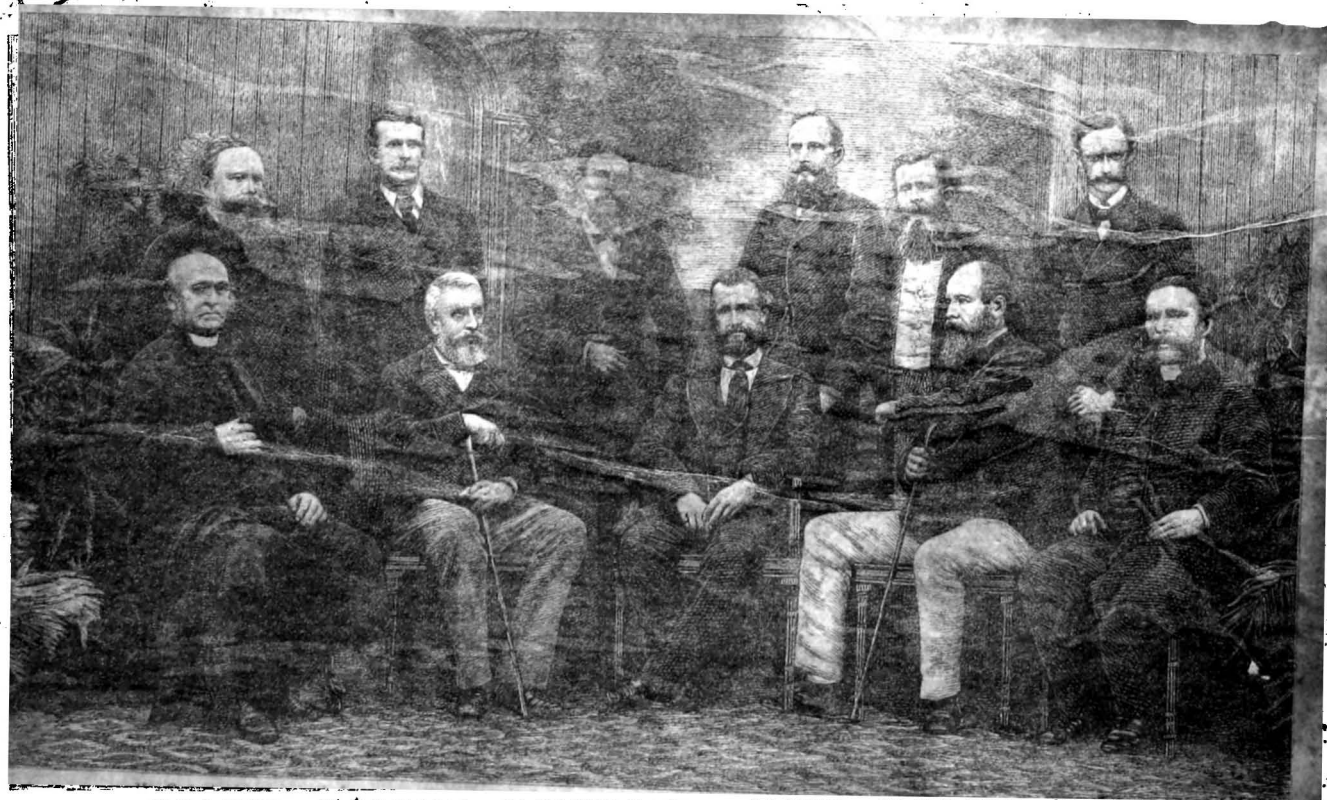


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**Wah Guruki Fatê!**  
**Victory to the Guru!**

*In sending this book out into the world,  
I desire to record my thanks to Mr.  
Ramesh Chunder Dutt for his constant  
interest and encouragement, and also to  
Prof. Patrick Geddes, who, by teaching  
me to understand a little of Europe,  
indirectly gave me a method by which to  
read my Indian experiences.*

NIVEDITA,

*Of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda.*

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A Tour  
Through the Famine Districts  
of India

A Tour  
Through the Famine Districts  
of India

BY

F. H. S. MEREWETHER

REUTER'S SPECIAL FAMINE COMMISSIONER

LONDON  
A. D. INNES AND CO.  
BEDFORD STREET

1898



RICHARD CLAY & SONS, LIMITED,  
LONDON & BUNGAY

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365



PLAGUE SIGNS.

# THROUGH THE FAMINE DISTRICTS

## PART I

### THE BOMBAY PRESIDENCY

#### CHAPTER I

##### BOMBAY

*Urbs prima in Indis* is the proud motto which its citizens claim for Bombay the Beautiful. It is the front door of India, as Aden can only be looked upon as the garden-gate leading to our vast Eastern possessions. Any one approaching from the sea cannot fail to be struck with the beauty of the islands and their surroundings. The island of Bombay, or, as the natives call it, Mambé, is flat with the exception of the Cumballa and Malabar Hills. The latter trends upward till it culminates in Malabar Point—the cold-weather residence of the Governor. The tropical foliage, the palms which stand up against the sky-line on the hills, and hide, in the lower ground below, the populous quarter of Girgaum, add to the charm, while the background formed by the deep red ghauts across the harbour gives a picture which impresses itself indelibly on the mind of the traveller, to whom the glories of the sunny East

have hitherto been more or less of a sealed book. The public buildings which line the shore and which face you on approaching Bombay, though somewhat bizarre and incongruous in detail, if taken as a whole form a pleasing view. The whole scene is enhanced during the rains by the bright green of the Maidans, amidst which the great public buildings and Government offices stand enframed. The picturesque thatch bungalows of the Marine Lines in the foreground form too a striking contrast to the massive buildings behind.

These old relics of a bygone time have, however, since the plague devastated the city, been razed to the ground, and their sites present now a series of immense rubbish heaps. The whole quarter, by orders of the Government, has been demolished and burnt. Apart from the inconveniences and the perpetual growls of the inhabitants, these old bungalows marked an epoch and formed a landmark in the history of Bombay, the removal of which the conservative lover of the antique will deplore. Sanitary science, alas, is a stern task-master, and will brook no interference from insanitary and dilapidated picturesqueness.

The fiat went forth, and at one fell swoop the dear old Marine Lines passed away. Many and pleasant are the associations with these time-worn and worm-eaten homes; and the messes of the Marine Light Infantry and the native Bombay Regiment will no longer re-echo with the merry voices of the gay subaltern and his friends. We shall probably have some solid stone, *pucca*-built quarters, which will be as ugly as the old bungalows were pleasing to the eye. How many joyous evenings have we not spent in these old homes! Never again shall we lounge after dinner in the long chair,

to the obscurity of the Appendices. Should even one heart be touched and one purse-string loosened for the benefit of the naked and starving myriads of Hindustan, the author of this work will feel that his reward is far greater than he deserves.

THE AUTHOR.

*Savage Club,*  
*Nov. 1897.*

A small portion of the matter herein has already seen the light in a series of articles contributed to the *Times of India*, and the Author begs here to express his thanks to the Editor for his courtesy in permitting the use of this material, which has been incorporated in the present work.

## To the Mother

WHO BORE ME, AND WHO HAS BORNE WITH MY VAGARIES  
FOR MORE YEARS THAN I CARE TO COUNT, THESE  
RECENT EXPERIENCES OF HER WANDERING BOY  
ARE AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

BY THE AUTHOR.

*Savage Club, Nov. 1897.*

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## APPENDIX A

### SOME EXTRACTS FROM THE STATISTICAL GOVERNMENT REPORTS FOR THE LATTER END OF THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY

#### THE BOMBAY PRESIDENCY.

THE appended progress statement of relief measures during the week under report, shows a decrease of 7962 in the daily average number (237,057) of relief workers as compared with the previous week, but returns for some works in the Poona district have not been received. A new metal-collecting work has been opened in the Ahmednagar district. One small work has been started in Khandesh, and a sum of Rs. 6000 has been allotted for it. Proposals have been submitted to Government regarding a project for a storage reservoir on the Pravara river in the Ahmednagar district, and pending the preparation of detailed plans and estimates, authority has been given to commence such portions of the work as are suitable and needed for famine relief. The work is expected eventually to give employment to about 25,000 people. Government have had under their consideration a scheme for the employment of distressed weavers in making coarse cotton cloth to be used for the covering of relief-workers' huts, kitchens, and poor-houses in place of bamboo-matting. The scheme has been approved, subject to the following conditions:—

- (1) That coarse cloth is about as suitable as bamboo-matting for the purpose for which it is intended;
- (2) That the excess cost, if any, is probably not

greater than the excess of cost of employing weavers on ordinary works over the value of the work they will do on them ;

(3) That the course suggested is not likely to bring the bamboo-matting makers into as great difficulty as the weavers are in ;

(4) That structures which are not really needed are not made on this account.

