

NO. 171

Papers relating to the
Famine (East India)

1873-74



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EAST INDIA (FAMINE)

COPY of LETTER to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for *India*, forwarding extra Supplement to the "Gazette of India," dated 26th February 1875, containing the final REPORTS of the Measures taken in consequence of the Scarcity of 1873-74.

(PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT BY HER MAJESTY'S COMMAND.)

*Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
23 March 1875.*

V-76.

COPY of LETTER to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for *India*, forwarding extra Supplement to the "Gazette of India," dated 26th February 1875, containing the final REPORTS of the Measures taken in consequence of the Scarcity of 1873-74.

(No. 6 of 1875.)

Government of India.—Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce.

Agriculture and Horticulture.—Famine.

To the Most Honourable the Marquis of *Salisbury*, Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India.

My Lord Marquis, Calcutta, 26 February 1875.

WE have the honour to forward herewith a copy of the extra supplement to the "Gazette of India," published this day, containing the final reports of the measures that have been taken in consequence of the scarcity of 1873-74, and to state that our opinions upon the Minute of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, and the reports from the Lieutenant Governor of the North Western Provinces and the Chief Commissioner of Oudh, are contained in our Resolution of the 18th, and the letters to the North Western Provinces Government and the Chief Commissioner of Oudh of the 25th and 20th instant.

We have, &c.
(signed) *Northbrook*.
Napier of Magdala.
B. H. Ellis.
H. W. Norman.
A. Hobhouse.
E. C. Bayley.
W. Muir.

Government of India.—Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce.

REPORTS ON THE SCARCITY OF 1873-74.

1. THE Governor General in Council has read, with all the attention which the importance of the subject deserves, the Minutes of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, the narrative received from the Lieutenant Governor of the North Western Provinces, and the letter of the Chief Commissioner of Oudh, giving an account of the measures adopted in consequence of the failure of the winter crop of 1873-74.

2. Sir Richard Temple, in the Minute which he has recorded on the scarcity in Bengal and Behar, and the measures taken to alleviate the distress caused by it, has given a clear and full account of the origin of the scarcity, of the manner in which it declared itself, of the general plan of operations, of the measures which were adopted, and of their result. On all these subjects Sir Richard Temple's excellent narrative conveys full and accurate information, and nothing need be added by the Government of India in regard to the history of those transactions.

3. The reports received from the Lieutenant Governor of the North Western Provinces and from the Chief Commissioner of Oudh show that the distress in those provinces was limited in extent, and much less severe than in Bengal and Behar. The observations of the Government of India upon these reports will be separately communicated to the Governments concerned.

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* *Farid Shah* *
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4. On 7th November 1873, the Secretary of State was informed that "Her Majesty's Government might rely upon the Government of India using every available means, at whatever cost, to prevent, as far as they could, any loss of the lives of Her Majesty's subjects in consequence of the calamity which threatened Bengal." The result has shown that the resources of the country and the energy of those who were entrusted with the conduct of the relief operations have been sufficient, by the blessing of God, to secure success.

5. The measures that have been taken have not only prevented the extensive mortality which must otherwise have occurred, but the general productive power of the country has not been allowed to deteriorate, and there is no reason to believe that any demoralisation has followed from the relief operations. The strongest assurances of the gratitude of the people have been received, and it may confidently be expected that the assistance which has been given by the State during a time of calamity will be long remembered and appreciated, not only on the scene of the distress, but throughout the whole of Her Majesty's Indian Empire.

6. The cost of the relief operations cannot as yet be accurately stated; but it may safely be assumed that the total net cost will not exceed the sum of 6,500,000 £., which was the estimate given in the budget for the current year.

7. Without further reference, excepting incidentally and by way of illustration, to the history of the past year, it may be profitable to put on record, while the recollection of the circumstances is fresh, some general observations which may serve for future guidance.

8. The Resolution of the Government of India, of the 7th of November 1873, which was mainly founded upon the experience of previous famines in India, embraces the chief subjects upon which general instructions appear to be required at the beginning of a period of scarcity.

9. Recent experience has shown, however, that greater attention should be directed as soon as the certainty of a serious failure of one of the principal grain crops has been ascertained, to obtain at once complete reports of its extent, and of the probable consequences upon the food supply of the people. The admirable series of Minutes written by Sir Richard Temple, when he was deputed to visit the distressed districts, will serve as a model for such reports. The general accuracy of the data supplied to Sir Richard Temple by the local officers is remarkable, and illustrates the value of the information which can thus be obtained.

10. The anticipation of the effects of the scarcity was found to be somewhat greater than the reality from two causes. The stock of food in the hands of the people turned out to be larger than was anticipated; and sufficient allowance was not made for the extraordinary exertions which were used by the cultivators to grow a greater quantity than usual of the grain crops which ripen in the autumn. It was impossible to reckon beforehand upon either of these circumstances; but the experience that has now been gained shows, first, that where a scarcity follows a fair season, considerable supplies of food will probably be in the possession of the people, and therefore sufficient time may be reckoned upon for the purpose of organising the relief which may ultimately be required; and, secondly, that the cultivators of the soil in India are able and willing to make considerable alterations in their agriculture for the sake of increasing the food supply at the earliest possible moment, by which means the period over which the scarcity would otherwise extend is considerably shortened. The out-turn of the autumn crops of 1874 was further increased by the unusual quantity of rain that fell early in the season.

11. It is also important that early assistance should be given; without any hesitation, to the officers who are employed in districts where the scarcity is known to be imminent, so that they may be left free to move constantly through their districts and to watch the progress of events. Thus accurate information will be secured from the first of the area which is likely to be most severely afflicted, and relief operations may be adjusted accordingly. The critical position of a part of Tirhoot at an early period of the scarcity of last year is mainly to be attributed to the weakness of the staff. This deficiency was promptly supplied, but the lesson should not be forgotten.

12. The experience of former famines with respect to the advantage of opening public works, especially at an early stage of the distress, has been fully confirmed. Large works should be opened at once, smaller local works subsequently, as the necessity for them arises. There should be no hesitation in providing sufficient superintendence. When the distress becomes extensive, it is essential that employment should be available near the usual homes of the people. Sir Richard Temple has justly observed that where very large numbers have to be employed upon public works, piece work is preferable to other methods for their payment.

13. In dealing with the most distressed districts, it was found that the tests of cooked food and of poor houses were inapplicable. Such tests can be usefully applied only where the distress is less severe and extensive, and where there is reason to suppose that improper advantage is being taken of the relief offered.

14. Where distress is not great, and where, although it may be great, there is no serious

serious deficiency in the supply of food, relief works, the distribution of gratuitous relief under proper precautions, and advances of money upon sufficient security, will be found (as was the case in the North Western Provinces, in part of Oudh, and in considerable portions of Bengal) to be sufficient. It is only where there is a great deficiency, and there is also good reason to believe that the traders will be unable to meet that deficiency, that it is right for the State to intervene for the purpose of supplementing the general food-supply. Under such circumstances, however, this is the only means whereby a dearth of food can be prevented; and, during the past year there can be no reasonable doubt that the measure was imperatively required in order to prevent a very great mortality. The principal reason of this necessity was the absence of sufficient means of transport by railway or canal. The river communication was but of little use at the time of year when supplies were required, and the carts of the country were not available for ordinary traders in any quantities, and could only be brought out in sufficient numbers by means of an organisation which was quite beyond the power of private individuals. As railway communication is extended, the probability of Government being called upon to interfere in this manner with the functions of trade will diminish.

15. The operations for the supply of food by Government on a large scale were novel. The difficulty experienced at first was to arrange that the supplies should reach the people who required them. In fact the Government had, for the time, to fulfil the functions of both wholesale and retail dealers. Every available channel of distribution had to be brought into play. Sir Richard Temple has fully described the method which was adopted. Dealers in grain were assisted in prosecuting their business, which must otherwise have ceased to exist. Advances of grain were freely made to cultivators for the purpose of enabling them to support themselves and to till their land until the next crop should be gathered. This measure was in entire accordance with the customs of the country, and proved very successful.

16. The Lieutenant Governor of Bengal will be requested to cause the returns which have been received from the local officers to be carefully analysed and condensed for the purpose of exhibiting the extent of the failure of the crops in different parts of the country, as compared with the number of people who have been relieved by the State or who have been supported by food imported by the State. In Durbhunga and Mudhobunee, the two subdivisions of North Tirhoot where the failure of the rice crop was most complete, half of the population was supported for about four months by food imported by the State. It is therefore unlikely that in the event of any failure of crops which is not prolonged for more than one year Government can have to supply a larger quantity of food than would be sufficient to support for about two months the whole population of the area most severely visited. This calculation, however, and others which are likely to be valuable hereafter, will be elaborated by the Government of Bengal.

17. The stores laid in by the State were not brought into the market until the deficiency of supplies in the local markets proved the necessity of doing so. Up to that time they were only used for the benefit of the people who were collected upon the Government works. When sales to the public were authorised, the price was determined by the principle which was adopted during the Irish famine. This principle was that the price should be regulated by that which prevailed at the nearest large mart situated upon one of the main lines of communication, some addition being made to cover the cost of carriage to the place of sale. It was found in Ireland that, under the operation of this principle, the inconvenience attending an interference with trade was reduced to a minimum, because as soon as traders were able to obtain supplies they could resume their business, and the Government could withdraw from the field, without any serious disturbance of prices. The same result was found to follow in Bengal. Moreover, the supplies of grain provided by Government consisted mainly of Burmese rice, to which the people were not accustomed, and which could not compete upon equal terms with Bengal rice when the latter again appeared in the market. It is remarkable that throughout the whole of these operations no complaints came from traders on the spot that they were injured by the action of Government. On the contrary, Sir Richard Temple received assurances from them of their entire concurrence, and he had to refuse applications for an extension of the sales by Government, a compliance with which rightly appeared to him to be contrary to the principle, which had been laid down from the first, that unnecessary interference with trade should be avoided.

18. It will be seen from Sir Richard Temple's Minute that a balance of about 100,000 tons of rice remained after the relief operations had been concluded. To this extent the measures taken have been in excess of the requirements of the case. The responsibility for this excess rests entirely with the Government of India. Having to deal with so vast a population, whose support depended upon many uncertain contingencies, it would have been imprudent not to have been prepared to meet larger demands than those which were actually made upon the Government. If a substantial reserve had not been provided, the success of the relief operations would properly have been attributed rather to good fortune than to foresight. The experience of last year shows the necessity of such a reserve. In the beginning of September 1874 very great apprehensions were felt that the scarcity would be prolonged. This was only averted by a fall of rain at the very last moment when it could have been of use to allow the winter crops to be sown; and if the rain had not then fallen, the rice in reserve would have been urgently required. It must not be forgotten that on previous occasions it has occurred that a second year of drought has followed the first.

19. The food supplies of India, including British Burma, proved amply sufficient to meet the demand occasioned by the failure of the rice crop. Out of the total quantity of grain purchased by the Government, which amounted to 479,696 tons, only 54,300 tons were obtained from beyond British India. The rice exported from British Burma in the year 1874 amounted to about 815,000 tons. Of this quantity about 290,000 tons were sent to Bengal, and about 470,000 tons to Europe, the exports to Europe having been only 33,000 tons less than in the previous year. The import of food-grains by railway from the North Western Provinces and the Punjab is calculated by Lieutenant Colonel Taylor to have amounted to 289,000 tons. This large export from Upper India did not greatly affect prices in the producing districts. The total quantity of food-grain carried into the distressed districts can hardly have been much less than 1,000,000 tons.

20. Great advantage was derived from the arrangement made to reduce at once the rates for the carriage of grain by railway, the difference being paid to the railway companies by the Government. The effect of this measure was to stimulate the importation of grain by railway into the distressed districts; but, owing to the great distances to be traversed and the necessity to traders of quick conveyance in order to secure the profit offered by the rise of prices, this advantage given to the railways did not materially injure the river trade, which is slow, and, moving in regular course, does not readily adapt itself to a sudden demand.

21. The statistics of the foreign trade in food-grain for the year show that the reasons for which the Government determined not to prohibit the export of food-grain, either in whole or in part, were sound. Notwithstanding the home demand, the exports of food-grain from India, including British Burma, were considerable. The return of the quantities of food-grains exported by sea from Bengal during the year ending on 30th September 1874, shows that the exports were diminished by about one-half owing to the rise of prices. The exports of rice fell from 410,712 tons in 1872-73 to 217,355 tons in 1873-74, of which 121,065 tons were sent to the Colonies and other places to which natives of India have emigrated, and where, according to official representations which have been received in the course of the year, great evils must have resulted if the usual sources of supply had been suddenly interfered with. Of the remainder, 29,968 tons consisted of the finer descriptions of rice which are not consumed by the poorer classes. The residue only amounted to 66,332 tons, and thus no bad effects can have followed from an adherence to sound principles, while the foreign trade has been preserved from a shock from which it might not have easily recovered.

22. Some representations were made, urging interference with the distribution of grain between different parts of Bengal. All action, direct or indirect, in this direction was prohibited, and the result of leaving supplies to be adjusted according to the demand has been that prices were equalised in a remarkable manner throughout the whole of Bengal; the effects of the scarcity were thus spread over a large area, and therefore were less severely felt in those parts which otherwise would have been most seriously affected. The only exception to this was in Orissa, where, probably owing to the deficiency of the means of communication, the price of rice was during the whole period very much lower than elsewhere, notwithstanding a considerable export.

23. The supplies purchased by Government were drawn mainly from sources at a distance from the scene of the scarcity. It was found better to buy by private arrangement with merchants, rather than that the Government should appear openly in the market. The limited experiments made in the latter direction showed that the public action of the Government produced an effect upon prices quite out of proportion to the actual amount of the transactions.

24. The facility with which large supplies of rice were imported from British Burma without any excessive rise of freights proved the value of the arrangements made with the British India Steam Navigation Company whose ships were largely engaged in the operation, as well as the great resources for purposes of transport which are afforded by the magnificent mercantile steam fleet trading to Calcutta. It was also satisfactory to find that the private firm which took the contract for landing the rice in Calcutta were able to carry through a business of considerable difficulty without any check from first to last. The traffic arrangements of the East Indian Railway Company showed the power of the Company to meet the strain of a very large additional traffic within a limited time. It is not too much to say that the relief operations could not have been successful, had it not been for the trunk line of railway which, passing through Behar, unites Calcutta with the Punjab. An additional proof has thus been afforded of the wisdom of the measures for railway construction in India which were commenced by the Marquis of Dalhousie, and have since been steadily prosecuted.

25. The manner in which the grain was conveyed from the railways to the places where it was required has afforded a remarkable instance of the great resources of the country in wheeled conveyance, and of the facility with which they may be brought to bear by the offer of profitable rates of hire. The Government of India entirely approved of the contracts made, at Sir Richard Temple's recommendation, for the transport of rice to North Behar. The cost was great, but the danger was not exaggerated. The immediate superintendence of the transport, when it assumed its full dimensions, was entrusted to officers of the army, and the manner in which this duty was performed

performed shows the confidence which may be placed in the efficiency with which such transport would, if necessary, be brought to bear upon military operations.

26. The vast business of distributing relief was most successfully carried on by minutely subdividing the country to be dealt with in accordance with its requirements, maintaining the same organization throughout, and leaving great discretion to the officers in local charge, after the main principles by which they were to be guided were laid down. In carrying out this work, Sir Richard Temple reports that the services of the native officers of the army were found to be particularly useful.

27. The Central Relief Committee, who undertook the duty of distributing the subscriptions which were raised in India and elsewhere for the relief of the sufferers from the scarcity, have not yet closed their accounts; but their reports, published from time to time, show that the appeal which was made to the liberality of the public has been promptly and liberally answered. The Secretary of State has already taken occasion to express to the Lord Mayor of London the value which is attached by the Government of India to the sympathy exhibited by the people of England towards the sufferers in India, not only on account of the material help which has been afforded, but also because its effect has been to strengthen the bonds of union between Her Majesty's subjects in England and in India. The princes and chiefs of India have distinguished themselves by the alacrity with which they have contributed; and liberal subscriptions have been received from all parts of British India, especially from zemindars and landholders in the distressed districts. The Government of India are satisfied that the assistance which has been bestowed is gratefully acknowledged by those who have benefitted by it, and they desire to take this opportunity of expressing the sincere thanks of the people to all those who have generously contributed to the Famine Relief Fund.

28. The Government of India have already from time to time expressed their approbation of the conduct of some of the officers of Government and others who have been engaged in the relief operations. The services rendered by Sir George Campbell during the time that he held the office of Lieutenant Governor of Bengal were acknowledged in April last. The thanks of the Government of India have been conveyed to Mr. Ashley Eden, the Chief Commissioner of British Burma, for the able and successful manner in which the purchases of rice were made under his directions. The Viceroy has taken advantage of the opportunity of addresses which have been presented to him during his visit to Behar and in Calcutta to convey the thanks of the Government of India to the zemindars and other gentlemen who have rendered active and valuable aid to their neighbours and fellow-countrymen. The Government of India now desire to express their entire concurrence with the minutes published by Sir Richard Temple, in which he has tendered, in suitable terms, the thanks of the Government of Bengal to the Commissioners and other officers of Government, civil and military, as well as to the zemindars and all others who have assisted in different capacities during the time of scarcity. The Lieutenant Governor of the North Western Provinces and the Chief Commissioner of Oudh have been requested to accept themselves, and to convey to those who have done good service in those provinces, the thanks of the Government of India.

29. Early in the month of March of last year, when the pressure of the distress had begun to be felt, but the power to deal with it successfully had not yet been proved, the Government of India expressed their confidence that the officers engaged upon the relief operations "would perform the arduous task imposed upon them with the zeal, ability, and self-sacrifice which had always distinguished the servants of the Crown and of the East India Company in times of difficulty and danger." This confidence has been entirely justified by the result, and another signal proof of the high qualities of the civil and military services has been afforded by the manner in which their duty has been performed during the past year. His Excellency the Commander in Chief, who has given every assistance in his power to the Government of Bengal, will be requested to convey to those officers, non-commissioned officers, and men under his Excellency's command who have been employed in the distressed districts the thanks which Sir Richard Temple has expressed in his Minute of the 24th of November. Similar communications will be made through the proper channels to those who are serving under Local Governments or departments.

30. The Government of India desire, in conclusion, to convey to Sir Richard Temple their recognition of the distinguished services which he has rendered to the people of Bengal and Behar during the time of difficulty through which the province has passed. As a Member of the Council of the Governor General, Sir Richard Temple was from the first intimately associated with the policy adopted by the Government of India in respect to the scarcity. He took a prominent part in carrying that policy into effect under Sir George Campbell's administration; and, since he assumed the office of Lieutenant Governor of Bengal in April last, he has unremittingly devoted himself to the personal direction and superintendence of the relief operations, which owe their complete success mainly to his exertions.

MINUTE by the Honourable Sir *Richard Temple*, K.C.S.I., Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, dated the 31st October 1874.

PREFACE.

THE letter of the 3rd October 1874 from the Government of India conveyed a request that a general report on the famine in Bengal and Behar during 1874 may be prepared by the Government of Bengal at the end of October of this year (1874), or as soon after as may be conveniently practicable. In compliance with this request, I make the following Report.

The subject seems to me to divide itself into six parts, which will be treated of in successive chapters, namely,—

- 1st. The origin and manifestation of the calamity; the principles on which the Government determined to meet it; the general plan of operations; and the preliminary instructions issued for that end.
- 2nd. The measures adopted in detail for carrying those principles and instructions into effect according to the development of affairs.
- 3rd. The statistics of the estimated extent and character of the calamity, and of the means employed by the Government to avert the consequences, together with the estimated expense of the undertaking.
- 4th. The progress of the relief operations from the setting in of the famine to its culminating point, the actual result being compared with the estimate.
- 5th. The gradual decline of the famine until its ultimate extinction, and the diminution of the relief operations until their cessation.
- 6th. General considerations relating to the circumstances described in the previous chapters.

CHAPTER I.

THE cause of the events which occurred in 1874 must be sought for in the scantiness of the rains in 1873 throughout Bengal and Behar. This cause did not operate in Orissa, which consequently escaped misfortune.

In Bengal and Behar, after a season of extraordinary heat during May and June of 1873, the rain did not begin till late, that is in July, and even then was scanty. It lasted more or less, but never abundantly, till the end of August, when it for the most part ceased prematurely. Enough had, however, fallen to secure a fair yield of the crops which are reaped in August and September. Little or none fell during the months of September, October, and November, that is, during the whole autumnal season, when heavy showers are indispensable for insuring the maturity of the rice crop of December (the most important of all the crops), and for sowing the crops which are to be reaped in the following spring. As experience showed that the consequences of drought are sometimes averted by rain even at the last moment, hope was not abandoned till the end of October. Not till then could it be seen whether the apprehension of failure of the crops would be realised or not. By that time, however, it became certain that wide-spread and heavy loss must occur in the December crops, that the sowing of the spring crop must be short, and that the germinating and growing of what had been sown must be jeopardised. The injury to the December rice harvest was almost irreparable. The injury to the young spring crops might yet be repaired, if rain should fall between the end of December and the beginning of February. Fear was chiefly felt for Behar and for the north part of Bengal, but largely also for all the rest of Bengal, save the eastern part in the basin of the Brahmapootra, and the deltaic region in the south which depends on inundation rather than on rainfall.

On the other hand, it had been ascertained that the September rice crop of Bengal, and the August maize and coarser grains of Behar had produced an average yield, sufficient to sustain the people till at least the middle of winter.

Early in October the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, Sir George Campbell, had expressed his fear that the drought of September must cause serious scarcity, and had instituted inquiries in every district regarding the actual out-turn of the autumn food crops and the apparent promise of the winter crops. On the 22nd October he reported to the Government of India that, owing to the shortness and early cessation of the rains, there was the gravest apprehension of general scarcity throughout the country, and of worse evils in some parts of Behar and north Bengal.

On the 7th November, the Governor General (who had proceeded to Calcutta) issued a resolution, in which the fundamental principles for dealing with the threatened calamity were

were embodied, namely, that in circumstances where numbers of persons may be exposed to danger of starvation, or to disease from want of food, the Government and its officers should do their utmost to apply the most effectual remedy that might be practicable; that interference with the trade in grain should be avoided, so far and so long as such avoidance might be possible; that the Government should afford some facilities for the transport of grain to distressed territories through the energy and enterprise of traders, such as the reduction of rates on the guaranteed railways; that public works, both Imperial and local, should be commenced, or prosecuted with a view of giving employment to those who might need it; that wages to the people thus employed should be paid in food-grain wherever desirable or convenient; that accordingly supplies of food-grain should be purchased and laid in by Government; that the undertaking of public improvements by corporations or other bodies, and of agricultural improvements by individuals, should be encouraged by loans from the public treasury; that advances of money should be made by Government to private gentlemen, European and native, who would undertake to import grain from a distance, and distribute it at prices to be regulated according to the circumstances of the case; that wherever and whenever the distress might become severe, the Government should assist in the organisation of a system of relief; that a central committee should be formed for administering the funds for relief received from private sources, and also if required, the funds received from Government; that relief committees should be established in the interior of the districts to distribute assistance to the distressed in cash or grain, or prepared food; that co-operation for the work of relief should be afforded by the commissariat, the medical department, and other branches of the public service; that emigration from the populous tracts visited or threatened by distress should be encouraged by the Government; that as the season progressed, advances of money for purchase of seed grain should be made by the Government to landlords or tenants; that periodically at short intervals information should be published regarding the state and prospects of the crops, the stock of food, the public works in progress, the relief operations, and all other circumstances relating to the scarcity.

The Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, who had, during the last days of October, visited the Patna and Bhagulpore divisions, proceeded to give effect to these principles by notifying the tracts in which failure of crops had occurred, and scarcity of different degrees was expected; by removing tolls from ferries and roads along the chief routes for grain transport; by issuing instructions to help *bond fide* importers of grain, with loans of money without interest; by directing the immediate commencement of a number of relief works, and the completion of preliminaries for many more; by intimating that wages to labourers might begin to be paid in grain whenever the local price of grain reached something like famine rates; by ordering storehouses for Government grain to be at once constructed on all the chief works; by effecting locally, in the less distressed parts of Bengal, moderate purchases of grain; by dispatching the grain so purchased by railway to the distressed districts, and so drawing out the means of local transport; by organising and testing the strength of local carriage of the country (mostly bullock carts but partly river boats), and choosing the best routes for transport of Government grain; by prescribing the selection of sites for granaries, relief houses, and relief committees suited to meet different grades of distress; by giving a large money credit from which local officers might make advances to persons who would undertake useful works for embankment, drainage, water supply, and other local improvements; by granting special concessions and privileges to persons who might take such advances; by sanctioning the organisation of such establishments, and preparation of such appliances as might be required for the transport and custody of grain, for relief works, or for the distribution of charitable relief; and by defining the points on which local officers were to furnish fortnightly reports on the condition of the districts, and the people under their care.

The Government of India authorised the vigorous prosecution, under the orders of the Government of Bengal, of the works of the Soane canal and its branches, the construction of embankments on either side of the River Gunduk, the commencement of the Northern Bengal State Railway, all which works would afford employment to those in need.

The opinion of the Government regarding the probable severity of the distress was based mainly on the reports of the local officers, who had made careful inquiries throughout their districts. But there were not wanting indications that the people themselves, and especially the more intelligent landholders and residents in the interior of the country, had the gravest fears in respect to the impending crisis. The British Indian Association of Calcutta, a society which is mainly composed of the zemindars and landholders of Bengal, early in December represented to the Government their expectation that the famine of 1874 would be more severe and general than the famine of 1866; that special organisation would be required to bring relief to respectable villagers who would not beg and could not work; and that, if the worst came, the task of feeding 60 millions of people might, as an extreme possibility, devolve on the Government. Looking to the position of the association and their sources of information, the Government deemed their opinion entitled to weight, and invited a fuller statement of the grounds for that opinion. The Association replied on the 24th December by submitting a valuable essay, stating the facts as they believed them to be, offering a full estimate of the position apparently warranted by those facts, and comparing in detail the prospects of the country in December 1865 with the prospects in December 1873. The Association's statement of facts coincided closely with the official reports already before the Government and the public. The important inferences which they drew were that the outturn of the food crops of

1873-74 over the whole of Bengal could hardly exceed two-fifths of the yield of an average year; that the stocks in the hands of the people, together with the December and April crops, would only suffice for six months' consumption for the whole of Bengal; and that widespread suffering and starvation could "be averted only by pouring in grain into the country sufficient, at any rate, for three months' supply." The Association contemplated three months' supply for the 60 millions of souls in Bengal outside Assam and Orissa—or, in other words, the importation of 3,750,000 tons of grain. This extreme demand (practically beyond the possibility of supply) was doubtless meant to be hypothetical. But the representations made by the Association show that the most intelligent and the best informed among the native landholders apprehended a calamitous famine unless the Government should step in to help or save the people.

In view of preventing any diminution of the general food supply of the country, the Government of Bengal proposed that the exportation of food-grains should be prohibited. The Government of India did not accede to this proposal, believing that the supposed advantages of the measure were uncertain, while its disadvantages were certain and serious.

There was a good hope that supplies of food would be sent in ordinary course of trade to central and northern Bengal and to Behar from Orissa, from Chittagong, and especially from the district of Backergunge, which comprises the combined delta of the Ganges and the Brahmapootra, which ordinarily has a large surplus of rice for exportation, and which had providentially not suffered at all from drought; and from parts of northern, north-western, and central India. As to northern India, there seemed to be justification for this hope, notwithstanding that those portions of the North Western Provinces and of Oude which adjoin Behar were also suffering from drought, though in a much less degree than Behar itself. In order to encourage and facilitate the transport of grain to Behar and Bengal from other parts of India, the guaranteed railway companies were authorised to reduce by one-half the rates on the carriage of grain, the loss to be made up by the Government.

As regards the grain to be supplied by the State, it was decided that, while purchases to a limited amount (50,000 tons) might be made in Bengal itself, and in the North Western Provinces by order of the Government of Bengal, all further State requirements must be met by purchases beyond the limits of the failure of the crops in Bengal and Behar, principally in the Madras Presidency, in British Burmah, in Saigon, in Chittagong, made under the direct order of the Government of India. The principle was this, that if very extensive purchases of grain by the State should be needed, they ought to be made in places which were distant from the scene of drought and scarcity, and from which supplies of food-grain could not be expected in the course of trade. By these means interference on the part of the Government in the inland grain trade of India would as far as possible be avoided, and the quantity of grain within Bengal and Behar would be *pro tanto* augmented. In the event of the importation of grain by Government becoming extraordinarily large, reliance was mainly placed on British Burmah, where the rice harvest was known to promise well.

The Government of Bengal, on the 2nd December, reported that 70,000 tons of grain, estimated to be equal to three months' supply of food-grain for 5 per cent. of the population of the distressed districts of Behar and northern Bengal, should be stored by the State in those districts by the end of January 1874 as a preliminary measure, but deferred stating the amount which might probably be required in addition until the result should be known of the rain expected to fall some time after the end of December. The Government of India immediately approved the preliminary measure. At the same time arrangements were made for the purchase of large additional quantities in British Burmah in the event of their being needed.

During the month of December the fears regarding the winter rice crop in Bengal and Behar were realised. In Behar and northern Bengal the rice harvest yielded less than one-third of the average produce, and in central Bengal about one-half. Up to the beginning of January no rain fell, nor was there prospect any falling. The spring crops, which are considerable in Behar (though inconsiderable in Bengal), had sprung up fairly well; but would probably be lost for the most part if the winter rains should finally fail. Under these circumstances the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal (Sir George Campbell) reported that 75,000 tons more should be placed in the distressed districts as soon as possible, and a large reserve provided in addition for dispatch to those districts according as need might arise. The Government of India had already taken preliminary measures to secure sufficient supplies. The arrangements prepared in British Burmah were concluded; the purchases were settled; and the vessels of the British Indian Steam Navigation Company were chartered to convey the cargoes of rice according to dates specified. The Government of India further undertook to store in Calcutta the grain brought from beyond sea, and to make over to the Government of Bengal in Calcutta such quantities as it might day by day require for dispatch by the "East Indian" and the "Eastern Bengal" railways to the distressed districts.

Thus to the Government of India pertained the task of directing the purchase of the grain from beyond sea, of transporting it to Calcutta, of storing it there. To the Government of Bengal pertained the task of dispatching the grain by rail to the frontiers of the distressed districts, of transporting it from the several railway stations to the numerous scenes of distress, and of distributing it among the people.

The first efforts to promote emigration from distressed tracts to the tea districts showed

showed the Government could not interpose in this business save at great cost and with small immediate result. The attempt was therefore abandoned, and the recruiting grounds were, so far as the tea districts were concerned, left clear for the operations of private emigration agents. Towards the end of January 1874 the Government of India made a grant of 50,000 £. to form a fund for the promotion of emigration to British Burmah, where the population is sparse, and an excellent field exists for labour. The magistrates of distressed districts were directed to act during the season of distress as agents for the engagement of persons willing to emigrate to Burmah, and were to arrange for their dispatch to Calcutta, where the superintendent of emigrants would provide passages to Burmah by the return voyages of steamers which brought Government grain from Burmah to Bengal. It will be seen hereafter that the number of these emigrants, though doubtless an acceptable addition to the strength of the districts where the people were settled, was not enough to make any impression on the aggregate population of the distressed districts.

During January (1874) it became apparent that while the aggregate of loss and of distress in Behar and Bengal would be equal to the worst anticipations, the scarcity would be unequal in its incidence; in other words, the scarcity would be intense and absolute in many extensive tracts, while in others it would be mitigated from various causes. This consideration rendered it necessary to develop some of the principles which had been first laid down for the management of relief. The constitution of the central relief committee and the various district committees was proceeded with. But it became clear that in the extremely distressed tracts, where the whole power of the Government would have to be exerted in order to save the people, the functions of the relief committees would, in practice, merge in the duties of the civil officers. In such tracts the necessity, which had been foreseen from the first, of supplying Government grain to the public when food might not be procurable through the agency of trade, assumed a practical shape. The rule also, which had been originated by the Governor General in December, began to take shape, to the effect that under such circumstances food-grain might be advanced by the State through the district collectors to the cultivators of the land, to be repaid without interest after future harvests.

Instructions for the organisation and guidance of relief committees were, after a conference with the Government of Bengal, approved by the Government of India on the 26th January. These rules gave the local authorities power—to establish relief committees and sub-committees in any number and to any extent that might be necessary,—to elaborate this organisation of relief to such a degree that all the operations should be inspected once a week at the least,—to arrange that supplies should be regularly distributed in every village where severe distress might exist, so that the congregation of persons for relief at a distance from their homes might be prevented,—to transport food to convenient places for the above purposes and to provide for its storage,—to distribute gratuitous relief to persons needing it and unable to work,—to afford useful employment for those who wanted it,—to provide specially for those whose condition, caste, or usage precluded them from applying for ordinary relief, but who would be in danger of starvation if not relieved,—to sell Government grain to the public where a serious deficiency in the supply of food might be apprehended; the price of the grain was to be regulated by that of the nearest large mart accessible by rail or river; the sale to be stopped as soon as the local trade might receive supplies, and any competition with such trade to be carefully avoided.

The Government invited the zemindars (landholders) of Bengal and Behar to co-operate in the work of relief, either by postponing the collection of rent or by opening relief works, or by making advances of money or food to their tenants. Inasmuch as heavy expenditure of this kind might sometimes make it difficult for zemindars to pay the Government land revenue, discretion was given to the collectors to postpone the collection of the Government revenue from any landholders who might distinguish themselves by employing labour on land improvements, or by importing grain for distribution, or by sustaining their tenants during the season of difficulty.

As January advanced without sign of rain, anxiety was more and more widely felt. But during the last week of that month heavy showers began to fall in southern Bengal, and rain gradually reached the northern and most distressed districts. These rains caused considerable reduction and contraction of the danger.

Before the end of January the extent and incidence of the scarcity and distress became more and more discernible. As regards Behar, irrigation from the unfinished channels of the Sone Canal had saved the rice and spring crops on 159,500 acres in the districts of Shahabad, Gya, and Patna. The important spring crops were growing well in the basin of the Rivers Ganges and Gunduk, in the south of the districts of Tirhoot, of Monghyr, of Bhagulpore, of Purneah; in the tracts south of the Ganges, including the districts of Patna, Shahabad, and Gya—territories having a total population of seven millions—for all which apprehension had been originally felt. In these tracts there was a fair hope that scarcity would not arrive at all, or, if it did come, would be much mitigated.

On the other hand, the realisation of even more than the original apprehensions was threatened in the upper or northern and central parts of the districts of Sarun, Champaran, Tirhoot, Bhagulpore, and Purneah,—in eastern Tirhoot also,—in parts of Sonthalia,—territories having a total population of nine millions. In these tracts the main crop, the December rice, had failed, and there were no spring crops adequate to sustain the

people. Here, then, was the prospect of dearth of food for several months; and these were the very places least accessible to trade and least likely to receive succour from that source. This prospect was further darkened by the probability of the conterminous tracts of Nepaul being similarly effected. As regards northern Bengal, in the tracts along the left bank of the Ganges and of the Brahmapootra, and in the tracts lying under the Himalayan range, either the December crops had been partly saved or the spring crops were growing well. These tracts comprised large portions of the districts of Maldah, Rajshahye, Pubna, Bogra, Rungpore, and Dinagepore, in all which there was fair hope that scarcity might not arise save in a mitigated form. On the other hand, the winter rice had been lost, and there were no spring crops growing in extensive portions of the districts of Dinagepore and Rungpore, also in some parts of Maldah, Rajshahye, and Bogra—tracts containing a total population of three millions. Here again was the prospect of severe and protracted scarcity. Moreover most of these places had little or no chance of receiving succour from trade.

Extreme failure of the chief food-crop in so many parts of Bengal was the more disastrous, in that the population of these districts was dense, ranging from 778 to 229 persons to the square mile, and averaging fully 500 persons to the square mile over the whole area.

As regards the remainder of the provinces under the Government of Bengal, the December rice harvest had been good nowhere save in Backergunge and Orissa; it had been only moderate in Eastern Bengal; it had been indifferent in Central Bengal and in the Chota Nagpore country; it had been bad in parts of some districts, namely, Burdwan, Beerbhoom, Bankoora, Moorshedabad, Nuddea, Manbhoom. The aggregate population of these last-named districts amounted to seven-and-a-half millions.

Further, the scarcity and high prices prevailing in the adjacent parts of Oude and the North Western Provinces had to be remembered.

The geographical area of extreme scarcity may be described in general terms as extending from the foot of the Himalaya along the frontier of Nepaul, Sikkim, and Bhootan on the north to the River Ganges on the south, and from the River Gunduk on the west to the River Brahmapootra on the east. The area enclosed by the hills and these three rivers is about 330 miles long, and, on an average, about 90 miles broad. The distressed tracts of Sarun, situated between the Gunduk and the Gogra, and of Burdwan, Moorshedabad, Chota Nagpore, and Sonthalia, lie outside and apart from this area.

The prices of rice in Bengal generally, and in Behar particularly, had been rising gradually since the middle of October; they had slightly rallied in December as the gathering of the winter harvest brought in some supplies; but they were rising again in January, by the end of which month they were twice as dear as in ordinary years. Where the ordinary rate at this season would be 28* seers for the rupee, the rate was 14 or 15 seers; where the ordinary rate would be 25 seers, the rate was 12 or 13 seers. With the exception of Orissa and Chittagong, those districts which had gathered a fair, though far from abundant, harvest, such as Backergunge, Dacca, Tipperah, also showed high prices, caused by exportation of their spare supplies, or by the anticipation of future demands.

It was the shortness of the harvest, the scantiness of food-supply, the tightness of the grain market, the dearth of prices, in Bengal generally, and in all the neighbouring territories, which aggravated the danger of the extremely distressed tracts, enhanced the probability of the scarcity in them deepening into famine, deprived them of the natural and normal succour from trade, and threatened to leave them almost without any resource save the extraneous help that might be afforded by the Government.

In this chapter the narrative has followed affairs to the last week of January. The general character and proportions of the calamity had then declared themselves. The plan of operations for meeting it had been settled; the principles to be borne in mind had been announced; the instructions regarding the procedure had been given. In the next chapter the narrative will show how all these principals, rules, and orders, were carried into effect according to the development and progress of the scarcity.

CHAPTER II.

I HAVE here to explain my own connection with the relief operations. Until nearly the end of January I had been Financial Member of the Governor General's Council, and had been also in charge (under the Governor General's direction and control) of the business relating to scarcity and relief which had to be disposed of by the Government of India. On the 21st January I was, with the concurrence of Sir George Campbell, associated with the Government of Bengal, and deputed to visit the distressed districts, with full powers to direct the relief operations under the rules laid down by the Governments of India and Bengal, reporting my proceedings to the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal. I remained on this deputation until the 8th April, when I assumed charge of the Government of Bengal from Sir George Campbell, who had been obliged, under medical advice, to

* A seer is equal to about two pounds avoirdupois.

to resign charge of duties which he had discharged under failing health with devoted disregard of his own safety. From the end of January, then, my own proceedings form part of the general work of the Government of Bengal, there being entire accord between Sir George Campbell and me.

It should be added that, between the 8th and the 20th March, Sir George Campbell visited Tirhoot and spent several days at Durbhunga, the most important centre of distress in the most distressed district, expediting the local arrangements, perfecting the relief organisation which had been set on foot, elaborating the orders and instructions in all details, dealing personally with the first outbreaks of actual famine, and encouraging both the people and the officers by his example. After this visit he recorded an exhaustive minute on the manner in which relief on a large scale should be conducted, which has proved of the utmost practical value to all engaged in carrying on the work.

In the situation, as explained in Chapter I, at the end of January, then, it became necessary, firstly, to make the final estimate of the distress to be anticipated in, and the Government grain to be allotted to each district, according to the latest information; secondly, to complete the arrangements for the transport by country carriage of the grain allotted to the various localities; thirdly, to propose to the Government of Bengal the precise organisation and the scale of establishments for the distribution of relief in each locality. For these purposes I travelled through the distressed districts, conferring with the local authorities and with the natives on the spot. From time to time I reported to the Government of Bengal the orders given by me in each district and the arrangements proposed. The allotments of grain then recommended by me and accepted by the Government exceeded for most of the districts the quantities which had been at first determined provisionally. But the sum total of my recommendations for the districts alone, agreed closely with the aggregate already recommended by the Government of Bengal, including both the present supply and a reserve.

The estimates which formed the basis of the allotments were made in this wise. In each district the area over which the crops had failed and the proportion of the average produce which had failed (two-thirds, one half, one-third, one-quarter, as the case might be) were ascertained. The population of the area thus affected was known from the census tables. The effect of the ascertained failure and loss upon the population was estimated in conference with the local officers and the natives, and was represented by a certain per-centage on the population expected to require assistance in some shape or other from Government. The per-centages in the various localities varied much, even in the most distressed districts, according to circumstances, from 15 to 75 per cent. In the majority of cases these calculations have been verified by the event, which attests the value and accuracy of the information collected by the local officers from the time when the misfortune began to threaten the country. Further, the estimates gave the numbers of persons expected to require relief during the several stages of the distress during its beginning, its height, and its decline, showing how they would gradually rise till they attained the anticipated maximum, and how they would decrease down to the minimum. In other words, these numbers were estimated for the initiatory period, when the distress would be gradually increasing; for the middle period, when it would be culminating; and for the latter period, when it would be declining, until its disappearance. The persons requiring assistance from Government included all those who would take such assistance in its several categories, namely, (I.), gratuitous relief; (II.), employment on relief works; (III.), purchase of grain; (IV.), advance of grain for subsistence or for seed. According to the estimated number of persons the quantity of grain was determined, at the rate of three-quarters of a seer, or 1½ lbs. per head per diem, for the periods specified. Thus the amount proposed for the total allotment of Government grain for each district singly, and for the whole country collectively, was obtained. These estimates, then, were founded on actual data the best available at the time.

The distress was expected to begin in March, to go on increasing till July, then to begin decreasing slightly till September, to decrease fast in September and October, to vanish generally in November, but to last till the end of December in some parts of north Behar, especially north-east Tirhoot, where comparatively little reliance is usually placed on the autumn crop, and where consequently the people would not receive adequate supplies from a new crop until the winter.

This rate (¾ of a seer or about 1½ lbs. per head for men, women, and children) at which grain should be provided was assumed after due consideration and discussion. The lowest diet provided in Bengal jails for non-labouring prisoners is equal to about 1 seer or 2 lbs. The ordinary diet of a labouring adult in Bengal is taken, after statistical inquiry, to be 1 seer of rice besides ¼ seer (about ½ lb.) of fish, pulse, pepper, or other condiments. The diet prescribed for adult Bengalee emigrants on shipboard and for Bengalee sailors always exceeds 1 seer a day in total weight, and in some cases it reaches 2 seers a day. Many of the poor people for whom grain was to be provided would be labouring hard on relief works during inclement and exhausting weather. Nearly the whole of the Government provision of grain consisted of rice, which contains less strength-giving qualities than wheat and some other grains. It was known that each bag of the expected consignments of Burmah rice would contain from 8 to 20 per cent. of innutritious husk. In view of all these considerations I framed my estimates of total requirements on the basis that each person to be relieved would on the average require ¾ of a seer (1½ lbs. of grain) a day. In practice it was found that even to ordinary paupers, who did not do any work, local committees had to give ¾ of a seer of rice daily besides one pice (¾ of a penny) for the purchase

of salt and condiments; to women in delicate health and to persons reduced by previous hunger a still larger daily dole had to be allowed.

