children under 12 years of age. The minimum limit of age for working children is 7 years, except in Bengal, where it is 10 years. In paragraph 16 of my notes on relief-works in Bombay, it has been stated that the Bombay officers consider the limit of 7 years too low. I would recommend that no children should be employed on works below the age of seven years, but that it be left to the discretion of the officer in charge to employ children between the ages of 12 and 7 on the works. If willing and able to work, they should be counted as half carrier units, and receive a child's wage, which might be fixed at the money value of 8 *chataks* of grain. The present Codes do not all fix the grain equivalent for children. In the Codes for Bombay and North-Western Provinces 15 *chataks* is prescribed as the maximum and 10 as the minimum, but in the latter provinces the actual wage is on the basis of 10 and 6 *chataks*, and the Code rates appear to be unnecessarily high, considering that only 14 *chataks* are allowed for an adult male of class D. It is now proposed to give the big children, between 12 and 16 years of age, 13 *chataks*, and for the smaller workers 8 *chataks* might be allowed.

If children below the age of 12 will not work and only get in the way, the officer in charge should send them to the kitchen, or give them the wage of non-working children on all works in which relief is given to such as dependants. Similarly children over the age of 12 should be moved from class Z into the children's class if they are unwilling to work.

15. Under these proposals there will therefore be only four classes employed on relief-works, *viz.* :—

Summary of proposed classification.

Class X, Special.
 Class Y, Diggers.
 Class Z, Carriers.
 Children-Children under 12.

There will also be only four rates of wage, except when special wages are allowed for some of the members of class X. With this simpler classification it will always be possible to compare the wages actually paid to the workers during any period of time with the amounts normally due to them under the Famine Codes, which can now be done with great difficulty and only by the use of very complicated forms of account. This is a point of great importance, and in a separate note (Appendix II.) I have explained how, with the classification proposed, it will be possible to adopt a simpler and more uniform system of relief-work accounts which will permit a fair and ready comparison of the results attained, not only in the same district at different times, but also in different districts or even in different provinces. This is a question that it is desirable to keep in view in all proposals for modifying the provisions of the existing Famine Codes.

16. In paragraph 9, *supra*, I have recommended that *whenever circumstances permit* the workers should be given an opportunity of earning something higher than the minimum wage. When the proportion of carriers to diggers is so high

Option of earning an extra wage, and abolition of Sunday wage.

that it is impossible by any distribution of the workers to give the carriers anything approaching to the standard task, even if the diggers succeed in doing 25 per cent. more than their full task, an increase in the wage of the carriers would not be justified. This question is discussed in Appendix I. to this report; and in accordance with what is there said, I would recommend that when the number of carriers on a work does not exceed the number required for the diggers employed by more than 10 per cent., an extra wage should be allowed for both diggers and carriers when the diggers perform a task 25 per cent. in excess of the full task, but when the carriers exceed the number required by more than 10 per cent. the diggers only should be entitled to the extra wage. If, however, the Sunday wage is abolished on any work, diggers and carriers should all be allowed to earn an extra wage irrespective of the proportion that the latter may bear to the former. On such works it will amount to this, that the Sunday wage or its practical equivalent will be given only to those who earn it by doing between them during the week more than the full digger's task. I think that on most works the Sunday wage might be done away with on this condition, which is practically the North-Western Provinces intermediate system. The extra wage for week days will seldom cost more than the Sunday wage, but the *morale* on the work will be improved. The only case in which it would then be undesirable to permit the extra wage would be when work of any kind was so difficult to procure that a restriction of progress was on this ground very desirable. In such a case it might be better to allow no extra wage, but to make up for it by granting the Sunday wage, and to accept the lower *morale* that might result from such a course.

17. The question of payments has next to be considered. Broadly speaking, there are two systems only—that of weekly or bi-weekly payments, as in force in the Bombay and Madras Presidencies, and that of daily payments, as in force in the North-Western Provinces and in Bengal. In the former the daily wage is worked out according to the ready reckoners appended to the Codes to the nearest *pie*, the amount payable to the worker being the total for three, four or seven days, as the case may be, less the fine, if any, imposed for the whole period, which can also be fixed at discretion to the nearest *pie*. The net totals thus payable can be disbursed to the nearest *pie*, the payments on one or even more works being made by a single cashier or paymaster, who can pay a few gangs every day till he has gone round them all, when

Method of payments.

he will begin again. This cashier is quite independent of the mates and muharrirs who write up the muster rolls, and in theory at least none of the wages pass through their fingers. On the other hand, when payments are made daily as in Bengal and the North-Western Provinces, the daily wage must be calculated to the nearest *pice*, and the difference between this and the true wage, which is sometimes in favour of the worker and sometimes in favour of Government, must be cumulative throughout the week. So also in the matter of fines; under a system of daily payments the fine must be according to the day's work and must be expressed in terms of a full *pice*. If the work is short every day in the week to the extent that involves a fine of one *pice*, the worker is fined six full *pice*; but under the weekly payment system when the fine is imposed with reference to the short work of the week, the amount would often be much less than this owing to the calculations being made in *pie*, even if the fines in both cases were as nearly as possible proportional to the deficiency in task. Again, when payments are made daily, it is absolutely necessary that they be made by means of the muharrirs and mates, who are the very persons employed in writing up the muster rolls and pay sheets, and who thus have every encouragement to enter fictitious names and to pay the wages drawn for them to themselves.

So far the advantages appear to be all on the side of the system of weekly or bi-weekly payments. But there is a great deal to be said on the other side. In the first place it is an undoubted benefit to the workers to be able to receive their wages daily. It may be, as I was told, that the *baniahs* on the works are always willing to give credit until pay-day, but credit no doubt is not given for nothing, and unless paid daily the workers are not free to go elsewhere for their supplies. Moreover, payments that are not made daily are apt to be made very irregularly, as suits the convenience of the paymaster, and I found that in practice this was often the case, payments being sometimes made two or three days after the pay-sheet had been closed. But the great advantage of daily payments is that they are so easily understood by the workers. When a party has a piece of work marked out for it and is told that if it is accomplished in the day, each digger will receive 7 and each carrier 5 *pice*, but that if the work is short, they will get respectively 5 and 4 *pice* fine, the advantages of a daily reckoning are apparent. Under the weekly system the wage for each day is worked out in *pies*, which many do not understand, the rate per diem often varying within the week, as the grain rates go up or down, while there is an unintelligible deduction made at the end on account of fines which cannot be challenged several days after the measurements. I think it very doubtful whether any worker under the weekly system knows what he ought to receive, whereas under the daily system there is no doubt on the point. Another great objection to non-daily payments is that labourers are less free to leave the work, as they must stay till pay-day comes round, and that there will usually be a greater number of absentees when payments are made.

In the Central Provinces wages are paid bi-weekly, but the payments are made by *muharrirs*, and the daily wage is worked out in *pice*. This intermediate system appears to me to combine all the disadvantages of both systems. If wages are not paid daily, they should be worked out daily to the nearest *pie*, the total at the end of each period only being reduced to nearest *pice*, and they should be made through an independent cashier. If the daily wage is worked out to the nearest *pice* only, and payments are made by the muharrirs, daily payments should be regarded as obligatory.

18. One difficulty in the system of daily payments is the large number of *pice* required daily on each work, but when these have been supplied in the first instance they circulate back to the work through the *baniah*. In paragraph 10 of my notes on the North-Western Provinces it is explained how the *pice* are counted and the payments made daily. I saw payments being made in Madras on the alternative system. An itinerating paymaster sat under a tree with a muster roll in his hand and two or three gangs seated round him. The names were called out three at a time, the aggregate wages of three workers slightly exceeding a rupee.

As the men came a rupee with the additional small change required was thrown out to the payees who were left to divide the amount between them in the proper proportions. As there were practically no fines this was probably a less difficult matter than it would have been otherwise, but these multiple payments, except to a recognized head of a party, must be very inconvenient to the workers, and it appears to me better to face the difficulty of small change. The advantage of payment by cashiers may, I think, be overrated. In all systems of task-work or daily wages, *bogus* entries, &c., have to be guarded against, and when payments are not made by the time-keepers there is great danger of collusion between them and the cashier, unless the latter is of a higher position than it is generally possible to obtain on relief works, and there is only another set of fingers between the worker and his pay. But under the system of daily payments it is much more difficult to defraud the workers, the systematic daily payment *coram publico* of a definite number of pice to each, and with the officer in charge and his assistants on the ground, being the most effective safeguard against fraud of that kind. If the muharrirs make anything by entering fictitious names, &c., it is not at any rate at the expense of the worker, and whether there be a cashier or not offences of this kind can only be detected by the frequent checks which it is the duty of the officer in charge and all inspecting officers to exercise.

Each of these two alternative systems has its advantages and disadvantages, and there may well be a difference of opinion as to which should be preferred. Personally I incline to the system of daily payments on a pice wage, though, as suggested in paragraph 9 of the notes on the Central Provinces, I would recommend that whenever the true wage exceeds an aliquot number of pice by $1\frac{1}{2}$ pie or more the next higher number of pice should be given, and that ready-reckoners for pice wages should be worked out on this principle. But I think that it is unnecessary to prescribe either system to the exclusion of the other, as it would be better that such matter should be left to the option of the Local Governments.

19. The next point to be considered is the manner in which fines should be exhibited, and this also depends in some measure on the system of payment adopted. As already pointed out when

Accounting for fines.

payments are made weekly or bi-weekly the payments show the gross amounts due, and the fines, if any, are shown in a separate single column against each name, the net or actual payment being shown in a third column. This is not, however, possible when payments are made daily. The actual amount to be paid after deducting the fine must be shown in the column for the day, as otherwise three columns would be required for each day. Thus the pay sheets or muster rolls on the daily payment system show only the actual amount due after deducting fines, whereas those on the weekly payment system show, or can be made to show, the actual amount of the fines. The point is not, however, one of great importance, because it is only by referring to those initial records, which are usually in the vernacular, that an officer can find out the actual amount of fines, even on the weekly system, and in the daily system he can find it out with very little extra trouble by referring to the same records. Under neither system, however, is the account of fines carried further or into the derived accounts, in which actual payments only are shown, without any exhibition of fines. It would be impossible to do this in any serviceable manner without greatly complicating the accounts, especially under the present system of classification. In Appendix II. I have, however, shown how under the new system of classification proposed it will be possible at all times to compare the wages actually paid with the amounts normally due for full tasks, and to ascertain the works on which fining has been excessive, working down from the work to the particular gangs which have been in default.

20. As regards dependants on workers it must, I think, be accepted that relief should in some form be given to them on almost all task-works upon which the workers receive little, if any,

Relief of dependants.

more than a bare subsistence wage. The tendency in all provinces, except Bengal, where the number of dependants on a single work is very small, has been to

substitute grain or cooked rations in place of a cash dole, cooked food being given almost everywhere in the case of children. There are difficulties in connection with the management of kitchens, and abuses and complaints are no doubt frequent, while it is certain that they are very unpopular with the people, and are not willingly resorted to, except by those of the lower castes. This is not, however, altogether a disadvantage, and it has been shown in the notes on relief works in Bombay and the Punjab how great abuses are likely to occur when there is a liberal cash dole. The Government of the North-Western Provinces has declared that when a cash dole was given the children were not properly fed, and has animadverted on the effect of the distress in weakening the natural solicitude of parents for their offspring. It must, however, be remembered that while many parents in the North-Western Provinces seldom receive more than the minimum wage, the non-working children have never received more than one pice per diem, which will not cover the cost of the cooked ration when grain sells for less than 12 seers to the rupee. The opinion of Famine Officers is, however, I think generally in favour of kitchens in lieu of a cash dole for non-working children on all but very small works, but it is a matter that may be left to the discretion of the Local Governments.

As regards adult dependants, grain rations were sometimes given in Madras, but the general practice is to give a money dole. The percentage of adult dependants is almost everywhere so small that it is not a question of great importance. The allowance in cash for dependants, whether adults or children, is not very clearly stated in terms of a grain equivalent in the Provincial Famine Codes, but it may perhaps be taken at 12 *chataks* for a man, 10 for a woman or child over 12 years of age, and 5 for a small child. I doubt whether it is necessary, however, to make a distinction in this class any more than in any other, between men and women, which cannot always be maintained when payments are in full pice, and would prefer to take 11 *chataks* in future for an adult dependant, whether male or female, or 2 *chataks* below the proposed Z wage.

21. The foregoing proposals relate to the future organisation of relief works on the task-work system, which is that contemplated in the Famine Codes, and which no doubt is in many cases the only system which can be safely adopted. The possibility of a more extensive introduction of piece-work in future remains, however, to be considered. The question has been discussed in paragraphs 132 and 133 of Part I. of the Report of the Indian Famine Commission, which are quoted in full below—

132. The contract system in its ordinary form, under which the labourers become the servants of the contractor, on whom all responsibilities for their payment rest, should be prohibited on relief works, as it is incompatible with that direct supervision and control on the part of the supervising officer, and that free communication between him and the labourers, which are essential to secure the effectiveness of the relief. The method of payment by the piece may, however, be introduced with advantage, provided that it is optional with the labourers to choose between it and the daily wage. One or more piece-work gangs might therefore be attached to each large relief work, in which all who are both able-bodied and skilful labourers should be classed, and to which those who are improving in strength and skill may, if they wish it, be transferred. The rates should be so fixed (with reference to the price of food-grain) as to give a little more than the ordinary daily wage in return for the quantity of work likely to be performed. Such increased earnings may tend to encourage a spirit of industry among the labourers which will be beneficial to all; but it should be remembered that it is not expedient to add to the outlay on relief, or to the consumption of food beyond what is essential, and that no object is to be gained by the early completion of any work put in hand. Again, at the end of a famine, if any able-bodied labourers are disinclined to go back to their ordinary work, a system of piece-work may be used, with lowered rates, to induce them to go.

133. We have arrived at these conclusions after careful consideration of the arguments of those who advocate systems differing in some one or other respect from that which we recommend. Of these suggestions, one of the most important is that all relief works should be on the piece-work system; that work should not be employed as a test of necessity, and as a condition of relief, but that it should be offered to all persons whose labour is "remunerative," that is, labourers capable of earning a living on works carried out on the usual system of the Public Works Department, at rates adjusted to the price of food. We are of opinion that experience has proved that the portion of the population not accustomed to work for wages on public works will not spontaneously seek such employment until forced to do so

by want, and that it must be anticipated that many will be reduced in strength, and at first at all events incapable of earning a livelihood on the public works, assuming that the work to be done to earn a livelihood by everyone must be that of an able-bodied labourer. An unusual proportion will certainly be women, and a large fraction will consist of children unfit for labour, the aged and infirm and those who are unaccustomed to the sort of work and otherwise unable to work up to the standard performed in the case of skilled labourers in ordinary times. Any attempt, therefore, to make these classes earn their living by ordinary piece-work could not fail to result in great suffering and mortality. If to avoid this the rate be adjusted to meet the powers of the least capable, it will make the works enormously costly, or if it were adjusted to the different degrees of strength of the labourers, the result would be to introduce a variety of rates suited to varying capacities, and so end in something not really differing from task-work. If, again, only those who can be employed profitably on works are so employed, a great mass of people will be thrown on the Government demanding gratuitous relief, but absolved from all necessity for showing that they are really in want. On these grounds we think that the only safe course for providing for proper management and economy on the one hand, and the interests of humanity on the other, is to give all those who can do a reasonable amount of work a task carefully adjusted to their powers, and pay them a wage on which life and health can be maintained; piece-work being employed only under the conditions mentioned in the preceding paragraph, and gratuitous aid, as described in the succeeding section, being confined to those who are incapable of working.

It will be seen that the Commissioners recommended the adoption of piece-work, but under the condition that it would be optional with the labourers to choose between it and the daily wage. This condition would be so inconvenient in practice that it is really prohibitive, and piece-work has in consequence not been provided for in any of the Provincial Famine Codes. During the late famine, therefore, all works were at first conducted on what have been called Code principles, that is, under some system of task-work more or less approaching to that contemplated in the Codes; but, as stated in paragraph 13 of the notes on the North-Western Provinces, the Government of those provinces took the initiative in proposing the adoption of piece-work under certain conditions. These proposals were approved by the Government of India and were circulated in due course to other provinces, with the result that all, with the possible exception of Burma, have since arranged to give piece-work a trial. Unfortunately at the time of my tour this trial was in progress only in Behar and in the Gorakhpur division of the North-Western Provinces, for the "modified intermediate system" in those provinces, which forms indeed the basis of the foregoing proposals regarding task-work, cannot rightly be considered as piece-work, inasmuch as payments are made under it with reference to the constitution of the working party, and not solely and absolutely with reference to the quantity of work done. Even when true piece-work had been adopted, it had been in force for too short a time for a fair opinion to be formed in its merits, and it laboured under the great disadvantage of having been introduced in succession to task-work, or among people who had been previously working on the task-work system.

22. The objections to piece-work have been fully stated in the extracts from the Report of the Famine Commission which have been quoted above, but those which may be made to a system of task-work or daily labour have not been as fully set forth.

The main objection to task-work or daily labour.

Of these by far the most important is that the tendency of a system in which the wage of every worker is in theory strictly restricted to his own individual requirements, the State undertaking the duty of separately relieving all dependants on him who are unable to work, is to weaken that sense of an obligation to maintain their own dependants which is so universal throughout India. So long as we pay neither more nor less than a bare subsistence wage to all who come to our works, we do not offer those who can work either the inducement or the means for supporting those who cannot, which is both a natural instinct and an established custom. The men who can work do not come to the works as long as they can earn in any way as much at home as they could get on the works, but they send all their women and children and infirm to take the Government dole. The alternative system of allowing those who can work to earn as much as they can, and throwing on them the responsibility of supporting those who cannot, has never fairly been tried. When the average wage per unit paid to relief-workers exceeds the subsistence limit, there is a natural apprehension that the cost of relief is excessive, and little consideration is paid to the proportion of effective and

ineffective labourers on the works concerned, or to the number of "units" that are kept off the works by the higher wages earned by their friends. It is at least conceivable that if the number of labourers on any work were reduced by one half, and then received a double wage, the amount paid as wages being the same as before, the half remaining at home would not be any worse off. The Famine Commission, in paragraph 127 of its Report, remarks that it will "be necessary to see that the cost to which the community as a whole is put by the employment of persons in want is no more than the case strictly requires." Accepting this as a fundamental principle of famine relief policy, it by no means follows that the system of paying a subsistence wage only to all who are in want is either more economical or more efficacious than that of paying a liberal wage to all who are willing to work for it; but it is undoubtedly far more demoralising, if it be true, that what is not required by the workers for their own subsistence will be applied to the support of their non-working dependants.

23. The next great objection to task-work is the fact that the amounts to be paid depend on the maintenance of an accurate register of the attendance, that

Second objection to task-work. must be taken at least twice a day, and also of a detailed record of the tasks performed daily. For the maintenance of these records in all necessary detail and for the preparation of the derived periodical statistics, a whole army of underlings, such as mates, murharrirs, paymasters, work agents, &c., have to be employed, the majority of whom are only too anxious to make illicit gains, either by actually intercepting the wages due to the workers or by exaggerating the amounts to be paid to them, and pocketing the excess. All Famine Officers complain that this is the case, and that it is only by incessant exertion on the part of a strong and highly-paid supervising staff that frauds can be kept within bounds, while it is impossible to absolutely prevent them. In piece-work, however, there is nothing to be considered in making payments but the quantity of work done by each gang or party, without reference to the daily attendance. In the matter of measurements there is of course ample room for fraud, but with proper and systematic arrangements, such as are now well understood by Famine Relief Officers, it is possible to prevent much overmeasurement, and when work is paid for by the piece and has been properly marked out, there is no doubt that in most places the people fully understand what amounts are due to them. In addition to the large sums of money that may be saved either to Government or the workers by thus reducing to a minimum the number of these subordinate agents and the opportunities for cheating and peculation, there is the actual cash saving due to the reduction in these establishments which piece-work renders possible, and all this has to be considered as part of the cost to which the community as a whole is put by the system of daily labour.

