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3. Narrative of the Famine in India in 1896-97. By T.W.Holderness. 1897. pp. 43- 86. Y: 4353.2. M7 CB
4. Government of India: Finance Department - Resolution. 1917. pp. 87
- 5 (A) do. Provincial allotments under that scheme required revision. Y: 4353.2 pp. 88-102.
- 6 (B) Letter from the Secretary, Madras Famine Code Revision Committee, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, dated 1st April 1922. Y: 4353.262.21.12 pp.103-112.
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Madras Famine Code Revision Committee

ABSTRACT OF CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

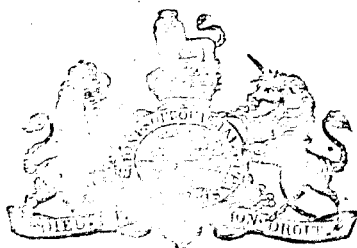
AND

THE SECRETARY OF STATE IN COUNCIL,

RELATIVE TO

THE DROUGHT IN BENGAL.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.



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ABSTRACT

OF

Correspondence between Government of India and the Secretary of State in Council, relative to the Drought in Bengal.

Para. 1. The Viceroy in Council announced to the Secretary of State in Council, on the 30th October 1873, his serious apprehensions that the failure of the crops in a great part of the Presidency of Bengal would occasion serious distress, if not worse results.

Agricultural and Horticultural Despatch of the Government of India dated 30th October, No. 9 of 1873. Received, 24th November.

2. He enclosed a letter from Sir George Campbell, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, dated 22nd October, of which the following statements represent an abstract.

Lieutenant-Governor's Letter, dated 22nd October, No. 50 T. of 1873.

- I. That throughout the greater part of the Provinces the shortness and early cessation of the rains had caused irreparable injury, and that the gravest apprehensions were entertained of general scarcity throughout the country, and worse evils in large parts of it.
- II. That the most immediate fear appeared in the very populous Division of Patna. That the rainfall, except in the north-east portion (probably alluding to Tirhoot) had not been so much below the average, but it had been distributed in the most unfortunate manner. The rains were late, and, when they came, so heavy as to cause considerable injury, and even, in some places, ruin to the crops. That great fears were entertained for the cold weather crops.
- III. In other parts of the Lower Provinces the rains had been late, short, and in quantity below the average to an extraordinary degree. This was especially the case in the tracts north of the Ganges and near the Himalayas,—usually great rice-producing countries,—in the north-east of Behar, and the north of Bengal, Dinapore, Rungpore, and almost the whole of the Rajshahye Division. In parts of this usually moist tract the rainfall had hardly exceeded the customary fall in the driest parts of the North-West Provinces. In Calcutta and the neighbouring districts the rainfall had been in a most marked degree below the average. In the 24 Pergunnahs and other moister districts the crops, though injured, would not wholly fail. In Western Bengal, a higher and drier soil, apprehensions were of a much graver character. In Eastern Bengal, usually the granary of the Lower Provinces, there would probably be no actual want of grain for local consumption, but it would be a bad feature if, as was feared, the usual exports should be impossible. In Orissa only and Backergunge the prospects were good.
- IV. That the hope of rain had hitherto buoyed the people up, and kept down prices.
- V. That the Lieutenant Governor asked for authority to make immediate arrangements, according to his discretion, for relief works, and for such importations as were not likely to interfere with private enterprise.
- VI. The Lieutenant Governor also suggested that the export of rice from India to foreign countries should be stopped. In the face of general failure in Bengal, he urged, any supply from British Burmah, the Godavery and Kistna Districts, and Orissa, would be but of little avail. If also there were premature cessation of rain in the North-West Provinces, no help could be expected from that quarter. If, before orders had been issued on this letter, no rain had fallen, “every grain of rice would be wanted.”

3. The Viceroy in Council proceeded to state that, on the receipt of this letter, he had given instructions for the extension of the Soane Canal, which would afford

Despatch of 30th October resumed.

work to the people near Patna, and that, in anticipation of sanction, he had ordered the commencement of the Northern Bengal railroad, which would run through part of the country where the failure of rain had been great.

4. That he had not thought it right to prohibit the export of rice. He preferred to obtain the requisite supplies by purchase, directly or indirectly, rather than derange trade, give occasion to claims for compensation difficult of adjustment, and, after all, not materially add to the stock available to meet the apprehended scarcity.

5. The Viceroy added, however, that he had every confidence in Sir George Campbell, and had given him authority to act according to his discretion in the commencement of relief works and the arrangements for the importation of grain where he might think it would not be provided for by traders. The authorities in Madras, the North-West Provinces, Oude, and British Burmah, had been called to state what supplies could be obtained and transmitted to Calcutta.

6. The Viceroy also stated his intention of immediately proceeding to Calcutta with Sir R. Temple. It may be added that he arrived there on the 31st October.

7. To this Despatch the Duke of Argyll in Council replied, under date the 1st December. He stated that the experience of Indian famines had shown that the operations of commerce and the ordinary processes of supply and demand could not be relied on for the adequate supply of food for affected districts, and that the active intervention of Government was necessary to prevent the worst consequences. That he therefore, as he had already done by telegraph, placed unreservedly in the Viceroy's hands his sanction, by anticipation, to all measures which the Viceroy, at the spot, and with full knowledge of facts, might deem necessary for the preservation of human life.

8. With regard to the prohibition of export, the Duke of Argyll in Council proceeded to state that he concurred with the Viceroy in preferring other modes of action, especially that of Government entering into the market as a purchaser. Such an operation would be of a less violent character than that of prohibiting export, and would have the advantage of inviting commercial enterprise to the increased importation of food. Exclusive reliance must not be placed on commercial enterprise for the introduction of food, and still less for its transit to and distribution in stricken districts, but it was the most powerful agency for the purpose, and ought not to be unnecessarily discouraged or thwarted. He therefore impressed on the Governor General the necessity of procuring by purchase whatever amount of supply the largest estimate of the danger apprehended might appear to require.

9. In conclusion, the Duke of Argyll in Council expressed his entire concurrence with the Viceroy, in placing the utmost reliance on the ability, energy, and special knowledge of Sir G. Campbell.

Abstract for the Week ending November 7th.

The Viceroy stated in this Despatch, that the prospect on the whole continued unfavourable.

2. The problem presented for solution might be thus stated,—

- I. In Behar, comprising the Patna and Bhaugulpore Divisions.
Population, 20 millions. Failure of rice crop very general, and prospects of spring crop bad.
- II. Rajshahye Division. Population, 9 millions. Failure of rice crop not so complete as in Behar, and prospects of spring crop somewhat better.
- III. Burdwan, Presidency, and Cooch Behar Divisions.
Population, 14½ millions. Considerable amount of failure, but it is hoped the results may not be serious.
- IV. Dacca, Chittagong, Chota Nagpore and Assam Divisions.
Population, 19 millions. Failure of rice crops in some districts, but on the whole a surplus expected for exportation, but less than in ordinary years. The Backergunge District of Dacca, a great exporting district, had not materially suffered.

Revenue Despatch of
Secretary of State in
Council, 1st December,
No. 20 of 1873.
(See page 51.)

Despatch from the
Viceroy, dated 7th
November, No. A. of
1873.
Received 1st of De-
cember 1873.

4. In the Orissa Division.

Population, $4\frac{1}{2}$ millions. Prospects altogether satisfactory.

In other parts of India the crops generally good, with the exception of Oudh and Benares Division of the North-West Provinces.

3. The Viceroy proceeded to state that much depended on the spring crop, and that it was difficult, before the middle of January 1874, to foresee the effects of the drought on the food prospects of the country during the next year. He transmitted a copy of the Resolution of Government as to the measures to be adopted for the alleviation of distress, which will immediately be noticed. He again stated his view against prohibition of export, and noticed that the greatest difficulty in India arose from the obstacles to transit to parts affected. He added, that the railways could carry 2,000 tons daily.

The Resolution of the Government of India should now be noticed. After stating that it was the Viceroy's wish not to interfere with the trade in grain, either by prohibiting export or by undertaking the general purchase and distribution of grain throughout large tracts of country, he proceeded to remark, that exceptional circumstances might arise whereby numbers would be exposed to starvation and distress. In such cases it would be the duty of Government and its officers to apply the most effectual remedy that might be practicable.

5. The Viceroy then detailed the measures by which he proposed to mitigate the evils arising from the scarcity. These may be summarised as follows:—

- I. The vigorous prosecution of public works. Orders were issued for the enlargement of operations from the river Soane, and for the commencement of the Northern Bengal State Railway, in anticipation of the sanction of the Secretary of State.
- II. The Lieutenant Governor of Bengal was authorized to commence such public works as could usefully be undertaken in distressed districts.
- III. Those employed on State works were to be paid in grain. For this purpose supplies of grain were to be purchased and laid in by the Government of India and the Local Government in such manner as to interfere as little as possible with the trade in grain. With this view the authorities of Madras and Burmah had been requested to make gradual purchases through the agency of the trade.
- IV. Loans to be granted to Municipalities for public improvements under Act XXIV. of 1871 (Local Public Works Loan Act), and rules on the subject to be relaxed.
- V. Loans to be granted to landlords and tenants for the improvement of land under Act XXVI. of Land Improvement Act, 1871, and rules on the subject to be relaxed.
- VI. The levy of the road cess to be postponed in distressed districts or parts of districts, according to the discretion of the Lieutenant Governor.
- VII. For the purpose of facilitating the transport of grain, guaranteed railways authorized to reduce by one half the rates charged for the transport of grain to distressed districts. The Companies to be hereafter reimbursed by Government.
- VIII. Special attention to be paid by Local Governments to the provision of country carriage in places where the means of water and steam carriage might not exist, and the practicability of constructing tramways in distressed districts to be considered.
- IX. Should distress become severe, Relief Committees to be formed, and a system of relief to be organized.
- X. As the prevalence of want might lead to many forms of epidemic disease, the Medical Staff of all grades were to be augmented in afflicted districts.
- XI. Non-official gentlemen, Native and European, to be invited to co-operate for the importation from distant places and distribution of grain. Advances for such purposes to be sanctioned.
- XII. Landholders also to be invited to co-operate for the dispensation of relief.
- XIII. Emigration to places where food might be plentiful, and where there might be a demand for labour, to be encouraged.

Note.—The 15th paragraph of the Despatch may be quoted in *extenso*.

To prohibit exports would have the effect of artificially reducing prices at the commencement of a season of scarcity, and, moreover, it would shake the confidence of the mercantile classes in the determination of Government to maintain the utmost freedom of trade as the best preservation against famine, and, by so checking commercial operations, cut off sources of supply from without which would naturally come to our aid in time of need.

Resolution of the Government of India, dated 7th November.

The Lieutenant Governor's Letter from Patna, dated 29th October.

6. The Viceroy, with his Despatch, submitted a letter from the Lieutenant Governor written from Patna on the 29th October. This communication, with enclosures, represented that the prospects in the Patna Division were extremely bad, that there must be great failure of both the September and March crops, and that generally there must be "not merely shortness of crops but disastrous failure." That he did not feel "he had the means of forming even an approximate estimate of the stocks on hand." That the "general tendency of opinion on this subject was gloomy," but, on the other hand, there was "little symptom of panic." That "maize" was in some parts almost cheap, and had been procured by planters and others, north of the Ganges, in considerable quantities for storing. Sir G. Campbell added, that a great peculiarity of the present failure was that it was "greatest in the parts of the country* which usually export the most food." He also expressed apprehension that in some large tracts, such as the north-east of Tirhoot, it was almost impossible that the food supply could suffice. The Lieutenant Governor then detailed the various relief works which, under his orders, had been commenced in this (the Patna) Division.

* Meaning of the Patna Division.

Viceroy's Despatch of 7th November resumed.

7. The Viceroy, in conclusion, stated that, in concurrence with the Lieutenant Governor, he was of opinion that the time had not yet come for the appointment of a Central Relief Committee, and for an appeal to the public for subscriptions. It was necessary to wait until a better estimate could be formed of the amount of distress which was likely to ensue, and which, in order to save life, would have to be met by a distribution of food.

8. Finally, it was mentioned that the Durbars at Agra and Lucknow had been put off, the Kirwee camp of exercise countermanded, and the Commander-in-Chief requested to reduce, as far as possible, the force which was to be collected at the Roorkee Camp.

Abstract of Correspondence for the Week ending 14th November.

Despatch from the Viceroy, dated 12th November, No. B. of 1873.
Received 8th December 1873.

The state and prospects of the crops in the Provinces of Bengal showed no substantial alteration.

2. No scarcity expected in the North-Western Provinces, except in the Goruckpoor Division and the southern portion of Mirzapoor. Sir W. Muir had been authorized to undertake at once such relief works as he might think necessary in those districts.

3. In Behar, on the recommendation of Sir G. Campbell, the prosecution of embankments on the river Gunduck was authorized.

4. The Viceroy also reported a conference held at Government House, Calcutta, with the Lieutenant Governor and his principal officers. This conference will be noticed hereafter.

5. It was stated by the Viceroy, that so far as prices could be regarded as an indication of sufficiency of supplies, the condition of affairs was not worse than in 1865, and that, as far as could be ascertained, great activity prevailed in the grain trade. So that there was a reasonable expectation that prices would be equalized on the great lines of communication over a large area of country.

6. The Viceroy announced that he was reluctantly compelled to proceed to Agra and Lucknow, but that he hoped to return by 11th December.

Correspondence enclosed in the Despatch of 12th November.
* Dated 7th November, No. 3,300 of 1873.
† Dated 12th November, No. 2,980 of 1873.

7. In the correspondence enclosed was a powerful letter* from the Bengal to the Supreme Government, in which the prohibition of export, first, from Indian ports, including Burmah, and, secondly, and as an alternative, from Bengal alone, was again recommended. The reply† of the Government of India was still adverse, being grounded partly on the Report of Colonel Baird Smith, on the Famine in the North-West Provinces, of 1860 and 1861, and partly on the consideration that the rise of prices must operate to check, and ultimately to stop, the export of ordinary quantities of rice from Bengal. The Customs returns, it was added, already showed that the exports of rice from Calcutta had diminished in comparison with former years.

8. It is now necessary briefly to notice the discussions of the Conference held on the 10th November at Government House, Calcutta.

6
Conference at Government House, Calcutta on the 10th November.

9. The conference was attended by the Governor General and the Lieutenant Governor, by Sir R. Temple, and many officers of the State, including the members of the Board of Revenue, three Commissioners, the Chief Engineer, the Superintending Engineer of the Northern Bengal State Railway, the Collector of Customs, and two Secretaries to the Government of India, and the Government of Bengal. After a statement by the Lieutenant Governor, to which reference will be made hereafter, the Viceroy suggested that the important points raised by the Government Resolution of the 7th November should be discussed seriatim.

10. First, with respect to Imperial works. Orders, it was stated, had been given for the commencement of two new branches of the Soane Canal. Mr. Levinge had full authority to act, and was waiting for labour to come in. Rice was being sent by the Government of Bengal for the immediate supply of labourers. With respect to the Northern Bengal State Railway, it was agreed that Major Lindsay should aid with his staff in the construction of roads which would act as feeders to the railway. The Viceroy expressed his readiness to place at the disposal of Major Lindsay such additional Assistant Engineers as might be required.

Imperial Public Works

11. Next, with reference to local works. The Lieutenant Governor stated that plans for such works had been prepared in all districts, and the number of additional officers which might be necessary was stated.

Local Public Works.

12. With reference to the purchase and storing of grain, after Mr. Malony, Commissioner of Rajshahye, had stated that it would be well in some parts of his districts for Government to lay in stores while water transport was still available, as in two months the water would have sunk too low, the Viceroy observed that Government would undertake the duty of providing grain for the labourers employed on the public relief works. In doing this, it wished to rely as far as possible on the trade for the collection and distribution of supplies of food, but when exceptional circumstances arose there was no intention of precluding Government Officers from securing supplies with a reasonable reserve of food for persons employed on relief works. Officers must act according to their discretion, and the case mentioned by Mr. Malony was one in which grain might properly be purchased and stored.

Purchase and storing of grain.

13. With respect to loans to municipalities, &c., the Lieutenant Governor stated that the necessary notices had been issued.

Loans.

14. Allusion was then made to the difficult subject of transport from the railway to the affected districts, regarding which the Viceroy expressed great anxiety, and which the Lieutenant Governor regarded as one of extreme importance. Pack bullocks were mentioned as affording a ready mode of transport, but difficulties regarding fodder were mentioned, with a statement that something had already been done by the Government of Bengal to meet those difficulties, by laying in supplies at various roadside stations. The Viceroy, after stating that the Commissariat and Post Office Department might be utilized, commended the subject to the serious attention of local officers; and the Lieutenant Governor was also asked to take into consideration the removal of tolls from canals, that officer having already stated that road tolls had been taken off and ferry tolls reduced to a minimum in distressed districts.

Transport.

15. The question of the distribution of gratuitous relief was then approached, and here it is necessary to refer to the remarks of the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the conference, which were alluded to in para. 9 of this abstract. Sir G. Campbell, after adverting to the grave responsibility which devolved on his Government, asked directly whether any and what provision was now to be made for eventual charitable relief? Was the Government of Bengal to act immediately in regard to relief centres, or to defer action? Was Government to buy and store grain at once for charitable relief? An early decision was necessary, on account of the difficulty of transport should action be delayed.

Relief.

16. The Viceroy stated that no better rule could be laid down than that alluded to by the Orissa Famine Commissioners (of whom Sir G. Campbell was one) "that Government should supply employment by means of public works, and that the public should supply the means of gratuitous relief to the helpless." The Govern-

ment would contribute an equal sum to that collected by private individuals, this was not to be regarded as the maximum amount of relief which the Government would give. He quoted the instructions issued by the Lieutenant Governor of North-West Provinces in 1869, to the effect, "It is the duty of the State to see that none of its subjects starve for want of food, even if charitable contributions should prove inadequate. The Lieutenant Governor will therefore hold every District Officer personally responsible that no death occurs from starvation which could have been avoided by any exertion or arrangement on the part of the District Officer or his staff." He also quoted Mr. Henvey's report relative to the scarcity in 1868-69 in the North-West Provinces, "Charitable relief must be held primarily the care of the public, but if public charity should fail from any causes, the Government must step in and save life." The Viceroy then stated that he wished to throw no greater degree of responsibility on the Lieutenant Governor and his officers than had been incurred by the Lieutenant Governor and officers of the North-West Provinces. For the present it was probably not necessary to establish Relief Committees anywhere, but the District Officers must be allowed discretion to do so on the first breaking out of any distress. Information should at once be obtained as to the places in which relief centres would probably be required, and as to the persons who would be willing to serve on Committees. An organization would thus be planned which could be called into active existence whenever the necessity should arrive. The Government, for the present, would only provide grain for the labourers employed on public works. On the Lieutenant Governor again asking whether he understood the Viceroy to say that, until Relief Committees were appointed, no grain would be laid up for relief purposes, it was answered, that such was the intention of the Government, but that Relief Committees might draw on the Government stores provided for labourers. It would now be necessary for the Bengal Government to draw up regulations for organizing charitable relief, which regulations would deal with the question of separating able-bodied men from the infirm and from women, and would determine the times and occasions on which food, cooked or uncooked, should be distributed.

17. It was agreed that a few more Civil Servants of some standing should be placed at the disposal of the Lieutenant Governor for collecting information in the threatened districts.

18. Finally, it was suggested by Mr. Schalch, a member of the Board of Revenue, that although Bengalees did not like Burmese rice, yet as they would probably be obliged to eat it, it would be well to obtain rice from Burmah for labourers on the public works. No great loss would be incurred if 50,000 tons were introduced. The Viceroy in reply said, the Government had announced its intention of importing Burmese rice. He thought it would be better for the Government of Bengal not to operate out of India, all purchases of foreign (including Burmese) rice would be made by the Government of India.

Letter of the Government of Bengal, dated 10th November, No. 3373.

19. On the same day as that on which the Conference was held, the Lieutenant Governor addressed a letter to the Supreme Government, written, it may be presumed, before the actual discussion at the meeting. In this letter Sir George Campbell adverted to the extreme difficulty of the question before him. He stated, (I.) that when failure of crops extended over a large area of country, famine might attain such proportions that no foresight, energy, or resources of Government could suffice adequately to deal with it; (II.) that in the early, and it might be said the middle, stages of scarcity there must always be an extreme element of uncertainty, which uncertainty increases in proportion to the extent of country in which failure of crops prevails. The larger the area of failure, the less can help from the outside world be depended on, and the main element in calculations must be an unknown quantity, viz., the stocks in the affected districts. (III.) It must also be remembered that Government, in its anxiety to avoid "negligence and undue shortcoming," might fall into an opposite difficulty, viz., that by giving relief with too free a hand, it might raise expectations and create obligations, to meet which would be a matter of extreme difficulty.

20. Sir George Campbell, after adverting to the entire deficiency of information as to stocks, to the suddenness of outbreaks of famine, to the inability to foresee the effects on the very sensitive and suddenly variable markets of Bengal of purchases for Behar by private traders or by Government, stated that it was

necessary to prepare full means of relief wherever there was a chance of distress,—that was in effect, everywhere. He therefore said the most pressing measure was the scattering broadcast of relief houses, so as to have one for every group of villages within reach of every one's home, and the purchase, transport, and storing of grain in the places in which it was most likely to be wanted for purposes of relief; that he should like to buy grain wherever it was to be had, to procure and use every possible means of transport, and prepare food depôts in almost every part of the Patna, Bhaugulpore, and Rajshahye Divisions, and perhaps in a great part of Burdwan. He, therefore, required a definite intimation of the amount which he might spend for the purposes thus indicated.