Being responsible for the general character of these estimates, I feel bound to record my tribute to the utility of the census which had been carried out two years previously under Sir George Campbell; the first regular census which had ever been taken in Bengal. If the success of the prescribed plan of relief operations has in any degree depended on the framing of estimates, if these estimates have in any degree enabled the Government to make a proper forecast of the supplies, and the resources necessary to encounter the crisis, then it is to be remembered that these estimates could never have been framed had not that census existed.

The difficulties of Government with respect to the scarcity were not wholly confined to British territory and British subjects. The strip of Nepal territory, known as the Terai, lying between the Himalaya and the distressed British districts, a rice-growing tract, had been afflicted by failure of the rains. It was anticipated by the Nepal authorities that consequent distress might affect from one quarter to half a million Nepalese subjects across our border. Our officers were instructed that distressed Nepalese must be employed at our relief works, relieved at our hospitals and relief centres, and served at our granaries, precisely in the same way as British subjects. And it was arranged, with the consent of the Government of India, that 1,000 tons of Government grain should be made over at a moderate price to the Nepal authorities for distribution to their distressed subjects. Throughout the season, Nepalese were among the largest purchasers of grain at the Government granaries along the border. The Nepal officials found difficulty in carrying their grain across British districts from the railway stations on the Ganges, and accordingly our officers at Bhagulpore transported the 1,000 tons of grain to the border and made it over there to agents of the Nepal Government. I am enabled to state that the Minister of Nepal, Sir Jung Bahadur, G.C.S.I., expressed to the Viceroy the grateful acknowledgments of his Government for the assistance rendered.

On the completion of the estimates in each district the arrangements were revised for the conveyance of the grain from the railway stations to the places of distribution. The amounts of carriage, either already employed or required in addition, were considered. In determining the transport arrangements the object aimed at was this, that all the amounts allotted should be carried to their respective destinations in the interior of the country before the setting-in of the rains by the middle of June. In this way the risks of the transport along roads heavy from rain would be avoided. Also, in the event of unforeseen additional quantities having to be carried, there would still be time during the rainy season to arrange some transport by water routes. For every reason it was expedient to be beforehand with so vital, and yet so arduous, a matter as the inland transit. No effort was spared by the local officers to provide the required amounts of country carriage by carts and bullocks, by pack animals, by boats, for the conveyance of the large quantities of grain which had been allotted.

The boats were used chiefly in Northern Bengal. In the beginning of November the navigable routes in that quarter had been tested with the view of transporting grain, as the navigation becomes uncertain after autumn. And boats began to ply during the winter on each river as soon as its suitability was established. With this water transport there was combined land transport by country carriage. This carriage was obtained by direct agency, or with the help of petty native contractors, for hire not more than 50 per cent. above the rates of ordinary times. So far no serious difficulty was encountered.

In Behar, however, there were no water routes practicable at that season, and the difficulty of securing sufficient land carriage was extreme. During December and January the local officers strove to obtain this carriage by direct agency, without help of large contractors, at hire little above the rates of ordinary times. In this way a considerable amount of carriage was laboriously collected, but that amount proved quite insufficient. The demand had become so extraordinarily large as to require not only all the carts and bullocks ordinarily available for hire, but also all those which might exist for use in other kinds of work. Consequently the rates of hire rapidly rose. Still our officers hesitated to allow the enhanced price, and persevered in their endeavours to procure the carriage. This process had an unfavourable effect on a people proverbially jealous regarding the collection of carriage, and they resolutely refused to give their carts and bullocks on the terms hitherto allowed. It was evident that unless some additional inducement were immediately offered, considerable failure in the land transport must ensue, which failure must cripple the relief of distress. There was no remedy but to abandon the direct agency which could not be rendered successful, and to substitute the employment of contractors, men of substance and influence, to produce the required amount of carriage. The contractors, chiefly European gentlemen, indigo planters, and landholders, possessed exclusively advantages of a special kind. In Behar, the indigo planters are always landholders, and this circumstance alone secured to them a large command of carriage. But the indigo industry also employs a great number of carts (probably 20,000 to 30,000) which are the property of the villagers, but are under engagements to serve the factories whenever called out for service. The planters therefore had a power of collecting carriage such as no other class possessed. And to this they added the invaluable force of British energy and prowess. For the successful accomplishment of the task all their assiduity, all their local knowledge, all the resources of their estates, all the influence of their factories, must be instantly evoked. The terms of the contracts entered into were, under such circumstances, necessarily high, and involved a rate of hire just double that of ordinary times.

It

It will be seen hereafter that the arrangement stood perfectly the test of trial, and was attended with ultimate success.

In furtherance of the general arrangements the planters banded themselves together in transport companies, which ultimately became five in number; one for Chumparun, for western and central Tirhoot, for south-eastern Tirhoot, for north-eastern Tirhoot, and North Bhagulpore, respectively.

On the 31st January, looking to the anxious prospect of the transport by country carriage, I recommended, with the concurrence of the local authorities, the immediate construction of a tramway for animal draught from the north bank of the Ganges (at a point opposite the railway station of Barh) to Durbhunga, the capital of the most distressed region of Tirhoot, a distance of 53 miles. The Government of India approved the project, but ordered that the line should be constructed as a temporary railway for engine traction. The line was commenced on the 23rd February, and was opened for the transport of grain on the 17th April, the construction having proceeded at the rate of a mile a day.

Further, looking to the uncertainty surrounding the land transport, by reason of the inclemency of the advancing season, the roughness of roads, the chances of epidemics, I considered it essential to the security of the transport operations that a strong reserve transport train should be formed by Government from carriage to be obtained in the North Western Provinces. It would have been impossible to form such a reserve from the carriage resources of Behar itself, because, as already seen, all such resources were needed for the contractors' transport. There was consequently no alternative but to procure the reserve from a distance. Indeed, during the preceding month, January, the Government of India had suggested to the Government of Bengal the adoption of measures of this description. With the excellent co-operation of the Government of the North Western Provinces and of its officers, this provision was successfully effected. The reserve transport train consisted of carts and bullocks, purchased or hired for Government, chiefly beyond the limits of Behar and Bengal. It was formed with a complete organisation under military officers, both European and Native, so that it might be relied upon for any service however hard, in the event of the other carriage breaking down from distress, from sickness, or other causes of failure. Inasmuch as all the draught animals, whether in Behar, and whether from without, were bullocks and buffaloes, it was manifest that any epidemic affecting those classes of animals might suddenly prostrate the transport. It was therefore necessary to procure other kinds of animals, namely, camels, mules, and ponies. Although camels could not be largely employed in Behar, a certain number of them were obtained; but ponies and mules were readily purchased in all parts of northern India as far as the Sutlej.

During the month of February, all the contractors brought their various contingents of carriage into the field, and all the numerous routs of transit were occupied by the transport power which had been set in motion throughout the distressed districts. It is difficult to describe adequately the extraordinary degree of alacrity and promptitude which the European indigo planters displayed in this emergency. North Behar proved to be a country extraordinarily rich in carts, of a build suitable to rough roads, and in a small but hardy breed of draught cattle. At this period the cattle were in the highest condition. The stubble on the vast plains of withered rice has afforded them most nutritious pasture. The suspension of field work on failure of the harvest had lightened their toils. So early as November the Government had enjoined the preserving and stacking of the rice stubble, which was available for fodder much more largely than usual. It will be shown hereafter that upwards of 100,000 carts, with 230,000 draught of pack animals, were brought into action during February and March. This gave employment to at least 120,000 men drawn from the distressed districts, and in itself constituted an important relief work.

Before the grain could be lifted by the country carriage as above described, it had to be carried across a great river, the Ganges. This obstacle *in limine* was overcome by the establishment of steam ferries at the requisite points along the river. For this purpose all the steamers of the Bengal Marine were employed, and many vessels of the India General Steam Navigation Company were chartered. Depôts with yards and enclosures covering many acres were formed on the river banks.

The East Indian Railway actually touched the Ganges at the city of Patna. But special sidings had to be made from the Futwah ghât and Barh stations, whereby grain waggons could be run down to the river's edge. The Barh riverside station supplied the Durbhunga Railway and the eastern Tirhoot transport companies. From the Futwah riverside station were ferried across to Bunkar ghât (opposite Patna) the supplies for western and central Tirhoot, for Chumparun and Sarun. The Patna ghât (riverside) station was left entirely for private traffic. The special sidings, which were put down with much promptitude by the East Indian Railway Company's engineers, were of great use to the transport department, and also to the engineers of the Durbhunga Railway. The origin and purpose of the Durbhunga Railway will be explained presently.

A large staff of officers, drawn from the Quartermaster General's Department and from all sections of the Army, was organised to supervise all the inland transport arrangements above described, and all the transit routes. They were assisted by three companies of sappers and miners and a corps of native pioneers. They literally pioneered all the transit routes, causing obstructions to be removed, repairs to be effected, temporary bridges to be constructed, pontoons to be thrown across streams, sometimes even cutting ways across country through the fields. They guarded the springs and improved the drinking

places at the halts in the march. Field hospitals for sick animals at central places were established with a complement of veterinary surgeons, in view to the contingency of murrain or epidemic sickness breaking out. The probability of cattle plague reported in Sarun was the source at one time of considerable anxiety.

As the concentration of so many thousands of cattle might prematurely exhaust even the abundant supplies of fodder which fortunately existed on the spot, large quantities of the best sorts of fodder were sent for by rail from the North Western Provinces and were stacked at convenient places.

As already stated, the grain had to be sent by railway to the various stations on the left or south bank of the Ganges, the bulk of it coming from Calcutta, and a portion of it from the North Western Provinces. The principal railway stations which thus became centres of activity were Arrah for Sarun; Patna and Futwah for Chumparun and west Tirhoot; Barh for east Tirhoot; Monghyr for north Bhagulpore; Sahebgunge for Purneah; Rajmehal for Maldah and Dinagepore; Kooshtea and Goalundo for northern Bengal generally.

The Eastern Bengal Railway, having a short line and a comparatively small quantity of Government grain to transport, did its share of the work with due punctuality. But the East Indian Railway, with a long line, a heavy ordinary traffic, and a very large quantity of Government grain (2,000 tons a day) to transport, met with great difficulty in delivering the grain fast enough for the country carriage to take away. The railway company, however, put forth every effort by procuring rolling stock from other railways, and by employing temporary establishments. In the end the work was well accomplished.

Among the essential preliminaries of the administration was the placing of all the principal relief centres in telegraphic communication with the existing lines of electric telegraph. Before the famine there was not any telegraphic communication in North Behar, nor in northern Bengal (save the line to Darjeeling). In November (1873) a telegraphic line was ordered from Patna to Segowlee, near the Nepal frontier, passing through Mozufferpore (West Tirhoot) and Motiharee (Chumparun); also a telegraph along the line of the Northern Bengal Railway through Parbuttypore, a point half way between Dinagepore and Rungpore. During February and March a temporary extension of these lines was obtained to the north-west extremities of Chumparun and of Tirhoot, and to Dinagepore and Rungpore; also sanction for temporary lines from the Ganges to Durbhunga, and north-east Tirhoot and north Bhagulpore. Thus a telegraphic connection was established with the remote centres of the worst tracts of country. The lines were constructed with a speed and efficiency most creditable to the Indian telegraph department. The posts were obtained from the bamboo groves so abundant in these regions. The lines were opened by March, and, despite floods and storms, were kept up through the rainy season. The numerous and important messages delivered during the relief operations were rendered with remarkable accuracy. The value of this communication as a resource in these emergent affairs is too obvious to need any description.

Next, after completing the transport arrangements and bringing all the country carriage into the field, the most urgent matter was the organizing of the relief system according to the rules of the 26th January already mentioned in Chapter I. My visits to all the most distressed tracts of country satisfied me that if relief operations were (according to those rules) to be inspected at least once a week, and if supplies were to be distributed in every severely distressed village, these tracts must be parcelled and mapped out into circles, each circle to contain from 50 to 100 villages, to be supervised by a superior European or native officer, with a staff of subordinates, among whom would be divided the duty of inspecting all the villages, and with at least one grain depot from which might be supplied the granaries to be established at convenient places within the circle; that, in short, the unit of relief administration must be the circle, with an organization of its own, sufficient for all branches of the relief work. The officer in charge of a circle would be the immediate executive authority and administrator of relief; to him would be entrusted the safety of the lives of the inhabitants of his circle; and of him would be demanded all the best practical qualities of a civil officer. The boundaries of the circle throughout the more distressed tracts, and the place for the head-quarters of each circle, were determined with all possible expedition. The construction of temporary habitations at these various head-quarters was taken in hand. It was expected that there would be at least 150 such circles. The selection of circle officers of the requisite ability for so many circles was the first care. The next thought was the collecting and disposing of the circle subordinates. Each circle would need, on the average, 10 inspectors for the visitation of the villages. For each inspector's sub-circle one granary would be needed (that is, 10 granaries to a circle), and each granary must have a storekeeper. Then the circle officer must have storekeepers for his central depot, and one or more native clerks. Thus, each circle must have, on the average, 25 subordinates of some education and training. The number to be found for 150 circles would be about 3,500. Besides these, which might be termed the fully organised circles in the most distressed tracts, there were to be in the less distressed districts many circles and relief centres, with a less complete organisation. For these, also, many hundreds of trained officials would be required.

The circle officers and their establishments were to be entirely subordinate to the ordinary civil authority of the district, that is, to the Magistrate and Collector. As regards relief operations, the Magistrate-collectors were entirely subordinate to the ordinary

ordinary Divisional Commissioners. In parts of North Behar and Northern Bengal it became necessary to appoint additional commissioners for assisting in the work of supervision.

In the fully organised circles, the functions of relief committees and sub-committees would merge in the duties of the circle officers, though even here there was nothing to prevent these officers from associating with themselves the best non-official persons, Europeans and Natives, of all classes; and, indeed, the assistance from private persons proved ultimately to be very great. In the less organised circles, there were sub-committees consisting of private persons. Often native landholders and zemindars distributed relief on behalf of the State in addition to the charity which they dispensed from their own funds. Often, also, European indigo planters acted as volunteers, or unpaid circle officers, for the villages surrounding their factories, being reimbursed by Government only for the establishments which they had to entertain for the purpose. Their permanent residence, their personal interest in the welfare of their neighbours, and their local experience, rendered them most useful and excellent coadjutors. And in all circles, whether fully, or partly organised, not only were the principal residents engaged in the work of securing the public safety, but also other classes, such as village headmen, superior ryots or cultivators, local accountants, petty traders, in short, all who by their good will or by their means, or by their personal attention were able to render aid.

In order, then, to carry out the comprehensive and searching system of relief which had been prescribed, an extraordinary large staff of officers and officials had to be rapidly collected. The ordinary civil establishments in Bengal are economically fixed on the lowest scale consistent with efficiency, and could spare but little of their strength for extraordinary service. Therefore the men for the relief establishments had to be sought for in every direction. From the commencement, that is, in November, the Government of Bengal had been obtaining the loan of European civil officers from the North Western Provinces, Oudh, the Punjab, the Central Provinces, and the Bombay Presidency. Assistance was subsequently procured from the military staff corps and from the various branches of the army. In the provinces under the Government of Bengal itself, all the junior civil servants, and many selected officers from the civil departments were withdrawn from their regular stations and appointed to the relief department, their places being supplied temporarily by natives. Many of the best native officials of all ranks were dispatched to the scene of distress. Afterwards a strong staff of trained native officials, deputy collectors, tehsildars, and others, from the North Western Provinces (through the good co-operation of the Government of those Provinces) were sent down to Behar, and did their work there with the full degree of efficiency that was to be expected of the distinguished administrative school whence they came. Further, with the special assistance of the Commander in Chief, a large number of selected native officers of various grades, both of the cavalry and of the infantry, were lent to the Civil Government for the relief work. These men have by their discipline, intelligence, and trustworthiness throughout the operations, left a name behind them in all respects worthy of the service to which they belong.

As a valuable adjunct to the relief system, a special medical staff was collected. Additional medical officers, Europeans, were appointed to most of the distressed districts. In each organised relief circle there was stationed a native medical official, and a field hospital was established in special view of the contingency of a more than ordinary ratio of sickness and mortality being caused by the dearth of food. A sanitary commissioner was deputed to travel over all the districts, and report upon all medical questions. Though the native medical establishments in India are weak in comparison with the growing needs of the country, still the native doctors required for the relief circles were promptly gathered together from all parts of the country.

Besides the organised circles and the relief committees, there was another important agency for the dispensing of relief, namely, the Public Works Department.

It had been decided that there should be two kinds of relief works, namely, petty works, such as village tanks or village paths, under the supervision of the circle officers and the relief committees; and larger works, such as roads for general traffic, under a special department of public works, with civil engineers and with trained overseers.

In those tracts where the majority of the population have to be supported for a time by the State, the principle of employing the people on works in their villages, and close by their own doors, assumes great practical importance. It would be very difficult to employ such vast numbers advantageously on any lines of road, or other considerable public work, that could be devised. Or if such object were in any degree compassed and accomplished, this could be done only by taking the people away from their homes, which process, however suitable for able-bodied or professional labourers, would be very detrimental to the feeble classes who have to be entertained on relief works. Fortunately the worst tracts abounded in old tanks needing fresh excavation, and in sites for new tanks. Scarcely a village was devoid of these humble, but useful works, on which the health, almost the life, of both man and beast depended. Here then was an opportunity of improving the rural water supply of the country in a manner that may be beneficially felt for more than one generation of men. The scheme also fitted in perfectly with the circle system. Accordingly the circle officers took charge of the tanks.

There were also many roads much needed for the promotion of trade, the making or repairing of which would properly benefit the people of the villages through which the

lines passed, and also all the professional labourers of the surrounding country. The lines of road to be thus undertaken were immediately made over to the Public Works Department. The several series of these roads were formed into an appropriate number of executive charges. These charges were grouped into three divisions of superintendence. Over each division was placed a superintending-engineer, and over the whole a special chief engineer. Every effort was made to gather together from all parts of India the requisite staff of civil engineers and overseers. But these professional establishments are never more than sufficient for the ordinary demands of the public works, always so very heavy in India, and much difficulty was experienced in causing the civil engineers, their assistants, and other subordinates, to arrive at the relief works in time. However, by strenuous efforts, the relief roads were all aligned and marked out beforehand. It will be found hereafter that the total length of these roads was expected to amount to upwards of 6,500 miles.

On the 4th February a public meeting, at which his Excellency the Viceroy presided, was held in Calcutta to consider in what way the public of India and England should be invited to help in relieving the distressed people of the drought-stricken districts. At this meeting a Central Relief Committee was appointed at Calcutta to collect subscriptions and administer such funds as might be subscribed. The Government of India undertook to place at the disposal of the Committee public funds equal to the amount of private subscriptions. The Central Committee communicated with the Lord Mayor of London, who had some weeks previously intimated his readiness to open subscriptions for a famine relief fund in England. The Lord Mayor held public meetings in London, at which a committee was nominated. Meetings were also held at different places in England and India. By the liberality shown 282,669 £ in all were collected, of which 146,500 £ were contributed in Great Britain, and 131,319 £ in India. The London Mansion House Committee collected in all 120,000 £; the Glasgow Committee sent 15,500 £; the Manchester Committee sent 10,000 £. Considerable sums were received from the Mauritius, from the Straits Settlements, and from the Dutch commercial community in Java. The Bombay Presidency subscribed 11,704 £; the Madras Presidency 10,500 £; and British Burmah 5,500 £. The total of the private subscriptions, together with the equal sum placed by Government at disposal of the Central Committee, amounted to 565,338 £.

In deference to the expressed wishes of some of the subscribers in Great Britain, the Central Committee at Calcutta decided that their expenditure should be in addition to, and not in place of, the measures which Government had undertaken for saving life in the most distressed districts. Accordingly they undertook to pay for the special relief hospitals and for the clothes and occasional money help given to paupers in the worst districts, but not for the grain that might be given to them to save their lives, the charges for which grain had been accepted by Government. In the other districts, where the scarcity was less severe, the Committee agreed to defray from their funds all charges on account of charitable relief in whatever shape given. Under this decision the expenditure from the Central Committee's funds may probably amount to about 130,000 £ in the worst districts, namely, Tirhoot, Chumparan, Bhagulpore, Rungpore, Dinagepore, and Maldah, and to about 290,000 £ for all the less distressed districts. Their total expenditure may thus amount to about 420,000 £ in all; but these figures must be regarded as estimates only, until the accounts are finally made up. The committee engaged also to make provision for orphans or deserted infants who might be unprovided for at the end of the scarcity. Happily such orphans have been few in number.

When the appointment of the Central Relief Committee was first proposed, in November 1873, it was hoped that they would manage and control the operations for charitable relief, and that their funds would, so far as the amount might suffice, bear all charges for such relief. But when, as already explained in Chapter I., it became apparent that in the worst tracts the whole power of Government would be needed to avert calamity, the position somewhat altered. The Committee considered that it would be undesirable for them to have a separate organisation side by side with the Government establishments. It appeared also that the responsibility of local officers would be weakened, and their action fettered, if they had to take instructions from a Central Committee in Calcutta, as well as from the Government. Some of the British subscribers had stipulated that their funds should be spent, not in contributing resources towards the saving of the life of the people—a duty ultimately devolving on and accepted by the Government—but on auxiliary forms of relief, beyond the sphere which Government relief might fill. It thus happened that the cost of gratuitous relief in the worst districts, where the brunt of the affair fell, was borne mainly by the Government. The duty of administering and controlling charitable relief operations and local committees devolved upon Government and its officers. The Central Committee received reports and accounts of expenditure of the moneys allotted by them, and rendered to the charitable public statements of the manner in which the relief funds were being spent.

The Government officers duly exhorted the more helpful classes of the community to bestir themselves. European indigo planters, native landholders and traders, took cash advances from the Treasury to import grain. In many instances native zemindars caused tanks to be made, either from their own fund, or from funds borrowed for this purpose from Government; or gave some advances to their tenantry; or postponed the collection of the rents. It was not, indeed, the case that all of the native gentry fulfilled their duty in these respects; but many, perhaps most of them, did perform it in whole or in part. In

Bettiah

Bettiah (North West Chumparan) the powers of a vast estate were, by special delegation from the Maharaja, exercised by an European gentleman as manager.

In three of the most distressed tracts, namely, Durbhunga (East Tirhoot), Hutwa (West Sarun), Chanchul (West Maldah), extensive estates were under the management of the Court of Wards, and consequently the whole power and resources of those estates were commanded by European officers.

Meanwhile, as the preparations of Government were rapidly completed during February and March, the scarcity grew worse and worse, till during the latter half of March there were signs of an imminent famine, which could not be stayed save by State interposition, exerted to the utmost.

Besides the marts of the towns and places of trade, there are numerous rural markets in the interior of the country, scattered amongst the villages and held weekly or bi-weekly, whence the majority of the population obtain their supplies of food. Week after week these rustic gatherings were disquieted by the sight of decreasing quantities exposed for sale, and by rumours that the stocks at the central marts were dwindling away. These rumours had, indeed, but too much foundation. There was little, almost no sign of grain being imported from a distance by private trade. Some convoys, rare and small, would arrive from a distance, and only served to show how slender was the hope in that direction. In all the marts of the most distressed districts, it was ascertained from the grain dealers that they were not importing, and did not expect to import any grain from a distance, for the plain reason that the high prices prevailing elsewhere must render such importation a losing business. Already the remnant of the rice of the past year (1873) was supposed to be exhausted. The rice stores of previous years were seldom seen. Whether they existed at all was doubtful; if they did exist, they were held back by the possessors, in view of harder times coming on. There was still some quantity available of the coarser grains, pulses, and millets of 1873. It would suffice to feed the masses for a short time only, how short no man could say. The external demeanour of the people was calm, patient, and resigned. Doubtless they had some faith in the efforts of Government, but remembering the events of former eras, they thought that the worst must come sooner or later. Presently some of the signs of popular anxiety began to appear. Incendiary fires were lighted in many places; private granaries were sometimes ransacked; and the houses of persons supposed to be hoarding hidden grain were occasionally destroyed. But no grain riots occurred at this period.

The prices of grain generally, and of rice especially, were becoming dearer, and were reaching a rate which must distress the poorer classes in many districts, namely, one rupee for ten "seers," or 20 lbs. The ordinary rate of wages for a labouring man ranged from 1½ to 2½ annas per diem, or something under 2 d. to something over 3 d. a day, in different parts of the country. But in North Behar the lower rate prevailed. A family in the poorer classes there can barely live if common rice is dearer than one rupee for 10 seers. In some places the price of rice was a rupee for nine, or eight, or seven seers; in other places it was even one rupee for six and five seers, which rates indicated famine. In other places there was no price quoted, as the article was not procurable at all. But famine rates were not permitted to last anywhere, as soon as they had been discovered by the vigilance of the Government officers. By this time, too, the action of Government had exercised an arresting influence on the rise of prices, steadied the markets, stopped a general run being made on all available supplies, and induced the holders of stocks to produce much more than they would otherwise have produced. Although not a single public granary had been opened, not a pound of Government grain had been issued, still the people saw the long convoys of Government grain threading their way over the country. And though they could hardly believe or imagine the real extent of the measures in progress, yet the sight of Government entering the arena had a potent effect on the public mind. But for this there would have been excessive dearth at the beginning of March, and famine prices before the end of that month, the evil being intensified by panic among a timid and ignorant people. The consequence must have been a constantly spreading mortality. This statement is necessarily one of opinion. Every care was taken that this opinion should be never subjected, or as seldom subjected as possible, to the cruel test of trial. In other words, the prevalence of famine prices was, as a rule, prevented by Government. That without such prevention they must have set in during March is, I believe, the opinion of all, or nearly all well-informed persons, European and Native.

Besides the apprehended insufficiency of food supply, there was another pressing difficulty, namely, the dearth of employment. In North Behar there usually is a certain scantiness of employment. There is but scanty work to be done for the spring crops, which are not largely raised. But the labourers receive wages in the winter harvest, from which they save a part for their support until the coming harvest, eking out their livelihood in various little ways. Also, numbers of them emigrate for a time to the districts on either bank of the Ganges where there is much harvesting in the spring. This year there were no savings from winter wages, and there was nothing to be earned in other ways, save by temporary migration towards the Ganges. Accordingly the number of the persons who thus went away was much greater than usual. Most fortunately the ripening Gangetic harvest of this spring was full. Therefore many hundreds of thousands, men and women, departed down south. But the demand in the south was limited, for there also the population is teeming. So the majority of the North Behar people stayed at home as usual, awaiting their fate. At this time (from the 10th to the 20th March) it was not an immediate dearth of the coarser grains in the market that was to be looked for, but rather the

dearth of means on the part of the people for obtaining it, either by paying money or by giving their labour for it. There was still some grain, though not much, to be bought, but the people could not buy it. The only question was, how long they could endure without coming to Government and stretching out their hands for food. Some did thus come day by day, hundreds here and there, the aggregate mounting up to some tens of thousands all over the country, who were duly relieved. But the mass of the people were known to be suffering with silent fortitude a degree of privation which must soon force them to seek relief.

The Government officers pressed on their preparations in every direction and by every mode, though it was impossible to say from what direction and in what mode the famine would open its real attack. The first shock occurred during the second and third weeks of March, in the east and north-east quarter of Tirhoot, near Durbhunga and Mudhoobunnee, when about 400,000 persons of various dates came trooping in from the villages all around, and settled down on certain lines of relief roads, where employment was known to have been afforded to limited numbers for many days past. Almost all were in destitution, most were in very poor strength and condition, many were emaciated, and some were near starvation. After the exodus the villages were found to be almost entirely deserted. The organisation of the circles and sub-circles for village relief was not finished; the engineering establishments on the relief roads had not all taken up their positions; the extensive preparations of Government had not been fully arrayed for action; the concourse of such multitudes on particular lines of road had not been contemplated. The intention was that the people should be relieved partly on the village works and partly on the roads. In this emergency the instant business was, of course, to issue money to the multitudes for purchase of food until their proper disposal could be arranged. Effort was then made to disperse the people among the relief circles and the villages. But they dreaded quitting the road, which they imagined to be the only place where subsistence could be obtained, and in their alarm they interposed all the passive resistance they could to being placed on village relief. This unwillingness caused considerable delay before they could be disposed of in such a manner that the circle officers could take systematic charge of a large proportion of them, leaving the remainder on the roads in gangs of a strength manageable by the engineer establishments. Meanwhile, before all this could be effected, masses of disorderly and unruly, though miserable and affrighted, people had to be entertained on a few miles of road. Some work was done, though quite disproportionate to the numbers employed under little more than nominal supervision. At first there was some irregularity in payment, though this was soon overcome. After a time, the people were efficiently supported, though not kept properly at work. For the moment, a due financial check could not be enforced. The daily enumeration of such multitudes could not be correctly made. Many persons of the lower grades, headmen of gangs, subordinate officials, and the like, found their opportunity for cheating, and made illicit gains. They exerted their influence to dissuade the people from obeying the orders which would introduce system and stop abuses. For a short time some degree of demoralisation must have prevailed. But the local authorities persevered with the most commendable resolution. Their establishments for supervision were strengthened constantly, and were soon made up to the full complement. After a short time the people were reduced to order, some on the roads, some on the village tanks. Those who could not work were, after inquiry, brought under operation of the system which had been devised for gratuitous relief. The first efforts at enforcing system were subjected to sore disadvantage, but at length the object in view was effected.

No such simultaneous rush of many masses of applicants as that at Durbhunga and Mudhoobunnee occurred elsewhere at this period of the famine, but the numbers of those seeking relief rose fast throughout the distressed area.

At this period the wages were entirely paid in cash, that is, in copper pieces; in a few exceptional cases only was payment made in kind. From the beginning, up to the 15th of April, thirty-one lakhs of rupees, or 310,000*l.*, were disbursed for this purpose. Apparently this was calculated to encourage importation of grain from a distance by trade. No such effect, however, ensued. The real effect of this circulation of cash was the production of the greater part of the local stocks, chiefly consisting of the coarser grains other than rice.

The question naturally arises here, as to whether there were many deaths from starvation. At the outset there must be a point of time between the moment when distress is approaching the stage which would justify the authorities in spreading their relief system over the country, and the moment when the system is actually instituted. It is just at this critical point of time that deaths might be apprehended. A watchful search for such cases was maintained. Some were reported and investigated, very few were authenticated. The number of proved cases up to the 18th April did not exceed twenty-two. There was every anxiety on the part of the Government officers to discover such deaths. The facts were important to them for guidance in commencing their operations. From the mistaken cases hastily reported, there was manifestly willingness on the part of the people to report. If the authorities had failed in discovering the actual deaths, there were many European non-official residents and independent witnesses able to supply the omission. It may therefore be accepted that the fatal cases were comparatively few, and that there was nothing approaching to an appreciable mortality anywhere. Still it was acknowledged at the time by the Government of Bengal that there must have been some cases directly due to starvation which had never become known, and some cases indirectly due to

starvation,

starvation, where persons casually sick, permanently diseased, infirm, and aged, must have succumbed to insufficient nourishment. This topic will be touched upon again in this narrative, but it may here be said that if such cases had but rarely occurred up to this time (the end of March), they were still less likely to occur afterwards, for the formal inquiry was now set on foot throughout the distressed districts to search out all persons who might be thought to be in danger.

This investigation was taken in hand, village by village and house by house, for all the poorer classes by the circle and sub-circle officers, already described. Nominal rolls were prepared, and tickets were issued to each person on the roll entitling him or her to a specified ration of rice at the nearest Government granary. The intention was that no person should escape enrolment who was in distress and wholly unable to work, fear being felt lest many ignorant persons might, if not searched out, perish without making sign or complaint. The result of this very extensive registration showed the fear to be but too well founded. But for the close search many would at this period have pined to death in obscurity.

Authority was given to the local officers to sell Government grain under the rules in a few specified places in east and north-east Tirhoot, in north-west Chumparun, in north Bhagulpore, in parts of Purneah, Dinagepore, and Rungpore; in which places a failure of supply in the rural markets might at any moment cause a panic to burst forth and shops to be closed, the consequence whereof might be acute distress in remote places before assistance could arrive, either through trade or from Government. The price was fixed at one rupee for ten* seers of clean rice, that being a dearer rate than those which then prevailed in the principal marts. The apprehension was that if the dealer should perceive, or fancy they perceived, a chance of grain falling short, they would instantly cease selling the small stores they might have in hand. In such times there is a fear lying deep in their minds of the day coming when no man can find food; there is also the forethought of the value which would then attach to every pound of grain. The dread of inanition and the hope of profit combined would precipitate the crisis of famine prices and their consequences. In order to prevent famine it was necessary to counteract this tendency. The notification of the authority to sell Government grain in these particular places prevented the occurrence of any such crisis. The dealers, seeing that Government would not in the last resort suffer food to fail, brought forward their supplies in the ordinary way. Thus panic in the grain markets, one of the things to be most dreaded at the outset of a famine, was never permitted to arise. But for this, the situation at the end of March would have been grievously aggravated by public alarm.

The matter was one of some delicacy, because the hope of assistance from trade had not been wholly abandoned. The orders of Government had from the first strictly enjoined the avoidance of interference with trade, and the rise of prices in the distressed tracts was the very thing most calculated to encourage importation. Dearness of food up to a certain point was regarded not with regret, but with satisfaction, as being for the best in the end, and as tending to augment supplies against the evil days yet to come. Nothing therefore could be further from our intentions than the artificial lowering of prices generally. On the other hand, as the fundamental principle was the prevention of famine, we could not allow famine prices to exist long in any place, inasmuch as the continuance of such prices must mean wasting misery speedily terminating in death. The determination of the line where famine prices begin wholly depends on the circumstances of the country. What may be an unendurable rate in one place or at one time, may be borne with comparative ease at another place or time. Under the then circumstances of the most distressed districts, there was no doubt that prices dearer than one rupee for seven seers of common rice would be famine prices, which, if permitted to prevail, must cause mortality. As life was at stake, it was resolved that a remedy against such prices must be provided by Government.

In most (though not in all) cases the occurrence of famine prices according to the description above given, was taken as a sure sign of a serious deficiency of food beyond the means of the local trade to supply, and consequently as a justification for giving effect to the rules of the 26th January for the sale of Government grain.

On the other hand, the sale of Government grain was not regarded as necessarily and inevitably to be introduced on the occurrence of prices which caused grave distress. There were other modes whereby Government could supply food to the people besides selling its grain to them, inasmuch as the relief works, the gratuitous relief, the grain advances, were so many modes whereby Government would supplement the food supply in event of need. It is to be remembered that, however dear the price of food might become, there would still be certain classes able to pay it. The circle of persons thus able to pay might become smaller and smaller as matters advanced, but it would continue to exist almost up to the extremity of events. And there would be no public object for Government to lower the price on behalf of these classes. It might be, and often was, preferable to abstain from selling Government grain, notwithstanding famine prices, to leave the upper classes to pay those prices, and to relieve the poorer classes in other ways.

The

* Note.—The Government grain, by the time it was delivered at local granaries in the distressed districts, had cost as nearly as possible 13*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.* per ton, equal to 8½ seers of grain, or equal to about 8 seers of clean rice per rupee (8 lbs. for a shilling).

The Government never undertook, therefore, to sell Government grain in order to lower even famine prices. Its undertaking was to save life when endangered, and it reserved to itself the discretion of choosing the mode of action most suitable to the general interests. Among those interests was the policy of interfering as little as possible with that trade upon which the food supply of the people, even with the utmost efforts of Government being exerted, so greatly depended. Therefore, whenever Government grain was sold, the price was fixed, not upon any conception of what the poorer classes could afford to pay, nor upon any assumed standard whatever, but upon an actual market standard. At some distance from the most distressed tracts, when Government grain was to be sold, there would sometimes be markets where prices were still quoted, though supplies might be scanty. At all events, there would be the markets on the main line of communication on the Ganges, where prices were regularly quoted, which markets precisely fulfilled the terms of the rules of the 26th January as being "the nearest markets accessible by rail or river." It was by the prices ruling in the markets, and by those alone, that the prices for the sale of Government grain were regulated.

The hope, however, that importation by private trade could ever effectually reach the most distressed tracts, was sinking fast. In all the places where the sale of Government grain was authorised, there was not only no prospect of supplies being brought by trade, but there was a certainty that such supplies could not arrive for a long time if they ever arrived. But the quieting and steadying effect of the authorisation induced the dealers to sell gradually in the ordinary way such supplies as they had. For some time the authority to sell Government grain was little used, and when sales were opened they were not largely attended.

The sum of the allotments of Government grain made to the several districts on my estimates came to 404,000 tons, and the Government of India had arranged to provide the whole of these amounts. Further, the Government of India having from the commencement decided to provide a reserve to meet possible contingencies, arranged to raise the total supply of Government grain to 480,000 tons, out of which 76,000 tons would be retained as reserve in Calcutta.

As already stated, the bulk of the Government grain was purchased in British Burmah, and sent thence to Calcutta. These arrangements were made (under the orders of the Government of India) by the Honourable Ashley Eden, C.S.I., the Chief Commissioner. The manner in which they were carried out was thus recorded in a letter addressed by the Government of India to Mr. Eden:—

"The aggregate order requiring delivery between November and May last amounted to 289,534 tons, value 2,130,874 £ sterling, exclusive of freight, and the details of the purchase were left to you. Upon general considerations of the state of the market and the danger of disorganising internal trade or the ordinary export to Europe, you decided not to call for tenders, but to entrust the execution of the order to two responsible firms, who had a large private business, and were therefore interested in keeping the market steady. For this purpose you selected Messrs. Bullock Brothers and Messrs. Mohr Brothers, and you gave them an open order to purchase at market rate up to fixed limit, subject to constant communication with yourself, and to ship to Calcutta free on board at port of dispatch. These firms undertook to prepare the rice by cleaning and husking it, to pack it in gunny bags and place it on shipboard, and they received a commission of three per cent. on their outlay. One of the greatest difficulties was, as you observe, to procure tonnage for the conveyance of the grain thus diverted from the usual channel of trade, as there was but a short time available to invite freight from distant ports, and as the whole order had to be executed within a few months. In this difficulty you were aided by the British India Steam Navigation Company, whose fleet was placed at your disposal, on very reasonable terms, and was utilised to the extent of 165,789 tons. The balance of the required tonnage was obtained by yourself chiefly in large and fast steamers, secured from various parts of the world, and thus the whole order, equal to about two-fifths of the total exportable produce of the province, was dispatched and delivered in Calcutta, according to dates previously advertised, regularly, punctually, and without any kind of misadventure. You express your admiration of the energy and power of organisation shown by the British India Steam Navigation Company and its officers in keeping to their engagements under the strain suddenly put upon them, and you are satisfied, on the whole, with the manner in which the firms selected by you executed the order entrusted to them, notwithstanding the numerous difficulties of detail consequent on the magnitude of the operation."

"The work is now over, and has been successfully done throughout. The Government entrusted the details of its execution to you, and thus unavoidably placed you in a new and difficult position, which required prompt decision and immediate action, coupled with secrecy, and in which any mistake must have been attended by very serious consequences, both to your own province and to the people of Bengal, whose relief was mainly dependent upon it. By the measures you adopted there has been no derangement of internal or export trade in the purchase of the required supplies, and no delay or failure in their delivery. The confidence placed in you by the Government has been fully justified by the result, and the Governor General in Council desires to record his high appreciation of your services."

I shall conclude this chapter with a quotation from a resolution issued by the Government

ment of India on the 6th March, which announced to all concerned the sentiments of the highest authority on the eve of the impending contest with famine.

"Active operations for the relief of distress having now commenced, the Governor General in Council reminds local officers that it is their duty to see that the arrangements for the relief of distress are adequate within the area under their charge, and that they will be held responsible that no deaths from starvation occur which could have been avoided by any exertion or arrangements within their power and the means placed at their command."

"His Excellency in Council is satisfied that all officers have cheerfully accepted this responsibility, and that they will perform the arduous task imposed upon them with the zeal, ability, and self-sacrifice which have always distinguished the servants of the Crown and of the East India Company in India in times of difficulty and danger."

"The Government has not prescribed the invariable use of any test, either by labour or by the distribution of cooked food, for the purpose of determining who are fit objects for relief. Such tests are desirable and necessary under certain circumstances. It is right that able-bodied men accustomed to labour should, as a general rule, be required to work in return for the food or money supplied to them. It is desirable that light work should be found for others, where this can be arranged profitably and without obliging large numbers of people to leave their homes. In dealing with certain classes of distress, especially in towns, the issue of relief in cooked food may be useful as a test. But stringent tests are inapplicable to those limited tracts of country where, owing to the great failure of the crops and the absence of private trade, the Government have, in accordance with their Resolution of the 7th November last, assumed the task of importing grain for sale and distribution to the people."

"In such tracts the difficulty will be not to prevent undeserving applicants from being relieved, but to ensure that sufficient supplies reach those who require them; and in addition to the modes of relief, and the provision for the sale of grain specified in the instructions to relief committees, grain should be freely advanced to zemindars and mahajans under the instructions already issued by the Government of Bengal, as well as to cultivating ryots, where there is a reasonable probability of repayment, at the discretion of the local officers, and with a due regard to the maintenance of a sufficient reserve."

The succeeding chapter will show how the above instructions, and all the previous orders were executed during the worst period of the distress.

CHAPTER III.

THE narrative has been continued up to the middle of April, that is, up to the time when the scarcity was approaching its full development, and when the relief operations were covering their entire extent with all their force. Before proceeding further, I will pause to give in this chapter a statistical summary of the results of the estimates described in the last chapter as regards—

- 1st. The famine,
- 2nd. The relief operations,
- 3rd. The financial cost.

The first category relates to the famine itself. The area is divided into two parts namely, the very distressed tracts, comprising a large portion of the districts of Sarun, Chumparun, Tirhoot, Bhagulpore, Purneah, Dinagepore, Rungpore, and Bogra, and the partly distressed tracts, comprising portions of the districts of Shahabad, Gya, Monghyr, Southalia, Maldah, Rajshahye, Pubna, Moorshedabad, Julpigoree, Burdwan, Beerbhoom, Bankoora, Manbhoom, Nuddea, and some scattered places not worth mentioning separately.