From further reports received from officers of the Sanitary Department regarding the inspection of relief camps in the Ahmednagar, Nasik, and Bijapur districts, it appears that the general health of the workers and their condition continues to be satisfactory. On one of the works in Bijapur there were fifty female weavers, who were specially examined, and found to be in good health. The attention of the district officers has been drawn to certain defects in the sanitary arrangements at the camps.

The number of persons gratuitously relieved in villages or poor-houses during the week under report was 16,402, as compared with 13,128 in the preceding week. A further amount of Rs. 15,000 has been placed at the disposal of the Collector of Poona for expenditure on gratuitous relief, including doles to inferior village servants. Allotments of Rs. 15,000 and Rs. 8700 have also been sanctioned for kitchens in Poona and Khandesh respectively. Authority has been given to give jowari instead of flour, and the grain equivalent of the other items constituting the dole prescribed in Section 107 of the Famine Code, where such a course is found to be expedient.

An extra assignment of Rs. 15,000 has been made for takavi advances in the Kolaba district. The first instalment (Rs. 75,000) of a loan of three lacs of rupees applied for by the Administrator of the Jath State for expenditure on relief measures in that State, has been made available out of the funds at the disposal of this Government. The Collectors of the affected districts have been authorized under Section 145 (b) of the Code to confer on ordinary Mamlatdars and Mahalkaris the powers of a sub-divisional officer under the rules relating to takavi loans.

NUMBERS EMPLOYED ON RELIEF WORKS

District.	Number and class of relief or test works.	Number of persons employed on relief or test works.	Number of non-working children whose parents are employed on relief works, including women in charge, and other dependents.	Daily average number of persons relieved gratuitously in villages.
		Daily average number.	Daily average number.	Daily average number.
Bijapur	Fifteen Relief works under Public Agency	59,669	22,162	} 1
	Six Relief works under Civil Agency (including two Local Boards and Municipal works)	1,480	368	
Sholapur	Twenty Relief works under Public Works Agency	62,437	32,140	} 6,138 (in 30 vil.)
	One Relief work under Civil Agency	85	...	
A h m e d - nagar	Nineteen Relief works under Public Works Agency	47,244	25,488	796 (in 402 vil.)
Poona ...	Four Relief works under Public Works Agency	5,990	2,966	} 2,776 (in 137 vil.)
	Seven Relief works under Civil Agency	79	...	
Nasik .....	Twelve Relief works under Public Works Agency	13,953	7,017	112 (in 5 vil.)
Satara .....	Six Relief works under Public Works Agency	21,209	4,404	13 (in 8 vil.)
Khandesh	Seven Relief works under Public Works Agency	15,551	6,424	...
	Five Relief works under Civil Agency	4,786	1,774	...
	Three Ordinary works used as Relief works <sup>2</sup>	2,318	1,525	...
Belgaum	Two Relief works under Public Works Agency	2,095	641	} 351 (in 30 vil.)
	One Test work under Public Works Agency	124	70	
	Two Local Board and Municipal works under Civil Agency	37	...	...

<sup>1</sup> 6175 (in 677 villages), including 1394 relieved by Municipalities.

<sup>2</sup> Including two Local Fund works.

The Police Force in the Bijapur, Sholapur, and Belgaum districts has been further strengthened, and an Assistant Superintendent of Police has been temporarily appointed for duty in the Bijapur district.

*Bombay.*—Rain fell in the Upper Sindh frontier. The standing crops have been slightly damaged by drought in three talukas of Karachi, by locusts in two of Karachi, by frost in two of Karachi and three of Hyderabad; otherwise they are thriving in Sindh and Gujerat, but indifferent elsewhere. Crops recently sown have withered, or are withering, in Nasik, Ratnagiri, Poona, Ahmednagar, Sholapur, Belgaum, and Dharwar. Autumn harvesting has been completed except in Khandesh. Reaping of the late crops has commenced in Panch Mahals, Broach, Surat, Thana, Khandesh, Nasik, Ahmednagar, Sholapur, Satara, Bijapur, and Dharwar. Fodder is sufficient except in the Deccan, Karnatak, Shikarpur, and parts of Karachi and Baroda. The grain supply is generally sufficient in the affected districts. Cotton-picking continues in Broach, Surat, and Rajkot. The condition of the agricultural stock is deteriorating in Poona, Ahmednagar, Sholapur, and Bijapur; but is healthy elsewhere, except in parts of Sindh, Khandesh, Nasik, Ratnagiri, and Kanara. Prices are rising in parts of Kolaba, Ratnagiri, Poona, and Sholapur; falling in parts of Kolaba, Poona, Sholapur, and Bijapur; stationary in Surat and in parts of Poona and Bijapur. The prices of staple food-grains in the affected districts are—Dharwar, 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ ; Belgaum, 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ ; Sholapur, 11; Bijapur, 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ ; Ahmednagar, 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ; Poona, 10; Nasik and Satara, 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ ; Khandesh, 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ ; Kolaba, 8 $\frac{3}{4}$  seers per rupee.

#### THE PUNJAUB.

*Hissar.*—Fodder stock exhausted; condition of cattle very bad. Prices high. Gram, 9 $\frac{1}{2}$  seers; jowari, 10 seers. Canal crops in fair condition. Prospects average; stocks of grain exhausted, grain being imported from Sindh.

	Men.	Women.	Children.
Relief workers ... ..	12,678	12,445	9,053
Dependents ... ..	307	379	8,466
Relieved in poor-houses	38	29	50
Other relief ... ..	830	967	442

*Rohtak.*—Fodder getting scarce and dear. Prices slightly rising. Wheat, 8 seers; jowari, 9½ seers. Crops on well and canal lands in good condition, except on brackish wells of Jhajjar. Rain much wanted. Strong westerly wind blew throughout the week. Canal irrigated crops likely to suffer therefrom. Stocks of food-grains seem sufficient.

*Gurgaon.*—Fodder and condition of cattle fair. Wheat, 8 seers; bajra, 8½ seers. Extra spring sowings continue in parts. Late dry land crops suffering from high west winds and want of rain.

*Delhi.*—Fodder scarce, condition of cattle poor. Crops on irrigated area fair. Unirrigated suffering from want of rain. Stocks are being exhausted, but imports are meeting requirements.

*Karnal.*—Fodder scarce in parts. Wheat 7½ seers; gram, 8½; maize, 9 seers. Prospects on irrigated land good, but on dry land poor. Ploughings for extra spring crops.

*Umballa.*—Supply of fodder sufficient. Condition of cattle good. Crops generally in good condition.

*Jullundur.*—Supply of fodder scarce. Prices abnormally high, and still rising. Wheat, 8½ seers; gram, 10 seers; maize, 11½ seers. Prospects of the rabi crop favourable. Standing crops fair. Stocks of grain reduced but not insufficient.

*Ludhiana.*—About 150 employed upon test works.

*Ferozepur.*—Supply of fodder and condition of cattle fair. Damage still reported to rape and gram crops by caterpillar (sundi); stocks of food-grain sufficient.

*Mooltan.*—Supply of fodder scarce in parts. Prices high, condition of crops average.

*Lahore.*—Scarce in parts, cattle getting lean. Prices high. Ploughing and sowing going on. Condition of crops average. Land is being prepared for-kharif autumn crops.

*Amritsar.*—Supply of fodder scarce, but recent rains will improve. Condition of cattle good. Prices high. Wheat, 8½ seers; maize, 11 seers. Stocks of food-grain insufficient with cultivators.

*Sialkot.*—Supply of green fodder improving. Condition of cattle average. Prospects good, extra spring crops being sown.