24. Another objection to task-work is its inelasticity, and the vexatious and unnecessary restrictions which it imposes on the people. They must come daily to the work, often at a considerable distance

Third objection to task-work. from their homes, to do what may be no more than a nominal task, which may not, however, be exceeded; whereas if left to themselves, as in piece-work, they would often do a double task in one day, working perhaps long overtime, and stay away the next. In paragraphs 12 and 21 of the notes on relief works in North-Western Provinces it has been shown how the efficiency of a working party may be affected by other restrictions that have been imposed under the task-work system, and although these are perhaps not all necessary or an essential part of that system, there must always be a tendency to hamper the workers when payments have to be made with reference to the attendance and classification of individuals as well as to the outturn of the gang and not to the latter consideration only.

25. The last objection to task-work or daily labour is the great cost of the work done in proportion to its normal cost, I put this last because I regard it least.

Last objection to task-work. It is generally assumed that the cost to the community as a whole per unit relieved will be less under the daily labour than the piece-work system. This has not, and perhaps cannot be proved, and is at

least open to question if we include among the units relieved all those whom the piece-workers support in their own homes. But assuming for the moment that it is true, the only economical advantage that could be claimed for piece-work would be that for a given expenditure a greater quantity of work would be done under it than under the daily labour system period. This advantage would, however, be of little real value in the case of the many relief works of small or doubtful utility which have been started solely for the purpose of providing employment, and on which expenditure would be stopped at once directly the need for employment has passed. On such works great progress is rather an embarrassment than an advantage, as it tends more rapidly to exhaust the reserve of works held available for relief purposes. There are, however, other works in which it is a real advantage to get as much work done for a given outlay as may be possible, and in which the real cost of the relief given may be regarded as the difference between the normal value of the work done and the amount actually expended, and on such works the objection now under notice has a direct connection with the cost to which the community as a whole is put to by the employment of persons in want.

26. If the experience gained during the recent famine, up to the time of my tour and subsequently, has furnished no positive indication that the objections which have been entertained to piece-work are exaggerated, it has at least shown how great are the disadvantages of the alternative or Code system. The deviations from the strict letter of the Codes in the direction of payment by results which have been approved by several Local Governments and the readiness with which all have accepted the suggested introduction of piece-work as an alternative, are proofs of the dissatisfaction that is felt with the original Code system. Circumstances during the recent famine probably differed considerably from those which the Famine Commissioners had in mind when framing their proposals for the organisation of relief works. The great extensions of the railway system have tended to equalise prices all over India, and while the local intensity of distress has thus been mitigated the area has been greatly widened. Moreover, the effect of the Famine Codes has been that more complete arrangements were made on all sides for the timely anticipation of distress, and as recommended in paragraph 127 of the Commissioner's Report the relief afforded by relief works has in most cases been "tendered promptly and before the people have begun to lose strength from want of food." All officers whom I have met who have had experience in previous severe famines, especially in Bombay and Madras, have told me that the condition of the people on the works was then infinitely worse than it has been in 1896-97, and indeed the cases of emaciation or even physical weakness which I saw on the works, although numerous enough to indicate the reality of distress and the necessity for remedial measures, were nevertheless few enough to indicate the efficacy of the measures that had been taken. There must, however, be some intermediate stage between that at which it is necessary to invite all that are in want to the works, and to give to each a wage that is but a thinly-disguised form of gratuitous relief, and that at which those who can work can earn enough by their ordinary occupations for the support of themselves and of those who are dependent on them. The question is whether it would not suffice at this intermediate stage to provide full employment for those who can work at rates which will enable them to support their dependants, and whether the actual cost to the community would be any greater than under the Code system. This can only be answered by giving the proposal a fairer and more extended trial, under favouring conditions, than has hitherto been deemed advisable. It is no doubt true that the piece-work system cannot be adopted at all times and places. In many cases, and perhaps in the majority of cases, the daily labour system, with all its faults, will be the only one possible, and it is on this account that the question of classification of daily labourers has been considered at such length. But unless it be held that it should be adopted universally, to the entire exclusion of piece-work, the problem which will await the famine administrators of the future, and which must be kept in mind in considering the questions that remain to be discussed in this report, is the determination of the circumstances or conditions under which piece-work may safely, advantageously, and economically be substituted for task-work. On this point some suggestions will be offered later on.

27. The next point to be considered is the class of work most suitable for relief works. Practically the only works which all but a very small minority of relief labourers are capable of performing are earthwork and stone-breaking, and all relief labour must be mainly employed on one or other of these. Subject to the condition that employment of this kind is provided, relief works may be divided into four classes as follows :—

Class I.—Productive public works already in progress.

Class II.—New works or extensions of existing public works which are likely to be productive or financially remunerative.

Class III.—Public works which will be of great utility to the general public, but which will not be financially and directly remunerative.

Class IV.—Works which will not be useful to the general public, and which will benefit only a small section of the population.

Works of Class I. are unfortunately rare, the Fattepur extension of the Ganges Canal being perhaps the only instance in the late famine. When such works are available, however, they are to be preferred to works of any other class, because the ultimate cost to the community of the relief afforded by them will be actually less than the difference between the expenditure incurred and the normal value of the work done, as the acceleration of progress will enable the works to earn revenue sooner than would otherwise be the case.

Works of Class II. differ only from those in Class I. in so far that Government is not committed to any expenditure on them. But when relief works are necessary they are those which can be most advantageously undertaken after those in Class I., and the ultimate cost of the relief afforded by them should not greatly exceed the difference between the actual expenditure and the normal value of the work done. The Ghaggar and Jhelum Canals in the Punjab and the Barsi-Pandharpur Light Railway in Bombay are examples of such works.

Class III. includes all road works, and also irrigation and drainage works, which, though not likely to be remunerative, will be useful as protective works or on sanitary grounds. The expenditure on works of this class is regulated mainly by the extent to which it is necessary to provide relief works, but in most of them it is desirable that they should be pushed forward to completion before relief works are closed, as until completed they are almost valueless. These works are only open to objection when they are likely to result in future liabilities for the net cost of upkeep out of all proportion to the benefits to be derived from them.

Class IV. comprise village tanks and other petty works which would never be undertaken, except for the sake of providing employment for distressed labour, and which will benefit only a few individuals, or at most the inhabitants of a single village. These works can be discontinued at any time, and there is no advantage whatever in stimulating progress, if this involves any increase in expenditure beyond that absolutely required for the relief of distress.

28. The Famine Codes provide that programmes for relief works shall be prepared by the Civil and Public Works Officers in communication in anticipation of famine. Such programmes doubtless existed in all provinces long before relief works were undertaken, and employment appears to have been found everywhere for all who applied for it, in spite of the long duration of distress. The number of remunerative works, Class II., which were available when relief works were started appears, however, to have been very small in all provinces, except in the Punjab, and perhaps in Burma. And of works falling under Class III. the utility of many was very small, while in respect of others the future liabilities for maintenance will possibly result in their being ultimately abandoned. In Bombay and Bengal large and useful projects were started at a later stage of the relief operations, but the preparation of these was only put in hand after distress had declared itself, and was necessarily hurried. In view of this fact, and of the frequent postponement on account of want of funds of public improvements or of large works which are likely to prove remunerative, the

question naturally suggests itself whether the original provincial programmes might not have included a greater number of desirable works of this kind.

It is difficult to answer this question directly and for each province, but there are many reasons for the non-inclusion of many large works in the programmes of relief works. There is perhaps a tendency to place too much reliance on the sufficiency of petty works, such as are described in paragraph 13 of the North-Western Provinces Code, and indeed in two Codes it is directed that in the early days of scarcity these should be used to the utmost in preference to large works, "which will be the backbone of the system of relief in the later stages of a famine."*

* See paragraph 48 of Central Provinces Code and paragraph 71 of Burma Code.

such works can be executed by private agency assisted by takavi advances, as contemplated in paragraph 13 of the North-Western Provinces Code, but if there is the slightest prospect of scarcity deepening into distress, and of relief works proper being required, the sooner petty works of this kind are closed the better. They may be invaluable at a later stage, when the prevalence of epidemic disease may render it desirable to disperse large gangs of labour, as in the South Allahabad district, referred to in paragraph 31 of the notes in North-Western Provinces relief works, or when for any other reasons it is necessary to bring the people into the neighbourhood of their homes, but the utility of such works is as a rule so small that they should be reserved for such occasions. After village works reliance has next been placed on road work. This may often be useful, though, owing to the general shortness of the lead, it does not admit of full tasks being given to the carriers, and the cost of road earthwork is generally excessive. In many cases, however, roads are made when they are not required, or they are embanked where embankment is unnecessary, or they are metalled when it is certain that they cannot afterwards be maintained as metalled roads.

29. The preference given to works of this kind is no doubt mainly due to the fact that they provide employment close to the homes of the labourers, and it is in some provinces almost an article of faith that if this is not done the people will

Distance of relief works from the affected villages.

not go to the works, but will prefer to lie down and die in their own villages. I doubt, however, if experience in the recent famine really justifies this view, which if accepted will render a programme of useful relief works almost impossible. In Bengal the large number of persons on gratuitous relief, and in Madras the small proportion of men on the works, have been explained as in a measure due to the fact that on the approach of scarcity many of the men migrated into Assam or Mysore in search of employment, and if this is the case, it is difficult to understand why they will not attend relief works in their own province. In Bombay, where this belief at one time obtained, no difficulty appears to have been found in inducing the people to attend large relief works at a distance of 30 or 40 miles from their homes, and it has been found practicable to enforce a rule rendering residence within the relief camp obligatory on all workers. I understand that when labourers are drafted to a distant work they either receive advances for the journey or arrangements are made for giving them a daily allowance at certain stations on the road. In the Punjab relief workers do not object to travelling 50 miles to the works, and in the North-Western and Central Provinces a considerable number of labourers sojourn at or near the works. The objection that if the works are too far from the homes of the workers the latter will not readily return to field labour as soon as opportunity offers has some weight; but a distance of 40 miles can be easily covered by any native in two days, and will not prevent his return when occasion resents itself. No doubt as long as employment can be found in the vicinity of the villages, the inhabitants will profess a great disinclination to go further afield, but I have found no evidence that they cannot be induced to attend large works at a distance from their homes when others are not provided close at hand, and when proper arrangements are made for their maintenance during transit and for their accommodation on the works.

In connection with this subject it may be noted that the extension of the railway system has given great facilities for deporting labourers to large works at

great distances from their homes. It is now a common practice for contractors on large public works to import labour by rail, and in Burma it was recently proposed to deport relief workers in this way from the Meiktila to the Shwebo district, or over a distance of about 125 miles. It was, however, eventually decided to employ them on the Mandalay Canal, which is a little nearer ; but in this case they will also be carried nearly 100 miles by rail, and the result of the experiment will be interesting.

30. In future famines we may therefore contemplate the employment of relief-workers at greater distances from their homes than has hitherto been the general practice, but there are nevertheless other difficulties in the way of entering large public works in the relief programmes. In the first place it will sometimes be found impossible to propose any works within any practicable distance of an affected tract. In the next the completion of such works may often involve heavy expenditure which will be useless for purposes of famine relief, especially in the case of railways, as already pointed out in the Famine Codes. Again for the preparation of projects in the necessary detail the assistance of a considerable professional establishment is required, which is often not available.

These difficulties are great, but something might be done. At present many projects are shelved after a preliminary investigation which indicates that they will not be financially remunerative, or on the ground that there is little prospect of funds being available for them. But it should be remembered that in reserving works of this kind for purposes of famine relief, it is not necessary that they should be remunerative in the sense of yielding an adequate return on the outlay incurred. Such works may be recommended if they will not impose a permanent charge on the community out of all proportion to the benefits derivable from them, including their protective value in case of future famines, and if they will be less useless than other works that may be proposed. Again, as regards funds the position is that in time of famine funds have to be found for the relief of distress, and it is only a question of the works on which they may be most advantageously applied. As regards railways and other works involving heavy charges which will be useless for purposes of famine relief, it is no doubt of great importance that such works should never be started unless and until their construction has been decided on upon other grounds than that of affording employment for relief labourers. But as regards railways there are now programmes of lines to be constructed all over India, in which the position of each in order of urgency has been laid down, and the prosecution of which depends mainly on the extent to which funds can be provided. When the construction of a line has been decided on, relief-workers cannot be better employed than on the earthwork, especially in an undulating country, and perhaps on the collection of ballast. Even if the permanent-way be not laid down until 10 years after, such labour is not thrown away. In Bombay and Bengal railway relief-works have been carried out during the recent famine which afforded a most excellent means of employment. The same remarks apply to the case of large irrigation works, the construction of which has been definitely decided on as soon as funds are available, as in the case of the Jhelum Canal and some other minor canal works upon which relief-workers have been recently employed. As regards establishment, if after due consideration the construction of any public works in a district subject to famine appears *prima facie* to be a desirable means of employing relief labour, there should be plenty of time in the long intervals between famines to permit their being properly investigated, even though the Public Works Department may not be prepared to recommend their construction under any other circumstances.

31. Before leaving this subject it may be pointed out that in the next great famine there will probably be less room for a programme of small works than hitherto. During the recent famine roads have been made in all directions, supplies of metalling have been collected which will probably in many cases never be used, village tanks have been excavated or cleared wherever suitable sites could be

found, and generally the reserve of works of this class has been nearly exhausted. No doubt in course of time other works of the same kind may be proposed as suitable, but as already pointed out they should be held in reserve. In future famines the backbone of the relief system, not only in the later, but in the earlier, stages, should therefore be large works of public utility; and I venture to think that a fuller programme of such works will be possible in future if it be recognized that the labourers may be drafted to much greater distances from their homes than has hitherto been customary, and that large public works may be contemplated, even when not likely to prove financially remunerative, whenever it can be shown that they will entail a smaller ultimate cost to the community than other works that may be proposed, or will be more suitable for purposes of famine relief, special preference being given to works which will afford protection in future famines, such as minor irrigation works or protective railways.

32. The next question to be considered is the complaint that relief-works interfere with the supply of labour to private employers, to which reference has already been made in the provincial notes as in margin. It is no doubt true that an ordinary family of relief-workers can, with their dependants, earn between them much more on relief-works than on a railway or other work constructed by contractors or private employers on ordinary

Interference of relief-works with the supply of labour to private employers.				
				Paras.
Bombay ... ..	...	...	...	24
Madras ... ..	...	...	...	23
Central Provinces ... ..	...	...	...	12
North-Western Provinces ... ..	...	...	...	29-30
Bengal ... ..	...	...	...	28

contract principles, and this is especially the case when, as in Bombay, Madras, and the Punjab, the carriers receive more than the D wage. But such workers are not required on contract works of the kind referred to, and the real complaint is that professional labourers are attracted to the works by the advantages offered. It is not so easy to say whether the workers of a professional family can earn more between them on contract works than they and their dependants can draw between them on famine relief-works, as this really depends on the relation of the contract rates to the price of grain. When the contract rate is invariable the relief-works naturally become more attractive as the price of grain rises, and it appears that railway engineers and contractors are very reluctant to raise their rates even in the face of a great rise in the price of grain. One of the minor advantages of a more extensive introduction of piece-work would be that the payments made to relief-workers and to those employed on contract works could be brought into fairer comparison, and if the relief-works were found unduly attractive, the piece-work rate could be reduced into closer agreement with those paid on the contract works. But before making such reductions Government should first satisfy itself that the rates offered on contract works are fair rates with reference to the price of grain. If the rates offered are so low that no one but a Titan could be expected to earn a living wage on such works, the complaint that the relief-works interfere with the supply of labour to private employers will not deserve attention.

I do not think that the rates on piece-work should often materially exceed those offered by a Railway Company to its contractors. The piece-workers will then receive higher rates than the railway-workers by the difference between the rates offered to the contractors and the rates paid by them to their labourers, and this difference is no more than is required on account of the lower efficiency of the relief-workers. If it be apprehended that with this almost unavoidable difference professional labourers will leave the contract works, some effort must be made to limit the daily task. In the case of railway works it will perhaps often be preferable to take the work over as a relief-work, to be conducted on the task-work or piece-work system as may be more convenient, and on the understanding that the railway should be charged only the actual value of the work done at normal rates, *i.e.*, at ordinary rates enhanced to the extent considered appropriate on account of the high price of grain; the normal rate thus being not the ordinary rate, but the rate that would certainly have to be paid to attract the labour required in a season of high prices, such as renders incumbent the opening of Government relief-works. This is the plan that has been adopted in the case of the railway relief-works that have been undertaken in Bombay and Bengal, and although it throws more work on the

Public Works officers, it has the advantage of eliminating altogether the difficulty in regard to professional labourers, who are as much entitled to employment as any other class of labourer.

33. We have next to consider the respective duties and responsibilities of Civil and Public Works officers in relation to relief works. As has been pointed out in some of the provincial notes, the existing Famine Codes do not very clearly define the position of the officers in the different classes of the Public Works Department in connection with these works. In some the existence of such an officer as a Superintending Engineer is recognised only to the extent of declaring him responsible that requisite arrangements are made for supplying tools and plant to the relief works, while the duties of a Chief Engineer are confined to seeing that due budget provision is made for the expenditure to be incurred. The theory is that the Collector is the responsible officer for the management of relief works, however numerous or important, and that the officers of the Public Works Department are merely required to assist him with professional advice on technical matters. The matter is referred to in paragraphs 129 and 130 of the Report of the Indian Famine Commission which are quoted below:—

129. The immediate direction of these works should be entrusted to the officers of the Public Works Department, whose special training best qualifies them for such a duty and who would be responsible for enforcing discipline and directing the labour. It is to be clearly understood by these officers that their duty is not, as in ordinary times, to get the greatest quantity of work done at the cheapest rate, but to give effectual relief to the labouring population, inasmuch as the work is undertaken, not for its own sake, but for the sake of the people employed on it. Labourers of all kinds and of all degrees of working capacity and working power should be received on these works if they apply for admission, and civil officers should be appointed to co-operate with Public Works officers in classifying the labourers and seeing that they are properly paid and tasked according to their strength. The other duties of the civil district officers will be so numerous and important that it is not expedient that the ordinary relief works should be carried on by them unless in the case of the Public Works Department being unable to supply officers for that purpose. Work might, however, be carried on under the civil officers for the purpose of giving employment to persons who have been in the receipt of gratuitous relief, and who, though beginning to recover from debility, are not yet strong enough to be sent off finally to the regular relief works.

130. The collector of the district should exercise general supervision over all works as over all other arrangements for giving relief within his district, and should be responsible to Government for their efficiency. Pending reference to the Government or other superior authority, his decision should be accepted by the Public Works officers in all matters relating to the task and wage of the people employed, as well as in opening or closing works, and generally in everything except arrangements of a merely technical nature.

In practice the Public Works officers have, during the recent famine, been granted a wider discretion in most provinces than allowed by the strict letter of the Codes; and, except in the Madras Presidency, the Superintending Engineers, working in close communication with the Commissioners and under the orders of the Local Government in their own department, have been mainly responsible for the conduct and organisation of relief works.

34. I venture to think that this is as it should be, and that in any future revision of the Famine Codes the Public Works Department should be declared responsible for the proper organisation and management of all relief works that may be entrusted to its control. The Collectors cannot possibly exercise the supervision of these works which is contemplated in the Codes, except through the medium of their subordinate officers who should have no authority to interfere with the arrangements on works which are controlled by an Executive Engineer, who is an officer of another department. The division of duties and responsibilities in this matter can be made very clear. The whole work of famine administration outside the relief works should lie with the Civil Department, the Public Works Department being responsible for the management inside the works. It will thus be the duty of the Civil officers to send to the works all who are in need of out-door employment, and of the Public Works officer to find

suitable employment for all who come, in accordance with the rules that may be prescribed for his guidance by the Local Government in his own department, and subject to the control of his own departmental superior, the Superintending Engineer.