The following table shows the area of distress, the population affected, the maximum number of persons expected to need assistance from Government, the per-centage of that number upon such population, and the quantity of Government grain allotted:—

	Area in Square Miles.	Population.	Number of Persons expected to require Assistance from Government at the worst Season.	Per-centage of Numbers in Column 4 on Numbers in Column 3.	Quantity in Tons of Government Grain Allotted.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Very distressed tracts - - -	20,950	10,700,000	2,805,080	26.2	330,000
Partly distressed tracts - - -	10,159	7,064,650	918,484	11.5	74,000
TOTAL - - -	40,109	17,764,650	3,723,564	20.9	404,000

The quantity of grain above shown (404,000 tons) is that which, up to the middle of April, the Government of Bengal had undertaken to carry from the railway stations into the interior of the districts. It is exclusive of the quantity ordered for the reserve at Calcutta under the Government of India, which brought the grand total up to 480,000 tons.

The numbers of the villages, and of the houses to be inspected or visited for relief purposes, especially in the partly distressed tracts, could not be stated precisely enough for insertion in a statistical summary. But approximately it was calculated that the work would spread over 27,750 villages containing about 2,096,843 houses.

The area affected by the failure of crops has been stated to be about 40,000 square miles. It is not possible to state precisely the area of crops that were lost; but an estimate framed, district by district, on the best data available, shows that the loss must have been from three to three and a half million tons of food, a quantity equal to the average out-turn of six to seven million acres of food-producing land. The vacuum in the supplies was, we may believe, filled by the importation of 1,000,000 tons of grain on the part of trade and of Government together, by the consumption of old stocks to an extent that cannot be stated, and by the cultivation of a very largely increased area with early food crops, whereby a great quantity of food was thrown into the market during August and September 1874, two or three months before the time when the main rice-crop is usually available. Further, there was some compensation afforded by diminished consumption in consequence of the high prices.

The next table shows the means of transport with which the task was to be undertaken of carrying the 404,000 tons of grain, generally by rough and unmade roads, over distances ranging from 20 to 155 miles.

	European Officers of the Army.	Native Officers and Soldiers.	Carts.	Cartmen.	Draught Bullocks.	Camels.	Pack Animals, chiefly Mules and Ponies.	Country Boats.	Steamers.	Number of Main Routes of Transport.
Carriage belonging to the country.	43	1,030	99,900	102,575	202,800	1,350	3,000	2,340	9	23
Government reserve transport train.	45	1,086	4,250	4,250	10,000	—	11,000	—	14	—
TOTAL	88	2,116	104,150	106,825	212,800	1,350	14,000	2,340	23	23

If the amount of transport, then, engaged by land and water, shall seem enormous, it is to be remembered that the figures represent the highest amount of transport in use or to be used at any one time. In most cases the maximum amount of transport remained in employ but for a short time, say, a very few weeks. About two-thirds of the aggregate was intended to be employed continuously for four months.

The statistics having been given of the numbers of persons to be relieved in some shape or other, of the Government grain allotted, and of the means and resources for transporting that grain, there remain to be given the statistics of the means for dispensing the relief and for distributing the grain.

The following table exhibits the numbers of the relief centres of various kinds:—

Central Committee.	District and Sub-divisional Relief Committees.	Organised Circles under Government Officers.	Sub-circles or Groups.	Circles under Private Persons, European or Native.	Sub-Committees.	Total of all Relief Circles.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
1	90	158	1,141	242	650	2,281

The relief centres then, great and small, amounted to 2,281 in number. All of them had grain depôts and granaries, besides which there were special depôts at the starting places of the main lines of transport. Altogether the number of depôts and granaries together was not less than 2,300.

The special administrative staff ordered or appointed to the relief centres shown in the last table may be classified as below. The average period for which this special establishment was to be employed was expected to be seven, perhaps eight months.

European Superior Officers.	Circle Officers.	Native Officers.	Grain Storekeepers and other Ministerial Officers.	Private Persons, European or Native, employed on Relief.	Total of all Grades.
102	158	1,270	3,395	2,026	6,960

The

The special establishments for relief were over and above the ordinary civil establishments of the districts concerned. The total number of men (6,960) represents men of training and education from the highest degree to the lesser degrees. But it is exclusive of messengers, watchmen, and menial servants, who were very numerous, and could hardly be specified numerically; the number of these, however, was believed to be not less than 9,800. If this last-named number be correct, the total numerical strength of the relief establishments alone must have amounted to 16,760 men.

As previously explained, there were medical establishments engaged for the relief centres, which may be numerically shown as below:—

European Surgeons.	Native Assistant Surgeons and Doctors.
5	136

Besides these, the ordinary medical staff of the distressed tracts were much occupied in attending the relief hospitals and supervising the administration of in-door relief.

As already seen, one of the principal modes of affording relief was employment on public works. The next table shows the various classes of public works then intended to be undertaken or prosecuted for this purpose, each column representing distance in miles:—

Relief Roads.	Soane Canal Works.	Gunduk Embankments.	Northern Bengal Railway.
Miles.	Miles.	Miles.	Miles.
6,625	380	90	198

If the proposed length of relief roads should seem extraordinarily great, it is to be remembered that the work was for the most part to consist of throwing up embankments or preparing plain unmetalled roadways, partly also of repairing old roads, and that comparatively few bridges or culverts were expected to be built.

As already seen, one important class of works for the employment of the people consisted of tanks; partly constructing new tanks, but chiefly excavating the old village tanks, especially in North Behar. It was impossible to give any precise number of the tanks thus worked upon more or less, but the total number was expected to amount to not less than 2,500.

The public works shown above do not include any works of general utility or agricultural improvement undertaken by private persons, European or Native, indigo planters, zemindars, and others. It was impossible to foresee exactly how much such private persons would be induced to do in this direction, though there was every hope and belief that much was being and would yet be done by them.

For the supervision of the various public works exhibited in the last preceding table, the following establishments were employed. From these, however, are excluded the establishments on the Soane Canal and Northern Bengal Railway, as those great works (though temporarily serving the purposes of relief) were, in the main, to be carried on irrespectively of the present famine. The table stands thus:—

Special Chief Engineer.	Superintending Engineers.	Executive and Assistant Engineers.	Overseers and Subordinates.
1	4	56	113

The extent of temporary lines of electric telegraph constructed in order to connect the principal relief centres with the regular telegraph communication of the country may be thus shown in miles:—

Number of Principal Relief Centres connected.	Length of Temporary Telegraph Lines in Miles.
17	336

The labour undertaken by the Government having been thus summarised, there remains to be given the estimate of the cost financially. On the 13th February Sir George

George Campbell submitted an estimate of the expenditure to be incurred on the famine, which showed a net expenditure of 4,350,000*l*. Immediately after assuming charge of the Government of Bengal, on the 10th April, I was requested by the Government of India to submit a revised estimate according to latest information, which was done on the 13th April. The net result of my estimate showed a larger expenditure than the estimate previously made, inasmuch as during the interval more grain had been bought, the Durbhunga railway undertaken, and the Government reserve carriage organised.

The revised estimate was generally accepted by the Government of India.

The following abstract gives the gross expenditure, according to the estimate of the 13th April, to be incurred before the end of the year 1874-75:—

	£.
Special establishments -	135,000
Promotion of private grain trade (on guaranteed railways) -	340,000
Relief works -	2,530,000
Durbhunga State Railway -	200,000
Government grain purchase -	3,784,000
Ditto transport -	1,750,000
Government reserve transport train -	186,000
Charitable relief -	200,000
Grants-in-aid of private works -	50,000
Advances to zemindars, traders, &c. -	500,000
TOTAL - - - £.	9,075,000

But as a set-off against this gross expenditure large recoveries were expected to be made during 1874-75 and 1875-76, as shown below:—

	£.
Sale of Government grain to relief labourers -	1,000,000
Sale of - ditto - to the public -	300,000
Sale of - ditto - to relief committees -	150,000
Sale of reserve grain -	378,000
Recoveries from ryots of value of grain advances -	714,000
Recoveries of advances from zemindars and traders -	450,000
TOTAL - - - £.	3,525,000

The anticipated net expenditure was to stand thus:—

	£.
Gross -	9,075,000
Less recoveries -	3,525,000
TOTAL - - - £.	6,150,000

When this estimate was submitted, a reservation was made to the effect that the case involved extraordinary circumstances which could not be accurately foreseen.

The statistical summary given in this chapter does not exhaust the statistics relating to the famine. It presents only a figured abstract of the general situation as known in the middle of April, and of the detailed scheme of operations according as the event was expected to occur. The statistics relating to the event, as it actually occurred, will appear in the succeeding chapters.

CHAPTER IV.

THE circumstances of the famine having been narrated up to the 15th April, and a statistical abstract of the case as it then stood having been given, I resume the narrative from that date. It may be remembered that on the 10th April I had assumed charge of the Government of Bengal.

At length it was certain that the greatest of the apprehensions which had ever been officially expressed would be realised in the very distressed tracts. Some grounds for encouragement were not, indeed, wanting. In many of the less distressed tracts the harvest of the spring crops had proved quite as abundant as its early promise. The spring harvest was fair in the North Western Provinces, and very good in the Punjab. Importation of food-grains from those quarters into southern and central Behar by private trade was going on largely, and was likely to go on more and more, all which would tend to narrow

narrow and restrict the area of distress. There were some early rice-crops (of inconsiderable amount) being reaped in Northern Bengal. On the other hand, the showers hoped for in the spring had never fallen. The intermediate coarse crops sown by the people of the very distressed districts in February, in order to obtain some slight relief in the summer, were withering fast. There was no longer any hope that grain would or could be imported by private enterprise into these tracts. The private stocks of grain were believed by the people to be nearly exhausted. Prices were rising fast, and it was universally understood that they were prevented from reaching famine rates only by the trust of the public that the opening of the Government granaries would not be delayed. There was, on the whole, every reason to fear that the larger portion of the people in the worst tracts would be forced to look to the State for assistance, more or less, until August. The official investigations had penetrated to every village. It was proved that the class of destitute poor and beggars, ordinarily supported by private charity, could no longer be sustained by these means, the donors of such alms being themselves in straits. It was found that the non-agricultural classes, weavers, workers in metals of all kinds, carpenters, artisans of all sorts, fishermen, menials, and others, had nothing to eat, and were wholly out of work; that the extensive class next above these, namely, the field labourers and the small cultivators who occupy some land and eke out their livelihood by working on the land of others, had eaten up their little stores, and were bereft of employment. It was further apparent that destitution was gradually creeping over other classes, such as the cultivators generally (with the exception only of the occupancy tenure-holders), and such as the Brahmins, whose habits and notions unfitted them for active work. Although the distress had been successfully checked in most places, the cases of starvation being very rare, yet in some places distress was discovered to have reached a critically dangerous degree, relief arriving only just in time to restore the emaciated, to resuscitate the fainting, and to avert considerable mortality.

The measure of the distress actually existing was at that period ascertainable by the numbers on gratuitous relief and on relief works, which numbers stood thus on or about the 15th April:—

Persons on Gratuitous or Charitable Relief.	Persons on Relief Works.	TOTAL.
116,471	1,185,448	1,301,919

The numbers were rising daily everywhere, and official warning had been received from many places that a more rapid increase must be expected. In most of the distressed districts complaint and entreaty had been made by the cultivating classes to the effect that, as their subsistence until the next August harvest was running short, they might receive advances of Government grain. And in every possible way the people were making known to the officials their anxiety that the Government granaries should be opened everywhere without any more delay, for the sale of grain to the public, for payment of relief wages in kind, and for the general administration of relief. The Government granaries had been for the most part kept closed, partly in order that private trade might have the fairest chance possible, in order that the resources of private stocks might be tested by paying wages wherewith the people would buy their food, and that the arrival of the Government stores in adequate quantities might be secured, before opportunity should be given for very heavy demand.

There was no room for doubt that, while private trade was doing all in its power in many directions with the greatest public advantage, yet there were extensive limits of territory within which it was powerless, and in which there was a general demand beyond its means to supply. The payment of relief wages in cash, by stimulating purchases, had brought out private stocks till they were near depletion. The transport department had succeeded in bringing up enough supplies to meet any demand that could practically be made.

To postpone longer the general issue of Government grain, would be to aggravate the sufferings of the people. It was therefore decided that all gratuitous relief must be given in grain, except a small portion which might continue in cash; that all wages to relief labourers must be paid in grain, cash payments being stopped as soon as might be practicable; that the relief officers need no longer hesitate to sell Government grain to the public, in all places where such selling had already been authorised, and should immediately apply for permission to sell in any place where the circumstances might seem to necessitate this measure under the rules; that the numerous applications from cultivators and ryots for advances of food-grain must be entertained, and, after inquiry, allowed in all cases where the authorities considered that there was a fair prospect of recovery.

Thus all the parts of the general scheme were brought into effect, and all the forces at our disposal were exerted. In succeeding paragraphs, it will be shown how the executive decision was carried out respecting each of the above points in order.

Before doing so, I must advert to the working of the relief circles and sub-circles, inasmuch as the execution of all orders depended on the circle system; and also to the proceedings of the regular Public Works Department in connection with that system.

The organisation of the relief circles and sub-circles in one shape or other, and of the relief committees and sub-committees, as already described, had been by this time completed in all the distressed districts. The very numerous staff of officers and officials (set forth in Chapter III.) had arrived at their posts. In the worst tracts every cluster of villages, from five to ten in number, was formed into a group with a native official, and a store of grain with its storekeeper; so that every village could be visited twice a week or oftener, and Government grain be within reach at a distance of two or three miles at the furthest. The several groups in each circle were being frequently inspected by the European circle officer and his assistants. The organisation was simple in itself. Its real magnitude, and the difficulty of enforcing it, will be apparent only when the area and population over which it extended are borne in mind. The apportionment of the relief labourers between the circle officers and the Public Works Department had been effected. The relief roads had been visited by the several superintending engineers, and a certain degree of departmental method and check had been established.

The issue of rations in grain to the recipients of charitable relief was arranged without difficulty. The grain consisted generally of rice. It was necessary that, together with the rice, some other kind of grain or some vegetable and condiment should be taken. To enable these people to purchase the accessories, a small portion, one-sixth, of the ration was given in money. It was not found expedient as a rule to issue cooked or prepared food, save in a few places. The investigation adverted to in Chapter II. had been finished, and the registers had been prepared of all fit recipients of this relief. The tickets entitling the people named to gratuitous relief had been issued to each person or to each family. Those who were able to do any, even the lightest kind of work—weaving, spinning, or the like—had their tasks allotted. Those who were unable to take any care of themselves were lodged in poor-houses, or placed under medical supervision. There was still, however, some difficulty in searching out all the fit objects of this relief. The superior officers of the circles, on going their rounds in the villages to see whether the registration had been completely done, would find here and there some feeble person not included in the registers. And at each weekly or bi-weekly inspection by the group or sub-circle officials, the nominal roll was swelling. In justice to the people, it must be said that but little imposture came to light. We had to guard rather against their holding back unduly, than against their coming forward improperly. Whether from shyness, or ignorance, or resignation, or despair, they often faced mortal danger in a manner which inspired both pity and esteem.

By degrees those persons who from caste, delicate nurture, social seclusion, or such like reason, could neither work nor beg, were added more and more to these lists. In north Behar, the Tirhoota Brahmins form a very numerous class. Some few of them were induced to work for Government wages, by the persuasion of a relief officer who was himself a Brahmin. It is probable that the majority of them would, sooner than work, have drifted into a condition near to starvation. The local authorities deferred relieving these cases as long as possible, but gradually admitted them according as the imperative demands of safety might dictate. The people of this class, however, were, from a natural pride, often unwilling to be regarded as recipients of altogether gratuitous relief, and would endeavour to pay something, however small.

In the Burdwan division only was there any reason to take precautions against imposture. There the endemic fever had necessitated the administration of relief, medical or other, during several years past, and some classes had gradually fallen into habits of undue dependence on public charity. Here the issue of cooked-food served as an effective check in this division.

It was ruled that the payment of wages of relief labourers in grain might be arranged in more ways than one. The most direct way was the issue of grain to the men. But the authorities might establish grain-shops at, or close by, the works, and issue money to the men, wherewith they would buy grain at these shops. Or the men receiving their wages in money might purchase their food at the nearest Government granary. About the time when these orders were being given, a difficulty with many large gangs of these labourers on the relief roads had sprung up in several districts, and more especially in Mudhoobunnee and north-eastern Tirhoot. These people had been paid on the plan of daily wages, which meant that a person—man, woman, or child—should labour all the working hours of the day, and receive a daily wage at rates fixed for men, women, and children respectively. The rates being hardly higher than those of ordinary times, were very low in places of dearth and scarcity. This plan, though applicable to limited numbers, was found, when applied to very large numbers, to militate against any effective supervision by measuring up of work actually done; to fail in offering a reward to industry or imposing a penalty on idleness; to give birth to many petty abuses, and especially to afford opportunities of wrongful gain to gangmen who had to be selected from among the people themselves for watching the work of the gangs. During the first rush, crush, and stress of relief affairs, the introduction of the piece-work plan (which is much preferable) had not been practicable; but it was resolved to take the earliest safe opportunity of introducing it. The piece-work plan meant fixing a rate of payment for a specified amount of earth-work, measuring up the work actually done, and paying accordingly. The terms first proposed for the piece-work were quite liberal as compared with those which would be allowed in ordinary times, and even in these hard times admitted of a tolerably able, industrious, and skilful person earning a subsistence. They were, however, hardly liberal enough in regard to the severity of out-door toil in the hottest season, to the indura-

tion

tion of the parched-up soil, to the feebleness and inaptitude of many of the people, and to the large proportion of women and children in the gangs. When they were promulgated, the ignorant people imagined them to be so hard as to preclude an ordinary untrained villager from earning subsistence under them. This notion was fostered by the gangmen, who thought by passive resistance to stop the substitution of piece-work for the daily wage, and thereby to prolong the opportunity of their own illicit gains. So they persuaded the people that to attempt piece-work on the roads was to fail to obtain sufficient food, and that it would be better to stay at home and languish there than to starve abroad. In many cases they even insinuated that the Government was tired of supporting the people, and that the piece-work was only a pretext for making the relief-labourers leave the roads, and so for closing the works. All this resulted in the people deserting the works in very large numbers. The total number of persons who thus deserted in various places and on various dates about this time was not less than 350,000. A certain number, some thousands in all, who were either professional earth-diggers or were apt at labour, remained on the roads to do the piece-work. For a while it was naturally believed that the hundreds of thousands of deserters must all come back to the works, inasmuch as they had no other means of living. But soon the relief circle officers reported that tens of thousands of persons having left the roads had returned to their homes and were staying there in apparent destitution, perhaps under some misapprehension. It was found on inquiry that these people were existing on the verge of starvation, under the idea either that they had no chance of earning their bread on the roads, or else that the works had been closed against them. Unless some remedy were immediately adopted, extensive mortality must ensue. These misapprehensions were soon rectified, and the labourers were too glad to return to work and pay. Opportunity was taken to render the terms of the piece-work more liberal, and the local authorities gradually, but firmly, substituted this system for daily wages almost everywhere. At the same time the wages were paid in grain. So many pounds of rice were given for so many cubic feet of earth-work measured up.

After a time, the effect of this change was visible in the behaviour of the relief-labourers. They found on trial the premium which piece-work offers to the industrious who choose to work during extra hours. Practice fast improved their skill and aptitude. The long summer days enabled them to labour for many hours out of the twenty-four, and so to earn an amount from which they could find present sustenance, and save something against the rainy season when the works would be closed. Many men, whose wives and children had been working on the roads, would now earn alone enough for the household, and would keep their families at home. Very many, too, managed to earn in a few hours enough for daily food, and spent the remainder of the day preparing their arid fields in the hope of showers. The majority of the people were spurred and stimulated to a degree of perseverance and energy, which would hardly have been credited had it not been fully demonstrated. Despite incessant toil in the fierce heat, the physical condition of the mass improved week by week. As their labouring and earning powers increased, it was thought safe for them, and just to the State, to render the piece-work terms somewhat harder. To this they submitted without complaint. The piece-work system was seen to be open to one particular objection, in that a practised or professional workman earns more than need be allowed to him as relief. Any terms which were favourable enough for the unskilled and inefficient (who are the great majority), must prove too favourable for the skilled few. It was decided that this objection could not be obviated, and that no exception could be made as against these individuals, especially as their example instructed the mass of the relief-labourers in workmanlike habits.

While the number of persons thus assisted rose everywhere, and in some places rapidly, no such extraordinary rush of people to relief centres occurred, such as that related in Chapter II. as occurring in Tirhoot during the latter part of March. However, some rapid assemblages did take place in the north-west corner of Chumparun, in parts of Sarun and of Bogra, also in Julpigoree, near Cooch Behar. And in some parts of west Tirhoot (near Mozufferpore), distress was found to have brought the villagers to the borders of destruction, when succour arrived to save them. In Julpigoree there was serious rioting, though of very brief duration. In no other district did any breach of the peace occur.

About this period some disappointment began to be felt at the amount of labour on the large engineering works not being larger than it was. The Gunduk embankment, indeed, being very favourably situated in respect to distressed tracts, did attract almost as many labourers as could be advantageously entertained, 45,000. But the Soane Canal and the Northern Bengal Railway never received the desired complement. The highest numbers of labourers on these works may be thus stated:—

Soane Canal - - - - -	41,000
Northern Bengal Railway - - - - -	22,000

Unsuccessful attempts were made to induce bodies of labourers from Sarun to resort to the Soane Canal, and from the south of the Ganges, Monghyr, and Southalia to the Northern Bengal State Railway. Frequent injunctions were sent to the local authorities to send labourers to that railway, but without much result. These numbers would have been greater had there been no other relief work. Some men who might have been induced to leave their homes and go to a distance for these great works, preferred lesser works close at hand. But this objection cannot be obviated, when, from general famine, it has become necessary to spread a relief system over the country. The majority of relief labourers cannot migrate to a distance for a short time; they have their families,

their fields, and their concerns at home, all which will in a very few weeks urgently need their presence. Their time would be lost in going and coming, and unless they received bounties (which are otherwise objectionable) they could not subsist. For them, therefore, if no works but the great engineering works are open, there will be no relief at all, and they must perish. But if the numerous lesser works are open for them (and they are the vast majority), it is impossible to prevent the few who could migrate from taking advantage of the works near at home. Nor is this wholly disadvantageous. For these are the very men who, having skill, show the unskilled multitudes how to work, and thus render the relief labour more productive.

It is not to be forgotten, indeed, that even in ordinary years, if State works, whether for relief or other purposes, were to be opened in the month of May, they would attract a certain number of people. But no such numbers, nor a fraction of such numbers, would ever be attracted to out door work at this burning season, as those which flocked to, and lived upon, the relief works in May 1874, unless they were really suffering from hunger.

The applications from cultivators and ryots for advances of food-grain became so very numerous that it would be impossible to dispose of each separately. Therefore in the more distressed tracts an inquiry was instituted by the circle officers, village to village, as to what cultivators desired and really needed such advances. A registry having been thus made of fit recipients, the circle officers granted the advances. The amounts in various cases differed according to circumstances, representing food for the cultivator and his family for one month, or two months, or even more. Sometimes the cultivator was able to pledge some little property as security; or the cultivators of a village would be joint personal security one for the other; or the landholder and zemindar would be security for his cultivators. The advances were allowed to be made in all cases where there was a reasonable probability of repayment according to the principle laid down by the Government of India on the 6th March, in the resolution quoted at the end of Chapter II. The terms of these advances were that the price of the grain was to be repaid, half by March 1875, and the remainder by March 1876. The price at which repayments was to be made was 15 seers per rupee, and subsequently the price was cheapened to 18 seers per rupee in the case of advances made on the security of zemindars. According to the prices of ordinary years, a ryot will have to sell at least two maunds of rice in 1875 and 1876 to raise funds for repaying the price of one maund advanced in 1874. Though no interest is charged on Government grain advances, yet the terms to the ryot will practically be cent. per cent. interest in kind for the loan of the grain for two years. Although the Government, receiving back its principal only in cash, does not of course reap any such interest, still it will be seen that the terms of these advances were made as favourable for the public treasury as they could be with regard to the safety of the people.

As the cultivating season approached, on the falling of the summer showers which usually precede the setting in of the rains, the policy of making these advances became seriously important. The men must be tilling their fields, and would be thereby precluded from earning wages elsewhere. But what if there should be no food to be bought, or if they should have no means of buying it, or if, to raise the means, they should have to part with their little capital, their seed-grain and their cattle? These questions involved the prospects of the future crops.

The advances tended especially to prevent the consumption, for food, of grain which ought to be reserved for seed. If they were withheld, there was every reason to fear that seed-grain might not be forthcoming for the next sowings. Some quantity of seed-grain was known to be in the hands of the trade. It was desired to get some of this into the possession of Government for distribution, in event of need, to cultivators. The local officers were authorised to exchange some of the Government food-grain for this seed-grain, which was accordingly done to a limited extent. Some quantity of seed-grain was also purchased by Government in Calcutta for the use of the distressed districts.

While the State was thus doing its utmost for the relief of the people, the efforts of the zemindars and landholders, and nearly all the principal natives who hold land (which have been already alluded to in Chapter II.) were exerted more and more, in respect to the digging of tanks, to advances to the tenantry, and to the postponement of rent collections. The conduct of many zemindars was honourably conspicuous. There were, indeed, omissions, short-comings, and failures, on the part of individuals, all which may furnish matters for regret. But when the enumeration comes to be made of the good deeds done by the zemindars as a body during this famine, the catalogue will be found to be extensive and creditable.

I must now advert to the sale of Government grain. Although in some few parts of North Behar there was a rush of purchasers on the opening of the granaries for these sales, yet during April the whole amount sold was small; less than 10,000 tons. The people were allowed to purchase direct from the Government granaries. Generally, however, the grain was sold to dealers on the condition that they retailed it at the fixed rate to the public. Often, too, it was sold to wholesale dealers at a slight advantage over the retail rate to enable them to distribute it among the retail dealers. The prices were slightly modified in favour of the people as compared with that first fixed (1 rupee for 10 seers of cleaned rice to be sold to the consumers), and were fixed at rates from 1 rupee for 10 seers to 1 rupee for 12 seers. The rates then prevailing at Calcutta, Dacca, Patna, and other great marts were somewhat cheaper. It was with reference to these market rates, and to these alone, that the prices of the Government grain were regulated. The

determination

determination of any artificial standard of price was avoided, and the principles already explained in Chapter II. were adhered to.

It will here be proper to state the tracts where the sale of Government grain was and was not authorised. Such sale was authorised over the greater part of Tirhoot, Chumparun, North Bhagulpore, North Monghyr, parts of Purneah, Dinagepore, Rungpore, Maldah, and Bogra. In the above districts the people largely availed themselves of the privilege. Sale was subsequently authorised in very limited tracts of Manbhoom, Rajshahye, Moorshedabad, Sonthalia, Julpigoree, Sarun, and Bankoora, and at four places in Gya. In these last-named tracts the people availed themselves but slightly of the privilege. Sale was never authorised in South Tirhoot, Shahabad, Burdwan, Beerbhoom, Hazareebagh, Pubna, and in parts of Sarun, Purneah, Dinagepore, and Rungpore. On the whole, the sales were authorised in about one-third of the area of the distressed districts, and were never authorised in the remaining two-thirds.

Up to the 10th of June the total sales of Government grain in all the distressed districts amounted to only 47,389 tons.

Native opinion may be regarded as having an important bearing on the question whether these sales really interfered with trade. I questioned the native grain dealers at all, or nearly all, of the principal marts in Behar and Bengal, and found them unanimously in favour of the measure, provided that it was carried out under the conditions prescribed by Government. In some places the traders urged the measure on our consideration, and constituted themselves advocates on behalf of their suffering fellow-citizens. From their own repeated declarations it appeared that they were not afraid of Government interference. From no persons have I heard stronger expressions of gratitude, or more distinct assertions, that the State had saved the fortunes of the traders by saving the lives of their constituents, than from the principal native merchants of Behar.

The best illustration, however, is that derivable from the facts of the grain trade during the summer of 1874, which may now be summarised.

The districts in which the sales of Government grain was not authorised, or was kept within narrow limits, were supplied largely by private trade. The concession whereby Government defrayed half the railway freight on grain, and so enabled private importers to carry their grain by railway at the rate of about 3½ pies (less than a halfpenny) per ton per mile, produced an important result in the shape of large private importation into the distressed districts. Rice from Bengal, wheat, barley, maize, millet, and other grains from northern and central India, were brought by rail to all the chief marts on or near the line of the East Indian Railway. For some months the importation of private grain into Behar alone by railway averaged from 1,200 to 2,000 tons a day. The total of private grain imported into Behar by railway, from October 1873 to October 1874, amounted to—

From Bengal upwards -	-	-	-	-	157,226 tons.
„ northern and central India -	-	-	-	-	225,952 „
Total -	-	-	-	-	383,178 „

The grain imported into Behar by the Ganges during the same period was registered at Sahebgunge and found to amount to 44,886 tons. The rice imported from the eastern districts into northern Bengal came by many different channels, and could not be registered or reckoned as it passed. The total importations of rice from Bengal by rail and river into Behar have been seen to have reached a total of 202,000 tons. It is estimated that about half as much more (101,000 tons) was carried into northern Bengal (Rajshaye) from the neighbouring granaries of the eastern districts. According to this estimate, a total of 529,000 tons of grain must have been carried by private trade into the distressed districts. This large total shows that private trade has been active beyond the anticipations of most people, and has fully justified the confidence placed by the Government of India at the beginning of the affair in the resources and enterprise of private dealers. It has been already explained that prices were everywhere so high that private traders could not afford to carry grain by long land journeys to markets far from the railways or great rivers; and that consequently private importation scarcely penetrated to the most remote and most distressed parts of north Behar and northern Bengal. But the private importation, as just shown, fully supplied the broad and densely-peopled tracts near the railways, and left the Government free to concentrate its supplies and resources mainly on the most distressed tracts.

It may be interesting to note here the total quantity of grain, public and private, imported into the distressed districts during the year 1874. The total Government importations (exclusive of the reserve in Calcutta) amounted to about 460,000 tons; this, together with 529,000 tons of grain carried into the country by private dealers, makes a total of about 1,000,000 tons of food, a quantity sufficient to support about 8,000,000 persons for six months. Of the Government stocks, about 105,000 tons will, in consequence of the favourable character of the present autumn season, remain unexpended at the end of October, when all relief measures will be for the most part at an end everywhere save in the Burdwan country.

It is a sign of the great resources of the provinces of India that, notwithstanding the drain on northern India and Burmah during the past 10 months, the price of food in those countries is at the present moment about as cheap as in ordinary years.

While all parts of the general relief scheme were in force during April and May, causing a present drain on the Government granaries, with the prospect of a still heavier drain from and after June, the efforts of the inland transport department were strained to the utmost degree of tension. Some of the European contractors, those in Chumparun, north-west of Tirhoot, and north Bhagulpore won the highest credit by their vigorous management and unflinching punctuality, performing their engagements some weeks before the appointed time. The native contractors in Sarun, Purneah, Malda, and Dinagore did almost equally well. Delays, however, came about in Rungpore and in Manbhoom, partly because the local officers persevered in their endeavours to obtain carriage without the aid of contractors, and partly because cholera attacked the transit routes. Providentially the cholera soon ceased, and the other obstacles were soon overcome by the dispatch of experienced transport officers to the spot, with authority to make contracts.

In eastern and north-eastern Tirhoot all the troubles which had been foreseen as incidental to transport work, sickness and mortality of cattle, scantiness of water, poorness of fodder, roughness of roads, breaking up of carts, large deficiency of carriage below the amount which the contractors had expected to bring into the field, falling off in the amount of carriage which had at the outset been forthcoming, actually threatened us in combination, and in their totality assumed formidable proportions. The aggregate of losses and deficiencies was estimated as being represented by a failure of 14,000 carts and 28,000 bullocks. Had there been no additional resource available, it would have been difficult at this time to avert disasters on this, the most important of all the lines of our operations. There would, indeed, have been no general resource to fall back upon save the water-carriage during the coming rainy season, which resource might not prove adequate. In this emergency the railway from the Ganges to Durbhunga, and the reserve transport train from northern India, came into use.

The railway to Durbhunga began to carry grain from the last week in April, and by the second week in June, when it was first invaded by the floods, and ultimately broken up, it carried 31,213 tons of grain, 8,031 tons of fodder, besides 7,530 tons of coal and material. After the closing of the line the rolling stock and permanent-way material remained available. The actual cost of the temporary line amounted to about 100,000 £, exclusive of the cost of material which remained in hand after the grain transport was done.

The Government reserve transport train made its appearance in detachments, the first of which rendered assistance in carrying materials for the completion of the Durbhunga railway. One detachment after another came on the scene, consisting sometimes of carts and bullocks, sometimes of pack mules and ponies. Though originally intended as a reserve, this transport train was regularly used immediately on its arrival. Each detachment on crossing to the north bank of the Ganges was, without an hour's delay, employed to make up for losses or deficiencies in the contractors' carriage. As the exigency grew intense towards the end of May and the beginning of June, the pressure upon the bullock carts, and especially on the mules and ponies, became excessive, and many animals sank under the toil at the most inclement season of the whole year. If any misgiving had ever arisen as to the necessity of collecting this costly reserve, it was dissipated by the event. The necessity was abundantly proved at this critical and crucial juncture. The presence of the reserve transport train was indispensable to the safe conclusion of the operations in Tirhoot.

The main object during May was to fill every dépôt at relief centres, and every granary, in the groups of villages, with its allotment of grain while the roads and pathways were open, and the dry rice-fields afforded easy passage. Besides this, supplies were lodged beforehand in most of the principal villages enough to last for consumption during the rainy season. The time was foreseen when the rains would hinder the dispatch of convoys, would damage exposed grain, would clog the roadways, and would flood the rice-fields.

The exertions of the military officers, both those engaged in arranging the affairs of the contract transport and preparing the transit routes, and those in charge of the Government reserve transport train, were unremitting, and caused a degree of hardship and exposure to a fierce climate, which taxed all their powers of physical and mental endurance. The business which devolved on the transport department of ensuring the due arrival of so many convoys, passing by so many routes to so many diverse points, was very complicated. It was aggravated by the stress arising from urgent haste, but it was discharged with a degree of precision and punctuality most creditable to the officers concerned. Equally great was the endurance and self-sacrifice evinced by the officers in charge of the depôts on both banks of the Ganges, and equally commendable was the dispatch of business on their part. The affairs of the two great depôts on the north bank (Bunker Ghât, opposite Patna, and Chumpta Ghât, opposite Barh) were extraordinarily complex, and were disposed of by the officers in charge with remarkable skill, and with entire regularity, notwithstanding the pressure of speed and expedition, with the discomforts, the blinding glare and the dusty heat of an unsheltered situation.

The total quantity of grain ordered to be transported to the interior from the north bank of the Ganges by the middle of June, amounted to 343,750 tons, of which about 340,000 tons were carried within the appointed time. The small residue arrived within a short time afterwards. During this period, although the cattle suffered severely in parts of north-east Tirhoot, there was no general sickness, murrain, or epidemic. The Government

Government fodder as it arrived proved most useful, and the veterinary establishments in the field hospitals tended the ailing and injured animals.

The weather during the months of April and May was unusually dry. The showers to be looked for at that season never fell; much fear was felt lest a dearth of water should supervene. The running streams, so frequent in north Behar, were at the lowest ebb. The water in wells, usually a few feet below the surface, was reached only at a considerable depth. The tanks were drying up, but were dug out deeper and deeper by the relief labourers till water was obtained. Thus a supply was maintained in all the villages. These village tanks are in constant use with the mass of the people, and are very numerous all over the country. The improvement of them in a manner, which must be gratefully appreciated for many years to come, will be one of the results of the relief operations.

The public health was good, probably above the average of ordinary years, throughout this drought and heat. No epidemic sickness broke out. The people were spared the visitations of cholera and small-pox which had been so much dreaded. Relief had been so fully dispensed that the general diseases which are known to follow in the train of famine never supervened. The stronger classes, mostly to be found on the relief works, were in good physical condition. The weaker classes, mostly to be found on the gratuitous relief lists, were, on medical inspection, found to exhibit all the miserable symptoms which arise from want of nourishment. But their state improved week by week; and the medical reports constantly showed a decreasing percentage of persons emaciated and depressed, and an increasing ratio of persons in ordinary condition. Reports of death from starvation were very rare. The authenticated cases numbered only 22 from the commencement of the scarcity to the 20th June, which may be taken as the culminating point of the distress. The question whether more cases have occurred which never came to light, has been discussed in Chapter II. Whatever may have been the truth in this respect at the outset of the famine, it is probable that extremely few deaths could have occurred beyond those officially reported after the middle of April, inasmuch as the whole country was patrolled, officials being within reach of every village and every hamlet, almost every house being visited or inspected.

The health of the civil officers and officials engaged in relief was, on the whole, excellent, notwithstanding the mental and bodily strain caused by their devoted exertions during the worst season, and out-door exposure in all hours of the hottest days. Their self-denying zeal, their earnestness in the business of relief, their patience in dealing with the people, were exemplary.

Although the casualties among these officers which had been anticipated did not occur, still it was thought that many accidents and misfortunes of this sort would happen during the wet season. The formation of a reserve staff of officers of all grades was commenced, and was calculated at a strength of ten per cent. upon the existing relief establishment. Officers in different parts of India were told off to join this reserve immediately on their services being called for. But happily the health of the relief establishment continued so good that very few of the reserve officers had to be demanded.

The month of June was ushered in amidst public anxiety and gloom in north Behar. The drought was then excessive, and its continuance for another season was much thought of. The people seemed to be making up their minds for a prolongation of trouble. The existence, or otherwise, of private stocks of grain was universally discussed. If they existed, the holders were certainly keeping them back. Prices were steadied by the Government stores, now seen by every one to have arrived in adequate quantities. But for this, famine prices with all their fatal consequences must have prevailed. Indeed, despite all precautions, they did for a brief moment prevail in several places.

Although the arrival of the allotted quantities of Government grain before the setting in of the rains was assured, still the contingency was foreseen of having to send additional quantities by water during the rains when the rivers had risen. With this view a special examination of the navigable rivers in Behar and north Bengal had been made by an engineering staff, experienced in respect to inland navigation. Small light steamers (of 3½ feet draught) four in number, with barges, had been specially constructed in the Calcutta dockyard. Ten such steamers with barges had been sent out from England. Four more small steamers, with five barges, had been obtained in Bengal and Madras. Canoes had been obtained from the forest department in Oude, and the services of a large number of the river craft of the Ganges had been retained. The strength and composition of this flotilla may be thus stated—

Steamers.	Barges.	River Boats.	Canoes.
18	22	4,000.	800

A portion of this water-carriage was to be stationed at those points on the Ganges where the several main affluents and their tributaries join the great river, namely—

	Steamers.	Barges.	River Boats.	Canoes.
At Hajeeapore for the Gunduk river system of Chumparun and south-west Tirhoot.	4	5	750	—
At Khagurriah for the river system of east Tirhoot and north Bhagulpore.	7	9	1,500	800
At Godagaree for the Mahanuddee river system of Malda and Purnea.	4	5	1,000	—
At the Burral river for the Atrai river system of Dinugepore and Bogra.	3	3	750	—

By the water-carriage were dispatched some quantities of fodder and of grain which the land transport was not able to carry; also such amounts of grain as were dispatched after the setting in of the rains in addition to the original allotments. But inasmuch as the quantities sent by land proved in the main amply sufficient, the powers of the flotilla never were exerted to the full. The steamers sent from England, as well as those built in Calcutta, proved (with some slight exceptions) suitable and effective vessels for inland river navigation.

It is to be remembered that the number of vessels of all kinds last mentioned is over and above the number of vessels mentioned in Chapter III.

It has been mentioned that many hundreds of temporary storehouses had to be erected for the reception of Government grain. These granaries were of all sizes, and contained from 4,000 tons down to half a ton each. They were for the most part built of wood, mud, matting, and straw, according to the custom of the locality. During the dry months only two of these granaries were destroyed by fire. Before the beginning of the rainy season, selected officers were deputed to inspect every granary containing 400 tons or upwards. These inspections were completed by the appointed time. Occasionally defects of structure or of site were discovered, and some few granaries were found to be insufficiently raised from the ground, or to be not quite water-tight. The inspecting officers caused all such defects to be remedied at once; and the Government grain has been almost everywhere kept sound and wholesome throughout the rainy season.

In Tirhoot during June it was deemed prudent to increase the provision of Government grain from 154,000 tons to 180,000 tons. Subsequently in Sarun the distress among the ryot classes was found to be spreading more widely than had been expected when the estimate was made in February, and at the earnest request of the Collector, the allotment was raised from 19,000 tons to 34,000 tons.

A general permission was given to pay in Government grain the wages of the lowest grades of the relief establishments, whenever the recipients might prefer that mode of payment.

The fortnight between the 4th and the 18th June was the worst period of the famine, that is to say, the period during which the greatest amount of assistance had to be afforded by Government to the people. The approximate ascertainment of the total number of persons who, in some shape or other, received such assistance is a matter of great interest. Although the number of persons on charitable relief and on relief works were known exactly, the numbers who were assisted by sales and advances of Government grain could only be made out by estimate and calculation. It may be well here to quote the statement which I presented at the time (7th July).

"In order to estimate the total number of persons receiving assistance of some sort during the first fortnight of June, we have the following data to form a basis:—

Total number of relief labourers	- - - - -	1,770,732
Total number of persons on charitable relief	- - - - -	401,959
Total grain expenditure, in maunds, of first half of June	- - - - -	843,000

"Thus we have 2,172,691 persons receiving relief, quite irrespective of those who are living on advances or purchases of Government grain. The amount of Government grain disposed of during the fortnight would give three-fourths of a seer a day to 3,401,900 persons for a fortnight. But among the people who consumed Government grain were all the persons on charitable relief, and a large portion of the labourers. The district narratives show that by the end of the first fortnight of June the practice of paying all labourers in grain, though largely introduced, had not been fully carried out. The Bhagulpore return is the one which best distinguishes between sales to the public and those to labourers; and that shows 98,228 maunds sold to the public, as against 25,628 maunds sold to labourers. All the district narratives show that the non-labouring public are the chief customers at our granaries.

"It would therefore be probably within the truth to take one-half of the persons supported

ported by Government grain as being outside the relief labour and charitable relief lists. By this reckoning the total numbers receiving assistance in one shape or another would be,—

Labourers and paupers as above	- - - - -	2,172,691
One-half the consumers of Government grain	- - - - -	1,700,950
Total	- - - - -	3,873,641

"The best estimate that we can now frame shows that the number at the worst period was 3,900,000 persons receiving assistance of some sort."

As stated at the time, this statement, though very large, may have been slightly under the truth, certainly not above it. It apparently agrees, as nearly as could be expected, with the estimated number given at the beginning of April, as shown in Chapter III. The general per-centage of this number on the population affected was seen in that chapter to be 26 per cent. in the most distressed districts, and 11½ in those less distressed. The ratio of course varied considerably, being in many places less than that above stated; but in the worst tracts of north Behar it stood as high as from 50 to 75 per cent.