21. Sir George Campbell next day followed up the letter just cited with another, in which, after recounting the objects for which it would be necessary to provide under the Resolution of the Supreme Government of the 7th November, he applied for a credit on account of the famine for 50 lacs. (500,000*l.*)

Letter from the Bengal Government, dated 11th November, No. E.

22. The Government of India replied on the 13th November to this letter, forwarding a *précis* of the discussion at the Conference, and stating that, while thinking the grant of a credit of 50 lacs at present premature, it was prepared to support the Government of Bengal with such financial means as might be deemed necessary. The action of Government was to be at first limited to providing for the consumption of those employed on the relief works, but this decision was not to debar the Government of Bengal from acting on its own responsibility in case of any sudden emergency.

Government of India to Government of Bengal, dated 13th November, No. 3003 of 1873.

23. Finally, with reference to this week, a letter of the date noted in the margin from the Supreme Government should be noted. The Viceroy impressed on the Government of Bengal, having in view the possible want of fodder for cattle, the necessity of husbanding, stacking, and storing for future use the rice stubble which cattle were usually at that season of the year permitted to consume in a wasteful manner.

Government of India to Government of Bengal, dated 14th November, No. 3004 of 1873.

Abstract of Correspondence forwarded with Despatch of the Government of India, dated 21st November, No. 1 C of 1873.

The Viceroy, writing from Agra, stated that he had directed the Lieutenant Governor to forward a weekly special narrative in which the proceedings of the Government of Bengal, in connection with the drought, would be recorded. The enclosed or first narrative contained no information of a later date than what had already been conveyed in the Viceroy's Despatch of the 12th November. It will not, therefore, require notice in this abstract.

Despatch from Government of India to the Secretary of State, dated 21st November, No. 1 C of 1873.

2. The information received from the Commissioners of Bhaugulpore and Patna by the Viceroy and Sir R. Temple, on passing through Behar, was to the effect that extreme distress would be confined to Tirhoot, Sarun, Gya (to the remaining districts of the Patna Division in a less degree), to the half of Monghyr, the northern half of Bhaugulpore, less than half of Purneah, and more than half of the Sonthal Pergunnahs.

3. It was stated that, with respect to the eastern districts of the North-West Provinces, in which the rice crop had failed, that no difficulty was expected in dealing with them, and that the Lieutenant Governor (Sir W. Muir) had taken all the precautionary measures which the situation required.

4. The Viceroy expected to arrive at Calcutta about the 10th December, and in the meantime had nominated Sir R. Temple to be President in Council in order to prevent any delay in the issue of emergent orders.

5. Finally, it was stated that the Government of India had communicated with the Sind, Punjab, and Delhi, the Great Indian Peninsula, and the Oudh and Rohilcund Railway Agencies, with the view of reducing the rates for the carriage of food grains to Behar and Bengal, as had been done on the East Indian and Eastern Bengal Railways.

6. Although the information contained in the narrative of the Government of Bengal up to the 14th November has been generally already given, there are one or

Narrative of the Bengal Government for week ending 14th November.

two statements which should be mentioned. For instance, it was stated that the exportable surplus of the Balasore District in Orissa, about 22,000 tons per annum, had been bought up by Madras merchants for export to the Maldivic and Laccadive Islands, to Ceylon, and the Madras Presidency. It was also mentioned that about 23 lacs had already been sanctioned for the purpose of increasing the food supplies of the distressed districts.

7. It should also be noted that the narrative contained a concise statement of the very minute instructions issued by the Lieutenant Governor by circular to the various Commissioners for the collection of statistics as to the state and prospects of each district in relation to the threatened famine.

Abstract of Second Narrative of the Bengal Government relative to the Drought in Behar and parts of Bengal, dated 21st November.

Second Narrative of the Bengal Government for the week ending 21st November.

The Viceroy being absent at Agra, directed the Bengal Government to send its second Narrative direct to the Secretary of State. The Narrative is dated 21st November, and the following is an abstract of it.

Weather.

2. First, as to weather. No change was reported. No rain had fallen where distress was anticipated. The absence of rain had a double effect:—1st, the rice crop continued to wither away; 2nd, the sowing of the spring crop was hindered. The reports from Orissa, the eastern seaboard districts, and Sylhet were still favourable.

Prices.

3. Prices had not risen so much as had been expected, but it was very difficult to get accurate returns, and also to pronounce, among sudden and violent variations, what was the ruling price. A circular had been issued on the subject, and all that care and attention could do to eliminate error was being done. In the Patna division, one of the most important of those threatened, the rupee obtained 13 seers, while in the preceding year it had obtained 21 seers.*

* A seer is a fraction over 2 lbs.

Estimated yield of crops.

4. Estimated out-turn of food crops in Bengal and Behar was thus stated, but it should be borne in mind that, when a farmer speaks of "a good average crop," he means "a bumper crop," such as is very seldom harvested, therefore a three quarter or twelve-anna crop is in reality a good average yield.

Six Tracts into which Bengal is divided.

- I. Lower Delta and the Littoral Districts, including Midnapore (greater part), Jessore, Backergunge, Noakally, Chittagong, Cuttack, Balasore, Pooree.
Population, 11 millions. From three quarters to good average crop.
- II. Western Bengal below the uplands, comprising Burdwan, Hooghly, and Howrah Districts (the most thickly populated tracts in Bengal).
Population, 3½ millions. About one half of the yield of a full average year.
- III. The Central Delta Districts, comprising 24 Pergunnahs, Nuddea, Moorsheadabad, Furreedpore, and Pubna.
Population, 7 millions. From one half to three quarters of a full average crop.
- IV. Northern Bengal, including Rajshaye, Maldah, Dinagepore, Bograh, and Rungpore Districts.
Population, 7 millions. One quarter to one third of a full average crop.
- V. Eastern Bengal, including the Dacca, Mymensing, Sylhet, Tipperah, and Cachar Districts (large exporting districts in ordinary years).
Population, 7½ millions. From one half to two thirds of a full average crop, except in Sylhet, where there will be a full crop.
- VI. Upland country of Bengal and Chota Nagpoor, including the Districts of Bancoorah, Beerbhoom, a small part of Midnapoor, Maumbhoom, Hazarcebaugh, Lohardugga, Singbhoom, Sonthal Pergunnahs, southern tracts of Bhaugulpore, Monghyr.
Population, 7 millions. From one half to three quarters of a full average crop.

Two Divisions of Behar.

- I. North Behar, *i.e.*, north of Ganges, including Tirhoot, Sarun, Chumparun, parts of Bhaugulpore, and Monghyr, Purneah Districts.
Population, 11 millions. One quarter to one third of full average crop.
- II. South Behar, *i.e.*, south of Ganges, including Districts of Patna, Gya, Shahabad, parts of Bhaugulpore, and Monghyr.
Population, 8 millions. One quarter to one third of full average crop.

- I. Assam and Hill Districts, including Darjeeling, Julpigoree, Cooch Behar, Goalparah, Kamroop, Darrung, Nowgong, Sebsaugor, Luckhimpore, Naga Hills, Khasia Hills, Garo Hills.
Population, 3½ millions. Three quarters of a full average crop.

5. Next with respect to stocks. The information was still very scanty. In Northern Bengal, ordinarily an exporting district, there would probably be considerable stocks, because in similar exporting districts, such as Sylhet, Backergunge, and Orissa, it was found that old stocks were coming into the market. In some of the Behar districts, other produce was usually exported, and a portion of the food supply imported; it could not therefore be expected that either dealers or growers had retained large stocks. The chief anxiety of the Lieutenant Governor was for Behar and Northern Bengal; very much in those districts depended on the cold weather food crops. Stocks.

6. The Lieutenant Governor then reported the various local relief works regarding the commencement of which orders had been given. Instructions had been sent to the Commissioners of Patna, Bhaugulpore, and Rajshahye to commence the purchase of grain, at a distance, and as much as possible through the ordinary traders, for use on relief works. The rules for advances to landlords and tenants were under revision. Negotiations about emigration had been opened with Commissioner of Burmah, and the Landholders' Association in Calcutta had been addressed with reference to the demands for labour in Assam and Cachar. The Opium Agent at Behar had been instructed to afford facilities, by advances and postponement of demands, for the sowing of food crops in lands in which the poppy sowings had failed. The Lieutenant Governor of the North-West Provinces had named a special officer to execute orders for purchase of grain coming from the Commissioner of Patna, through whom all other officers were to act in connexion with this subject. Steps taken by the Government of Bengal to carry out the general principles and policy of the Government of India in respect to the famine.

7. With respect to the suspension of the road cess, careful inquiry had been commenced, in correspondence with the Senior Member of the Board of Revenue, as to the places in which it was required. Authority had been granted to the Commissioner of Patna to postpone the collection wholly until October 1874, if it were clear that there would be great difficulty in the Division, and a similar but more limited authority had been accorded to the Commissioners of Rajshahye and Burdwan; they were so to exercise their discretion as neither to remit the cess unnecessarily nor to press the people too much when they were really reduced to distress. Suspension of road cess.

8. The Lieutenant Governor stated that he had received offers of assistance and co-operation from the Maharajah of Burdwan, and Khajeh Ashanoollah, in his own name and that of his father, Khajeh Abdool Gunny, C.S.I., of Dacca. Conclusion.

9. Finally, Sir G. Campbell mentioned that the Native press had taken a very gloomy view of the situation, and had strongly advocated the prohibition of export.

10. Sir G. Campbell forwarded with the narrative a note on the movement of food grains. It was stated that the internal trade in food stuffs was not so brisk as the rise in prices might have suggested. At the Sahibgunge registering station 10,000 maunds of rice and 7,000 maunds of pulse (600 tons in all) had gone up the Ganges to the Behar Districts, while, from places chiefly in the Bhaugulpore Division, 45,000 maunds (about 1,600 tons) of grain and pulse have gone down to Calcutta. Note on the movement of food grains.

11. On the Gorai River, 39,000 maunds (say 1,400 tons) of food grains, chiefly wheat and grain, had gone by Kooshtea from the Behar Districts to Calcutta, and

none up. By the Goalundo registering station 18,000, or 650 tons, of rice had gone from the Eastern Districts to Maldah and places above. There was little or no traffic in food stuffs on the Eastern Bengal Railway.

12. From 1st October to 15th November 4,68,000 maunds (about 16,700 tons) of rice had reached Calcutta from the Eastern Districts and Backergunge.

* What grain is not stated.

13. From 8th October to 19th November 6,89,000 maunds (about 24,600 tons) of grain* were exported from Howrah, Chundernagur, and the adjacent stations to Rancegunge, the Behar Districts, and the North West Provinces, by the East Indian Railway. During the four days preceding the 21st November 13,000 maunds, or about 450 tons, were exported daily from Howrah and Chundernagur to the Behar Districts.

14. The total export of rice from Calcutta, from 1st to 19th November, was 1,60,000 maunds (about 5,700 tons) of rice. From Chittagong 46,500 maunds, or 1,660 tons, of rice were exported to other than Bengal Ports. From Orissa, from 1st to 19th November, 13,500, or 450 tons, had been imported into Calcutta. Between the same dates 35,000 maunds, or 1,250 tons, of wheat had been imported from Calcutta.

15. It was lastly stated that the Madras merchants had paused in their purchases in Orissa on account of the rise in prices.

Abstract of Third Weekly Narrative of the Bengal Government for the Week ending 28th November.

Third Narrative of Bengal Government for the week ending 28th November. General prospects.

In consequence of the absence of the Governor General, the third Narrative for the week ending 28th November was forwarded direct to the Secretary of State.

2. The general prospects of the season were perhaps a little better than previous reports had suggested as likely. The state of the spring crops was certainly better than had been anticipated. In the Patna, Bhaugulpore, and Rajshahyic Divisions, the late rice crop, the main staple of the country, was as bad as had been apprehended, but it was hoped that if rain came in December the spring crop would not be permanently injured.

Stocks.

3. With respect to stocks, the Commissioner of Patna had reported the determination of the ryots of Tirhoot (the district most gravely threatened), not to sell their grain, in consequence of their recollections of the suffering in 1866. He added, that one of the chief causes of great distress in 1866 was the total depletion of stocks, caused by the high prices which tempted the ryots to break in on their stores of grain. In Orissa it was believed the people had, since the famine of 1866, become more provident, and that they had good stocks.

Rain.

4. There had been no rain. But there was cloudiness unusual at that time of year, and there was hope that while other meteorological phenomena remained anomalous, there might still be hope for anomalous rain.

Prices.

5. Though in some districts prices had fallen, there was generally an upward tendency. In 1865-66 the prices fell during the winter months, but rose again in February.

transport.

6. With the view of testing and using, as early as possible, the means of transport from railway stations and rivers into the interior of the distressed districts, the Lieutenant Governor had despatched (I.) to Patna Ghât, (II.) to Raj Mchal, Kooshtea and Goalundo, and (III.) to Arrah and Buxar, all the foreign rice which had come to Calcutta on the Government account, for (1) the Gunduk Embankment; (2), the Northern Bengal Railway works; and (3), the Soane Canal works, respectively.

Purchases of grain.

7. The Lieutenant Governor further stated that, for storage on the Government local works, he had commenced buying rice as quietly as possible at Calcutta, through an agent, and had caused enquiries to be made in Dacca, Backergunge, and Chittagong, but had been assured that it would not be possible for Government to buy largely without raising the price greatly, and paralyzing private trade. In Chittagong it was stated that large orders for rice could be executed only by

European firms, which had engagements for export beyond sea at high prices, and would only sell at those prices. A chief European firm had run up the prices one rupee the maund, in the hope of attracting boats from the rice districts. The Lieutenant Governor therefore felt it was better not to buy rice at Chittagong, and similarly at Goalundo and Kooshtea the officer charged with the duty of buying rice for Government had earnestly represented that if Government were to intervene as a large purchaser the trade would be paralyzed. Under these circumstances, the Bengal Government had only, up to the 24th November, bought 30,000 maunds, or about a little more than 1,000 tons. But, seeing the absolute necessity of immediate despatch to local works, he had during the last week bought 1,40,000 maunds, or 5,000 tons, at the current rates, and more than half this quantity had been despatched for storage on the works in the distressed divisions. In short, taking in all grains, rice, wheat, maize, barley, millet, from Northern India, Orissa, and Burmah, about 22,000 tons had been bought or ordered by the Government of Bengal and its officers, and of this amount about three-quarters would be delivered in Behar and other affected districts before the end of December. The grain to cost Government Rs. 3¼ per maund all round.

8. Orders had been issued on the subject of providing fodder for cattle during the scarcity, and for the promotion of vegetable cultivation by purchase of seeds for distribution.

9. With respect to advances to landlords and tenants, to enable them to improve their lands, under Act XXVI. of 1871, the rules had been revised, certain preliminary formalities involving delay had been dispensed with, stamps and process fees were no longer required, the authority of subordinate officers to make advances had been increased, and no interest was to be charged for advances under Rs. 500 for the first year. In the case of loans to municipalities, under Act XXIV. of 1871, the rules had been revised, and various provisions connected with the authorization of advances and the commencement of works relaxed.

Advances to landlords and tenants.

10. Advances had been authorized for the construction of unmetalled roads in Behar, and for wells. The officers in the Opium Department were to be employed in making the necessary arrangements.

11. Offers by the Chief Commissioner of British Burmah to employ six thousand immigrants for six months on public works, and afterwards to give them land to settle on, besides contributing something to the expense of their transport, had been communicated to the Commissioner of Patna, for the purpose of ascertaining whether the people would go, and how such emigration could be organized.

Emigration.

12. Means of facilitating emigration to Assam and Cachar are still under consideration.

13. With respect to the lowering of charges for the transport of food grains on the railways, it had been found necessary to exclude all grain sent from Upper Provinces and Behar to stations below Luckserai and Bhaugulpore, from the operation of the reduction, as advantage had been taken of it by exporters and others to carry grain away from the districts in which it was most wanted.

14. Report had been made to the Government of India of complaints by some collectors of requisitions being made for carriage for troops at a time of so much pressure.

15. It is very worthy of note, that the Commissioners of Patna, Bhaugulpore, and Rajshahye all reported that they had failed in their endeavours to purchase grain for relief works through local traders, the reason being given by the traders themselves, that import was a work for which they had no aptitude, that all their experience had been in export dealings, that they did not understand the business of import or know the markets.

16. Finally, it may be remarked, that it would be impossible, without most unduly increasing what is not intended as an abstract, to detail all the minute instructions, and all the searching questions contained in the various circulars issued by the Lieutenant Governor to his officers at this time.

17. With the narrative the Lieutenant Governor sent a note on the movement of food grains. On the Ganges, the total traffic in wheat and grain passing down to Calcutta between 1st and 25th November was 78,000 maunds (say 2,800 tons).

Note on the movement of food grains.

Between the same periods, on the Gorai river, 70,000 maunds (about 2,500 tons) passed down. The upward traffic, registered at Sahebgunge up to 25th November, was 45,000 maunds (say 1,600 tons) of pulses, and 26,000 maunds (900 tons) of rice. At Goalundo it was stated that, from 1st to 22nd November, 43,000 maunds (about 1,550 tons) of rice had passed up the Ganges; such upward traffic at that time of year was unusual. The down trade in food grains past Goalundo had ceased. By the eastern canals, between 16th and 26th of November, 97,000 maunds (say nearly 3,500 tons) had come to Calcutta. This had made the total from 1st October 5,75,000 maunds (about 20,000 tons). Between 19th and 26th November, 1,25,000 maunds of rice (about 4,500 tons) had gone from Howrah, Chundernagur, and adjacent places to Bhaugulpore, Patna, Arrah, &c. A large proportion of this had been purchased by Government for relief works. The total despatch from Howrah to Chundernagur since 1st October was 8,14,000 maunds (about 28,000 tons).

18. As to external trade, it was stated that the export of rice from Calcutta was small. Between 19th and 26th November, 54,000 maunds (nearly 2,000 tons) left the port, the total since 1st November being 2,14,000 maunds, or about 7,600 tons. Between 19th and 26th November, 2,000 maunds of wheat and 10,000 maunds of other food grains, in all 12,000 maunds, or 450 tons, left the port. During the same time (19th to 26th November), 68,848* maunds, or about 2,200 tons, had been imported from Rangoon, Akyab, Balasore, Dhomrah, Chandballi, and Chittagong, two thirds of the amount being from Rangoon, and almost entirely on Government account.

* The detailed figures mount up to 63,850 maunds, but the amount given in the text is that stated in the note.

Abstract of Despatch of the Government of India and Fourth Narrative of Government of Bengal for Week ending 5th December.

With this Despatch was transmitted the Fourth Special Narrative relative to the drought, from 29th November to 5th December.

2. The Government of India, considered that the prospect was not worse than had been already indicated. No rain had fallen, but the weather had been constantly cloudy during the week. The extent and character of the distress in Behar and parts of Bengal would much depend on the winter rains. Another month must elapse before the results of these rains could be known.

3. The operations of the grain trade were active in many parts of the country, but very far from having attained the maximum of activity, and in some parts less advanced than might have been expected. A stream of food was however settling in towards the threatened districts, while exportation from Calcutta, in comparison with former years, was comparatively small.

4. Prices of food grains had not perceptibly increased. They were generally steady, and in some cases had even shown a downward tendency.

5. Good accounts had been received of harvests and crops in parts of India beyond the Government of Bengal, with the exception of those in the eastern and south-eastern portions of the North-West Provinces. In the parts of the North-West Provinces which were in immediate communication by rail with Behar, the autumn harvest and spring crops promised well.

6. The Government of India had received an estimate from the Lieutenant Governor that it would be necessary to provide by the end of January, 1874, within reach of the districts, food for 5 per cent. of a population of 25 millions, or 1,250,000 souls. The Lieutenant Governor had added, that the estimate was founded on imperfect data, and the Government of India therefore bore in mind that possibly a larger proportion might require food.

7. To meet this possible demand 80,000 tons had been ordered beyond sea by the Government of India, and 38,000 tons had been ordered in India by the Local Government. In all, 1,18,000 tons had been ordered, and were in due train for arrival. The question was then presented how much of this amount could arrive before the end of January. On this point the Government of India stated that it was in communication with the Chief Commissioner of Burmah, urging that officer to send on as much more grain as he could obtain at a reasonable price before the

Financial Despatch from the Government of India, dated 5th December 1873, No. 534.

Prospects.

Trade.

Prices.

Harvests and crops in other parts of India.

Provision made to meet scarcity.

(15)

end of December, in addition to 10,000 tons which were then coming in from Barmah and Madras. Out of 22,000 tons already purchased by Government of Bengal, five-sixths would arrive during January, and such quantities as could be purchased in the North-West Provinces might also arrive during that month.

8. After stating that the relief works were being actually commenced, and that the reduction of cost of carriage on the railways noted in the margin* was producing an excellent effect, the Government of India went on to remark that there was reason to fear that, while the transport of grain by rail and river might be comparatively easy, the inland transport by country carriage might prove difficult. The local officers seemed to think the country carriage was sufficient for the present. The attention of the Government of Bengal had been directed to this point, and special arrangements, including the utilization of the Commissariat Department, were under consideration.

* I. East Indian.
II. Eastern Bengal.
III. Punjab and Delhi.
IV. Oudh and Rohilkund.
V. Part of the Great Indian Peninsula Line in Central Provinces.
Transport.

9. The orders relative to advances to landholders and others for the purchase and distribution of grain at fair prices were stated to be already producing good results.

Advances.

10. The negotiations relative to emigration to Burmah had not been attended with success, but the subject, and also that of emigration to Assam, was still under consideration.

Emigration.

11. The Viceroy and Lieutenant Governor of Bengal were still of opinion that the time had not quite arrived for forming a Central Relief Committee in Calcutta.

12. Proceeding to the fourth Narrative of the Government of Bengal which accompanied the Viceroy's Despatch, it should be understood that the latter document, in many instances, gave the substance of the information communicated by the Lieutenant Governor in the former. Such particulars as "Prospects," "Rain," and "Prices," may therefore be passed over in giving an abstract of the Narrative.