*Gujerat.*—Average number of relief workers, 31,108; dependents, 18,290; otherwise relieved, 1,292. Maize-flour, 8 seers.

*Gujranwalla.*—Supply of fodder scarce, cattle getting lean. Sowings of extra spring crops going on. Standing crops doing well. Stocks low with zemindars; ploughings commenced.

*Shahpur.*—Supply of fodder scarce, cattle out of condition. Prices rising; rain needed.

*Rawul Pindi.*—Supply of fodder insufficient, except in Murree. Prices falling. Prospects good; stocks of grain sufficient.

*Peshawur.*—Supply of fodder sufficient; condition of cattle good. Prices rising. Prospects improved. Sowings of extra spring crops are in progress. Stocks of food-grain average.

*Dera Ismail Khan.*—Supply of fodder scarce; cattle generally lean. Prices high. Conditions of standing crops average. Rain wanted.

#### GENERAL REMARKS.

No rain. Prices are generally high, and are showing a tendency to rise again in most districts; they remained stationary in Mooltan, Lahore, Sialkot and Rawul Pindi districts. Wheat is selling from  $7\frac{1}{2}$  to 10 seers, gram  $8\frac{1}{4}$  to  $10\frac{1}{2}$ , bulrush millet  $8\frac{3}{4}$  to  $11\frac{1}{2}$ , great millet  $9\frac{1}{2}$  to 11, and maize 9 to  $11\frac{3}{4}$  seers per rupee. Ploughings and sowings of extra spring crops in progress. Land is being prepared for the next autumn. Irrigated crops are generally reported in good condition, except in parts of Rohtak, where well-water is brackish. Prospects are said to be good to average. Crops on dry land are still suffering from want of more rain in certain districts. More rain is still wanted in the Delhi division as well as in the Shahpur and Dera Ismail Khan districts. The stock of grain has been exhausted in Hissar and Delhi, where imports are meeting requirements. The stock with the cultivators of Amritsar and Gujranwalla is insufficient. Rape and gram crops are still being damaged by caterpillars (sundi) in Ferozepur. Westerly winds are blowing in the Rohtak and Gurgaon

districts, and are likely to damage the crops. Cattle are generally reported in poor condition. They are said to be good to fair in Gurgaon, Umballa, Ferozepur, Amritsar, and Sialkot. Six cattle died of starvation in Rohtak. Fodder is sufficient in Umballa, and scarce elsewhere. The average daily number of relief workers and dependents are as follows:—

	Men.	Women.	Children.
Relief workers ... ..	18,452	18,028	12,212
Dependents ... ..	325	416	9,426
Relieved in poor-houses	348	349	247
Otherwise relieved ... ..	2,037	2,448	1,101
Test workers ... ..	266	152	120

In addition to the above, the number for which the details are given by the District Officer is as follows:— Relief workers, 31,108; dependents, 18,290; and otherwise relieved, 1292. The total number of workers, dependents, etc., in this province was 116,000, against 110,000 last week.

*Prices of staple food-grain on which famine is reckoned.*  
—Rohtak, gram 10 and great millet 11 seers; Gurgaon, bulrush millet 8½, and Delhi 8½; Karnal, gram 8½, maize 9; Umballa, maize 10; Ferozepur, great millet 12; Mooltan, wheat 9½; Lahore, wheat 10 and maize 10½; Gujerat, maize flour 8 seers per rupee.

## THE FAMINE IN THE NORTH-WEST PROVINCES

### MEERUT DIVISION.

*Dehra Dun.*—There is sufficient demand for labour in Dehra tahsil; agriculturists in the southern khatts of Jaunsar-Bawar have benefited by the rainfall during the month. The general outlook has much improved during the month.

*Saharanpur.*—The condition of the agricultural and labouring population is fairly good, and there is at present sufficient work for labourers in cutting and pressing sugar-cane.

*Muzaffarnagar.*—The condition of the labouring and agricultural classes is fair.

*Meerut.*—Labour is abundant. Irrigation of rabi and sugar-cane pressing are causing great demand for labour.

*Bulandshahr.*—The condition of the labouring and agricultural population is fair. High prices of staples are generally complained of.

*Aligarh.*—The condition of the labouring and agricultural population is fair.

#### AGRA DIVISION.

*Muttra.*—There is very little work to be had, and the number of labourers on relief works is increasing very much. So far many cultivators have not been driven on to the works. Pressure of scarcity is distinctly on the increase.

*Agra.*—Landlords and agricultural tenants are fairly well off. Small artisans and hired labourers are for the most part in want of employment, and have begun flocking to the relief works.

*Farukhabad.*—The condition of the poorer classes is not satisfactory. Labourers are provided with work on test relief and intermediate relief works. The condition of the agricultural population is satisfactory.

*Mainpuri.*—Agriculturists are busy in field work, and the recent rainfall has put them in heart. The production of carrots and potatoes has also been a relief to them. The small number of labourers at work on the Batesar-Shikohabad road shows that no pressing want is felt yet. Poor-houses have been opened at Mainpuri and Shikohabad for the relief of paupers, and gratuitous relief is being distributed under the Famine Code. These forms of relief are considered sufficient for the present.

*Etawah.*—The condition of agriculturists, where means of irrigation are available, is excellent. Elsewhere they suffer in general with the other population from the pressure of scarcity. Labourers are getting labour at ordinary or at a little lower rate of wages according to demand, but the demand is not ample everywhere. People have come in large numbers to the relief work, Etawah-Kalpi road.



*Etah.*—The condition of the agricultural and labouring population is fair at present except in Aliganj tahsil. The labouring classes find plenty of employment in fields throughout Kasganj tahsil, but there is some want of employment in Etah tahsil, and considerable want in Aliganj and part of Jalesar. Test relief works are supplying the necessary employment.

## ROHILKHAND DIVISION.

*Barilly.*—The late fall of rain has thrown a considerable number of labourers out of employment. Four test works and two poor-houses are open in the district. A fifth test work will probably be started by the middle of this month. The number of labourers on test works on January 31, 1897, was 5238, and the number of inmates in poor-houses was 230. Relief was also afforded to *purdah nashin* women in the city and district from private subscriptions. The condition of the people is generally fair.

*Bijnor.*—Cultivators and labourers are engaged in cane pressing. At the end of January there was a great rush on poor-houses and test works, probably due to slackness of time and the pooriness of the cane crop.

*Budaun.*—The fall of rain has rendered irrigation less necessary, and thrown a number of agricultural labourers out of employ who are now working on the test works. So far cultivators have not come to these works. Some of the crops will be ripening in about five weeks, after which the present scarcity will largely disappear.

*Moradabad.*—Cane pressing affords employment to labourers and agriculturists. At the end of the month there were 2428 persons on test works and 394 persons in poor-houses. The numbers will probably increase as work on sugar-cane cutting and pressing ceases.

*Shahjahanpur.*—The numbers on test works are increasing, and the four existing test works are about to be converted into intermediate works. Relief in other forms is also being distributed.

*Pilibhit.*—Four test relief works are open with an attendance of some 8000 persons, and the numbers

employed are rising as cane pressing nears its conclusion. Cultivators are not moving from their villages, and the people generally are in good heart, though the high prices of food-grains are severely felt.

#### ALLAHABAD DIVISION.

*Cawnpore.*—The condition of the labouring population has become worse, owing to the recent rainfall having checked irrigation and thrown them out of employment.

*Fatehpur.*—Condition of people is not satisfactory owing to unfavourable season. The agricultural population and labouring classes are generally provided with work on canal and intermediate works. There are three poor-houses open in the district. The high prices of staples form the chief and only cause of general complaint.

*Banda.*—There is no improvement in the condition of the people. The labouring classes are the greatest sufferers, and the agricultural classes are not much better off than the labouring classes. The high prices are generally felt throughout the district.

*Hamirpur.*—The labouring population is suffering from high prices and from lack of employment. Six relief works are in progress, and the number employed on them is rapidly increasing. There were 38,400 persons, with 11,219 dependents, on these works on January 30, 1897. Numbers in five poor-houses amounted to 4462, and those relieved under other provisions of the Famine Code to 5920.