But there was a further mode whereby assistance was rendered by Government, which could hardly be included in any particular statement presented at that time, namely, the cash advances made by Government to individuals, European planters, native traders, and others, for the importation of grain, and to landholders and zemindars for agricultural improvements. These advances of cash went on, month by month, till they reached the sum of 46 lakhs of rupees, or close upon half a million pounds sterling. How many persons virtually derived their subsistence from this source it is impossible to say, but the sum was enough for feeding 500,000 persons for seven months; and that number ought at least to be added to the 3,900,000 given in the above statement. On the whole, then, nearly four and a-half millions of souls must have been receiving assistance, directly or indirectly, from the State at the worst period. Under this view of the case, it must be admitted that the actual distress did exceed the estimate. But in reference to the uncertainties of the case, the difference between the estimate and the probable actual is not great.

CHAPTER V.

The narrative has, in the last chapter, been carried on to what may be termed the culminating point of the famine. In this chapter gradual decadence and ultimate extinction of the famine will be described.

The rains began about the 25th May in eastern Bengal, and extended to northern Bengal, and thence to Behar, where they set in about the 5th June. They hardly began in southern and south-western Bengal till a fortnight later. They continued abundantly in northern Bengal and Behar till the 15th July.

During this period it became apparent that, in the distressed districts, the agricultural classes, ordinarily prompt and industrious on the occasions when a change in the season favours their work, were on this occasion putting forth extraordinary efforts. The land was ploughed and prepared with remarkable rapidity. The husbandmen seemed possessed with a desire to free themselves from dependence on the State by resuscitating their own means of subsistence. Some complaints were made by individual employers of the difficulty of attracting men from the relief works. Facilities were immediately afforded for obtaining the men required. In one part of north-east Tirhoot suspicion arose that some men were lingering on relief works instead of betaking themselves to their fields; this was immediately remedied. An unusually large area was sown with those crops, the early varieties of rice, the maize, the coarser millets and pulses, which would be reaped in August, and which would yield the speediest return. Much land was sown with these crops, which from exposure to inundation, was not properly suited for them, and in which there was consequently great risk of the produce being destroyed. Still the cultivators ran that risk in the hope of obtaining resources by an early date. So intent were the people on the early sowings, that doubt began to arise as to whether due attention was being given to the preparations for the main rice crop to be reaped later. It was soon found, however, that this crop was being sown to the fullest extent possible.

Fear had sometimes been felt lest the administration of relief on a great scale should tend to demoralise a people chiefly agricultural, and to relax their zeal for husbandry. Such fear was immediately dissipated, inasmuch as the severe lessons of the famine had evidently taught them to work harder than ever, and to make the most of the first chance afforded to them by the seasons for recurring to self-help.

There was no longer any anxiety regarding the supply of seed grain. Relief reaching to all classes had preserved the merchant from the temptation to sell his stock of seed to the hungry for food, and had deprived the cultivator of any motive for eating his seed grain. Manifestly there was plenty of seed grain in the country.

On the 3rd June I reminded the officers that they should lose no time in discharging from the relief works all those who might reasonably be expected to find private employment

ment in agriculture. Every effort was used by the local authorities for the furtherance of this object.

It was soon found that the cultivators and occupants of land did the work in their fields with their own hands to an unusually large extent, in order to save the cost of employing labour. Though a great number of field labourers found employment as usual, still, from the above cause, a considerable number remained unemployed, which circumstance, as will be presently seen, retarded the reduction of the relief labour lists.

Within a fortnight from the culminating point of the distress (some time between the 10th and 20th of June), the aggregate number of persons on charitable relief and relief works fell from 2,175,605 to 1,418,783. But while the number of those on relief works went on decreasing, the number of those on charitable relief went on increasing. Inasmuch as the number pertaining to relief works was much more important than that pertaining to charitable relief, the net decrease on the total of the two numbers was very considerable. The progressive net decrease, as the rainy season advanced, may be shown thus:—

PERIOD.	Persons on Charitable Relief.	Persons on Relief Works.	TOTAL.
15th June - - - -	404,903	1,770,732	2,175,605
1st July - - - -	525,620	893,163	1,418,783
15th „ - - - -	643,524	638,762	1,282,286
1st August - - - -	740,973	453,486	1,203,459
15th „ - - - -	647,550	426,738	1,074,288
1st September - - - -	591,820	395,402	987,231
15th „ - - - -	444,466	331,982	776,448
1st October - - - -	358,446	270,650	629,096
15th „ - - - -	213,063	114,647	327,710
31st „ - - - -	100,000	50,000	150,000

The numbers under both headings (charitable relief and relief works) fluctuated considerably in many districts. The course of decrease was sometimes arrested and turned again towards increase. For some time after the setting in of the rains, anxiety arose by reason of the constant growth of the numbers on charitable relief, and the continuance of a comparatively high number for relief works; so much so, that orders were again issued in the beginning of August for further efforts being made to discharge labourers from relief works and transfer them to private employ in the fields; also for a fresh scrutiny of the rolls of the gratuitous relief, with a view to reduction. Injunctions, too, were given for further vigilance and economy in the issue of Government grain, lest the drain upon the granaries should be excessive. But soon afterwards causes arose tending to maintain both distress and relief at a high degree; and these must now be mentioned.

The rains of July, though copious in Orissa, in eastern and northern Bengal and Behar, were very scanty in southern and south-western Bengal, comprising the partly distressed districts of Burdwan, Bankoora, Beerbhoom, Moorshedabad, and Manbhoom, and also the district of Hooghly, which began to suffer so much as to be counted among the distressed districts. In all these places cultivation was delayed, the usual demand for field labour failed to arise, prices became dearer, private charity ceased to support the destitute poor: in short, distress spread fast, and with it the relief work expanded, much beyond the original estimate. Thus the trouble of south-western Bengal assumed during the summer a prominent position in famine affairs, much beyond that originally contemplated. The additional allotments of Government grain for these districts were drawn from the reserve at Calcutta. The grain, though issued for charitable relief, for wages of relief labour, and sparingly for advances to cultivators, was not sold to the public (notwithstanding many applications, direct or indirect), as these districts are so situated as to be able for the most part to rely upon sufficient supplies of food being imported by private trade.

The prices of food-grains, though cheaper by one-sixth or seventh since the commencement of the rains, remained dear,—about double the ordinary rates for the season. There was no prospect of further abatement until the early harvest should be reaped towards the end of August. Large quantities of private grain continued to be imported (from 800 to 1,200 tons a day) by rail into Behar from Bengal and from northern India, especially from the Punjab. These supplies were taken up for the tracts on either side of the Ganges, and no share of them ever reached the upper parts of Tirhoot and Chumprun. On the other hand, when the navigation became easy on the rising of the rivers, but little private grain arrived from eastern Bengal; and this particular traffic, from which so much had been hoped, proved comparatively insufficient. Throughout Bengal the

the native grain merchants were disposed to hold their stocks, and to refrain from selling until the prospect of the coming harvest should be more clear.

From the setting in of the rains the relief circle officers did their utmost to carry out the instruction to discharge all able-bodied persons of either sex from the relief works. As already seen, some nine hundred thousand were so discharged, or went away of their own accord within a fortnight after the setting in of the rains. But there was no employment available save field work, and that had become more restricted than usual, as already explained. Large numbers of men not belonging to the agricultural class, and still large numbers of women and children, were unable to obtain either private employ or assist in their own business, and were necessarily retained on the relief works. They, again, were able to find work in the fields for a short time only, and that was over, they were forced to return to the relief works. Many, who were thus situated refrained from returning to relief, and sustained themselves by the surplus earnings saved by them during the active season on these works. In general terms it may be affirmed that those who could manage to support themselves did not resort to relief.

The situation for those on charitable relief before the commencement of the rains was subsequently improved. It had become gradually worse for those who were very destitute. As to the higher castes, who were unsuited for manual labour, times were operating more and more hardly against them as their little resources were drained. Numbers therefore fell from these classes into the class of recipients of public charity. It is further remarkable that very many able-bodied men, who earned a reasonably good living on the relief works under the piece-work system already described, supported infirm and helpless relatives not of their immediate households. But these men, when discharged from the relief works, resorted to the fields and received the minimum wages for which such service was procurable. With such scanty earnings, and with very high prices, they were unable to support their destitute and helpless relatives, who consequently came upon charitable relief.

The rains of July sufficed to secure good early crops for August and September everywhere, except in parts of south-western Bengal. As these were reaped, the effect on grain markets was perceptible to the benefit of most classes. The accession of grain from this source (at the best sufficing to sustain the people for a short time) failed to lower prices to the degree that might have been expected, by reason of a trouble which was arising, and which must be described.

As the season advanced, the rains, instead of becoming heavier, according to their course, became lighter.

From the end of the first week in August to the end of the first week of September little rain fell anywhere in Bengal or Behar save on the line of the Ganges, in districts of Monghyr, Bhagulpore, Purneah, and Maldah. Thus August, which should have been the wettest month in the season, proved to be an extraordinarily dry month for most parts of the country. Nor was there any rain during the first days of September. At that time the greater part of the principal rice crop (for the winter) remained untransplanted. This crop is sown in seed-beds among the fields. These beds become the middle of August full of seedlings. The tender plants are then rapidly transplanted into the surrounding lands, which should have become very wet from constant rain and flooding. But now the first week in September was passing, and yet the seed could not be transplanted, because the lands were dry, the soil in many places cracked into fissures from the drought. The very seed-beds were beginning to fade or wither. The transplanting had been already delayed to an extreme degree. After a very few more days of drought the process would be impossible, the consequence of which would be failure of the principal rice crop for the second consecutive year in most of the distressed districts. It were superfluous to dilate on the crisis which was imminent. Alarm spread among the people, prices rose, and distress increased.

At the last moment rain began, about the 4th and 5th of September, in the south-east of Bengal, and extended to the north and to Behar, where it fell abundantly in the very places where it was most needed. It has since fallen seasonably and propitiously at intervals during September and October. The people exerted their utmost energy to effect the transplanting of the winter rice crop, which has been successfully completed almost everywhere, and the subsequent rains have rendered the prospect of the harvest favourable as could be wished. With the reservation of possible consequences of variations of Providence and of accidents which cannot be foreseen, the winter crop may be described as secure in the ordinary and practical sense of the term.

In some parts of Hooghly and Burdwan, however, where the failure of rain supply in August followed a very insufficient supply in July and June, the rain of September did not entirely save the early crop, nor fully restore the prospect of the winter crop in such places there is and will be some slight failure of the crops. And here distressful relief operations to a limited extent will be protracted beyond the time when they cease in the distressed districts generally.

As soon as the setting in of the rains caused the numbers of labourers to be diminished and the pressure upon the public works officers and their establishments to be lightened, the opportunity was taken to complete the surveys, plans, and estimates of all the roads which had been undertaken in the districts north of the Ganges, to consider the value and importance of the work which had been actually done, and to determine what remained to be done, in order that the roads, if not fully completed, might be practicable.

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for traffic, and rendered permanently useful to the country. These steps properly while every officer and official was absorbed in the work of relief labourers. The preliminary examination has been completed, and the works will be proceeded with as soon as the open season is over, or the cessation of the rains. The result of the preliminary inquiry is that the districts north of the Ganges altogether about 4,000 miles of old and new roads have been operated upon by relief labourers; that 1,284,000 L . in cash, and 1,753,000 L . in all have been expended on relief works; that the work has been done hurriedly, and occasionally without proper surveys and plans, is of a better quality than had been supposed; and that all the work done by relief labourers on the whole, cost about double as much as it would have done in ordinary years. The total expenditure of 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ millions sterling, about 650,000 L . were expended on the roads. The road work is estimated to be worth about 1,100,000 L . on roads. These results, if substantiated by the experience of ordinary years. These results, if substantiated by the experience of ordinary years, will be fairly satisfactory. Some of the labourers had to be aligned while the labourers were working on the lengths behind them, the price of food was more than double the rate of ordinary years, and for people who came to the relief roads were unable to do a full day's work. In order that none of the relief works may be infructuous, I have, with the sanction of the Government of India, set apart a strong staff of civil engineers and their assistants to survey all the relief roads and tanks, to complete unfinished works, to see that the alignment or construction which the survey may bring to light, to erect culverts and bridges over the smaller openings, and to erect timber bridges over the larger streams, and, in short, to make all the relief roads into really useful works, so far as time and means allow. The Chief Engineer in charge of the relief works hopes to accomplish it by March or April next at a cost of perhaps fourteen lakhs (1,40,000 L). The money will have to be found by the provincial and local authorities. The work is worth doing, and now is the time to do it. If it can be satisfactorily finished, then the expenditure on famine relief works during 1874 will have some lasting benefit on the country.

The length of 4,000 miles stated above comprises only the relief roads north of the Ganges. Besides this, there was a considerable length operated upon in the other districts, which would bring the grand total nearly up to the 6,600 miles. Chapter III.

Thus brought the two categories of charitable relief and relief works to an end, I have to revert to the two remaining categories of sale of Government grain, to cultivators for their subsistence. These categories of advances were last mentioned during the period immediately before the progress since that period is now to be described.

It has been seen that up to the 10th of June 47,389 tons of Government grain had been sold to the public under the rules of the 26th of January. The quantity gradually to the several amounts on the dates specified below:—

10th July -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	74,836 tons
10th August -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	95,858 "
10th September -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	116,941 "
1st October -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	118,107 "

The amount last given, 118,107 tons, may be regarded as the total sold to both the public and to the Government. To it will have to be added only such small amounts as were sold in October. It is exclusive of grain given directly as wages to relief labourers. In all May and the first week of June there was hardly any rice, and very little of other kinds in the markets of the interior of north Behar and in these tracts the petty retail dealers found their occupation gone, and as agents for the distribution of Government rice by sale among the people the spectacle was presented of a whole class of native traders being converted into a mere agency.

When the rains set in after the first week of June, some private stocks were brought into the market, a part belonged to individuals, zemindars and others, and was used for the wages of agricultural labour; a part belonged to traders, and was sold in such sales were, however, comparatively insignificant. After a time the markets became quite empty again, and remained so until the new grain came in. The hope so much entertained of grain being brought into the market by private traders in boats on the rising rivers was in the main disappointed. It did indeed arrive in this way, but they were not sufficiently large to have any appreciable effect. The same preventive cause which has been already explained, that the prices in neighbouring districts, and in Bengal generally, were so high, that the importation being profitable. But as these prices had been so high, it was deemed just to the people that the price of the Government grain, under the rules, to be regulated by prices at the nearest large mart accessible, should be lowered from one rupee for 12 seers to one rupee for 14 seers in northern Bengal.

The purchases of Government grain were to a considerable extent made by wholesale dealers, to whose mind the fear of another failure of the crops was ever present, and who were guided by the appearance of the weather and of the season. The purchases from the Government granaries attained their maximum weekly rate at the beginning of June, when the people determined to lay in supplies for some little time. The weekly rate, indeed, decreased immediately, on the setting in of the rains; but it continued at a steadily sustained average throughout July. It fell further in the beginning of August, but towards the end of that month it showed a tendency to rise again, as the people, seeing the unfavourable state of the weather, were disposed to lay in supplies. In September, however, it decreased again, immediately on the falling of the rains, and continued to decrease until it ceased altogether in October.

The quantity of Government grain advanced to cultivators and ryots by the 10th June has been already shown to have amounted to 14,412 tons, estimated to sustain for one month 720,000 persons of this class including the men and their families, at the rate of $\frac{1}{4}$ of a seer (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb.) of rice per diem for each member of a family. As the season advanced men of this class, finding the stores for their subsistence to be near exhaustion, were more and more forced to ask for aid by advances of Government grain; and so the total number of applicants swelled day by day. Moreover, very many of these men had to carry on the preparation of their fields so emergently necessary after the coming of the rains, by means of the hired labour, which, according to custom, has to be paid for in grain. Unless they could obtain advances of Government grain, they could not prepare their fields. A similar need arose again and again during the course of the agricultural season. Men who had struggled on without advances through July were forced to apply for them in August; many held out through August, but had to apply in September. Some again, who obtained small advances in May, obtained further instalments during the subsequent months. It is to be observed that large numbers of men who were discharged from the relief works and found employment as labourers in the fields received their wages for that labour in grain, which their employers had obtained as advances from Government.

The importance then, of these advances is manifest. Without them many of the cultivators in all the distressed districts would have been too weak and emaciated to perform the cultivation properly; many would have been without seed to sow, having consumed their seed grain for food; many would have been unable to pay for the necessary labour in the fields; much land would have been imperfectly tilled, sown, and cared for, or left untilled altogether. When, therefore, the famine was mitigated or shortened by the strength and spirit with which the people raised fresh crops, when the return of plenty is secured by fine harvests spread over a more than ordinary large area, it is to be remembered that these results are partly due to the system of advances of grain from the Government stores.

The quantity of grain advanced to cultivators from the middle of June rose to the several quantities on the dates specified below:—

10th June -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14,412 tons.
10th July -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45,376 "
10th August -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	82,935 "
10th September -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	102,828 "
10th October -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	107,877 "

The number cannot be precisely given of the ryots and cultivators among whom the final quantity (107,877 tons) has been distributed. It is believed to be about 400,000. This number of 400,000 cultivating men represents, at the rate of six persons to a family, 2,400,000 persons belonging to the husbandman class who received help in this way.

In continuation of the statement given in a former part of this chapter, of the total number of persons receiving assistance from Government at the worst period (15th June), a similar statement may here be made for the period when the early crops began to be reaped, namely, the 15th August:—

Labourers on relief works	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	426,788
Persons on receipt of charitable relief	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	647,550
Persons living on purchases of Government grain, being the number of people that would be supported for one month by the grain sold between the 15th July and 15th August, at the rate of $\frac{1}{4}$ of a seer per day per head	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,282,464
Persons living on advances of Government grain, being the number of people that would be supported for one month by the grain advanced between the 15th July and 15th August	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,692,936
Add for persons still deriving support from advances of money made to zemindars and other residents	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	200,000
TOTAL	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,249,688

It may at first sight appear remarkable that the number shown above (4½ millions) should be so slightly below the number (4½ millions) previously stated for June. A greater decrease might perhaps have been hoped for, but the continuance of the sales and the expansion of advances caused the number during August to be very high. After August, the number must have rapidly declined. In a similar statement made for the end of September or the beginning of October, the last three items, namely, sales and advances of both kinds (which constitute the bulk), would almost entirely disappear. The two first items only (labourers on relief works and recipients of gratuitous relief) would remain, but with shrunken proportions.

The comparative suddenness with which the sale of Government grain ceased in the beginning of October, was due partly to the incoming of the new grain of the autumn harvest. It was also partly due to the popular belief in the safety of the winter crop being assured by the rain which fell at that time. The consequence was, that some of the old stocks which had been withheld all through the famine were produced.

The departure of nearly all the relief labourers from the works need not excite surprise, as the work in the fields for the winter crop became most brisk.

But the discharge of the recipients of gratuitous relief proceeded more quickly than had been anticipated. Those who were able, on the revival of the general prosperity, to support themselves, had been previously discharged. Those who remained at the beginning of autumn, that is 1st to 15th September, were those who in ordinary times subsisted on private charity, and who had no livelihood of their own making. During the famine, the classes who are the donors of this charity being themselves in straits, ceased to support their indigent and infirm people, who consequently came upon State relief. But with the prospect of returning plenty it became a matter of serious moment to send these poor people back to private charity. There was anxiety as to whether the ordinary donors would resume their charitable offices; however, so strong is the force of usage, almost amounting to religious obligation, that they must have begun again to give to the beggars and to the helpless their accustomed doles of food. These poor creatures have been discharged from State relief, and no harm has resulted to them. These circumstances are certainly creditable to the industrious classes.

Some reduction in the large relief establishments (specified in Chapter III.) were made in August, and still more during September. As soon as the abundant rain, lasting to the very end of September, brightened the agricultural prospect, it was decided to break up the framework and machinery of relief from the beginning of October. Every exertion was made to effect this object quickly, and so to save expense. By the middle of October nearly all of these establishments ceased to be borne on the rolls. Some small establishments were maintained here and there, and some of the superior officers to guard against any untoward accident which may even yet occur.

By the beginning of October, when the autumn crops had come fully into market, the Burdwan country was the only province under the Bengal Government where relief operations were maintained on any considerable scale. Though the autumn crops had been poor and the winter crops did not promise well in the Burdwan or Hooghly districts, yet in the surrounding districts the harvests were good, and trade was brisk; therefore, it was deemed advisable not to send any further supplies of Government grain to these two districts. It was ascertained that if relief labourers were paid in cash, they could buy food in the local markets, and that grain for charitable relief could be purchased locally. Accordingly orders were issued during the first week of October directing that no more Government grain should be sent to Burdwan or Hooghly from the Calcutta reserve. The authorities in those districts were instructed to pay relief labourers in cash, and to buy grain locally for charitable relief as soon as their stocks of Government grain should be exhausted.

During October the famine has declined rapidly. On the last days of the month (that is the present time of writing), the total number of those receiving assistance from Government does not exceed 150,000. Of these, the majority belong to the districts in the south, that is, in the Burdwan Division. In most of the lately distressed districts north of the Ganges there are no persons receiving relief. The only district there which shows any appreciable number of such persons is Sarun. This most fortunate decline has occurred from the middle of September onwards, at a quicker rate than was anticipated when the estimates of distress were first formed. Those estimates provided for 520,000 persons needing assistance during October and 316,000 in November. Experience on former occasions showed that considerable distress occurred in the autumn. It seemed proper to assume that the same thing would happen on this occasion. In many of the worst districts the autumn crops were known to be small in ordinary years. It was therefore feared that such tracts would not receive a new supply in sufficient quantity till December. As it has happened, however, the distress at this season has proved very slight in most districts, and has so far most agreeably disappointed the expectation. The cause is to be found partly in the administration of relief which had been going on during the previous months, which maintained the people in fair condition during the crisis, and so facilitated their discharge towards the end, but chiefly in the abundant produce of the early autumn crops, which, as already described, had been sown over so much larger an area than in ordinary years.

One portion of the establishments is still maintained, and must remain for a short time longer—namely, the account department. A strong staff of accountants under the supervision of trained officers was formed by the Government of Bengal in the midst of the relief operations, besides the auditors appointed by the Government of India for the incorporation

incorporation of the famine expenditure in the Imperial accounts. The special accountants in the interior of the districts are still working at the accounts, which will, it is hoped, be soon presented in due form and order.

It has been explained that the Government provision of grain, including the reserve in Calcutta, amounted to 480,000 tons in all. Of this there had been expended up to the middle of June 115,000 tons. By the first week in September a further quantity of 208,000 tons had been consumed; and up to the first week in October the total expenditure of Government grain had reached 343,000 tons. After the 1st October there has been very little expenditure of Government grain for relief purposes, save in the Burdwan division. On the 15th September stock was taken of all the grain in the Government granaries, and the total on that date was found to be 100,188 tons exclusive of the Calcutta reserve. The greater part of this quantity, perhaps as much as 85,000 tons, will be absolute surplus, besides about 20,000 tons of unexpended reserve stock in Calcutta. This surplus amounts to about 20 per cent. on the total provision of Government grain. If all the circumstances are considered, if all the necessities to be met are borne in mind, the surplus will not appear excessive. At two very critical periods the Government was not without grounds for fearing that the total provision of grain might not suffice. Towards the end of May, there was hardly a responsible officer in the very distressed districts who considered that the provision of grain for his district or subdivision was too large; and there were many who thought their provision would not suffice. During the last days of August, again, and the first days of September, there was a very general belief that the supplies of grain then in store would be inadequate, and that fresh Government importations would have to be begun.

In previous Indian famines the months of September, October, and November, have been marked by very high prices and by some misery and even mortality. Experience therefore warned us to guard against such contingencies. The unusual breadth, and the generally abundant produce of the early autumn crops of 1874 constituted, as above observed, the main cause of the cessation of the demand for Government grain about the end of September or the beginning of October. Another cause, as already seen, was the relief given so constantly throughout the summer months helped to enable the people to support themselves six weeks earlier than was expected in February 1874. Again in the beginning of the famine the recipients of relief subsisted (as seen in Chapter II.) on cash payments, without grain, for a longer period than was anticipated: consequently the expenditure of Government grain commenced later in the season than had been expected.

The surplus grain in the interior of the lately distressed districts is being sold to the best advantage on the spot by the local authorities. The surplus remaining out of the Calcutta reserve has been advertised for sale on specified dates under the orders of the Government of India.

The Government reserve transport train was during July and August kept in the vicinity of Durbhunga in order to recruit its strength, which had been somewhat shattered by the excessive work of May and June. It was retained chiefly as a resource against unforeseen emergency. It then performed such casual and miscellaneous duty as occurred. In the beginning of September, when the season threatened so ill, there was every reason to believe that its utmost services would be required. Soon afterwards, however, these fears were removed, and since the end of September it has been maintained only until it can be advantageously disposed of. Orders for its disposal by sale or otherwise have been given and are in train of execution.

The accounts of the famine expenditure are not yet finally completed. At this moment, therefore, the cost of the relief measures of 1874 cannot be exactly stated. All outlay has, however, almost ceased, and the accounts are so far ready that the ultimate result can be estimated approximately.

In the order of the heads of charges and receipts, as in the estimate of April 1874, given in Chapter III., there will be—

	Estimate now offered.
EXPENDITURE:	
	£.
Special establishments - - - - -	120,000
Promotion of private grain trade - - - - -	453,000
Relief works - - - - -	1,280,000
Durbhunga State Railway - - - - -	100,000
Government grain purchase - - - - -	4,400,000
Government grain transport - - - - -	1,760,000
Government reserve transport train, land and water (net cost)	314,000
Charitable relief - - - - -	280,000
Grants in aid of private work - - - - -	10,000
Advances to zemindars, traders, &c. - - - - -	460,000
TOTAL - - - £.	9,177,000

	Estimate now offered.
RECEIPTS AND RECOVERIES:	
	£.
Sales of grain to labourers and the public - - -	950,000
Sales of grain to relief committees - - -	270,000
Sales of reserve grain in Calcutta - - -	70,000
Sale of surplus grain stocks in the interior - - -	300,000
Recoveries of cash advances to zemindars and traders during 1874-75 - - -	250,000
Ditto - ditto - in 1875-76 and subsequently - - -	210,000
Recoveries of price of grain advanced to ryots during 1874-75 - - -	25,000
Ditto - ditto - in 1875-76 and subsequently - - -	600,000
Miscellaneous receipts - - -	50,000
TOTAL - - - £.	2,725,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURE - - -	9,177,000
TOTAL RECEIPTS - - -	2,725,000
NET EXPENDITURE - - - £.	6,452,000

There is another item of Imperial receipt which may (as it seems to me) be reckoned as a set-off against the famine expenditure, and that is the increase in the net earnings of the East Indian, Jubbulpore Extension, Eastern Bengal, and Punjab Railways. This increase must have been wholly due to the enormous development of the grain trade: other traffic was, in consequence of the famine, comparatively dull. The increase of the grain trade was mainly due to the Government importations and to the concession whereby Government defrayed half the freight of all private grain carried to the distressed districts; the cost of these operations is debited to the famine in the foregoing estimate under the headings of "Government Grain Transport" and "Promotion of Private Grain Trade." The railway earnings account will stand thus, according to the latest available figures:—

	Total Increase in the Gross Goods Traffic Earnings of the Eleven Months ending on the 30th September 1874, as compared with the same Earnings of the corresponding Months of the preceding Year.	Share of the Increase debitable to Working Expense, as far as Estimate can be made by the Deputy Accountant General, Public Works Department.	Share of the Additional Net Earnings which will accrue to Government, being one-half thereof in the case of the East Indian Railway, and a larger Proportion of the whole in the case of other Lines; as computed by the Deputy Accountant General, Public Works Department.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
East Indian Railway - - -	880,330 - -	286,830 - -	440,222 - -
Jubbulpore Extension - - -	47,735 - -	10,385 - -	25,883 - -
Eastern Bengal Railway - - -	67,971 - -	38,743 - -	14,998 - -
Sinde, Punjab Railway - - -	176,168 - -	24,956 - -	151,212 - -
TOTAL - - - £.	1,172,204 - -	360,914 - -	632,315 - -

This computation does not include any part of the increased earnings on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway (161,532*l.* during the 11 months), though to this railway the Government paid more than 30,000*l.* during the year on account of freight of private grain. It therefore seems quite fair to reckon the whole of the Government share of the additional net railway earnings as a set-off against the famine expenditure. If this sum be deducted from the total shown in the next preceding paragraph (6,452,000*l.*), the final net expenditure on the famine will, according to the best estimate that can be made, amount to 5,820,000*l.*

There do not appear to be any other charges whatever debitable to the famine. If we succeed in recovering more than 85 per cent. of the grain advances, as many local officers expect we shall, then the result will be somewhat better than the present estimate.

Further, the sum of 200,000*l.*, and possibly some additional sums, will have to be

be deducted from the Imperial charges of the famine, for reasons which I must briefly explain.

There is yet a question as to how far the whole of the cost, as above set forth, will fall upon the Imperial finances of India. It was in the beginning ruled by the Government of India that the provincial finance of Bengal should be liable to be debited with the estimated amount at which the relief roads and such like works might be valued, that is to say, the real value of the works if constructed in an ordinary year; the excess cost over such value being chargeable to famine. The expenditure on these relief works was debited provisionally to the provincial finance to the amount of 450,000*l.* As this caused some embarrassment to the provincial finance, the Government of India made a grant to the Government of Bengal of 250,000*l.*, which, deducted from the 450,000*l.*, leaves a sum of 200,000*l.* really contributed by the provincial finance of Bengal towards the expenses of the famine. Therefore, 200,000*l.* are at all events to be deducted from the Imperial cost of the famine.

But, as already seen, the value of the relief roads is at present estimated at 550,000*l.*, which is, *primâ facie*, a debt due by the provincial finance of Bengal to the Imperial finance of India. From this amount is to be deducted 250,000*l.* already granted by the Government of India, and 200,000*l.* paid by the provincial finance of Bengal, leaving 100,000*l.* still due. Whether the payment of the 100,000*l.* by the provincial finance of Bengal (or whatever the precise amount may eventually turn out to be) will be enforced in whole or in part, must depend on the pleasure of the Government of India, which will doubtless be expressed after the accounts shall have been finally made up.

So far as is yet known, then, the cost to the Government of India of the famine may be set down at—

	£.
Net expenditure as shown above, less recovery by net traffic receipts of guaranteed railways - - -	5,820,000
Less repayment by provincial finance of Bengal - - -	200,000
Net Cost - - - £.	5,620,000

Until the end of the year 1874-75, the losses to the general revenue from the famine of the past year cannot be stated. But it may be anticipated that there will be, in consequence of the famine, some loss on certain items of the customs revenue, a moderate loss on the excise revenue, and perhaps some small falling off in the salt revenue.

I would here testify most emphatically to the desire manifested by relief officers of all grades to be as economical as possible in dispensing Government aid, whether in cash or in kind, to stop waste, and to prevent State aid being afforded to any except the really deserving and needy.

It may here be observed that in the only three districts, namely, Bankoora, Burdwan, and Hooghly, where non-official committees could act on their own judgment, and showed what they would do if unfettered, they invariably displayed a disposition to do much more than the local officers thought necessary. These committees, which had thus to be checked in their too liberal dispensation of charitable relief, were composed of the best and most intelligent native gentlemen of the neighbourhood. On inquiry being made why the committees wished to dispense relief so liberally, it was explained that the pressure put upon them by the local opinion of the vicinity, and by individual importunity, was too great to be resisted. This pressure was exerted, not for the sake of money, but for the sake of grain, to be dispensed in quantities too small to allow of the recipients making money-profit therefrom; and this grain, moreover, was of a kind which in ordinary years the people would hardly eat at all. Such circumstances, occurring as they did in the less distressed districts, afford striking illustrations of the keenness with which the famine was felt.

CHAPTER VI.

THE foregoing narrative is intended to be a bare statement of the facts as they occurred, without any description of the scenes or situations which presented themselves during the course of these events, and without any discussion of the considerations which such events suggest. In this chapter I shall endeavour very briefly to describe some of the scenes and situations, and to discuss some of the considerations relating to the circumstances which have been narrated.

It will be evident to the reader that during the actual occurrence of such events there must have been many striking scenes and situations. It might even be feared that many sights, sad, shocking, terrible, must have been seen. The mere notion of swift destruction sweeping over many thousands of square miles of country, highly cultivated to the last rood of ground, and waving with crops destined never to ripen, the very name of utter and wide-spread famine, affecting several millions of people, must rouse in our minds the thought of horrors indescribable. The story of such things is known to every student

of Indian annals. The tradition of such calamities endures with vivid force among the people of India.

Happily, the famine of 1874 was for the most part free from circumstances of this grave character. If such things occurred at all, their occurrence was in a mitigated form, and to a limited extent. It may be that some horrors have happened of which the accounts are too imperfect and uncertain to command credence, or of which we have never heard and shall never hear. Nevertheless, there must unavoidably have been very much of misery to stir the depth of human sympathy. Visiting authorities have found many families of many villages in destitution near to starvation. Relief administrators inspecting crowds of poor have seen the affecting spectacle of women and little children in the last stage of emaciation. Medical examiners scrutinizing the field hospitals, the poor-houses, the relief centres, have made professional reports of physical depression in whole classes. Here and there corpses of hunger-stricken persons have been found, and sometimes the reports of deaths from famine have been authenticated. All these things are, indeed, sad to be recalled; but much worse things even than these might have happened, which it is unnecessary to imagine. The object of the operations undertaken by Government, of the administrative efforts made, of the financial cost incurred, was to prevent these things from happening so far as might be humanly possible. It will be for others to judge how far that object was attained.

There were, however, many remarkable points of interest at various stages of the affair, some of which I will mention here, having seen them or heard them described by competent witnesses.

In north Behar the rice crop is raised in vast hollows or depressions in the surface of a slightly undulating country. From any low eminence the view extends over many square miles of rice harvest, a fine spectacle in ordinary years. But in the autumn of 1873 the crop grew up, then faded, and at last withered. Its colour became brown, deepening by the effect of distance into red. The unnatural aspect of such apparently endless expanses of cultivation, the presage of the coming desolation, produced a striking, almost an appalling, effect on the beholders.

In north Bengal many spots on the banks of the inland rivers are formed into quays for the exportation of the surplus rice. These places in ordinary years become scenes of cheerful activity, and are the centres of the life of the country. The contrast which they presented of utter deadness and desertion towards the end of 1873 was deplorable. The rice country generally abounds with luxuriant groves of bamboos, the green masses of which form one of the most characteristic features of that region. In the drought of 1873-74 these innumerable trees dried up and perished down to their roots. They will recover, or there will be reproduction. But at the time their parched and wasted appearance, notoriously portentous according to native ideas, added to the prevailing gloom of the situation.

On the river Hooghly at Calcutta, and at the railway stations on its banks, there was much scope for energy and organisation in unloading the rice ships and loading the bags on to the railway trucks. At one time there were simultaneously as many as seventeen steamers and ships laden with Government rice in the port of Calcutta, with from 200 to 2,000 tons of rice on board of each. The bags of grain were carried away from the steamers by lighters to the railway wharves, whence they were to be dispatched to the north. This work had to be done on a broad river, with a tide that runs sometimes five miles an hour, and to be finished promptly to save demurrage of the steamers. The rice ships often came into harbour in convoys, and, converging as they did on Calcutta from so many distant ports, there would occasionally be a block or accumulation of 3,000 tons of rice on one wharf, 2,000 tons on another, and 1,000 tons on a third; while scores of lighters were waiting at each to unload additional quantities. The bustle, the noise, the crush, were extreme. Again each bag had to be carried on a man's back from the lighter to the shore, and from the shore into the railway trucks, the men swarming like bees up the steep bank. Sometimes 45,000 or 50,000 bags had to be lifted daily across a wharf space of barely 100 yards. Sometimes, for a day or so, it would seem as if the business of unloading and dispatching the grain could never be managed on the narrow wharves. But the arrival of rice ships would slacken for a brief time; all the vessels in the river would be unloaded, and the accumulation would be cleared before fresh consignments arrived. From 2,000 to 3,000 tons of Government rice were cleared daily from ship-board for weeks together. Demurrage was incurred in only one instance, and was mainly due to the arrival of 10,000 tons of Saigon rice at one time in mat bags, which burst in the holds of the vessels. In two instances only were the rice loads of lighters lost, notwithstanding the strength of the tide and the stress of work. One ship from Madras, with 2,000 tons, went down.

The banks of the Ganges in Behar, which formed the great base of our transport operations, presented scenes of much animation. On the south bank temporary branches or sidings from the main railway line were constructed on to the very ridge of the high river-bank, where long sheds were erected for sheltering the bags of rice piled up in long series of heaps. Wooden slides were constructed, stretching down the steep bank, so that the bags might shoot straight from the goods platform to the deck of the steamers lying in the stream. At that spring season violent winds from the west (hot as furnace blasts) blow over the broad river-bed (several miles in average breadth) from morning to evening, filling the air with dusty haze and obstructing navigation for all vessels save those propelled by steam. From eventide the winds subside until the morning. But navigation

navigation in the shifting and tortuous channels was impossible during the dark hours, so the work had to be done either by steamers laden together with their barges (called "flats"), or else by steamers towing country craft. It was interesting to see a steamer tugging against wind and stream a far-stretching string of, perhaps, twenty country boats. On the other side, the steamers would meet the Durbhunga Railway, which had been carried across the low sands to the water's edge, the steam vessel lying almost alongside of the railway engine. As the river rose gradually, the waters encroaching on the sands would drive back the railway line a few yards day by day.

On the north bank the main depôts could be descried from afar by the clouds of ascending dust. Day and night there was a ceaseless creaking and rolling of carts, incoming empty and out-going laden. The great length of sheds which had been erected was often insufficient for the bags that arrived, which were then heaped into pyramids from 60 to 80 feet high.

The lines of the carts extended continuously over many miles. A traveller might traverse, say 20 miles of country, and meet with uninterrupted strings of carts throughout the whole distance. Every one of the streams (which, though very low, were still running clear in that region) was blocked by cartmen stopping to water their cattle. Every one of the roadside mango groves, which abound in that quarter, was crowded with men and animals packed close together for temporary repose and shade. At evening the darkness of the groves would be lit up by the cooking fires. The roadways were cut by the cart wheels into ruts from two to three feet deep (called "leeks"). The carts could not move unless they followed the ruts. Fortunately most of the carts were of an uniform build. But whenever carts of a different build came into the field, there actually arose questions of cart gauge, broad and narrow, and the transport department would be obliged to carve out fresh roadways wherein the carts of a particular breadth might work out their own ruts.

More interesting still, perhaps, was the assembling and mustering of the many contingents of carts in the country around Durbhunga and Mudhobunnee during February 1874. The rough tracks and lanes form a network of communication in that region. Every line was covered by the bands of carts, each several thousand strong, converging from every direction. The troops of men with their carriage gathered with alacrity at central stations. All seemed to understand the vital moment of the enterprise on which they were entering. At first the groves and tanks of the central stations afforded shade and water, even for these masses. But soon these places became choked with the dust from the arid, friable soil trodden by countless feet. The foliage of the trees became encrusted and brown with layers of dust; the tanks would be drained to their dregs of fetid mud; the air was thick with particles of earth flying in the fervid blasts of the summer wind. Throughout the twenty-four hours of the day the business had to be prosecuted, and order had to be maintained among the masses of men, animals, and carts, whether at rest or in motion. Side by side with this were the field hospitals for the people and for the beasts—for the sun-stricken, the foot-sore, the over-fatigued, the exhausted, the ailing, and the sick. During the hottest hours of the day European officers on horseback were recovering stragglers, urging on the backward, and encouraging the forward.

The appearance of the cattle, both for draught and burden, was, in the beginning, splendid. For them the drought, which destroyed the ear of the rice plant, had spared the stubble for fodder. The sap and strength of the plant had remained in the stem; so that the stubble fodder was more than ordinarily nourishing. This accounted for the excellent condition of the cattle. Certainly, sleeker, sturdier beasts could hardly be seen. A very few weeks of transport service changed all this. But, though they lost flesh and appearance, they showed muscle and power to the end.

Towards the close of the hot weather, when the lowering clouds gave warning of the downpour which would damage all grain it might find exposed, the haste and hurry to store the rice bags in the granaries became intense. At some of the depôts which were latest filled streams of laden carts, camels, mules, and ponies would pour in much faster than the loads could be disposed of under cover. In the still heat of the heavy air, with all the signs of quick-coming rain-storms, the efforts of the people to house the grain produced an almost wild excitement.

At the opening of the relief operations in many places the population massed itself upon the relief works. Multitude after multitude came trooping across the fields. Every hamlet sent forth a mournful procession of hungry people. Large villages would be searched through and through, but not a soul would be found in the deserted homesteads, save some few who could not stir, and who were resigning themselves to the fate to which they apparently had been abandoned. When the people thus came herding and flocking to certain points on the roads, sitting helpless on the ground by day, and bivouacking on the spot by night, the difficulty was to marshal them in to anything like order, so that they might be counted, arrayed in gangs, set to labour, supervised in their work, and paid when the day's task was over. Sometimes, when questions arose as to the terms of work and payment, our officers would find it almost impossible to obtain a hearing amidst the vociferations of the men and the screaming of the women and children. The proneness to alarm, the sense of pressing danger, even the heat and glare of the weather, added vigour and vivacity to the tumult. Evening after evening, as the hour for payment came round, the unruly throng would press round the paymasters, grasping for copper coin. Soon this confusion, through the perseverance of our officers, gave place to quietness and order. Then the multitudes would be seated on the ground, row after row, thousand upon thousand,

sand, in silence broken only by occasional exclamations of misery, to be inspected with patient and leisurely regularity by the relief officer, and to be told off, some to the poor-house, some to light labour, spinning and weaving, some to village tanks, some to the roads, according to the discrimination of the physical fitness of each person.

When the Government granaries near the villages were opened for all to come and buy, it was strange to watch the purchasers congregating in numbers, beyond the power of the storekeepers to serve with sufficient quickness, waiting anxiously but quietly till their turn should come, the widows tendering their mites in payment, the infirm and aged stretching forth the cloth to receive the full measure of grain.

Stranger still, perhaps, was it to see the larger depôts of Government stores attended by all the wholesale and retail dealers of the neighbourhood, who would be settling all their grain transactions and almost turning the depôt inclosure into a sort of local exchange until their own proper trade should revive.

The contrast afforded by the commencement of the rainy season after the long protracted drought was enough to equal the happiest anticipations.