The responsibilities of the Civil officers in time of famine are very onerous, even if relieved entirely of the duty of controlling the management of relief works. In addition to the ordinary administration work of the district, extra duties fall on them in connection with the system of village relief, agricultural advances, distribution of charitable funds, and a great many other matters; and it is a waste of power if, with such an organisation as the Public Works Department at hand, they should have also to concern themselves with the management of relief works. It may be urged too that, whatever system may be adopted inside the relief works, the effect can be best appreciated by outside enquiry. Take, for instance, the case of unlimited piece-work, where high wages may be paid to a comparatively small body of competent workers. If we want to estimate the efficacy of a relief work of this kind, we must not consider the question of the average task or daily wage, but must ascertain by village inspections the extent to which the works meet or fail to meet the demand for employment. Famine relief is too much associated with the idea of relief works, but one conclusion that may perhaps be drawn from experience in the recent famine is that village relief requires as much attention and supervision as the relief works, whether regard be paid to the numbers relieved, or the demoralisation and excessive expenditure that may result from lax supervision. Constant village inspections and scrutinies of the village relief lists will probably afford the best means of testing the efficacy of all branches of relief administration, including that of relief works, and such inspections would be more frequent and thorough if Civil officers were relieved of all responsibility in connection with the relief works. Of course they should have access to them at all times, and have every opportunity of ascertaining the condition of the workers, the proportions of the sexes and of different classes and castes, the villages from which drawn, and other particulars. The authority of the Collector or Deputy Commissioner as head of the district must also always be recognised, but this would not be in any way affected by transferring the responsibility for all details of management from him to the Public Works Department, nor will it be less incumbent on Public Works officers to pay prompt attention to all his representations. The practice which has been described in paragraph 14 of the inspection notes on relief works in the Central Provinces is one which may be recommended for future guidance in this respect.

There are a few relief works that must always remain under the charge of the Civil officers, such as petty agricultural works for which tacavi advances have been made, works in outlying parts of the district where no Public Works officers may be available, works of moderate size in the immediate neighbourhood of tahsils, &c., and, when considered advisable, small works employing not more than say 500 labourers in other parts of the district. No hard-and-fast rule is required, but whenever it becomes evident that relief works on a large scale will be required, the whole business of organising and managing them should be entrusted, as far as possible, to the Public Works Department.

35. The next question that calls for consideration is that of the officers in charge of relief works. The Famine Codes lay down no precise rules on this subject, and the practice varies somewhat in different provinces. In the Punjab, where distress was confined to a comparatively small area, the resources of the Public Works Department were not very severely taxed and the officers in charge were usually either Assistant Engineers or experienced Upper Subordinates. In Bengal, where the relief works were very numerous, but generally of very small size, men of all classes have been placed in charge, including European, and even native, non-commissioned officers. In Madras, where the relief works are more directly under the control of the District Officer than elsewhere, it has been the practice to employ Upper Subordinates of the Public Works Department as officers in charge, but the supply has been wholly inadequate to the demand, and it has been necessary to engage a number of temporary subordinates who were in many cases very imperfectly qualified for the work. In Bombay, the Central Provinces and the North-Western Provinces, the officers in

charge have as a rule been Revenue Subordinates who have been nominated in the Civil Department, generally and at first men in the position of Naib-Tahsildars or Kanungoes, though as the number of works increased it has been necessary to go wider afield than this, and to appoint others of lower status and qualification. The officers in charge are usually of this class in all these three provinces, but whereas in the two last they are nominated by the Civil Department, but placed entirely under the orders of the Public Works officers, they are in Bombay nominally under the direct orders of the Collector. In this Presidency they are called Special Civil Officers, and their duties are laid down in paragraphs 90 to 93 and 96 of the Bombay Famine Code. In paragraph 90 it is directed that the Special Civil Officer should be a Magistrate with summary powers, but as observed in paragraph 24 of the Bombay inspection notes this has not been found necessary or even desirable, and as far as I am aware such powers have never been granted in Bombay or elsewhere to officers in charge as such, though they may in some cases have been invested with them before appointment to the charge of relief works. In Bombay the Special Civil Officer is not, I believe, often in full charge of the work, as there is on all the larger works an Engineer or Upper Subordinate in charge, who is responsible for payments. In the Central and North-Western Provinces the officer in charge is also cashier and responsible for all payments.

The practice of employing these nominees of the Civil Department in full or subordinate charge of relief works appears to be a good one as long as men of the requisite character and qualifications are forthcoming. Their special duties are to receive all applicants for relief, to draft them to the work, to arrange for and supervise the bazar, to look after the sanitary arrangements and health of the people, with the aid of the medical subordinate, to check the musters and move about among the gangs so as to receive complaints, to be present as frequently as possible at the distribution of wages, to prepare and despatch the daily or periodical reports and returns, and when there is no sub-divisional officer resident on the works to have the care of the cash chest, and to be responsible for all payments. All these duties can be best performed by intelligent and respectable natives, who understand the language and the people, and have had some experience in office and accounts work. The practice of nomination by the officers of the Civil Department is convenient, but after appointment they should, as in the Central and North-Western Provinces, be placed entirely under the orders of the Public Works Department. In the case of large works which require constant and close professional supervision, the officer in charge should however be a resident sub-divisional officer of the Public Works Department, that is, an Assistant Engineer or senior Upper Subordinate, whenever these are available, and the Special Civil Officer should act under his orders as assistant officer in charge. In this case the sub-divisional officer will keep the cash book and be responsible for payments, and his assistant may generally be a man of somewhat lower qualifications than those required when there is no resident sub-divisional officer. In general, however, the Special Civil Officer must be entrusted with full charge of the works under the orders of a non-resident sub-divisional officer, who will have several charges under him, visiting each as frequently as may be possible.

When relief works are numerous it will be better to utilise the services of Upper Subordinates as visiting inspectors, as is done in North-Western Provinces, than to place them in charge of relief works. Their special duties will be to visit each work in these circles in turn, and instruct and overlook the Lower Subordinates who set out the work and record the measurements, and also to make suitable arrangements for supply of tools, &c. When works are being first started or when gangs are being reorganised they should remain two or three days, or longer if necessary, to put things into a proper groove. The services of experienced Upper Subordinates are specially required for work of this kind, and their time should not be taken up with the other matters which can be entrusted to the Special Civil Officers.

36. As regards the Engineer Establishment, it must inevitably be short-handed when relief works are simultaneously required in almost all provinces, as during the recent famine. The time of the Public Works Establishment. It is very much occupied in the are in need

preparation of reports and estimates for the works to be started, and in the arrangements for setting them out and organising the various relief camps, and they have little left to devote to the constant inspection of relief works which is so essential. The establishment can be strengthened only by stopping leave, and by the temporary transfer of Royal Engineer Officers and Upper Subordinates from the Military Works Department. When this is insufficient the employment of officers from the Staff Corps must be contemplated. Many of these officers are required in the Civil Department for work of village inspections, but when necessary some of them should be placed at the disposal of the Public Works Department, as in the North-Western Provinces, for exclusive employment as circle officers, whose duty it is to supplement the efforts of the regular engineering staff in inspecting works by surprise visits, for the special purpose of checking the muster rolls, pay sheets and measurements, reporting on the condition of workers, sanitary arrangements, and all other questions on which the orders or advice of the divisional or sub-divisional officer is required. These latter officers will of course also inspect the works as frequently as possible, and should at first visit them with the circle officers so as to be able to instruct them in the points requiring attention, and the general *modus operandi* in inspections. I have already, in paragraph 33 of the notes on the North-Western Provinces, referred to the value of these circle officers, and in such a famine as that through which we have just passed, the number that can be very profitably employed is limited only by the extent to which they can be spared from their military duties. The value of their services is not to be measured only by the assistance rendered in preventing speculation and extortion, in dealing with epidemics, and in facilitating the successful and economical prosecution of the works, for much of the experience gained while thus brought into close touch with the people cannot but tend to increase the efficiency of these officers in their own profession. The great want on relief works is constant supervision by active, sympathetic and reliable European officers, and for these principal reliance must be placed on the Indian Staff Corps.

37. We may now return to the consideration of the question of piece-work, and the circumstances under which it may be advantageously employed. The problem is not how to get a maximum outturn of work for a given outlay or even for every unit receiving relief, but how to supply adequate relief to all who apply for employment at a minimum ultimate cost to the community as a whole. Piece-work may involve much higher payments to each worker unit than the daily labour system, but its ultimate cost to the community may be less for one or other or all of the following reasons:—

- (a) The number of persons requiring relief may be less, as part of the higher wages earned by the workers will go towards the support of many who would otherwise come to the works.
- (b) There will be a saving in the cost of special establishment required for the supervision of task-work.
- (c) The difference between the total expenditure and the real present value to the community of the work done, which is the true ultimate cost of famine relief, will be less.

In piece-work the people are encouraged to do very full tasks, even where it may be necessary to fix a maximum limit. If the work selected is one of great utility, and especially if it is likely to prove remunerative, this will not much affect the ultimate cost to the community, because the more work a man does the greater will be the present value of that work, and the less the actual cost, inasmuch as the greater the progress the lighter will be the incidence of establishment and miscellaneous expenses. But if the work is one of very doubtful or limited utility, there is little advantage in a full tale of work, and under such circumstances it would be better not to introduce piece-work.

If, however, future programmes of relief-works can be so arranged as to include a number of really useful works, even at some distance from the affected villages, it would be an immense advantage to commence operations by opening these, first as test and afterwards as relief-works, on a strict piece-work system. The duty

of Government at this stage is merely "to replace for the moment, as far as may be needed, the ordinary employers of labour, and to furnish work and the wages for work to the labouring classes, with a view to enabling them to earn a livelihood as long as their ordinary occupations are necessarily interrupted" (see paragraph 127, Report of Indian Famine Commissions). This is a very different thing from offering a daily wage in consideration of a more or less nominal task to every man, woman and child who will come a short distance daily to ask for it, and in addition gratuitous relief to as many of their dependants as may be incapable of even a nominal task. On works of the kind now under consideration it is almost a matter of indifference how high are the earnings of the workers, if the rates have been properly fixed, as long as it is found that these earnings go to the support of those who cannot work. When this is not the case, and weak women and small children are thus forced to come to the works in greater numbers, it may be necessary to alter the system. When piece-work has once been properly established there will never be any difficulty in converting it into task-work, and introducing the special extra establishment required, though it is probable that this will only be necessary when distress has become very acute. If we begin, however, by a demoralising system of task-work, it will always be difficult to successfully change this for piece-work, and it is on this account that I have urged that piece-work has never hitherto been given a trial. In the Punjab notes instances have been given of works on which piece-work might have apparently been introduced initially with very great advantage.

38. The question as to the conditions under which piece-work or task-work should be adopted is one that may, I think, be left in the first place to the Public Works Department, if this Department be made solely responsible for the effective management of relief works. The principles and criteria by which its officers would be guided in this matter would be authoritatively laid down by the Head of the Department in each province, and approved by the Local Government. It would be the primary duty of these officers to provide work suitable to their capacity for all who apply for it, but not in the first instance at any rate to offer what is little better than gratuitous relief to those who will not or cannot work. It will be the duty of the civil officers to watch the results outside the works, and if they find that people are coming to them for gratuitous relief who are at least capable of doing a light task, that many are kept from the works by the insufficiency of the wage that they can earn on them, and that in fact the initial standard must be lowered, their representations to that effect should receive immediate attention.

The concessions or relaxations that may be made as distress deepens may be very gradual. Before giving up piece-work it may be supplemented by task-work, or by relief for dependants, or the effect of raising rates may be tried. When task-work has been adopted the tasks may be successively lowered as the *nadir* of distress is reached and may be again raised as prospects improve, until as the distress draws to a close it is possible to return again to piece-work on low rates, as contemplated in paragraph 132 of the Report of the Famine Commission. There are other devices by which the works may be adapted to variations in conditions. For instance, when piece-work became impossible on a line of road owing to great accessions of women and children, these might be drafted off to village tanks along or near the line of road, with a small complement of diggers, and employed on task-work. It will be the duty of the Public Works officers to adapt their works to the exigencies of the situation, and I do not think that they will fail in this if they are given a sufficiently free hand, and clearly understand what is required of them. The great experience that has been gained by Public Works officers during the recent famine will justify the proposal that the future management of relief works should form a specialised branch of Public Works administration, and it should not be impossible to frame rules and task-tables for future guidance which will permit an adaptation of the system on each work to all the circumstances of the case.

The question of fixing a maximum limit to piece-work earnings is also one of those that should be considered departmentally with reference to circumstances.

The objection to it is that it involves the maintenance of an exact register of the attendance of piece-workers and an interference with the free action of the workers, which are undesirable, but there may be cases in which such a limit is advisable—as, for instance, when it is found that the works attract an excessive proportion of professional labourers, and it should be left to the Public Works Department to scrutinise the working in either case, and to make such changes as may be necessary.

Again, with reference to the special contract system alluded to in paragraphs 11 and 14 of the Central Provinces and North-Western Provinces notes respectively, and also in the Punjab notes, there are undoubtedly occasions when this system could be employed with advantage. Many Executive Engineers have contractors on whom they can thoroughly rely, and who by their long experience in the organization of labour gangs would be far more efficient in every way than the untrained establishment that must otherwise be employed. In the few cases in which this system can be introduced with advantage discretion should be given to the Public Works Department to adopt it.

39. In paragraph 136 of the Report of the Indian Famine Commission, it is observed that when distress is comparatively light and “only amounts to severe scarcity, the Government will commonly find it sufficient to enlarge its ordinary works, so as to offer employment to greater numbers than usual, but without any change of system; and this, with the addition of some help in the villages to those incapable of work, will probably enable people to tide over the season of distress.” By this is meant that ordinary public works may, under the conditions stated, be carried out in the usual manner, through the agency of contractors, and that operations may be expanded when it is considered necessary to afford employment on such works to greater numbers than would otherwise be employed. The prosecution of ordinary public works on the usual Public Works system is contemplated in most of the Famine Codes, but an expansion of these works without any alteration of system, so as to obviate the necessity of opening more or less useless relief works, is at present seldom permissible, however strong a case may exist. An expansion of such operations almost necessarily involves an increase of the Budget Grant under some other head than that of Famine Relief, and financial exigencies will seldom permit this being sanctioned. In order to get the requisite funds, it is therefore necessary to convert the work into one conducted on famine relief principles, which has hitherto been taken to mean on the task-work or daily labour system, although under the proposals now made piece-work may in future be regarded as in accordance with famine relief principles. But under the conditions assumed contract work may often be more economical and effective than piece-work, and involves less disturbance. To meet such cases it would be a great advantage if, by a suitable modification of financial rules, the extra grants required could be given without reference to the condition that the work should be carried out on famine relief principles. There is of course a danger that grants for the expansion of ordinary public works in times of scarcity may be applied for more for the sake of expediting the progress of the works than because their more active prosecution will render it unnecessary to open other relief works. But it should not be difficult to insist on satisfactory assurances in this respect before sanctioning additional grants, and when such assurances can be given a considerable waste of public money may be prevented.

40. In paragraphs 14 and 31 of the notes on relief works in Bengal attention has been drawn to the number of elaborate famine returns in use in that province. In other provinces the periodical returns published in the Gazettes give a certain amount of information, and they may be supplemented by unpublished returns in the divisional or circle offices, but all these statements are open to the same objection. They are not based on a uniform plan or framed in such a way as to permit comparisons with the returns of other provinces, and they exhibit only the figures for the particular week, month, or

other period to which they relate, and not up to date figures. In a separate note I have made suggestions as to the initial forms of account to be maintained on the works and the periodical returns which will be derived from them, which will meet these objections, and if adopted the periodical returns will give reliable, if not absolutely correct, information on all the most important points connected with the efficiency of relief works. Apart from these statements or returns there is the question of the audit of famine accounts, or rather of the accounts of relief works carried out by the Public Works Department. In Bengal special instructions have been issued by the Examiner, Public Works Accounts, in regard to the accounts of relief works, and a Deputy Examiner has been appointed who inspects the offices. The muster rolls and other vouchers are sent direct by the sub-divisional officer to the Deputy Examiner, and not to the divisional officer, who is thus relieved of a great deal of accounts work. I do not know how this system has been found to work in practice, or what modifications, if any, of the ordinary public works system have been made in other provinces. I believe, however, that in none were audited accounts obtainable showing up to date expenditure in comparison with the value of work done, and certainly not in an aggregate form. It was said that accounts could not be kept up to date, and that information of this kind could only be given months hence, when the great pressure of relief works was removed. There can be no doubt of the supreme importance of making relief work accounts as simple as they can be made, and of leaving all officers as free as possible for inspection of the works, but it is at the same time very desirable that accounts of the cost of relief works should be punctual and up to date, and it is far easier to compile them with the necessary degree of completeness as the work is in progress than at a much later date. This is not a question to which I was specially directed to pay attention, and I did not make many enquiries on the subject, but I have been struck with the want of uniformity in provincial returns which render comparisons of results attained almost impossible, and with the difficulty of obtaining reliable information relating to the actual expenditure over a considerable area and period, with reference either to the number of units relieved or the normal value of the work done. The suggestions which have been made in the appended note are intended to remove this difficulty, but I am of opinion that the whole question of the manner of rendering and auditing relief work accounts should be considered by a committee of experts, with the view, on the one hand, of simplifying and assimilating them as far as may be possible, and on the other of keeping them close up to date. It is desirable to utilise the experience gained in the recent famine for the improvement, not only of the system of organisation, but also of the system of accounts.

Summary of recommendations.

41. The recommendations made in this Report may now be summarised as follows:—

- (a) Efforts should be made to include in future programmes of relief works a greater number of large public works, which shall either be of a remunerative character, or of such public utility as to justify their construction when it is incumbent on Government to devote large sums of money to the purpose of famine relief which must otherwise be expended on works of a less useful and perhaps absolutely useless character. It is not essential that such works should be remunerative, but they should not involve future liabilities for maintenance out of all proportion to the public benefit that will be derived from them. Nor should they involve heavy expenditure on materials or on work that will be almost useless for purposes of famine relief, except in the case of projects the construction of which, sooner or later, has been recognised as necessary, and has been definitely approved by competent authority.
- (b) Such works may be entered in the programmes of relief works on the understanding that on the first occurrence of distress it will not be obligatory to provide employment for the people in the immediate neighborhood of their homes, but that they may, on the contrary, be drafted to works 40 or 50 miles away from their villages. In the case of large and important works, upon which great numbers of labourers

can be employed with great public advantage, it may even be contemplated to draft them by rail from greater distances than this, when the requisite facilities exist.

- (c) As soon as it appears probable that relief works will be required, test and relief works should, in the first instance, be opened as far as possible on works of the class referred to in (a) and with reference rather to the utility of the work than to its proximity to the affected villages, but arrangements may be made when necessary and under proper precautions to convey the people to the works, or to pay the cost of their maintenance during transit.
- (d) When it is evident that relief works will be required on an extensive scale in any district, they should be placed under the charge of the Public Works Department, which will be solely responsible for the organisation and management of such works in accordance with the principles and rules that may be laid down for its guidance by the Local Government, which will be framed with reference to the general provisions of the Famine Code to which these instructions will be subsidiary or supplementary.
- (e) When relief operations are first started, whether as test or relief works, a strict system of piece-work should be enforced and the people should not be encouraged to expect employment for all as daily labourers, even at the minimum wage, without reference to their capacity for work. As the works proceed, it should be left to the Public Works Department, in free and constant communication with the civil officers, to introduce any system approved in the departmental instructions which may appear most appropriate, with reference to the character of the work, the condition, customs, and capacities of the workers, the proportions of men, women and children, the qualifications of the available subordinate and special establishment, the intensity of the distress, and other considerations.
- (f) It will be the duty of the Public Works officers to so adapt the system on each work that suitable employment may be offered to all who are drafted to the works by the civil officers who are engaged in the supervision of village relief, and whose duty it will be to send to the works all applicants for gratuitous relief who may be considered capable of performing a moderate task. The inter-dependence of relief works and village relief must be fully recognised, and though the civil officers should be relieved of all responsibility for the management of the former, they should pay increased attention to the supervision of the latter, not only on account of the great numbers for whom this form of relief is alone suitable, but also because the scrutiny of the village lists afford the most reliable means of testing the efficiency of the relief works as a means of relief.