*Allahabad.*—Numbers in need of relief are increasing. On the 30th of the month there were on works under the Public Works Department 103,650 workers with 26,888 dependents. On village works there were 5502 persons. Poor-houses contained 7923 paupers, while about 12,500 persons were relieved under other provisions of the Famine Code.

*Jhansi.*—The condition of the labouring class is pitiable, but that of the agricultural population is somewhat better. The district is in a most critical state.

*Jalaun.*—The failure of successive crops and high

prices of food-grains have reduced the agricultural and labouring population to great straits. The distress is rapidly extending, and the numbers on relief works are increasing. There are seven relief works open in the district, and relief is also largely given in other forms.

## BENARES DIVISION.

*Benares.*—Agricultural and labouring population find work, and their condition is satisfactory. Paupers are immigrating from neighbouring districts. Four test relief works have been opened, and they are attracting labourers.

*Ghazipur.*—Field work and the railway are providing for labourers.

*Ballia.*—The condition of the agricultural class is fair. Labour is sufficient.

## GORAKHPUR DIVISION.

*Gorakhpur.*—Tahsils Gorakhpur, Bangsaon and Hata in whole, and pargana Haveli of Maharajganj tahsil have already been declared distressed. The remaining two parganas of Maharajganj tahsil and the whole tahsils of Deoria and Padrauna are under observation. Relief works are open in the distressed area, and intermediate works are in progress in the area under observation.

*Basti.*—Work is generally available, and the condition of labourers and agriculturists is not very bad. There are eight ordinary works with 1977 men as average, and four poor-houses with 1181 inmates.

*Azamgarh.*—Report not received.

## KUMAUN DIVISION.

*Almora.*—The condition of the labouring and agricultural population is good.

*Garhwal.*—The condition of the labouring and agricultural population is generally good. There is no apprehension of scarcity owing to the good rains. The

people from the south where the kharif was scanty will probably purchase from the northern parganas where it was good.

*Naini Tal.*—There is plenty of employment for the labouring and agricultural classes, who, though they feel the high prices of food-grains, yet are not by any means in a bad way.

#### LUCKNOW DIVISION.

*Lucknow.*—Distress among the agricultural population was acute. Ten relief works under the control of the Public Works Department are in progress: three in the city and seven in the district. More works will shortly be started. Gratuitous relief under chapters v. and x. of the Famine Code has been distributed in the city and district. Three poor-houses are open. State kitchens are attached to them. The number of inmates in these poor-houses on February 1, 1897, was 2106.

*Unao.*—The condition of the labouring and agricultural population is not good.

*Sitapur.*—The condition of the labouring class, as judged from the men coming to relief works, is fair on the whole. Seven relief works were open during the month, and more are about to be opened, as almost all the seven works are full.

*Hardoi.*—The labouring classes and agriculturists are generally very badly off. No improvement is expected in the current month.

*Kheri.*—The condition of the labouring classes is not satisfactory. Five works are open in tahsil Mohamdi and two in Lakhimpur tahsil. The total number of persons on them during the month was 28,932.

#### FYZABAD DIVISION.

*Fyzabad.*—The condition of the labouring classes necessitates help being afforded to them till the harvest is ripe. Six intermediate works, one District Board test relief work, and a number of village works are open. Numbers on all these works are steadily increasing, as was expected. Numbers in poor-houses

have also increased, but suitable inmates are being drafted to their villages, and relief given to them at their houses.

*Gonda.*—The pressure brought by the high prices and bad times on the labouring population is greatly relieved by the employment which the people can get on the railway and on intermediate and village works.

*Bahraich.*—No complaints have been heard regarding the state of the labouring and agricultural population. Labour is available on railway and on roads in all tahsils.

*Sultanpur.*—There is a continually increasing demand for employment everywhere, met by public and other works. The labouring classes are feeling the pinch and often look pulled down, but there is plenty of employment supplied for them, and there is not much longer to wait now before the rabi harvest is reaped. It is unusually forward everywhere.

*Partabgarh.*—The condition of the labouring and agricultural population is not very satisfactory. Labouring classes are receiving relief from test works, etc. There are three poor-houses, and three test and four famine relief works open in the district.

*Bara Banki.*—The agricultural population is hopeful owing to the bright prospects of the rabi crops. Relief works and small village works open all over the district are giving employment to the poorer classes. Numbers employed on relief work during the month were 24,220, and those relieved on small village works were 9366; 1130 persons were relieved in poor-houses, and 1939 persons were in receipt of gratuitous relief.

#### BENGAL.

Good and general rain fell in Bihar and Chota Nagpur, and showers in North and South-west Bengal. The rain has benefited the standing crops, but has slightly injured the pulses, which are ripe or being harvested. It has also facilitated the ploughing for *aus* (autumn rice) and jute, which is in progress in several districts of Bengal Proper. In Palamau there was a severe storm with hail on the 11th, and some

damage to the spring crops is reported. The pressing of sugar-cane is going on. In the distressed districts the price of the food-grains on which the relief wages are based are—Nadia (common rice) 9 seers, Khulna (common rice) 10 seers, Rajshahi (common rice)  $9\frac{1}{2}$  seers, Patna (common rice)  $10\frac{1}{2}$  seers, Shahabad  $10\frac{1}{2}$  seers, Saran (Indian-corn) 9 seers, 14 chittaks; Champaran (Indian-corn)  $10\frac{3}{4}$  seers, Muzaffarpur (Indian-corn) 10 seers, Darbhanga (common rice) 9 seers and (Indian-corn) 10 seers, Bhagulpur (common rice) 10 seers per rupee. These figures show a slight rise in Saran, Muzaffarpur, and Darbhanga, and a slight fall in Champaran.

#### MADRAS.

There was no rain except a few trivial showers in parts: but since the close of the week rain has been general over portions of the Presidency south of Madras, but amounts are not yet fully known. The water-supply continues to decrease and is very deficient in parts of the Circars and Deccan, and it is growing scanty for drinking even in parts; elsewhere the supply is generally fair. Some cultivation is still proceeding under large irrigation works, channels, and wells. The standing crop in the Carnatic, Central, Southern, and West Coast districts is generally in fair condition, and the recent rain should benefit the cotton crop where it is grown in them. The standing crop in the Deccan is drying up. Harvests are proceeding with fair to moderate yield over the southern half of the Presidency, elsewhere they are generally poor or bad. Pasturage is decreasing, but may revive somewhat where rain has fallen. Fodder is generally available, though dear in many places and very scarce in parts of the Deccan. In the latter cattle are suffering; elsewhere they are generally in good condition. Prices have risen in the Circars and in parts of the Deccan, Central, and West Coast districts; elsewhere they are almost stationary or fluctuating irregularly. Prices by which wages are regulated are—Kurnool  $13\frac{1}{2}$ ; Bellary and Anantapur 14; Cuddapah 17; and Ganjam  $12\frac{1}{2}$  seers per rupee.

## THE FAMINE RELIEF WORKS.

The following was the total number of persons receiving relief in India at the end of February :—

Name of Province.	Preceding Week.			Present Week.		
	Relief Works.	Gratuitous Relief.	Total.	Relief Works.	Gratuitous Relief.	Total.
Madras .....	37,389	10,774	48,163	43,508	11,595	55,103
Bombay ...	348,572	13,126	361,698	342,036	16,402	358,438
Bengal .....	265,347	101,220	366,567	300,763	134,270	435,033
North-Western Provinces and Oudh .....	1,126,289	278,247	1,404,536	1,250,258	279,673	1,529,931
Punjab ...	79,664	26,575	106,239	78,712	30,892	109,604
Central Provinces..	251,796	64,817	316,613	238,299	68,749	307,048
Burmah.....	27,225	5,857	33,082	23,915	5,463	29,378
Berar.....	2,152	...	2,152	5,883	...	5,883
Central India .....	69,321	4,344	73,665	90,930	4,897	95,827
Rajputana...	24,327	2,819	27,146	19,492	2,348	21,840
Grand Total	2,232,082	507,779	2,739,861	2,393,796	554,289	2,948,085

## APPENDIX B

### NOTE BY THE HONOURABLE THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR ON THE GHAGGAR CANALS RELIEF WORKS

1. I VISITED the Ghaggar Canals Relief Works on Saturday in company with the Commissioner, the Deputy-Commissioner, Colonel Jacob, Superintendent Engineer, and the officers of the Public Works Department employed on the works, and Dr. Roe, Sanitary Commissioner. We rode down the alignment of the southern canal, seeing the people of two of the camps on that canal at work, and then crossing the Ghaggar came up the alignment of the northern canal and saw the work of two camps there.