In the distressed districts north of the Ganges the last days of May were distinguished by a heated dust-laden atmosphere; by scanty ploughing and sowing; by anxiety for seed; by navigable streams reduced to lowest ebb; by empty tanks and dried-up wells, to the distress of men and the detriment of cattle; by grain markets becoming tighter and tighter, prices hardening, and private stores locked up; by an intense demand for Government grain, both for wholesale and retail, as if all were anxious to lay in supplies at once for some time beforehand; by private trade stagnant, and traders holding out no promise of importation; by labouring and agricultural classes coming in greater numbers than ever to relief works; by the lists of gratuitous and charitable relief much swollen; by ryots and cultivators clamorous for advances of food-grain; by a large proportion, in some places one-half, in other places three-fourths, of the population receiving assistance from Government in some shape, or from charitable subscriptions, physically in good condition from extraneous aid, but morally depressed and fearful for the future; by relief establishments everywhere strained to the utmost to meet the demands upon them; by transport operations consisting of the final struggle towards the attainment of a long-deferred object; by doubts as to whether even the largest allotments of Government grain would carry the people through the months that must be passed before the winter harvest.

The last days of June were, on the contrary, distinguished by rain; by masses of cloud promising further downpour, even to excess; by saturated soil; by extensive ploughing and sowing of every crop of the season, and general sufficiency of seed; by tanks and wells filling fast, to the refreshment of man and beast; by grain markets still tight, but with an inclination to become easier, no stores indeed produced by traders, but landholders and private persons evidently bringing their hoards into use; by a demand for Government grain diminished and limited more according to the needs of the present moment; by traders collecting their boats and promising importation as soon as the rising streams should afford the necessary means; by labourers and husbandmen all gone from the relief works to the busy fields, leaving only some of the women and children on the works; by the lists of gratuitous and charitable relief still swollen; by ryots and cultivators obtaining advances of food-grains, those who could from their landlords, and those who could not from the relief officers; by a diminution of the proportion of the people receiving assistance from Government; by a general manifestation of feeling that peril from drought was for the present stayed; by relief establishments partially freed from out-door avocations and with more leisure to complete returns and accounts; by transport operations nearly over and granaries filled; by confidence that, unless some new trouble should supervene, the allotments of Government grain would prove sufficient to the end.

I now advert to some of the considerations relating to the famine of 1874. Whether the preservation of the people from the destructive consequences of that calamity should be undertaken by the State was an imperial question beyond the power of the local Government of Bengal to decide. The Government of India determined from the beginning that this should be undertaken with every effort and at any sacrifice, in order to avoid risk with a reasonable degree of certainty, and to secure success so far as human means might avail. It was under this view and upon this understanding that the scheme of operations was conceived and worked out in all its details. Much of course may have been done amiss in the management of such multifarious affairs. As regards the means adopted and the steps taken for the proposed end, it is for others, and not for me, to judge whether any essential mistakes have been made in the way of doing either too little or too much, of falling below, or of going beyond, the requirements of the case on the fundamental principles which had been laid down for our guidance. But if any mistakes have been made in conducting the operations, then it will perhaps be remembered that many (though not all) of the parts of the undertaking had an unprecedented character. Many things were to be accomplished the like of which had never been attempted before. However great may have been the knowledge and practice of the many persons of all classes engaged in this service, still no person could possibly have had the actual experience needed in order to foresee the issue or the entire effect of the measures which had to be adopted.

The lessons learnt in one famine may doubtless be most useful for successfully encountering similar conjunctures in future. But during this famine no particular method has proved to be applicable in all the places concerned. On the contrary, divers methods have been used in the varying circumstances of the several tracts of country. In Bengal and Behar the calamity assumed different aspects, according to the products, the

the trade, the landed tenures, and the habits of the people. Therefore a similar calamity occurring in other parts of India might present even wider differences. Moreover, any one famine is almost sure to be, in many important particulars, unlike every other calamity of the same general description. It seems certain that a famine at once deep and broad results only from a conjunction of many causes, the convergence of many adverse forces. This has been manifest in the Bengal famine of 1874. If, while the province of Behar was afflicted with scarcity, Bengal had been blessed with average harvests, the disaster in Behar might have failed to produce famine; but we have seen that Bengal was suffering from scarcity at the same time. If the scarcity had befallen those parts of Bengal where the agricultural classes are possessed of resources, as in the eastern districts, the people might have sustained themselves with but little extraneous aid, instead of being reduced almost wholly to dependence on the State; but this calamity befell those tracts in Behar where the agricultural classes were in a lower status than in any other part of the country, and those parts of northern Bengal where the people do not possess the advantages of the jute fibre culture. If the failure of rain had occurred in districts where harvests are reaped in spring as well as in early winter, then there would have been some chance of gain in one harvest retrieving the loss in the other; but the tracts most severely visited were just those where there could be no spring crops to make up for the loss of the main winter crops. If the worst failure had happened in those parts of Bengal which are traversed by railways or by rivers navigable at all seasons, there would have been hope either that succour would arrive through private trade, or that such supplies as might be dispatched by Government would be transported easily; but utter failure of rain and crops occurred in the very tracts which are most remote from easy communication. It was this concatenation of difficulties which intensified the famine of 1874, and which compelled Government to adopt preventive measures so searching, so laborious, and so costly.

In averting the consequences of famine the necessity of using extreme haste is most oppressive to those charged with the administration, and produces inevitable excess in expenditure of resources of all kinds. If the failure could be certainly foreseen even a few weeks before its arrival, or if when it was foreseen the Government could commence large preparations, trouble might be saved in an almost inestimable degree; but this can never be. Failure dreaded for weeks may be averted by rain even at the last moment. Early in September 1873 fears began to be felt, and grew more and more acute as October advanced, but a fall of rain even late in October might have re-established everything. In regard to efficiency of preparations by Government, the time for that was in the autumn. But to set them on foot before the scarcity had declared itself, for certain, would have had an evil effect. When the arrival of scarcity within a given time has become certain, the Government cannot properly begin to display all its power, to call forth all its resources; for if it does so, trade will be paralysed or impeded at the outset, and the people might at once learn the too easy lesson of foregoing self-help and leaning altogether on the State. It is only by trade being stimulated to supply a vast and emergent demand, by the people being incited by the motive of self-preservation, that the danger can be restricted to those limits within which the Government may effectually interfere. If, then, the measures ultimately adopted by Government had been taken in hand at a much earlier date, the gain in economy and efficiency would have been insignificant as compared with the mischief which might have ensued from the discouragement of private enterprise. In practice, therefore, the measures, however much they may have been considered beforehand, cannot be put into execution until the latest safe moment for decisive action has arrived. The excessive urgency which will then arise must be very disadvantageous, especially in transport arrangements. It multiplies the chances of failure and enhances considerably the expense. But it must be endured, as it springs from the very nature of the trial and from the essence of the case.

In the urgency thus admitted to be inseparable from a great undertaking of this nature, the use of railways in India is conspicuous. On former occasions of this nature, the railways have proved very valuable. On this occasion, however, it is difficult to describe fully the usefulness of their services. It may suffice to say that without the railways the operations against this famine could not have been adequately carried out. The supplies of grain coming either from distant places beyond sea, or from the northern extremity of India, had to be conveyed by rail for distances ranging from 150 to 450 miles to the borders of the distressed country.

The task of systematically feeding almost the whole population of tracts of country containing two or three millions of souls, or even a higher number than that, should not, of course, be accepted by Government save under the most exceptional circumstances, and under the paramount necessity of saving human life. Though undertaken on this occasion for many of the distressed districts, it has not been undertaken for all of them. Many distressed districts have been managed by other methods. But evidently in many cases the thorough and absolute remedy for famine, by Government supplying the people with food, may be most desirable, if it be practicable. As it had never, perhaps, been tried before, its practicability would probably have been doubted until proved by trial. At the outset the most sanguine of those engaged in such a task doubtless felt some misgivings as to its entire success. There is, however, no longer any doubt as to its being perfectly practicable. It can be accomplished with entire regularity for many months consecutively by disbursing cash, so long as supplies and trade last, and when these fail by distributing, paying, selling, and advancing Government grain. And the demonstra-

tion of this problem may be regarded as one of the experiences which the events of 1874 will store up for the future.

Large as may be the official machinery for the administration of any broad system of relief, the experience of 1874 shows the possibility of enlisting powerful forces of voluntary assistance. If in the most distressed tracts the work is mainly done by official agency, yet in less distressed tracts private agency to the utmost extent can be, as it has been, brought into play. The zemindar, the planter, the landholder, the merchant, the trader, the head villager, have all rendered service in their respective spheres.

The enforcement of labour tests, the establishment of poor-houses, the issue of cooked or prepared food, were the topics of much discussion at the outset of the operations of 1874. I shall recapitulate the results of the experience gained regarding these subjects during the operations.

I understand the enforcement of the labour test to mean this, that before gratuitous relief is afforded to any applicant inquiry is made as to whether the person can do any work, light or heavy; and if the person can, then such work is imposed as may be appropriate to the age, sex, or condition. If this be the labour test, then it has been invariably enforced from beginning to end of the operations. Hundreds of thousands of persons of both sexes, of all ages, of various degrees of health, strength, and weakness, have been successfully subjected to it.

The term "establishment of poor-houses" may be used in two senses. If the plan means the constructing of tolerably commodious buildings, even though of a temporary sort, the collecting therein of considerable numbers (say some hundreds, or even thousands) of poor or miserable people, and the managing of the house as an institution on a large scale, then it has never been adopted by Government during the famine of 1874; though there have been some institutions conducted by eminent individuals which in some respects come under the above description. There may be many circumstances under which measures of this sort can be beneficially adopted in preference to any other method of coping with distress. That particular position of affairs did not present itself in the distressed districts on this occasion. But if the plan means the constructing of a small, though salubrious, temporary structure, in which are placed a very limited number (say less than 50) of poor persons unable to do any out-door work, though not ill enough to be sent to hospital, or unable to walk from their home to fetch food, or having no house to shelter them, or belonging to no village where they could conveniently receive house relief, then it has been adopted in very many places scattered all over the distressed districts. It has been seen in the last chapter that those recipients of gratuitous relief who could be relieved without being placed in a poor-house were given tickets entitling them to so many rations of grain to be issued from the nearest Government granary.

The issue of cooked or prepared food was much discussed at an early stage of the relief operations. The question was raised whether gratuitous relief ought not to be given in the shape of cooked food. It was argued that in India none would come to a public place for cooked food unless they were really in want, and that the distribution of cooked food would be a test or a check against imposture. On the other side it was explained that needy people of the middle class, respectable widows, and the like, could never thus come; yet there were many people of this class who required relief and must die if they did not receive it. It was decided that charitable relief might be given in the shape of cooked food or uncooked food, according as the local committee or local relief official might think best. When severe famine visited a tract it was impossible to enforce any cooked food test or to adequately relieve the people except by distributing grain enough for a week's or a fortnight's consumption at a time to every person or family found to be in want. When it is remembered that in a single circle of about one hundred villages there were from 5,000 to 23,000 persons supported by charitable relief, the preparation of cooked food for all these would have been a serious addition to the work of relief. But cooked food was given to inmates of relief hospitals, and to the cripples who lived at the poor-houses.

Towards the end of the distress, when it was desirable to throw the people back on their own resources, and to send the paupers and cripples to their ordinary supporters, the gradual enforcement of the cooked food test was salutary. In towns like Burdwan and Cutwa a class of fever-stricken poor had for some time existed; and there cooked food had to be distributed daily to hundreds who had hardly strength to cook for themselves.

The selection of the most suitable sorts of relief works for the employment of the poor has occupied much thought. At the outset road-works proved decidedly the best for the accommodation of masses of hungry people suddenly arriving. These people could all settle down on one part or other of the road, and could be in some way counted and paid up every evening. When, after the multitudes had been reduced to order, large numbers of them were brought back to their respective villages, relief work on tanks (new or old) was found to be the most appropriate employment. There was a new tank to be dug or an old tank to be deepened within reach of most villages; and it was much easier to enlist the services of local notables and village headmen in supervising work on tank works than on roads. There is this drawback to tank works, that they benefit a small locality and a few people rather than the public generally, and are not therefore such fitting objects for public expenditure as roads.

The large works constructed on high engineering principles, such as canals and railways, will not be very serviceable as relief works in the earlier stages of distress, unless portions

portions of the works are carefully set aside for the reception of weakly persons. Such arrangements can generally be made, and were actually carried out, on the Sonc Canal, the Northern Bengal State Railway, and the Gunduk embankment. Apart from such undertakings being necessarily concentrated over single lines of country, they are ordinarily done by petty contract. It is contrary to the interest of contractors to employ persons who cannot do a good day's work; and this tendency has to be counteracted. When the relief labourers become strong and healthy, they can with advantage be drafted to railways and canals.

The choice between different modes of paying for relief labour has, as shown in Chapter IV., caused much anxiety. There were three plans, namely, "daily wages," whereby a person having laboured for so many hours receives a wage, whether the result of the work has been much or little; "task-work," whereby a person receives a daily wage for an allotted task, but is liable to reduction of wage if the performance falls short; "piece-work," whereby a person is paid for the quantity of work done and measured up, much or little, according to a fixed rate. The daily wage plan renders it difficult to enforce a proper amount of labour, and is open to manifold abuses. It is permissible at the outset only, until the people can be taught to follow better plans. The task-work is better, but it has one fault—in that it fails to offer any inducement for special and extra exertion, or for self-improvement in skill.

The "piece-work" plan was found the best on every account. As regards facility of supervision, prevention of cheating, and economy of money, it is excellent for the sake of the works; but for the sake of the people also it is preferable to any other plan. It offers a stimulus to extra exertion and self-improvement, and conduces to industrial training. By holding out the prospect of gain, it makes the relief labourers work harder, perhaps, than they had ever worked before. It teaches them to save something from their earnings, and to exercise forethought. Its good effects were exemplified in the conduct of the relief labourers during May and June, as described in Chapter IV. And when the expenses of relief works are examined, it is found that even when the piece-work rates were twice as high as in ordinary years, the work done cost less than under the daily wage system, when the rates were kept down to the low standard of ordinary years. The experience of 1874 seems to show that piece-work, even at high rates if necessary, should always be introduced on relief works at the earliest possible moment.

The sale of Government grain to the public, wholesale and retail, has been an important element in the policy of relief administration of 1874.

Even in the most distressed districts there were some whole classes, and many individuals in other classes, who had money, or the means of raising it, but who could not obtain food for it. The sale of Government grain to such people relieved the pressure on relief works and on charitable relief, promoted self-help, and maintained self-respect among the middle classes, agricultural or non-agricultural, and materially reduced the burden on the public treasury. In Mudhoobunnee, where the failure of the crops was the most severe, the sales of Government grain were largest. To any one watching the sales at the petty granaries, it was remarkable to see what numbers of people, who to all external appearance were paupers, produced or raised money, and bought their food rather than ask for charitable relief. Widows, aged persons, children, and unlikely people of all classes, seemed either to have brought out old hoards, or to have raised money somewhere wherewith to buy food at the Government granaries. If Government grain had not been for sale, these poor people could hardly have bought at the famine rates which would have prevailed, and they must have either died or have swelled the lists of the people on relief works and on charitable relief. Numbers of instances were related of widows who had sold their last remaining ornaments so as to be able to buy food for themselves and keep their names off the pauper lists. In some cases these poor creatures, when they could not afford to pay the full Government price, begged to be allowed to pay at reduced rates rather than be put on the list of paupers who got their food for nothing. These grain sales secured the return of one million sterling out of the money expended by Government on bringing grain into the country. Certainly the people themselves believe the sale of Government grain to have been among the most useful measures which the Government adopted for the relief of distress.

There must always arise the question whether the sale of Government stores is detrimental to private trade. Certainly no effort has been spared to prevent the measure producing any such ill effect. It has been adopted, as shown in Chapter IV., in those places only where there was no private trade in food-grain and no prospect of any arising. If the opinion of native merchants and grain-dealers may be taken as conclusive, I may say that in Bengal and Behar generally, and the distressed tracts particularly, they were all in favour of the measure with the conditions under which it was carried out. More valuable still than the opinion of the trade are its practice and action, as seen already in Chapter IV. Nothing, indeed, could have exceeded the activity of the import trade of grain in the distressed districts generally during the time when the sales of Government grain were at their maximum. From parts of Bengal, such as Mymensingh and Julpi-goree, where the crops had been fairly good, private exportation into the distressed districts during the early part of the season was so very brisk that in May and June trouble arose in these exporting tracts, and scarcity was for a time keenly felt. Rarely or never has so brisk an importation of grain been witnessed in Behar as that which occurred in the summer of 1874. It could not, indeed, have possibly been greater from the north-west quarter, inasmuch as it took up all the available railway carriage. The merchants

sent their grain as near as they could to the most distressed tracts. Their conduct showed that they had no fear whatever of being interfered with or undersold by Government in any place whither they could manage to dispatch their grain. The injunctions which had been given to the local authorities to stop the sales on the arrival of private grain were carefully made known to the merchants and to the public. In the end the sales of Government grain ceased of themselves by the action of local trade underselling the Government. As private supplies made their appearance in the market during the autumn, the prices of private grain became cheaper; while the price of Government grain was purposely kept at the comparatively dear rates which had been adopted in July, so as to give the best opportunity for the revival of local trade. The new rice and the remnant of old stocks began to be offered at cheap rates, so the people at once purchased private grain and ceased to buy the Government grain; thus the Government operations did not prevent or check the resumption by the trade of its proper functions. On the whole, it may be affirmed that the sale of Government grain did not improperly interfere with private trade.

It may, of course, be argued that Government, by interposing at all to prevent famine, and consequently by averting the prevalence of famine prices, must to a certain extent have interfered with trade. But any doubtful advantage which trade might have gained if Government had refrained from interposing, would have been much more than counterbalanced by the loss of life and the diminution in production which must have ensued. And, dominating all these considerations, there is the moral principle that it is, in the last resort, the duty of Government to save the lives of its people. But the result proves that Government, while on the one hand exerting the interposition sufficiently for the preservation of the people, restrained it on the other hand within legitimate limits. Inasmuch as the private importation exceeded the Government importation, it is evident that, great as were the efforts of Government, the efforts of all the traders combined were greater still. Indeed the Government itself had the strongest interest in evoking the assistance of trade for the prevention of the famine. That assistance was essential to the accomplishment of the objects in view, and it was ultimately rendered to a vast and beneficial extent.

The policy of granting advances of food-grain to ryots and cultivators on a large scale has perhaps both novelty and interest. The situation was this, in a vast number of cases ryots or tenant-cultivators had no grain and no means of obtaining it. Through the larger landlords advanced grain to their tenantry, the smaller landowners, who own in the aggregate a great portion of the land of the country, were unable to do so. The village grain-dealers, who would ordinarily make such advances, either had no grain to advance, or refuse to advance what they had until the prospect of the next crop should be assured. The cultivators were much employed in the transport of the Government grain; they also laboured on relief works. But the time came when they must leave all such employment for their fields. For carrying on the cultivation they must have grain not only for themselves, but also for giving wages in kind to their field labourers; unless, therefore, advances of grain were made to them by Government, agriculture must suffer, and the new crop must for want of husbandry be short, notwithstanding abundance of rain. The policy then of thus advancing Government grain was clear. Its working and effects have been described in Chapter IV. It is among the causes which have brought about the speedy and satisfactory termination of the famine of 1874. So far experience attests the advantage of adopting it in similar emergencies. It remains to be seen whether the money value of these advances will be duly recovered. Instructions have been issued for the realisation of some instalment, however small, at the coming winter harvest, so that the people may be reminded that Government intends to hold them to their bond. It has been assumed in the financial estimates that 85 per cent. of these advances will be recovered. The local officers report that the recoveries may even exceed this proportion, and that the people feel grateful for the concession, and evince entirely a disposition to repay.

In reference to the issue of food-grain by Government to the people in distressed districts or provinces, whether gratuitously or in wages for public work, or by sale, or in advances, or by all modes together, it is to be borne in mind that these processes, singly or collectively, must affect prices of all food-grains, not only in those districts and provinces, but also in neighbouring places. It is indeed impossible to define the area or distance to which such influence may extend, but the extent must be considerable. Comparisons are sometimes made between the prices of food-grains which have prevailed in Behar and northern Bengal (into which provinces vast quantities of Government grain have been poured) during 1874 with the prices which have prevailed during the same period in neighbouring portions of the North Western Provinces, and in other parts of Bengal, where no Government grain was sent. Surprise seems to have been sometimes felt that with all the scarcity of private grain in north Behar and in other distressed places, with all the impending misery and mortality averted only by Government aid, the prices quoted in the local markets for other food-grains as well as rice, should have been not essentially dearer than those quoted in other districts where distress was but slight, or did not exist at all, and should not have reached the high prices that ruled in previous famines; such comparisons, however, are manifestly inapplicable to the circumstances of the case. It was the policy of Government, and nothing else but that, which prevented prices in Behar in 1874 from becoming dearer than those of Hindoostan, and from reaching the rates of former famines. This policy in Behar acted indirectly to prevent

prevent prices in the immediately adjoining districts of the North Western Provinces rising in sympathy with Behar rates. If there had been no importation by Government, Behar would have attracted an excessive quantity of grain from those districts, and would so have caused prices there to touch famine rates; nothing short of this policy could save the mass of human life which was in jeopardy. The Government poured into the distressed districts 460,000 tons of grain, and by paying a part of the railway charges assisted private dealers to import 530,000 tons more. The importation by Government kept down prices in north Behar. The private importation, thus encouraged by Government, kept down prices in south Behar. The Government grain was distributed in all the remoter and more distressed tracts, and was sold to the public at rates adjusted according to the prices of neighbouring marts. When wholesome Burmah rice was to be had at these rates close to every village, the common rice of the country, though preferred to Burmah rice, must necessarily follow that standard; in short, the Government was obliged in parts of north Behar to take into its own hands the supply of food for the people; it is therefore manifestly impossible to compare the prices of a place and a time wherein Government so seriously and potentially interposed, with the prices of other places and other times wherein there has not been such interposition.

In the tracts south of the Ganges, where little Government grain was stored, the vast quantities of grain imported with the help of Government by private dealers from the cheap districts of northern India could be sold with profit at rates cheaper than famine prices.

In the most distressed districts the supplies of food were regulated by the operations of the Government, acting for the safety of the people, within the limited area of interference. The pertinent question, therefore, is not what the prices were with State interposition, but what they would have been without it. Referring to this question, I subjoin a statement showing the range of prices in seven of the larger districts during the recent scarcity as compared with prices ruling in ordinary years and in the famine of 1866. It will be seen that, on the whole, prices were in 1874 quite twice as dear as they are in ordinary years. In the early part of the season, before the forces of Government had come fully into the field, prices were dearer during the recent scarcity of 1873-74 than during the corresponding months of the last famine of 1865-66; but from April to June quotations were much the same during both years; in other words, the tendency to an excessive dearness dangerous to life was checked in 1874, doubtless by reason of the proceedings of the Government. Then during July, August, and September of 1874, food was much cheaper than it was during the same months of 1866. Those months were in 1866 a time of very short stocks, of very high prices, of much misery, and of some starvation; whereas in 1874 the efforts of Government, seconded by private trade, sustained the people in fair condition, and kept prices considerably cheaper than starvation rates. According to the analogy of 1866, the failure of December 1873, and the prices of the four subsequent months must have been followed by starvation rates in the summer and autumn of 1874 if Government had not interposed.

NAME OF DISTRICT.	Number of Seers of Common Rice sold for one Rupee in																	
	December.			February.			April.		June.		July.		September.					
	Average good Year.			Average good Year.			Average good Year.		Average good Year.		Average good Year.		Average good Year.			Average good Year.		
	1865.	1873.		1865.	1874.		1865.	1874.	1865.	1874.	1865.	1874.	1865.	1874.		1865.	1874.	
Tirhoot - - -	23½	14	12	22½	12	9½	21	9½	9	18	9	9	18½	9	11	20	10	14
Champaran - - -	26½	10	13	26	10½	9½	23½	9	9	22	9	11	22	6½	11	23	11	43
Saran - - -	20	18	12	20½	13½	8½	19½	12	12	20	11	12½	19	10	12½	18½	12	13½
Monghyr - - -	24	14½	13½	23½	12	9½	20	9	12½	19½	10	10½	19½	7½	11	18½	10	13½
Purneah - - -	30	18	10	26	16	9	25½	12	10½	23½	9	10	21	9½	10	24	12	17
Rungpore* - - -	29	22	14	27	16½	11½	26	16	8	23½	15	9½	22	11½	11½	23	10	16½
Dinagpore* - - -	34	19½	14½	30	20	14	30	15	8	27	15	8½	28	11½	9	26	11	15

* The famine of 1865 was but little felt in the districts of Dinagpore and Rungpore.

In fact, however, it is attested by all classes of witnesses that the failure of crops in 1873-74 was very much greater than in 1865-66, both as regards extent of area and losses within that area. It may therefore be presumed, almost with certainty, that had affairs been left to follow an uninterrupted course, the prices of 1874 would have been much higher, and the distress much more intense, than in 1865-66.

Even with all our efforts, very high prices did occasionally obtain in limited tracts and under exceptional circumstances. So early as March common rice had risen to seven seers per rupee in parts of Tirhoot, before the Government granaries were opened. In May, when the entire machinery of relief was in play, prices more than once rose to one rupee for seven seers at Mozufferpore, the capital of Tirhoot. In May also a sudden outburst

outburst of distress occurred in an unexpected quarter of Purneah; the Government granaries were cleared out, and the price of common rice stood at five to six seers per rupee until further Government supplies arrived. In the Julpigoree district prices ranged from five to seven seers per rupee for a fortnight before the Government grain arrived. Calcutta merchants, who had been concerned in the Orissa famine, predicted most confidentially, before the Government policy had been fully declared, that prices in Calcutta would reach seven and eight seers per rupee before the trouble was over.

I believe that none conversant with the facts can doubt that common rice would have been selling at five and six seers per rupee for months together over large tracts of Behar and Bengal if Government had not imported grain largely, and had not successfully promoted importation by trade. In the worst part of north Behar indeed, and in many other places from time to time, prices must have become even dearer than these last mentioned, until at last grain ceased to be procurable at any price. In such dire event, the people would have swayed hither and thither in a wild quest of food. Those who could move would have fled elsewhere, causing accession to the growing mass of misery wherever they went, or lying down to die by the way; those who could not move would have perished in their homes. Such prices would after a time have attracted supplies by trade, but before the arrival of such supplies a large portion of the people would have been dead.

It is always to be remembered in India that the effect of any given price of food upon the people largely depends on their circumstances, such as the proportion of cultivable to cultivated land, the incidence of the population on such land, the quality and value of the articles exported, the influx of money in payment for exports, the demand for labour, the rate of wages, and the like. Again, the effect much depends on the growth, continuance, or permanency of these circumstances. If dearth of food arises from such causes as these, the people bear up against it, even flourish under it, to a degree that would hardly be credited unless experience proved the fact. In central and western India, for several years subsequent to 1861, prices prevailed which would cause misery in eastern and north-eastern India, yet with those prices the people of central and western India had abundant harvests, and made strides onwards in health, wealth, and strength. Experience will immediately show what the people in any given province can or cannot endure in this respect. And it is understood that in Behar and in many districts of Bengal prices dearer than one rupee for ten seers mean distress, and that prices dearer than one rupee for six seers mean mortality.

I need not dilate here on this part of the subject, as it has been already adverted to in Chapter II.

These considerations lead to the question how many lives may have been saved by the expenditure and the operations which have been described. It has been seen in Chapters II. and IV. that the condition of the people in the great rice tracts of Durbhunga, Mudhoobunnee, Ramnugger, Bettiah, Soopool, parts of Mozufferpore and Seetampurhee, and parts of Purneah, Dinagepore, and Rungpore, in March and April last, was this, that they had no food, no money wherewith to buy any, and no means of earning anything. I believe that the best informed persons are quite right when they say that the people of these tracts could not have come through the crisis without losing about one-third their number if Government had not stepped in and helped them. Such a consequence would represent the loss of about one and three-quarter millions of lives. Besides this broad sweep of destruction, there would have been sporadic mortality or individual casualties in large numbers in the districts of north Behar and northern Bengal generally; also in parts of Moorshedabad, of the districts round Burdwan, of Chota Nagpore and Sonthalia. This secondary degree of mortality would represent an aggregate which cannot be stated numerically, but it might perhaps represent a loss of nearly 500,000 lives. This would raise the possible mortality to a number of two millions and a quarter. The famine of 1769-70 afflicted very nearly the same region as that which has been visited by scarcity during the past year; and it was estimated by so competent an authority as Warren Hastings that one-third of the population of Bengal (or, as it has since been calculated, ten millions of souls) perished in the famine of 1770. This estimate must apparently have been excessive, still it may be referred to as having passed current for years, and as having been adopted by so able a thinker as James Mill in his History of India. In 1874, for several months three millions to four millions of people, and in two months four and a quarter to four and a half millions, were either living on, or helped by, grain or money supplied by Government or at the expense of the charitable relief fund. My estimate, and after all it is a mere estimate, is that more than half of this number, or upwards of two millions of people, must have fallen victims to the famine of 1874 if Government had not interposed on a great and costly scale.

It is apparently thought by some that in the provinces under the Government of Bengal the population is becoming too dense to be supported properly by the land; and that when the people have been protected by extraordinary efforts on the part of Government from famine and other calamities, there will remain the problem as to how they are to sustain themselves permanently in ordinary times. Without at this moment attempting a solution of this problem, which indeed demands the most vigilant attention, I will offer some facts and considerations which are immediately available as bearing upon it.

It has been mentioned in Chapter I. that one of the measures by which the Government proposed to relieve distress was the promotion of emigration from the afflicted districts to parts of the country where food was cheaper and population less dense. For some years

past

past about 30,000 persons have emigrated annually from Calcutta to the tea districts of Assam and to the British colonies. Very few of these emigrants come from the thickly-peopled districts of Bengal or Behar; indeed Behar has hitherto contributed only 14 per cent. and Bengal proper barely 5 per cent. of all the emigrants who start from Calcutta. In November and December 1873 attempts were made to collect, in the densely-peopled districts of Sarun and Tirhoot, a large number of families who would be willing to emigrate to Assam. It was found that unless liberal bounties were allowed and a regular staff maintained for recruiting emigrants, no perceptible relief could be afforded to the distressed districts. It was considered that the money available for relief would be better spent in other ways, and so the attempt to promote emigration to the tea districts was abandoned. At the same time the usual emigration promoted by employers of labour in the tea districts and colonies was more than ordinarily active.

The authorities in British Burmah, in December 1873, suggested that the scarcity would afford a favourable opportunity for promoting emigration thither from the rice districts of Bengal. The Government of India made a considerable grant of money in January 1874 to meet the cost of beginning a system of emigration to British Burmah. An officer acquainted with emigration affairs was deputed to superintend the business, and all the district officers of Bengal were made his agents to procure emigrants and assist them in starting. The result of eight months' working of the Burmah emigration agency has been that 5,040 emigrants have gone to Burmah, and that the Government has spent 99,115 rupees, or over 19 rupees per head, in sending them. Much of this outlay will be repaid by the emigrants from their future earnings. Out of the total number of emigrants to Burmah, 3,479 came from Calcutta and the districts immediately round the metropolis; 1,199 from Behar; 87 from the Chota Nagpore country; and none at all from northern Bengal.

These facts may throw some little light on the question whether the pressure of the population of Bengal generally is too heavy for the resources of the land. The statistics of emigration (so far as they go) would seem to show that it is not. The fewness of Bengalee emigrants can hardly be due to any mismanagement on the part of emigration agents, for Bengalees themselves are quite as unsuccessful in obtaining emigrants. The chief minister of the Cooch Behar State, a highly intelligent and capable Bengalee gentleman, recently attempted in vain to induce families from his native neighbourhood, the Burdwan country, to emigrate to Cooch Behar, where excellent virgin soil close to dear markets is available at low rents.

A review of the export returns of Bengal ports shows that in ordinary years—

About 400,000 tons of rice (besides 40,000 tons sent annually up the Ganges into the North Western Provinces);

About 175,000 tons* of oil-seeds of different kinds;

About 380,000 tons of jute and jute fabrics;

About 10,000 tons of indigo and opium from Bengal alone—

are exported annually beyond the sea.

These products, together with miscellaneous raw produce exports, occupy about 3,750,000 acres of the best arable land in the country; so that Bengal can in ordinary years support her own population, and can spare more than one-twelfth of her cultivated land for production of food and other staples for the use of other countries. These remarks, too, apply with special force to the very districts which have been lately the worst distressed, namely, north Behar and northern Bengal. The tracts recently most afflicted with scarcity export food largely in ordinary years, with the single exception of Sarun; but Sarun largely exports non-edible grains, which trade enables it to purchase food supplies from many marts close at hand.

The agricultural statistics for Bengal have not been completed, but we know that, notwithstanding the great extension of cultivation during the last 80 years, there are still large areas of fertile soil awaiting the plough in Purneah, Dinagepore, Chittagong, Julpigoree, north Bhagulpore, and in Chota Nagpore.

Along the whole northern border of the most populous districts (which last year were also the most distressed) of Behar and Bengal, stretches a wide strip of fertile land awaiting the approach of cultivation. To the south of central Bengal lie the Sunderbunds, where, even allowing sufficient land for forest reserves, there are broad areas of rich waste available for settlers from the thickly-peopled districts of Bengal. To the west again of Behar and Bengal are situate the districts of the Chota Nagpore division, where the population is comparatively sparse, and where perhaps barely one-fifth of the land has yet been brought under the plough. In the rich valleys of Assam and Cachar there is ample space for any population that may overflow from eastern Bengal for very many years to come. There are thus on all sides of Bengal wide areas of uncultivated land available for such surplus population as may migrate from the districts of Bengal and Behar.

Sir George Campbell instituted the systematic collection of agricultural statistics in 1872. As yet this work has been completed for the district of Jessore only. The results for that district show that much of the land produces two crops a year, and that lands given up wholly to food-crops yield on an average about one ton of clean rice to the acre; that is to say, an acre supplies ample food for four people for a whole year. In this case

the

* The total export of oil-seeds from Calcutta is about 20,000 tons a year, but of this one-eighth comes from the North Western Provinces.

the land is yielding enough for the dense population settled on it and for a large exportation besides. Estimates made by competent authorities for Backergunge, Dacca, and the Sunderbunds, put the yield for those districts above one ton of rice to the acre. And some of the best lands in eastern Bengal produce three instead of two food-crops in the year. It is probable that many parts of Bengal do not produce at this rate; but it is believed that land put down with two food-crops a year produce at a rate approaching to one ton per acre in eastern and northern Bengal. Probably lands bearing only one crop of rice a year in Behar and western Bengal may not yield more than half a ton of clean rice to the acre in ordinary years. Even this calculation would show that the land must be yielding enough for the population living on it, and for some exportation besides.

At the rate of half a ton of food to the acre, one square mile (640 acres) of food-crop land would support 1,280 persons. The area of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa (exclusive of Chota Nagpore, the Chittagong and Tipperah Hills, and the tributary states), amounts to 133,924 square miles, with a population of 443 persons to the square mile. In the absence of correct agricultural statistics, the best estimate I can offer of the cultivated area is that in these three provinces about 48 millions of acres (equal to 75,000 square miles) are under cultivation. It is estimated that about four-fifths* of this area bear food-crops. By this reckoning 38½ millions of acres produce food; one-twelfth of the produce will more than meet all requirements for seed grain; so there remain 35 millions of acres for food, which will support 70 millions of people; but the population of these three provinces is only 59½ millions. Therefore if the estimate now offered is near the truth, there is, without reckoning the yield of double crop lands, a considerable margin of food produce to meet demands for exportation, and to cover short production or occasional failure of crops over limited areas.

In western Bengal, especially Burdwan, and in Behar, the wages of unskilled labour are very low indeed, and there are large classes who live poorly in ordinary years. Their depressed condition has been strikingly apparent during the troubles of 1874. But recent investigations have shown that even in the Burdwan country the poorer classes are, in respect of petty comforts and conveniences, better off than they were 20 years ago. In eastern and northern Bengal the wages of unskilled labour are comparatively high, there is no pauper class, and the petty occupiers of the land are almost to a man comfortably off. For instance, in the Rungpore district, where the population averages 619 to the square mile, and the whole people make a comfortable living by the land, it would be almost impossible to collect 5,000 workmen in any one place. The road making, the palanquin carrying, and the harder menial duties throughout Rungpore are usually done by sturdy immigrants who visit Rungpore and Cooch Behar annually from the less fertile districts of Chota Nagpore and Sonthalia.

Without at all controverting the opinion that the poverty of large classes of the people in some parts of the provinces under the Bengal Government does afford ground for anxiety, I believe that the above considerations forbid us to despond. There are evidently some facts which point the other way, and indicate that so long as the seasons are propitious and the crops prosper, the people will, as a whole, support themselves; that they can withstand a moderate degree of misfortune, and even a partial failure of harvests; and that nothing short of a really formidable calamity will drive them to the verge of danger.

The distress caused by wide-spread failure of crops in a country thickly inhabited by a purely agricultural population would not of itself show that the pressure of the population is too heavy in ordinary years. In very few countries could the people bear up against such a disaster as that. The rapidity with which the people re-established their agricultural livelihood in the summer of 1874, and with which vast crowds have, during the autumn of that year, left the relief works and relief centres all over Behar and northern Bengal, seems to show that the people look with entire assurance to the land proving sufficient for their support in ordinary years.

The events of 1874 have not indeed furnished any conclusive data for solving the question, which is perhaps insoluble, as to what may be the average amount of stocks of food in the country; but the experience of this year tends to show that these stocks in the distressed districts at the end of 1873 were larger than they had been supposed by many to be. The British Indian Association expressed in December 1873 their confident belief that "the stock of old rice in the country was not such as in any way materially to supply the deficit in the yield of the current year's crops." Again, my own estimates of the grain requirements of each district, which were framed after inquiry on the spot, reckoned

* Note.—In the three sub-divisions of the Jessore district, for which accurate statistics have been collected, the proportion of food-crop area and of double crop land has been found to be as follows:—

	Acres.
Total area, 1,581 square miles, equal to	1,011,840
Total crop-producing land	749,832
Land producing two or more crops a year	75,699
Area under food-crops	661,798

Out of this last total (661,798 acres) more than 75,000, equal to 11 per cent. of the whole, produces two food-crops in the year. In this tract, therefore, 89 per cent. of the cultivated land produces food; but it is notorious that the Jessore district yields a large surplus of rice, sugar, and other food stuffs for export to Calcutta and Western Bengal. In Behar, where opium and indigo are largely grown, the proportion of food crops to other staples is probably smaller than in Jessore.

reckoned on the people needing to consume some Government grain during February 1874, and a great deal more during March and April. Yet the result showed that in all the distressed districts the local supplies sufficed for the great majority of the population until the middle of March, and in some districts they lasted up to even later dates. Their exhaustion was constantly dreaded and frequently appeared imminent; still they held out in most places, though they ran short in some. Up to the end of April only 14,000 tons of Government grain had been consumed, as compared with a consumption of 57,000 tons anticipated in the estimates. It is true that we endeavoured at the outset, by cash payments, to prevent the consumption of Government grain, and that consequently during subsequent months, May to August, the Government grain was consumed at a rate fully equal to that which had been anticipated. Still there is the fact that stocks in great quantities were drawn out during the spring. Again, at the end of the season, in September and October 1874, when the prospects of the winter rice-crop were nearly secure, considerable stocks of grain were brought to market in some of the districts where the failure of 1873-74 had been greatest.

The experience of 1874 has fully indicated the correctness of the policy which drew the Government supplies of grain mainly from Burmah and Saigon, and has also shown that rice is, for Bengal and Behar, the best kind of grain for Government to import. The small Government purchases made in Calcutta during December unavoidably disturbed markets and forced up prices to an extent out of proportion to the magnitude of the transactions, while the result showed that all the surplus food of northern India, and of Orissa, that could by any means find means of transit, would work its way to the distressed districts by means of private trade. Considerable purchases (about 17,000 tons) were made by Government in Orissa; but a very much larger quantity (estimated to be about 50,000 tons) of grain found its way by private trade from Orissa into central Bengal, either for dispatch to Behar or else to fill the vacuum caused by exportation from Bengal to Behar. The surplus grain of northern India, so far as the railway could carry it, was brought into Behar by private traders, and thus the Government importations from beyond the sea were in addition to, and not in place of, the surplus grain available from other parts of continental India.

The people of Behar, as well as those of northern Bengal, preferred rice to wheat, and it seemed clear that they were not accustomed to eat wheat in any shape. In parts of Purneah, to which a small supply of northern wheat found its way, numbers are said to have boiled it like rice, and to have eaten it in that shape. Coarse grains, such as maize and the cheaper millets, were not imported by Government, with the exception of some small quantities, because they would not have kept sound longer than a very few months.

Burmah rice, though quite wholesome, was not so palatable to the people as Bengal rice; but this circumstance had its advantages, for it was certain that few would consume Government Burmah rice who either possessed or could buy Bengal rice. But in the last resort the hungry people ate the Burmah rice and threw upon it. The Burmah rice kept well in India. Fears were expressed by experts from Burmah versed in the rice trade that the Government grain stored in bulk would heat and spoil, as large stocks often did in Burmah; but the Government rice from Burmah has almost everywhere kept well, has not heated, and has been comparatively free from weevils. Part of this result is probably due to the care taken by Government officers to construct good granaries, to keep them water-tight, and to maintain thorough ventilation throughout the stacks of grain bags.

We were not so successful in keeping other grains, such as gram and wheat. Some of the stocks were attacked by weevils, and had to be sorted and sold off.

In respect to the state of the people, some questions must obtrude themselves, namely, in what physical condition has the administration of relief in 1874 left the masses of the population in the distressed districts? Has it improved the rates of wages? Has it caused any lasting material improvement? Has it aggravated or widened pauperism? Has it tended to demoralise the labouring classes? Has it altered, for better or worse, the relations between the people on the one hand and the Government and its servants on the other? Has it left any evil legacies behind it?

There is testimony, apparently universal, to the effect that all of the lately distressed classes are now, that is in October 1874, in quite as good health and strength as they have ordinarily been. That the humble classes connected with the land are in excellent working condition, is attested by the state of husbandry and by the area of well-tended cultivation at this moment. Of the classes lower in the social scale, some of them are ordinarily in poor physical condition, and they can hardly be otherwise now. Now that liberal relief has been dispensed for a time, they are declared by the best medical inspecting authorities to be not at all worse than usual, perhaps even to be somewhat above what must be acknowledged to be a low average state.

There is no sign as yet to show that the rate of wages has risen since the relief operations were undertaken. The intention was, in managing relief, and in introducing for a time causes which are in their nature artificial, to avoid everything which might tend to permanently influence wages either way. It has been seen in Chapters II. and IV., that when daily wages were given for relief labour, they were made relatively low and kept down as nearly as possible to the standard of ordinary years. When relief labourers were enabled to earn much more than ordinary wages, that was under the piece-work system, which necessarily offers a premium upon extra exertion, and it was thought that this would

not affect the future rates of wages proper. At all events it is presumable that the relief administration has not left the rate of wages at all worse than it found them, and that perhaps is all that properly could be expected. In north Bengal the rates of wages are moderately good, and may yet rise. In north Behar they are very low, perhaps as low as they are anywhere, and lower than in most Indian provinces of equal wealth and culture. It were much to be wished, for the sake of the humbler section of the community, that they were higher. There seems at present to be no reason to hope that any essential improvement has set in. The only prospect of such improvement immediately discernible arises from the projects of railways and canals in that region. If such works shall be undertaken, then, doubtless, the lower classes will receive their share of benefit in the shape of wages bettered.

