

THE  
MADRAS FAMINE.

WITH APPENDIX

CONTAINING

A LETTER from MISS FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE,  
AND OTHER PAPERS.

BY

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## THE INDIAN FAMINE.

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We have had, in the past Session, four discussions on the subject of India. In all which, of course, the most terrible visitation that has occurred in our time, the present Famine, has been the most prominent point, but in all, the word *Water* has, I believe, been never once mentioned. Most assuredly, then, our first enquiry is, what can be the reason of this omission? There must be some most tremendous pressure that could force the Officials carefully to avoid any allusion to the one thing upon which all depends in the matter. The slightest hint of the subject of *Water* might have led to the dangerous question, what becomes of all the *Water*? This would be treading upon most dangerous ground. It might even lead to a demand for information upon the whole question of *Water* for production and *Water* for transit. The moment the question is started we come upon the fact that one single river in the peninsula pours into the sea in a single day, 5,000 millions of cubic yards of *Water*, enough to produce rice for two millions of people for a year. There was certainly *Water* enough flowing into the sea last year to provide food for the whole population ten times over, and it would supply *Water* for all the Navigation Canals that could be cut throughout India. There is therefore no want of *Water*. The only remaining question then is, What would it cost to distribute the *Water* over the Land and along the Navigation Canals? The answer to this is that all the great Irrigation works already executed by our Government, Irrigating about six millions of acres, or rather