2. The workers have come in in numbers, and with a rapidity beyond what was anticipated, and the Public Works Department officers who have charge of all the arrangements, the Commissioner and Deputy-Commissioner exercising only the supervision contemplated by the code, have had a very difficult task in settling such vast numbers down, but in spite of their being very short-handed have succeeded in doing it far better than could have been expected, and everything seems to me to be now on a satisfactory footing, except as regards two important matters, to which I shall presently refer, and which I hope, by giving the Public Works Department officers more assistance, it will be possible to get right.

The arrangements for taking on the new arrivals and setting them to work seem to be good, and no one appears to be kept waiting. The Sanitary Commissioner remained behind when I left, and is to submit a report on the matters with which he is concerned; but so far



as he and I could see as we rode through the works, the people seemed to be in excellent health and good condition, and there was no sickness to speak of except five or six small-pox cases—one a very bad one, in a hospital we visited in the first camp. Dr. Roe is now about to arrange for vaccination. I learned that the people of the neighbouring villages, unlike those round the works in Gujerat, were unwilling to give shelter to the famine labourers, but shelter has been provided for them (and I was told for all of them) under *sirki* thatches, of which each family has one to itself. These thatches are similar to those under which Nuths and other similar wandering tribes ordinarily live, and, though they do not look so well as the regulation huts, a certain number of which have been erected here as in Gujerat, seem to afford sufficient shelter for people of this sort, and are preferred by them.

The supply of food is ample at present, and no difficulty is anticipated on that score.

3. Before I left Lahore the Chief Engineer represented to me that the Public Works Department establishments, which, as already stated, have charge of all the arrangements, could not cope with the work thrown on them, and he suggested that it might be well to confine them to their proper professional work, arranging to have everything else done by district officers and their establishments somewhat as proposed in the note on the Gugera Branch Famine Relief Work, written by Colonel Hutchinson in communication with him. I was inclined to agree with him in this; but when I came to discuss the matter with the Commissioner and Deputy-Commissioner and Colonel Jacob, I found that they were unanimously in favour of continuing the present system, and keeping the actual making of all arrangements in one hand, namely, that of the Public Works Department, and I eventually came to the conclusion that they were right. The fact is, that such things as the classification of labourers, the direction and supervision of the actual performance of the work, and the determination of the question as to how far short work shall be excused, and how far it shall be punished by a reduction of the wage, are matters that are

in practice most difficult to separate from the matters left to the Public Works Department by the Gugera Branch note, and are, moreover, in certain ways *more fit* to be dealt with by a Public Works Department official than by a district official. I have to-day had an opportunity of discussing the matter further with Colonel Hutchinson and Mr. Beresford, and they now accept this view, and I learn from Mr. Beresford that it is also the view of Colonel Marshall. I would therefore make no change on the Ghaggar Works in this respect. We shall no doubt have to strengthen the hands of the Public Works Department officers very much, and many of the additional staff to be taken on will be men of the class that ordinarily work under district officers; but I agree that they should be all put under the orders of the canal officers.

4. Now as to the two important points in which I found that the arrangements were not satisfactory. They are—

*First*, that the payment of the labourers is not sufficiently closely supervised; and

*Secondly*, that the out-turn of work is ridiculously short.

5. As regards the former point, I understand that the Public Works Department officers have been supervising the payment of wages as closely as it was possible for them to do, with the immense amount of other work thrown on them, but it is of course impossible for them to look into the account of every labourer and see that he gets what is due to him. What we want is a number of native officials, who I think, whether they are Public Works Department or Civil Department officials, should be of not lower rank than that of a *Tahsildár* or superior *Náib Tahsildár*, who would sit down on a section of the work with the muster rolls and reports of work done before them, who would call up the labourers one by one, tell each individual, or the members of each gang, what was due to him or them, and if there were any deductions, why they were made, and then see the money actually handed over. Whether the men who are employed for this work should be a few men specially employed solely on it, and doing it on one section of the

work one day and on another another day, or whether they should be men also employed in supervising work and should discharge this duty only on the particular section of the work which they supervise, I must leave to others to determine. All I insist on is, that wages should be paid in the way I describe in presence of an official of the rank I have mentioned. It is vain to hope that the labourers will get their wages right if the matter of actual payment is left in the hands of a small under-strapper subject to appeal and inquiry if he is accused of malpractices.

6. Then as to the second matter—the low out-turn of work—things are not as bad here as they seem to have been in the North-Western Provinces, where the out-turn amounted to only 4 to 6 cubic feet of earth-work per head per diem, but the out-turn of work is, as I say, ridiculously low. I was told on Saturday that the earth-work done up to this, instead of costing Rs. 2-8-0 per 1000 cubic feet, had cost something like Rs. 15. Now, of course, we all expect to have to pay a good deal more for work done on the famine relief system than for work done by petty contract, and moreover, large allowances must be made for the facts that it takes a certain time to get everything in proper train, that the work here has been going only a short time, and that the labourers have been coming in in larger numbers and with a rapidity which no one expected; but still the result is deplorably bad. I don't mean for one moment to blame the Public Works Department officers for this. I have heard nothing but praise of the energy of Mr. Petter and Mr. Wakefield, who went round the works with us, and Mr. Floyd, under whom they are working, is a man well known and well thought of in the Department.

7. The main cause, so far as I can judge, that has hitherto led to the failure in getting anything like a reasonable task done, is the utterly inadequate provision made for supervision. Any one going over the works can see this. No doubt, as Colonel Jacob pointed out more than once, the majority of the diggers are men unaccustomed to such work, and who could never be expected to do anything approaching a full task; but, as he also observed, they were not setting about the work in the

way they should. I think his impression was that they should be working "against a face," as it would be easy to teach them to do if we had better provision for supervision. Again, we many times observed carriers going off with their baskets not half full. Of course, when the work is measured up and found short, it is possible to reduce the wage if it is not already at the minimum, but it is in the case of a large proportion of the labourers already at the minimum, and even where it is not, the margin for reduction is so small that, especially where a number of the same family are working together, most of them at the lower rates, and earning perhaps ten or eleven annas a day among them, it is scarcely felt. What is needed is to have the work of every gang watched from hour to hour as it proceeds by some responsible man, who would be unencumbered by any clerical work, who would have a short length of the works assigned to him, over which he would be walking back and forward throughout the working hours, and who would show the diggers how to do their work and keep them up to it, who would see that the carriers went away with full baskets, and so on. We all, of course, knew that it would be a very difficult thing to get work done by people like those we have here to deal with on a system which requires us to take on every one who applies for work, and to give him enough to keep him in health, no matter how little work he does; but I don't think any of us realized before *how* difficult a thing it is, and what a very close degree of supervision it would require to get it done.

8. I should feel much obliged if Mr. Beresford and Colonel Marshall would visit the Ghaggar Works together, and devise in concert with Colonel Jacob a proper system of supervision. I have above referred chiefly to the *subordinate* supervision, which struck me as so much wanting, but I may add, that even as it is—and the works are still extending—the two Assistant-Engineers have too heavy a task thrown on them, and it is a question whether there ought not to be four of them instead of two; but I leave all details in the hands of Mr. Beresford, Colonel Marshall and Colonel Jacob. I am anxious that Colonel Marshall and Mr. Beresford

should go down to aid in the settlement of this matter, partly because we have up to this been somewhat unsettled as to the system on which we should work, and partly because the difficulty of getting a reasonable task done has turned out to be much greater than I anticipated, and I accordingly think it is well that the thing should be more fully considered than it has hitherto been.

9. I am aware that it has been suggested that we can never get such work done at anything less than an extravagant cost until we alter our relief work system, so as to attract professional diggers, and that may be true; but I am not prepared to accept it until we have given the relief works system a trial under really effective supervision. Meantime, however, I think that the suggestions made with a view to getting professional diggers on to the works should be considered.