As regards all the distressed districts save Burdwan, the belief is that pauperism has not been widened nor aggravated. At the period when the famine most touched the very poorest class, there were 750,000 persons on gratuitous relief and on light in-door labour. This number certainly included all the paupers of the distressed districts; but it included many more besides, namely, high caste people unable to beg or to work, and people unable to work and obliged to seek charity for a time only. The reduction of the total number began (as seen in Chapter V.) in the beginning of August, and by the middle of September all those who could be made to obtain any support for themselves were discharged. Those who remained after the middle of September (441,000 persons, as seen in Chapter V.) represented fully the pauperism of these districts. This number is equal to $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the population of these districts, taken at 18 millions in Chapter III., not a large proportion, all things considered. These people ordinarily subsist on private charity. They also (as seen in Chapter V.) have been undergoing discharge until they have disappeared almost entirely from the Government rolls everywhere save in the Burdwan division. There has been every desire on the part of Government and its officers to avoid retaining the poor people on the rolls a day longer than could be helped. Since their discharge these people must doubtless be again seeking private charity. In the absence of a poor law there must needs be a class who, by reason of sickness, infirmity, age, or helplessness, are forced to subsist on private charity. The relief system has preserved this indigent class in life through the crisis of the famine, when the sources of private charity were dried up. It has now restored them to their previous way of livelihood. There is no reason for supposing that it has done otherwise than leave them just as it found them. The pauperism of the country remains as it was. Its limits have not been enlarged.

There has been no demoralising effect whatever visibly produced on the labouring classes. It is true that in the distressed districts these classes were for several months employed on the relief works. A small portion of them consisted of professional labourers, who work for hire in road-making and similar occupations. This limited class certainly made good earnings by the piece-work system; but as they did this by industry superior to the average, there is no reason to regard them as demoralised thereby. They were among the first to be discharged from the works as soon as the season changed for the better. They will doubtless labour in the future on public works and the like, much as they have laboured in the past. But the real bulk of the relief labourers consisted of the lower classes of ryots and cultivators and the field labourers. In Chapter IV. it was shown that, although the system of daily wages, unavoidably adopted as a temporary expedient, had demoralising tendencies, the system of piece-work, which was speedily substituted and finally adopted, had not any such tendencies, but quite the reverse. It is believed that these people, so far from being demoralised, were actually improved in morale by the system which was adopted. After the setting in of the rains the matter became one of demonstrable fact. For in what did the ordinary work of these classes consist? Agriculture. After the rains set in, was there any reluctance on their part to return to their fields? Was there any slowness to sow? Was there any contraction of the average area of cultivation? Was any land ordinarily tilled left untilled? Was the first or autumn crop badly raised, tended, and gathered? Was the second or winter crop indifferently sown or inefficiently transplanted? Now all of the above questions, and any similar questions that could be put, may be answered emphatically in the negative. Never have these important things been done better by the people than during the summer and autumn of 1874. Though some persons here and there may have during June last been charged with unwillingness to quit relief, yet, as a whole, they have evinced a degree of alacrity and industry never surpassed by them within living memory. Such being the case, it is hard to see how they can have been in any way demoralised. On the contrary, they have probably learned a lesson regarding the vicissitudes of season and the expediency of losing no chance of self-preservation by skill and promptitude. The only thing ever alleged against them was this, that in the autumn of 1873 they might have saved some part of their crops by turning streams to the uses of irrigation. But they were wanting in knowledge and not in will. Irrigation cannot be improvised by ignorant rustics for the first time in face of an emergency.

In respect to the relations between the people on the one hand and the Government and its servants on the other, if there is any alteration produced, it is for the better. The people cannot have witnessed unmoved the really vast preparations made by the British Government and the unflagging devotion of the relief officers of all grades. I am convinced that the people of all classes, from the highest to the humblest, regard with the

utmost gratitude the policy and proceedings of Government on this occasion. They look back with extreme sensibility to the mortal peril which impended over them. Under Providence they attribute to Government their preservation from that peril. The impression left on their minds is profound, and will prove enduring. The sentiment of lively gratitude is not confined to the lately distressed districts, but pervades all the provinces under the Government of Bengal. The native press, the conversation of the people of all ranks, the addresses and representations constantly tendered to Government, teem and abound with proofs of this. From their bearing and conduct on this memorable occasion, all classes of the people, the zemindar, the landholder, the merchant, the trader, the ryot, the husbandman, the artisan, the labourers, the helpless poor, have risen in our estimation and regard. In respect to the officers of Government, their knowledge of the state of the people must have been greatly enlarged by the experience of the relief work, and they cannot but feel a more vivid interest than ever in the welfare of the people whose lives they have been instrumental in saving.

Respecting any supposed evil legacies of the famine, I hope that they are but few. Certainly a great expense has been incurred, about five and three-quarter millions sterling. This is an evil which cannot be overlooked or forgotten. It may be thought that a precedent has been established, which, whether for good or not, still is in either case most important. If any such precedent is thus established, I believe it will be for good, though I need not discuss its bearings here. Otherwise no evil legacy is perceptible. The famine relief may have not made the people better, but it has left them at least as well, morally and physically, as it found them. Some questions have been made prominent, the discussion of which may conduce to the public benefit hereafter. The insight of Government and its officers into the condition of the people and resources of the country has been improved. Public works for the prevention of famine in future have been designed. Another bond has been added to those bonds which unite the Government and its subjects. Above all, there is the moral effect of the elevated example which has been set by Government before the people at large.

One momentous lesson the famine has left behind it for our learning. That lesson teaches us the necessity of strenuous perseverance in the course of material improvement, on which the Government has already so beneficially and successfully embarked. It is only by such improvement that the country can be permanently protected from famine, and the necessity be avoided of adopting such extraordinary and costly remedies as those which have been described.

On a retrospect of the prevention of the famine, we cannot escape the question as to how the adoption of such extreme preventive measures on the part of Government in the future can be obviated. The calamity of 1874 is averted, the people are preserved in their ordinary condition, these fine districts are to pass on to 1875 with no unfavourable traces of the threatened destruction of 1874. But this has been effected at a very heavy financial cost to the State. During the period of safety there may be a disposition to forget that famine may happen again; still this contingency ought never to be absent from our reflections. Calamities of such awful magnitude as that which recently hung over these provinces are rare, and have been manifested at long intervals of time. We may hope that these provinces may, under Providence, long be spared such a visitation in the future. But at the worst, we must meet famine as we should meet war.

However such events shall again occur in Behar and in northern Bengal, there will be resources available which have been wanting on this last occasion. The Soane Canal, which, though incomplete, has been of great service* already, will be effectively protecting from drought the best part of southern Behar. There will be a railway connecting Patna, the commercial centre and emporium of Behar, with north-east Tirhoot, the chief scene of the late calamity. There is hope that irrigation works on a lesser scale will be securing from misfortune of seasons those rice plains on the northern borders of Tirhoot and Chumparun and those tracts of Sarun which have most suffered of late. In northern Bengal there will be a railway running through the heart of that territory from the Ganges at the south to the Himalaya on the north, which, had it existed in 1874, would have done much to prevent the famine in that region.

CONCLUSION.

Whatever may be the result of the proceedings of which the narrative is now concluded, we must be aware of the futility of mere human efforts for the averting of such a calamity as the famine of 1874; and we must be duly thankful for the mercy of Providence in sparing the lives of so many of our fellow subjects.

The Government of India can judge whether throughout the affairs, which have been described in this report, the officers of all grades working under the Government of Bengal have tried to act up to the terms of the resolution issued by the Governor General in

* At page 11 it was mentioned that irrigation from the unfinished channels of the Soane Canal had saved the crops on 150,000 acres. The amount of food thus secured to the country is reckoned by the Irrigation Department to have been 70,000 tons, valued at 580,000 £ sterling.

in Council in March 1874, and whether they have striven to "perform the arduous task imposed upon them with the zeal, ability, and self sacrifice which have always distinguished the servants of the Crown and of the East India Company in times of difficulty and danger."

No language that I can employ will adequately express my sense of the devoted manner in which the Government of Bengal has been served by the body of its officers during this period of extreme trial.

In a separate minute I have made a record of the services of the officers.

In another minute, also, will be set forth the various works for the relief and benefit of the poor undertaken during this crisis by the zemindars and other natives in the lately distressed districts, showing that their conduct has been worthy of their means, fortune, opportunities, and social position.

In recounting these events, the Government of Bengal thankfully remembers its obligations to the Government of the North-Western Provinces for the large staff of highly trained officers and the transport resources; to the Commander in Chief of the army for the well selected body of military officers, both European and Native; and to the Chief Commissioner of British Burmah for the timely arrival of the grain supplies.

Lastly, the Government of Bengal is gratefully conscious of the considerate guidance, the unvarying support, and the constant encouragement received by it in the fulfilment of its task, from the Governor General in Council.

Richard Temple.

NORTH WESTERN PROVINCES.

LETTER from C. A. Elliott, Esq., Secretary to Government of North-Western Provinces, to the Secretary to Government of India, Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce, dated 1st January 1875.

IN reply to your demi-official letter, dated 24th September 1874, and subsequent telegrams, I have the honour to forward reports on the scarcity of 1873-74 in the districts noted in the margin, with a brief narrative of the scarcity so far as it affected these Provinces.

2. The report has been urgently called for, and much delay has occurred in the receipt of the required information from the district officers. The Lieutenant Governor has, therefore, thought it better to submit this communication at once. A further Despatch will follow, containing His Honor's remarks on the conduct of the officers who have borne the brunt of the work.

3. The Basti report is necessarily imperfect. The Magistrate, Mr. F. Elliot, under whom all the famine operations were carried on, was allowed to take furlough in October under the promise that he would submit a report before he left India. This promise he was unable to fulfil; but his report is expected soon, and will be forwarded when received.

NARRATIVE of the Scarcity of 1873-74, in the North-Western Provinces.

THE rains of 1873 began in the North-Western Provinces more than a fortnight later than usual, were very deficient in quantity, and ended rather earlier than usual. At their close it was reported, especially from the eastern and sub-Himalayan districts, that the ponds and tanks were nearly empty, and this fact, added to the early cessation of the rains and the want of subsequent showers, indicated the probability of an extensive failure of the rice crop, and that the consequence of this, wherever rice is the main crop, would be scarcity and distress. No time was lost in ascertaining the measure of the calamity. On the 7th November, a circular order was issued to commissioners of divisions, instructing them to demand from collectors a full general report on the state of the crops in their districts, and on the prospects for the coming season. Replies to this circular were received in December and January. It was at once seen that for the Agra, Rohilkhand, and Meerut divisions there was nothing to fear, and that of the other three plains' divisions, that of Benares had suffered most. The Benares report indicated South

Mirzapur,

Mirzapur, Ghazipur, and the northern parts of Basti and Gorakhpur as the parts where severe distress was to be looked for. The extent of distress was, however, uncertain. Everywhere great hopes were built upon the rabi; but the parts where the rice failed most completely are also those where a second crop is usually sown in the fields which are still moist after the rice has been cut, and the ground in which the rice had perished was as hard as iron, so that this second crop could not be sown. As the cold season advanced, it gradually became evident that the districts in which State relief would be necessary were divided into two classes: first, those in the east and north-east of the provinces (the sub-Himalayan tract of Basti and Gorakhpur, and the east of Ghazipur), which, in climate and agricultural conditions, more or less resemble the western districts of Bengal; and, second, the Bundelkhand districts in the south, Banda, Hamirpur, Jhansi, Jalaun, and Lalitpur, with the southern portion of Mirzapur, all of which had suffered from a succession of bad years, and where the cultivators and landowners are in a state of chronic distress. In all these tracts the pressure of scarcity began to make itself felt at about the same time. Relief works, for which provision had already been made, were opened in most districts during January and in the beginning of February. In Jhansi and Jalaun they were about a month later. They were of the usual type, being mostly road embankments and other works of the kind, on which unskilled labour could be employed.

2. Meanwhile the winter rains were anxiously expected. Every effort was made to supply their place by diligent irrigation, and advances were given by Government to all cultivators who required them to dig wells; but as the drought continued, serious injury to the young crops became inevitable, and towards the end of January the situation became critical. The Christmas rains always make the difference between a good and a poor harvest; and this year, the ground having been less soaked by the rains than usual, the harvest would have been exceptionally poor. To add to the misfortune of the province, a frost such as had not been known for years set in about the middle of January and continued for some days; it did not affect the hardy wheat and barley, but the arhar, peas, and other more delicate crops were completely burnt up by it. At length in the first week of February the long delayed rain fell in moderately heavy showers, and the heavy calamity which seemed to be impending was averted. Though too late to do all the good which it might have done had it fallen at the usual time, it was of incalculable benefit, and through its influence a year of high prices was substituted for a year of famine.

3. The attendance on relief works, however, continued slowly to increase throughout the month. The numbers were greatest in the eastern districts; and as there was by this time little doubt that these were the only districts in which distress would be general and severe, it was thought desirable to obtain a comprehensive view of their condition. Messrs. Simson (junior member of the Board), and Carmichael (Commissioner of Benares) and Colonel Davidson, R.E., Superintending Engineer, were accordingly commissioned to make a tour through these districts, and report to Government the results of their inspection. Their reports (dated 22nd and 30th March 1874), showed that in Benares and Azamgarh there was no ground for apprehension, and that in Ghazipur distress was not nearly so widespread as had at one time been feared. Mirzapur the committee were unable to visit. By far the worst districts were Gorakhpur and Basti, and in each of these, the northern portion had suffered most severely. Rice is there the main staple, and it entirely failed. The winter crops which are ordinarily sown for a second harvest, after the rice had been reaped, could not be put into the ground on account of the early cessation of the rains. In a tract so extensive, and in which the failure both of the spring and the autumn crops had been so general, it was not to be expected that the rabi harvest would bring much relief. For the last week of March the daily average attendance on relief works was about 30,000 in Gorakhpur and 22,000 in Basti; and there was evidently a steady tendency to increase, which it was probable would continue till the setting in of the rains dispersed the people to field work. Meanwhile, other measures of relief were sanctioned. In the Maharajganj Tahsil of Gorakhpur one half of the rabi revenue kist was remitted, and in Basti the collector was authorised to propose remission or suspension of revenue where he thought it necessary. Advances were to be made to zemindars and ryots for the purchase of rice seed to the extent, if needful, of a lakh and a half in Gorakhpur and of half a lakh in Basti. The seed was procured from Nipal, sale being permitted by the Darbar to purchasers furnished by the collector with a certificate, and the total amount of advances in Basti was 43,209 rupees, and in Gorakhpur 91,471 rupees. In Gorakhpur it was apprehended that the northern grain markets in the Maharajganj Tahsil might run short in the rainy season, when importation is difficult. The collector was therefore empowered to advance money, repayable in a year, without interest, to traders who should guarantee to store grain at specified places, such grain being purchasable by Government at a price fixed so as to cover all the expenses of the trader. The grain stored under these conditions amounted to 90,865 maunds, and though eventually not required by Government, its presence in the district probably had a beneficial action upon prices. To merchants who preferred to import grain for sale at their own discretion, money was to be advanced, repayable without interest in six months; and in this way 10,700 maunds were imported.

Gorakhpur.
Basti.
Ghazipur.
Mirzapur.
Azamgarh.
Benares Divisional
Review.
Jaunpur.

Allahabad.
Banda.
Karwi.
Hamirpur.
Allahabad Divisional
Review.
Jhansi and Jalaun.

Inspection of eastern districts by Special Famine Commission.

Beginning and development of distress.

Ultimate extent of distress

4. This estimate of the situation formed by Government in March was confirmed by the event in all but one particular. It was thought probable that the distress would last till the autumn crops (especially the rice) were ripe, and that the relief works would have to be kept open till then. The unexpected improvement in the spring harvest, however, diminished the distress considerably. The effect of the new supply of food was marked in Ghazipur, where the harvest was decidedly above the average, by a speedy decrease of the numbers employed on relief works, which fell from 3,000 in the end of February to 800 by the middle of April; and in the last week of July the works, which had been kept open for some weeks of the rains, in deference to the wishes of the district officer, were everywhere closed. In Gorakhpur and Basti distress may be said to have reached its highest point in the beginning of April, when the daily numbers on the works averaged 52,000 in the former and 28,000 in the latter district. But even after distress had attained its maximum, the numbers on relief works continued steadily to increase. One reason for this was that the rabi outturn, though fairly good on irrigated land, had not been so plentiful in these districts as in Ghazipur, and in the sub-Himalayan rice tracts the area under this crop was very small. By the end of the month there were 91,000 people on the works in Gorakhpur and 84,000 in Basti. But the large and increasing proportion of women and children could not escape notice, and there were considerable doubts as to the extent of the distress which prevailed. On the one hand, it seemed that the relief works might be popular on account of the difficulty of exacting a full day's labour from the crowds who thronged to them and the liberty they enjoyed, and on account of the wages being paid in cash at a time when agricultural labour was very slack and there was nothing else for the people to work at. On the other hand, there was the hypothesis that these works were the sole refuge of a famished and despairing population whose only means of supporting life was by the wages earned on them.

Visit of Lieutenant Governor to eastern districts.

5. Sir John Strachey lost no time after assuming the reins of Government in visiting the distressed districts, in order to form his opinion, with the aid of the best local advice. The conclusion he came to was that, on the whole, the former explanation was the correct one, and that there was not really any such severe distress as to deserve the name of a famine. He decided that it was not advisable to close the works, but that efforts should be made to make the relief more distasteful by exacting a larger tale of work, and that the wages should be reduced to the minimum which would provide subsistence for the labourers. Evidence was adduced that the scale had until lately been too high, and that the relief works had attracted sellers not of necessities only but of luxuries. The rates now fixed were on the scale which had been introduced by the magistrate of Gorakhpur about three weeks previously, the allowance for infants only being lessened by one-half. They were—

For a man	-	-	-	-	5	Gorakhpuri pice (or one anna).
" a woman	-	-	-	-	4	ditto.
" a child able to work	-	-	-	-	3	ditto.
" an infant	-	-	-	-	1	ditto.

Thus the exclusion of all who were not in need of aid was left to be gradually effected by the low rates of wages and the strict demand of a fair day's work from every labourer. The collectors of both districts were authorised to allow zemindars to indent on the relief works for men, and labourers who refused to accept employment under these requisitions with the promise of full wages, were to be turned away from the works. The rates of wages were also to be lowered as soon as should be consistent with safety, but the necessity of such a measure was practically obviated by the early setting in of the rains.

Disposal of labourers during rains.

6. There was a further question to be considered—how the people were to be disposed of during the rains. No less than 219,000 men, women, and children were congregated on relief works in the districts of Gorakhpur and Basti in the beginning of May. It was obviously impossible to provide out-of-door employment for these multitudes during the rainy season. One of the chief works was the raising of an embanked road through the centre of a great depression which would be filled with water in the rains; and in other places, though the work itself might not be in a swamp, it would have been difficult to hut the labourers on high and dry ground, and a serious outbreak of sickness from damp and exposure might be expected. There was, however, every reason to hope that with the coming of the rains the people would, for the most part, disperse to their ploughing and sowing, and the continuance of the relief system would not be necessary. The Lieutenant Governor (Resolution No. 479 A., dated 16th May 1874) therefore laid down the following general principles for the conduct of relief operations:—

1st. Able-bodied persons of a class accustomed to labour were to be employed on *bonâ fide* public works at the ordinary rates of pay.

2nd. For persons of the above class, incapable of labour on public works, easy employment was to be found on roads, &c., or in poor-houses. The plan of these poor-houses was identical with that adopted by the Lieutenant Governor when he was collector of Moradabad, during the scarcity of 1861, and was based mainly on the principles that relief should ordinarily be given in the shape of cooked food and restricted to persons obviously in actual want; that every one should work, who was not physically incapable; and that all working paupers should remain the whole day in the poor-house.

3rd. Gratuitous

3rd. Gratuitous relief was to be provided for persons incapable of labour; and
4th. Persons, who on account of caste, or other feeling or prejudices, should refuse to accept relief on the above terms, were to receive exceptional treatment.

7. Steps were now taken for gradually introducing this change of system, and for bringing the relief works to a close, and dismissing the people engaged on them. Warning was given to the people that it was intended to close the works, and work-houses were established at the head quarters of Gorakhpur and Basti: at Mithaura and Bansi in the north, and at Kasia in the east. The change was made with even less difficulty than was looked for. Towards the end of May, after a few partial showers, the demand for agricultural labour began to make itself felt in Gorakhpur, and from all the works there set in a steady flow of labourers to the fields. On the 30th May rain fell generally throughout the district, and the numbers in daily attendance on relief works, which had been 89,000 during the last week of the month, sank to 25,000 in the first week of June. The rains had now thoroughly set in, and a few days later the last relief work was closed, and the three workhouses were opened for the destitute, who still claimed assistance. In Basti the number of labourers went on increasing to 127,000 daily in the last week of May. About this time wages were reduced by one-fourth, the rains began early in June, and by the 22nd of the month the last relief work was closed. In each district the workhouses opened with about 800 inmates.

Closing of relief works.

8. These events completely justified the conclusions arrived at by Sir John Strachey on visiting the locality, and they deserve special and prominent record on account of the importance of their bearing on the treatment of future famines. It appears probable that in a slack season of the year the opening of Government relief works would always attract great crowds of labourers. In a season of considerable pressure, but not of absolute famine, the relief works in Gorakhpur and Basti were for some weeks daily thronged by more than 200,000 men, women, and children, who found an attraction in the light work, in the liberty of going at night to their houses after attending a sort of vast picnic during the day, and the wages earned at a time when ordinarily they had no employment in the fields, and had to live on their harvest savings. But when the wages were cut down to a mere subsistence allowance, when a full day's labour was insisted on, and when the liberty of living at their homes was threatened, these immense crowds melted away as rapidly as they had collected, and it was found that there was hardly any one who really stood in need of relief.

General conclusions.

9. For the southern districts the history of the scarcity may be more briefly told. Here distress was due, not as in the eastern districts, to the failure of a single staple, but to the fact that a series of bad seasons was followed by the indifferent autumn harvest of 1873. In South Mirzapur and in Jhansi relief works had been found necessary in 1872-73. In Hamirpur and Banda, and indeed throughout Bundelkhand generally, the spread of kans grass has of late years checked cultivation and impoverished the people. Throughout a great part of these districts the country is wild and hilly, and the population poor and sparse. This is especially the case in South Mirzapur, where distress made its appearance in the plateau between the valleys of the Son and Ganges as early as the beginning of December, and attained its maximum about the middle of January, when for some time nearly 3,000 people were daily employed on relief works; but the out-turn of the rabi harvest in this tract was so good that by the middle of March there remained only one work with about 300 labourers, and this closed in the middle of June. Among the hills to the south of the Son, in the Government estate of Dudi, and the Court of Wards' estate of Agori-Barhar, the effect of the spring harvest was less marked. Various measures of relief were adopted; advances were made to cultivators and to zemindars who undertook to employ labour; grain was imported and stored, and a number of small relief works were opened, to which the wild and timid people of Dudi were at first hardly persuaded to come. Their only other means of escape from famine was emigration to Sirguja, but as the season wore on they gained confidence or were driven to the works by want, and the number of labourers gradually rose to 1,300 at the end of May. This was the maximum. On the setting in of the rains the people found employment in the fields, and all works were closed by the third week of June.

Distress in the southern districts, South Mirzapur.

10. In Banda, Hamirpur, Jhansi, and Jalaun, distress did not manifest itself so soon. Relief works were opened in Banda in the end of January, in Hamirpur in the beginning of February, in Jhansi in the beginning of March, and in Jalaun not till April; but as they lay in districts more populous than South Mirzapur, they were more numerous attended. The maximum daily average in Banda was between 7,000 and 8,000 early in March; in Hamirpur about 2,500 at the end of May; and in Jhansi and Jalaun respectively, 1,000 and 180 during May. The Jalaun relief works and all the Banda works but one ceased as soon as the rains began; this one and the Jhansi relief works came to an end in the second week of July; and the last works in Hamirpur were closed by the 20th July.

Banda, Hamirpur, Jhansi, and Jalaun.

11. The workhouse system which was to be substituted for relief works during the rains in Gorakhpur and Basti has already been described. The same system was introduced into Banda and Hamirpur. In Gorakhpur the number of paupers in the three work-houses reached its maximum (a little over 1,500) in the end of July; it remained at

Workhouses.

about 1,000 during August, rapidly declined after the end of the month, and before the end of September all three workhouses were closed. In Basti the average during August was 1,800, and during the greater part of September about 1,200: October opened with about 550, and by the 21st of the month all workhouses were closed. In Hamirpur the numbers in the workhouses rose from 600 to 730 during August and September, but began to fall off in October, and by the end of the month all State relief had come to a close. In Banda the workhouses opened with nearly 1,000 inmates, and the numbers gradually decreased to less than 100 by the middle of August. On the 17th of October all workhouses were closed.

Prices.

12. During the entire period of scarcity prices may be said to have followed their own course. The dearth of grain in the eastern districts during the last three months of 1873 was probably due in part to export to Bengal, but before the beginning of 1874 this had wholly ceased. In Gorakhpur and Basti the rabi grains—wheat, barley, and gram—were at first even somewhat cheaper than they had been in the same months (October–February) of the previous year; but the deficiency of the rabi out-turn reversed the case from March to June. The previous year, however, was itself an unfavourable agricultural season, and does not afford a fair standard of comparison. In an ordinarily good year, between October and June, a rupee will purchase not less than 16 seers of wheat, and for the greater part of the time not less than 20 seers. In 1874, in March and April, after the spring harvest had come into the market, 14 or 15 seers was the cheapest rate for wheat. The prices of barley and gram were higher than usual in a considerably greater degree. All these grains were even dearer in Ghazipur from October to February, but there the plentiful rabi out-turn of March and April immediately brought prices down to about their normal level. In the case of rice, which is an autumn crop, there was of course no such fresh supply. The price in Ghazipur between November and June varied from 11 to 12 seers the rupee. In Gorakhpur the price rose to 11 seers in February and to 10½ from April to June; in Basti it was nine seers during February and March, and eight seers and three-quarters from April to June. In an ordinary year a rupee will buy 19 or 20 seers from October to March, and not less than 16 from April to June. The range of prices in the other distressed districts was less remarkable. Grain of all kinds was more or less dearer than usual, but in general prices did not reach the famine limit, and the pressure of distress was, as already explained, due rather to the impoverishment produced by previous unfavourable seasons than to the deficient harvests of 1873–74.

Rates of wages on relief works generally.

	Adult— Man.	Child— Above 10.	Child— 10 and under.
Flower	oz. 16	oz. 12	oz. 8
Vegetables	4	2	2

13. In the beginning of February the execution of all relief works was made over to the Public Works Department of Government. By that department a resolution was published on 10th February for the determination of rates of wages on the following principles:—The daily wages given were to be sufficient to purchase a certain quantity of food, which was fixed according to the scale shown in the margin. It was calculated in the district of Gorakhpur wages on the above scale would be six Gorakhpuri pice (or 1½ anna) for a man, three for a woman, and two for a child. For the other districts the wages were left to be fixed by the magistrate, in accordance with the food standard prescribed. The maximum daily rates were 1½ anna for a man, 1 anna for a woman, and ½ anna for a child. If it should happen (which was not expected, and did not in fact take place) that the daily quantity of food which these rates could purchase fell short of the standard, orders were to be required of Government. To the scale laid down by this resolution, wages paid in all districts gradually adjusted themselves. The rates at first paid in Gorakhpur and Basti were in Gorakhpuri pice of five to the anna:—

Man.	Woman.	Child.	Infant.
6	4	3	3

and in Ghazipur, were 4 pice, equal 1 anna,

Man.	Woman.	Child.	Infant.
7	5	3	0

and in the end of February they were reduced to

Man.	Woman.	Child.	Infant.
6	4	3	0

In Banda, on the 1st April, the rates were,

Man.	Woman.	Child.	Infant.
4	3	2	1

About the middle of April the Collector of Gorakhpur found it possible to reduce the wages of a man to 4 pice, or 1 anna, and the allowance for non-labouring children to 2 pice. This change was ordered by Government to be introduced in Basti also, and the Ghazipur rates were to be brought down to the same scale. In the beginning of May the Ghazipur rates were reduced by the Lieutenant Governor to 4, 3, and 2 pice, and on the 12th, in Gorakhpur, the allowance for infants was cut down to one pice, the rate which

which had already prevailed for some time in Basti. Towards the end of the month the Ghazipur rates were adopted in Basti, and the change, as has already been related, was followed by the speedy dispersion of the crowds assembled on relief works.

14. On making over the execution of relief works to the Public Works Department in February, sanction was given to an expenditure of 70,000 rupees, as detailed in the margin. Towards the end of March the grants for Gorakhpur and Banda were each increased by 10,000 rupees, a grant of 10,000 rupees was made for Jhansi, and 10,000 rupees more were placed at the disposal of the Public Works Department for expenditure as should be judged necessary. On the 20th of April the sums shown on the margin were sanctioned in addition to former grants, and on the 17th of June a final grant of 4,93,000 rupees was assigned to Gorakhpur and Basti. The accounts have not yet been closed, but the district reports which are printed with this state the expenditure as follows:—

Expenditure on Relief Work.		Rs.
Mirzapur	- - - - -	10,000
Basti	- - - - -	20,000
Gorakhpur	- - - - -	20,000
Ghazipur	- - - - -	10,000
Banda	- - - - -	10,000
TOTAL		70,000
Gorakhpur at half a lakh per mensem for six months		3,00,000
Basti, ditto	- - - - -	3,00,000
Ghazipur	- - - - -	4,000
Mirzapur	- - - - -	3,000
Banda	- - - - -	15,000
Hamirpur	- - - - -	3,000
Jalaun and Jhansi	- - - - -	5,000
Unallotted specially to any district	- - - - -	20,000
TOTAL		6,50,000

	Relief Works and other Expenditure Chargeable to the State.	Expenditure on Poor-houses, &c., met from the Charitable Relief Fund.
	Rs.	Rs.
Gorakhpur	3,40,195	10,894
Basti	4,28,557	9,637
Ghazipur	13,116	6,900
Mirzapur	46,239	—
Banda	13,249	6,026
Hamirpur	9,145	6,221
Jalaun	6,893	—
Jhansi	925	295
TOTAL	8,58,319	37,973

15. The relief works were intended for the support of the able-bodied poor. The North West Government adhered to the rule laid down in the famine of 1868, that the duty of Government is to provide work for those who can and will work, but that the relief of those who are unable to work is a matter which devolves properly on private charity, in which the State should assist, but should not bear the whole burden. Accordingly, as on former occasions, a Central Relief Committee was formed and the subscriptions of the public invited, an equal sum to that subscribed being contributed by Government. The amount thus collected was 63,988 rupees, but the contribution from public funds was no more than 13,037 rupees, for the favourable turn taken after the rains of February reduced the task of the Committee, and the demand for assistance made upon them, far below the original expectations; and, speaking generally, it may be said that the offer of labour on the roads and in workhouses almost met all the requirements of the case. The Committee's report is printed as an appendix; it will be seen that the sums shown in it as expenditure from the charitable relief fund differ somewhat from those shown in the district reports, which are of later date.

16. The above remarks contain all that his Honor considers it necessary to say of the scarcity of 1873–74, regarded from a provincial point of view. The district reports, especially that of Gorakhpur, comprise all the detailed information that can be required, and the following paragraphs sum up briefly what was done in each district:—

Mr. Lumsden's report gives a very full and clear account of the condition of the district, the causes of the distress, and the range of prices. Common rice, which is the staple food of the northern part of the district, stood at 10 or 11 seers from January to August, but no other grain was sold at what may be called famine prices; barley never fell below 13 seers, nor gram, except for a short interval, below 14. Relief works were opened at the end of January and in February:—(1.) In the northern or Maharajganj Tahsil, where the main crop is rice, and which had therefore suffered most severely. (2.) In and about the city. (3.) In the south-west part of the district, on the great embankment known as the Tuckerbund. On the first of these works the numbers averaged about 12,000 in March, 40,000 in April, and 41,000 in May. In the works round the city the numbers never much exceeded 7,000. At the Tuckerbund and another work near it, 7,300 were employed in March, 16,500 in April, and over 19,000 in May. The average number in May on all the works was 78,000, and the maximum reached in that month was 89,000. Early in June these great masses melted away rapidly on the first appearance of the rains, and the works were all closed by the middle

of the month, having cost altogether 3,20,444 rupees. Three workhouses took their place: one was established in the city, where was the greatest collection of permanent poor; one in the north, where distress was severest; and one in the east, at Kasia; both the latter were but little used. The average at Gorakhpur never exceeded 1,000, and hardly rose above 200 at the other two places. The workhouses were closed in September, the total expenditure on them having been 7,353 rupees. Besides this, 5,865 rupees were expended from private subscriptions on poor-houses established earlier in the year and superseded by the workhouses, and 513 rupees in relief to "pardah-nashin" women; 4,700 rupees was the cost of keeping up hospitals for the poor-house and workhouse sick; 91,471 rupees were given as advances for purchasing rice for seed grain. Altogether the cost of the relief works of all sorts was to Government 3,40,195 rupees, and the sum of 10,894 rupees was further expended from the funds of the Charitable Relief Committee.

Basti.

17. In Basti the first relief work, the road from Basti to Bansī, was opened on the 22nd January. Throughout February the numbers averaged about 5,000 a day; in March they were over 8,000; by the end of April they rose to nearly 35,000, and they stood at about this figure through May. In June they rapidly fell to 6,500. The next work opened was the road from Basti to Minhdawal undertaken at the end of February. The numbers in March were about 5,000 a day, in April they rose to 35,000, in May to 50,000, and in June they fell suddenly to 7,000. The Domariaganj road was begun in March, and in May it employed 30,000 labourers. The Basti-Faizabad road was taken up in May, and during that month the numbers averaged 7,000. On the road from Basti to Nepal no less than 30,000 people were employed throughout May. The rapidity of the dispersion of the people is shown by this fact, that while the number on all the works in the last week of May were 127,000, in the third week of June they were 25,000. The total cost of these works was 4,28,557 rupees. The two workhouses were opened in June and closed in October, and their total cost was 9,637 rupees. The necessarily imperfect report sent up from this district does not show the average daily number of inmates.

Ghazipur.

18. The Collector's report gives an interesting but rather highly coloured account of the difficulties he had to encounter in his district, its over-population, and the chronic struggle of its labouring poor for bread. The rice crop, the failure of which was almost universal, is estimated to cover about one-seventh of the cultivated area of the whole district, and this failure came on the top of a series of bad seasons. The price of wheat stood at about 10½ seers in October 1873, barley and gram at 14 and 15 seers, and they remained low till the rabi harvest came in. Several relief works were opened early in February, and employed about 2,000 persons a day in that month and March, but with the reaping of the harvest the numbers fell to less than 1,000, and they were finally closed in July, having cost 13,116 rupees. No regular poor-house was established, but an existing one supported by the municipality at Ghazipur was enlarged, and much gratuitous relief was distributed in grain and cash throughout the district. The cost of this was about 6,900 rupees up to the end of October 1874.

Mirzapur.

19. In the south of Mirzapur (Robertsganj and Dudhi) wheat stood in October and November at about 12 to 14 seers, barley at 14 to 16, and rice at 11 to 12. With the end of March and the harvest gathered, all grains rose to an easier level except rice, which remained almost as dear till August. A great number of small relief works were set on foot in December and January, the population being too scattered and small to congregate anywhere in large numbers. The average daily attendance was between 2,000 and 3,000 in January, but fell off rapidly after the 15th March, and the works were closed on the 21st of June. The total expenditure was 25,136 rupees. Besides this, 21,103 rupees were expended in advances to zemindars and cultivators for seed grain and food, and to banias to help them to buy grain. Much of this has since been repaid, and almost all is recoverable.

Banda.

20. The rains ended in Banda on the 9th September, but no severe distress was felt till the beginning of February. Prices were not high then, for barley never fell below 16 seers, or gram below 20 seers per rupee, but the cessation of hired employment in the fields threw many of the poorer classes out of work. Three relief works were opened in February; the maximum attendance was in March, when the numbers rose to above 7,000 a day; they diminished greatly when the rabi harvest set in, and the works were closed by the end of June. Besides these works, 21 poor-houses were opened, the earliest of which were started in February. At these about 1,000 persons received daily relief in April (the maximum, 1,700, being reached in the first week of that month); the numbers diminished rapidly after the rains set in, and the poor-houses were closed in October. The total expenditure on public works was 13,249 rupees; on poor-houses 6,026 rupees.

Hamirpur.

21. At Hamirpur signs of distress were observed earlier. The price of wheat never fell below 13½ seers, or gram below 18 seers per rupee. In December and January two works were set in hand in order to provide relief; later on the number was raised to 10. They were all closed by the 20th July; the average number of persons employed was 1,100, and the highest number was about 2,500, in the last week of May. Six poor-houses were also opened, the average attendance at which was 434, and the last

was

was closed on the 31st October. The total cost of the relief works was 9,145 rupees, and of the poor-houses 6,221 rupees.

22. In Jalaun there was really no distress to speak of; one relief work was opened, more as a precaution than as a necessity, and only about 180 persons resorted to it; no poor-house was started. Jhansi, however, has long been in a semi-pauperised condition, and though prices were fairly low and the prospects of the rabi good, there was a considerable amount of general, but not acute, distress in the eastern part of the district. Relief works were opened in March and closed on 14th July; the average attendance was about 1,000 persons, and the total expenditure was 6,983 rupees. Poor-houses also were opened in several places, but were very little resorted to, not more than 50 persons a day being relieved at any time; the cost of this was only 295 rupees.

From the Secretary to Government, North-Western Provinces, to the Secretary to Government of India, Department of Revenue, Agriculture and Commerce; No. 4, dated 11 January 1875.

In continuation of my letter No. 1 dated 1st January 1875, I am desired to forward the following remarks on the conduct of the civil officers engaged in famine relief operations in the North-Western Province in 1874.

2. The chief brunt of the work fell on the magistrates of Gorakhpur and Basti, Messrs. Lumsden and Elliot. Both these officers, and especially Mr. Lumsden, showed energy and zeal in devising and setting on foot measures for the relief of the distressed, ability and local knowledge in placing before Government the true condition of the country, and discretion in perceiving when the distress had passed away and the time for contracting the operations had come. The Lieutenant Governor thinks that Mr. Lumsden deserves the high commendation of the Government for the excellent services which he has rendered. Among their assistants, Messrs. Stoker and Thomson of the civil service, and Mr. Mills, inspector of police, deserve special notice.

3. Among the officers on the Public Works establishment who supervised and carried out the relief works in these districts, the chief engineer singles out Lieutenant Colonel E. Davidson, R.E., superintending engineer, Captain Beauchamp, R.E., and Mr. Sub-Engineer Peart, for special commendation.

4. Syud Ahmad Khan, Bahadur, C.S.I., readily responded to the call of Government, and gave very useful help in establishing a system of workhouses on the same principle which was adopted in Moradabad in the famine of 1861.

5. The arrangements made by Mr. C. Robertson, magistrate of Mirzapur, for meeting the wants of the wild and difficult region in the south of his district, were all that the Lieutenant Governor could desire.

6. Mr. Oldham, the magistrate of Ghazipur; Mr. Wall, the magistrate of Banda, with his assistants, Messrs. Knox and Hardy; and Mr. Kaye, magistrate of Hamirpur, showed great devotion and zeal in superintending the works and relieving distress in those districts.

7. All these officers have received the thanks of the Lieutenant Governor for their services.

LETTER from C. A. Elliott, Esq., Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce; No. 13, dated 11th February 1875.

In continuation of my letter, No. 1, dated 1st January 1875, I have the honour to forward the report of the Central Famine Relief Committee mentioned in paragraph 15 of the narrative accompanying the letter above quoted.

* The maximum price of wheat was 14½ seers, of grain 5½ seers, per rupee.

LETTER from C. A. Turner, Esq., Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Central Famine Committee, North-Western Provinces, to the Secretary to Government, North-Western Provinces; No. 195, dated 28th January 1875.

IN pursuance of a resolution passed at a public meeting convened at Allahabad on the 7th February 1874, his Honor the Lieutenant Governor was pleased to nominate a central committee to concert measures for the relief of the indigent classes in such districts of the North-Western Provinces as were threatened with scarcity, and in the famine-stricken districts of the North-Western Provinces.

2. His Honor was pleased to intimate that the Government would provide labour for all who could work, but that the support of the sick and aged, the young and tender, and the infirm, must mainly be the care of private charity; and his Honor announced that to all subscriptions raised for these purposes, the Government would contribute an equal sum.

3. On the 12th February the central committee appointed an executive committee, instructing it to meet at regular intervals for the transaction of business.

4. At a meeting of the executive committee held on the same date, it was resolved:— (1.) That the collectors of the several districts in the North-Western Provinces should be requested to form committees to collect subscriptions; (2.) That the collectors of Basti, Gorakhpur, Ghazipur, Mirzapur, Hamirpur, and Banda should be requested, if they had not already done so, to form relief committees, to keep the central committee acquainted with the state of destitution in their respective districts, and the amounts which they might from time to time estimate as required for relief of the poor who might be unfit for labour; and (3.) That while the circumstances of particular places or persons might require and justify a departure from the rules prescribed by the committee, relief should only be given ordinarily to those persons only who could not labour on relief works, and in the shape of cooked food, not exceeding 10 chittacks per diem for each adult.

5. On the 22nd April, the Government, North-Western Provinces, issued a circular to the collectors, declaring that the entire supervision of charitable relief, and auditing of accounts connected with it, has been confided to the central committee, and ordering that the accounts both of collections of contributions and disbursements should be submitted to the committee in such form as the committee should prescribe. It was at the same time announced that the Government would not sanction any expenditure on poor-house or charitable relief, shown in the treasury accounts of any district until it were shown to have been approved and audited by the central committee.

6. In order to prevent any migration of the poor from the district of Gorakhpur into the district of Champaran, Lower Provinces, and thereby disturb the calculations of the officers of that district, the executive committee requested the collector to establish centres of relief at the outlying tahsils, and to put himself in communication with the collector of Champaran.

7. Acting on the instructions, and guided by the principles above indicated, the executive committee procured the appointment of local committees where they had not been appointed in districts requiring relief, received the contributions forwarded from the several collectorates, made grants, and received and scrutinised accounts of expenditure.