Fourth Special Narrative of the Government of Bengal.

13. Sir G. Campbell stated, that since the date of the last narrative he had bought no more grain in Calcutta. The state of the market was too delicate, and any operation on his part would have paralyzed private trade. Local Officers had purchased barely 40,000 maunds (1,400 tons). But the Lieutenant Governor was hoping to arrange for the purchase of 400,000 maunds (about 14,500 tons) in addition.

Purchase.

14. Having detailed the movements of Government purchases to the railway and river stations in distressed districts, the Lieutenant Governor stated that the work of transporting grain from the railway and river into the interior had commenced, and the necessity of avoiding all delay had been pressed on the Local Officers. Places for storage had been selected, and warehouses had been commenced on the Soane Canal, at two places on the Gunduck Embankment, and in most of the districts of the Bhaugulpore and Rajshahye Divisions. In the Patna Division the Commissioner (Mr. Bayley) was travelling from district to district of North Behar, and was arranging the storage places and means of transport with the District Officers. He had indicated the route by which grain was to be taken to each part, and had actually despatched grain by boats and carts to three different quarters in which distress was soonest expected.

Transport and storage.

15. Generally, the Lieutenant Governor bore testimony to the activity and intelligence with which the Local Officers were giving effect to the orders of Government.

16. A difficulty had occurred with respect to Burmah rice, in consequence of its being packed in bags containing more than (200) two hundredweight. This had caused great difficulty in loading and unloading. The Rangoon authorities had been asked to pack only two maunds in each bag, and the Lieutenant Governor had given orders for the making of one maund bags at all the Government factories, for the purpose of packing any rice that might have to be "re-bagged."

Burmah rice.

A maund = 82½ lbs.

17. It was stated that labourers had not yet in great numbers repaired to relief works, harvesting of what rice there might be and March sowings having given considerable employment.

Labourers on relief works.

Burdwan District.

18. The Division of Burdwan had not been hitherto fully classed as a distressed district, but, at the request of the Commissioner, sanction had now been given for the commencement of relief works in the districts of Burdwan, Burbhoom, and Bancoorah.

19. Finally, the Lieutenant Governor noticed the liberality of the planters of North Behar and on the Rajah of Bettiah's estate in Chumparun in coming forward for the purchase, importation, and sale at cost price of grain. He also alluded to the public spirit of Baboo Luchniput Sing Bahadoor, a Marwari banker and landholder in Rajshahye, in suspending his rents and storing grain.

Note on the movement of grain.

20. With the Narrative the Government of Bengal also forwarded a Note on the movement of grains during the week under report. The substance may be thus given,—

I. Downward traffic on Ganges past Sahibgunge 21,500 maunds (750 tons) of wheat and grain, almost all consigned to Calcutta, and chiefly from Bhaugulpore Division. Total from 1st November 100,000 maunds, or about 3,600 tons, despatched to Calcutta. Upward traffic past Sahibgunge, 6,000 maunds of rice, and 6,000 maunds of pulse, in all 12,000 maunds, or 400 tons. Total since 1st November, 32,000 maunds, or 1,150 tons rice, and 51,000 maunds, 1,800 tons pulses.

II. During week ending 29th November, downward traffic past Kooshtea, on the Gorai, in wheat and grain, 28,000 maunds, or about 1,000 tons. Upward, past Goalundo, on Ganges, 20,000 maunds, or 700 tons of wheat.

III. By Eastern Bengal Railway, down to Calcutta, during the week, 7,000 maunds, or 250 tons, of food grains.

IV. Between 27th November and 3rd December, by Eastern canals, 73,000 maunds, or 2,600 tons of food grains, reached Calcutta, almost entirely rice. Total since 1st October, 638,000 maunds, or 23,000 tons.

V. From Howrah, during week ending 3rd December, 78,000 maunds, or 2,700 tons, despatched upwards. From Chundernagur, 4,000 maunds, or 140 tons. Total by rail since 8th October, 8,96,000 maunds, or about 32,000 tons, to Patna, Bhaugulpore, Arrah, Buxar, and other stations. These included Government consignments.

External trade.

VI. External trade. From 27th November to 3rd December, 61,000 maunds, or 2,150 tons, of rice, and 26,000 maunds, or 900 tons, pulse and grain, left Calcutta. Total of rice since 1st November, 2,75,000 maunds, or about 9,500 tons. Imports of rice into Calcutta during same week, 41,386 maunds, or about 1,500 tons, nearly half of which from Chittagong on Government account.

VII. From Chittagong to other than Bengal ports, were exported between 27th November and 2nd December 83,000 maunds, about 3,000 tons, of rice. The discontinuance of export trade from that port was reported to be only temporary.

East Indian railway.

VIII. During the first fortnight of November, 98,000 maunds, or 3,500 tons, of food grains passed on the East Indian Railway from stations above Mirzapore to Mirzapore, and stations below, down to Luckiserai and Rajmchal. Of this nearly half to stations in the Patna and Bhaugulpore Divisions. The rest went to the Benares Division of the North West Provinces. In the third week of November, 1,20,000 maunds, or 4,200 tons, were delivered by same railway; 40,000 maunds, or 1,400 tons, in the Benares Division; and 80,000 maunds, or 2,800 tons, in the two divisions of Behar.

Viceroy's Letter of 6th December from Lucknow.

21. By the same mail was received a Despatch from the Viceroy from Lucknow, dated 6th December, forwarding copy of an address presented to him by the Municipality of Agra, and of his reply.

Viceroy's reply to the Agra address.

22. The reply carefully stated the situation before the Government of India, which, though one of great anxiety, did not on the whole seem worse than that which the Government had dealt with in Bengal in 1865 and 1866. He alluded to the measures which had been taken to meet the impending calamity, and stated that no better means could be found for distributing the food supplies of a country at a time of scarcity than the free action of trade. That trade, he had reason to

believe, was very active. The position of affairs gave cause for anxiety, but there was every reason to believe that, by the blessing of Providence, the Government and the people would be able to cope successfully with the difficulties which were before them.

23. The abstract thus given of the Viceroy's reply is very brief, because the address was in the main a clear and forcible statement of facts and opinions which have already been collected and summarized from previous Despatches.

Abstract of Despatch from the Government of India of 12th December, and of Fifth Special Narrative of the Government of Bengal from 6th to 12th December.

Prospects unchanged. Rain had fallen in Bay of Bengal, and had extended to the Chittagong coast, where it had done more harm than good. There had also been a fall in Calcutta and neighbourhood, but none in Behar. On the whole the appearances of the weather encouraged the hope of winter rains.

Government of India's Despatch of 12th December. Received 5th January. Weather.

2. The winter rice harvests had been reaped in Bengal, Behar, and Orissa; the yield was perhaps slightly better than was anticipated. The rising spring crops also promised better.

Winter rice harvest.

3. Prices had shown generally a fall, in consequence of the incoming produce of the winter harvest. A considerable rise not expected until the middle of January.

Prices.

4. The harvest and crops in other parts of India were fairly good, except in the eastern part of Oudh, from which accounts were worse. From the North-West Provinces generally there was hope of obtaining considerable supplies of food. About 100,000 maunds, or 3,600 tons, of grain had already been purchased by the Bengal authorities, and negotiations were in progress for the purchase of a further amount of 250,000 maunds, or about 9,000 tons.

Harvest and crops in other parts of India.

5. More than 34,000 tons, out of 80,000 tons, ordered from beyond sea were expected to arrive before end of January, the date by which the Government of Bengal had indicated that 72,000 tons would be required. Of this amount 10,000 tons had arrived, or were arriving, from Burmah and Madras. 7,000 tons were promised in December, and 10,000 tons in January, from Burmah; 9,000 tons were expected within the period from Hong Kong and Saigon. The remaining 38,000 tons would be obtained by the Government of Bengal in India.

Supplies to be provided before end of January.

6. There had been no marked activity in the grain trade during the week.

Trade in grain.

7. The local officers still continued to believe that supplies of country carriage were for the present abundant, but bearing in mind that, as the season advanced, there might be deficiency, the Viceroy was considering the practicability of obtaining country carriage from a distance for use in the distressed districts in which such means of transport were likely to run short.

Transport.

8. The Viceroy was still in communication with Burmah on the subject of emigration, but until distress became severe, it was hardly probable that any large number of intending emigrants would offer themselves.

Emigration.

9. The Lieutenant Governor had applied for additional Civil Establishments involving a cost of Rs. 37,823 per mensem probably for five months, and the Viceroy had accorded his sanction to the charge.

10. Finally, it was stated there were no signs yet of general distress. A considerable number of labourers had been employed on the public works, but relief works had not yet become general.

1. After adverting to the weather and the prospects of the crops, and mentioning that rices, though slightly higher in Northern Bengal and Behar, were on the whole about the same as in December 1865, the Lieutenant Governor stated that the Government of India had sanctioned his proposition that 1,875,000 maunds, or about 69,000 tons of grain, should be procured and stored by the 31st January.

Narrative of the Government of Bengal, from 6th to 12th December.

He appended his letter to the Commissioners of Patna, Rajshahye, and Bhaugulpore, showing how this amount, when obtained, should be allotted. The proportions were,—

	Maunds.
To Patna - - - - -	900,000
„ Bhaugulpore - - - - -	300,000
„ Rajshahye - - - - -	300,000
For reserve - - - - -	375,000
Total - - - - -	<u>1,875,000</u>

12. Of the amount thus sanctioned the Lieutenant Governor stated that,—

Maunds.	
270,000	had been ordered by Government of India, and were deliverable in January.
400,000	the Bengal Government expected to have from Calcutta by end of January.
200,000	from Orissa.
350,000	from North-West Provinces.
<u>950,000</u>	

leaving 655,000 to be provided. This amount the Lieutenant Governor hoped the Government of India would supply from beyond sea; and it is known from the Despatch which forwarded the Narrative, that the Viceroy had promised that 34,000 tons, including the 10,000 tons just alluded to, should be available. The 24,000 tons thus indicated would give a full compliance to the requisition of the Government of Bengal.

Transport.

13. The Lieutenant Governor mentioned that 181,500 maunds, about 6,500 tons, of Government grain had already been sent up country. There had, up to the present time, been no block on the East Indian Railway, and no inconvenience to private traders. The information relative to transport from railway stations to the interior was imperfect, but generally the Local Officers reported that the country carriage sufficed to carry all the Government grain and all the private importations. But the Lieutenant Governor added, that the resources of carriage would soon be tested much more severely.

14. On the Northern Bengal Railway two feeder roads to the railway station had been commenced and it had been arranged that the Boona Coolies (the navvies of that part of India), should be transferred from local roads to the railway works, leaving the lighter labour of the roads to the destitute poor of the district.

Relief works.

15. As a rule, employment on relief works was not in great demand, but in some parts of Sarun, Monghyr, Purneah, Rajshahye, and Rungpore the demand was brisker than in ordinary years, the condition of the labourers was good, and they were fed without recourse to Government stocks. Generally the demand for employment would not be great until harvesting and cold weather sowings were completed.

16. The Commissioner of Patna having reported that the saltpetre makers of Northern Behar were very poor, and suffered greatly in former times of scarcity, the Lieutenant Governor had ordered the temporary suspension of Act XXXI. of 1861 (Act to Regulate the Manufacture of Saltpetre). The Commissioner of Chota Nagpore had been allowed to store grain in the district of Singbhoon, on account of its peculiar position.

Note on movement of food grains.

17. The Lieutenant Governor appended a note on the movement of food grains, of which the following is an abstract:—

- I. Downward traffic on Ganges, past Sahebgunge, 22,000 maunds, say 800 tons, of wheat and grain to Calcutta. Total since 1st November, 122,000 maunds, or 4,400 tons.
- II. Upward traffic on Ganges, 22,000 maunds (800 tons) of pulses Total since 1st November, 73,000 maunds, or 2,700 tons. Also during " week, 8,000 maunds (say 300 tons) of rice. Total since 1st November 10,000 maunds, or 1,500 tons.

- III. Downward traffic on the Gorai river, past Kooshtea, 30,000 maunds, about 1,050 tons, chiefly wheat and gram. Total since 1st November, 1,28,000 maunds, or 4,550 tons.
Upward traffic past Goalundo, 28,000 maunds, or about 1,000 tons, of rice. Total since 1st November, 91,000 maunds, or 3,250 tons.
- IV. By Eastern canals into Calcutta, 90,000 maunds, or 3,200 tons, of rice. Total since 1st October, 7,28,000 maunds, or 26,000 tons.
- V. The despatches from Howrah of rice, 103,000 maunds, or 3,700 tons; despatches from Chandernagore had nearly ceased. Total from both, since 8th October, a million maunds, or about 37,000 tons.
- VI. The exports of grain from Calcutta during the week amounted to 2,11,092 maunds, or 7,600 tons, of which about 6,750 tons were rice. Total of rice exported from Calcutta since 1st November, 457,000 maunds, or about 16,500 tons. External trade.
- VII. Imports of rice into Calcutta during the week, 26,312 maunds, or about 900 tons.
- VIII. From Delhi, Umballah, and Loodianah, during the fortnight ending 29th November, 2,20,000 maunds of grain were exported by rail to stations between Agra and Howrah.

Abstract of Despatch from the Government of India, dated 19th December, and of the Sixth Special Narrative of the Government of Bengal.

There was no material change since the date of the last Despatch.

Despatch of the Government of India, dated 19th December.
Weather.
Prices.

2. The weather had been clear, rainless, and cool, and thus seasonable.

3. Prices of food grains continued comparatively low on account of the harvesting now in progress over all Bengal.

4. The harvesting in Bengal appeared in some places better, in no places worse, than had been anticipated. The general opinion was that in Behar the promise of the spring crops exceeded the first expectation. If winter rains were favourable a fair yield of food supply might be expected from that source. In other parts of India, the accounts of the crops were favourable, with the exception of the eastern and south-eastern portions of Oudh and the North-Western Provinces. Harvesting, and prospects of spring crops.

5. It might be stated generally that symptoms of distress in districts affected by drought were, when perceptible, slight and partial. The labourers on relief works were of the class which usually sought such employment. Condition of districts.

6. The Government of India adhered to its opinion against a view enunciated by the Lieutenant Governor, that the position of the Lower Provinces was not worse in 1873 than at the corresponding period in 1865. In making this remark it was stated, that if Orissa were excluded there might be foundation for this view of the Lieutenant Governor, but that if it were included, that view could not be justified. It may here be stated, that if the particular Letter of the Lieutenant Governor, No. 4003, dated 18th December, be examined, it will be seen that Sir George Campbell, though considering the failure of crops in 1873 more wide spread than in 1865, yet added that the latter year had been preceded by bad seasons, while the crops 1871-72 had been good, and that therefore the country was in no greater danger in 1873 than it was in 1865.

7. The Viceroy then added that no decisive opinion as to the extent of the distress could be formed until the end of January, but in the meantime every requisition of the Lieutenant Governor had been met.

8. All the grain required by the end of January (72,000 tons) was on its way, would doubtless reach the afflicted districts by the time specified.

There had been greater activity in the grain trade than before, and emigration towards Assam and the tea districts had commenced. Trade and emigration.

With this Despatch was sent the sixth Special Narrative of the Bengal Government for the week ending 18th December. It was shorter than usual, and its statements were substantially given in the Viceroy's Despatch. Sixth Narrative of the Bengal Government, 13th to 18th December.

- Supplies. 11. The Lieutenant Governor stated that Mr. A. Colvin, the Officer appointed by the Government of the North-West Provinces to arrange for the supply of grain required for Bengal from those Provinces, had engaged to send the full amount for which requisition had been made, and 40,000 maunds (1,500 tons) of mixed grains had already arrived in Behar. The Government grain from Madras and Burmah had continued to come in. Further shipments from Saigon, Burmaah, and Madras had been advised. It had not been found convenient to make purchases in Eastern Bengal, but the surplus of those districts was mostly finding its way into Calcutta, and the Lieutenant Governor still hoped hereafter to collect there any further supplies required for the Rajshahye Division.
- Transport. 12. The despatch of grain from stations on the East Indian Railway to the interior was going on satisfactorily, and it was reported from Patna and Barh that 98,566 maunds, about 3,500 tons, had already been received, and that two-thirds of this amount had been despatched to storehouses in the Chumparun, Tirhoot, and Sarun districts. The magistrates of Bhaugulpore and Caragola had notified that they could carry across the Ganges to the north of their districts 20,000 maunds (700 tons) a week. The despatches to the Rajshahye Division from Goalundo and Kooshtea were not going on so rapidly, but Mr. Toynbee, the officer charged with the superintendence of transport, was about to proceed to those parts and to endeavour to arrange for greater expedition.
13. The Commissioner of Patna had reported that, in his opinion, the Government importations were checking private trade. This view was, in some degree, confirmed by an intelligent Native gentleman, who, approving of what the Government had done, wrote "the arrangements made by Government for storing grain for supply when needed, have gone far to assure the people there will be no want." The Commissioner was endeavouring to make it generally understood that the intention of Government was to expend its stores of grain in payment for work, and he had been authorized to make a further attempt to buy through the local trade in order to promote importation.
- Prospect of crops. 14. The Lieutenant Governor considered the reports submitted in December, on the prospects of crops, to be, on the whole, a little more promising than those submitted in November.
- Distress. 15. Actual distress had not as yet shown itself anywhere, nor was there yet a brisk demand for labour, while in 1865 distress had shown itself in October.
- Soane Canal works. 16. It was reported that the Soane Canal works had irrigated 121,751 acres in the Shahabad District. In the Gya District 3,732 acres had been irrigated from the Patna Canal. The irrigation from the Poonpoo river had covered 5,000 acres. The labourers on the Canal works amounted to 20,000, and it was stated that they had not sought employment on account of the scarcity. They showed no signs of distress, and no difficulty was experienced in the supply of food.
17. On the Northern Bengal Railway, Major Lindsay, the Superintending Engineer, had been directed to commence brick making, an employment which would give work to a very large number of people.
18. The British Indian Steam Navigation Company, which had recently raised its rates of freight from Orissa to Calcutta, had now offered to carry Government rice at rates 30 per cent. below the rates named in their postal contract with Government. The Company had accordingly been asked to put on a special steamer to carry rice at low rates from Orissa to Calcutta.
- Advances. 19. The Commissioner of the Presidency Division had received an allotment of Rs. 100,000, for expenditure on advances for land improvements.
- Purchase of tools for relief works. 20. Finally, the Lieutenant Governor stated that all the tools suitable for relief works had been bought up in the Calcutta and Madras markets, and arrangements had been made for a weekly supply from the North-West Provinces and the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay.
- Note on the movement of food grains. 21. The usual note on the movement of food grains was appended ^{Total} _{week,} ₍₁₈₆₅₎ narrative. It showed the following returns :—
- I. Downward traffic on Ganges, past Sahebgunge, 17,000 maunds (about 600 tons) of wheat and grain.

(21)

- Upward traffic on Ganges, past Sahebgunge, 9,000 maunds of rice and 12,000 maunds of pulse, in all 21,000 maunds, or about 750 tons; the rice chiefly to Benares, pulse to the Benares, Patna, and Bhaugulpore Divisions.
- II. Downward traffic on the Gorai river, past Kooshtea, 30,000 maunds, say 1,050 tons, of wheat and grain.
Upward, past Goalundo, on the Ganges, 18,000 maunds (about 650 tons) of rice. This traffic had not developed.
- III. By the Eastern canals, between 11th and 16th December, 73,000 maunds (about 2,600 tons) of food grains came into Calcutta. Total since 1st October, 800,000 maunds, or about 28,500 tons. It was particularly worthy of remark that wheat was coming in from the Behar districts by this route.
- IV. Between 11th and 16th December, 80,000 maunds (about 2,850 tons) of rice had left Howrah for up country, chiefly consigned to Bhaugulpore and Patna. This included Government despatches.
- V. During the six days ending 16th December the export of food grains from Calcutta amounted to 2,00,569 maunds (about 7,200 tons); of this 1,61,108 maunds, or nearly 6,000 tons, were rice. Total of rice since November 1st, 6,18,000 maunds, or rather more than 22,000 tons. External trade.
- VI. Imports of rice during the same time into Calcutta, 15,588 maunds, or about 550 tons.
- VII. Since the last report, 35,000 maunds (about 1,250 tons) of rice had been exported from Chittagong to other than Bengal ports.
- VIII. During the week ending 7th December, it had now been ascertained, that 1,52,000 maunds, or about 5,400 tons, of food grains had been exported from Delhi, Umballa, and Loodianah, but the destination was not more accurately known than that the exports were to Agra, Benares, and places below.
- IX. During the week ending November 29th, 1,70,000 maunds (or little more than 6,000 tons) of food grains were received by the East Indian Railway, at Mirzapore and stations below, from stations above. Of this amount 1,00,000 maunds, or 3,600 tons, were received at places in Patna and Bhaugulpore Divisions.

22. With the Narrative was also transmitted copy of a letter from the Government of India to the Government of Bengal, conveying the impressions which the Viceroy had derived from his recent visit to Behar, on his way down to Calcutta from Agra and Lucknow. The Viceroy in his letter stated that he fully approved of all the arrangements to meet the impending distress ordered by the Lieutenant Governor, and which were being carried into execution by the local officers with great energy and intelligence. He especially praised the exertions of Mr. Bayley, the Commissioner of Patna, and Mr. Levinge, the Engineer on the Soane Canal. Letter from Government of India to Government of Bengal, dated 16th December, No. 604 of 1873.

Abstract of the Despatch from the Duke of Argyll in Council, dated 23rd January 1874.

After the receipt of the last of the Despatches from the Viceroy of India, of which an abstract has been given, the Duke of Argyll in Council replied in a Despatch* dated 23rd January, which may conveniently be noted in this place. * See page 52.