Two such suggestions have been put forward. The first is, that we should let the diggers do as much work as they choose, and be paid for it at a certain rate; but it must be remembered that, though we should undoubtedly get a great deal more work done for the same amount of money by employing professional diggers in this way, each of these professional diggers would have to be paid the wages of about three of the diggers we now employ, and hence we should not by expending that amount of money be keeping so many men alive, and as we are bound to find work to keep alive every one who comes and asks for work, the sum total of our expenditure on famine relief would be largely increased. It may no doubt be that this system would be on the whole more economical. I mean, that under it the difference between the total amount expended on famine relief works, and the total value of the work turned out, would be greater than under the present system, however much improved; but still the fact would remain, that we should have to find a great deal more money, and I do not know what the Government of India might say to that.

In order to enable me to form a clearer idea of how

the matter stands, I should be glad to have, if it is possible to devise a way of making such a calculation, a calculation showing how we should stand after the proposed change as compared with the way we should stand under the existing system if we failed by extra supervision to bring the cost per 1000 cubic feet down below Rs. 15, if we succeeded in bringing it down to Rs. 10, and if we succeeded in bringing it down to Rs. 5. In making any such calculation, it must be borne in mind that the result of substituting skilled diggers for the present diggers is not unlikely to be, that we should have to put most of the latter on some work that would be absolutely useless, for there probably would not be work for them as carriers on the canal, and so far as that would be the case, the wages paid to them on that work would have to be charged to the account of the proposed system in making the comparison.

The other suggestion made is, that we should not go so far as above proposed, but should simply offer a digger four annas per diem if he dug 150 cubic feet. This would be a course intermediate between our present system and the other system just referred to, and the observations above made apply to it also, though to a less extent.

Both suggestions, I may observe, seem to proceed upon the supposition that under the existing system the diggers do not supply sufficient earth to keep the carriers employed, and it is a question how far that is really the case. I cannot venture to offer any opinion after a hurried visit of the sort I made, but I must say, it seemed to me that very commonly it was not the diggers but the carriers who were behindhand.

10. It has been proposed to try the two alternatives suggested on lengths say of 1000 feet of the work, and I will take upon myself to sanction such an experiment without referring to the Government of India; but I trust that it will be remembered that, as I said to the Public Works Department officers on the spot yesterday, the way to get *kudos* over this business is to make the system prescribed by the Government of India work, and yield something like a reasonable out-turn of work

by proper supervision. Any one of course can get full value for money spent on digging if he employs professional diggers and let them earn a full wage.

## GHAGGAR CANALS FAMINE RELIEF WORKS

*Note by the Chief Engineers, General and Irrigation Branches,  
Public Works Department.*

1. IN accordance with paragraph 8 of his Honour the Lieutenant-Governor's note of January 18, we visited the Ghaggar Canals Famine Relief Works on January 23, in company with Colonel Jacob, R.E., Superintending Engineer. We reached Sirsa with Colonel Jacob by the early morning train of the 23rd, and devoted the greater part of the day to a minute inspection of the works in the two first camps on the southern and northern canal. The 24th, Sunday, was devoted to the discussion with Colonel Jacob and the officers in immediate charge of the works, of various matters connected with the works, and with our observations of the previous day.

2. Two important points are brought to notice in his Honour's note, quoted, viz.—

*First*, that the payment of the labourers is not sufficiently closely supervised;

*Secondly*, that the out-turn of work is ridiculously short.

We propose dealing with the second point first, and beginning with an explanation of the system on which the work is being carried out at present and the tasks estimated.

3. The people are divided into gangs of from 80 to 120 under a gangman, who has a list of the people in his gang entered on the ordinary muster-roll form. The gang is divided into parties of 12 to 18, for each of which there is a representative man that may be called a working mate. This man is one of the diggers

selected by the rest of the party. A party of 12 would have 4 diggers and 8 carriers; in addition there would be the dependents of his party, but these are to be looked on as quite separate. A task of from 85 to 100 cubic feet is laid out as the daily task for each digger, but in the majority of cases it is found that the full task is not performed, that only 50 to 60 cubic feet is excavated, so the party generally receive only the minimum wage. The shortcoming is not so often in lateral dimension as in vertical depth dug, an item which is not so easily checked. In many cases the depth of pit was from 6 to 10 inches only, instead of 12 inches. Sticks 12 inches long are to be given to the working mates to show clearly the depth required.

4. In order to distribute the work in a form that will afford sufficient room and facilitate measurements, the excavation is carried out in strata one foot thick, the irregular surface portion being first removed.

The sub-overseer records the work done by each party in his measurement book, noting the particular 100 feet peg in which the work is situated. A new system of measurement book is being started, in which all the measurements in the same chain or peg will be on one page. In this way it will be easy to compare the total of daily measurements with the final measurement when work is done. At present it is a long process to carry out this check, as the daily measurements are scattered over many different pages of the book. But in three chains tested the result was very satisfactory, as shown below:

## SOUTHERN CANAL

Chain.	Final measurement.	Total of daily measurements.	DIFFERENCE.	
			+	-
37-38	14,875	14,862	13	...
41-42	13,002	13,406	...	404
43-44	10,300	10,211	...	11



The new arrangement of measurement book will be a powerful check on the sub-overseer's daily measurements.

5. The soil is hard to dig in most places, and the difficulty of digging is further increased by the necessary plan of working in thin layers instead of deep faces, as would be done in ordinary contract work. At present only phaorás are employed; an order has been given to try pickaxes, but the people will probably prefer to work with the tool to which they are most accustomed. Experiments made by Mr. Wakefield show that an able-bodied professional digger can excavate 230 cubic feet of the hard soil near the head of southern canal. Mr. Floyd has been asked to repeat the experiment. There seems to be no reason why the general digger should not do the task of 100 cubic feet. The people at present on the work are on the whole in good condition, and show no signs of emaciation. The women and weaker men are able to carry full baskets weighing 25 seers. A small basketful weighed on the spot gave  $12\frac{1}{2}$  seers of earth, and we estimate that the baskets of earth carried average 15 seers or over, to one-fourth of a cubic foot of solid earth.

6. In considering the proper task per head that may be expected, it is necessary to ascertain the task that would be done under ordinary circumstances. The rate allowed for the Ghaggar Canals earth-work, excluding contingencies, is Rs. 2-12-0, 44 annas per 1000 cubic feet. If done by professional diggers and carriers working very hard, the average earnings would probably not be less than 3 annas a day; and allowing the contractor a profit of 10 to 12 per cent., or say 5 annas per 1000 cubic feet, 39 annas would be paid for actual labour. The work would thus have to be done by 13 labourers giving a duty of  $\frac{1000}{13} = 77$  cubic feet. If instead of professional diggers and carriers only ordinary able-bodied villagers, men and women, are employed, the earnings would not exceed 2 annas a head;  $\frac{39}{2} = 19$  to 20 hands would have to be employed on every 1000 cubic feet, giving a duty of 50 cubic feet a head. This may therefore, we think, be looked upon as a full day's work under ordinary circumstances on contract work where the soil is hard. The average of 75 cubic

feet laid down in Form B of the Famine Code is therefore obviously too high. The foot-note regarding column 10 is misleading throughout, and should be revised at once. The estimate of one digger and two carriers performing a task of 100 cubic feet, or 33 per head, is a much more practical estimate. This is given as a task in paragraph 11, page 80, Appendix B, Punjab Famine Code. The present out-turn of work on the Ghaggar Canals per head of people actually employed on digging and carrying is from 15 to 20 cubic feet, and it is expected to increase up to 30 cubic feet.

7. It is found that whatever is dug by one man is carried by two people. It is the digger that fails, and it is now proposed to give the working mate a bonus of 6 pies if he and his small party of diggers perform the task of 100 cubic feet each. At present most of the diggers are strong men of B class. The bonus would mean promoting the working mate to a higher class, and giving him the usual allowance of 3 pies extra for his interested supervision. All the party have an interest in getting the full wage of their class instead of the minimum as at present. It is feared the gangman is not influential enough to exact a full task out of all the people in the gang. In one case the gangman was beaten by some of his gang for exacting what they considered too much work. It is hoped that increasing the pay of the working mate in a small party will be the most effective means of increasing the out-turn round. The plan is being tried.