In connection with this subject it is most desirable that there should be some fairly uniform standard by which the capacity of an applicant for relief to perform a moderate task may be judged. It should be recognized that, while it is very demoralizing to give gratuitous relief to persons who are capable of working, it is not less so to lower the task standard on relief works by the admission of large numbers who can only be given an absolutely nominal task.

- (g) When it is found necessary to substitute a system of daily labour for piece-work upon any work, the classification, wages and tasks of the daily labourers should be regulated in accordance with the suggestions that have been made in paragraphs 8 to 16 of this Report, or any modifications of them that may be finally approved by Government.

- (h) Whenever the more active prosecution of public works already in progress or sanctioned is shown to the satisfaction of the Government of India to be desirable, as a means of obviating the necessity for opening relief works on the systems approved in the revised Famine Codes, the requisite funds should be provided for an expansion of operations under the usual Public Works system, as a temporary charge, if necessary, against famine relief, without insisting on its being conducted on Code principles.
- (i) Petty works in the neighbourhood of distressed villages should not be opened in the earlier stages of distress, but should be held in reserve in the event of its becoming necessary to disperse the labour collected on large works, or until the large works are approaching completion, or for the latest stage of distress.
- (j) Small relief works which cannot conveniently be placed under the charge of officers of the Public Works Department, and all petty agricultural works for which petty advances have been made, should remain under the charge of the Collector or Deputy Commissioner, and be managed, as far as may be, in general accordance with the principles to be laid down in case of works under the Public Works Department, though the accounts may be kept in less detail.
- (k) The systems that may be adopted on relief works may be classed as follows :—
- (i) Ordinary public works conducted on the ordinary public works or contract system, under the conditions referred to in (h), or when an expansion of operations on such works is considered necessary in the public interests.
 - (ii) Works conducted on the piece-work system, whether limited or unlimited, and whether under the management of approved contractors or on the pit-gang system, no allowance being in any case made to dependants.
 - (iii) Piece-work as in (ii), supplemented by relief to dependants, both adult and children, or to children dependants only.
 - (iv) A combination of piece-work and task-work, with or without relief of dependants, certain parts of the work being set apart for piece-workers, and others for daily labourers ; or workers of the digger class being paid by the piece and carriers as daily labourers.
 - (v) Task-work or daily labour throughout, with or without relief to dependants, but without a Sunday wage, the option being given to all tasked workers to earn a higher wage than that pertaining to their class on performance of more than the full task.
 - (vi) Task-work or daily labour in which no one can earn more than the normal wage of his class and in which all dependants are relieved and a Sunday wage is given.
- It may be contemplated that as distress deepens the system will gradually change from (i) or (ii) to (v) or (vi), and that as prospects improve and the demand for relief is less keen and universal a reversion will be gradually made in the reverse order.
- (l) The relief of dependants should depend on the degree of distress, and should be given only on the recommendation of the Collector or Deputy Commissioner. When relief is necessary it should, whenever possible, be given by means of kitchens, the children receiving a cooked ration, and adults either a cooked or dry grain ration. The systematic management of these kitchens will be part of the duty of the Public Works Department.

- (m) On all large works a special civil officer to be appointed, who shall usually be nominated by the Civil Department, but whose services should be at the disposal of the Public Works Department. When there is a resident Assistant Engineer or Upper Subordinate in charge of a work, the special civil officer will be placed under his orders as assistant officer in charge, but otherwise he will be the officer in charge, and subordinate to the sub-divisional officer in whose charge the work lies. The duties of the officer or assistant officer in charge will be generally as described in paragraph 33 of this Report.
- (n) Payments of daily labourers may be made daily, or at longer intervals, as may be decided by Local Governments, but the adoption of the system of full pice wages and payments through the medium of the gang muharrirs and mates should be permitted only when payments are made daily. Piece-workers may be paid daily, or at longer intervals, as may be directed by the Superintending Engineer.
- (o) The Collector or Deputy Commissioner should be furnished with a daily report of the number of men, women and children on the works and in receipt of relief as dependants, and other information that may be required for the weekly returns of relief operations, but the periodical returns showing expenditure incurred, value of work done, and other working statistics should be rendered by the Executive to the Superintending Engineer, by whom copies or abstracts would be forwarded to the Commissioner for inclusion in the periodical returns required by the Local Government or the Government of India. Suggestions as to the form of these returns have been made in Appendix II. to this Report.
- (p) A committee of experts should be appointed to consider the more general question of forms of account for relief works, and the manner of rendering and auditing them, with a view to greater simplicity and uniformity, and an earlier return of properly audited figures relating to all expenditure on famine relief works incurred in the Public Works Department.

42. Some of these proposals will involve a few modifications in the existing Famine Codes, but they will not be very great, nor will they be inconsistent with the recommendations of the Famine Commissioners. If, at the end of this enquiry, I am unable to recommend more radical alterations, the fact may be regarded as one indication of the value of the Codes, which cannot be overrated. Whatever deviations may have been found necessary in some provinces from the strict letter of these Codes, or whatever difficulties or friction may have been occasionally caused by some of their provisions, it is impossible to deny their great usefulness during the recent famine as a guide to all officers engaged in relief operations and as a means of ensuring a fair uniformity of system and standards in the management of relief works. They have been severely tested, and have stood the strain so well that, although many amendments are doubtless necessary, some diffidence must be felt in proposing them, especially by one who can claim no personal experience in the executive control of famine relief operations.

43. In conclusion I must express my obligations to all the Civil and Public Works officers that I met during my tour for the hospitality and assistance offered to me. On the part of all the greatest readiness was manifested to anticipate my desires for information and to give me every opportunity of visiting as many works as possible, though the arrangements for my journeys must have often caused a great deal of trouble and inconvenience.

In addition to this personal acknowledgment, I desire also to allude to the splendid work that has been done in this famine campaign, not only by these officers, but by others whom I had not an opportunity of meeting. It is not within my duty, nor is it indeed within my power, to appraise the services of individuals, but as one who has had the privilege of witnessing relief operations in almost all parts of India at a time when distress was near the maximum, and during the hottest season of the year, I cannot conclude this Report without bearing testimony to the zeal and devotion of the officers in all Departments who have been conducting them. In addition to constant fatigue and exposure, the work of these officers has been of a most arduous and anxious kind, for not only the economical expenditure of the resources of Government, but also the health and lives of thousands, have depended on their energy, vigilance and ubiquity, while the new difficulties constantly presenting themselves have demanded great resourcefulness, judgment and tact. Famine officers in the discharge of their duties must often appear stern and hard-hearted, but the ready cheerfulness with which their work has been everywhere carried on must be mainly attributed to a spirit of compassion of which this was the only permissible manifestation. I have felt, while in every province, that whatever success may have attended the relief operations, the most important factor has been the ability, sympathy and devotion of the officers who have been in charge of them, and whatever may be the forms or provisions of the revised Famine Codes, it is on the same high personal qualification that principal reliance must be placed in future.

1st October 1897.

T. HIGHAM.

APPENDIX I. TO REPORT ON MANAGEMENT OF RELIEF WORKS.

Note on the standard task for an average famine carrier.

1. In paragraph 10 of the Report to which this note is an Appendix, it is shown that one of the most important problems in the organization of relief works is the determination of the average carrying task that may be legitimately expected from an ordinary famine carrier who receives only the D minimum worker's wage. It is unnecessary to consider here the digger's task, which varies according to the nature of the soil, from 200 cubic feet in Bengal to 40 cubic feet or less in the Deccan. The problem is to determine for different leads and lifts the minimum complement of carriers required for a company of diggers who are set a full task of T cubic feet per diem. Circumstances may still often render it unavoidable to employ more than this minimum number, and to whatever extent this may be the case the carriers will be lightly tasked. The determination of the minimum will, however, give a standard by which the lightness of the task will be judged, and if it is ever necessary to employ less than the minimum complement, that is, to increase the task above the standard, the carriers will be fairly entitled to something more than a minimum wage.

2. In many of the Codes, *e.g.*, that of Bombay, tables of standard tasks for carriers have been worked out for males and females of the three classes A, B and C and for working children, but in them certain relations are assumed between the task that can be done by a man, a woman and a child, or by a member of one class and a member of another class, which are at least in some cases open to question, and although the task proposed may, in particular cases, be fairly correct, it does not follow that the derived tasks are correct, nor is it clear what task should be allowed for the average on famine works. Another objection to most of the tables is that they are based on the assumption that the task will vary inversely as the horizontal lead when the lifts are the same. It is, however, much easier for a woman to carry a basket on her head for say a mile, and return with it empty, than to make 53 trips of 100 feet each and back with the same basket, taking it full from the digger in each case and returning to him with it empty. In any line of carriers the first in the line who takes the basket from the digger carries it a much shorter lead than the others when there is no lift, and it is clear that some allowance has to be made for the initial effort. The first carrier frequently has to assist in filling the basket, or loses time waiting until it is filled by the digger. She has then to lift it to her head through a height of over five feet, but in this is generally assisted by the digger, and after carefully poising it has in most cases to step out of the pit, and whether (as in the case of very short leads) she be the only carrier, or the first in a long line, she usually has to take the lead through a lift of at least 3 feet in addition the horizontal lead.

3. We may thus consider the *reduced lead* upon which a carrier's task must be based to consist of three factors—the initial effort, the horizontal lead and the vertical lift; and if we can express the first and third of these factors in terms of the second, the sum of the three will represent the *reduced lead*. As regards the initial effort I consider that it may fairly be taken as equivalent to 72 feet of horizontal lead, that is to say, that the carrier who takes the basket from the digger and carries it to a distance of 28 feet will be just able to serve the second carrier who may be supposed to carry the basket through a horizontal lead of 100 feet. It must be added that this initial effort must be held to include a vertical lift of three feet, which may be taken as a minimum lift in almost all forms of earthwork. The carrier has usually to step out of a pit one or two feet in depth, and the earth when thrown down will stand at a level of one or two feet above the natural surface. The first in a line of carriers in almost all cases overcomes the first three feet of the vertical lift, as she transfers the basket from her own head to that of the second carrier at a level from which it can be thrown down to a level of at least three feet above the horizontal plane from which the earth was taken.

4. As regards the conversion of vertical lift into horizontal lead, there is some difference of opinion and practice. In the standard task-table, of the Bombay Famine Code, 5 feet of lift are taken as the equivalent of 100 feet of horizontal lead, or 1 in 20. In some experiments with able-bodied labour made many years ago on the Sirhind Canal, it was concluded that 1 foot of lift was equivalent to 6 feet only of horizontal lead. In the Bengal rules 3 feet of lift are taken as equivalent to 50 feet horizontal lead, which gives a proportion of 1 to 16.6 feet. Professor Rankine states that in wheelbarrow work 1 foot of lift may be taken as equivalent of 6 feet horizontal lead, but for basket work no doubt the equivalent in horizontal work is greater. The extra rates paid for lift and lead in Northern India are usually 8 annas per chain of 100 feet horizontal lead and 1 anna per foot of lift, which is therefore the equivalent of 12½ feet of horizontal lead. On the whole I think that a ratio of 1 to 12 may be accepted as that most generally applicable, and it accords very well with such observations as I have been able to make on relief works.

5. The reduced lead on any work may therefore be expressed symbolically by the following formula:—

Let R = Reduced lead in feet.

H = Horizontal " " "

V = Vertical lift " " "

Then $R = 72 + H + 12(V-3) = 36 + H + 12V$.

And if T = Task of diggers in cubic feet.

C = Task of carriers in cubic feet carried over lineal feet.

Then $C = T \cdot R$.

And if c = Task of an ordinary famine carrier.

$\frac{T \cdot R}{c}$ = Number of carriers required for a digger's task T to be carried over a reduced lead R.

low. The initial tasks prescribed for class A labourers in the Bombay, Central Provinces and Upper Burma table are also low, as pointed out in paragraph 17 of the Bombay notes.

11. The standard task proposed of 10,000 cubic feet over lineal feet may now be considered with other formulæ or rules, and to certain observations recorded in my inspection notes :—

- (a) The formula proposed in a Resolution by the Government of Bengal, dated 5th October 1892, which has been inserted in almost all the Provincial Codes, assumes that the initial effort is equivalent to an additional lead of 50 feet ; but it is stated that the formula is a little too liberal when the lead is long, so that it may be inferred that the allowance for initial effort is not quite as much as it should be, and that 72 feet allowed in my formula will be more appropriate. The assumption is also made that a man can carry 125 cubic feet of soil for 100 cubic feet when there is no initial effort, and that a woman can carry a little less than a man. The task in cubic feet over lineal feet for a man is thus 12.500.

If 50 feet be allowed for initial effort, the task for a woman, according to the examples cited in the Resolution, will be 10,000.

- (b) In the note by the Chief Engineer of Bengal, dated 15th March, 1897, on the manner of laying out tanks for famine relief works, it is stated that under normal conditions a carrier will remove 125 cubic feet a day for a lead of 100 cubic feet and lift of 3 feet, but that famine carriers will not do more than five-eighths of such a task, or 75 cubic feet. This, however, is for the initial chain, and involves the initial effort. If we add 72 feet for this to the lead, the real task done is $76 \times 172 = 13,072$.

In paragraph 7 of the same note it is laid down that in road-work three carriers are required for every 200 cubic feet carried over a lead usually under 50 feet, with a lift under 6 feet. For a 50 feet lead and 6 feet lift the reduced lead, according to the formula proposed, would be 158 lineal feet, and the work done by three carriers would be $158 \times 200 = 31,600$, or 10,533 per carrier. The carrier's task is generally low on road-works.

In paragraph 3 of the same note it is said that two extra carriers should be allowed in tank work for the second and successive lines of pits, that is, for every additional 25 feet of lead, the task of the diggers being 800 cubic feet. Here we have not to consider the initial effort. The task of the additional carriers is $\frac{800 \times 25}{2} = 10,000$, but it is remarked that this is somewhat too low.

In paragraph 4 of the same note it is directed that for every successive horizontal layer 2 feet in depth, two extra carriers may be allowed for the task of 800 cubic feet. The extra depth of 2 feet in digging will probably involve an extra height of 1.5 feet in the spoil bank, so that the extra mean lift will be 3.5 feet, and for this the same number of extra carriers is allowed as for 25 feet extra horizontal lead, that is, 1 foot of lift is taken as equal to only 7 feet of horizontal lead instead of 12 feet allowed in the proposed formula, 16.6 feet in Bengal piece-work rules, and 20 feet in most of the standard task-tables. If we take the ratio as 1 to 12 as in the proposed formula, the carrier's task becomes $\frac{800 \times 3.5 \times 12}{2} = 16,800$ which is very high.

The rules for extra carriers on tank work have been framed with a view to simplicity and appear to be rather too liberal for extra horizontal lead and too hard for extra lift, but taking both together it will be found that the carrier's task varies in different pits and for different lifts from 11,000 to 13,000, and that 12,000 may be taken as the average contemplated in Mr. Glass's rules.

- (c) In paragraph 16 of my notes on relief works in North-Western Provinces it is shown that on road-work, with a lead not exceeding 50 feet, two carriers are allowed for a full digger's task of 100 cubic feet, and if the lift be taken at 5 feet, the carrier's task according to the formula is $\frac{100 \times (36 + 50 + 60)}{2} = 7,300$ only, while for a maximum digger's task of 125 cubic feet, the carrier's task is but 9,125. The carriers in the North-Western Provinces are, however, generally very lightly tasked, especially on road-work.

- (d) On the Amipur Nullah embankment referred to in paragraph 25 of the same notes it may be assumed, for the reasons given, that the 1,736 diggers spent half their time in carrying. The carriers consisted, therefore, of :—

868 diggers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Carrier units.	= 1,302
2,006 other men	...	...	...	...	...	...	...		= 2,006
4,151 women	...	...	...	...	...	...	...		= 4,151
1,287	...	...	...	...	...	...	...		= 965
									8,424

I have taken each digger as equal to $1\frac{1}{2}$ carrier units and each child as $\frac{1}{2}$ of a unit. Small children should count only as half a unit, but on this work the proportion of small

children was very low. The quantity of earth removed over the lead of 900 feet and lift of 3 feet was 104,160, and the average task per carrier unit was therefore $\frac{104,160 \times 972}{8,424} = 12,019$.

These were all piece-workers, and were probably doing their best. This example is an interesting one, as there was a long lead, but practically no lift.

- (e) Two examples of high lifts are given in paragraphs 12 and 13 of my notes on the relief works in Bengal. In the former the task of the carriers, according to the proposed formula, was $\frac{600 \times (36 + 200 + 240)}{22} = 12,982$, and in the latter $\frac{200 \times (36 + 140 + 240)}{7} = 11,886$. Both these cases were task-work on the
- Blackwood system, or practically piece-work.

- (f) In paragraph 19 of the same notes it is shown that 18,302,704 cubic feet of earth-work were carried out by 392,354 workers, of whom it is assumed that 30 per cent. were diggers, so that the number of carriers may be taken as 274,648, and the task per carrier will have been $\frac{18,302,704 \times (36 + 68 + 120)}{274,648} = 14,927$.

The digger's task worked out in this case to 155 cubic feet, which is not very high, and it is possible that some of the diggers assisted in carrying, while the average lift of 10 feet has probably not been calculated very accurately, and may have been somewhat over-estimated. A high duty might, however, be expected on this canal, which was piece-work.

- (g) In Madras I found that carrying tasks for leads of over a furlong were generally fixed on the assumption that a woman could carry a basket containing 0.4 cubic feet of earth a distance of 5 miles per diem, returning with the empty basket, and that a child could carry a basket containing 0.2 cubic feet the same distance. The woman's task would therefore be equivalent to 10,560, if no allowance be made for initial effort. With short and numerous trips, making up to 5 miles, the task done would be heavier than this, as allowance would have to be made for the initial effort. In practice, however, the tasks in Madras were generally much less than this owing to the excessive number of carriers.
- (h) In paragraph 12 of the Bombay notes it is shown that women carriers were required to carry 20 seers, or $\frac{1}{2}$ a cubic foot of road-metalling 6 miles daily, returning with the empty basket, and in paragraph 6 of the Central Provinces notes the task for carrying kankur long distances is stated to have been 3 cubic feet, divided by the distance in miles. In both these cases, therefore, 1 cubic foot is carried 3 miles, and disregarding initial effort for these long leads the measure of the task is 15,840.
- (i) From a note by the Chief Engineer, Irrigation Works, Punjab, on relief works in that province, it appears that for a horizontal lead of about 65 feet the carrier's task was 75, 50, and 40 cubic feet for mean lifts of 3, 9, and 16 feet respectively, and the measures of these tasks are 10,275, 10,250, and 11,720.
- (j) On the Jhelum Canal in the Punjab three carriers were required to take 160 cubic feet over an average horizontal lead of 200 feet and a lift of 4 feet, the measure of the task, according to the proposed formula, being $\frac{160 \times (200 + 36 + 48)}{3} = 15,147$. An extra carrier was allowed for every additional 8 feet of lift, the measure of whose task would be $160 \times 8 \times 12 = 15,360$. These tasks are high, but they were set for labourers receiving the A class wage.

12. A consideration of all these instances in different provinces will, I think, be found to justify the assumption that 10,000 may be taken as the measure of the task for an average carrier's unit, and 12,500 of the task entitling to an extra wage. An able-bodied carrier receiving the wage of a digger should be required to perform a task of 15,000, while the ordinary task for a child would be 5,000.

13. It is not obligatory, however, to adopt these constants in all cases. In some provinces or districts the condition of the people may be such as to justify the adoption of a lower standard, and the task for the average carrier unit may be taken as 9,000 or 8,000, the tasks for child units or for able-bodied men employed as carriers being proportionally reduced. On the other hand there may be more provinces in which the standard may be fixed as high as 12,000. If the formula for the reduction of lead is accepted, the value of *c*, or the measure of the task for the average carrier unit, may be fixed at discretion. The formula and constants proposed are those which appear to me generally suitable for relief works, but are only put forward tentatively for the consideration of those who have great or more extended experience in famine earthwork. What I am most desirous of urging is the necessity for establishing some standard whereby it may be readily seen whether famine carriers are being over or undertasked. Overtasking can always be prevented by taking off some of the diggers and making them carry. Undertasking will be often unavoidable when the proportion of carriers is excessive, but it is nevertheless desirable that there should be some standard by which the degree of undertasking can be measured and undue laxity prevented.