2. After noticing the care with which the estimate of the extent of failure had been framed by officers well acquainted with the threatened districts, the able analyses of the evidence furnished by the Government of Bengal, and the discriminating caution with which measures for the investigation of anticipated distress had been taken by the Viceroy, his Grace in Council alluded to the fact that every requisition and suggestion of the Government of Bengal had been complied with, except the prohibition of export.

The Secretary of State stated that he had already conveyed the approval of Majesty's Government to the resolution of the Government of India to abstain from the prohibition of export. That measure had the one recommendation, not important, of satisfying a considerable amount of Native opinion. But, on again regarding carefully the whole case, Her Majesty's Government adhered to its course with the Viceroy's views.

4. His Grace in Council believed that the supplies of food available in India, after deducting the usual exports, were sufficient, and other markets were accessible should the Government be compelled to resort to them.

5. After noticing the differences between the present position and that of the Orissa Famine in 1866, especially contrasting the accessibility of Behar with the remoteness and isolation of Orissa, the Duke of Argyll proceeded to state that, were the Government of India to assume or appear to assume the duty of feeding 24 millions of people, nothing but disastrous failure would be the result. The Government had, therefore, rightly in his opinion, determined not to interfere with the functions of traders in grain, and to confine itself to the provision of work and wages in food, as well as more direct relief when such was required, for that portion of the people who were too poor to purchase at enhanced prices, and whose wants, therefore, the ordinary grain trade could not be expected to supply.

6. Her Majesty's Government, it was stated, entirely approved of this policy, and had full confidence in the means taken by the Viceroy, in conjunction with the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, to anticipate the necessities which might arise.

7. Finally, the Secretary of State approved of the system of relief works which had been wisely organized very soon after apprehensions of drought arose. He assured the Viceroy of the full support of Her Majesty's Government in the adoption of any measures which might be deemed necessary for the saving of life and the mitigation of distress.

Abstract of Despatch from the Government of India, dated 26th December.

In this Despatch it was stated that the Special Narrative of the Bengal Government relative to the drought would in future be submitted fortnightly, instead of weekly as heretofore. No Narrative, therefore, accompanied the present Despatch.

2. The general situation remained unchanged.

Weather.

3. In Behar there had been some very slight rain, and at some places in the North some showers. In Eastern and Southern Oudh there had been a moderate and seasonable fall in some of the localities in which it was most needed, and highly beneficial results were expected.

4. The out-turn of the winter rice harvest had been in some places slightly better, in others slightly worse, than in previous reports. The net result was about the same.

Prices.

5. There had been no appreciable decline or rise in prices.

Trade.

6. The internal grain trade was active between the North-West Provinces and Behar, but less active in regard to the despatch of rice up country from Calcutta. Satisfactory accounts of the despatch and arrival of the grain ordered for Bengal continued to be received.

7. Local preparations to meet distress wherever and whenever it might arise were in due course of provision, but it was not proposed at present to announce Relief Committees.

8. The practicability of laying down tramways from Patna to Gya, and from Moozufferpore in Tirhoot to Hajepore on the Ganges, were under consideration.

Abstract of Despatch from Government of India, dated 2nd January, No. 2 of 1874 and of the Seventh Special Narrative of the Government of Bengal.

Despatch of the Government of India, dated 2nd January, No. 2 of 1874.
Weather.

1. The general situation remained without essential change, but if there was change it was slightly for the worse.

2. There had been slight showers in parts of the Patna, the Bhaugulpore Rajshahye Divisions, which had done some little good, but by no means satisfied the wants of the cultivators, and the lack of moisture for the rising spring crops had been severely felt. In other respects the crops were promising, and it was

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manifest that the sowing and germination of those crops had been much better than was anticipated at the first period of alarm. No signs were yet apparent of the winter rains. There was yet time for them to come, but upon this coming during the month of January depended the question of whether the spring harvest in Behar would be saved or lost. That question would be solved by the end of January.

3. Prices taken as a whole were stationary, but in some places there was a tendency to rise, and at a time when the new rice crop had just come in, that tendency must be regarded as a presage of coming distress. The area of distress it was thought might extend, in some degree, in the Burdwan and Presidency Divisions. Prices.

4. Relief works were increasing in number and extent at various places. The labourers upon them were increasing, which constituted the only perceptible symptom of coming distress. It had not been thought expedient to commence operations through Relief Committees. Relief works.

5. There was considerable evidence of the activity of the grain trade in the interior. Trade.

6. Supplies ordered from beyond the seas were duly arriving. The British Indian Steam Navigation Company had rendered useful service. The storing and distribution of grain in the interior was advancing under the direction of the Lieutenant Governor. Supplies.

7. The Viceroy then alluded to a letter from the British Indian Association, which stated the reasons and facts which had induced it to form a more unfavourable anticipation of the drought than the official accounts warranted. The Government of India was not at present prepared to assent to the views of the Association, but it was carefully considering the arguments advanced, in order that it might be prepared to make any new arrangements which might be shown to be necessary.

8. The Narrative opened with the usual statements relative to the weather, state and prospects of crops, and prices, which have already been briefly given in substance in the abstract of the Government of India's Despatch of the 2nd January. To the notice therein given it may be well to add the Lieutenant Governor's opinion that there would be a moderate spring crop if the dews continued, and if there were more rain, but he added that the spring crop would not greatly improve the condition of purely rice tracts like Northern Tirhoot, Soopole, Dinagepore, and Bograh. As to the rice crop already noticed, the yield could not be regarded as better than was expected, with the exception of the out-turn of the Bhaugulpore district (which, with the exception of the Soopole Sub-division, stated to be very bad), was now reported to be half of an average crop. On the other hand, the spring crops were stated to be still healthy in all places except some tracts north of the Ganges. Seventh Special Narrative of the drought in Bengal, from 19th to the 31st December.
Weather.
State and prospect of crops.

9. With respect to prices, the fluctuation had been slight. The only serious rises had been in Rungpore, from 15 to 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ seers for the rupee, in Burdwan from 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ to 14 seers the rupee, in Mymensing from 16 seers to 14 the rupee, and in Calcutta from 13 $\frac{1}{4}$ to 12 seers the rupee. In Patna and Bhaugulpore Divisions there had been little change in prices. In North Behar, in which great distress had been anticipated, Indian Corn was nowhere dearer than 16 seers the rupee, and in most places cheaper, the only exception being the south-east corner of Purneah, in which 10 seers the rupee was the rate for the food of the common people. Prices.

10. It was worthy of note that there was no intelligence of grain thefts or other robberies in any of the distressed districts. Crime.

11. Since the submission of the last Narrative very large assignments of Government grain reached Calcutta and the distressed districts. Nearly the whole of 1,50,000 maunds (about 5,500 tons), bought in Calcutta on public tender, had been delivered and patched up the country. Burmah and Madras rice was coming in rapidly. About 1,000 tons had been delivered up to date, and about 5,000 tons more were in the way. During the fortnight, 2,16,861 maunds (about 7,800 tons) of Government rice had been despatched to the affected districts. In the last week, several ships with Government rice had arrived from Madras, Burmah, and Saigon, and unloading and despatch from Calcutta by railway and steamer had kept pace with arrivals. The first consignment by river steamer had left Calcutta, taking Supplies of food and transport.

20,000 maunds (about 750 tons) to Kaleegunge and Chilmaree, in the Rungpore District, at the rate of 7 and $7\frac{1}{2}$ annas per maund for the whole trip.

12. The exact amount of arrivals of Government grain from Northern India was not exactly known, but, by the last account, 65,000 maunds (about 2,400 tons) of barley, peas, and wheat had arrived in the Patna Division, and 40,000 maunds (about 1,500 tons) in the Bhaugulpore Division, while 12,000 maunds (about 400 tons) of rice, bought by the Commissioner of the Rajshahye Division, were on their way to the north of that Division. The transmission of grain to the storehouses in the interior of the distressed districts was going on in earnest. By the last accounts,—

1,20,000 maunds (about 4,300 tons) had been despatched from railway stations to places in the interior of the Patna Division.

1,10,000 maunds (about 4,050 tons) from railway to the interior of the Bhaugulpore Division.

85,000 maunds, or about 3,100 tons, from Kooshtea and Goalundo to the interior of the Rajshahye Division.

12. Special efforts were being made to carry grain with all speed to storehouses in the north of Chumparun, Tirhoot, Bhaugulpore, Purneah, Dinagepoor, and Rungpore, places in which the distress would probably be most severe, and which were least accessible. Already reports had been received of the storing of large quantities of Government grain in those places. The stream of grain transport, after some difficulties and stoppages, had fairly and steadily begun. The Commissioner of Patna had reported, that he could now despatch 60,000 maunds, about 2,100 tons, weekly into the interior, but he had to contend with great difficulties in procuring boats. In fact, it was remarkable to what an extent the facilities of water carriage had fallen short of expectation. Both in Behar and Rajshahye the Local Officers seemed to be more and more disposed to carts than to boats for carriage to places off the very great rivers.

13. In addition to Government grain, large quantities had been ordered, and were being imported for estates under the Court of Wards, and by indigo planters and others who had taken advances for the purpose. The Hutwa and Durbhanga estates, situated in the very heart of the distressed tracts of Sarun and Tirhoot were importing 100,000 maunds, about 3,600 tons, and 1,20,000 maunds, about 4,250 tons, respectively.

14. Storehouses were being hired or built everywhere. In this matter there was no delay whatever.

15. The Commissioner of Orissa had secured 4,27,000 maunds (or 15,500 tons) of grain at the favourable rate of Rs. 2. 12 per maund, nearly the whole of which would be delivered in Calcutta by the end of January. Arrangements had been made for the purchase of 25,000 maunds, about 850 tons, of wheat, at Rs. 2. 11 per maund from the Nerbudda Valley. The whole to be sent to Bhaugulpore, in weekly instalments, by the middle of February. The Lieutenant Governor stated, that he believed 116,000 tons of grain had been ordered, and that of this amount 70,000 tons would be available by the end of January. He was now anxiously considering what further amount he should urge the Government of ^{the} ~~the~~ ^{to} purchase.

State of the country.

16. The Lieutenant Governor then proceeded to review the District Narratives. He stated that actual distress had been reported from one part of Chumparun only; but particulars were not yet fully known. It was said that actual distress would probably be felt in part of Tirhoot within a month, and in Bogra the prospects were reported to be graver than had been at first supposed. The people were generally more hopeful than in November, but the fear was, that, if the power of Government to meet all requirements, the results might be disastrous. The District Officers were endeavouring as much as possible to execute the intentions of Government. In the Burdwan and Hooghly districts, in ^{was} ~~was~~ ^{there was a large} ~~there was a large~~ ^{labouring population with little more than a bare living,} ~~labouring population with little more than a bare living,~~ ^{committees would be} ~~committees would be~~ necessary that the early appointment of Relief

17. In the Sarun, Monghyr, Tirhoot, Bhaugulpore, and Dinagepore districts, Relief works. 25,000 labourers were employed on relief works. Food was everywhere obtainable on the works, at neighbouring markets, or from shops set up by petty dealers. No Government grain had yet been sold or distributed, but the question had arisen at what rate it should be sold, and the Lieutenant Governor had issued orders that, subject to the discretion of the Commissioners, Bengal rice should not be sold at a less rate than ten (10) seers per rupee, maize, barley, and Burmah rice being sold proportionally cheaper.

18. Several local officers had expressed a fear that private importations had Private importations. decreased. The Collector of Shahabad had explained that the prices ruling in his district left no margin for profit on importations from Calcutta; on the other hand, prices in the North-West Provinces were much below Behar prices, and considerable private importations, especially by planters, still continued. Co-operative associations for importing and selling grain at cost price had been formed at Moorshedabad and at Patna, in the Rajshahye District. Some zemindars of Rajshahye, who wished the Government to import rice into their estates and sell it at cost price, had been referred to dealers in the Calcutta market, but assistance in forwarding to its destination any grain they might buy had been promised.

19. The Lieutenant Governor then briefly detailed the routes and modes of traffic Routes and modes of traffic. by which the threatened districts could be approached.

I. Patna. This district stretched along the railway and river. Means of carriage into the interior were said to be ample. There was, therefore, no anxiety about it.

II. Gya. This district was being supplied from the Bukhtiarpore, Patna, and Bihta stations of the East Indian Railway. From the first of them grain was carried by pack bullocks to the western and less fertile districts. From the other two stations grain went on carts by metalled road and by fairly good unmetalled roads. There was anxiety about Aurungabad, in the extreme west of the district, and inquiry was being made as to the best manner of supplying its wants.

III. Shahabad. This district was supplied from five railway stations; most of it was very accessible, with the exception of the Bhubooah Sub-Division, to which special attention had been drawn.

IV. Tirhoot. The supply of this district was more important and more difficult than the districts of South Behar. Grain was being despatched by three routes,—

1. From Patna Ghat Station, by boat, to Hajee poor, and thence by cart to the centre of the district.

2. From Barh Station, by boat, to Champta Ghat, and thence by cart to Durbhanga, Mudhodbanee, and Seetamarhee.

3. From Monghyr Station, up the Kodsee and Ghugree rivers, to a place eight miles from Durbhanga, and thence by cart to Northern and Western Tirhoot.

V. Sarun. This district is on the river, within easy distance of the railway. The transit to the marts in the interior is by carts.

VI. Chumparun. Access to this district is by boats, but it is slow, and it is very difficult to get a sufficient number of small boats when large boats cannot go up the river. The Commissioner is considering how supplies can be carted from the Ganges up to Chumparun, into which 9,000 tons were to be sent by end of January. About 1,750 tons have already been despatched by boat.

VII. Monghyr. Transport was going on briskly by cart from stations on the chord line and from Luckiserai to the parts of Jumodee regarding which there was some anxiety. There was no "hitch" in this district.

VIII. Bhaugulpore. Supplies were being taken by carts from the Ganges to the extreme northern parts of the district, which had caused great anxiety. No difficulty in transport was expected here.

IX. Purneah. This district had drawn its supplies entirely from the Saheb-gunge Station. There had been a block both at the ferry and station. The ferry steamer could only carry a limited amount of cargo, and what it

did convey the Purneah carts could not carry off. A special officer had been sent up to superintend the transport, and additional routes were to be tried.

- X. Rajshahye. In this division grain is sent by the Eastern Bengal Railway to Kooshtea, and thence by boats and carts to various parts of the districts. There was considerable difficulty, and additional routes by land and inland streams were to be tried.
- XI. Bograh. This district is supplied by grain purchased in Eastern Bengal, and sent up the Berhampooter in native boats. The wants of the district were emergent, but supplies could be thrown in without difficulty.
- XII. Rungpore. Grain was being carried to this district by boat and steamer. Carts and boats were being collected for carriage into the interior, and though the arrangements were not yet complete, no difficulty was anticipated.

Area of distress.

20. Hitherto the area of distress, as recognized by Government, was confined to Behar and part of Rajshahye, but reports had reached the Lieutenant Governor to the effect that relief works would probably be required in the Burdwan and Hooghly districts, in parts of the Sonthal Pergunnahs, and in part of Nuddea. Sir G. Campbell added that, if importations into these districts should be necessary, no difficulty would be experienced.

21. Increased advances had been given, with the sanction of the Lieutenant Governor, to the cultivators of the poppy fields in Shahabad. It was considered that the promise of the opium crop justified these extra advances.

22. Lastly, the British Indian Steam Navigation Company had agreed to lay on an additional steamer from False Point to Calcutta, at reasonable rates of freight for grain, on condition that Government would provide a hulk whereon the freight could be collected. The Government had complied with this condition. By this arrangement it was considered certain that all the grain bought by Government and by private traders could be brought from Orissa to Calcutta before the setting in of the monsoon.

Movement of grains.

23. The Lieutenant Governor had usually appended to the special Narratives a note on the movements of food grains. On this occasion he did not follow that course, but substituted in the body of the Narrative a review of the external and internal trade in food grains since 1st November. The facts may be thus briefly stated,—

I. External trade :

1. Export of rice from Calcutta to ports other than Bengal ports, to 30th December, 9,20,482 maunds (about 33,000 tons).

Import of rice into Calcutta, 68,969 maunds (about 2,500 tons), together with 2,00,000 maunds (about 7,200 tons) now in the river, but not cleared at the Custom House.

Exports were all by private traders, the imports all by Government.

2. Export of rice from Chittagong to ports not in Bengal, 2,60,000 maunds (about 9,500 tons).

Imports, nil.

3. Export of wheat, pulse, grain, &c., from Calcutta, 2,54,307 maunds, or about 9,200 tons.

Thus about 57,000 tons had been exported from the Presidency of Bengal, and about 10,000 tons imported.

4. From the Orissa ports about 1,51,000 maunds (about 5,500 tons) of rice have been imported into Calcutta.

II. Internal trade :

1. The Eastern Canals brought into Calcutta, up to 30th December, 8,86,000 maunds (about 32,600 tons) of food grains, chiefly rice.

2. The East Indian Railway brought into Calcutta, 2,45,991 maunds (about 8,900 tons) of food grains other than rice.

3. From Behar there passed down the Ganges for Calcutta 1,11,095 maunds (about 4,000 tons) of wheat, and 38,649 maunds (about 1,400 tons) of gram.

4. From 1st November to 20th December, 4,22,486 maunds (about 15,200 tons) of grain, &c., were imported into Behar from the North-West Provinces and the Punjab, by the East Indian Railway; and from Calcutta, by the same railway into the same Division, 8,05,100 maunds (about 29,000 tons) of rice.

On the whole, Behar received from the two ends of the railway 1,700,000 maunds (about 61,000 tons) of rice and other grain in October, November, and the greater part of December.

5. On the Ganges, up to 20th December, 1,28,000 maunds (about 4,600 tons) of rice passed Goalundo upwards, and, up to 23rd December, 1,05,000 maunds (about 3,800 tons) of pulse, and 88,000 maunds (about 3,200 tons) of rice passed Sahebgunge upwards.

24. The consumption of food in the threatened Provinces was estimated to be more than a million of maunds (about 37,000 tons) per diem, to which large total, the Lieutenant Governor remarked, the amount of food received bore a very small proportion.

*Abstract of the Despatch from the Government of India, dated 9th January,
No. 3 of 1874.*

The Viceroy stated that the winter rains had not fallen, that there had been slight showers in some of the Behar districts, but not enough to do any real good. Weather.

2. Attention was fixed on the spring crops, which continued to promise well. In some districts, however, they had begun to show signs of withering, and in all they stood absolutely in need of rain within the next fortnight. Spring crops.

3. Prices were slightly rising in many places, and, on the whole, the anticipated tendency to such a rise was manifesting itself. Prices.

4. It was now nearly certain that at the best there must be distress for several months in Behar, and especially in Tirhoot. The contraction or enlargement of the area of distress all depended on the contingency of whether rain did or did not fall during the next fortnight.

5. It was trusted that the Government importation of rice, together with the purchases in India, would be found adequate to meet the worst consequences that could be expected. The arrivals from beyond the sea were very regular, 24,000 tons had already been received in Calcutta, and 25,000 more were expected before the end of the current month.

6. The immediated attention of Government was being given to the question of transport of Government grain into the interior. The railway, it was trusted, would prove equal to all demands, whether of Government or of private traders. But there was not the same confidence as to the sufficiency of country carriage. Accurate information on this important point had not been obtained, although the attention of the Bengal Government had been repeatedly called to it since November. The subject had again been impressed on the attention of the Lieutenant Governor, and it was hoped that specific assurance of timely arrangements would soon be received. His Honour had accepted the offer of assistance from the Commissariat Department and the necessary orders for the provision of such assistance had been issued. Transport.

7. The organization of Relief Committees was not as far advanced as could be wished, especially as the time for calling them into active operation had in some instances arrived. The attention of the Lieutenant Governor had been urgently called to this subject. Preliminary measures for constituting a Central Relief Committee had been ordered, but it had been decided, after consultation with the Lieutenant Governor, to postpone an appeal to the public until distress had begun to declare itself to some appreciable extent. Relief Committees.

8. Relief works had been commenced in several places, but they were nowhere largely resorted to except in Sarun. The Works on the Soane Canal and the Gunduck Embankments were only attended by those who, under any circumstances, would seek this kind of employment.

9. After consulting with the Lieutenant Governor, the Viceroy was of opinion that the project of constructing tramways from Hajepore on the Ganges opposite to Patna to Mozufferpore, the capital of Tirhoot, and between Patna and Gya, could not, on the whole, be advantageously undertaken.

Abstract of the Despatch from the Government of India, dated 16th January, No. 5 of 1874, and of the 8th Special Narrative of the Drought in Bengal from the 1st to 15th January.

Despatch of the Government of India, dated 16th January.
Weather.

Since the date of the last Despatch there had been partial showers in the Patna, Bhaugulpore, and Rajshahye Divisions. Some benefit would arise, but the prospect of the spring harvest had not materially improved. In the districts of the North-West Provinces and Oudh adjoining Behar there had been some rain, and, excepting only the southern portion of the Mirzapore district, no apprehension of general distress was felt in that quarter.

Prices.

2. There had been a slight increase in prices.
3. Some distress was manifesting itself in Northern Behar, and it was reported that the distress in North Tirhoot would be severe.
4. With the exception of Sarun, where the Lieutenant Governor had enjoined increased activity on the part of the Local Officers, the relief works were reported to be sufficient to meet the existing demand.
5. With respect to supplies of grain, arrangements had been made to secure the arrival in Bengal and Behar, from month to month, of supplies sufficient to meet the highest estimates that had been made of the demand for relief works and relief operations.
6. Adequate steam tonnage had been engaged for February, March, and April, and similar arrangements would be made for the months after April.
7. Additional evidence had been afforded of the ability of the East Indian Railway to carry all the quantities of grain daily despatched by Government and by private traders.

Trade.