On the Ghaggar Works there appears to us to be no great difficulty in getting diggers in sufficient numbers capable of excavating 85 to 100 cubic feet each, and from our observation two average carriers are able to dispose of the 85 to 100 cubic feet excavated by one digger. It means 50 cubic feet equivalent to a weight of cubic feet  $50 \times 55 = 2750$  seers, filling 183 baskets with 15 seers of earth in each on an average. [Strong women and men carry 25 seers, and the smallest child over seven years of age carries 5 seers. The majority can carry 20 seers.] This would mean 30 baskets an hour, or one every two minutes, during a working day of six hours, which is a moderate task.

8. For purposes of comparison and checking work it is necessary to classify the workers as *diggers* and *carriers* only. At present some small children are supposed to be employed on breaking clods. The work is never done by them in practice. These children should be made to carry, or if unable to do this should be classed as dependents. It complicates the case counting them as workers, for they do no useful work, and merely play at clod-breaking, and draw a pay of one anna instead of half-an-anna as dependents.

C. J. FLOYD,

*In Charge Ghaggar Canals.*

January 24, 1897.

DETAIL OF WAGES PAID ON RELIEF WORKS, GHAGGAR CANALS

*Situation of work*—Northern Ghaggar Canal, mile 2.

*Village*—Babbhar.

*Tahsil*—Sirsa.

*District*—Hissar.

*Distance from Relief Work*—Said to be about 12 miles.

*Caste*—Sweeper.

	Rs. A. P.			<i>Minimum.</i>		
	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
1. Laloo (father of family) ...	0	1	9	0	1	6
2. Jeeo (mother of family) ...	0	1	6	0	1	3
3. Sundar (son) ...	0	1	9	0	1	6
4. Sabo (daughter) ...	0	1	3	0	1	0
5. Farrid (son) ...	0	1	3	0	1	0
6. Bhanu { children } ...	0	0	6	0	0	6
7. Lakmera { under 7 } ...	0	0	6	0	0	6
8. Monia { years } ...	0	0	6	0	0	6
Total wages per day ...	0	9	0	0	7	9

*Second family from same village, same caste, etc.—*

	Rs. A. P.		
	Rs.	A.	P.
1. Lucknow ...	0	1	9
2. Nathow ...	0	1	6
3. Sáhib Zádi ...	0	1	6
4. Asow ...	0	1	6
5. Bakhtáwar ...	0	1	0
6. Chandan ...	0	1	0
7. Bhaini { under 7 } ...	0	0	6
8. Najun { years } ...	0	0	6
Total wages per day ...	0	9	3

The number of dependents on the work is now estimated at 22 per cent. of the whole, and we think that if the children were properly classed the proportion under dependents would be increased.

In one large gang of sweepers numbering 126, two families of eight persons were picked out. The details are given on the previous page.

In one case the father, mother, and three children were workers earning from 1 anna 3 pies to 1 anna 9 pies with three small children receiving 6 pies each as dependents, the total daily wage being 9 annas against a possible minimum of 7 annas 9 pies.

In the case of the other family there were only two small children. The daily wage earned was 9 annas 3 pies against a possible minimum of 7 annas 9 pies.

In both cases the members of the family were in good condition and very well clad. Each family is now earning about Rs. 17 to Rs. 18 a month, including pay on Sundays, and might earn more if they worked harder.

These people are from a village some twelve miles from the works. Whole families migrate to our works, and it is impossible under present rules to limit their income. However much we may reduce the pay of the two families referred to above, each will receive 7 annas 9 pies a day. Our only plan is to make the task as hard and to get as much work as we can for the money.

9. Turning now to the cost of the work on which the deduction as to poor out-turn was to some extent based, an analysis of the conditions will show what rate we may reasonably hope to work to, and why the cost is high.

The cost, which, as noted by his Honour, had amounted to something like Rs. 15 per 1000 cubic feet, included preliminary expenditure on hutting, laying out camps, jungle clearance (a heavy item), marking out and levelling roads, etc., etc., which of course swells the rates largely at commencement, but less and less as more earth-work is done. Calculating roughly while we were there, Mr. Floyd estimated that the rate had already fallen to something over Rs. 8 per 1000.

We have not got the actual figures, and it would be well to get them put down at stated periods to test progress.

The rate by contract as an ordinary work would, as shown in paragraph 6 above, be Rs. 2-12-0 for the work now going on at the Ghaggar, and would employ thirteen labourers with an average out-turn of  $1\frac{0}{3}\frac{0}{3} = 77$  cubic feet each, and they would earn 3 annas each. But the out-turn which the standard task exacts is in present conditions only 33·3 cubic feet, and the average wage of workers at the Ghaggar is 1·83 annas for a full task. Therefore the cost of actual labour when all do their full task must be  $\frac{1\frac{0}{3}\frac{0}{3}}{3\frac{3}{3}\frac{3}{3}} = 30$  labourers at 1·83 annas = 54·9 annas. To this must be added one-sixth, or 16·25 per cent. for Sunday wages, when no work is done, and also work charges (at present about 375 per cent.), making the total 66 annas, or Rs. 4-2-0 per 1000. The preliminary expenses will raise this again, and we do not think that a lower rate than Rs. 5 can be attained in existing conditions of wage and standard task if the soil is classed as hard, and under the conditions existing we think it must be so classed.

The present position therefore is that, judging from measurements, our out-turn of work is 15 to 20 cubic feet, instead of 30, as it ought to be, and the cost is a little over Rs. 8 per 1000 instead of Rs. 5, which we might hope to attain to for earth-work alone. The position is not really so serious as the figures previously given led his Honour to conclude.

10. But we have all the same to try and improve matters. We have only two ways open to us for endeavouring to exact a full task—

- (1) By making the minimum wage a real hardship, so as to induce the labourers to work well and so avoid being subjected to it;
- (2) To increase supervision to an extent which would make it impossible for any labourer to shirk his work.

We do not propose to enter into detail as regards (1) just now, though we think that as now arranged the minimum wage has no deterrent effect on shirkers, and

that it is probable that a more effective use of this deterrent might be made. We will confine our remarks here to the question of supervision.

At present supervision is carried on by the following officers and subordinates :—

Assistant Engineer.

P. W. D. Subordinate (Upper or Lower).

Mistri.

Muharrir.

Gangman.

Working Mate.

*The Working Mate* has about a dozen to eighteen labourers (excluding dependents) with him, and gets nothing beyond his famine wage.

*The Gangman* has about eight working parties, say 100 to 120 labourers, and gets Rs. 6 to Rs. 8 a month.

*The Muharrir* has about three gangs, say 300 to 360 labourers, and gets Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 a month.

*The Mistri* has from 500 to 1000 labourers to look after.

*The Public Works Department Subordinate* has a whole camp of from 1000 to 3000 labourers.

*The Assistant Engineer* has four or five camps to look after, and as work expands will have seven or eight camps.

As regards the Working Mate, his duties are apparently easy. We propose as an experiment classing him higher and giving him the usual "mate's" allowance (3 pies) if the task of his party is completed—this to give him a personal interest in keeping them up to the mark.

The Gangman has custody of the muster-roll and is responsible for tools. He can assist to some extent in enforcing tasks, but his influence is not very great.

The Muharrir is a writer merely, and has enough to do in taking musters and checking rolls.

The Mistri cannot combine much supervision over individual workers or gangs with his proper duties of seeing to levels, correct slopes, lines, etc., but he can assist to some extent.

The Sub-Overseer has to lay out and measure up the work. This he can do for 2000 labourers, and they have about 2000 each to look after, but he can only go

over the ground two or perhaps three times a day, and he cannot be made responsible for seeing that every man works.

To obtain supervision so close as to ensure that no one shall shirk, the responsibility of doing this should rest on a single official, who will remain all day long with the workers. He will have largely to rely on personal influence for effecting his purpose. Fines are already inflicted as far as the minimum wage permits. He cannot beat the labourers; he cannot turn them off; and if they are recalcitrant he must use the powers given under Sections 135 and 138. The best plan would probably be to put on an additional official (Náib Tahsildár by preference) over each thousand labourers, whose sole duty shall be to stir up the idle and see that full baskets are carried. If this official were paid Rs. 60 a month it would amount to less than 2 per cent. on the pay of the workers. The experiment might be tried.