14. Let it be supposed that there are 10 diggers in a pit, whose normal or full task is 1,000 cubic feet per diem, *i.e.*, 100 cubic feet per man, and that 40 carriers are required to carry this away, for the given lead and lift, each carrier performing a task measured by 10,000. If the diggers do a maximum task (25 per cent. in excess of full task), or 1,250 cubic feet, they will be entitled to an extra wage, but this will involve on the part of each carrier a task of which the measure would be 12,500 and each carrier would also be entitled to the extra wage. If, however, owing to excess of carriers it were necessary to put 50 instead of 40 into the pit, the measure of the carrier's full task would be 8,000 only, and if the diggers did a maximum task of 1,250 cubic feet, the carrier's task would still only measure 10,000, so that the diggers only would be entitled to an extra wage. If, however, the number of carriers were less than 50, the task would exceed 10,000 when the diggers did 1,250 cubic feet, though it would not amount to 12,500 as long as the number of carriers exceeded 40. The extra wage should therefore be allowed for some number intermediate between 40 and 50. Let us fix this at 44, or 10 per cent. above the normal number. When the diggers perform a maximum task, the carriers will do a task of $\frac{40}{44} \times 12,500 = 11,364$ or 13.64 per cent. more than the standard task. If this may be considered as entitling them to an extra wage, the following rule may be adopted in deciding whether an extra wage may be allowed to carriers when the diggers do 25 per cent. more than the full task :—

“When the number of carriers on a work does not exceed the number required for the diggers, according to standard task-tables, by more than 10 per cent., carriers and diggers should alike receive an extra wage when the diggers perform a maximum task. When the number exceeds 10 per cent. the diggers only shall be paid an extra wage.”

If the gang registers and work abstracts are properly maintained, it will never be difficult to ascertain when the number of carriers on a work exceeds the number required by over 10 per cent.

If there is no Sunday wage, the carriers might, however, be allowed an extra wage whenever the diggers perform a maximum task.

2nd October 1897.

T. HIGHAM.

APPENDIX II. TO REPORT ON MANAGEMENT OF FAMINE RELIEF WORKS.

Note on Initial and Periodical Returns relating to Famine Relief Works.

1. The initial field accounts and derived periodical returns relating to Famine Relief Works which are in use in different provinces differ very much, both in form and in regard to the nature and extent of the information which they are intended to convey, but all, including even those which are the most detailed and elaborate, are open to the following objections :—

- (i.) The returns derived from the initial field accounts do not show the extent to which the relief workers are fined, or the difference between the amounts actually paid to them and those to which they are normally entitled under the Famine Code rules in force.
- (ii.) The periodical returns do not compare the expenditure incurred on wages to relief workers, and on other items, with the value of the normal rates of the work done during the period under reference.
- (iii.) Nor do they show the average task required on the principal forms of works and, in comparison with this, the tasks actually performed.
- (iv.) The forms in use do not provide for showing separately the results of piece-work and task-work.
- (v.) All returns exhibit only the figures for the period, day, week, or month to which they relate, and there is no record of up-to-date figures.
- (vi.) The returns for one province are not comparable with those of another, owing to the great differences of form and classification, and even in the same province returns for different districts are in regard to many points not comparable, owing to differences in the grain rates, or the character of the works, *e.g.*, the outturn of earthwork per male unit, without reference to the hardness of the soil or the conditions of lift and lead.

2. The great variety of forms is in a great measure due to the variety in the systems of classifying relief workers, and of fixing their tasks. If the suggestions in regard to these matters made in the Report to which this note is an appendix are accepted, it will be possible to introduce more uniform and simpler forms of returns to which the foregoing objections will not apply. The following proposals to

Simpler and more uniform returns will be possible under a simpler system of initial classification.

this end are made, partly for the purpose of more fully illustrating the advantages of the system of classification proposed in the Report, and partly as a starting-point in the future consideration of the general question of the returns and accounts relating to relief works.

3. In most provinces some form of progress report or famine return is prepared weekly, and is either recorded in the district or divisional offices, or is published in a more or less condensed form at weekly, fortnightly

or monthly intervals in the local Government Gazette. In Bengal these returns were compiled weekly, and in addition separate sets of returns were submitted at ten-day intervals to the Examiner for accounts purposes. The length of the period to be embraced in periodical returns is a matter for the discretion of the Local Government, but it is at least advisable that the periods adopted for statistical and accounts purposes should be synchronous. The forms proposed in this note are intended to be made out half-monthly, that is, for the former 15 and latter 15 or 16 days of a month of 30 or 31 days, and it is thought that this will be found more convenient than any other period. But there will be no difficulty whatever in using the forms for periods of a week, 10 days, a fortnight, or a month, as may be deemed desirable. It should be noted, however, that the periodical returns now under consideration are not intended to supersede the brief weekly returns which are now required by the Government of India, showing for each district the numbers on the last day of the week of workers and dependants and recipients of other forms of gratuitous relief without regard to sex, age or class.

The series of statistical returns.

4. There are five forms of return to be considered, *viz.* :—

- (1) The initial returns, including the Gang Register, Muster Roll and Measurement Book.
- (2) The Daily Reports, or abstracts of the Gang Registers, &c.
- (3) The Works Abstract or Day Book maintained on each work by the officer-in-charge.
- (4) The Half-monthly Progress Report, prepared from the work abstracts in the Sub-divisional or Divisional Office.
- (5) The Final Return, or abstract of the figures given in the Progress Reports, for each Civil District, or, if thought necessary, for each sub-division of a district.

The last is the only return that would usually be published in the local Government Gazettes.

Each of the last four of these returns will be an abstract of the return immediately preceding and all will be essentially in the same form. The forms appended are those suggested for the Works Abstract or medial return of the series, and will be first described, the few modifications necessary in the initial and derived forms being explained subsequently.

5. The Works Abstract will consist of three parts, but the appended forms are for Parts I. and II. only. Part III., which will be on the

The Works Abstract.

reverse of the form, is merely required for the exhibition of the progress, "last reported,"

"during month," and "to end of the month," under all the work sub-heads of the estimate, and will be in the form usually adopted for Daybooks or Work Abstracts.

Parts I. and II. have been drawn up on the supposition that piece-work and task-work are both in progress on the same work, though this will not be very commonly the case. When there is no piece-work, columns 9 and 12 of Part I. and columns 2 to 13 of Part II. may be altogether omitted, and the form will be greatly simplified. When there is no daily labour but all are piece-workers (which will perhaps seldom however be the case) columns 6 to 11 of Part I., and columns 14 to 25 of Part II. will not be required. In practice, therefore, the Works Abstracts may often be in a much simpler form than proposed, but the two derived returns, the Progress Report and the Final Return, will very often include piece-workers and daily labourers, and it is convenient, therefore, to show the Works Abstract in a form that will be suitable for these derived returns.

6. Part I. of the Works Abstract will contain an abstract of the daily reports for every day in the half-month, each column being then totalled to show the totals for the half-month.

Part I. of Works Abstract.

This Part gives all necessary details of the attendance and classification of the workers, the amounts of the wages to which they are entitled at the prescribed normal rates, the amounts earned, and those actually paid. A comparison of the amounts entered in columns 10 and 10 (a) will show at a glance to what extent deductions have been made from the normal wage. Payments for piece-work and on account of other items are shown separately (column 13 may be sub-divided at pleasure), and the total daily payments on all accounts, except Relief of Dependents, are shown in column 14. The total in this column at end of the half-month is compared with the total value of work of all kinds done by the relief labourers, whether on piece or task-work, during the same period, as worked out from the details of progress in Part III. of the Works Abstract. In the next column the figure of merit for the half-month, or percentage on the total expenditure

of the value of work done, is recorded. This in itself will not always be an index of the efficiency of the work, as in particular months the special or miscellaneous charges may be very heavy, but the forms permit the up-to-date percentage being also exhibited, and as miscellaneous charges are shown separately they can be always allowed for. The last four columns of this Part show the number of dependants and the amount paid on their account. This amount will not be included in the total expenditure shown in column 14, as many officers consider that gratuitous relief should never appear as a charge against the work. It may be said on the other hand that, as daily wages are often fixed with reference to the consideration that dependants will receive gratuitous relief, and as dependants are not usually relieved when piece-workers are employed, the cost of gratuitous relief may fairly be charged against the work. Where gratuitous relief is given it forms a considerable but very fluctuating proportion of the total expenditure, over which, however, the officer-in-charge has very little control, and on these grounds I think it better that it should not be included in the works expenditure shown in column 14. As long as the cost of such relief is shown separately, as in the form proposed, it is not of much importance whether it is included or excluded from the total in column 14, but the practice should be uniform in all provinces.

The form will show the totals for the half-month for each column. Some additions will probably have to be made in the sub-divisional or divisional office under columns 13 and 14, and when this has been done the form can be completed by entering from the last preceding Works Abstract the totals to end of previous half-month, and then showing for each column the totals from commencement to end of the half-month, or up to date.

7. It may be said that Part I. will not give information as to the actual cost of the work

Part II. of Works Abstract.

in sufficient detail, especially as the payments to daily labourers will include the wages of many who have not been tasked. Its usefulness as a general abstract of the operations for the period embraced would be marred however by loading it with further details, and it is on this account that Part II. is proposed which will deal with the more important working statistics. Columns 2 to 7 relate to piece-workers of all kinds. In columns 2, 3 and 4 the total number of men, women, and children employed are shown, as it is very necessary to keep a distinct record of the proportions which men bear to women and children on piece-work. The corresponding number of male units, calculated as directed in the notes on the form, will be entered in column 5. The amounts to be entered in column 6 will be identical with those in column 12 of Part I., so that the average earning of the piece-workers per male unit may be shown in column 7.

When piece-work is in force it will probably assume various forms, on many of which very few workers will be employed. As full details cannot be maintained for each kind of piece-work all piece-workers will be accounted for together in columns 2 to 7. On all relief works, however, the great majority of the relief workers, whether paid by the day or by the piece, are employed either on earthwork or on road-metalling, and working statistics must be maintained for these if it is desired to test the efficiency of the management. As regards piece-workers the information to be given in columns 8 to 13 of Part II. is all that is required, and require no explanation. Earthwork by daily labour will be accounted for in columns 14 to 19. Although it has long been recognised that earthwork tasks must be fixed, in the first place, with reference to the capacity of the diggers, I have seen no forms, except in some cases the gang registers, in which a record has been maintained of the work of the diggers. In column 14, however, the number of digger units employed daily will be shown, the aggregate task set for this number will be entered in column 15, and the work done, as measured, in column 16. A comparison of column 15 with column 16 will thus show at a glance to what extent the work of the diggers has fallen short of or exceeded the amount prescribed as a full task, however much this amount may differ, according to hardness of soil or for other reasons, in different gangs. Similarly as regards carriers; the number of units required for the work to be done by the diggers, as taken from tables based upon the formula and constants proposed in Appendix I. will be entered in column 17, and a comparison with the number of units actually employed, as shown in column 18, will indicate at a glance whether carriers are in excess or are being too heavily worked. From these columns alone the efficiency of the task-work can be ascertained, but as most officers like to compare the wages actually paid to task-workers in working days with the amount of work done, I have added column 19 for this purpose. The work done is shown in column 16, but the total of this column should be corrected at the end of the half month when necessary so as to accord with final measurements as reported in Part III.

Columns 20 to 21 will give necessary details of road-metalling task-work. Here the main point to be considered is the work of the breakers, of which details may be given in columns 20 to 22 similar to those relating to the work of diggers in columns 14 to 16. In addition to the breakers there will be a number of complementary workers, whose proportion to the breakers must be fixed for each work according to circumstances by the Sub-divisional Officer, and a comparison of column 24 with column 23 will show at all times whether this number is being exceeded, that is, whether the complementary workers are being undertasked. The actual cost of the finished outturn (column 22) will be shown in column 25.

All the columns in Part II. will, like those in Part I., be totalled at the end of the half-month, and in the sub-divisional office the totals to end of previous half-month will be added, so as to show on the Works Abstract up to date totals to end of the period embraced, as well as those for the period itself.

8. We may now consider the initial field accounts, the Gang Register and Muster Roll

Gang Register and Muster Roll.

The measurement book, which is as important as either, may be in any convenient form, but as the daily outturn of each gang is posted into the gang register from the measurement book the latter requires no further consideration here. The gang register may be kept in a separate book, or it may form an outer cover to the muster roll, but from these two records, in whatever form maintained, will be derived the figures required for columns 2 to 12 and 16 to 19 or 20 of Part I., and all columns in Part II., though there will, of course, be separate gang registers for piece and task-workers. The task-work gang registers will in the case of earthwork also show for each gang the lead, lift, and reduced lead, from which the number of carrier units required will be calculated for purpose of column 17 of Part II.

9. The Daily Report will be a daily abstract of all the gang registers and muster rolls.

Daily Reports.

It will be convenient to use exactly the same form as proposed for the works abstract, which will be posted from the daily reports. Each muharrir may submit a *goshwara* or abstract in this form of the registers of his own gangs, the totals of these abstracts being worked out in the works office for posting in the works abstract, or a muharrir may be sent round to post the abstract of each gang register into a book, the totals of which will be posted into the works abstract. On receipt of the daily report the officer in charge should particularly scrutinise the entries for each gang under columns 10 and 10a, the differences between which will indicate the amount of the fines or deductions, or of the extra wages earned by doing more than full tasks, so that any cases in which the differences are abnormal may be promptly enquired into. Inspecting Officers will also of course pay much attention to this point.

10. After the Works Abstracts have been completed in the Sub-divisional or Divisional

District Progress Reports.

Office the District Progress Report can be prepared. This will be in two parts of identically the same form as Parts I. and II. of the Works Abstract, except that column 1 in both parts will be headed "Name of work" instead of "Day of the month" and column 10 (a) in Part I. may be omitted, as in forms derived from the works abstract it is only necessary to consider wages paid, which in the long run are practically identical with wages payable. In this and the final returns annas and pie may also be omitted from the money columns. In column 1 will be entered in succession the name of each relief work in progress in the district during the half-month, and opposite it, on the same line, the totals for half-month of each column, as shown in the works abstract. Below the last work will then be entered in each column the totals for the half-month for the whole district. Below this again will be entered the "Totals to end of previous half-month" for the district as reported in the previous Progress Report, and below this the district totals for each column to the end of the half-month under consideration.

The form as thus prepared will show under each part the figures relating to each work for the half-month and the up-to-date figures for all works, *i.e.*, for the district. It will not show the up-to-date figures for each work, though it can, of course, be prepared so as to do so if considered necessary. But the Divisional officer, who is most interested, will have the up-to-date figures for each work in the Work Register concerned, which will be filed in his office, and the more important entries will be posted in due course into his register of works.

11. Assuming that the responsibility for the management of relief works under the

Abstracts of the half-monthly Progress Reports.

Public Works Department lies solely with that Department, the Divisional officer will submit his half-monthly Progress Report to the Superintendent Engineer, by whom abstracts of the same for each district (or copies if desired) will be forwarded to the Commissioner. The abstract would be in the same form as the half-monthly Progress Reports, with the exception that the heading for column 1 in each part would be "Civil Districts" instead of "Name of work." Each part would then be divided into two sections. The first or upper section would be headed as "Operations for the half-month," and a line would be allotted for each district, upon which the column or totals for the half-month would be entered as given in the half-monthly Progress Report, the totals for all districts being shown at the bottom. The second or lower section in each Part would show "Operation to end of the half-month," a separate line being again allotted to each district, upon which would be entered the column or up-to-date totals, at the foot of the half-monthly Progress Reports.

12. The abstract thus prepared would be the Final Return for a Civil Division if all

Returns for works carried out by Civil officers.

works were conducted under the Public Works Agency, but in some districts there will probably be a few works under the management of civil officers. The initial accounts for such works should be kept as nearly as possible in the manner proposed for works under the Public Works Department, but as the civil works will generally be comparatively small and unimportant, it will probably not be thought necessary to keep up Part II. in the daily report or other derived returns. Part I. should, however, be maintained, and at the end of the half-month the Collector or Deputy Commissioner would forward a half-monthly progress report in this form to the Commissioner for incorporation in the final return.

13. The final return as prepared by the Commissioner would therefore require for its

The final half-monthly returns.

Part I. two lines for each district, in both the first and second sections. On one line would be entered the appropriate totals for works under Public Works Agency, and on the second those for works under Civil Agency, but it will hardly be necessary to total these separately for each district, though the grand totals for the Civil Division at the bottom of each section may be shown on three lines, one for works under Public Works Department, the second for works under Civil Agency, and the third for the grand total for works of all kinds.

Part II. would comprise only works under Public Works Department, and would remain in the form of the abstract received from the Superintending Engineer.

14. These Final Returns for each Civil Division might be published in the local Government Gazette, but if relief works have been started in more than one Civil Division, there should be an abstract at the end of both parts

Final returns for the province.

showing the aggregate totals for the province. It may be observed that the published provincial returns at present show only the figures for each district separately for the period to which they relate, and not the total operations of the province for that period and up to date, which is however desirable.

15. I have hitherto proposed that the district should be the unit for the final returns,

Sub-division of the district as a unit for returns.

but if desired a sub-division of a district or the tahsil may be taken as the unit. The half-monthly progress reports can be prepared as easily for tahsils as for districts, but the final returns will be longer.

16. In the Bengal returns it is the custom to reduce the numbers of relief workers to

Reduction of daily labourers to the male unit.

male units. The total amount paid as wages divided by the number of male units is then taken as the average wage of the male unit, and the quantity of earthwork done, divided by the same number, is the outturn of work per male unit. In these proposals I have discarded the male unit, except for the returns relating to piece-work, for several reasons. In the first place the process of reduction, however simple it may be, involves a good deal of clerical labour when it has to be constantly repeated. The actual practice followed in making this reduction is, however, neither uniform nor correct, and is sometimes very incorrect. It is unnecessary to explain this at length, because even if we could reduce all labourers to a male unit by some system which was uniform, simple, and correct, we could not make very useful deductions. The average wage per male unit, who would have to be a male of one particular class, would no doubt be an indication of the average wage of a unit of any sex or class, but for all purposes of comparison we must know in every case what the wage basis or selling rate of grain has been, and this, which varies in different districts and often in the same districts at different times, is not shown in the returns, and cannot be shown without greatly complicating them, while the further reduction to a common wage basis would be very troublesome. The average wage of any class of daily labourer can be far more readily ascertained, either for the gang, work, district or province, by observing the ratio of column 10 (a) or column 11 of Part I. of the proposed forms to column 10. The actual wage will have been in this ratio to the normal or code wage of the class, and it is unnecessary to consider at all the wage basis.

So with regard to the outturn of work per male unit. Nothing can be more misleading than the outturn of work per male unit obtained by adding together the quantities of earthwork on different works and dividing the total by the number of male units. For the quantities of work are not like quantities, owing to differences both in the quality of the soil and in the lift and lead, and without a knowledge of these conditions in each case a statement that the average task per male unit or per worker unit was 30 cubic feet per diem conveys no meaning at all. Columns 14 to 16 of Part II. will, however, show, also for the gang, the work, the district, or the province, what the average task for each digger has been in relation to the normal task due from him, and columns 17 to 19 show the same for the carriers, or, what is the same thing, the number of carriers employed to the number normally required for the work to be done.

For piece-work it is, however, necessary to consider the male unit, because there is no classification of piece-workers, nor can a separate account be kept of diggers and carriers. For the consideration of piece-work statistics we must therefore fix some conventional ratios for the comparative efficiency of men, women and children as wage-earning units. Having regard to the conditions of those who will ordinarily come on piece-work, I would propose the ratios of 3, 2 and 1, that is, I would assume that a man could earn half as much again as a woman and three times as much as a working child under 12 years of age. The wage for a piece-worker male unit might then be fairly compared with that earned by an ordinary digger, or that prescribed for a unit of class Y according to the new classification proposed in the report.