8. The committee received from the undermentioned districts the subscriptions entered in the subjoined statement:—

	Rs.	a.	p.
Allahabad	5,030	3	—
Agra	799	6	—
Budaun	2,721	10	3
Bareilly	1,242	8	—
Bijnor	2,269	13	—
Bulandshahr	1,848	10	—
Etawah	1,137	12	—
Farukhabad	2,095	—	—
Jaunpur	202	—	—
Lalitpur	202	9	—
Meerut	10,201	8	—
Mirzapur	1,774	—	—
Moradabad	2,524	4	—
Muttra	8,520	—	—
Muzaffarnagar	3,233	8	—
Roorkee	578	13	6
Saharanpur	3,367	12	—
Shahjahanpur	1,500	—	—
TOTAL	49,149	4	9

9. In the districts mentioned in the subjoined statement, the collectors received in subscriptions, and, under the sanction of the committee, applied to local requirements the sums therein shown:—

	Rs.	a.	p.
Allahabad	100	2	—
Banda	1,718	2	11
Ghazipur	5,372	6	10
Gorakhpur	5,084	10	1
Hamirpur	2,607	19	7
Jhansi	208	4	10
Basti	754	6	5
TOTAL	15,845	11	8

10. The districts of Fatehpur and Aligarh gave no contribution to the fund, nor did the district and wealthy city of Benares. Of the sum subscribed in the district of Muttra, no less than 7,000 rupees were the gift of Seths Gobind Das and Lachhman Das of Muttra, who received the thanks of Government for their liberality. Subscriptions were raised in the district of Azamgarh, and, it is believed, expended to meet local requirements; no account of these subscriptions, or of their disbursements, has come to the hands of the committee.

11. The total amount of subscriptions received by the committee, and by the district officer, over which the committee has had control, is Rs. 64,995. —. 5.

12. Before the full amount subscribed was received, the committee drew from the Treasury the sum of Rs. 13,036. 12. 4., being the amount contributed by the Government under the order before mentioned.

The committee has therefore to account for Rs. 78,031. 12. 9.

13. The sum of 15,000 rupees was subscribed and remitted by the inhabitants of Bombay for the relief of sufferers from famine in the North-Western Provinces. When the gravity of the crisis in the north-west had disappeared, and it had been ascertained that the sums subscribed in these provinces would be adequate to meet local requirements, it came to the knowledge of the committee that distress existed in Sind, for the relief of which an appeal to Bombay was probable; the committee, therefore, replaced, at the disposal of the subscribers in Bombay, the 15,000 rupees which had been remitted from that Presidency.

14. The central relief committee in Calcutta announced to this committee a resolution passed by it, declaring that the funds received from subscribers in England were available for the relief of the distressed in the North-Western Provinces. The committee for the North-Western Provinces, finding that its funds were amply sufficient, did not avail itself of this resolution.

15. Before discussing the particulars of the expenditure incurred under the sanction of the committee, it will be convenient to state that the extent of population, and the incidence of Government revenue per acre have been taken from the census tables recently published, and that the number of persons stated to have been employed on public works has been ascertained from a return obtained from the department of public works, which apparently does not include the number of persons employed on works of which the expense was defrayed from local funds.

16. Relief was given in the shape of cooked and uncooked food and cash. The cooked and uncooked food consisted chiefly of the cheaper grains, such as dal, bajra, gram, barley, and common rice, and the flower of the mahua tree. The sick and infirm under medical direction received more nutritious diet. Relief in cash was distributed principally to purdah-nushcen women.

17. The miscellaneous expenditure (where it is not otherwise stated) includes these cash payments. It also includes charges for the construction of poor-houses, for the provision of culinary vessels, firewood, cotton for the employment of those able to spin, and medical assistance and medicines.

18. The district officers submitted accounts showing the particulars of the expenditure weekly, and these accounts have been carefully scrutinised by the committee.

19. The following is an account of the operations of the committee in the distressed districts:—

Ghazipur.—This district has been selected as the first for mention because the committee has received from the officiating collector, Mr. Oldham, a copy of a carefully compiled report submitted by him to the commissioner of the division; and putting aside the peculiar circumstances of the district, many of the remarks made by Mr. Oldham are, it is believed, applicable to the other districts, in which operations for the relief of distress were carried out under the supervision of the committee.

The features which distinguish Ghazipur from the districts last mentioned are the greater

greater density of its population; its production of valuable crops other than food crops—circumstances which conduce to a third difference; its greater reliance on imports for its food supply; and lastly, as compared with some of the other districts, its enjoyment of greater facilities for importation in the shape of railroad and river communications with foreign markets.

The average population of Ghazipur is estimated at 620 persons to the square mile. The incidence of the Government revenue per acre is *Re.* 1. 1. 4. to the total area, *Re.* 1. 1. 7. to the area under settlement, and *Re.* 1. 8. 0. to the area under cultivation. The officiating collector estimates the area under cultivation at 1,000,000 acres; and he considers that of this, 20,000 are devoted to opium, 10,000 to indigo, 40,000 to rose and oil seeds, and 100,000 to sugar-cane. Thus a total of 1,75,000 acres are abstracted from the total area under cultivation to produce crops other than grain crops.

To meet the deficit in the food supply, the officiating collector calculates that in ordinary years from 120,000 to 130,000 maunds of edible grains are annually imported by rail, and a yet larger quantity by road and river. From 1st October 1873 to 1st October 1874 the importations by rail amounted to no less than 864,728½ maunds. This increase was doubtless in some measure due to the reduction of freight, but still more to the circumstance, that whereas in ordinary years the district draws much of its supplies from Bengal and the grain from Bengal is introduced by road and river, in the year ending 1st October 1874 the bulk of the food supply was obtained from the north-west and the Punjab. The increase in importation by rail was, in addition to these causes, mainly due to the failure of the kharif crop in the district.

The officiating collector insists on the fact that the whole of this importation was effected by private enterprise, and the circumstance is certainly noteworthy. The disaster in Orissa has been frequently made the text of diatribes against the science of political economy. It has been urged that the ordinary rules of that science are inapplicable to the circumstances of India. This objection, when taken to the rule that demand begets supply, merely comes to what every political economist would allow, that the rule is only applicable when there are facilities for the supply. There must be the article available, the means of transport, the wealth with which it can be purchased by the importer, the energy which sets the importer in motion, and the retail distributor. In Orissa several of these essentials were found wanting. In Ghazipur they were all present: grain was to be had in foreign markets at rates which made its importation profitable, the railroad conveyed it to the place where the demand existed, the importers and retail distributors merely extended operations to which they were habituated and for which the wealth of the district was adequate to provide funds.

In dealing with famines it may be found necessary according to the peculiar exigencies of the crisis or the circumstances of the locality, to provide any one or more of the facilities above mentioned.

If a Government recognises it as an incumbent duty to protect its subjects from famine, it may have to bring the food required within the reach of the importer, to supply the means of transport, or itself to take the place of the importer or distributor, or it may have only to furnish funds to importers and distributors to enable them to extend their operations; but inasmuch as any interference on the part of the Government may tend to check private enterprise by rendering its gains hazardous, it is obvious that, where it is possible, the interference of Government should be limited to those matters which private enterprise cannot achieve, or can only achieve with assistance. The provision of access to foreign markets by railroad or water communications is a work, in the present condition of India, generally beyond the means of private enterprise, and therefore the intervention of the Government in this matter is essential.

There can also be no question of the soundness of the policy pursued by the Government, North-Western Provinces, during the recent crisis in offering to importers and distributors advances to enable them to extend their operations. This amplification of the ordinary channels of trade educates and stimulates private enterprise; and where a sufficient number of importers and distributors are provided with funds, so as to secure healthy competition, the cost of the importation and distribution of the food supply, when carried out by private enterprise, will probably be found far less than it would be were the same work accomplished by the agency of a staff of officials suddenly called into existence to meet the emergency. The importers and distributors bring their experience to bear on the work; their private interest inculcates the strictest economy, and they keep and check their own accounts. The importations into the district of Ghazipur during the scarcity of 1873-74 go to show that in this country private enterprise is equal to meet such crises where the normal conditions exist which are essential to the operation of the law of supply and demand. Although the committee is not in possession of figures which would enable it to speak with certainty upon the subject, it is believed that large importations of food grains also reached the other distressed districts in these provinces through private enterprise.

The main feature which is common to Ghazipur and the other distressed districts is the poverty of the labouring classes. The officiating collector states that at a time when there is more than the ordinary demand for labour, indigo planters pay mate weeders four-fifths of an anna per diem, and common weeders three-fifths; and that, excepting in harvest time, a ploughman with a pair of oxen receives for himself and his cattle only two annas per diem.

Cash wages are, however, by no means the rule in villages in the north-west. The proprietors ordinarily pay their labourers a certain allowance of grain, and on rare occasions

occasions a rupee or two to buy clothes. The greater portion of the land being held in small parcels by proprietors or tenants, no sooner does scarcity manifest itself than the hired servants are, as is pointed out by Mr. Oldham, discharged, being sometimes replaced by the members of the family, who in ordinary seasons would not labour in the fields. Again, in an Indian village, which, as Mr. Oldham has pointed out, is in itself a kind of small community, the occurrence of dearth deprive of employment the village artisans, such as weavers and blacksmiths. Even in richer countries high prices of food check the retail trade in all articles with which the consumer can for a time dispense. The small wages of the village artisan, which are ordinarily paid in rain, afford no reserve to which he can have recourse when employment fails or his wages are unpaid. Lastly, the charity habitually practised by the natives of India, in the support of the aged, the infirm, and the religious mendicant, comes to an end with the small funds out of which it was doled. The general indigence of the small proprietary and labouring classes causes the effects of a bad harvest to be felt more immediately than in a country in which these classes are either themselves richer, or dwell amongst, and in a measure depend for their employment on, a wealthy proprietary body. It is therefore absolutely essential, in order to ward off from the people of this country the evils of famine, that energetic measures should be taken on the first threat of the calamity.

In Ghazipur, as in the other distressed districts, the cause of the dearth of 1873-74 is to be found in the failure of the kharif crop, on which the poor principally depend for their food supply.

The central committee remitted, for the relief of distress in this district, the sum of *Rs.* 5,354. 12. 3., and the subscriptions collected by the district officer amounted to *Rs.* 5,372. 6. 10., making *Rs.* 10,727. 3. 1.

Twenty-three thousand five hundred and fourteen rations of cooked food were distributed, at a cost of *Rs.* 1,348. 4. 7., and 148,649 rations of uncooked food, at a cost of *Rs.* 4,305. 8. 1.; while *Rs.* 742. 0. 5., were distributed in cash to 4,100 persons. The balance, *Rs.* 3,831. 6., has been appropriated to the relief of sufferers from inundation, as will be hereafter explained.

The months in which the largest number of rations were distributed are shown in the marginal table, together with the number of persons employed in the corresponding months on relief works. The average cost of a day's rations of cooked food is shown as 11 pies; but as the whole of the sums entered as miscellaneous expenditure are shown as expended in cash donations, it appears that the sums charged in other districts under this head are included in the cost of the cooked rations in the Ghazipur return. The average cost of a ration of uncooked food is shown as less than six pies.

It will be seen that the necessity for relief greatly diminished in this district when the harvesting of the rabi crops commenced.

The number of persons employed on relief works, shown in the above table, is taken from a return obtained from the office of the department of public works. The return furnished by the officiating collector shows a considerably larger number, possibly because in it are included persons employed on works of which the cost was defrayed from local funds. The rates of wage originally paid to persons employed on relief works was one and a-half anna for each man, one anna for each woman. In February, the rates were reduced to one and one-fifth anna for each man, four-fifths of an anna for each woman, and three-fifths of an anna for each child; and subsequently to four-fifths of an anna for each man, three-fifths of an anna for each woman, and two-fifths of an anna for each child.

20. *Gorakhpur.*—In this district the number of persons to the square mile is 441; the incidence of the Government jumma per acre is *Re.* 1. 9. 6. on the total area, *Re.* 1. 10. 2. on the area paying revenue, and *Rs.* 2. 11. 2. on the area cultivated.

Mr. Simson reported, on the 2nd March 1874, that the kharif crop had almost totally failed, and that less than the ordinary area was under cultivation for the rabi crops.

The district officers collected in subscriptions *Rs.* 5,084. 10. 1., and the committee remitted *Rs.* 7,704. 0. 1., making a total of *Rs.* 12,788. 10. 2. The sum of *Rs.* 12,383. 15. 11. was expended in providing 175,149 rations, and in meeting miscellaneous charges to the sum of *Rs.* 5,981. 12. 1.

The average cost of a daily ration, excluding miscellaneous charges, was therefore about 7½ pies.

The table in the margin shows the months in which the largest number of rations was distributed and the number of persons employed in the corresponding months on relief works.

21. *Basti.*—In this district the population is 528 to the square mile; the average incidence of Government revenue per acre is *Re.* 0. 11. 11. to the total area, *Re.* 0. 12. 3. to the area under settlement, and *Re.* 1. 1. 8. to the cultivated area.

The circumstance of the district much resembled those of Gorakhpur.

The sum of *Rs.* 7,358. 8. was remitted by the committee, and accounts have been received of the expenditure of *Rs.* 7,982. 12. 9., in providing 106,741 rations, and in meeting *Rs.* 1,967. 13. 11., miscellaneous expenditure. The average cost per ration, excluding miscellaneous charges, was about 10½ pies.

	Number of Rations Distributed.	Number of Persons on Relief Works.
February	65,467	806
March	66,605	1,247
April	7,759	647
May	2,227	689
June	2,521	956
July	7,831	—

	Number of Rations Distributed.	Number of Persons on Relief Works.
March	36,532	21,825
April	38,840	73,261
May	30,415	78,959
June	17,499	29,344

A balance of Rs. 130. 1. 8. remains to be accounted for or remitted to the committee.

The table in the margin exhibits the months in which the largest number of rations were distributed, and the number of persons employed in the corresponding months on relief works.

22. *Hamirpur*.—The population of this district is shown as 231 to the square mile; the incidence of the Government jumma per acre to the total area is *Re.* 0. 11. 10., to the area under settlement *Re.* 0. 12. 1., and the cultivated area *Re.* 1. 5. 8.

The Collector reported that a succession of bad seasons had reduced the people to such poverty that many were starving. The sanitary commissioner, North-Western Provinces, in his report for 1873, had brought to the notice of the Government the miserable condition of the people in several parganas of this and the adjoining district of Banda, reporting that many appeared to him bordering on starvation. The normal condition of the district will account for the circumstances that the rise in the price of food grains throughout the North-Western Provinces was specially felt there.

The district officers collected Rs. 2,607. 10. 7., the committee remitted Rs. 4,236. 4., making a total of Rs. 6,843. 14. 7. Of this sum, Rs. 6,530. 8. has been accounted for in providing 115,519 rations and meeting Rs. 2,387. 7. 5., miscellaneous charges; the average cost of a ration, excluding miscellaneous charges, being somewhat under 7 pies. A balance of Rs. 313. 6. 7. remains to be remitted to the committee.

The table in the margin exhibits the months in which the largest number of rations were distributed and the number of persons employed in the corresponding months on relief works.

The Collector attributes the increase in the numbers of the relieved in July partly to the closing of relief works, and partly to the fact that owing to the incessant rains; employment in the fields in weeding, &c., was not procurable.

From the circumstance that only 1,955 persons were employed on relief works in June, it is obvious that the closing of the relief works can hardly account for the increase in August and September. It is more probable that employment in the fields was scarce, and that until the chief grain crops, the produce of the kharif, were harvested, the poverty of the landholders in the district prevented them from maintaining hired labourers and dependents.

23. In Banda and Karwi the population averages 240 to the square mile; the incidence of the Government jumma per acre to the total area is *Re.* 0. 11. 9., to the area under settlement *Re.* 0. 12. 1., and to the cultivated area *Re.* 1. 6. 7.

The circumstances of the district appear to resemble those of Hamirpur, and the observations recorded by the sanitary commissioner in his report for 1873 apply, as has been stated, to several of the parganas of Banda.

The sum of Rs. 1,514. 12. was collected by the district officers, and the sum of Rs. 5,914. 12. was remitted by the committee, and Rs. 203. 6. 11. were received as sale proceeds of the products of labour for which material was provided by the local committee. Of the total receipts, Rs. 7,632. 14. 11., Rs. 4,747. 7. 4. were expended in food rations, Rs. 826. 11. 3. in out-door relief, and Rs. 1,488. 10. 1. in miscellaneous charges. The average cost of a ration, excluding miscellaneous charges, was somewhat less than 7 pies. A balance of Rs. 570. 2. 3. remains to be accounted for or returned to the committee.

The months in which the largest number of rations were distributed is shown in the marginal table, together with the number of persons employed in the corresponding months on relief works.

It will be seen that the number employed on relief works in Banda is small as compared with the number of rations distributed. This is probably to be attributed to the circumstance that the distressed population were scattered over so large an area that it would have been necessary to open a number of relief works at an inordinate expense, whereas at a much less expense relief was afforded to small groups of distressed persons at each tahsil centre. In Karwi there were no relief works. The pressure of distress in the district was apparently relieved immediately on the harvesting of the rabi crop.

24. *Jhansi*.—In this district the average population is 203 to the square mile, and the average incidence of the Government revenue per acre is to the total area *Re.* 0. 7. 6., to the area under settlement *Re.* 0. 8. 3., and to the cultivated area *Re.* 0. 15. 9.

The sum of Rs. 208. 4. 10. was collected in the district, and expended in 4,901 rations; the average cost of a day's ration, including miscellaneous expenditure, which is not distinguished in the accounts of this district, being somewhat in excess of 8 pies.

The

The table in the margin shows the months in which the largest number of rations were distributed and the number of persons employed in the corresponding months on relief works.

25. *Allahabad*.—In this district is a population of 507 persons to the square mile; the incidence of the Government jumma per acre is to the total area *Re.* 1. 3. 6., to the area under cultivation *Re.* 1. 3. 9., and to the cultivated area *Re.* 2. 0. 8.

The Collector reported that although there was no actual famine, many persons residing in the parganas of Barah and Khairagarh are so poor that the slightest rise of prices affects them. In ordinary seasons about 80 persons are fed at a poor-house at Mega, the expenses of which are met by the zemindars of the two parganas. In the spring of 1874 the number of necessitous poor increased so largely that an application for assistance was made to the committee. The committee accordingly remitted to the Collector Rs. 1,945. 10. 10., making, with a sum of Rs. 100. 2. collected in the district, a total of Rs. 2,045. 12. 10. This sum was expended in providing 33,502 rations, and in meeting miscellaneous charges to the amount of Rs. 401. 4. 2. Excluding miscellaneous charges, the average cost of a day's ration was about 9 pies.

No relief works were, it is believed, open in this district.

The stress of the scarcity was most felt in this district in the months of April, May, and June. In April 8,622 rations were distributed; in May 12,682.

The number fell to 9,348 in June and to 682 in July, when extraordinary measures of relief were discontinued.

26. In addition to the sums above shown as expended, the committee made grants for the relief of distress occasioned by sudden calamity other than dearth, and pressing the more severely on the people by reason of the high price of food. Thus in several small townships or hamlets of Ghazipur the dwellings of the population were destroyed by violent rains and abnormal inundations. Immediately on the occurrence of the disaster, the Collector remitted 500 rupees for the relief of the indigent poor in Ballia, an expenditure which was at once sanctioned, while grants to the extent of Rs. 3,331. 6. have been made to assist the people in rebuilding their houses.

27. A like calamity in Shahjahanpur necessitated a grant of 3,000 rupees; while, on the recommendation of the Commission, a sum of Rs. 121. 8. was remitted for the assistance of the inhabitants of Dumduwa, in the district of Benares, whose houses were destroyed by fire.

28. On the closing of the Banda poor-houses a sum of 900 rupees was granted to the Rev. J. Hill, of Banda, on his undertaking to take charge of some bed-ridden paupers for whom it was necessary to provide a home.

29. The charges of the central committee for clerk, peon, postage, &c., amount to Rs. 288. 2. 3.

30. There has been expended on the whole a sum of Rs. 52,251. 0. 6., and there remains in the hands of the committee, including Rs. 1,013. 10. 6. to be accounted for by district officers, a balance of Rs. 26,780. 12. 5. Of this balance it is proposed to devote Rs. 13,306. 12. 4. to the repayment to Government of the like amount contributed at the commencement of the committee's operations as the equivalent of subscriptions received up to that date, and to invest the residue in Government paper to be available for expenditure in any future famine or scarcity.

31. Many of the working members of the executive committee are now absent from Allahabad, so that I am unable to circulate this report for their consideration and approval. I am sure I may venture to express, on behalf of all the members, their obligation to the district officers and local committees by whom the work of relief has been carried out. Information has at all times been freely supplied to the central committee, satisfactory accounts of expenditure furnished, and a careful selection of the objects for charity and economy in expenditure appear to have been kept in view in all the districts in which operations have been carried on under the direction of the central committee.

32. In conclusion, I have also to bring to the notice of Government the valuable services rendered to the committee by the Honorary Secretary, Mr. W. Tyrrell, C. S.

PARTICULARS OF RELIEF OPERATIONS OF THE DISTRICT OFFICERS IN THE NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES.

DISTRICT.	Month.	Number of Adults Relieved.	Amount Expended.	Number of Juveniles Relieved.	Amount Expended.	Miscellaneous Expenses.	Total Number of Persons Relieved.	Total Expenditure.	REMARKS.
ALLAHABAD	March	2,168	Rs. a. p. 119 3 -	-	Rs. a. p. 38 10 9	Rs. a. p. 95 11 0	2,168	Rs. a. p. 214 14 9	Local subscriptions Remitted by Committee - - - - -
	April	8,031	407 1 0	591	447 10 6	40 - 7	8,622	494 12 10	- - - - -
	May	3,128	161 4 -	9,554	447 10 6	199 - 6	12,682	807 15 -	- - - - -
	June	4,087	184 5 11	5,301	256 - 5	42 9 4	9,388	482 15 8	Deduct expenditure - - - - -
	July	-	-	682	30 4 7	14 14 -	682	45 2 7	Balance refunded to Committee - - - - -
	TOTAL	17,414	871 14 5	16,988	772 10 3	401 4 2	33,502	2,045 12 10	- - - - -
BANDA AND KARWI	February	1,920	100 7 9	-	-	-	1,920	100 7 9	Local subscriptions - - - - -
	March	42,347	1,771 10 7 1/2	-	-	-	42,347	1,771 10 7 1/2	Government grant - - - - -
	April	34,189	1,228 1 5 1/2	-	-	-	34,189	1,228 1 5 1/2	Remitted by Committee - - - - -
	May	29,650	850 10 10	-	-	-	29,650	850 10 10	- - - - -
	June	19,876	491 9 6	-	-	-	19,876	491 9 6	- - - - -
BASTI	July	6,402	215 13 9	-	-	-	6,402	215 13 9	Local subscriptions - - - - -
	August	2,576	83 13 9	-	-	-	2,576	83 13 9	Government grant - - - - -
	September	1,542	51 2 8	-	-	-	1,542	51 2 8	Remitted by Committee - - - - -
	October	414	14 1 4	-	-	-	414	14 1 4	- - - - -
	Outdoor relief and contingencies.	-	-	-	-	2,315 5 4	-	2,315 5 4	Deduct expenditure - - - - -
	TOTAL	131,827*	4,747 7 4	-	-	-	131,827	7,062 12 8	Balance to be accounted for - - - - -
GHAZIPOUR†	March	1,075	115 6 1	445	22 - 10	79 - 7	1,520	216 7 6	Local subscriptions - - - - -
	April	4,782	334 12 5	1,061	52 10 3	158 10 4	5,843	586 1 -	Remitted by Committee - - - - -
	May	8,891	566 12 9	2,963	126 13 4	290 3 10	11,854	983 13 11	Amount sent from Daudungra - - - - -
	June	16,463	1,102 1 8	8,187	967 9 6	276 5 -	24,650	1,746 - 2	- - - - -
	July	14,725	924 - 9	9,132	402 8 9	438 3 -	23,857	1,764 12 6	- - - - -
GOREKHPUR	August	11,987	763 11 9 1/2	8,076	307 4 11 1/2	391 15 4	20,063	1,962 - 1	Deduct expenditure - - - - -
	September	8,100	225 12 5 1/2	6,350	234 4 11 1/2	558 1 2	14,450	1,118 2 7	Balance to be accounted for - - - - -
	October	1,854	119 - 8	1,501	60 15 8	75 6 8	3,355	255 7 -	- - - - -
	TOTAL	68,486	4,410 10 7	38,255	1,274 4 3	1,907 13 11	106,741	7,982 12 9	- - - - -
HAZIPUR	February	65,467	1,704 5 -	-	-	140 2 6	65,467	1,844 7 6	Local subscriptions - - - - -
	March	68,005	1,801 5 3	-	-	382 4 5	68,005	2,183 9 8	Government grant - - - - -
	April	7,759	388 14 7	-	-	224 8 -	7,759	613 6 7	Remitted by Committee - - - - -
	May	2,227	82 7 10	-	-	-	2,227	82 14 10	- - - - -
	June	2,521	137 14 6	-	-	-10 -	2,521	128 8 6	- - - - -
JHANSI††	July	7,831	287 5 1	-	-	4 7 6	7,831	291 12 7	Local subscriptions - - - - -
	August	7,551	448 4 3	-	-	20 -	7,551	468 4 3	Amount sent from Daudungra - - - - -
	September	7,793	377 8 3	-	-	20 2 -	7,793	397 8 3	- - - - -
	October	8,569	425 4 11	-	-	-	8,569	435 4 11	Deduct expenditure - - - - -
	TOTAL	117,623	5,553 12 8	-	-	742 - 5	117,623	6,395 13 1	Balance to be accounted for - - - - -

* In these districts no distinction was made in the statements between adults and juveniles.

† In this district no distinction was made in the statements between adults and juveniles.

†† In this district no distinction was made in the statements between adults and juveniles.

‡ This includes 41,000 persons relieved by cash donations.

§ This includes the cost both of cooked and uncooked rations.

|| This sum was wholly expended in cash donations.

GOREKHPUR	February	17,171	420 6 2	14,577	202 11 1	138 14 6	31,748	701 15 9	Local subscriptions - - - - -
	March	24,051	926 3 4	11,581	220 - 4	592 6 11	35,632	1,738 10 7	Government grant - - - - -
	April	20,301	1,188 11 2 1/2	12,539	300 10 10 1/2	695 2 8	32,840	2,184 8 9 1/2	Remitted by Committee - - - - -
	May	21,857	1,072 1 10	8,558	247 6 6 1/2	613 9 -	30,415	1,993 1 4 1/2	- - - - -
	June	12,820	772 14 10	4,689	137 15 9	160 7 7	17,409	1,071 6 2	- - - - -
HAZIPUR	July	6,831	301 9 10	3,671	105 11 10	208 11 9	10,502	706 4 5	Deduct expenditure - - - - -
	August	4,743	253 6 10	2,994	82 10 1	154 10 9	7,557	490 10 8	Balance refunded to Committee - - - - -
	September	1,966	68 10 9	780	21 1 6	**618 10 -	2,146	608 6 3	- - - - -
	Poor-house hospital†	-	-	-	-	2,799 2 11	-	2,799 2 11	† 1,347 persons were admitted from 1st June to October 1874.
	TOTAL	115,800	5,083 15 0 1/2	50,289	1,318 4 - 1/2	5,081 12 1	175,149	12,383 15 11	** In this are included charges for the constructions of poor-houses incurred in previous months.
JHANSI††	February	8,519	146 3 9	1,007	22 9 3	-	4,586	168 13 -	Local subscriptions - - - - -
	March	6,340	277 - 1	1,073	23 15 1	-	7,413	300 15 2	Government grant - - - - -
	April	5,334	203 1 9	3,950	134 3 11	20 3 6	9,284	447 9 2	Remitted by Committee - - - - -
	May	13,581	480 5 10	-	-	133 13 1	13,581	623 2 11	- - - - -
	June	12,137	470 5 4	1,908	39 8 -	59 15 -	14,045	575 12 4	- - - - -
JHANSI††	July	13,189	510 10 6	3,518	75 6 3	435 4 5	16,707	1,021 5 2	Local subscriptions - - - - -
	August	16,297	624 4 5 1/2	5,035	105 - - 1/2	392 5 4	21,692	1,051 9 10	Government grant - - - - -
	September	15,490	501 12 8	4,912	98 15 11	975 11 4	20,408	1,586 7 11	Remitted by Committee - - - - -
	October	6,082	224 13 10	1,750	36 7 6	361 13 -	7,832	623 2 4	Deduct expenditure - - - - -
	November	61	3 4 5	-	-	73 5 9	61	81 10 2	Balance to be accounted for - - - - -
	TOTAL	92,396	3,606 14 7 1/2	23,183	556 1 11 1/2	2,387 7 5	115,519	6,530 8 -	- - - - -
JHANSI††	March	276	17 7 2	-	-	-	276	17 7 2	Local subscriptions - - - - -
	April	380	27 2 6	-	-	-	380	27 2 6	Expenditure - - - - -
	May	1,559	56 4 7	-	-	-	1,559	56 4 7	- - - - -
	June	1,494	52 13 7	-	-	-	1,494	52 13 7	- - - - -
	July	1,192	54 9 -	-	-	-	1,192	54 9 -	- - - - -
	TOTAL	4,901	208 4 10	-	-	-	4,901	208 4 10	- - - - -

PARTICULARS of the Relief Operations of the District Officers in the North-Western Provinces--continued.

DISTRICT.	Number of Adults Relieved.	Amount Expended.	Number of Juveniles Relieved.	Amount Expended.	Miscellaneous Expenses.	Total Number of Persons Relieved.	Average Cost of Relief.	Total Expenditure.	Balance.	REMARKS.
	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.		Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.		Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	
Allahabad	17,414	871 14 5	16,088	772 10 3	401 4 2	33,502	- - 9	2,045 12 10	- - -	Rs. 54. 5. 2 refunded to Committee.
Banda	131,827	4,747 7 4	- - -	- - -	2,315 5 4	131,827	- - 7	7,062 12 8	570 2 8	
Basti	68,486	4,440 10 7	38,255	1,574 4 3	1,967 13 11	106,741	- - 10½	7,982 12 9	130 1 8	
Ghazipur	176,263	5,653 12 8	- - -	- - -	742 - 5	176,263	- - 6½	6,395 13 1	- - -	Rs. 404. 10. 3 refunded to Committee.
Gorakhpur	115,800	5,083 15 9½	59,289	1,318 4 -½	5,981 15 1	175,149	- - 7½	12,983 15 11	- - -	
Hamirpur	92,366	3,606 14 7½	23,183	536 1 11½	3,387 7 5	115,519	- - 7	6,230 8 -	313 6 7	
Jhansi	4,901	208 4 10	- - -	- - -	- - -	4,901	- - 8	208 4 10	- - -	
TOTAL	607,087	24,613 - 3½	136,815	4,201 4 5½	13,705 14 4	743,902	- - -	42,610 - 1	1,013 6 7	
Benares (given to sufferers from fire in village Dumdumva)										
		- - -	- - -	- - -	130 - -	24	5 1 -	121 8 -	Rs. a. p.	
Ghazipur (given to sufferers from destruction of town Ballia by the Ganges)		- - -	- - -	- - -	4,331 0 -	152	3 4 7-57	500 - -	3,831 6 -	Reserved for further relief, after sites for buildings are selected.
Shajahanpur (given to sufferers from inundation)		- - -	- - -	- - -	3,000 - -	451	6 10 5-16	3,000 - -	- - -	
TOTAL		- - -		- - -	7,461 6 -	627	5 14 11-58	3,621 8 -	3,831 - -	

GENERAL ACCOUNT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE.

[illegible]

LETTER from G. H. M. Batten, Esq., Officiating Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce, to the Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces, No. 82, dated Calcutta, the 25th February 1875.

I AM directed by the Governor General of India in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 1, of the 1st of January last, submitting the reports of the local officers on the scarcity of 1873-74 in certain districts of the North-Western Provinces, together with a narrative of the scarcity, so far as it affected those provinces; of your letter, No. 4, of the 11th of January, forwarding the remarks of the Lieutenant Governor on the conduct of the civil officers engaged in the relief operations; of your letter, No. 9, of the 29th of January, forwarding Mr. Elliot's report on the scarcity in Basti; and of your letter, No. 13, of the 11th instant, forwarding the report of the Central Famine Relief Committee for the North-Western Provinces.

2. Considerable apprehension was felt by Sir William Muir, who was the Lieutenant Governor of the North-Western Provinces, lest the unusual deficiency of the late rains in the season of 1873 should occasion an extensive failure of the winter crops; and early in November reports on the state of the crops and the prospects of the coming season were called for from the local officers. The information received showed that no scarcity was anticipated excepting in the eastern districts, in which there had been a serious failure of the crops.

3. Sir William Muir had successfully dealt with a period of severe scarcity in 1868-69, and the Government of India left to him with confidence the provision which should be made for the distress that was expected to occur; after assuring him that they were ready to give to the North-Western Provinces all the aid which he might require, and authorising him to undertake at once such relief works as he might think necessary.* In Sir William Muir's opinion no considerable difficulty was likely to be felt in dealing with the districts where the rice crop had failed, and the Government of India found, when they assembled at Agra at the end of November 1873, that all the precautionary measures had been taken which the occasion demanded.†

4. The fear that the failure of the winter crops of 1873 might be followed by the more serious calamity of a failure of the spring crops of 1874 was removed by the winter rains which, though late, fell plentifully at the end of January and in the beginning of February.‡ This timely rainfall, to quote the words of the narrative, "was of incalculable benefit, and through its influence a year of high prices was substituted for a year of famine." A large spring harvest was secured, and means were thus afforded for meeting the demand for food which arose from the failure of the winter crops. On the 13th of February the Government of India had the satisfaction of being able to inform the Secretary of State that "Sir William Muir had taken every necessary measure for the relief of distress in the south-eastern districts of the North-Western Provinces, and that no intimation had been received from him that he would require assistance in the way of supplies from the Government of India in respect to those districts, the prospects of which had, on the whole, been materially improved by the late rains."

5. As the year went on, it became apparent that severe distress would be limited to the northern portions of the districts of Gorakhpur and Basti, where rice constitutes the main staple of agriculture. In the month of March, Sir William Muir deputed a commission, composed of Mr. Simson, junior, Member of the Board of Revenue, Mr. Carmichael, Commissioner of Benares, and Colonel Davidson, R.E., Superintending Engineer, to visit those districts. They recommended that certain remissions of land revenue should be made, that money should be advanced to a limited extent to grain dealers on condition that they would provide a certain amount of grain which should be at the disposal of Government in a part of the country where some apprehension was felt of a dearth of supplies, and that liberal advances should be made for the purchase of seed grain. These measures were adopted by Sir William Muir with the cordial approval of the Government of India. The supply of seed caused at that time much anxiety, which was soon after relieved by arrangements with the Government of Nepal that the prohibition of the export of seed grain from Nepal should be removed.

6. A Central Famine Relief Committee was established at Allahabad, as well as local committees, who were charged with the care and management of the poor-houses which the collectors were authorised to set up where necessary, and at which cooked food was distributed to those who needed assistance and could not work. The expense of maintaining the poor-houses, and of all charges incurred in relieving the distressed among the higher classes who could not labour on the relief works, was met by subscriptions received from the public aided by donations from Government.

7. The distress appears from the narrative to have reached its highest point at the end of March or at the beginning of April 1874, and the measures which had been taken to meet it were judicious and sufficient. In the beginning of April, the daily average attendance on relief works in Gorakhpur and Basti was about 80,000. These numbers were not out of proportion to the character and extent of the scarcity.

8. Sir

8. Sir William Muir had directed that the pay on the relief works should be sufficient to enable the persons employed to provide themselves with sufficient food to sustain life, but no more; the amount in money being regulated by the price of grain in the neighbouring markets. The rates of pay given in March were—

For men	-	-	-	-	6	Gorakhpur pice a day.
For women	-	-	-	-	4	ditto - ditto.
For children	-	-	-	-	3	ditto - ditto.

Mr. Lumsden, the Collector of Gorakhpur, thinking that these rates, with reference to the season of the year, were so high as to attract labourers who were not in absolute want of employment, reduced them in the second week of April to—

For men	-	-	-	-	5	Gorakhpur pice a day.
For women	-	-	-	-	4	ditto - ditto.
For children	-	-	-	-	3	ditto - ditto.
For infants	-	-	-	-	2	ditto - ditto.

The same reduction appears also to have been made in Basti.

9. Sir John Strachey succeeded Sir William Muir in the office of Lieutenant Governor of the North-Western Provinces on the 8th of April 1874.

10. In the beginning of May Sir John Strachey personally visited the Gorakhpur and Basti districts. He found that during the month of April the numbers employed upon relief works had risen from 80,000 to 219,000, notwithstanding the reduction of the rates of pay, and although there was no reason to believe that the condition of the people had deteriorated, or that there was any dearth of food. It became evident that advantage was taken of the relief works by many persons who were not really in distress. The opinion of Sir John Strachey and the orders which he issued under these circumstances were recorded in his Minute of the 16th of May. The rates of wages on the relief works were compared with the price of provisions, and it was found that they were not unduly high; the only change made in them was the reduction from two pice to one pice a day of the dole to infants. In order to prevent improper advantage being taken of the relief works, the Collectors were instructed to pay wages in food instead of in money, and authorised to order applicants off the works who did not really require assistance. Sir John Strachey took care to prevent the risk of relief being withheld from any one in want, and the power, which was given to the local officers at their own request, was qualified by the condition that their orders were to be based "on individual knowledge of the persons or the village, not on general considerations."

11. The modes of relief applicable to the altered condition of affairs were clearly described in Sir John Strachey's Minute. A more extensive application of the work-house test was provided, and warning was given to the people that relief works would shortly be closed. "Circumstances," Sir John Strachey remarked, "have greatly altered since the works were undertaken. They were then beyond any doubt very useful and necessary works, and it is only lately that the numbers employed on them have become so immense. Owing to the general good out-turn of the rub'ee harvest in a country, only a small portion of which is dependent on a single crop, and to other causes, the people of these districts are undoubtedly better off now than was the case when the works were commenced."

"The Lieutenant Governor" (Sir John Strachey truly observed in another part of his Minute) "by no means asserts that the arrangements now contemplated would necessarily be sufficient to meet the extreme emergencies of severe famine where it falls upon the majority of a great agricultural population. Such emergencies unhappily exist in some of the districts of Bengal, but they do not now exist in the North-Western Provinces, nor is there at present any reason for apprehending them."

12. The Government of India approved of the orders issued by Sir John Strachey, and the result showed that he had rightly appreciated the situation of affairs. The good out-turn of the spring crops, coupled with early* and plentiful rain, soon relieved the pressure upon the agricultural population, and the necessity for any further relief operations ceased. The relief works were closed in June, and all that was required afterwards was a moderate amount of relief dispensed from poor-houses.

13. The relief operations which were carried on in other districts of the North-Western Provinces do not call for any special remarks.

14. The most interesting subject connected with the history of the scarcity of last year in the North-Western Provinces is the analysis of the causes of the difference between the condition of the eastern districts of the North-Western Provinces and that of North Behar. Sir John Strachey, in his Minute of the 16th of May, has referred to some of those causes. The far wider extent of the area of the drought, and of the failure of the winter crops—the much greater proportion of the winter crop of rice to other winter crops—the smaller proportion of the spring crops to the food supply of the year—the longer distance from sources of supply not affected by the drought—coupled, in many tracts, with a denser population—constitute the principal reasons why the distress was far more general and prolonged in Behar.

* Despatch from Viceroy, to Secretary of State, B. of 12th November 1873.

† Despatch from Government of India to Secretary of State, C. 1, 21st November 1873.

‡ Despatches from Government of India to Secretary of State, No. 7, 30th January; No. 9, 6th February, and No. 11, 13th February 1874.

* Despatches from Government of India to Secretary of State, No. 32, 22nd May, and No. 42, 30th June 1874.

15. The reduction of the rates for the carriage of grain by railway, and the large supplies of grain sent by Government into the neighbouring districts of Behar, are stated by the local officers to have materially diminished the effects of the scarcity in the North-Western Provinces. Some interesting figures are given in the report of the Central Famine Relief Committee as to the trade of the district of Ghazipur. It is calculated that in ordinary years this district imports by rail from 120,000 to 130,000 maunds of edible grains, besides importations by river. From the 1st of October 1873 to the 1st of October 1874 the importations by rail alone amounted to no less than 865,000 maunds. The Relief Committee lay great stress upon this example of the promptness with which supplies are brought forward in India to meet a sudden demand. They truly observe that where, as in the case of Ghazipur, "grain was to be had in foreign markets at rates which made its importation profitable, the railroad conveyed it to the place where the demand existed, the importers and retail distributors merely extended operations to which they were habituated, and for which the wealth of the district was adequate to supply funds," there can be no necessity for any interference by Government with the provision of supplies. A still more striking instance of this was given in South Behar; about ten times the quantity of grain imported into Ghazipur was poured by merchants into South Behar, and prevented any dearth of food throughout all that tract of country. The necessity of the interposition of Government arose in Orissa in 1866, and in North Behar during the past year, from the absence of all or some of the conditions enumerated by the Committee. The manner in which the demand has been met by an extension of the ordinary operations of trade, where those conditions existed, is very satisfactory: it supplies a valuable confirmation of the opinion which the Government of India have expressed, that the causes which have hitherto rendered interference indispensable on certain occasions will gradually be removed as the means of communication are extended, and the wealth of the country increases.

16. The operations of the Central Famine Relief Committee for the North-Western Provinces, as described in their report, were well conducted and successful. It is satisfactory to observe that funds were liberally subscribed, and that there was no need to take advantage of the offer of assistance tendered by the Central Relief Committee at Calcutta. The distress never assumed such dimensions in the North-Western Provinces as to prevent charitable relief being distributed under the directions of the relief committees, an arrangement which was made on former occasions with advantage. The same course was followed in many parts of Bengal last year; it was only departed from in the case of those districts where the scarcity was so wide-spread that it would have been impossible, without serious risk of failure, to have made use of two agencies for the purpose of dealing with it. I am to request that you will convey to Mr. Justice Turner and to the members and secretary of the Relief Committee at Allahabad the thanks of the Government of India for their services, and for their able and interesting report.

17. The thanks of the Government of India are due to Sir William Muir for the foresight and good judgment which he has shown in dealing with the scarcity, as well as for the cordial and valuable assistance which he rendered to the Government of Bengal upon several occasions during the period of greatest difficulty in the Lower Provinces. I am to convey to Sir John Strachey the thanks of the Governor General in Council for the judicious and able manner in which he prevented the measures of relief from being abused as soon as the substantial safety of the affected districts was secured; and I am to express the entire concurrence of the Government of India with the approbation which Sir John Strachey has bestowed upon the collectors, the officers of Government, and other gentlemen, European and native, who were actively engaged upon the relief operations. The experience of the past year in the North-Western Provinces shows the soundness of the means adopted for dealing with a scarcity of limited extent under circumstances which gave rise to no serious apprehensions of an extensive dearth of food.

ODDH.

LETTER from H. J. Sparks, Esq., Officiating Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Oudh, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce,—No. 5652, dated 16th October 1874:

In my letter No. 1158, dated the 3rd March, the Chief Commissioner reported the measures which he found it necessary to take in the northern parts of the province in order to avert famine, and I am now to submit a copy of Mr. Capper's letter, No. 4586, dated the 5th instant, and its enclosures, showing what has actually been done. These papers speak for themselves, but it may be as well to give a brief summary of what has occurred.