8. The activity of the trade was proved by the condition of the local money market and other facts.

Transport.

9. The Government of India still felt great anxiety as to the conveyance of the Government rice into the interior. The Lieutenant-Governor had expressed confidence in the sufficiency of the means at the disposal of the Local Officers for the distribution of the supplies allotted to the various localities, but the Government of India remarked that, notwithstanding the efforts of the Government of Bengal and its Officers, large accumulations of grain still remained at many railway stations for the want of transport into the interior. The Lieutenant-Governor was, however, fully alive to the urgency of the matter, and the Viceroy was awaiting receipt of detailed returns on this subject before taking further measures.

10. The Viceroy was expecting to hear of the formation of Relief Committees, and of the announcement by them of active operations. The final preparation of rules for their guidance would be expedited. They were under consideration of the Local Government.

11. In order to encourage zemindars to assist their people during the scarcity, the Viceroy stated, in conclusion, that it had been notified that wherever the zemindar had fallen into temporary difficulty from rendering such assistance, the demand for land revenue might be postponed for a time.

Eighth Narrative of the Government of Bengal of the drought, from 1st to 15th January.

12. The Narrative of the Government of Bengal, after giving some details as to prospects, weather, and prices which have already been stated in the Abstract of the Viceroy's Despatch, and after quoting a report from the Collector of the 24 Pergunnahs in support of the assertion that stocks in the neighbourhood of Calcutta had become depleted for foreign export, proceeded to the question of supplies.

Supplies.

13. The Lieutenant-Governor stated that the Government of India having sanctioned a supply of Government grain, up to 31st January, of 18,75,000 maunds,

(29)

which amount was subsequently expanded to 19,25,000 (about 70,000 tons), he had allotted 15,00,000 to districts, and had left 4,25,000 as a reserve. On the 5th January he had applied for a further supply of,—

- (a) 75,000 tons, to be pushed forward to the distressed districts as fast as possible during the three months commencing 1st February.
- (b) 150,000 tons, to be provided during the same period as a reserve to replace the vacuum caused by the exports from Bengal to foreign ports.
- (c) 75,000 tons, to replace exports from Bengal to Behar and the North-West Provinces.

Total, 300,000 tons. The Lieutenant-Governor had been informed, in reply, that arrangements had been made for the additional 75,000 tons from beyond the sea, which, with the 35,000 tons already provided up to the end of January, gave a total of 110,000 tons on which the Government of Bengal could calculate, and further, that a reserve above that quantity had been provided, and that additional precautions would be taken if circumstances seemed to require them.

14. On receiving this intimation from the Government of India, the Lieutenant-Governor at once allotted the reserve of 4,25,000 maunds, so as to make the entire distribution as follows :—

	Maunds.
To Patna - - - - -	10,00,000
„ Bhaugulpore - - - - -	5,00,000
„ Rajshahye - - - - -	4,25,000
	<hr/>
Total - - - - -	19,25,000
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Of the Patna allotment 2,75,000 maunds were destined for Tirhoot.

15. The total January supply of 19,25,000 maunds would have been thus obtained :—

	Maunds.
From North-West Provinces and Central Provinces direct to Behar	4,44,800
From Eastern Bengal direct to the Northern Bengal districts	80,000
From Calcutta - - - - -	14,01,000

With respect to the two first sources, there was no doubt that nearly all would reach the distressed districts, and be forwarded to the storehouses in the interior by the end of January, and with respect to the third source, Calcutta, up to 13th January, 8,39,788 maunds have been despatched up country, and further, large amounts had arrived from beyond sea, in fact, latterly the consignments from Burmah and Saigon had arrived more quickly than they could be sent up country.

16. It was added, that the Saigon rice, some thousands tons of which had arrived during the week, was packed in bags of plaited straw, many of which had burst, and the rice had to be re-bagged. This had caused some delay, but the rice would be re-bagged in the one maund bags made in the gaols,* and which were far more convenient for inland carriage than the ordinary two maund bags.

* The gaols it was hoped would turn out 200,000 bags in each month.

Transport.

17. Towards the end of the fortnight under review, a block of grain waggons had occurred at the Patna Ghat station on the East Indian Railway. This was due to an excess of arrivals of Government grain, and when these had been cleared off, there had been a block of private grain. Consequent on this block there had been a deficiency of waggons for the despatch of grain from Howrah. But the Government establishments at the Patna stations had been strengthened, and the agent of the railway had undertaken that as many waggons as the Government required should be forthcoming at Howrah.

18. With respect to transport into the interior, the Commissioners of Patna, Bhaugulpore, and Rajshahye had reported that they expected to despatch weekly,—

Local transport.

Patna - - - - -	1,69,000 maunds.
Bhaugulpore - - - - -	1,05,000 „
Rajshahye - - - - -	60,000 „

The Lieutenant Governor added, he had no doubt that all the original supply of grain, and most of the additional amount allotted from the reserve, would be either stored in, or in transit to, the distressed districts by the 31st January.

19. A fact very worthy of note was mentioned by the Lieutenant Governor as to the difficulties with which the Government had to deal at the present conjuncture. The exertions of Government Officers to avail themselves of every means of transport operated to the hindrance of private trade. The Commissioner of Patna (Mr. Bayley) had reported that private traders had had to incur demurrage charges, because they could not procure boats and carts to carry away their grain. The Lieutenant Governor remarked that, while fully believing that the strenuous exertions of the Government Officers to procure transport would be of very great benefit to the country, yet he did not think that the Government grain should be allowed to monopolize all the carriage that could be obtained. He had therefore impressed on the Commissioners that a great work of this kind if it were to be done on a large scale, required discretion as well as energy. Whenever private traders were importing, it would always be better to let them do so by preference, and to obtain the Government supplies through them. It was principally for remote parts, where private enterprise failed, that it would be necessary for Government to organize and avail itself of transport trains or other means of carriage. He particularly directed attention to the north of Chumparun, to Dinagepore, and part of Purneah, to the north and north-west of Tirhoot, and the north of Sarun, as tracts for which private trade could not be expected to do all or nearly all that was required.

20. The Lieutenant Governor stated that he had great cause to be satisfied with the energy of the officers in Behar in obtaining large means of transport at a short notice. The difficulties in Rajshahye were greater, but he did not anticipate failure there, although the water routes, to which he had himself originally greatly trusted, had, to some degree, failed. The Commissioner (Mr. Maloney) had, however, assured the Government that he intended to keep all the water routes working while the land routes were being fully employed.

Relief Committees.

21. It had been decided, in communication with the Government of India, that the time had come for making systematic arrangements for the distribution of charitable relief. To put Committees in active operation, Local Officers have been directed to select sites for relief centres, and, wherever there was appearance of serious distress, to raise subscriptions, giving, on behalf of Government, an equal sum to the amount raised by private benevolence. In order to place all the arrangements under efficient control, it was proposed that Mr. Schalch, of the Revenue Board, should be appointed President elect of the future Central Committee, with Mr. A. Forbes, of the Civil Service, as his Secretary; that Mr. Schalch should immediately, in consultation with the Lieutenant Governor, undertake the duty of drafting rules for the guidance of Relief Committees, such rules to be submitted for the sanction of the Government of India. Sir G. Campbell stated that, in anticipation of such rules being required, he had some time ago instructed Mr. Geddes, a very competent officer, to compile, from the records of former famines, the most approved orders and instructions bearing on the subject. This officer would be placed in communication with Mr. Schalch, and after the regulations were framed and approved, Mr. Schalch, it was proposed, should visit the distressed districts, and give such instructions to Local Officers as would ensure the efficient working of the scheme of relief when put in active operation.

22. The Lieutenant Governor then reviewed the Narratives from the distressed districts, but as the information they contained was of old date, he asked leave to be allowed to submit the next special Narrative on the 22nd January, instead of the 29th,* so that it might contain the latest information. No abstract, therefore, of this part of the present Special Narrative is submitted, with the exception of a very few very noteworthy points. The Lieutenant Governor took this opportunity of comparing previous estimates of the out-turn of the crops of 1873 with the actual yield, as far as it could be ascertained. To this he added a statement of the prospects of the spring crops.

* It had been ordered, all will be remembered, that the Narratives are to be submitted every fortnight, in- cluding one of every week.

Eighth Abstract of Second the General Narrative, Bengal: 10. from 1st January.

23. The Lieutenant Governor's statement was as follows,—

I. The Lower Delta and the Littoral Districts :

In November the estimate was that the crops would be from three quarters to a full average crop. In December it was thought that they would not be more than average ones all round. The final estimate was that they were not up to the average.

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The spring crops were doing well, and would probably give an average yield.

II. Western Bengal below the uplands :

Former estimates varied from under one half to fully over half of an average yield. The final result was that the crops of 1873 had yielded rather more than one half of an average out-turn.

The prospect of the spring crop was bad ; the out-turn would probably not be more than one half of an ordinary year.

III. Central Delta Districts :

There was no sufficient reason for estimating the out-turn from the whole of this district higher than before. The crop was from one half to three quarters of an average one.

The prospect of the spring crop was bad. The out-turn would probably be not more than half of that of an ordinary year.

IV. Northern Bengal :

The former estimate was from one quarter to one third of the out-turn of an ordinary year, and it had not been exceeded. The yield had probably been nearer to one quarter than to one half.

The prospects of the spring crop were bad, but not hopeless, and there was little chance of obtaining more than one third of an average yield. It was added, however, that the spring crops in these tracts never contributed largely to the food supply of the country.

V. Eastern Bengal :

The favourable view taken in December had been fully borne out. The yield had been from two thirds to a full average.

The spring crops were stated to be doing well, and the prospect was that of an average yield. It was added, however, that in these districts they were small in quantity.

VI. The upland country of Bengal and Chota Nagpore :

The former estimate had been that the yield would be from one half to three quarters of a full average year. The result had been that from one half to two thirds had been reaped.

Nothing was mentioned relative to the prospects of the spring crops.

BEHAR.

I. Northern Behar :

The yield would, on the whole, be less than one third of an ordinary year.

The spring crop might, it was thought, produce from one third to one half of an average yield. In the Bhaugulpore Division they promised remarkably well.

II. Southern Behar :

It had been estimated that the crops of 1873 would yield one third of an average. This estimate had been fully confirmed, and perhaps somewhat exceeded.

From the spring crops half the average was expected ; with seasonable rain, the yield would be better, and possibly much better.

In Behar it should be added that the spring crops usually contributed a very considerable quota of the food supply of the country, ranging from one eighth on the borders of Bengal Proper, *i.e.*, the eastern side, to one half in the districts bordering on the North-West Provinces, *i.e.*, the western side.

Assam and Hill Districts :

On the whole the crops had been fairly good, and the former estimate did not require qualification.

Nothing was mentioned regarding the prospects of the spring crops.

On the whole the estimate, after observation of the harvest, was that the crops of 1873 would give one half the average yield. But the out-turn of crops was a very large and intricate subject, and there were few subordinates who were able to make trustworthy observations.

24. The Local Officers had been desired to ascertain, as far as possible without ^{Stocks.} being inquisitorial, the amount of grain held in stock by landholders, traders, and

ryots. The results were somewhat indefinite, but the Lieutenant Governor was, on the whole, of opinion that while the supply of food grown in the country was, as a rule, either exported or consumed, the stocks might be about two or three months in advance of the supply, that is, that if no crops at all had been reaped in the late harvest, the public would have been able from the stocks in hand to have supported themselves for two or three months.

Relief works.

25. Relief works had been commenced in the Burdwan Division. The Commissioner had received full authority to make advances, and had been told that no work fit to be sanctioned should be delayed for want of funds. In the Nuddea District a special Deputy Collector had been allotted for work in connexion with relief. The Commissioner of the Presidency Division had reported that, with the funds at his command, he could provide full work for all who are likely to demand it. In Chota Nagpore some anxiety had been felt about the Sub-Division of Palamow, in the Lohardugga District. It had accordingly been recognized as a tract in which relief works would be required, and preliminary arrangements had been ordered. Certain estates, the property of Government, had balances at their credit from the 3 per cent. deducted from the rental for the Improvement Fund. The Commissioner had been informed that the present was a favourable opportunity for expending these balances.

26. Statements having been made in the public prints (whether true or not had not yet been ascertained) that the pay of labourers on relief works in Tirhoot had been left fifteen days in arrears, because money was not ready for paying them, the Lieutenant Governor had issued a very stringent circular, to the effect that delays of this kind should never be permitted, and that District Officers should be careful that Subdivisional Officers were fully supplied with money, and should prevent all possibility of stoppage of payments. A circular had also been issued, again calling the attention of Local Officers to the necessity of abstaining from all interference, directly or indirectly, with the trade in grain. They were to explain, as widely as possible, that the Government had collected grain for labourers on relief works, and for distribution from relief houses; that it did not expect to supply the place of private traders, and had no desire to compete with them. On the contrary, the Government desired to give them every encouragement, believing that on them the general public must depend.

27. The Lieutenant Governor had submitted his opinion that there was in reality little difference between the estimate of deficiency of crops formed by the British Indian Association and that formed by the Government. The former thought the deficiency in the late crop would be two thirds, *excluding Orissa and Assam*, the Government thought it would be about one half, *including Orissa and Assam*.

28. In addition to the entire civil and engineering establishments allotted to the Patna Division, six military Officers had been deputed on special duty connected with scarcity and relief, and placed with Colonel Mackenzie and some Officers of the Commissariat at the disposal of the Commissioner of Patna.

29. Some details relative to the progress of irrigation works were given, but they will be more conveniently noticed in the abstract of the succeeding Narrative.

30. Lastly, with respect to the provision of Native doctors and other medical subordinates for the charge of field dispensaries on relief works, the Medical Department reported that 20 hospital assistants and Native doctors had already been allotted, and that there would probably be "no want of medical subordinates on relief works."

Note on the movement of food grains.

31. A note on the movement of food grains was appended to the Narrative. The statements were to the following effect,—

I. The trade on the Ganges past Sahebgunge had not developed.

The up traffic was,—

	Maunds.
Rice - - - - -	27,179
Pulses - - - - -	11,515
Paddy - - - - -	2,152
Other Grains - - - - -	167
Total maunds	41,013

or about 1,500 tons.

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The down traffic was,—

	Maunds.
Wheat - - - - -	6,053
Gram - - - - -	6,047
Other Grains - - - - -	6,362
Total maunds	<u>18,462</u>

or about 650 tons.

The up traffic included 17,000 maunds of Government rice carried to Caragola. The pulses upwards from Rajshahye to Behar, and the wheat and gram downwards from Bhaugulpore to Calcutta were on private account.

II. The rice trade up the Ganges past Goalundo had developed to some extent. From 54,000 maunds in November it had increased to 1,33,000 maunds in December. From 21st December to 10th January it amounted to 1,08,400 maunds, and the total since 1st November to 10th January last, 236,700 maunds, about 8,700 tons.

The rice was consigned from Eastern Bengal, chiefly, to the Rajshahye Division.

III. The down trade on wheat and gram on the Gorai, past Kooshtea, continued. From 21st December to 10th January 42,349 maunds, about 1,600 tons, went down.

On the whole, the private trade on the Ganges, although developed by the unusual demand for certain districts, could not be said to be large.

IV. The quantity of rice coming in to Calcutta by the Eastern canals had largely increased. From 30th December to 15th January no less than 5,92,000 maunds (upwards of 21,000 tons) of food grains, nearly all rice, had reached Calcutta. The total since 1st December, 14,78,000 maunds, about 54,000 tons.

V. The despatches of rice by the East Indian Railway from Howrah between 30th December and 13th January reached 4,85,000 maunds (upwards of 14,000 tons), including 294,000 maunds (about 10,800 tons) on Government account. Of the total, only 22,800 maunds, about 800 tons, were consigned to stations out of Behar. The arrivals in Calcutta during the month of December of wheat, gram, and pulses amounted to 88,595 maunds, about 3,200 tons, more than half of which came from stations below Buxar.

VI. During the fortnight ending 3rd January 3,11,611 maunds, about 11,250 tons, food grains were carried from stations above Mirzapore to stations in Behar. Some part of this amount was on Government account. Since January 3rd, a further quantity of 161,000 maunds, about 5,800 tons, were reported to have reached Behar from the North-West Provinces.

VII. The external trade was brisk. From 30th December to 13th January there had been exported from Calcutta to places beyond Bengal, 4,09,677 maunds, about 15,000 tons, 12,400 tons of which were rice. External trade.

The total export of food from Calcutta beyond Bengal from 1st November amounted to 59,000 tons.

VIII. From Chittagong the exports of rice and paddy from 31st December to 9th January amounted to 1,19,000 maunds, about 4,300 tons. The total export from Chittagong beyond Bengal was 19,500 tons.

IX. The imports of rice into Calcutta from beyond sea amounted now to 22,900 tons, nearly all on Government account. From Chittagong during the last fortnight Calcutta has received 14,000 maunds, about 500 tons, and from Orissa 30,000 maunds, about 1,100 tons.

It will be observed that taking Calcutta and Chittagong together, the exports beyond sea from Bengal since 1st November had been 78,500 tons, and from 1st October 94,800 tons.

32. Among the Appendices to the Despatch was a note of a conference held at the Government House in Calcutta on the 8th January, at which the Viceroy and his Council, the Lieutenant Governor, Mr. Toynbee (the officer charged with the receipt and despatch of grain from Calcutta), with two Secretaries, one to the Government of India and the other to the Government of Bengal, were present. The object of the conference was to discuss several points on which the Viceroy

felt considerable anxiety. These were (1) the transport of grain from Calcutta to the main centres in the distressed districts. On this subject it was considered by the Viceroy, after discussion, that although rice was being received in Calcutta quicker than it could be sent up country, that on the whole the carrying power of the railway might be deemed satisfactory. (2) Local transport, as to which the Viceroy finally observed that he did not consider the question to be in a satisfactory state, and it was determined that the Lieutenant Governor should have the assistance of some Commissariat Officers, and that the Commissioners and Collectors should be called on to state distinctly what their powers of transport were, not only for the present but for the next three or four months.

33. (3) The question of constructing tramways was discussed, and the project was abandoned.

34. (4) The Viceroy next touches on the subject of the distribution of gratuitous relief. The Lieutenant Governor stated that the subject had not been in the first instance specially pressed on the attention of Local Officers. It had been thought that the more emergent question had been the transport of grain and the commencement of relief works, but that recently attention to the subject of Relief Committees had been enjoined. His Honour eventually thought that the time for the organization of such Committees had come.

35. The Viceroy then suggested that, supposing Relief Committees to be formed, what were to be their functions, and what amount of expenditure would be necessary. He especially dwelt on the difficulty of giving relief to the respectable class of persons, and especially women, who would not apply for relief, and respecting whom inquiries must be made, which inquiries could only be made by Natives. The Lieutenant Governor stated that the whole subject of instructions to the Relief Committees were under immediate consideration, that the question as to the relief of the respectable class, and especially of women, was one of the most difficult of all the problems presented for solution, and would require the utmost care for its disposal. As to superintendence, it was agreed that the services of some Military Officers should be placed at the disposal of the Lieutenant Governor for special duty in the distressed districts.

36. The formation of a Central Relief Committee was then discussed. The Lieutenant Governor was at first of opinion that the time had not yet come for the organization of such a body; but the Viceroy having stated that he thought there would be just ground of dissatisfaction, both in England and India, if action were not without delay commenced, and subscriptions invited, His Honour agreed in the advisability of immediate preparations, and said he would at once take the matter in hand.

37. Lastly, the Viceroy alluded to a letter from Mr. Robinson, the Relief Commissioner in Rajshahye, to the effect that he had been over a part of Dinagepore, and had reported there were small supplies and no trade, and that, unless Government came forward and sold grain to the people, there would be in that part of the country a dearth of food. Some doubts were expressed as to the correctness of Mr. Robinson's statements, and it was determined that, though he might be instructed to store up 2,000 tons, the effects of any idea, if it got abroad, that Government were making large importations for the purpose of feeding the people would be so injurious, that the sale of Government grain could only be continued until private trade was found sufficient to meet the wants of the people.

Abstract of the Despatch from the Government of India, dated 23rd January, and of the Ninth Special Narrative of the Government of Bengal.

The Despatch of the Government of India, dated 23rd January. Rain and prospects.

It was stated that the district reports showed that a fall of rain, although not large, had, in the south of the Patna Division and throughout all the Bhaugulpore and Rajshahye Divisions done good, and that the prospects of the spring crops could not now be regarded as unsatisfactory.

Prices.

2. A slight increase in prices was generally manifested, but in Calcutta the price of common rice had somewhat fallen.

3. The anticipation that distress would be severe in the northern part of State of the country Tirhoot and in the districts of Chumparun and Sarun had been realized, and the time had come to put into vigorous action the measures which had been devised to meet the distress. The District Officers were fully alive to the responsibility which rested on them, and in communication with the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, it had been determined to depute his future successor, Sir R. Temple, to Behar, with full powers to direct and control the relief operations. It was thought that the presence of Sir R. Temple would naturally conduce to the early and complete organization of these operations.

4. Ample supplies were coming in from beyond the sea to meet any demands Supplies and trade. from the distressed districts, and it was encouraging to note that private trade was active, especially in Behar, and that the traders fully understood that the importation of grain by Government was not intended to interfere with their operations.

5. The Viceroy was glad to be able to state his impression that every effort was being made to convey the supplies provided to the selected depôts. The Commissioner of Patna had availed himself of the services of Colonel Mackenzie, of the Commissariat Department, for the organization of means of transport throughout that Division. Steamers had been hired to carry grain across the Ganges, and full authority had been given for the provision of such additional engines as might be required on the East Indian Railway, and for the construction of such temporary appliances as might be necessary for the prevention of blocks at the various stations.

6. The Lieutenant Governor had promised to submit the regulations for the guidance of Relief Committees on the 27th December.