17. The forms as now proposed will work upwards from the gang to the province, and

All returns will be comparable irrespective of the unit of area or difference of conditions.

a main object that has been kept in view is that the district, or even the provincial, totals shall be as fairly comparable *inter se* as those for two neighbouring gangs on the same work. As regards the wage to daily labourers, the figures will show in all cases what proportion the

average bears to the average contemplated under the Code rules for the time being in force, without reference to the wage absolutely paid or the current price of grain. The total payments, whether on wages only or on all accounts, will be comparable with the actual value of the work done, without reference to the total quantity of earthwork, &c., done, under very dissimilar conditions. As regards earthwork under task-work the total quantities will indeed be shown irrespective of these conditions, but it will not be compared with the number of working or male units employed, but with the quantities that ought to have been done under the standard task-tables in force by the number of diggers employed, and it will at the same time be seen whether the complement of carriers has been excessive or not.

So too for earthwork by the piece; the returns will show the total quantity done under varying conditions of lead and lift by a given number of male units, but this will be considered with the amount paid for the same, or with the average rate per 1,000 cubic feet, which will sufficiently indicate the average character of the work as well as the quantity executed by the male unit. All these comparisons will therefore be between like and like, and in addition they can be made, not only for the period embraced in particular returns, but also on the transactions from the commencement and up to date. It is only by means of this double comparison that progress or retrogression in efficiency can be properly detected.

18. It is believed that the forms now proposed will give a maximum of information and a minimum of labour, and that in the form in

Concluding remarks.

which it can be most readily utilised. They do not involve any more entries in the initial or gang registers than are now regularly made on almost all works, except that of the normal number of carriers required. Their subsequent compilation will involve less labour than is now expended in almost all provinces on the returns at present maintained, though they will contain a great deal more information, and will be free from all the objections which may be raised against those returns. The great experience of many famine officers will no doubt enable them to suggest some modifications and improvements; but the form of statistical returns is so intimately connected with the general question of the management of relief works that I have thought it desirable to indicate even at this stage the form in which statistical information can be most readily and usefully supplied, as a matter that must be taken into account when such questions as the future classification of workers are under consideration. The great wants, both in the initial classification and in all returns dependent on it, are simplicity and uniformity, and a constant effort to bear these in mind has been made in the proposals now offered for consideration.

T. HIGHAM.

9th October 1897.

Form of Works Abstract for Famine Relief Works—Part I.

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10 (a)	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20			
Day of the month.	Relief workers of all kinds on works.				Classification of daily labourers.				Payments to daily labour.			Amount paid for piece-work.	Payments for other items.	Total payments.	Value of work done.	Percentage of column 15 on column 14.	Gratuitous relief.						
	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.	Class X @	Class Y @	Class Z @	Children @	Normal amount due.	Amount payable.	Amount paid.						Men.	Women.	Children.	Amount paid.			
									Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.

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- Columns 2 to 5—Will include all relief workers, whether on piece-work or a daily wage. The figures will be obtained from the gang registers of task and piece-workers. Boys and girls between the ages of 12 and 16 to be returned as men and women respectively. Children to include all working children under the age of 12.
- Columns 6 to 9—Will show the distribution by classes of all who are not employed on piece-work, without distinction of sex. When there are no piece-works the totals of columns 6, 7, and 8 will equal the total of columns 2 and 3, and the number in column 9 will equal the number in column 4. Differences will represent the number of adults and children employed on piece-work.
- Column 10—Will show for each day the amount normally due to the workers entered in columns 6 to 9, at the rates in force for each class. The rates in force on the first day should be noted in the heading. Changes in rates during the half-month should be shown in a foot-note.
- Column 10 (a)—Will show the amount due to daily labourers, after deductions for short work, &c., as entered in the gang registers or muster rolls. Arrears due to labour at commencement of the period should be brought forward in head of this column.
- Column 11—Will show actual daily payments on account of wages to daily labourers, whether tasked or not, including the Sunday wage or other payments for days on which little or no work has been done. Entries to agree with those shown in the cash-book. The difference between total of column 11 and column 10 (a) at end of half-month will be the amount to be carried forward as arrears unpaid into column 10 (a) of the work abstract for next half-month.
- Column 12—Will include all payments for work done by piece works, as entered in the cash-book.
- Column 13—Other items will include pay of special establishment, expenditure on hutting exclusive of wages of relief labour employed, wages of artisans and others who are not relief workers, purchases of baskets, string, and other materials, and all other miscellaneous payments chargeable to the work. This column may be sub-divided so as to show principal items separately, when thought necessary.
- Column 14—Will show total charges against the work, or the total of columns 11, 12, and 13.
- Columns 15 and 16—Will be filled in only at end of half-month, and in sub-divisional office. The amount in column 15 will be obtained by evaluating the quantities shown as progress during half-month in Part III under sub-heads that are mainly or entirely carried out by relief labour at the rates entered in the works estimate, which should be normal rates. If relief labour is partially or to a small extent employed on other sub-heads the wages of the labour so employed or its value at a fair rate on the progress exhibited may also be included in value of work done, but this should not include cost of labour employed on work which is included in the normal work rates, such as carriage of water, dressing earthwork, &c.
- Columns 17 to 19—Will show the daily attendance of dependants, as recorded in the muster-rolls.
- Column 20—Will show the daily payments on account of dependants, whether in the form of a cash dole or in the purchase of grain or maintenance of a kitchen,

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Form of Works Abstract for Famine Relief Works—Part II.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
Day of the Month.	Piece-workers of all kinds.						Earthwork by piece-workers.			Road-metalling by piece-workers.			Earthwork by daily labour.					Road-metalling by daily labour.							
	Men.	Women.	Children.	Male units.	Amount paid to piece-workers.	Rate per male unit.	Male units.	Quantity of work done.	Amount paid.	Male units.	Quantity of work done.	Amount paid.	Diggers.			Carriers.		Wages paid for earth-work.	Breakers.			Complimentary.		Wages paid for Road-metalling.	
													Number of units.	Full task.	Work done.	Units re-quired.	Units em-ployed.		Number of units.	Full task.	Work done.	Units re-quired.	Units em-ployed.		

Columns 2 to 5—Will be filled in daily from the daily reports of the piece-work moharrirs. The number of male units will be the number of men as in column 2, plus $\frac{2}{3}$ of the number of women as in column 3, plus $\frac{1}{3}$ of the number of children as in column 4.

Column 6—The amounts to be entered in this column will agree with those entered in column 12 of Part I. Annas and pie may be omitted.

Column 7—The rate should be expressed in annas and decimals, and need be struck only at end of the half-month, and entered on the line showing totals for half-month.

Columns 8 and 11—The number of male units, calculated as for column 5, employed on earthwork and road-metalling will be taken direct from the moharrir's daily reports.

Columns 9 and 12—The quantities of work done will be as entered in the measurement books and daily reports.

Columns 10 and 13—Will include only the payments made to piece-workers on earthwork or road-metalling. Annas and pie may be omitted.

Columns 14 to 25—The figures for these columns are all obtainable from the gang registers and daily reports. Column 14 shows total number of task-work digger units, column 15 the total task required from them, and column 16 the total task accomplished; column 17 shows the number of carrier units required, as worked out for each gang according to the reduced lead, and column 18 the total number actually employed. Similarly column 20 shows number of units employed on breaking, and columns 21 and 22 the quantity of broken metal required from this number as a full task, and the quantity actually done. Column 23 shows the number of complementary units required for quarrying, slicing, and carrying, and will be determined for each work by the Sub-divisional Officer according to circumstances, and column 24 will show whether this number has been actually exceeded. Columns 19 and 25 will show amount of wages actually paid to workers included in columns 14 and 18 and columns 20 and 24. It will not include Sunday wages, or payments to special or untasked gangs employed on miscellaneous work for which provision is not made in the number of carriers or complementary workers allowed, and which may be regarded as outside the form of task-work under consideration. In both these columns annas and pie may be omitted.

Extracts from the Proceedings of the Government of India in the Department of Revenue and Agriculture, No. 31—237-2-F., dated Simla, the 25th October 1897.

READ :—

- (1) Government of India Resolution No. 35—33, dated 24th August 1893.
- (2) Government of India Circular No. 16-104—1, dated 13th February 1897.
- (3) Government of India Resolution No. 20--157-1, dated 12th May 1897.

RESOLUTION.

By the last Resolution read in the preamble, Mr. T. Higham, C.I.E., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India in the Department of Public Works, was deputed in May last to visit the famine relief works then in progress in the different provinces, and to make inquiries on matters in connection with them, regarding which the Government of India wished to obtain information which might be useful for a future revision of the Famine Codes, or the administration of the next famine. Mr. Higham completed his tour of inspection by the end of July, and has since submitted full notes on the management and special features of relief works in each province, which have been communicated to the several Local Governments and Administrations concerned. These notes are of great interest and value, and the Governor-General in Council desires to record his acknowledgements to Mr. Higham for the assiduity with which he discharged his inspection duties at the most trying season of the year, and for the care and ability with which he has placed the results of his enquiry before the Government of India.

2. In a Final Note which accompanies this Resolution, Mr. Higham makes certain recommendations based on a comparison of the different methods of managing relief-works which came under his notice, and on a consideration of the extent to which the relief-work system embodied in the Famine Codes has in practice proved efficacious and economical. He is of opinion that, regarded as a whole, the system has well stood the severe strain to which it has been subjected. But he points out that numerous departures from the regulations of the Famine Codes with regard to relief works have been found necessary by several, if not all, of the Local Governments, and that the Codes no longer represent the actual practice approved by them. In these circumstances more or less extensive amendments in the chapters of these Codes which deal with the organization of famine labour will be required, and Mr. Higham's recommendations are accordingly now placed before Local Governments in order that they may receive careful consideration in connection with such revision.

3. The first group of recommendations deal with the classification and wages of relief workers employed on task-work, and their general purport is towards a simplification of the present Code regulations on the lines adopted in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Bengal, and the Central Provinces in the present famine campaign. The Government of India will be glad to know how far Mr. Higham's detailed recommendations under this head (paragraphs 1 to 20) are accepted by Local Governments, and what alterations in the Provincial Codes will be thereby necessitated. Succinctly stated, these recommendations are :—

- (1) Relief workers to be classified into three classes, or (I.) Special, (II.) Diggers, (III.) Carriers.
- (2) The wages of the three classes to be the cash equivalent of—

42 ounces of grain	... ..	In the case of Class I.
38 ounces of grain	... ..	In the case of Class II.
26 ounces of grain	... ..	In the case of Class III.
16 ounces of grain	... ..	In the case of children between 7 and 12.
22 ounces of grain	... ..	In the case of adult dependants.
10 ounces of grain	... ..	In the case of children between 7 and 12.

- (3) No distinction in regard to wage to be made between males and females, and children over 12 to be reckoned as adults.
- (4) A "standard" task for Class III. to be fixed in each province; the task for Class II. being fixed for each work by some competent authority.
- (5) On any work on which a Sunday wage is not given, workers in Classes II. and III. to be permitted to earn an extra wage by the performance of a task in excess of that prescribed.
- (6) On any work on which a Sunday wage is given, and on which the workers in Class III. exceed by more than 10 per cent. the number actually required, an extra wage to be earnable by Class II. alone.

4. Paragraphs 21 to 24 and paragraphs 35 and 36 of the Note deal with the desirability of substituting "pure piece-work" or "petty-contract," as distinguished from the modified forms of task-work which have been experimentally tried in several provinces under the name of "intermediate system," for the task-work system of the present Codes, to a greater extent than has hitherto been done. It will be observed that the note indicates that piece work, such as is discussed, has not had sufficient trial to enable a conclusion to be formed as to how far it is well adapted for relief purposes; and that all that is urged is that such modifications should be made in the letter of the Famine Codes as will permit of piece-work being resorted to, should this be found desirable, instead of the task-work system, when relief works are required in a district, especially in the early stage of a famine, and when the relief works consist of works of permanent public utility. In the "Principles for regulating expenditure upon

Circular No. 16-104-1 (Famine) dated 13th February 1897.

public works in time of Famine" circulated in the early part of the year the Government of India have already expressed approval to petty piece-work as a form of relief when the existence of distress is first indicated by a demand for labour on the part of the able-bodied, and they will consider favourably any amendments for giving recognition to it within due limits in the Famine Codes that may be recommended by Local Governments. With regard to the advantages claimed for piece-work over task-work in the Final Note, the Government of India think that some, at least, of the defects and inconveniences attending the present Code system of task-work will be considerably reduced by the adoption of the simplified classification and wage scale proposed by Mr. Higham, and by daily payments of the labourers. The simpler the system, the less occasion there is for large establishments, and the less room for successful fraud.

5. Paragraphs 25 to 29 of the note contain recommendations as to the principles on which the programmes of relief works should be drawn up and as to the desirability of including in them a greater number of large works of permanent utility. The Government of India concur in the view that large works are preferable to small works as the backbone of famine relief whenever the necessity arises for employing relief labour on an extensive scale, and they consider that the provisions contained in one or two of the Provincial Codes as to reserving large works for the late stage of a famine should be revised. They would like to receive the opinions of Local Governments as to the possibility of improving the programmes of famine works in the manner suggested by Mr. Higham, and as to the extent to which relief labour can be drafted to considerable distances. If any amendments on these points in the Famine Codes suggest themselves to Local Governments, they should be reported. Mr. Higham's remark in paragraph 29 that in the next great famine there will probably be less room for a programme of small works than hitherto, owing to the exhaustion of this class of works in the late famine, appears to the Government of India to be indisputably true. And this makes it all the more necessary that the question discussed by him should receive the fullest consideration.

6. With regard to paragraphs 31 to 34, which deal with the responsibilities of Civil and Public Works officers in charge of relief works, the Government of India are aware that the present Codes are on this point somewhat wanting in clearness, and that the degree of control over the management of relief works exercised by

the Divisional Commissioner and the District Officer in the present famine has been greater in some provinces than in others. It is desirable that the recommendations made in this portion of the Note should be carefully examined in the light of the actual practice and experience of each Local Government, and that amendments may be proposed in the Provincial Famine Codes embodying the final views of the Local Government. It is noticed by Mr. Higham that in most provinces during the present famine the chief responsibility for the management of the relief works has been placed by the Local Government on Superintending Engineers, and that in practice the Collector of the district has not interfered. But the Government of India apprehend that the District Officer has at least been allowed a voice as to the opening and closing of relief works in his district, as to the substitution of piece-work or modified task-work for the task system of the Codes, and as to purely non-technical questions connected with the management of the works. While therefore the Government of India are anxious to define more clearly the respective duties of Civil and Departmental Officers, and to give the latter the powers which in practice they have been authorised by Local Governments to exercise, they consider that a case does not exist for departing from the principle laid down in paragraph 130 of the Famine Commission's Report.

7. The question of relief works accounts discussed in paragraph 38 of the Note should be considered in connection with the suggestions made by Mr. Higham in an appendix, on which the opinions of Local Governments are invited.

8. The Government of India will be glad to have the opinions of Local Governments on the recommendations of the Note not later than the 1st March 1897. They propose to fix that date also for the submission by Local Governments of such amendments to the Provincial Famine Codes as the experience of the present famine may have shown to be necessary, not only in respect of the chapters regarding relief works, but in respect also of other parts of the present Codes and their appendices.

ORDER.—Ordered that a copy of the above Resolution be forwarded to Mr. T. Higham, C.I.E., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India in the Public Works Department, for information, and to the Local Governments and Administrations noted in the margin, for information and guidance.

Government of Madras	Bombay.	
"	Bengal.	
"	the North-Western Provinces	
	and Oudh.	
"	the Punjab.	
"	Burma.	
Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces.	Assam.	
"	Coorg.	
"	Ajmere.	
Resident at Hyderabad.		

Ordered also that copy be forwarded to the Foreign, Finance and Public Works Departments, for information.

[True Extract.]

T. W. HOLDERNESS,

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Table of monthly death-rates in continuation of vol. IV., p. 231.

Districts.	JUNE 1897.			JULY 1897.			AUGUST 1897.			SEPTEMBER 1897.			OCTOBER 1897.			NOVEMBER 1897.			DECEMBER 1897.		
	Death-rate of the month per mille per annum.	Average in 10 previous non-famine years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of the month per mille per annum.	Average in 10 previous non-famine years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of the month per mille per annum.	Average in 10 previous non-famine years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of the month per mille per annum.	Average in 10 previous non-famine years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of the month per mille per annum.	Average in 10 previous non-famine years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of the month per mille per annum.	Average in 10 previous non-famine years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of the month per mille per annum.	Average in 10 previous non-famine years.	Deaths from starvation.
									MADRAS.												
Kurnool ...	Per annum. 19·5	21·0	...	Per annum. 30·7	23·3	...	Per annum. 44·7	24·3	...	Per annum. 52·4	23·0	...	Per annum. 38·1	22·6	...	Per annum. 24·5	22·9	...	...	...	...
Cuddapah ...	17·3	15·8	...	19·0	17·8	...	22·6	19·8	...	33·1	20·9	...	50·4	21·3	...	31·6	22·8	...	...	...	...
Bellary ...	23·3	24·4	...	35·5	25·6	...	46·4	23·6	...	41·2	20·8	...	34·1	20·3	...	27·1	19·4	...	...	...	...
Anantapur ...	18·5	18·5	...	22·9	20·6	...	22·8	20·5	...	45·1	18·4	...	49·3	18·9	...	30·7	18·8	...	...	...	...
Ganjam* ...	97·5	25·9†	...	82·5	24·8†	...	55·5	20·9	...	42·1	20·6	...	41·7	18·1	...	40·0	17·1	...	...	...	...
Vizagapatam* ...	33·6	19·7†	...	48·0	22·6†	...	40·8	20·5	...	40·0	22·3	...	43·8	18·8	...	33·6	17·7	...	...	...	...
Bhadrachalam (Godavari Dist.)	61·1	30·0	...	36·2	27·4	...	31·9	27·1	...	23·7	35·4	...	23·6	38·4	...	32·6	42·6	...	...	...	...
									BOMBAY.												
Ahmednagar ...	Per mensem. 3·50	2·97	...	Per mensem. 6·86	4·67	...	Per mensem. 7·18	4·76	...	Per mensem. 5·09	3·64	...	Per mensem. 4·52	3·20	...	Per mensem. 3·02	2·66	...	...	...	...
Khandesh ...	3·17	2·37	...	3·62†	2·95	...	7·32	4·03	...	6·40	3·28	11	3·68	2·66	...	2·83	2·64	...	...	...	...

Nasik	5.25	2.98	...	6.54†	3.38	...	8.06	3.78	...	6.51	3.14	12	5.11	2.78	4	3.68	3.09	...	...	...	...
Poona	5.72	2.28	...	10.10†	3.31	...	7.18	3.84	..	5.14	2.98	...	5.25	2.53	...	5.19	2.38	...	3.73	2.37	...
Satara	5.81	2.73	...	5.82	3.30	...	5.52	3.62	...	5.30	3.21	...	6.74	2.95	...	5.27	2.52	...	...	...	...
Sholapur	3.96	2.55	...	7.72	3.86	...	5.78	4.07	...	4.77	3.35	...	5.20	3.00	...	4.97	2.63	...	4.39	2.42	...
Belgaum	5.0	2.99	...	3.73	2.99	...	3.46	2.78	..	2.82	2.38	...	2.72	2.31	...	2.81	2.15	...	2.69	2.21	...
Bijapur	4.56	2.85	...	5.25	3.06	...	5.18	3.00	...	4.48	2.56	...	4.22	2.40	...	3.38	2.23	...	2.25	2.07	...
Dharwar ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	3.31	2.64	...	2.82	2.30	...	2.62	2.30	...	3.19	2.46	...	...	...	...
	Death-rate of month.	Average of previous 5 years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average of previous 5 years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average of previous 5 years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average of previous 5 years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average of previous 5 years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average of previous 5 years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average of previous 5 years.	Deaths from starvation.
										BENGAL.											
Patna ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Shahabad	2.75	2.44	Nil	2.85	2.89	Nil	3.44	3.66	Nil	2.73	3.53	Nil	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Saran	2.45	2.71	Do.	2.59	2.90	Do.	3.89	3.30	...	3.11	2.89	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Champan	2.44	3.31	Do.	2.49	3.05	Do.	4.50	3.86	...	3.99	3.22	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Muzaffarpur	2.26	4.25	Do.	2.62	3.01	Do.	4.07	3.30	...	3.41	2.97	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

* Owing to the fluctuation in the population for which returns are received in these districts, it has not been found possible to estimate the present population, and consequently the rates have been calculated upon the census population.