11. We now come to the other point which his Honour noticed, namely, that the payment of labour is not sufficiently supervised.

The payments at present are made by cashiers, who get from Rs. 35 to Rs. 40 a month, and furnish a security of Rs. 1000.<sup>1</sup> They pay on the nominal rolls as prepared by the Muharrirs the amounts which are certified to by the Sub-Overseer, who checks them by his measurements, and notes fines for short work.

The Sub-Overseer has nothing to do with payment, and the cashier has nothing to do with fixing the amount. We received no complaints of short payment from the work-people, but it is of course possible for collusion to occur, and if we could obtain the services of Tahsildárs in sufficient numbers,<sup>2</sup> no doubt it would be a good guarantee against malpractices.

But perhaps this may not be found possible, and if so, we would suggest as the next best practical way of gaining our object, that if the official (Náib Tahsildár)

<sup>1</sup> In the North-Western Provinces and Central Provinces it seems that the payments are made by Gang Muharrirs on Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 a month with no special supervision.

<sup>2</sup> One cashier or disburser is required for every 2000 or 3000 people.

suggested above is entertained he should undertake supervision of payments also. He must not, however, be made responsible for accounts, but merely for watching the payments made. This he could do supposing payments were made once a week (paying one-sixth, or 166 labourers each day), without unduly interfering with his duty of looking after idlers.

On the basis proposed the cost of subordinate supervision would be for 1000 labourers—

	Rs.
1 Naib Tahsildár, say	60
$\frac{1}{2}$ Cashier	20
3 Muharrirs	40
10 Gangsmen	70
1 Mistri	12
$\frac{1}{2}$ Sub-Overseer	30
Total	232

or 4·3 per cent. on the wages; but in addition to this there would be horse allowance to the Cashier and Sub-Overseer, and share of medical, sanitary, and other miscellaneous establishment, and also of all the superior staff.

J. S. BERESFORD.  
G. F. L. MARSHALL.

*To His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor.*

*P.S.*—Regarding the apparent inefficiency of the present minimum wage as a deterrent to labourers shirking their task, we think that the power conferred by the last clause of Sections 135 and 138 of the Famine Code might be applied more generally than is the case at present. It is believed that the power is seldom exercised, owing perhaps to a doubt as to the meaning of the word “temporarily,” and as to the extent to which the reduction of wage may be carried; but these are matters which must necessarily be left to the discretion of the officers on the spot, who will doubtless remember the necessity for caution when approaching the limit of what is needed to keep the labourer in health and condition.

J. S. BERESFORD.  
G. F. L. MARSHALL.



*Second P.S. by Mr. Beresford.*—Regarding the extent of the reduction, I think the reduction may be in the proportion which the penal ration of Section 170 bears to the minimum ration given in Section 167.<sup>1</sup> Omitting ghi, condiments and vegetables, these rations are as follows—

*Minimum Ration—*

			<i>Man.</i>	<i>Woman.</i>
Flour	...	...	16 oz.	14 oz.
Pulse	...	...	2 "	2 "
			18 oz.	16 oz.
Total	...			

*Penal Ration—*

Flour	...	...	14 oz.	12 oz.
Pulse	...	...	1 "	1 "
			15 oz.	13 oz.
Total	...			

In round numbers, I think we may safely say the *penal* is one-sixth less than the *minimum ration*. The average pay earned at present on the Ghaggar Works is 183 annas. But a great many receive 15, or 1 anna 6 pies, and in their case 3 pies would be the correct reduction to make, reducing their pay to 1 anna 3 pies. In fact, the "penal wage," as I may call it, might be taken all round as 3 pies less than the minimum wage laid down. There is no time to treat each case fully on its own merits in practice, and a rough-and-ready rule is necessary—one that is not too oppressive.

The definition of "temporarily" and "for a time" might be limited to a period of not more than say three days in a week, or some such limit.

J. S. B.

<sup>1</sup> Section 138 states that payment may be made for a time in proportion to work done. I don't think this is acted on in practice.

## GLOSSARY OF INDIAN TERMS

<i>Abrū</i> . . . . .	self-esteem, honour
<i>Babu</i> . . . . .	native clerk
<i>Baksheesh</i> . . . . .	gratuity, tip
<i>Faudobust</i> . . . . .	plan, arrangement
<i>Bannias</i> . . . . .	native shop-keepers, grain-sellers, a distinctive caste
<i>Bhiga</i> . . . . .	an Indian square measure, about $\frac{2}{3}$ acre
<i>Bhoosa</i> . . . . .	bran
<i>Bilati rhoti</i> . . . . .	English bread
<i>Bobachi</i> . . . . .	cook
<i>Bobachikhana</i> . . . . .	cook-room
<i>Bugela</i> . . . . .	a native coasting craft
<i>Byle</i> . . . . .	bullock
<i>Charpoy</i> . . . . .	native bedstead
<i>Chatti</i> . . . . .	native earthen pot
<i>Chobdar</i> . . . . .	Gold or Silver-Stick-in-Waiting
<i>Chota haari</i> . . . . .	little breakfast, or early roll and coffee
<i>Chuddah</i> . . . . .	shawl or blanket
<i>Chuppati</i> . . . . .	a wheaten cake
<i>Chupprassie</i> . . . . .	attendant, to go messages, etc.
<i>Dukhankhana</i> . . . . .	eating-place
<i>Durbar</i> . . . . .	a state meeting of the officials
<i>Gadi</i> . . . . .	throne
<i>Garrib logue ke-khana</i>	poor folks' place, poor-house
<i>Garrib logue</i> . . . . .	poor people, lit. quiet or tame folk
<i>Ghaut</i> . . . . .	lit. a step, then pass over hills
<i>Ghindi</i> . . . . .	large copper or brass vessel
<i>Gobra</i> . . . . .	silly, distracted
<i>Gup</i> . . . . .	gossip
<i>Guru</i> . . . . .	ascetic, anchorite
<i>Hakim</i> . . . . .	doctor
<i>Hathi</i> . . . . .	elephant
<i>Hookum</i> . . . . .	orders
<i>Huzoor</i> . . . . .	Lord protector of the poor, a title of respect employed by natives in addressing a sahib
<i>Jhils</i> . . . . .	tanks, or swampy marshes

<i>Kafir</i>	. . .	unbeliever
<i>Karkoon</i>	. . .	clerk
<i>Khubbar</i>	. . .	news, information
<i>Khud</i>	. . .	slope, declivity, precipice
<i>Kiss</i>	. . .	land revenue, assessment
<i>Konkan</i>	. . .	the lowlands opposed to the high table-lands
<i>Lac</i>	. . .	100,000
<i>Loot</i>	. . .	the proceeds of robbery, the spoil
<i>Mahout</i>	. . .	elephant driver
<i>Mandap</i>	. . .	shed
<i>Marwarri</i>	. . .	money-lender
<i>Nullah</i>	. . .	a ravine
<i>Panch</i>	. . .	a council of five
<i>Pan-supari</i>	. . .	betel-leaf which the natives chew ; always handed round at native state ceremonies
<i>Patwari</i>	. . .	head-man of village
<i>Pucca</i>	. . .	lit. cooked opposed to raw ; solid as opposed to cutcha ; a pucca house means a stone or masonry house ; a pucca road, a metalled road
<i>Puggaree</i>	. . .	turban
<i>Resai</i>	. . .	a wadded quilt
<i>San</i>	. . .	commission, or toll
<i>Serai</i>	. . .	a rest-house for native travellers ; cf. caravanseraï
<i>Shikar</i>	. . .	hunt
<i>Shikari</i>	. . .	hunter
<i>Sivcar</i>	. . .	ruler
<i>Tahsildar</i>	. . .	native head officer of a tahsil or circle
<i>Takavi</i>	. . .	money advance to peasants by Government for land improvements
<i>Taluka</i>	. . .	sub-district or circle
<i>Tamasha</i>	. . .	a spectacle, exhibition
<i>Ticcasharry</i>	. . .	a hired vehicle, used in Bombay for the victorias plying for hire
<i>Tiffin</i>	. . .	luncheon
<i>Zoolum</i>	. . .	oppression, tyranny
<i>Zubberdustie</i>	. . .	high-handedness