7. Arrangements were about to be made for relieving vessels bringing rice from Chittagong and Orissa from all port charges except those for services actually rendered.

8. Finally, the establishment of a systematic scheme of Government emigration from Bengal to British Burmah had been determined on, and a sum of 50,000% appropriated as a fund from which to pay the expenses of the transport of emigrants.

9. This Narrative was submitted by special arrangements on the 22nd instead of the 29th January, to fit in more conveniently with the dates of receipt of report from Local Officers. In future they would be submitted every fortnight. Ninth Special Narrative of the Government of Bengal, from the 16th to the 22nd January.

10. There was nothing to be added relative to the weather, in addition to what has been previously stated in this abstract, beyond the fact that the cold had been more severe than had been ever shown by the meteorological records of nineteen years. Weather.

11. After noticing that the condition of parts of Behar had become critical, and alluding to the appointment of Sir R. Temple for the personal inspection and control of the relief arrangements now in progress, the Lieutenant Governor stated that Government grain from Burmah had continued to arrive, and that Orissa rice was also coming in gradually. The 10,000 tons of Saigon rice had been unloaded; 2,500 tons had been re-bagged at Kooshtea, and were rapidly being despatched from that place into the Rajshahye Division, while the remaining 7,500 had been re-bagged and housed in sheds close to the railway station. The despatch of grain from Calcutta upwards, during the week, amounted to 157,327 maunds, or about 5,800 tons, and on one day (the 20th January) 40,000 maunds, about 1,400 tons, of Government grain had been sent off by railway, the largest quantity yet sent in an equal space of time. Supplies.

12. The Lieutenant Governor proceeded to state what had been done to clear the block at the Patna Ghat, which had been overcome by the 20th of January, and it was now in contemplation to construct two more river-side stations for Government grain, so that the Patna Ghat and other stations usually frequented by private traders might be left for private import. Another difficulty which had occurred was that the number of railway station coolies was limited, and they were nearly all employed in unloading Government grain, to which work the ordinary untrained Patna coolie was unequal. Colonel Mackenzie, the Commissariat officer, was engaged in training a body of railway coolies to do the Government work at the new river-side stations, so as to leave the ordinary railway coolies available for private importers. Transport to distressed districts.

13. A similar difficulty had occurred in connexion with the transport of Government grain across the Ganges. When traffic set in so briskly during the last fortnight the Government officers had secured all the boats, and private traders could not be accommodated. It had been arranged that two large steamers and four flats should be hired to carry over the food grain, and thus the private boats could be left to the private traders. It was also added that Government had consented to bear the demurrage charges incurred by private traders in consequence of the railway block.

Transport into the interior of distressed districts.

14. Next with respect to transport from river and railway into the interior. From the Patna district 2,03,000 maunds had been despatched into the interior of the Northern Behar districts during the fortnight. There had been some delay in getting the Gya grain for the Nowada Sub-division away from the railway, but the difficulty was being overcome. There were at the end of the fortnight 33,000 maunds in the storehouses of Shahabad; 35,000 in those of the Soane works, and much more in transit from the railway. In Tirhoot 32,000 maunds were in the storehouses, and 33,000 maunds in addition had nearly reached their destination. This rate of progress was insufficient, and the local officers had promised to send forward from the river side into the interior of Tirhoot 50,000 or 60,000 maunds weekly. In the Sarun storehouses 31,000 maunds of grain were already housed, and all grain was being despatched into the interior as soon as it arrived. In Chumparun 18,000 maunds had been stored besides the accumulations at the Gunduck Embankment works, and it was reported that 45,000 maunds a week were being sent forward.

15. In the Bhaugulpore Division, transport and storage had gone on well. In the Monghyr storehouses, 1,05,000 maunds were collected. In Bhaugulpore station, notwithstanding delays from the formation of a sandbank on the river, 35,000 maunds were in store and 30,000 in transit. The Magistrate hoped, when his arrangements were complete, to send off 4,000 maunds daily. In Purneah, 58,000 maunds were stored, and arrangements had been made for sending 6,000 maunds daily across the Ganges from Colgong and Sahebgunge to Caragola.

Rajshahye.

16. In the Rajshahye Division there were greater difficulties to be encountered. But two powerful steamers had been sent up, and greater expedition was now expected. 38,000 maunds only were in store, but 2,00,000 maunds more were actually in transit by land and water into the interior of the Division. The supervising staff had been greatly strengthened.

17. The Lieutenant Governor mentioned he had asked for additional aid from the Commissariat Department, to assist in organizing services for the transport of grain across the Ganges and its adjacent sandy flats at Patna, Sahebgunge, and Rajmehal. The river crossing had been found the weakest link in the chain of transport.

State of the country.

18. The condition of the people was, on the whole, still satisfactory. The prices indicated the expectation rather than the presence of scarcity. There was no very urgent demand for labour, but to these remarks the northern part of the Patna Division was an unfortunate exception. In Tirhoot, the condition of the people had "become decidedly worse." In the Sub-division of Mudhoobunnee the distress was certainly increasing. In Chumparun the reports were still more alarming, and people in that district were resorting to the relief works in large numbers. Crimes against property had considerably increased in comparison with the returns of 1871 and 1872.

Crimes against property in distressed districts:—
 1871 - - 1,058
 1872 - - 1,141
 1873 - - 1,678

Relief works.

19. With respect to the relief works, it was stated that in Bhaugulpore and the southern part of the Patna Division the people did not seem to want employment, and the Soane Canal works did not attract much labour, but in the northern part of the Patna Division nearly all the work provided had been taken up. Tirhoot employed during the fortnight nearly 10,000 labourers, besides 4,000 employed on the Durbhanga estate; Sarun, about 13,400; Dinagepore, more than 6,000; Rajshahye, about 500 daily.

Irrigation works.

20. On the Soane Canal works the daily average of labourers was 32,000; the number of acres irrigated was 1,33,057 on the Shahabad, and 22,152 on the Gya side of the river. On the Gunduck Embankment works in Chumparun there was a daily average of 460 men. On the same embankment, in Sarun and Tirhoot, there were 1,077 labourers, but the number had been 1,401. On the Kana Nuddee works 418 men were employed.

21. It had been found necessary to divide the large district of Tirhoot, containing four millions of inhabitants, into two districts, for scarcity and relief purposes, and additional establishments had been sanctioned.

22. Lastly, with respect to private trade, it appeared to be active in the Patna Division and in some of the eastern parts of the Rajshahye Division, but not so active in other tracts. The importations of traders into the Patna Division had been,—

	Maunds.
Into the Patna District	2,20,931
„ Shahabad District	1,11,011
„ Bhaugulpore District	4,922
„ Monghyr District	18,271

In addition to these amounts, it was reported that 81,000 maunds of grain had arrived in Sarun from Oudh and the North-West. In the north-eastern parts of Tirhoot, and still more in Dinagepore, the trade were doing very little to supply the necessities of the people, but there was no ground for supposing that Government importations had deterred private individuals from entering the grain trade. A curious circumstance had been discovered, which should be mentioned, that some dealers had imported wheat into the distressed districts at the specially low rate, and had then attempted to re-export it to Calcutta. The railway authorities had endeavoured to stop this practice by refusing, as far as they could, to re-book such grain, and, if necessary, further steps would be taken to prevent such a perversion of the objects of Government.

23. I. On the Ganges, past Sahebgunge, the traffic during the week ending January 20th was,

Upwards—	Maunds.
Rice	5,889
Pulses	5,965
Paddy	1,285
Other grains	303
Total	13,442

About 500 tons.

Downwards,—	Maunds.
Wheat	4,174
Gram	3,093
Other grains	1,299
Total	8,566

About 320 tons.

II. Down the Gorai, past Kooshtea from Behar, the trade had much diminished. Only 5,115 maunds of food grains passed down.

Up the Ganges, past Goalundo, 28,700 maunds, about 1,050 tons, of rice were carried to Pubna, Rampore Beaulah, Maldah, &c.

III. The East Indian Railway continued to pour grain into Behar. In the week ending 20th January the despatch from Howrah amounted to 2,27,000 maunds, about 8,400 tons, nearly half of which was on Government account. The total from 31st December to 20th January amounted to about 23,000 tons, including Government consignments. During the week ending 17th January, 1,66,945 maunds, about 6,100 tons, of grain had been received in Behar from the North-Western Provinces and the Punjab.

IV. The Eastern canals had continued to bring supplies into Calcutta. During the last week 3,54,722 maunds, about 13,000 tons, chiefly rice, had been received. Total since 1st November, 67,800 tons.

V. External trade. During the week the exports from Calcutta to non-Bengal ports were 2,33,180 maunds, about 8,600 tons, chiefly rice. From Chittagong to non-Bengal ports, 1,14,022 maunds of rice and 39,700 maunds of paddy, in all 1,53,722 maunds, about 5,600 tons. The total export of food from Bengal to non-Bengal ports since November 1st to January 20th was

91,400 tons, which, with 16,380 tons exported in October, amounted in all to 107,780 tons.

The total import into Calcutta since 1st November was 26,000 tons, or including a quantity which did not pass through the Custom House books, 33,000 tons, almost all on Government account.

Abstract of the Despatches from the Government of India, dated 30th January, Nos. 7 and 8 of 1874.

Despatch from the Government of India, dated 30th January, No. 7 of 1874.

1. The Viceroy reported that, on the 25th and 26th January, there had been a heavy rainfall, varying from half an inch to three inches and a quarter, all over Bengal, and extending to Oudh and the southern portions of the North-West Provinces. In Mirzapore it had been very deficient. In Burdwan and the Presidency Divisions the rain had fallen too late to do any good to the cold weather crops on the ground, but it had filled tanks and would promote the growth of fodder. From Dinagapore no report had been received, but it was hoped that the rain which had fallen at Rajmechal, Bograh, Julpigoree, and Rungpore had extended to it. Unfortunately it had not reached the spring crops in the Patna and Bhaugulpore Divisions. From Tirhoot and Chumparun no report had been received. In the Patna district there had only been partial showers, but these could not have failed to be useful to the low-land crops.

Prices.

2. Prices still showed a gradual tendency to rise, and indicated, in connexion with the activity of trade, that the distressed districts were drawing largely on the more favoured regions to the east and south.

3. The Viceroy had held, on the 24th January, a conference with the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal and other high officers, in which were discussed the rules by which Local and Central Relief Committees should be guided. A copy of the rules (which will be hereafter noticed) were forwarded to the Secretary of State, and it was added that in framing them the varying circumstances of different localities had been considered, and that Relief Committees and officers of Government had not been precluded from adopting special measures to mitigate sudden and severe distress whenever it might occur.

4. It had been determined to hold a public meeting on the 4th February, and to appoint a Central Committee, not because the Local Committees were not able to cope efficiently with the scarcity then apparent, but that the Government might be prepared beforehand with every measure that a sudden outbreak of severe distress might demand.

5. Sir R. Temple had left Calcutta on the evening of the 24th January, and was then in the centre of the distressed districts. The Government was awaiting with interest a Despatch from him, as to whether his observations and inquiries had confirmed the estimate formed by Government as to the probable extent of the scarcity, and as to whether the arrangements ordered by the Government of India and the Government of Bengal were in that state of progress which the local reports had indicated, and which had been communicated to the Secretary of State.

6. The Viceroy, in conclusion, after adverting to some enclosed correspondence which will be hereafter noticed, stated, that the proposed remission of port dues at Calcutta had, for the present, been postponed.

7. With the Despatch the Viceroy forwarded the instructions framed for the guidance of Relief Committees. There were to be three classes of Committees. I. The Central Committee at Calcutta; II. District Committees; III. Sub-Divisional Committees. The third of these classes would act under the general superintendence of the second, and the second would be in direct communication with the first. Each Sub-Divisional Committee would be responsible for organizing the agency for the relief of distress within the Sub-Division, and on it would be imposed the duty of taking care that the whole of the relief works within the Sub-Division were inspected once a week at least, that the relief operations were being properly carried on, and that there was no place without relief operations in which relief was needed. The instructions to the Sub-Divisional Committees for the

purchase, transport, and distribution of food, the provision of useful employment for those who might apply for it, and were able to work, the inquiries as to those of the better class, and especially of women, who might need relief, the sale of grain to those who are able to buy, the establishment of poor-houses where those who applied might be received and furnished with cooked food,—the instruction on all these and other similar subjects were most minute and complete, and, in addition, a general authority was given for the adoption of special measures by Relief Committees and officers of Government for the Relief of sudden and severe distress.

8. It was determined that Mr. Schalch, the Chairman of the Central Committee, should not visit the distressed districts, as the necessity for such a step had been removed by the deputation of Sir R. Temple.

9. The Viceroy next furnished a correspondence with the Government of Bengal relative to an application from the Directors of the Indian Terai Tea Gardens Company of Darjeeling, asking for a loan to enable the Company to lay in stores of rice for coolies working in its gardens. The Government of Bengal was authorized to grant the loan, if the security for repayment was adequate, if it was certain that the money would be devoted solely to the object in view, and if there was no private trade with which such a measure could interfere.

10. A petition from some Zemindars of Hooghly, praying (1), for a postponement of the levy of the road cess, and (2), for the entire remission, or at least suspension for two years, of the next two instalments of revenue, was next noticed. The Government of Bengal had declined to postpone the road cess as a general measure, but had issued instructions to suspend it in places in which distress prevailed. The Government of India had approved these proceedings. With regard to the second prayer of this petition, the Bengal Government stated that no recommendation in favour of such a remission had been made by the Local Officers, and Hooghly was by no means the district to which such a concession should first be made. The Government of India stated it would make no general order, but that, in cases in which Zemindars had spent money in endeavouring to mitigate distress, and were consequently in difficulties, no pressure would be put on them for the recovery of instalments due.

11. Lastly, the Viceroy stated that arrangements for assisting emigration from Behar and the suffering parts of Bengal to British Burmah had been concluded. Dr. Payne had been appointed Superintendent of Emigration, with full powers to place himself in communication with the Collectors of distressed districts, for the purpose of making arrangements for the transport to Calcutta of persons wishing to emigrate, to employ recruiters, to make contracts, to constitute a depôt for the reception of emigrants, to provide food and medicine, and to take all sanitary precautions for their comfort while in depôt, and, finally, to arrange for their passages to British Burmah. On the arrival of emigrants at their destination, all the arrangements connected with them were to be under the control of the Chief Commissioner.

12. The Viceroy, on the same date as that of his Despatch No. 7, viz., 30th January, transmitted another communication, No. 8 of 1874, in which he acknowledged the receipt of the Duke of Argyll's Despatch of the 1st December, No. 20, of 1873, with expressions of gratitude for the confidence reposed in his Government, and especially for the approval of the decision not to prohibit the export of rice from Indian ports. On the latter point he transmitted copy of a Minute which he had recorded on the subject, and which will be noticed hereafter.

Despatch from the
Government of India,
dated 30th January,
No. 8 of 1874.

13. After alluding to the necessity which existed for the adoption of a prudent reserve relative to the provision of supplies of grain, on account of a prevailing impression that Government proposed to take on itself the duty of feeding the people, and therefore to interfere with the activity of private trade, the Viceroy proceeded to state that this impression had been removed by the exertions of Government and its Officers, and that he could now inform the Secretary of State, without fear of misapprehension, what general arrangements he had concluded to meet the impending calamity.

14. These arrangements consisted of the purchase and transport by Government, as a provision to the middle of May, of 342,000 tons of grain, inclusive of considerable quantities bought by the Court of Wards and by planters and Zemindars with

funds advanced by Government. It was estimated that it might be possible the Government would have to provide for the support of $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions, or 10 per cent. of a population of 25 millions for seven months. The food required for such a number, at the rate of one pound per head per day, would be about 210,000 tons. The first cost of these supplies it was calculated would amount to three millions sterling, an expenditure which the Government had not hesitated to incur for the purpose of alleviating the effects of a calamity with which a large tract of country was threatened.

15. The Viceroy expressed his confidence in the ability of the railways to carry ample supplies to their principal stations. The Lieutenant Governor of Bengal and the local officers were making every exertion to organize the means of transport to the interior of the affected districts, but the local difficulties to be encountered were very great.

Viceroy's Minute on the question of the prohibition of export of food grains, see page 54.

16. In this Despatch was enclosed a Minute recorded by the Viceroy on the subject of the non-prohibition of export of food grains, the substance of which may be stated as follows.

17. The prohibition of exports from other Indian ports than those of Bengal was first briefly discussed. The annual export of rice from British Burmah was 700,000 tons, and from Madras 100,000 tons. To prohibit the export of rice from British Burmah would probably have inflicted a fatal blow on the trade of that dependency, while, on the other hand, although Burmah rice was not usually consumed by the people of Bengal, such quantities as either the Government or the private trade might require for the distressed districts could easily be procured without recourse to the extreme measure of prohibiting exports.

18. Next, as to Madras. The rice exported from that port was almost entirely taken up for consumption in Ceylon. That colony the Viceroy could not regard as foreign territory, although it did not officially form a part of the Indian Empire. He considered it should be treated, in the matter of food supply, as if it had been an integral part of British India, and he had accordingly assured the Governor of Ceylon, who had expressed some anxiety on the subject, that the export of rice from India to that island should not be stopped.

19. The Viceroy then proceeded to discuss what appeared to him the practical question, viz., whether the export of common rice from Bengal should have been prohibited.

20. Taking the export of rice in 1872-73, which was higher than any year since 1864, as a standard, the return in round numbers for that year was an export of 526,000 tons. Of this amount 80,000 tons were "table" rice, which, from quality and price, was not suited to the ordinary consumption of the people. To have prohibited the export of this class of rice would have been to deprive the growers of the money which they required for the purchase of the cheaper description of food.

21. Discarding, then, table rice from the account, there remained an export of 446,000 tons. Of these, 189,000 were sent to British Indian ports, including Ceylon, 160,000 tons to the West Indies, Mauritius, and other places to which natives of India have emigrated in large numbers, and the remaining 97,000 tons to other parts of the world, principally to Great Britain and the Persian Gulf.

Note.—The West Indian Committee, on the 29th of November, addressed a letter to the Duke of Argyll deprecating the prohibition of export of rice to the West Indian Colonies.

22. In the opinion of the Viceroy it would have been unwise to have interfered with the interpostal trade, and wrong to have stopped without notice the main supply of the usual food of Bengal coolies in the Colonies. But even if the whole export of common rice had been prohibited, what effect would the retention in India of such an amount, reduced as it would necessarily have been from the rise of prices, have had on the food supply of a population of 66 millions, requiring a provision of 30,000 tons of food per diem?

23. But it had been said that the action of Government in prohibiting export would have given confidence to the people, and have had a great effect in reducing prices. It was probable that there would have been a considerable fall in prices, but that very fact would have interfered with one of the principal safeguards in India, as elsewhere, against famine, namely, the diminution of consumption. A rise in prices lessens the demand. The Viceroy could conceive no interference of Government more unwise than the reduction of prices below their natural level at

the beginning of a period of scarcity. An increase of consumption would have followed such reduction of prices, and would soon have absorbed the addition to the stock of food derived from the prohibition of export.

24. But even supposing no lowering of prices had ensued, and consumption had not been stimulated, there would then have been a clear addition to the food supply of the people, but would this fact have outweighed considerations which could be adduced on the other side ?

25. An export of food grains must be regarded as a great advantage to a country like Bengal, raising its own food supplies, having no import trade in food, and the population of which was poor. The existence of such an export ensures the production in ordinary years of more food than is required by the people. The natural rise of prices in times of scarcity must divert a portion of the export to home consumption, and thus a reserve, easily and quickly available, is habitually maintained. The influence of a rise in prices in diverting a portion of the export might be illustrated by the plainest facts. In 1864 the export of rice was 695,341 tons. In 1865-66 and in 1866-67, years of great scarcity, the export fell to 336,211 tons in the former, and to 222,659 tons in the latter. Again, in the three months of October, November, and December, in 1872, the export was 113,277 tons. In the same months in 1873, that is, at the beginning of the present scarcity, the export had fallen to 64,425 tons. It followed that any measure which would diminish the export trade in common rice in Bengal would weaken the power of the country to meet any future period of scarcity, and beyond this, trade is readily diverted from one channel to another ; the interference of Government with its free course might easily destroy it. If ordinary customers were refused their supply at any price, they would be compelled to resort to other markets, and it was impossible to assume that when again wanted they would return.

26. The Viceroy bearing these facts in mind, and knowing that the Government could bring into the country, without difficulty, a larger supply than was exported in ordinary years, had no hesitation in pronouncing against prohibition of export.

27. The British Indian Association, in a temperately stated argument, had urged that the exports of rice from Bengal in 1865 and 1866, "if they could have been retained in the country, would have gone a great way in saving the famishing millions in Orissa." On this statement it was necessary to point to the simple fact, that the loss of life in Orissa was caused, not by a deficiency in the general food supply of the country, but by the difficulties which the isolated position of Orissa opposed to the transport of that supply to the suffering people. The same difficulty existed in the present case, but not in the same degree. It was not with a deficiency of food supplies throughout the country that the Government would be embarrassed in dealing, nor in the conveyance of sufficient supplies to railway and river stations, but in the transport of those supplies from the rail and river into the interior, and in the organization of arrangements for their distribution.

28. The Government had gone far beyond any previous action in times of scarcity in the purchase and storing of grain for relief purposes. It had secured 340,000 tons, mostly from beyond the sea, and this amount was about equal to the export in ordinary years. The supply thus purchased by Government would be directly applicable to the distressed, and would, therefore, have more effect in the relief of distress than would an equal addition to the general supply obtained by the prohibition of export.

29. Finally, the Viceroy stated that he had purposely abstained from alluding to the objections to an interference with trade, which depend upon general considerations connected with trade and finance, but had regarded the question entirely and solely with reference to the present and future food supplies of the people.