† Average of five non-famine years.

‡ High death-rates due to cholera.

NOTE.—Mortuary registration has much improved in Bengal during the last five years, and an average rate struck on the figures for 10 years incorrectly represents the actual average mortality.

NOTE.—The average death-rate from April has been calculated for the last five years (1892-96).

The high death-rate of Puri in June is due to epidemic cholera.

The increased death-rate in July in Palamau, Manbhum, Hazaribagh, Lohardaga, Puri and Bankura was due to an epidemic of cholera.

The high death-rate in August in Palamau, Manbhum, Lohardaga, Puri, Sonthal Parganas was due to cholera; in Champaran and Muzaffarpur the high rate was due to fever.

Table of monthly death-rates—continued.

Districts.	JUNE 1897.			JULY 1897.			AUGUST 1897.			SEPTEMBER 1897.			OCTOBER 1897.			NOVEMBER 1897.			DECEMBER 1897.		
	Death-rate of month.	Average of previous 5 years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average of previous 5 years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average of previous 5 years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average of previous 5 years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average of previous 5 years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average of previous 5 years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average of previous 5 years.	Deaths from starvation.
									<i>Bengal—continued.</i>												
Darbhanga ...	2.1	3.83	Nil	2.0	2.54	Nil	2.9	2.48	...	2.6	2.30	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Palamau ...	3.83	3.39	Do.	4.62	2.97	Do.	6.43	3.32	...	5.29	3.32	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Manbhum ...	3.96	2.40	Do.	4.08	2.51	Do.	4.49	2.66	6	2.26	1.94	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Hazaribagh ...	3.03	2.53	Do.	5.34	3.00	Do.	10.51	3.50	Nil	6.59	3.08	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Lohardaga ...	1.97	2.22	Do.	3.42	2.72	Do.	12.07	3.46	1	8.77	2.91	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Nadia ...	1.70	1.62	Do.	1.64	1.69	Do.	1.83	1.94	Nil	1.87	2.18	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Khulna ...	1.59	1.47	Do.	1.86	1.76	Do.	2.38	1.95	Do.	2.32	2.12	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Puri ...	5.58	2.39	Do.	4.87	2.44	Do.	4.66	2.71	Do.	3.00	1.86	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Bhagalpur ...	2.1	2.81	Do.	2.29	2.38	Do.	3.5	2.94	Do.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sonthal Parganas	2.43	1.89	1	2.85	2.12	Do.	4.13	2.42	1	...	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Murshidabad ...	2.12	1.72	Nil	2.61	1.85	Do.	2.74	2.12	Nil	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Bankura ...	2.47	1.73	Do.	2.44	2.02	Do.	1.92	2.40	Do.	1.78	1.87	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

I.—Distressed
Districts.S
R

	Death- rate of month.	Average for month in 10 previous years.	Deaths from starva- tion.	Death- rate of month.	Average for month in 10 previous years.	Deaths from starva- tion.	Death- rate of month.	Average for month in 10 previous years.	Deaths from starva- tion.	Death- rate of month.	Average for month in 10 previous years.	Deaths from starva- tion.	Death- rate of month.	Average for month in 10 previous years.	Deaths from starva- tion.	Death- rate of month.	Average for month in 10 previous years.	Deaths from starva- tion.	Death- rate of month.	Average for month in 10 previous years.	Deaths from starva- tion.
NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES AND OUDH.																					
Agra	2.94	2.54	Nil	2.63	2.25	...	4.17	2.89	Nil	7.75	3.23	...	12.39	3.29	Nil	9.22	2.83	...	5.94	2.85	...
Etawah	2.61	2.29	Do.	2.20	2.20	...	3.08	2.96	...	4.26	3.12	...	8.83	3.31	Do.	7.46	3.00	...	4.75	2.74	...
Cawnpore	2.62	2.88	Do.	2.70	2.91	...	2.81	3.45	...	3.67	3.68	...	6.53	4.02	Do.	5.87	3.44	...	4.24	3.29	...
Lalitpur ... ..	...	...	Do.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Fatehpur	3.61	3.01	Do.	2.68	2.51	...	2.93	2.67	...	3.88	3.01	...	5.22	3.98	Nil	4.89	4.30	...	3.89	4.06	...
Banda	3.60	3.60	Do.	2.62	2.94	...	2.61	2.54	...	3.97	2.98	...	4.76	3.65	Do.	5.06	3.61	...	4.15	3.50	...
Hamirpur... ..	4.97	3.27	Do.	3.80	4.19	...	6.62	4.52	...	8.93	4.63	...	9.89	5.31	Do.	6.60	4.68	...	4.05	3.78	...
Allahabad... ..	3.09	2.57	Do.	2.45	2.28	...	2.70	2.52	...	3.64	2.87	...	3.67	3.40	Do.	4.03	3.21	...	4.64	2.93	...
Jhansi	3.25	3.76	Do.	3.18	3.54	1	4.40	4.03	...	5.15	4.04	...	5.64	4.57	Do.	4.74	3.99	...	3.80	3.48	...
Jalaun	3.67	3.55	Do.	4.39	3.54	...	6.19	3.65	...	9.34	3.82	...	9.78	4.87	Do.	6.95	4.25	...	5.02	3.74	...
Mirzapur	3.45	2.69	Do.	3.83	2.65	...	4.57	2.98	...	4.51	3.17	...	5.38	3.33	Do.	4.73	2.94	...	4.25	2.73	...
Jaunpur	2.48	2.08	Do.	2.83	2.02	...	3.18	2.39	...	3.11	2.38	...	3.64	2.58	Do.	3.55	2.59	...	3.14	2.29	...
Gorakhpur	2.10	2.39	Do.	3.20	2.13	...	4.09	2.33	...	3.56	2.36	...	3.83	2.86	Do.	3.14	2.91	...	2.52	2.75	...
Azamgarh	2.34	2.21	Do.	3.89	2.27	1	5.02	2.70	...	4.62	3.83	...	3.93	3.20	Do.	3.33	2.74	...	2.63	2.42	...
Lucknow	3.06	3.07	Do.	4.89	3.36	...	6.00	3.91	...	5.22	3.38	...	5.56	3.60	Do.	4.39	3.52	...	3.57	3.03	...

Table of monthly death-rates—continued.

Districts.	JUNE 1897.			JULY 1897.			AUGUST 1897.			SEPTEMBER 1897.			OCTOBER 1897.			NOVEMBER 1897.			DECEMBER 1897.		
	Death-rate of month.	Average for month in 10 previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average for month in 10 previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average for month in 10 previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average for month in 10 previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average for month in 10 previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average for month in 10 previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average for month in 10 previous years.	Deaths from starvation.
<i>I.—Distressed Districts—cont.</i>	North-Western Provinces and Oudh—continued.																				
Unao	2·34	3·05	<i>Nil.</i>	2·81	3·08	...	3·26	3·51	1	4·15	3·17	...	5·56	3·43	<i>Nil.</i>	3·98	2·86	...	3·47	2·62	...
Rai Bareli ...	2·95	3·71	<i>Do.</i>	2·94	2·71	...	3·64	2·56	<i>Nil.</i>	4·09	2·48	...	4·85	2·92	<i>Do.</i>	4·34	2·95	...	3·75	3·38	...
Sitapur	2·96	2·65	<i>Do.</i>	2·70	2·28	...	3·11	2·55	...	4·10	3·15	...	3·80	3·49	<i>Do.</i>	3·36	3·43	...	2·70	2·80	...
Hardoi	2·95	2·34	<i>Do.</i>	4·37	2·52	...	5·72	3·30	...	4·82	3·68	...	5·40	4·55	<i>Do.</i>	4·05	3·31	...	2·76	2·67	...
Bara Banki ...	2·87	4·03	<i>Do.</i>	3·22	3·38	...	3·34	3·20	...	2·72	2·81	...	3·05	3·03	<i>Do.</i>	2·56	2·81	...	2·76	2·78	..
<i>II.—Districts under observation.</i>																					
Dehra Dun ...	1·77	2·86	<i>Do.</i>	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	2·26	2·29	<i>Do.</i>	2·68	2·09	...	1·96	2·04	...
Muttra	2·37	2·41	<i>Do.</i>	1·73	1·82	...	2·06	2·23	...	4·75	2·83	...	8·37	3·18	<i>Do.</i>	7·73	3·24	...	5·00	3·02	...
Farukhabad ...	2·60	2·36	<i>Do.</i>	2·55	2·51	...	2·78	3·16	...	3·23	3·33	...	5·85	3·67	<i>Do.</i>	5·68	3·32	...	4·42	3·13	...
Mainpuri	1·98	1·93	<i>Do.</i>	1·65	1·78	...	1·80	2·10	...	2·61	2·35	...	5·15	2·54	<i>Do.</i>	5·77	2·21	...	6·71	2·70	...
Etah	2·57	2·40	<i>Do.</i>	2·48	2·05	...	2·59	2·43	...	3·71	3·00	...	6·00	3·42	<i>Do.</i>	6·28	2·94	...	4·18	2·93	...

1537	Bareilly ...	2.15	2.35	Nil	2.10	2.11	...	2.63	2.65	...	4.55	3.62	...	12.85	4.71	Nil.	11.56	4.10	...	6.66	3.36	...
	Bijnor ...	2.22	2.93	Do.	1.93	2.14	...	2.30	2.47	...	3.27	3.25	...	5.24	4.12	Do.	4.81	3.81	...	4.11	3.41	...
	Budaun ...	2.22	2.12	Do.	2.21	1.97	...	2.46	2.43	...	3.35	3.33	...	5.08	3.98	Do.	3.61	2.90	...	3.58	3.20	...
	Moradabad ...	1.96	2.72	Do.	1.95	2.39	...	2.62	3.16	...	4.60	4.66	...	7.21	5.37	Do.	6.01	4.35	...	4.11	3.79	...
	Shahjahanpur ...	2.20	2.40	Do.	2.35	2.35	...	3.93	2.96	...	4.76	4.08	...	5.83	5.52	Do.	3.76	3.99	...	2.95	3.35	...
	Pilibhit ...	1.88	2.61	Do.	1.96	2.24	...	2.27	2.64	...	5.11	3.50	...	10.78	5.12	Do.	8.00	4.73	..	6.09	4.20	...
	Benares ...	3.21	2.32	Do.	3.76	2.62	...	4.89	3.32	...	4.63	3.22	...	5.15	3.23	Do.	5.02	3.06	...	3.45	2.99	...
	Basti ...	2.50	2.42	Do.	2.80	1.97	...	2.59	1.98	...	2.45	2.06	...	3.19	2.62	Do	3.03	2.91	...	3.25	3.09	...
	Kheri ...	2.47	2.74	Do.	2.50	2.27	...	2.95	2.63	...	3.31	3.27	...	3.43	4.33	Do.	2.89	4.34	...	2.74	3.68	...
	Fyzabad ...	1.81	2.44	Do.	2.70	2.29	...	3.69	2.41	...	3.13	2.55	...	3.97	3.13	Do.	3.11	3.39	...	2.76	3.52	...
	Gonda ...	3.13	3.30	Do.	3.77	2.52	...	4.84	2.54	...	3.85	2.55	...	3.40	2.87	Do.	2.93	3.12	...	2.41	3.10	...
Sultanpur...	2.44	3.17	Do.	2.57	2.51	...	2.82	2.39	...	2.92	2.46	...	4.17	2.90	Do.	4.03	3.27	...	3.17	3.58	...	
Partabgarh ...	2.32	2.49	Do.	2.16	2.24	...	2.59	2.06	...	3.50	2.12	...	3.73	2.49	Do.	4.52	2.68	..	3.53	3.83	...	
		Death-rate per annum.	Normal for June.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate per annum.	Normal for July.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate per annum.	Normal for August.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate per annum.	Normal for September.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate per annum.	Normal for October.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate per annum.	Normal for November.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate per annum.	Normal for December.	Deaths from starvation.
		Per annum.	36	1*	Per annum. 40.20	27	...	Per annum. 27	46.35	...	Per annum. 64.3	35	...	Per annum.	...	...	Per annum.	...	...	Per annum.	...	...
3 R 2	Hissar ...	40.15	36	1*	40.20	27	...	27	46.35	...	64.3	35	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Rohtak ...	28.95	34	...	27.94	24	...	25	28.72	...	39.7	39	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Gurgaon ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

* Occurred in June but not before reported.

Table of monthly death-rates—continued.

Districts.	JUNE 1897.			JULY 1897.			AUGUST 1897.			SEPTEMBER 1897.			OCTOBER 1897.			NOVEMBER 1897.			DECEMBER 1897.			
	Death-rate per annum.	Normal for June.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate per annum.	Normal for July.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate per annum.	Normal for August.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate per annum.	Normal for September.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate per annum.	Normal for October.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate per annum.	Normal for November.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate per annum.	Normal for December.	Deaths from starvation.	
								Punjab—continued.														
Delhi	Per annum. 29·12	42	...	Per annum. 23·98	29	...	Per annum. 30	22	...	Per annum. 32	44	...	Per annum.	...	...	Per annum.	...	...	Per annum.	...	...
Karnal	32·30	45	...	30·74	34	...	34	33·42	...	41·7	45	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Umballa	21·27	35	...	22·88	26	...	28	23	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ferozepore ...	28·07	32	...	24·92	28	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Lahore ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Gujarat	17·97	24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Death-rate of the month per mille per annum.	Average of month in previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of the month per mille per annum.	Average of month in previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of the month per mille per annum.	Average of month in previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of the month per mille per annum.	Average of month in previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of the month per mille per annum.	Average of month in previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of the month per mille per annum.	Average of month in previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of the month per mille per annum.	Average of month in previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	
										BURMA.												
Meiktila	36·00	...	Nil.	36·00†	Not known.	Nil.	30·00	Not known.	Nil.	30·9	Not known.	Nil.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Yamethin	20·76†	Not known.	Do.	23·76	Do.	Do.	21·12	Do.	...	17·64	Do.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Myingyan	24·48	...	Do.	28·44	Do.	Do.	20·16	Do.	...	12·48	Do.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

	Death-rate of month.	Average for 10 previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average for 10 previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average for 10 previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average for 10 previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average for 10 previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average for 10 previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average for 10 previous years.	Deaths from starvation.
	CENTRAL PROVINCES.																				
	Per mensem.			Per mensem.			Per mensem.			Per mensem.			Per mensem.			Per mensem.			Per mensem.		
Saugor ...	10·37	3·32	...	8·26	3·64	..	11·62	4·77	...	11·30	4·57	...	8·28	4·23	...	5·98	4·17	...	4·05	3·49	...
Damoh ...	6·39	3·63	5	4·57	3·54	2	7·26	4·52	...	6·78	4·67	...	5·84	4·25	...	4·49	4·36	...	3·35	3·53	..
Murwara ...	} 5·71	3·15	...	4·38	2·83	...	5·60	3·37	..	5·96	3·71	...	6·51	3·65	...	4·95	3·68	...	3·42	3·03	...
Jubbulpore ...																					
Narsingpore ...	6·48	3·41	...	6·26	3·67	...	7·24	4·43	...	7·86	4·44	...	9·87	4·87	...	6·75	4·26	...	3·85	3·31	...
Hoshangabad ...	6·15	2·95	..	4·33	2·47	2	6·95	3·04	...	7·72	3·69	...	7·73	4·19	...	5·99	3·82	...	4·11	3·11	...
Nimar ...	} 6·96	1·95	...	5·60	1·95	...	7·32	3·11	...	7·89	3·28	...	5·61	2·55	...	3·92	2·96	...	3·88	3·24	...
Burhanpur ...																					
Mandla ...	10·52	3·38	8	16·44	3·21	5	16·66	3·76	...	11·59	3·53	...	8·04	3·30	...	3·74	2·99	...	2·34	2·69	...
Betul ...	6·30	1·95	23	7·45	2·05	*11	11·76	3·16	*1	12·20	3·59	...	8·20	3·63	...	4·45	3·25	...	3·25	2·93	...
Chhindwara ...	4·08	1·97	1	4·46	2·19	...	4·80	3·18	...	7·86	3·58	...	6·67	3·64	...	4·59	3·15	...	3·99	2·72	...
Seoni ...	6·86	2·67	...	8·28	2·48	...	12·29	3·19	..	8·63	3·33	...	5·93	3·07	..	4·07	2·89	...	2·58	2·68	..
Balaghat ...	11·76	2·42	...	8·81	2·43	...	11·75	3·21	...	10·07	3·28	...	6·68	2·83	...	4·52	2·72	...	4·16	2·66	...
Bhandara ...	7·02	2·21	...	5·48	2·25	...	6·42	3·17	2	8·90	3·20	...	6·56	2·96	...	6·36	2·90	...	3·67	2·74	...
Nagpur ...	4·83	1·96	4	3·93	2·09	4	5·68	2·94	4	6·84	3·43	...	6·85	3·33	...	4·95	2·92	...	3·65	2·70	...
Wardha ...	5·59	1·89	...	4·00	2·05	...	6·24	3·39	..	8·96	4·50	...	9·38	4·45	...	6·56	3·69	...	4·67	3·06	...

* Vide letter from Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces No. 2017-F., dated October 1897.

Table of monthly death-rates—continued.

Districts.	JUNE 1897.			JULY 1897.			AUGUST 1897.			SEPTEMBER 1897.			OCTOBER 1897.			NOVEMBER 1897.			DECEMBER 1897.		
	Death-rate of month.	Average for 10 previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average for 10 previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average for 10 previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average for 10 previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average for 10 previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average for 10 previous years.	Deaths from starvation.	Death-rate of month.	Average for 10 previous years.	Deaths from starvation.
Central Provinces—continued.																					
Chanda	2.88	2.44	3	3.30	2.30	2	4.17	3.09	...	5.80	3.23	...	4.72	3.21	...	4.70	3.18	...	3.53	3.02	...
Raipur	9.05	3.43	14	7.16	3.05	...	9.86	3.17	...	8.89	2.93	...	8.23	2.73	...	6.13	2.45	...	3.87	2.45	...
Bilaspur	10.99	3.32	53	9.92	2.89	13	12.51	2.94	12	11.09	2.68	...	11.41	2.30	6	6.56	2.35	...	4.88	2.55	...
Sambalpur	4.11	2.92	...	2.30	2.63	...	3.78	3.59	...	2.81	2.71	...	2.78	2.00	...	1.79	1.73	...	1.85	2.07	...
BERAR.																					
Amraoti	3.3	1.9	*27	3.9	2.4	12	8.0	4.4	19	8.7	5.2	13	...	...	.	...	...	...	...	...	...
Akola-	4.8	2.2	†1	4.7	3.2	2	11.2	5.1	2	10.0	4.9	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ellichpur ... ..	...	1.65	‡7	...	2.4	18	§	3.9	6	...	3.4	17	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Wun	3.1	2.8	||11	...	...	...	5.7	5.2	49	6.9	4.1	17	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Basim	2.8	2.3	Nil	3.8	5.5	3	7.8	4.5	12	6.7	4.3	9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Buldana	2.4	2.8	¶4	3.1	2.93	**22	5.26	§	7	11.5	...	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

* Of these 27 persons 15 were immigrants and 12 were residents of the district. Precautionary measures calculated to minimise the number of these deaths have been adopted by the Deputy Commissioner.
† A wanderer from outside the district. ‡ Of the deaths reported five occurred on the works; of the other two, one was a foreigner and one an inhabitant of the Melghat Taluk.
§ Not reported. || Detailed information not furnished, but the Deputy Commissioner has been asked to supply it.
¶ All residents of the Buldana district. ** Of these nine have been verified and 13 are under investigation.