Abstract of the Despatch from the Government of India, dated 6th of February, No. 9 of 1874, and of the Tenth Narrative of the Government of Bengal relative to the Drought.

The Viceroy reported that a copious rain had fallen over the whole of Bengal and Behar, of which the beneficial effect would be great. The rainfall had not been confined to Bengal ; it had been reported in Mirzapore, Gorucknoore, Ghazee-

Despatch from the Government of India, dated 6th February, No. 9 of 1874, Rain.

pore, and Benares. It had also occurred throughout Oudh, Rohilkund, and some of the upper districts of the North-Western Provinces. On the whole it might be assumed that the prospects of the spring crops in Oudh and the North-West were favourable.

Area of distress.

2. The Viceroy hoped soon to be able to foresee with more accuracy the real area of distress. The latest information showed that the tracts most seriously affected were unfortunately those which were the least accessible to carriage. Sir R. Temple had taken the most energetic measures to provide the amount of carriage required.

Meeting in Calcutta.

3. A public meeting had been held on the 4th February in Calcutta, and Central and Sub-Committees formed to supervise and direct the charitable operations which the calamity would demand throughout the country.

Supplies and trade.

4. Supplies were coming in rapidly and regularly from beyond sea, and arrangements were being made to store them temporarily until they could be despatched up country. The inland trade still generally showed great activity.

Prices.

5. Prices had fallen in Calcutta, partly on account of the rain, and partly because the public was now fully informed of the policy of Government, but throughout the country there was still a tendency to rise, and the rate at which common rice was sold was in many parts double that of an ordinary year.

6. The Government had been informed by the Resident at Nepaul that famine was apprehended in the part of that country bordering on Behar. He had been instructed by the Nepaulese Government to ask if supplies of rice could be procured in Calcutta. The Government of India in reply had offered to place 1,000 tons of rice at the disposal of the Nepaulese Government at cost prices.

Tenth Special Narrative of the Government of Bengal.

Rain and prospects.

Prices.

7. The Lieutenant Governor, after stating that the effects of the rainfall, where ascertained, were favourable, and that it was hoped that better accounts might be received from Sarun, Chumparun, and Tirhoot, where the prospects of the spring crops had been very bad (only a quarter crop expected), but from which no report had yet been received, proceeded to notice prices. There had been no very sudden alteration. In the Burdwan Presidency, and Rajshahye Divisions, there had been a small rise. In Eastern Bengal the tendency had been to fall. In Behar there had been a rise on the whole, but in Sarun and Chumparun a slight fall in the price of common rice was reported. He then gave a table, which, as having considerable interest, is here copied *in extenso* in the margin. The only districts on which famine prices could be said to have reached were Gya and Purneah. The results of the recent rainfall on prices had not yet been seen, but the little information there was indicated a fall.

	Number of Seers of common Rice sold for a Rupee on the		
	10th Jan. 1874.	24th Jan. 1874.	24th Jan. 1873.
Burdwan - -	14½	14	22½
Calcutta - -	12½	12½	17½
Backergunge - -	17½	16½	29
Dacca - -	17	16	32
Dinagepoor - -	13½	13½	28
Pubna - -	15	14	28
Patna - -	13	12	21
Gya - -	10	9½	18½
Tirhoot - -	10½	10	22
Bhaugulpoor - -	12½	12½	22½
Purneah - -	11	9	26
Hazareebagh - -	18	13½	17

8. The demand for rice in Calcutta for export had been brisk in the early part of the fortnight under review, but towards the end it had lulled.

Sir R. Temple's Memorandum.

9. Sir R. Temple had left Calcutta for the distressed districts on the 24th January, and was actively engaged in the performance of his duties. He had considered the arrangements at military stations, and generally on the south of the Ganges, to be efficient, and had approved of the conduct of Local Officers. He had suggested the construction of a tramway from the Ganges opposite Barrh to Durbhanga and onwards, to a total length of 87 miles, and an Engineer had been deputed to report whether the scheme or any part of it was practicable. He had also proposed the establishment of telegraphic lines from Patna to Moteebaree and Chumparun, and some other towns, and an officer of the Telegraph Department has been sent to perform the work. With respect to the state of the country, Sir R. Temple had reported by telegraph that, in Tirhoot alone, the Civil Officers expected to have 800,000 to a million on their hands for several months, one third of the population having lost their harvest entirely, and another third having lost the greater part.

In Chumparun between 300,000 and 400,000, and in Sarun 100,000, altogether about a million and a half in the whole Patna Division, it was thought, would require relief. There was no marked distress anywhere except towards eastern portion of Tirhoot. Without help from Government and the public, great mortality would certainly ensue. The people anxious, but patient. It was believed that already a large portion of the population were restricting themselves to one meal a day.

10. The private imports of grain into Patna continue to be considerable. During the fortnight there had come into Private trade.

The Patna District	Maunds.
„ Shahabad „	1,20,000
„ Sarun „	80,000
Total	<u>5,82,000</u>

or about 21,000 tons.

The Government stores in Patna were overflowing, but the dealers seemed reluctant or unable to convey their grain into Tirhoot. The Lieutenant Governor had therefore relaxed the rule regarding allowances to dealers (to enable them to bring grain from a distance), in order that traders in the distressed districts might be induced to go over to Patna, and bring such grain for sale in their own neighbourhood.

11. The Lieutenant Governor then alluded to the despatch of Government grain. During the fortnight, 4,81,478 maunds (about 17,000 tons) had been sent off, of which 400,000 maunds, or about 14,000 tons, had been carried by the East Indian Railway. When the new riverside stations at Patna and Barrh were open, and a temporary block at Monghyr, caused by private grain for the Durbhunga estate, removed, it was anticipated that 1,500 tons of Government grain would be despatched daily, and disposed of at the stations in Behar. Despatch of Government grain.

12. The total quantity of Government grain despatched to the distressed Divisions, up to 31st January, stood thus :— Transport of Government grain.

	Maunds.
Despatched by Mr. Toynbee from Calcutta	13,90,000
Received from North-West Provinces and Central Provinces, and from local dealers in Patna Division	4,30,000
Received from Eastern Bengal	1,11,000
Total	<u>19,31,000</u>

or upwards of 70,000 tons.

Of this quantity, the amount sent to the several Divisions stood thus :—

	Maunds.
Patna Division	10,10,000
Bhaugulpore	5,29,000
Rajshahye	3,92,000
Total	<u>19,31,000</u>

Two fifths of this amount had reached their destination by the 24th of January, and the rest was mostly in transit in boats and carts, and partly in steamers and railway wagons at the earlier stages. The greatest difficulty was found in the Rajshahye Division, where the usual water routes had sadly failed. That Division does not, however, depend only upon water carriage, and grain was being carried into the north and centre of Dinagepore by six distinct routes.

13. The relief officer of Tirhoot had reported that he would be able to carry 2,50,000 maunds every month from the Ganges to the three distressed districts of Tirhoot. The Commissioner of Patna was confident of being able to introduce about 50,000 maunds a week into Chumparun. The Sarun district, being nearer to the Ganges and the Gogra, could be more easily supplied. Sir R. Temple was carefully considering the question of improving and increasing the transport powers of Northern Behar.

14. In Bhaugulpore, the Coorce river route, which had been tried, had entirely failed. There had been some want of organization on the Purneah road from Caragola, but Mr. Hankey, the Inspector of Transport, had proceeded to and stayed some time in the districts, and with the help of the Collector had brought the arrangements into working order.

Government grain
from Orissa.

15. The Government of India had permitted the British Indian Steam Navigation Company to take a steamer temporarily away from the Kurrachee service, and put it on the Orissa line. In consequence of this arrangement, Government grain and private was coming in quickly from Orissa. Other steamers of this Company were calling at False Point and Pooree, and bringing in supplies to Calcutta. The Bengal Zemindars, who were storing grain for their ryots, were finding Orissa their best source of supply.

Crossing over the
Ganges.

16. The crossings over the Ganges, which, it will be remembered, were regarded by the Lieutenant Governor as the weakest link in the chain of transport, although impeded by sand banks, had been improved at Patna Ghat, Rajmehal, Colgong, Sahebgunge, and Kooshtea, by the employment of steamers and flats.

Condition of the
people.

17. The Lieutenant-Governor proceeded to remark on the condition of the people. His statement, which is consistent with the later intelligence contained in Sir R. Temple's message, is naturally more full, and should therefore be briefly noticed. If the crops then on the ground continued to do well, there would, in the opinion of Local Officers, be no fear of famine in Patna, Gya, South Bhaugulpore, or in any part of Monghyr, except in a corner of Samoom. In Shahabad, if prospects retained their present appearance, there would be no famine, though ample relief works, and perhaps charitable relief would be required. So much for South Behar. In North Behar matters were widely different. In the three Sub-divisions of Tirhoot, in the north of Chumparun, in the north of Bhaugulpore, in a part of Sarun, in certain tracts of Purneah, and, as stated above, in a portion of Monghyr, keen distress was commencing, and famine would certainly appear in a few weeks, if not staved off. People were coming to the relief works in large numbers in these districts, Government grain was beginning to be sold on the works, and it was thought that the distribution of charitable relief must at once commence. The condition of these tracts was reported as extremely critical, and it was necessary that Government grain should be introduced as rapidly and as largely as means would permit. In Dinagepore, Maldah, Rajshahye, Rungpore and Bograh, supplies were for the present sufficient, and actual severe distress had not appeared. The condition of these districts, with the exception of Dinagepore, regarding parts of which the Lieutenant-Governor was still anxious, was better since the rains than had been anticipated.

18. On the whole, the Lieutenant-Governor thought that many districts in which the crops had generally failed, and regarding which there had been great apprehension, might escape actual famine. But everywhere scarcity and high prices might produce very bad effects.

Relief works.

19. The latest returns of labourers on relief works stood thus,—

In Sarun	-	-	-	-	33,000
„ Dinagepore*	-	-	-	-	14,000
„ Chumparun†	-	-	-	-	12,700
„ Tirhoot	-	-	-	-	17,000
„ Bhaugulpore	-	-	-	-	4,000
„ Monghyr	-	-	-	-	4,000
„ Purneah	-	-	-	-	800

* Besides the labourers
on the Northern
Bengal Railway.

† Besides those on the
Gunduk Embank-
ment.

Tank digging.

In Monghyr and parts of Patna tank digging had been commenced as a substitute for embanked roads. It had been felt that such roads, carried athwart the drainage of the country, might do harm if not bridged. The construction of the necessary bridges would involve a larger charge than local funds could bear. It was thought then that the excavation of new, and the cleansing and repair of old and long disused tanks would be an admirable relief work, which would confer long and lasting benefit on the villagers. There was a technical difficulty, arising from the fact that tanks, as a rule, were private property, and district road funds could hardly be applied to any other purpose than the improvement of public roads; but a reference had been made to the Government of India, to the effect that, in the present emergency, Local Officers should be permitted to undertake tank works

where none else were available, and settle in each case with zemindars and the people as to the share which they should contribute. Orders had been issued that tank works under the same conditions should be undertaken in Sarun and other distressed districts of the Patna Division, and in Bhaugulpore.

20. The Lieutenant-Governor stated that the total grants from provincial funds for the current year would be Rs. 26,18,127, of which about Rs. 16,25,000, or 16 lacs and a quarter, would represent expenditure consequent on the failure of crops in Behar and Bengal.

Funds for relief works.

21. A careful note relative to the rate of wages on relief works had been prepared by Colonel Nicolls, the Chief Engineer, of which the substance was, that south of the Ganges, in Shahabad, Patna, South Monghyr, South Bhaugulpore, the rate for a single man was from one anna and six pies to two annas per diem, and for a man, wife, and child from three annas to four annas per diem. To the north of the Ganges, the rate for a man was from one anna to two annas, and for a man with his wife and child from two annas and one pie to three annas and seven pies. In Rungpore, Bogra, Maldah, and Moorshedabad, the rate for a man was from two annas to three annas, but in these districts a man's family did not work, a fact which should be noted.

Wages on relief works.

22. In the Patna, Burdwan, and Chota Nagpore Divisions, and in the districts of Sarun, Chumparun, and Monghyr, planters and zemindars continued to take advances for the purchase of grain for distribution among their ryots, and for land improvement, but in the rest of Behar, and in Rajshahye there was little demand. It had been reported by the Commissioner of the last-mentioned Division, that in Moorshedabad many people had offered to undertake tank work with their own funds if Government would contribute one third of the cost. The Lieutenant-Governor stated that he had gladly agreed to this concession.

Advances to private persons.

23. The system of advances to landowners had been extended to Putneedars, Jotedars, and others holding a permanent interest in the land.

24. It was stated that Relief Committees were actually at work in Tirhoot, Chumparun, and Purneah, and had been nominated for all the districts of the Patna and Bhaugulpore Divisions. It was thought, however, that charitable relief on a large scale would not be required for some time south of the Ganges. A curious instance of the difficulties offered to the efforts of Government in giving such relief was mentioned by the Collector of Monghyr, Mr. Lockwood. He stated that when giving tickets for rice to an emaciated crowd, a man took a ticket from a child's hand, read it and run away, followed by a large number of those assembled. On the people being with difficulty recalled, it was ascertained that the man had informed them, after reading the ticket, that the object of the Government was to fatten them up and then send them to the Mauritius, a place which the Collector, in another part of his report, described as the "great bugbear of the district."

Relief committees.

25. The Lieutenant Governor, after stating the precautionary measures adopted in anticipation of distress in the Division of Burdwan and the Sub-division of Palamow, proceeded to notice the progress of the irrigation and embankment works. The number of workmen on the Gunduk Embankments was daily increasing. By the last reports there were 680 men on the upper, and 1,438 on the lower embankment. It was thought that as distress increased it would be necessary to set apart one or more lengths of each work for those who could not do a full day's work. The Public Works Officers fully understood this, but there was a difficulty in inducing subordinates to act promptly in accordance with this obligation.

Irrigation and embankment works.

Gunduk embankments.

26. The area watered by the Soane Canal had risen to 157,548 acres. It was thought that the water could now be shut off for the rest of the season, so that the masonry works might proceed. This was under inquiry.

Soane Canal.

27. The Kana Nuddee works had largely benefited a part of the Hooghly district. The people were stated to be overjoyed with the introduction of water from the Damooda River, calling it "a gift from God."

The Kana Nuddee.

28. The works on the Northern Bengal Railway were proceeding satisfactorily. 1,300 labourers were employed on the 17th January, and many more had come since that date. Wages were paid every three days, and the workmen supplied

Northern Bengal railway.

their own food from the local bazaars. But rice had been stored in considerable quantity in the central section of the line to meet emergencies.

29. Finally, the Lieutenant Governor stated that the duty and responsibility devolving on Sub-divisional Officers, in connexion with charitable relief and the prosecution of relief works, were so heavy that he had thought right to send an additional officer to each really distressed Sub-division. The officer now sent would relieve the Sub-divisional Officer of magisterial and ordinary work, besides giving such special assistance as might be required in the circumstances of each tract.

Note on the movement of food grains.

30. I. The amount of grain passing up and down by Sahebgunge, on the Ganges,—

Up Traffic.

	Maunds.
From 17th to 24th January - -	20,172
„ 25th to 31st „ - -	19,947
Total - -	<u>40,119</u>

About 1,500 tons.

Down Traffic.

	Maunds.
From 17th to 24th January - -	11,121
„ 25th to 31st „ - -	8,279
Total - -	<u>19,400</u>

About 700 tons.

II. During the fortnight ending 31st January, there passed down the Gorai, and were registered at Kooshtea, 18,177 maunds of grain (about 650 tons).

During the same period there passed up the Ganges at Goalundo, to various river stations between Pubna and Patna, 75,400 maunds, about 2,800 tons of grain.

III. The despatches of rice by rail to Behar had generally increased. In the week ending January 27th, 3,05,700 maunds had been conveyed, and a larger quantity in the week after. The total amount, from beginning of October up to January 27th, carried from Calcutta into Behar had been 91,122 tons. The amount of food grains brought into Behar from stations above Mirzapore, in the week ending 24th January, had been 6,185 tons, and the total, from 1st November to same date, 49,250 tons.

IV. The import of food grains into Calcutta from the Eastern Districts during the week ending January 27th had been 12,405 tons, and during the following week 13,225 tons. Total since beginning of October, 104,898 tons.

Export from Bengal ports.

V. Export from Bengal ports to places beyond Bengal, from 1st October to 31st January, had been 143,495 tons.

This statement was to be regarded as in correction of former returns, which were not complete.

Abstract of a Despatch from the Government of India, dated 13th February, No. 11 of 1874.

Para. 1. The effects of the rainfall alluded to in the Despatch of the 6th February had been most beneficial, and the condition of the country generally had been materially improved.

2. There had been no information that the means of communication by river with the distressed districts had been improved by the rainfall.

3. The accounts from the North-West Provinces and Oude of the spring crops had led to the supposition that they would be large, and would afford the means of meeting any demands for food which might arise in the districts of those Provinces in which there had been a failure of the autumn rains.

(47)

4. Sir R. Temple had visited the worst parts of North Behar, and his conclusions were that a provision of 4,000,000 maunds of food grains should be made for Tirhoot, 1,000,000 maunds for Chumparun, and 550,000 maunds for Sarun. For the north of the Patna Division, therefore, there would be a requirement, up to the 15th June, of 5,550,000 maunds, of which a portion would be provided by the Rajahs, Zemindars, Court of Wards, and persons who had received advances from Government. The Viceroy calculated that about 180,000 tons of food grains, provided by Government, would have to be conveyed into North Behar before the 15th June. The Government was in a position to meet this demand without difficulty, and had thought it right to approve all Sir R. Temple's arrangements for the provision of transport from the railway to Northern Tirhoot. The Government of India had expressed to the Government of Bengal its disappointment that the requirements of North Tirhoot had been underestimated by Local Officers. The arrangements for transport to Chumparun and Sarun were not expected to cause much difficulty.

5. Mr. Molesworth, Consulting Engineer for State Railways, had proceeded to Barrh, to construct a tramway from Chumpta Ghât, on the Ganges, to Durbhunga. He thought the work could be made in time to be useful in the present emergency. It would therefore be pushed on with all expedition.

6. With reference to the apprehensions of distress in Nepaul, Mr. Girdlestone, the Resident, had been placed in communication with Sir R. Temple, and told to act in accordance with his advice.

7. The Viceroy then alluded to his communications with the Central Relief Committee, which will be noticed hereafter.

8. Sir W. Muir, in the North-West Provinces, was taking every necessary measure for the relief of distress in the south-eastern districts. No intimation that he would require assistance from the Government of India had been received.

9. Sir G. Couper was also actively preparing measures for the relief of distress in the northern parts of Oude, adjoining the Terai. He had no apprehension that there would be difficulty in bringing in supplies in advance for any part of the country which might require them during the rains.

10. In conclusion, the Viceroy stated that the present drought in North Behar, and former droughts within a short period of time, had drawn the attention of Government to the necessity of a system of irrigation which would provide, as far as human means could, against the recurrence of similar calamities. Inquiries and surveys had accordingly been ordered.

11. With the Despatch the Viceroy transmitted two Minutes relative to Chumparun by Sir R. Temple, which it is necessary to notice. The first, dated 8th February, written at Bettiah, in Chumparun, gave an account of the prospects of that district. Sir R. Temple made, from the best information which he could procure, the following calculation as to the number of persons who would have to be fed :—

Sir R. Temple's
Minute, dated 8th
February.

	Average per diem.		
In February	-	-	- 79,000
„ March	-	-	- 158,000
„ April	-	-	- 237,000
„ May	-	-	- 316,000
„ June	-	-	- 316,000
„ July	-	-	- 316,000
„ August	-	-	- 237,000
„ September	-	-	- 79,000

12. An average per diem of 217,000 persons for eight months, at three fourths of a seer per head, would require about 4,068 maunds a day, or 976,320 maunds (about 35,000 tons) in all. It was therefore stated by Sir R. Temple that a million maunds must be imported into this district before the 15th June. The Transport Agency at Patna had already sent on 215,000 maunds to arrive in the district by the 15th February. The Collector was now contracting with Europeans of proved competency and means to cart not less than 50,000 maunds a week from the Bunkur Ghât, opposite Patna, after the 15th of February. This would give, by 1st June, 700,000 maunds. For the works on the Gunduck embankment 24,000 maunds had arrived,

and more was on the river. The supply by the river route was estimated at 50,000 maunds. Thus the total Government provision was 975,000 maunds. Then 150,000 maunds were being brought into the district by the manager of the Bettiah estates and the planters resident in that part of the district. Sir R. Temple thought this supply would be sufficient, especially as the Gunduck would, after the 15th May, begin to rise, and thus land carriage would be supplemented by water carriage.

13. Sir R. Temple considered the state of preparations of the transport arrangements, even to the remotest parts in which distress was anticipated, as creditable to the administration of the district, and he expressly acknowledged the services of Mr. T. Gibbon, the manager of the Bettiah estates, and of Mr. R. Lethbridge.

Sir R. Temple's
Minute of 10th
February.

14. Sir R. Temple having left Chumparun recorded a second Minute as to the prospects of that district. He stated that there had been recently two falls of rain, varying from one to two inches. The prospect of the spring harvest was much improved, and it was thought the supply it would produce might replenish the grain markets for a month. But there was much uncertainty as to the yield, and Sir R. Temple thought the precautions and preparations of the authorities should go on without alteration or relaxation.

15. The Rajah of Bettiah had manifested a desire to behave well. The Rajah of Ramnuggur, who had at first done nothing, had now promised to render assistance. The Zemindars had shown no public spirit. The European indigo planters, on the other hand, had given cordial assurances of help.

16. Careful arrangements had been made regarding Sub-divisional Committees and Sub-Committees for the effective administration of relief. There would be three Sub-divisional Committees and five Sub-Committees, all under the District Committee which had been formed. Relief works were being commenced in every part of the district.