Statement showing numbers of persons on relief works and in receipt of gratuitous relief in the districts affected by scarcity in India—(District details.)

No.	Name of Province and District.	Area.	Population.	FOR THE WEEK ENDING THE 24TH JULY 1897.									GRAND TOTAL.
				RELIEF WORKS.			Number on test works.	Total on works.	GRATUITOUS AND SPECIAL RELIEF.				
				Workers.	Dependents.	Total.			Poor-houses or kitchens.	Village doles and other relief.	Total.		
<i>Madras.</i>													
1	Cuddapah	8,723	1,272,072	97,328	3,095	100,423	...	100,423	3,211	20,954	24,165	124,588	
2	Kurnool	7,514	817,811	163,901	5,615	169,516	...	169,516	15,893	46,341	62,234	231,750	
3	Bellary	5,713	880,950	145,421	6,951	152,372	...	152,372	3,779	22,476	26,255	178,627	
4	Anantapur	5,461	727,725	65,704	3,481	69,185	...	69,185	690	9,725	10,415	79,600	
5	Ganjam	8,369	1,896,803	36,267	233	36,500	...	36,500	8,545	78,603	87,148	123,648†	
6	Vizapatnam	17,242	2,802,992	23,014	1,766	24,780	...	24,780	10,856	19,042	29,898	54,678	
7	Godavari	7,857	2,078,782	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total Madras		60,879	10,477,135	531,635	21,141	552,776	...	552,776	42,974	197,141*	240,115	792,891	
<i>Bombay.</i>													
1	Bijapur	5,668	796,339	80,102	10,855	90,957	...	90,957	686	12,767	13,453	104,410	
2	Sholapur	4,542	750,689	69,179	20,275	89,454	...	89,454	132	10,001	10,133	99,587	
3	Ahmednagar	6,589	888,755	63,060	18,503	81,563	...	81,563	717	12,153	12,870	94,433	
4	Poona	5,352	1,067,800	7,272	1,615	8,887	...	8,887	...	11,414	11,414	20,301	
5	Nasik	5,940	843,582	12,688	5,010	17,698	...	17,698	...	1,796	1,796	19,494	
6	Satara	4,987	1,225,989	10,477	1,515	11,992	...	11,992	110	1,291	1,401	13,393	
7	Khandesh	9,943	1,434,716	12,771	3,656	16,627	...	16,627	...	...	...	16,627
8	Belgaum	4,652	1,013,261	12,161	1,803	13,964	...	13,964	...	776	776	14,740	
9	Dharwar	4,603	1,051,314	991	...	991	...	991	...	936	936	1,927	
10	Ratnagiri	3,922	1,105,926	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
11	Kolaba	2,129	594,872	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total Bombay		58,327	10,773,243	268,701	63,432	332,133	...	332,133	1,645	51,134	52,779	384,912	
<i>Bengal.</i>													
1	Champanan	3,531	1,859,465	33,624	1,684	35,308	...	35,308	1,348	68,419	69,767	105,075	
2	Shahabad	4,373	2,063,337	1,299	347	1,646	...	1,646	978	22,499	23,477	25,123	
3	Nadia	2,793	1,644,108	27,263	...	27,263	22	27,285	...	58,803	58,803	86,088	
4	Patna	2,075	1,796,004	...	...	...	...	...	186	54	240	240
5	Khulna	2,077	1,177,652	414	...	414	...	414	660	9,462	10,122	10,536	
6	Saran	2,656	2,467,477	16,609	1,136	17,745	...	17,745	1,017	58,053	59,070	76,815	
7	Darbhanga	3,335	2,801,905	81,212	7,304	88,516	318	88,834	5,784	38,948	94,732	183,566	
8	Muzaffarpur	3,004	2,711,445	33,130	1,308	34,438	...	34,438	931	53,249	54,180	88,618§	
9	Rajshahi	2,329	1,313,336	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,674	6,674	6,674
10	Bhagalpur	4,226	2,032,696	...	...	...	...	...	11,234	...	11,234	11,234
11	Palamau	4,912	596,770	1,050	...	1,050	...	1,050	...	2,252	2,252	3,302	
12	Manbhum	4,147	1,193,328	4,959	...	4,959	...	4,959	1,619	5,256	6,875	11,834	
13	Pabna	1,839	1,361,223	...	...	...	1,243	1,243	...	76	76	1,319
14	Murshidabad	2,143	1,250,946	3,122	...	3,122	...	3,122	...	3,748	3,748	6,870	
15	Hazaribagh	7,021	1,164,321	1,467	...	1,467	902	2,369	3,272	1,198	4,470	6,839	
16	Puri	2,472	944,998	3,336	...	3,336	...	3,336	...	2,035	2,035	5,371	
17	Sonthal Parganas	5,470	1,754,196	1,331	44	1,375	...	1,375	...	5,328	5,328	6,703	
18	Bankura	2,621	1,069,668	371	...	371	...	371	...	10,405	10,405	10,776	
19	Singbhum	3,753	546,488	10	...	10	...	10	...	...	...	10
20	Lohardaga	7,132	1,128,885	762	...	762	...	762	...	1,023	1,023	1,785	
Total Bengal		71,909	30,877,248	209,959	11,823	221,782	2,485	224,267	15,795	408,716†	424,511	648,778	
<i>North-Western Provinces and Oudh.</i>													
1	Agra	1,856	1,003,796	13,184	518	13,702	...	13,702	1,372	6,013	7,385	21,087	
2	Etawah	1,694	727,629	1,516	...	1,516	...	1,516	106	3,271	3,377	4,893	
3	Banda	3,061	705,832	126,457	20,529	146,986	...	146,986	3,006	51,514	54,520	201,506	
4	Cawnpore	2,366	1,209,695	770	178	948	...	948	1,225	10,139	11,364	12,312	
5	Hamirpur	2,289	513,720	10,046	1,428	11,474	...	11,474	4,219	17,104	21,323	32,797	
6	Allahabad	2,833	1,548,737	16,857	4,981	21,838	...	21,838	4,962	56,042	61,004	82,842	
7	Jhansi	3,587	683,619	5,304	1,067	6,371	...	6,371	2,779	20,392	23,171	29,542	
8	Jalaun	1,477	396,361	29,438	6,647	36,085	...	36,085	1,964	22,472	24,436	60,521	
9	Jaunpur	1,551	1,264,949	6,983	1,020	8,003	...	8,003	1,516	18,559	20,075	28,078	
10	Gorakhpur	4,595	2,994,057	10,798	...	10,798	...	10,798	1,050	13,200	14,250	25,048	
11	Lucknow	977	774,163	22,592	4,263	26,855	...	26,855	1,523	23,869	25,392	52,247	
12	Unao	1,736	953,636	4,325	1,777	6,102	...	6,102	863	17,331	18,194	24,296	
13	Rae Bareli	1,752	1,036,521	1,820	898	2,718	...	2,718	4,611	13,405	18,016	20,734	
14	Hardoi	2,286	1,113,211	44,769	11,672	56,441	...	56,441	1,749	47,186	48,935	105,376	
15	Mirzapur	5,233	1,161,508	5,307	1,491	6,798	...	6,798	2,553	17,279	19,832	26,630	
16	Azamgarh	2,147	1,728,625	3,463	...	3,463	...	3,463	905	22,521	23,426	26,889	
17	Fatehpur	1,631	699,157	1,046	424	1,470	...	1,470	1,432	9,109	10,535	12,905	
Carried over ... ..		...	...	304,675	56,893	361,568	...	361,568	35,835	369,400	405,235	766,803

* Includes 39,964 weavers relieved at their own trade.

† Besides 6,118 on zemindari works and 147 in private kitchens.

‡ Includes 40,755 relieved from the Indian Charitable Relief Fund.

§ Incomplete.

Statement showing numbers of persons on relief works and in receipt of gratuitous relief in the districts affected by scarcity in India—(District details)—contd.

No.	Name of Province and District.	Area.	Population.	FOR THE WEEK ENDING THE 24TH JULY 1897.									
				RELIEF WORKS.			Number on test works.	Total on works.	GRATUITOUS AND SPECIAL RELIEF.			GRAND TOTAL.	
				Workers.	Dependents.	Total.			Poor-houses or kitchens.	Village doles and other relief.	Total.		
	Brought forward ... (Districts under observation, but not yet officially recognised as distressed.)	...	...	304,675	56,893	361,568	...	361,568	35,835	369,400	405,235	766,635
1	Sitapur...	2,206	1,075,413	...	...	...	...	...	209	5,282	5,491	5,491
2	Bijnor ...	1,870	794,070	...	...	...	4	4	965	601	1,566	1,566
3	Moradabad ...	2,303	1,179,398	...	...	...	545	545	856	1,348	2,204	2,204
4	Barilly ...	1,591	1,040,949	...	...	...	1,575	1,575	232	1,504	1,736	1,736
5	Muttra ...	1,457	713,421	...	...	...	385	385	171	3,972	4,143	4,143
6	Etah ...	1,737	702,063	...	...	...	...	...	171	1,773	1,944	1,944
7	Mainpuri ...	1,697	762,163	...	...	...	...	...	102	1,326	1,428	1,428
8	Farukhabad ...	1,719	858,687	...	...	...	7	7	409	3,308	3,717	3,717
9	Budaun ...	1,985	925,598	...	...	...	...	...	301	...	301	301
10	Shahjahanpur ...	1,744	918,551	...	...	...	29	29	1,436	3,023	4,459	4,459
11	Pilibhit ...	1,373	485,108	...	...	...	1,019	1,019	86	3,463	3,549	3,549
12	Kheri ...	2,963	903,615	...	...	...	...	...	220	...	220	220
13	Sultanpur ...	1,701	1,075,851	...	...	...	388	388	573	2,563	3,136	3,136
14	Partabgarh ...	1,458	910,895	...	...	...	60	60	858	4,505	5,363	5,363
15	Fyzabad ...	1,707	1,216,959	...	...	...	...	...	810	2,816	3,626	3,626
16	Benares ...	1,009	921,943	...	...	...	...	...	591	10,427	11,018	11,018
17	Gonda ...	2,819	1,459,229	...	...	...	...	...	561	1,602	2,163	2,163
18	Basti ...	2,753	1,185,844	...	...	...	26	26	586	2,164	2,750	2,750
19	Bara Banki ...	1,703	1,730,906	...	...	...	...	...	273	1,318	1,591	1,591
	Total N.-W. P. & O.	76,867	37,375,879	304,675	56,893	361,568	4,038	365,606	45,245	420,397*	465,642	831,228	
Punjab.													
1	Hissar ...	5,217	776,006	35,989	4,369	40,358	...	40,358	573	7,332	7,905	48,263	
2	Rohtak ...	1,797	590,475	2,807	701	3,508	...	3,508	...	2,165	2,165	5,673	
3	Delhi ...	1,290	638,689	1,290	775	2,065	...	2,065	892	...	892	2,957	
4	Karnal ...	2,660	683,718	686	10	696	...	696	...	1,429	1,429	2,125	
5	Umballa ...	2,540	1,033,427	91	...	91	...	91	...	661	661	752	
6	Ferozepur ...	4,302	886,676	723	...	723	...	723	...	...	...	723
7	Rawalpindi ...	4,850	887,194	...	...	...	9	9	...	...	...	9
	Total Punjab	22,656	5,496,185	41,586	5,853	47,441	9	47,450	1,463	11,587	13,052	60,492	
Central Provinces.													
1	Saugor ...	4,007	591,743	23,778	2,345	26,123	...	26,123	5,709	8,044	13,753	39,876	
2	Damah ...	2,831	325,613	38,768	5,940	44,708	...	44,708	1,806	11,890	13,696	58,472	
3	Jabalpur ...	3,948	748,146	29,718	3,698	33,416	...	33,416	4,247	23,201	27,448	60,864	
4	Mandia ...	5,047	339,373	10,363	1,611	11,974	...	11,974	878	3,098	3,976	15,950	
5	Seoni ...	3,206	370,767	5,265	1,067	6,332	...	6,332	841	2,251	3,092	9,424	
6	Narsinghpur ...	1,916	367,026	22,214	3,161	25,375	...	25,375	2,583	4,680	8,263	33,638	
7	Hoshangabad ...	4,749	529,945	30,674	5,400	36,074	...	36,074	1,399	3,303	4,702	40,776	
8	Nimar ...	3,357	253,486	314	55	369	...	369	317	717	1,034	1,403	
9	Betul ...	3,824	323,196	9,320	716	10,036	...	10,036	228	2,038	2,266	12,302	
10	Chhindwara ...	4,630	407,494	14,798	1,491	16,289	...	16,289	574	2,096	2,670	18,959	
11	Nagpur ...	3,831	757,862	11,983	2,556	14,539	...	14,539	1,985	561	2,546	17,085	
12	Chanda ...	10,749	697,610	9	...	9	...	9	...	...	...	9
13	Bhandara ...	3,968	742,850	21,877	3,304	25,181	...	25,181	936	6,921	7,857	33,038	
14	Balaghat ...	3,139	383,331	38,378	8,121	46,499	...	46,499	911	10,530	11,441	57,940	
15	Raipur ...	11,724	1,584,427	47,295	14,326	61,621	...	61,621	4,885	9,299	14,184	75,805	
16	Bilaspur ...	8,341	1,164,158	37,792	4,612	42,404	...	42,404	6,230	47,649	53,879	96,299	
17	Sambalpur ...	4,948	796,413	529	35	564	...	564	...	...	...	564
18	Waidha ...	2,428	400,854	2,035	12	2,047	...	2,047	...	...	...	2,047
	Total Central Provinces	86,643	10,784,294	345,110	58,450	403,560	...	403,560	33,529	137,251	170,780	574,340	
Burma.													
1	Meiktila ...	3,000	206,650	...	...	6,834	...	6,834	...	1,385	1,385	8,219
2	Myingyan ...	3,737	351,411	...	...	13,424	...	13,424	...	3,628	3,628	17,052
3	Yamethin ...	5,550	217,011	...	...	...	...	...	...	329	329	329
	Total Burma	12,287	775,072	...	...	20,258	...	20,258	...	5,342	5,342	25,600
	GRAND TOTAL—Carried over	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,946,050	...	...	1,372,221	3,318,271

* Includes 64,481 relieved from the Indian Charitable Relief Fund.

† Exclusive of 5,717 on relief works of Family Domains of the Maharaja of Benares.

‡ There were also 38,569 persons employed on railway and other private works.

Statement showing numbers of persons on relief works and in receipt of gratuitous relief in the districts affected by scarcity in India—(District details)—continued.

No.	Name of Province and District.	Area.	Population.	FOR THE WEEK ENDING THE 24TH JULY 1897.								GRAND TOTAL.
				RELIEF WORKS.			Number on test works.	Total on works.	GRATUITOUS AND SPECIAL RELIEF.			
				Workers.	Dependants.	Total.			Poor-houses or kitchens.	Village doles and other relief.	Total.	
	Brought forward ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,946,050	...	...	1,372,321	3,318,371
	<i>Berar.</i>											
1	Akola ...	2,659	574,782	...	...	11,168	...	11,168	1,805	2,913	4,718	15,886
2	Basim ...	2,956	398,181	...	...	1,181	...	1,181	262	238	500	1,681
3	Ellichpur ...	2,623	315,798	...	...	1,913	...	1,913	568	2,019	2,587	4,500
4	Amraoti ...	2,759	655,645	...	...	2,762	...	2,762	944	541	1,485	4,247
5	Buldana ...	2,809	481,021	...	...	289	...	289	669	...	669	958
6	Wun ...	3,911	471,613	...	...	5,421	...	5,421	...	1,095	1,095	6,516
	Total Berar ...	17,717	2,897,040	...	...	22,734	...	22,734	4,248	6,806	11,054	33,788
	<i>Hyderabad.</i>											
1	Gulbarga ...	4,064	649,258	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
2	Raichur ...	3,661	512,455	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
3	Naldurg ...	4,010	649,273	...	...	11,561	...	11,561	...	800	800	12,361
4	Lingsagar ...	4,907	630,014	...	...	...	...	...	...	566	566	566
5	Bir ...	4,460	642,722	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
6	Mahbubnagar ...	6,497	674,649	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Total Hyderabad...	27,599	3,748,370	...	...	11,561	...	11,561	...	1,366	1,366	12,927
	<i>Central India.</i>											
1	Bundelkhand ...	11,323	1,737,606	...	...	24,877	...	24,877	...	5,884	5,884	30,761
2	Baghelkhand ...	25,846	3,482,351	...	...	30,851	...	30,851	...	5,094	5,094	35,945
3	Gwalior ...	10,227	1,508,053	...	...	17,447	...	17,447	...	9,541	9,541	26,988
	Total Central India ...	47,396	6,728,010	...	...	73,175	...	73,175	...	20,519	20,519	93,694
	<i>Rajputana.</i>											
1	Marwar ...	34,963	2,519,868	...	...	(not reported)	...	...	...	...	...	...
2	Dholpur ...	1,154	279,890	...	...	1,879	...	1,879	...	1,439	1,439	3,318
3	Bikanir ...	22,340	832,000	...	...	5,505	...	5,505	...	1,621	1,621	7,126
4	Jaisalmir ...	16,062	115,500	...	...	424	...	424	...	210	210	634
5	Kotah ...	3,784	526,262	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
6	Bhurtpur ...	1,982	640,303	...	...	...	...	...	...	458	458	458
7	Tonk ...	1,113	198,934	...	...	1,595	...	1,595	...	2,612	2,612	4,207
8	Deoli ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8	8	8
9	Bundi ...	2,220	295,675	...	...	63	...	63	...	298	298	361
	Total Rajputana ...	83,618	5,408,432	...	...	9,466	...	9,466	...	6,646	6,646	16,112
	GRAND TOTAL FOR ALL PROVINCES ...	565,898	125,340,908	...	...	...	...	2,062,986	...	...	1,411,806	3,474,792

NOTE.—The total area and total population of each district in which any relief operations are in progress are given in this statement, though in many cases distress is confined to a small area of the district.

The date at the head of the table is the date of the *Gazette of India* in which the Provincial totals were published. The figures however, actually show the numbers on relief on the preceding Saturday. All previous returns should be read subject to a similar correction.

* Besides 6,287 on ordinary works.

Statement showing numbers of persons on relief works and in receipt of gratuitous relief in the districts affected by scarcity in India—(District details)—concluded.

No.	Name of Province and District.	Area.	Population.	FOR THE WEEK ENDING THE 5TH FEBRUARY 1898.								GRAND TOTAL.
				RELIEF WORKS.			Number on test works.	Total on works.	GRATUITOUS AND SPECIAL RELIEF.			
				Workers.	Depend-ants.	Total.			Poor-houses or kitchens.	Village doles and other relief.	Total.	
<i>Madras.</i>												
1	Nellore	8,765	1,463,736	4,664	...	4,664	...	4,664	117	33	150	4,814
	Total Madras ...	8,765	1,463,736	4,664	...	4,664	...	4,664	117	33	150	4,814
<i>Bombay.</i>												
1	Sholapur	4,542	750,689	8,624	571	9,195	...	9,195	...	2,650	2,650	11,845
	Total Bombay ...	4,542	750,689	8,624	571	9,195	...	9,195	...	2,650	2,650	11,845
<i>Central Provinces.</i>												
2	Bhandara	3,968	742,850	...	...	...	...	...	53	...	53	53
3	Balaghat	3,139	383,331	...	...	...	...	...	99	...	99	99
4	Raipur	11,724	1,584,427	...	...	...	...	...	203	...	203	203
4	Bilaspur	8,341	1,164,158	...	...	...	...	...	225	...	225	225
	Total Central Provinces	27,172	3,874,766	...	...	...	...	13,859	580	...	580	580

NOTE.—The total area and total population of each district in which any relief operations are in progress are given in this statement, though in many cases distress is confined to a small area of the district.
The date at the head of the table is the date of the *Gazette of India* in which the Provincial totals were published. The figures, however, actually show the numbers on relief the preceding Saturday. All previous returns should be read subject to a similar correction.