17. Sir R. Temple finally reported that the carriage contractors had got their system into effective working order, that the local resources in carts and bullocks were large, and that he trusted it would not be necessary to indent on the North-Western Provinces for carriage for the service of the Chumparun district.

Sir R. Temple's
Minute on the trans-
port arrangements
in Tirhoot, dated
31st January.

18. A Minute by Sir R. Temple regarding the transport arrangements of Tirhoot was also forwarded by the Viceroy.

19. It was estimated that about 1,000,000 of persons, or 25 per cent. of the whole population, would require relief. In Sir R. Temple's opinion it would be necessary to procure carriage for 4,000,000 of maunds (148,200 tons) of grain. The two worst months would be May and June, though April would, in all probability, be bad, and July, August, and September certainly bad. Land carriage would be available up to July. From July there would be help from water carriage, but the land carriage would then fall off. It would, therefore, be preferable to bring the whole of the four millions of maunds into the northern part of the district by the 15th June.

20. Such was the demand. The question remained how was it to be met?

21. The Transport Agent at Patna had sent 200,000 maunds to arrive in the distressed divisions by 15th February, and had arranged to send from that date 50,000 maunds in each week, so as to place 800,000 maunds in the Sub-divisions by 15th June. Thus one million of maunds would be supplied. The Court of Wards (Durbhanga) had arranged to bring in 200,000 maunds, and the Zemindars, planters, and others who had received advances, to bring in 50,000 maunds. The Collector had just made contracts with trustworthy Europeans to bring up 110,000 maunds a week from Chumpta Ghât, opposite Barrh, from 15th February, which arrangements would place, by the 15th June, 1,760,000 maunds in the distressed Sub-divisions. Sir R. Temple had himself, on the suggestion of the Lieutenant Governor of the North-Western Provinces, invited tenders to carry 200,000 maunds a week from the left bank of the Ganges from 1st April to 15th June, which arrangement, if effected, would bring in 2,000,000 maunds.

22. These amounts would give the following total :—

	Maunds.
Patna Agency - - - - -	1,000,000
Court of Wards - - - - -	200,000
Zemindars, indigo planters, and others . - -	50,000
Local contracts - - - - -	1,760,000
North-West contracts - - - - -	2,000,000
Total - - - - -	5,010,000

23. The resources of Tirhoot in carriage were more than ordinarily great. The indigo planters and manufacturers caused a large number of carts and bullocks to be kept up by ryots, and these means had been largely supplemented by contracts. Relief works for the excavation of wells and tanks, with the view of providing water for cattle along the routes of transit, had been organized, and 50,000 maunds of cotton seed for fodder had been ordered from the North-Western Provinces to be sent by railway to Patna.

24. The transport arrangements only held good as far as the principal points in the distressed districts. Provision would still have to be made for the conveyance of grain to the villages. This would be done separately.

25. The Lieutenant Governor, in forwarding this Minute to the Government of India, expressed some doubts as to whether Sir R. Temple had not over-estimated the needs of the Tirhoot districts. He thought especially that he had not given sufficient credit to what would be provided by Zemindars and planters, and also to the operations of private trade.

Lieutenant Governor's
Note on Sir R.
Temple's Minute,
dated 6th February.

26. The Government of India in reply, having expressed its disappointment that Local Officers had so long neglected fully to appreciate the requirements of that part of the country, and had thus postponed to the present time arrangements which should have been made many weeks before, stated that it thought Sir R. Temple's proposals should be acted on, for although his estimates might possibly be found in excess of actual requirements, yet, considering possible failures in parts of the transport arrangements, and the probability that a portion of the population of Nepal might come on the hands of Government, it was a wise discretion which dictated the provision of four million maunds of grain.

27. The Viceroy also forwarded a letter, addressed by the Government of India to the Government of Bengal, relative to the action and functions of the Central Relief Committee.

28. The Supreme Government thought that the functions of the Central Committee should be mainly confined to the collection of subscriptions and the arrangement of the supply of food or money to the District Committees; that the supervision to be exercised by the Central Committee over the District Committees should be only of a general nature, and that it should not issue detailed instructions for the relief of distress. Such details must be left to the District and Sub-divisional Committees under the direction of the Local Officers.

29. The Government of India was also desirous of impressing on the Central Committee and all Committees that the application of a rigid labour test was not recommended by Government. When distress attacked whole classes of the population, an extension of the system of the gratuitous distribution of food must be resorted to, and the Government must rely on the local knowledge of the persons entrusted with the grant of relief to prevent abuse.

30. The Viceroy also forwarded a statement showing the quantity of rice, distinguishing between table and common, exported to the undermentioned countries from the ports of Calcutta and Chittagong, in the four months from 1st October 1873 to 31st January 1874.

STATEMENT showing the Quantity of Rice, distinguishing between Table and Common, exported to the under-mentioned Countries from the Ports of Calcutta and Chittagong in the Four Months from the 1st October to 31st January in each of the Official Years 1873-74 and 1872-73.

Countries to which Exported.	From 1st October to 31st January.							
	1873-74.				1872-73.			
	Table.	Common.		Total.	Table.	Common.		Total.
		From Calcutta.	From Chittagong.			From Calcutta.	From Chittagong.	
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
British Indian Ports - - -	2,877	919	4,449	8,245	8,491	10,596	4,440	23,527
Ceylon - - - - -	127	4,227	{ Not distinguished }	4,354	16	12,188	{ Not distinguished }	12,204
Mauritius, Bourbon, and W.I. Islands	1,168	33,312	19,884	54,364	634	32,388	32,202	65,224
Other Foreign Ports - - -	19,213	21,465	379	41,057	10,173	47,232	213	57,618
Total - - -	23,385	59,923	24,712	1,08,020	19,314	102,404	36,855	1,58,573

Note.—No Table Rice exported from Chittagong.

18th March 1874.

HENRY L. ANDERSON, Secretary,
Revenue Department.

DESPATCH from the DUKE of ARGYLL, referred to on page 4.

Revenue,
No. 20.

India Office,
London, 1st December 1873.

To His Excellency the Right Honourable the Governor General of India in
Council.

My Lord,

Para. 1. It is with much anxiety that I learn from your despatch of October the 30th last, which reached me by the mail of the 24th November last, and from the previous message by telegraph, that the failure of the crops in a great part of Bengal will occasion severe distress, if not worse results.

2. Repeated experience has sufficiently proved that, when scarcity and the danger of famine arises in India, the ordinary operations of commerce, and the ordinary processes of supply and demand, cannot be relied on for any adequate supply of food to the affected Districts, and that, without the active intervention of Government, the worst consequences are liable to ensue.

3. I have, therefore, to intimate to you, in pursuance of former telegraphic communications, that Her Majesty's Government are thoroughly satisfied of this conclusion, and I place unreservedly in your hands my sanction, by anticipation, to any measures which, acting on the spot, and with full knowledge of the facts, you may consider necessary for the saving of human life.

4. You inform me that the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal has advocated the immediate prohibition of the export of rice from all Indian ports, and you explain some of the reasons which induce you to prefer other methods of action on the part of the Government. In particular, you specify that method of proceeding which consists in the Government entering, either directly or indirectly, as a purchaser into the market, and thus obtaining any supplies of rice which may be necessary.

5. It is obvious that this method of proceeding will of itself have the effect of preventing export to any injurious extent. There can be no doubt that it is a method of operation by Government less violent than the other, and has the additional advantage of tending to turn and invite commercial enterprise in the direction of increased imports of food.

6. Commercial enterprise, though it cannot be entirely trusted to bring sufficient food into the country, and can still less be trusted to bring it to the stricken districts or to distribute it there, must nevertheless be the most powerful agency in bringing the necessary supplies within reach of the Government, and is certainly an agency which ought not to be unnecessarily discouraged or thwarted in its operations.

7. I approve, therefore, of the preference you have given to the method of purchase. But I would impress on you the necessity of securing by this method whatever amount of supply the largest possible estimate of the need may appear to require.

8. Scarcity in India is apt to outrun in its amount and in its effects all previous estimates of the danger, and if your Government is determined to secure in time an amount of food fully equal to the largest deficiency which can be calculated upon, it will be able to draw upon an adequate supply.

9. I entirely concur with your Excellency in placing the utmost reliance on the ability, energy, and special knowledge of the present Lieutenant Governor of Bengal.

I have the honour to be, my Lord,
Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,
(Signed) ARGYLL.

DESPATCH from the DUKE OF ARGYLL, referred to on page 21.

Revenue
No. 2.

India Office,
London, 23rd January 1874.

To His Excellency the Right Honourable the Governor General of India in
Council.

MY LORD,

PARA. 1. I have had under my consideration in Council your Lordship's
* No. A, dated 7th Nov. 1873. further despatches noted in the margin,* on the failure
" B, " 12th " " of the crops in certain districts of Bengal, on the
" 1 C, " 21st " " amount of distress likely to arise in consequence, and
" 534 (Financial), 5th Dec. 1873. on the measures you have been taking to meet it.
" 2 C, dated 6th Dec. 1873.
" 15 (Agricultural and Horticultural, 12th Dec. 1873.
" 17 (Ditto), 19th " "

2. The estimates you have formed of the extent of failure have been founded on very careful inquiry by the officers best acquainted with the affected districts, on personal inspection by your Excellency, and on the able analyses and summaries of evidence which have been furnished by the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal.

3. The measures you have taken for the mitigation of anticipated distress have been not less carefully concerted with the same authorities, after a minute comparison of the circumstances with those attending other periods of scarcity, and an anxious reference to the special causes which have led to former failures in averting the worst calamities of famine.

4. You inform me in the despatches now under reply, that you are taking every precaution which has suggested itself to you and to your officers after this review of the position of affairs, and that, with one exception, you have sanctioned every measure which has been recommended, and have authorised every demand which has been made by the Government of Bengal.

5. The one exceptional measure which you have declined to sanction is that of prohibiting the export of food from the ports of Bengal.

6. In my despatch of December 1st I conveyed to you the approval of Her Majesty's Government of your resolution to abstain from that measure. It seems, indeed, to have one recommendation not unimportant,—that it would satisfy a considerable amount of native opinion. I am far from undervaluing this inducement, and it is one which may well prevail in many cases where less serious considerations are involved. But after again weighing carefully the whole case, and the grounds on which you came to your decision, Her Majesty's Government desire to intimate their entire concurrence with you, that the objections to this measure far outweigh any recommendation in its favour.

7. These objections are so many and so grave that nothing in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government could justify having recourse to such a measure, unless it were a certainty or a reasonable probability that exports of food will so exhaust the resources of India as to render them incapable of affording the supplies which may be required for the affected districts.

8. Her Majesty's Government rejoice to believe that there is every reason to be confident of the sufficiency of the supplies of food which must remain available in the country. In many of the provinces surrounding the affected districts, there has been no failure of the crops, and in some there has been an abundant harvest. The same observation applies generally to almost the whole of the rest of India, and to the important field of Burmah. Moreover, other markets are accessible to the Government if it should find itself under any necessity of resorting to them.

9. Although, therefore, your Excellency and the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal have agreed in the general conclusion that the failure of the rains and the consequent amount of failure in the crops, have been in this season very much the same as in the season of 1865-66 which resulted in the Orissa famine, there are three circumstances affecting the present case which establish an important difference. The first of these is the amount of careful prevision and forecast to meet all

probable contingencies which, from the experience gained in the Orissa famine, the Government has been able to employ; the second is the abundance of food supplies which must exist in India; the third is the facility for making that supply available which is afforded by the geographical position of the districts affected in 1873-74 as compared with the districts affected in 1865-66.

10. One of the main causes of the suffering in Orissa was the position of the Province—remote—comparatively inaccessible,—out of the way of all the ordinary channels of trade and of the ordinary lines of communication.

11. Behar and the other districts now affected are, on the contrary, among the most accessible districts of British India,—traversed by all the great leading lines of communication of river, of railway, and of road, whilst the active and timely exertions of the Lieutenant Governor have been for some time specially directed to organizing a detailed system of land carriage.

12. Under the worst circumstances of scarcity in India a large part of the people have always been able to supply themselves with food at the enhanced prices of the time. It is only a certain proportion of the population who are in danger of suffering distress, and for whom therefore it is necessary by special measures to provide.

13. You have proceeded on the principle that if the Government were to assume, or appear to assume, the duty of providing for the total commissariat of a population of 24 millions of people, it would undertake an operation which no executive machinery could accomplish, and which could only end in disastrous failure. You have therefore given it to be understood that you would not supersede or interfere with the functions of the trader in grain as regards that part of the population which is able to purchase, and that you would confine yourself to providing work, and wages in food, as well as more direct relief where such may be required, for that other portion of the people who are too poor to purchase at the enhanced prices likely to prevail, and whose wants therefore the ordinary grain trade could not be expected to supply.

14. Her Majesty's Government entirely approve of this principle of policy. They have not the means which you possess of estimating the per-centage of the population for whom, in accordance with that principle, it has been requisite for you to purchase, to store, and to distribute an adequate supply of food. But Her Majesty's Government know that this estimate has been made by you after inquiries more systematic and complete than have ever been made before, and they place entire confidence in the means you have taken, in conjunction with the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, to measure and to anticipate the necessities which may arise.

15. In the exercise of this confidence I have again to assure your Excellency of the support of Her Majesty's Government in any measures you may think necessary for the saving of life and for the mitigation of distress. You wisely commenced a system of relief works at a very early date, with a view to save the labouring population from even the beginnings of distress, and from the debility which would render their labour valueless. You have also so selected and so distributed those works as to prevent as much as possible any necessity for large movement of the population. In the extensive employment of labour for the sake of charity there is generally much waste; but in India there is this great advantage that many public works, both large and small, of the greatest permanent value, have already been projected and sanctioned, and have been made the subject of careful estimate. The more immediate and rapid execution of these works, whilst it will serve the immediate purpose of providing food as wages for the people who are in want, will also be a sure and lasting gain to the resources of the country.

I have the honour to be,
My Lord,
Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,
(Signed) ARGYLL.

Minute by His Excellency the Viceroy on the non-prohibition of the Export of Grain, referred to in page 40 of the foregoing Abstract.

WHEN information was first received of the certainty that a portion of the winter rice crop would fail, the Government of Bengal recommended that "the export of rice to foreign countries from the Indian dominions should be stopped."

No. 50 T, 22nd October 1873.

That recommendation was shortly afterwards repeated in the somewhat wider terms: "that the exportation of food grains from British Indian ports might be prohibited," and it was urged that if the larger measure was not approved, at any rate the export of common rice from Bengal ports should be prohibited.

No. 3300, 7th November 1873.

At a later period the British Indian Association recommended that the export of food grains from British India, with the exception of Burma, should be prohibited.

21st November 1873.

None of these suggestions have been adopted by the Government of India. As the question is one of great interest, I wish to state the reasons which led me to decide against their adoption during the time when it became my duty to exercise the full powers of the Government.

I do not think it necessary to discuss at length the proposal for the prohibition of the export of all food grains from Indian ports, including Burma.

The exports of food grains from India consist chiefly of rice. Setting aside Bengal for the moment, about 700,000 tons of rice are exported annually from British Burma, and 100,000 tons from Madras.

To have prohibited the export of rice would probably have inflicted a fatal blow on the trade of British Burma. This is a sacrifice which I hardly think could have been seriously contemplated, especially as the Burmese rice is not usually consumed by the people of Bengal, and such quantities of it as either the Government might require for the distressed districts, or the trade might wish to purchase, were easily available without having recourse to such a measure.

The export of rice from Madras is almost entirely to Ceylon. I cannot look upon Ceylon as a "foreign country" on account of the accident that it is under the Colonial Office, and not under the Secretary of State for India. I think Ceylon is entitled to be treated as an integral part of British India; and we had no hesitation in assuring the Governor of Ceylon, who expressed some anxiety on the subject, that the usual export from India would not be stopped.

There is a small but increasing export of wheat, chiefly from Bombay and Kurrachee; to have stopped this could not have materially affected supplies in Bengal, while it would have inflicted great injury upon the districts from which the trade is supplied.

The practical question appears to me to be whether the export of common rice from Bengal should have been prohibited; and to that proposal alone I will address such further observations as I have to make.

It will be convenient in the first place to state exactly the facts of the case.

In the year 1872-73 there was a larger export of rice from Bengal than in any year since 1864. The figures of the year 1872-73 may, therefore, be taken to show the extreme quantity of rice which is likely to be exported during the coming year.

The total exports of rice from Bengal ports amounted in round numbers in the year 1872-73 to 526,000 tons.

About 80,000 tons of this consists of "table rice," which, from its quality and price, is not suited to the ordinary consumption of the people. It could hardly have been intended to interfere with the export of this class of rice, for to have done so would have withdrawn from the growers means which they require in order to provide themselves with cheaper descriptions of food.

The total export of common rice was, therefore, in round numbers, 446,000 tons ; of this, 189,000 tons were sent to British Indian ports, including Ceylon, 160,000 tons to the West Indies, Mauritius, and other places where the consumers are mainly natives of India who have emigrated, and the remaining 97,000 tons to other parts of the world, principally to Great Britain and the Persian Gulf. -

For my own part, I entertain a strong opinion that it would have been very unwise to have interfered with the inter-portal trade, and that it would have been wrong, at any rate without considerable notice, to have stopped the main supply of the usual food of Bengal coolies in the Colonies ; but even if the whole export of common rice had been prohibited, the amount, reduced as it must necessarily be from the rise of prices, would be inconsiderable in comparison with the food supply for a population of 66,000,000, who require about 30,000 tons of food a day. It may, I think, be assumed that the addition taken by itself could have made no considerable difference in the general price of rice throughout Bengal.

It is said, however, that the action of Government in prohibiting the export of rice would have given confidence to the country, and have had a great effect in reducing prices.

It is very probable that, had the export of rice been prohibited, the action of Government would have had the effect of considerably lowering the price of rice. The confidence, however, that might have been thus produced would not have been justified by the addition which would have been made to the supplies of food.

One of the greatest safeguards against a famine in India, as in every country, lies in the diminution of consumption which naturally results from the rise of prices which the anticipation of scarcity occasions ; and I can conceive no interference by Government more unwise than the reduction of prices below their natural level at the beginning of a period of scarcity. This would have been the effect which would probably have followed a prohibition of exports. The addition that would have been made to the general supplies of the country would in that case have been soon absorbed by the increase of consumption which would have been the result of an undue lowering of prices.

I will assume, however, for the purpose of argument, that I may be mistaken in my estimate of the effect which would have been produced upon prices by the prohibition of exports, and that the measure would have produced no undue reduction of prices. Consumption would, upon this assumption, not have been unduly stimulated, and there would have remained a distinct addition to the food supplies of the people.

Even on this assumption I am of opinion that the advantage which would have been derived for the time would have been dearly purchased by the probable consequences for the future.

It seems to me that an export trade in food grains is a great advantage to a country in the condition of Bengal, raising its own food supplies, having no import trade in food, and whose population is poor. The existence of such an export ensures the production, in ordinary years, of more food than is required to meet the demands of the people. The natural rise of prices in times of scarcity must divert a portion of the ordinary export to home consumption, and thus a reserve easily and readily available is habitually maintained.

For example, the years 1865-66 and 1866-67 were years of scarcity, and the exports of rice from Bengal fell from 695,341 tons in 1864-65 to 336,211 tons in 1865-66, and to 222,659 tons in 1866-67. In the three months of October, November, and December last the exports were 64,425 tons as compared with 113,277 tons in the corresponding months of 1872.

It follows that any measure that would diminish the export trade in common rice from Bengal would weaken the power of the country to meet any future period of scarcity. Trade is readily diverted from one channel to another. The

interference of Government with its free course may easily destroy it. If we refuse to supply our ordinary customers at any price we oblige them to have recourse to other markets, and it is impossible to assume that when we want them again they will return to us.

Bearing in mind, therefore, the permanent harm that might be done by an interference with the export trade in food grains, and being satisfied that the Government could without difficulty bring in a larger quantity of rice than is exported even in ordinary years, I had no hesitation in preferring the latter course, and I see no reason to doubt the correctness of the conclusion at which I then arrived.

The British Indian Association, in their argument, which is well and temperately stated, assume that the exports of rice from Bengal in the years 1865 and 1866, "if they could have been retained in the country, would have gone a great way in saving the famishing millions of Orissa."

The circumstances of the case do not seem to me to bear out this assumption. The loss of life in Orissa was not occasioned by a deficiency in the general food supplies of the country, but by the difficulty which the isolated position of Orissa presented to bringing supplies to the people who were suffering. In my opinion the same difficulty exists now, although in a less degree. The real difficulty of dealing with the present distress will probably be found not in any general deficiency of food supplies throughout the country, or in a want of food supplies at the command of Government in Calcutta or on the main lines of communication by railway or river, but in the transport of those supplies into the interior, and in making arrangements for distributing them.

The Government have gone far beyond the action heretofore taken in times of scarcity, by purchasing and laying in stores of grain for relief operations. Those stores of grain will, in the six months from November 1873 to May 1874, amount to about 340,000 tons, of which the greater portion will be obtained from beyond the sea, there will thus be an importation by Government about equal to the annual average export of rice to foreign countries from Bengal ports during the last five years.

The supplies purchased by Government will be especially applicable to the distressed districts, and therefore, I need hardly say, have a far greater effect for the relief of distress than an equal addition to the general food supplies of the country obtained by prohibiting exports could possibly produce; for the rice, the export of which would have been prohibited would have come, not from the distressed districts, but from other parts, and must have been bought by Government or the trade, and carried to the distressed districts before being of use there.

In these remarks I have purposely abstained from alluding to the objections to an interference with the export trade of India, which depend upon general considerations connected with trade and finance, as I have desired to look upon the question entirely with reference to the present and future food supplies of the people.

NORTHBROOK.

30th January 1874.

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