2. *Test Works.*—Towards the end of 1873, it was feared that there might be considerable distress in the Fyzabad division, and early in the current year it was apparent that these fears were not groundless. Test works were then started by Mr. Capper, the Commissioner.

missioner. Not content with the appearance of the country and the people, and the reports that he received of the distress, he took the precaution of directing small works to be experimentally set on foot, rightly judging that if many persons were attracted to the works by the very small wages offered, there could no longer be any doubt that the people were suffering from want and privation.

3. *Fyzabad.*—In the Fyzabad district, though the autumn crops had failed, there was no great distress. Here the people found labour without much difficulty. Some few test works were started, but they proved that no relief works were really wanted, and they were all closed before the end of March, the total expenditure being less than 3,000 rupees.

4. *Distress in Bharaich and Gonda.*—But the number of persons who flocked to the test works in some parts of Bharaich and Gonda proved beyond all question that, owing to previous bad seasons, and the failure of the winter rains in the trans-Gogra districts, help was absolutely required. The distress was confined to tolerably compact tracts. The total distressed area comprised about 2,900 square miles, and contained some 750,000 souls.

5. *Nature of Relief Works.*—The first step was to determine the nature of the relief works to be undertaken. Road-work was eventually decided on, and the reasons which led to its selection may be given in the words of the Commissioner: "As to the nature of the works to be started as relief works, Sir George Couper from the first had urged on us the utility of works of irrigation. But by this time we had gained by experience some knowledge of the numbers which flocked to every test work that was opened. Wells, as chiefly employing skilled labour, were out of the question, even in those parts where there was a probability of successfully sinking them; tanks, although serviceable in the prevention of future scarcity, required much local knowledge and matured consideration in the selection of their site. Their concurrent construction in numerous places demanded a large skilled supervising establishment of a class which was not available, and the few which could have been immediately commenced would have entailed the assemblage at each of a mass of poor, under-fed wretches who would have been to a considerable extent unmanageable in so confined a space, and whose very assembling in the immediate vicinity of a village would tend to the outbreak at any time of an epidemic, which might have the most disastrous effects. It was decided that road-work was the most expedient. By simultaneous opening of several sections of each, work would be offered within reach of the homes of the mass of those employed; the gangs would be distributed, and their supervision rendered comparatively easy; whilst the roads themselves in the then roadless Terai would facilitate the immediate importation of food-grains and stimulate the trade in future. Roads then, with poor houses along the several lines, and at such other places as might be thought necessary, were to form the staple of the relief works. Field dispensaries, with central hospitals and adequate medical superintendence of the gangs, were to be provided; whilst, owing to the deadly climate of the Terai during the rainy season, when work by the acclimatized was liable to be stopped by floods, and superintendence by Europeans and unacclimatized officials was said to be precluded by the endemic fevers, depôts of grain were provided for the support of the people when no work could be done. In Gonda itself provision for 50,000 maunds of grain was made, partly as a measure of precaution, should unforeseen accident occur, or another bad season be in store, but chiefly because the new demand, at any price, of grain for Lower Bengal threatened to exhaust the relics of our maize crop and to carry off the spring harvest so soon as it was reaped. So great was this demand, that the agents of Government or of grain speculators hovered round even our most distressed tracts, tempting the holders of even a few maunds by tenders of cash at previously unheard-of rates to part with their small reserves, and there was no law which authorised direct interference with their action. Fortunately, so far as the rabi crop was concerned, the people realised the danger, and, as a rule, refused to sell; whilst the thekadars, who generally receive their rents in kind, and who for a consideration had bound themselves to procure and store such stock in excess of their usual stores as was prescribed for each, laid an embargo on the crops of the poorer tenantry, and allowed no sales except to themselves.

"Subsidiary precautions were taken, and amongst others the famine tracts, and those others in Gonda district, where intolerable distress was apprehended, were divided into circles, each under the supervision of some local respectability, to whom all village chowkedars and servants of the circle were bound to report all cases of urgent distress, and who was authorised (being provided with means for the purpose) to give discretionary immediate relief, reporting his action to the local delegate of the relief committees. Fortunately, although enough cases were thus brought to notice from time to time to show that the machinery was in working order, it never was severely strained, and may (tested by results) be pronounced to have been unnecessary."

6. *Roads.*—In the Terai there were but few roads, and it was not difficult to select lines which, while convenient at present, because passing through the heart of the country where the distress was greatest, would be of great ultimate utility. An old military path, roughly made during the campaigns of 1858 for patrolling purposes, ran along the Nepal frontier. This could still be traced in places, and it has now been made a useful road. A series of roads, opening out the northern parts of the districts and bringing the forest

Supplementary
works.

roads into connection with the district communications, were designed and lined out, and these were the first works opened. But in addition to these roads, some supplementary works were sanctioned, to be taken in hand if found necessary. Of these may be noticed several tanks, of which two were ultimately undertaken: A "bund" embankment on the Rapti, some 1,200 feet in length, designed to stop a flood which every year submerged some five miles of country; a canal, three miles long, to drain the water from three square miles of swamp. This, it was thought, would not only reclaim some valuable rice land, but would also render that part of the country less unhealthy. Rest bungalows for the inspecting officers wherever they might be found necessary were also under consideration, but only one was constructed, as the Maharaja of Bulrampur placed at the disposal of the authorities houses in various places, which provided sufficient accommodation for such officers as were not at the time under canvas.

7. *Works undertaken.*—The following Tables, taken from the Commissioner's report, show the nature of the works undertaken in the two districts, the number of persons to whom they afforded labour, and the expenditure:—

DISTRICT.	NAME OF WORK.	Length in Miles.	Estimate.	Number of Persons Employed from com- mencement.	Amount to Labourers.	Estab- lish- ment and Contingen- cies.	TOTAL.
			Rs.		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
GONDA	Road from Atrowla to Bulrampur - - - -	17½	37,691	610,414	30,160	6,502	36,662
	„ Atrowla to Tulsiपुर - - - -	14½	46,371	561,460	28,259	2,515	30,774
	„ Military (Gonda Section) - - - -	36	84,312	786,916	41,706	4,147	45,853
	„ Chowdri Dee to Khurgapur - - - -	31½	59,639	1,222,110	58,639	5,866	61,505
	„ Bulrampur to Ekona - - - -	14½	40,315	181,940	10,314	1,462	11,776
	„ Karasur to Maskapur - - - -	11½	7,533	73,396	4,082	537	4,619
	TOTAL ROADS in GONDA - - - -	123½	2,75,261	3,436,236	1,73,160	21,029	1,94,189
	Tank at Chowdri Dee - - - -	-	1,858	24,951	1,204	139	1,343
	„ Lallia - - - -	-	2,839	44,165	2,020	197	2,217
	Bund on Rapti at Ghussyer Ghat - - - -	1,200 feet.	1,060	21,504	1,218	136	1,354
	Canal at Mehnawan - - - -	3 miles.	8,730	66,824	3,159	357	3,516
	Total Irrigation Work in ditto - - - -	-	6,487	157,444	7,601	829	8,430
Inspection Bungalow at Atrowla - - - -	-	1,841	No rolls kept.	1,751	-	1,751	
TOTAL in GONDA - - - -	-	2,83,589	3,593,680	1,82,512	21,858	2,04,370	

DISTRICT.	NAME OF WORK.	Length in Miles.	Estimate.	Number of Labourers Employed.	Expenditure.
					Rs.
BHARAICH	Road Bharaich to Nanpara (Jingraghat) - - - -	1	5,755	52,860	3,759
	„ Military (Bharaich Section) - - - -	15½	24,932	2,80,570	18,435
	„ Gobhapur to Bhinga with Sahelwa Branch - - - -	9	9,016	91,117	6,571
	„ Bhinga to Lachmanpur - - - -	8½	4,102	48,470	4,100
	„ Lachmanpur to Mathura - - - -	5	2,262	22,421	2,252
	„ Pipraghat to Ekona - - - -	13½	5,582	51,106	4,853
	„ Bhinga to Nanpara - - - -	26	33,865	1,58,409	13,910
	„ Pipraghat to Charda - - - -	32½	24,359	53,634	8,410
TOTAL BHARAICH - - - -	106½	1,09,873	7,59,046	62,309	
LYZABAD	Repairs - - - -	5½	3,000	57,239	2,997

Altogether in the whole division 4,409,965 persons were employed for one day at a cost of 2,69,667 rupees, being about one anna two half pie per head, including cost of gang supervision.

Reasons for its
adoption.

8. *System adopted.*—In carrying out these works it was arranged that the works generally should remain under the supervision of the Commissioner, and be constructed by gangs working under and paid by the Deputy Commissioners; the surveys, marking out and measuring up, and purely professional supervision of works in progress, as well as the preparation of the regular plans and estimates, being entrusted to the officers of the Department Public Works. Other proposals had been made. It had, for instance, been suggested that Government should utilise the skilled and able-bodied labour which in times of distress can be obtained at lower rates than usual by employing them on remunerative works, while all other distressed persons should be fed by charitable relief. But the great object in view was not to get the works done cheaply, but to avert distress; and

and it was held to be far better to take on at the works every one who was willing to give a day's labour for a day's food, than to employ the able-bodied only, and feed the rest in idleness.

9. Doubtless it would have been easier to organise and supervise gangs of skilled and able-bodied labourers. But it would have been disheartening to them to find that advantage was taken of the hard times to get their labour at a cheap rate while their neighbours ate the bread of idleness, and for a naturally lazy people it was considered that it would not be good to give away much in charity. Many would doubtless long continue to come for a day's food given gratis, who would not linger on the works a day after they found they could find more remunerative works elsewhere. Moreover, they would in future take less trouble with their crops if they knew that at the worst they would be fed by Government. The system adopted after due consideration had this advantage, that it taught the people that the authorities would help those who helped themselves.

10. *Work carried out by Mixed Gangs.*—The works were accordingly carried out by mixed gangs, every one who was willing to work being allowed to do so. The gratuitous distribution of alms to persons able to work was avoided, and the following three points were kept steadily in view:—

(1.) That so far as might be possible, men were not to be attracted from their agricultural avocations.

(2.) That to ensure this, the wages of labour were to be kept so low as to provide food, but not tempt those who could by any other means obtain it.

(3.) That these wages were to be paid daily, either in money or kind.

11. *Mode of Payment, &c.*—As to the mode in which the labourers were employed and paid, the Chief Commissioner cannot do better than let Mr. Capper speak for himself:— "All comers willing to work at our rates were to be received, and work was to be allotted to each class according to their capacity. They were to be formed into gangs some miles apart to avoid overcrowded encampments, and to bring the work as far as possible within daily reach of the labourers' homes."

Sanitary arrangements were duly seen to, and a field hospital and a few moveable huts were attached to each gang. All moonshees and mohurrirs were provided with lithographed copies of vernacular instructions as to laying out and constructing the road, soils to be selected or avoided, digging side-drains, dressing the roadway and slopes, mode of payments, their own duties towards their superior officers and subordinates, and their relations to the supervising establishments of the Department Public Works. Those incapable of even light work were to be received and fed on the works, pending the orders of the proper officer. With him it rested to determine whether such should be maintained at their homes, removed to a poor-house, or sent to a central hospital.

As to the actual working, Mr. Maconochie, Deputy Commissioner of Gonda, states that "over each gang there was a mohurrir to keep accounts and to take care that the necessary funds were available for daily payments; a supervisor of works who apportioned and overlooked the works of each sub-gang, and appointed assistant mohurrirs and mates according to the numbers who flocked to the works. As a rule, each assistant mohurrir had 220 persons under him told off into four sub-gangs of fifty-five persons each, five being skilled diggers, the fifty unskilled hands. There were two mates to each sub-gang, one of whom was required to be able to read and write either Hindi or Persian, and keep the roll of workmen. This man between seven and eight in the morning, after marking down all in attendance, made up his account and delivered to the assistant mohurrir a total, showing the number of persons present in each class, and the amount of money required to pay them. After the assistant mohurrir had checked up the returns of his mates, he made up a similar total for the head mohurrir, who, after receiving the accounts of all his assistants, made up the accounts of the whole gang. He was expected to have made over by 3 p.m. to each assistant mohurrir the money required to pay each sub-gang, and the mohurrir distributed this to the head mates, who, when the order to leave off work was given, seated their sub-gangs according to their order in the nominal roll, and after the number had been tested, the order to pay was given, and each person received his wages for the day."

Under the system of simultaneous payment of sub-gangs, it was as easy to pay 5,000 rupees as 500 rupees, and the people were off to their homes before dark. But the preliminary difficulties in procuring a regular supply of pice or of grain on the different sections were very great. They severely taxed the energies and strained the authority of the Deputy Commissioners and their staff, and had the work been entrusted to the Department Public Works, any arrangements that could have been made by them must have broken down, and they would have called upon us to find the cash, the change, and the accountants. It is known from practical experience how tedious is the operation of paying in grain, and it is not surprising that Mr. Maconochie stopped it as soon as he could. But both he and Mr. Chapman found at first that it was much easier to procure maize at 15 or 16 seers per rupee than to get an adequate supply of copper coin, although it was not easy to get the grain.

The Government coinage was unknown in the Terai, the circulating medium being the lump

lump of copper known as the Goruckpuri pice, valued generally at 20 gundas of four to the rupee, and there was but a scant supply of these. The stock of copper coin in the district treasuries was, in the face of such a demand as this sudden and unexpected one, ludicrously inadequate, and emergent indents on Lucknow and Fyzabad produced but little. Meanwhile, speculators became alive to the demand, and the price of Goruckpuri pice rose so rapidly, that when the Government pice arrived, the two coinages became current at the same rate, four to the anna, or 16 gundas to the rupee. This had, however, its advantageous side. At each work, as far as possible, a banian was induced to settle, and although some came with great reluctance and very small stocks, the more enterprising soon discovered that it was a very good business. Government, the work-people, or the neighbouring villages took at once every ounce of grain that they could produce, and the daily re-sale of the coppers which they received from the people to the works gave them a very handsome profit. In consequence, their numbers and their food-supplies rapidly increased, till at last in April small baiparis, travelling grain dealers, who were taking grain to Nawabganj for boat exportation to Bengal, found it worth their while to bring their three or four carts to our distressed Terai, and every work had its banians no longer pressed but voluntarily attending.

The system and the measures for organising and maintaining the people worked well, though at the cost of great labour and anxiety to the European officers, and incessant labour and worry to their supervising subordinates.

12. *Wages*.—No man, woman, or child ready to labour was turned away. Every person willing to work was employed, and many came, not only men, but women and children also; "and yet," to quote Mr. Capper again, "the pay given was very small, and the actual measurements by the Department Public Works show that there was a very fair tale of labour exacted." The wages at first starting were—

	a.	p.
For skilled diggers - - - - -	2	0 daily.
" unskilled diggers - - - - -	1	6 "
" adult carriers - - - - -	1	0 "
" children - - - - -	0	9 in Gonda.
" children according to age - - - - -	1 to 3	in Bharaich.

About the third week of February Mr. Maconochie found "that these rates were above the ordinary rates paid in villages to unskilled diggers and common coolies, and feared that they would attract the whole population to our work." He proposed to give in future—

	a.	p.
Skilled diggers - - - - -	2	0 a day.
Unskilled " - - - - -	1	0 "
Adult carriers - - - - -	0	9 "
Children between 12 and 17 years - - - - -	0	6 "
" under 7 years - - - - -	0	3 "

The Commissioner had written to Mr. Chapman, who was in charge of the Bharaich sections of the military road, that if he had any reason to believe that the people preferred our work and pay to working in the fields, he was to reduce—

	a.	p.
Diggers to - - - - -	1	0
Adult carriers to - - - - -	0	9
Children to - - - - -	0	6

And on the 25th February he had announced the reductions. At the conference of the 2nd March, Mr. Maconochie's rates were unanimously adopted. The first rates were a little too high, for, when reduced, some persons left the works, thus proving that they were not in absolute want. That the wages afterwards given were not too attractive is shown by the fact that no sooner did rain fall in June, than the people began to leave the works in large numbers.

13. *Alms*.—The amount spent in affording relief to those who did not work was comparatively small. On this head, the Commissioner writes: "As might be expected under our system, the number of persons who received gratuitous relief was but small." In Fyzabad the aggregate, up to 24th April, was only 1,114. At Bulrampur a large poor-house, supported by the Maharajah, fed from 250 to 300 daily, and as that public-spirited gentleman took upon himself the charge of the poor of his estate, including our special poor-house at Tulsipur, only 29,871 persons at the Atrawla poor-house were charged to Government.

14. *Medical Arrangements*.—It was feared that the disease might break out among some of the gangs employed on the relief works, and that the privations they had undergone might render the people especially liable to any epidemic disease. Rules were therefore drawn up, laying down the procedure to be followed in the event of an outbreak of cholera or other epidemic; and some extra medical subordinates were sent to each district. Fortunately, the health of the people was on the whole good, and there was no occasion to test the efficacy of the arrangements that had been made.

15. *Works*

15. *Works completed*.—Of the works that were undertaken, some remained unfinished when the time arrived that relief was no longer needed. Of the work that has been done, Mr. Capper writes as follows:—

The work completed was, in Bharaich:	
New Roads constructed:	
Bhinga to Gobhapur - - - - -	5½ Miles.
" to Lachmanpur - - - - -	8½ "
Lachmanpur to Muthura - - - - -	5 "
Pipraghat to Ekona (part) - - - - -	6½ "
" to Charda - - - - -	14 "
Total - - -	39 "
Old Roads widened and raised:	
Military Road - - - - -	15½ Miles.
Pipraghat to Ekona (part) - - - - -	7½ "
Bhinga to Nanpara - - - - -	13 "
Total - - -	36 "
TOTAL Roads constructed - - -	
75 Miles.	
Leaving incomplete:	
Pipraghat to Charda - - - - -	18½ Miles.
Bhinga to Nanpara - - - - -	12 "
Pipraghat to Ekona - - - - -	1 "
TOTAL - - -	31 "
In Gonda the work done was:	
New Roads constructed:	
Chowdri Dee to Khargapur - - - - -	29 Miles.
Atrawla to Tulsipur - - - - -	14½ "
Mankapur to Karasur - - - - -	7 "
Total - - -	50 "
Old Roads widened and raised:	
Military Road - - - - -	36 Miles.
Bulrampur to Ekona - - - - -	9 "
Atrawla to Bulrampur - - - - -	17½ "
Total - - -	62 "
TOTAL Roads constructed - - -	
112 Miles.	
Leaving incomplete:	
Chowdri Dee to Khargapur - - - - -	2½ Miles.
Bulrampur to Ekona - - - - -	5½ "
Mankapur to Karasur - - - - -	4½ "
TOTAL - - -	12½ "
Showing a summary of works completed in the division:	
New Roads constructed - - - - -	89 Miles.
Old Roads straightened, widened and raised - - - - -	98 "
GRAND TOTAL Roads constructed - - -	
187 "	

Besides two irrigation tanks, one drainage canal (part), and one river embankment, at a total expenditure (not including compensation for land taken up, pay of Public Works establishment, and a few miscellaneous items) of not more than 2,75,000 rupees.

16. *Cost*.—The accounts not having been finally closed, the exact cost cannot be given, and the Commissioner's figures, which have been checked by the Controller of the Department Public Works, seem to be rather under the mark. Approximately, the cost on relief works has been:—

	Rs.
Works - - - - -	2,98,363
Establishment - - - - -	17,866
Tools and plant - - - - -	866
TOTAL - - - Rs.	3,17,097

To these figures must be added the sum of 90,000 rupees, spent on the storage of grain, and a sum of 1,25,000 rupees advanced for a similar purpose. The lakh and a quarter last mentioned will be recovered, as will also the greater portion of the 90,000 rupees. Taking these sums as expended, the total cost of the relief works has been 5,32,067 rupees. But all accounts have not been received, and there will be some charge on account of pay of hospital assistants, cost of medicine, &c. The total cost may be reckoned as 5½ lakhs. But this sum has not all been given away. The greater part, if not all, of the money expended on storage of grain will be recovered. Allowing for loss, 1½ lakhs should at any rate be recovered. The works that were undertaken were useful works. At ordinary rates they would have cost about 1,36,604 rupees; so that all that can be fairly said to have been expended on this account on pure relief is 1,80,493 rupees. As far, then, as can be judged from accounts not finally closed, the expenditure stands thus:—

	Rs.	Rs.
Cost of relief works - - - - -	3,17,097	
Cost of grain - - - - -	90,000	
Advanced for storage of ditto - - - - -	1,25,000	
Contingencies and charges not yet brought to account - - - - -	17,903	
Total - - - - -		5,50,000
Deduct—		
Value of work done - - - - -	1,36,604	
To be recovered on account of grain - - - - -	1,75,000	
		3,11,604
Balance - - - Rs.		2,38,396

The exact figures will be submitted hereafter. Those given above cannot be far wrong, and the Chief Commissioner does not think it necessary to delay this report in order to be absolutely precise.

17. *Quality of Work.*—The rates at which the work was done were necessarily high. Many of the labourers were women and children. Many of the men were infirm. The work was carried on at a time of year when the clayey soil had become as hard as stone; and much was done which, under ordinary circumstances, would not have been commenced before the rains. All this has added to the cost; but though the rates were high, the work done was good, and the Engineer's report shows that though a considerable portion of the country has been flooded during the late rains, little or no damage has been done to the new works.

18. *Summary.*—Briefly, owing to previous bad seasons, want of rain, and a severe frost, the population of some 2,900 square miles were, early in the year, on the verge of very great distress, which, but for Government aid, would have culminated in famine. Relief works were undertaken, on which four million and a half people worked for one day; this must represent at least 50,000 persons who were paid for their work; and besides these there are others who have received charity, and who have been assisted with advances.

The wages offered were so low that it may be safely held that none came to the works who were not in want, and the ultimate cost to the State of the relief that has been given will be something under two lakhs and a half.

19. In conclusion, the Chief Commissioner trusts that these operations, taken as a whole, will not be regarded as unsatisfactory. They have not been accomplished without much personal sacrifice; one valuable life has been lost, and others have broken down under the effects of exposure in that pestilential climate at the most trying time of the year; and Sir George Couper would submit that the services of Mr. Capper, and of the officers whom he has mentioned in his report, especially Messrs. Maconochie, Chapman, and Hodges, as well as of the Maharaja of Balrampur, are deserving of the acknowledgments of his Excellency the Viceroy in Council.

P.S.—The return of the original maps is requested when no longer required.

LETTER from G. H. M. Batten, Esq., Officiating Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce, to the Chief Commissioner of Oudh,—No. 73, dated Calcutta, the 20th February 1875.

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your Officiating Secretary's letter, No. 5652, dated 16th October 1874, submitting the final report on famine relief works in the Province of Oudh.

2. In reply, I am to say that the letter and the reports which accompanied it from Mr. Capper, Commissioner of the Fyzabad Division, Mr. Maconochie, Deputy Commissioner of Gonda, Mr. Hodges, Officiating Executive Engineer, Relief Works Division, and Mr. C. Chapman, Assistant Commissioner, Bharach, give a clear and complete account of the measures taken under your directions to avert the distress which was apprehended from the failure of the rains in the autumn of 1873.

3. The condition of some parts of Oudh caused considerable anxiety at the time when his Excellency the Viceroy visited Lucknow in December of that year, the failure of the rice crop having followed a succession of bad harvests and other circumstances injurious to the cultivators of the soil. You were authorised to make such temporary remissions of the land revenue as might after local inquiry be found advisable, and to carry out such other measures for the relief of distress as might be required, being guided by the resolution of the Government of India of the 7th November 1873.

4. Great pains appear to have been taken by the Commissioner of Fyzabad to ascertain the extent of country over which the severe distress was likely to occur, and you visited in person the districts where the failure of the rice crop had been the greatest. In your letter, No. 1158, dated 3rd March, the measures which seemed to you, after consultation with the local officers, to be sufficient, were reported. Their gross cost was estimated at 4,62,500 rupees, of which it was calculated that 2,65,000 rupees would be spent on relief works, and 1,97,500 rupees on advances for the purchase of grain to be held in readiness for the people to buy in case there should be a dearth of food in certain remote parts of the province.

5. These measures were approved by the Government of India in Mr. Howell's letter No. 1024, dated 25th March 1874, and you were authorised to act upon your own discretion in adapting to the circumstances of Oudh the general principles which have been laid down to meet the distress in Bengal. Subsequently your proposals for strengthening the staff in the distressed districts were also approved.*

6. The rain which fell at the end of January and in the beginning of February 1874, is stated to have been of the greatest value in securing an abundant spring crop and thus preserving a large tract of country from severe distress. The area of country throughout which scarcity was actually felt is estimated to comprise about 2,900 square miles, with a population of 750,000, and severe distress was confined to "tolerably compact tracts."

7. The measures taken appear to the Governor General in Council to have been completely successful. Public works were opened as the necessity arose. They were judiciously selected, and the system adopted was well suited to the circumstances of the case. It is calculated by you that 50,000 persons were employed upon these works, which were closed in the middle of August.

8. Very little need was found for the distribution of gratuitous relief excepting on the property of the Maharaja of Balrampur, who took upon himself the charge of the poor upon his estates, having, besides other relief elsewhere, fed from 250 to 300 persons daily in a large poor-house at Balrampur. The supplies of grain which were secured are stated to have been of considerable use, and the precaution taken was a wise one; but there does not appear to have been actually any serious deficiency in the food-supply, and trade is stated to have been active.

9. You calculate that the net cost of the relief operations will be 2,38,396 rupees, of which 1,80,493 rupees have been spent on public works, above the sum for which they would have been constructed in ordinary course. Forty thousand rupees were expended on the grain operations, and 17,903 rupees upon contingencies. The expenditure is moderate in amount, and every care appears to have been taken to prevent extravagance.

10. The reports prove that the part of Oudh where the rice crop of the winter of 1873 failed was for a time in a very critical condition, and that the successful manner in which severe distress was averted is mainly due to your foresight and that of the local officers, coupled with the zealous exertions of those who were actively engaged upon the relief operations.

* Mr. Howell's letter, No. 1518, dated 2nd May 1874. Financial Resolution, No. 4611, dated 28th July 1874.

11. I am accordingly to convey to you the thanks of the Government of India, and to request that you will also convey their thanks to Messrs. Capper, Maconochie, Chapman, and Hodges, as well as to the other officers, European and Native, who have been noticed by Mr. Capper as deserving special approval for their conduct.

12. I am further to request that the thanks of the Governor General in Council may be expressed to the Maharaja of Balrampur for the assistance which at considerable sacrifice he has rendered to those persons living upon his estates and in his neighbourhood who were in need. The conduct of the Maharaja upon this occasion has given another proof of the liberality and public spirit which the Maharaja has always shown when occasion has demanded.

13. I am to add that the report and enclosures together with this reply will be published in the Gazette of India.

RAILWAYS, &c.

LETTER from Lieut.-Colonel *F. S. Taylor*, R. E., Consulting Engineer to the Government of India for Guaranteed Railways, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Public Works Department,—No. 3407, dated 29th December 1874.

In accordance with the request conveyed in your No. 2378 R., dated 24th September last, I have the honour to submit a report on the Railway operations in connection with the dispatch of grain to the distressed districts. This report has been delayed for the compilation of the necessary statistics.

REPORT on the Traffic operations of the East Indian Railway during the Famine of 1873-74.

The traffic in food-grains on the East Indian Railway showed unusual activity as early as the month of October 1873, and its development became very rapid after the issue of the notification of 1st November, by which the rates to the public for food grain travelling towards the threatened districts were, at the expense of Government, reduced to one-eighth pie per maund per mile.

2. The arrangements of the traffic department were duly organised to meet the emergency, and kept pace with the demand during the rest of the year; but early in January, when the Government commenced operations on its own account, and the despatches of Government rice from Howrah to the Patna station began on a large scale, in addition to the public traffic, the signs of a block at once showed themselves; and on the 17th January I received instructions from his Excellency the Viceroy to take immediate steps to remedy the threatened evil.

3. After consultation with the railway officials, I waited on his Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal on the 19th, and represented that nothing short of the complete separation of the Government business from that of the public at Patna station would suffice, and with his approval I proceeded to carry the necessary measures into effect in concert with the local civil authorities and the railway company.

4. Two favourable sites on the banks of the Ganges, one two miles below Patna, the other opposite the neighbouring station of Barr, were found on the 22nd, and the railway engineers at once proceeded to lay branch lines to these points and to construct suitable sheds, sidings, and loading banks, Government agreeing to pay the cost; and to these two depôts, with some slight assistance from a third branch which was subsequently laid from the station of Mokameh to the river at the request of Sir R. Temple, the whole of the Government rice was worked up from Howrah in full train loads and thence transported across the Ganges without a single hitch of any consequence.

5. In connection with this operation the name of Mr. Michael Fox, the contractor who constructed these branch lines, deserve special mention.

6. In the middle of the month of February, the arrivals of Government rice in Calcutta became so large as to overpower the receiving and dispatching capabilities of the Howrah station; and under instructions issued by his Excellency the Viceroy on 21st February, a special supervision of the Company's arrangements for utilising the carrying power of the line to its utmost, and for preventing confusion during the processes of landing and dispatching, was undertaken.

7. During the first week, after improved arrangements were put in train, the daily dispatches from Howrah by East Indian Railway averaged 2,220 tons, and continued at about 2,000 tons per diem up to the end of March; during April the traffic was at its height, and the daily dispatches of Government rice exceeded 2,500 tons; by the end of the month the pressure was over, and during May the dispatches fell again to 2,000 tons, and after that ceased to cause further anxiety.

8. In connection with the dispatches from Howrah the name of Mr. Urban Broughton, district traffic superintendent at Howrah, deserves special mention for his zeal and ability.

9. Towards the end of February intimation was received that grain was accumulating to an enormous extent at the stations of the Sindh, Punjab, and Delhi Railway in the Punjab, and on 3rd March I received instructions from his Excellency to report on the carrying power of the railway "downwards." I accordingly dispatched Lieutenant Bisset, R.E., Deputy Consulting Engineer, to Lahore, to confer with the Government and railway officials on the subject.

10. He reported by telegraph, on the 12th, that the supply of grain in the Punjab was practically unlimited, and I informed his Excellency that my investigations led me to believe that with due co-operation between the two railways, and with the rolling stock then available, the dispatches from the Punjab and North-West Provinces together might reach 1,700 tons per diem.

11. Lieutenant Bisset's visit to Lahore was most opportune, and the mission entrusted to him was very ably carried out. The result was a greatly improved system of working the through traffic.

12. A disorganisation of the working arrangements on the chord line towards the end of April caused detention of trains which necessitated a diminution in the dispatches of Government rice and led to an additional accumulation of goods at Howrah. Captain W. A. J. Wallace, R.E., Deputy Consulting Engineer, who was deputed to investigate the matter, reported that the defect which had arisen from mismanagement in the working of the station block system had been detected by the agency and removed. The arrears of traffic that had accumulated at Howrah during this block were all worked off by 8th May.

13. The magnitude of the work actually performed may be gathered from the following figures.

From the 1st October 1873 to the 1st August 1874, the total deliveries of grain at the stations in the threatened districts amounted to 842,696 tons.

Of which—

306,697 tons were grain.
95,113 " pulses.
440,886 " rice.

The total quantities mentioned above were derived from the following sources:—

	Tons.	TOTAL.
East Indian Railway in Lower Bengal:		
Grain - - - - -	38,400	
Pulses - - - - -	7,887	
Rice - - - - -	425,759	472,046
East Indian Railway in North-Western Provinces:		
Grain - - - - -	74,857	
Pulses - - - - -	31,007	
Rice - - - - -	12,563	118,427
Jubbulpore Line in North-Western Provinces, Central India, and Central Provinces:		
Grain - - - - -	20,785	
Pulses - - - - -	4,211	
Rice - - - - -	1,524	26,520
Great Indian Peninsula Railway, chiefly in Central Provinces:		
Grain - - - - -	33,987	
Pulses - - - - -	19,201	
Rice - - - - -	182	53,370
Oudh and Rohilkund Railway, in North-Western Provinces and Oudh:		
Grain - - - - -	740	
Pulses - - - - -	127	
Rice - - - - -	10	877

	Tons.	Total.
Rajpootana State Railway, chiefly in Rajpootana:		
Grain - - - - -	639	
Pulses - - - - -	327	
Rice - - - - -	6	966
Sind, Punjab, and Delhi Railway, chiefly in Punjab:		
Grain - - - - -	137,280	
Pulses - - - - -	32,353	
Rice - - - - -	848	170,480
TOTALS - - -		842,696

14. Of the amount received from Lower Bengal, 304,898 tons were Government rice sent from Calcutta, and considerable quantities of the receipts from the Punjab were either Government, or procured for Government; but of this there is no record at once available. Of the total receipts, however, a considerable portion was from one part of the famine district to another, and there were also considerable dispatches from stations within to stations beyond those included in this return.

15. The statistics of exports and imports in each group of stations are shown, month by month, in Appendix No. 1; and the Abstract at foot shows the net quantities of food-grains absorbed by each district.

These amount in total to—

Grain - - - - -	248,348 tons.
Pulses - - - - -	68,748 "
Rice - - - - -	398,758 "

Grand Total Net Receipts - - - 715,854 tons.

16. The supplies from the Jubbulpore line, to the Great Indian Peninsula line, the Sind, Punjab, and Delhi Railway, which amount in all to 250,380 tons, could not by any other means of communication than railways have found their way to Behar, and it is since the occurrence of the last distress in Behar, in 1866, that these sources of supply have been opened. It is to be regretted that there is no means of comparing the supplies by the East Indian Railway in that period with those of the present occasion; but the East Indian Railway Company have unfortunately destroyed their records of that time, and the information cannot now be got.

17. The chief executive responsibility during this trying period devolved upon the Traffic Manager of the East Indian Railway, Mr. J. C. Batchelor; and, notwithstanding some shortcomings, the result, when the difficulties they had to contend with are taken into consideration, cannot fail to reflect creditably upon him, his deputy, Mr. St. Leger Carter, and his staff of district superintendents.

18. To Mr. D. W. Campbell, the Locomotive Superintendent, very great credit is due for the able management of his staff, and for the admirable way in which he worked his department; and Mr. R. W. Pearce, the Carriage and Wagon Superintendent, equally upheld the credit of the company in his department.

19. Lastly, the members of the Board of Agency, Mr. Cecil Stephenson, and Mr. G. Sibley, are to be congratulated on the highly successful termination of their labours; and it must be remembered that upon these two gentlemen as the administrative heads of the company's Indian staff, the burden of the responsibility fell.

Calcutta,
23 December 1874.

F. S. Taylor, Lieutenant Colonel,
Royal Engineers,
Consulting Engineer to Government for
Guaranteed Railways.

— No. 1. —

STATISTICS of GRAIN TRAFFIC, EAST INDIAN RAILWAY, from 1st October 1873 to 31st July 1874.

APPENDIX showing the Total Imports and Exports of

YEARS.	MONTHS.	BURDWAN TO TEENPAHAR (LOOP LINE).						RAJMAHAL TO KUJRAH (LOOP LINE).						MANCOOR (CHORD LINE).	
		GRAIN.		PULSES.		RICE.		GRAIN.		PULSES.		RICE.		GRAIN.	
		Export.	Import.	Export.	Import.	Export.	Import.	Export.	Import.	Export.	Import.	Export.	Import.	Export.	Import.
		Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.
1873	October	23,711	697	4,896	5,324	55,320	1,597	1,09,722	4,679	27,913	539	38,207	21,470	1,133	7,093
"	November	18,422	6,070	18,372	9,329	66,309	729	65,015	27,740	24,408	12,615	15,413	1,29,936	3,631	12,023
"	December	15,391	3,881	8,392	6,825	124,791	1,226	47,399	85,098	15,877	26,075	11,105	2,59,891	1,446	11,122
"	January	34,621	5,588	9,089	8,162	143,263	4,370	60,593	1,14,321	12,751	6,833	11,271	4,12,602	2,200	9,288
1874	February	26,471	5,143	8,839	11,184	80,991	3,348	27,318	91,304	11,297	21,238	4,791	5,58,254	7,422	9,141
"	March	6,561	2,540	7,475	11,657	53,177	3,396	17,209	96,878	9,763	11,872	3,919	5,63,555	7	4,194
"	April	14,856	8,391	7,335	6,987	56,829	20,836	29,786	56,735	6,063	6,225	3,697	8,45,468	382	7,190
"	May	6,631	18,155	4,970	11,279	51,957	18,082	76,174	58,936	21,456	7,481	2,089	3,89,379	186	6,373
"	June	7,067	9,588	5,165	15,542	44,120	61,780	1,25,598	1,24,140	19,029	28,610	2,842	1,19,183	694	5,967
"	July	203	4,781	4,775	11,406	24,590	90,033	44,104	59,163	20,675	30,664	12,123	3,54,364	1,479	5,363
TOTAL MAUNDS		153,934	64,834	79,308	97,995	701,547	235,397	6,02,918	7,18,794	1,69,232	1,53,152	1,05,457	36,56,102	12,580	77,754
TOTAL TONS		5,655	2,382	2,914	3,600	25,773	8,648	22,150	26,406	6,217	5,590	3,874	134,317	462	2,856

ABSTRACT showing DESPATCHES or EXPORTS (in Roman) and

DESCRIPTION.	
Burdwan to Teenpahar	- - - - -
Rajmahal to Kujrah	- - - - -
Mancoor to Mananpur	- - - - -
Luckeeserai to Mogulserai	- - - - -
Benares to Mirzapore	- - - - -
TOTAL	- - - - -

GRAND TOTAL NET RECEIPTS of Food Grains in Famine Districts -

* The totals represent the differences between the total Exports and

Office of Consulting Engineer to Government of India,
Calcutta, 15 December 1874.

— No. 1. —

(Prepared in the Consulting Engineer's Office from Statistics supplied by the Chief Auditor, East Indian Railway).

FOOD GRAINS, Month by Month, at certain Groups of Stations.

TO MANANPUR (LINE).				LUCKEESERAI TO MOGULSERAI						BENARES TO MIRZAPORE.					
PULSES.		RICE.		GRAIN.		PULSES.		RICE.		GRAIN.		PULSES.		RICE.	
Export.	Import.	Export.	Import.	Export.	Import.	Export.	Import.	Export.	Import.	Export.	Import.	Export.	Import.	Export.	Import.
Mnds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.
1,835	3,344	8,852	76,257	9,733	1,09,262	20,763	10,523	31,236	4,43,074	1,543	1,33,501	1,431	30,308	2,170	17,062
158	11,499	17,652	15,175	22,374	3,01,561	37,222	48,344	19,114	3,72,863	12,707	1,22,557	918	14,003	2,429	12,393
1,869	5,306	24,348	8,599	47,823	5,39,155	11,911	1,46,568	13,863	4,67,563	16,760	2,20,929	1,018	32,734	1,883	16,511
583	5,520	38,430	23,120	1,00,322	8,62,847	26,517	1,39,899	6,653	7,59,535	58,429	2,37,147	3,372	19,532	2,402	19,574
197	6,679	21,663	12,021	45,052	7,80,901	26,588	1,87,963	6,058	8,90,291	67,558	2,57,448	1,476	23,168	2,464	28,634
222	11,527	19,073	16,477	30,063	6,93,955	29,039	2,70,155	8,084	12,10,270	33,508	1,12,296	10,267	12,565	696	11,667
342	18,913	16,458	91,415	28,635	5,44,925	67,206	3,96,712	15,122	19,18,810	8,914	65,910	10,384	21,205	650	18,463
729	16,618	12,652	1,49,688	53,072	6,74,633	54,755	4,32,776	6,108	9,71,509	7,400	61,430	3,558	9,057	437	6,078
1,695	23,506	5,460	69,744	1,56,116	7,75,807	84,250	1,76,179	16,354	2,23,375	19,544	1,69,799	2,250	23,118	458	9,526
2,140	24,701	20,632	1,07,545	94,913	6,47,075	65,417	1,99,259	17,822	1,39,490	4,423	1,75,801	981	18,241	506	8,734
9,770	1,27,608	1,85,220	5,68,311	5,88,103	59,30,123	4,23,673	20,08,378	1,40,416	73, 8,720	2,30,786	15,56,821	35,655	2,02,831	14,095	1,42,396
359	4,688	6,804	20,578	21,605	2,17,859	15,565	73,783	5,158	2,71,812	8,478	57,194	1,310	7,452	518	5,231

Net RECEIPTS or IMPORTS (in *Italics*) in the above Groups.

GRAIN.	PULSES.	RICE.
Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
3,273	686	17,125
4,256	627	130,442
2,395	4,329	14,074
196,254	58,218	266,654
48,716	6,142	4,713
248,348	68,748	398,758

715,854 tons.

Imports, and not the sums of the entries in the body of the Abstract.

F. S. Taylor, Lieut. Col., R.E.,
Consulting Engineer to Government of India for
Guaranteed Railways, Calcutta.

— No. 2. —
STATISTICS OF GRAIN TRAFFIC, EAST INDIAN RAILWAY, from 1st October 1873 to 31st July 1874.

APPENDIX showing, Month by Month, the Sources from which the Supplies Imported to the Stations between *Burdwan* and *Mirzapore* were drawn.

YEARS.	MONTHS.	EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.						JUBBULPORE LINE.			GREAT INDIAN PENINSULAR RAILWAY.			ODDH AND ROHILCUND RAILWAY.			RAJPOOTANA STATE RAILWAY.			SCIND, PUNJAB, AND DELHI RAILWAY.		
		GRAIN.		PULSES.		RICE.		GRAIN.	PULSES.	RICE.	GRAIN.	PULSES.	RICE.	GRAIN.	PULSES.	RICE.	GRAIN.	PULSES.	RICE.	GRAIN.	PULSES.	RICE.
		*Up.	*Down.	Up.	Down.	Up.	Down.															
1873	October	Maunds. 1,18,498	Maunds. 54,852	Maunds. 35,134	Maunds. 9,340	Maunds. 5,33,937	Maunds. 5,463	Maunds. 34,529	Maunds. 2,465	—	Maunds. 16,267	Maunds. 2,642	—	Maunds. 1,985	—	—	Maunds. 450	—	—	Maunds. 28,651	Maunds. 357	—
"	November	1,19,383	2,16,667	26,434	47,183	5,13,842	15,026	26,959	1,501	228	14,124	2,203	—	4,961	—	—	2,155	—	—	83,702	18,469	—
"	December	96,925	3,51,699	19,082	1,33,959	7,17,123	26,379	21,193	4,578	3,354	23,789	9,563	188	6,036	2,092	170	1,125	—	—	3,59,413	48,234	816
1874	January	1,81,049	4,60,833	25,063	1,00,594	11,43,896	59,294	28,756	2,647	8,128	60,132	13,077	811	3,547	258	93	2,974	—	—	4,91,870	38,307	6,839
"	February	1,29,232	3,16,170	10,150	1,33,644	13,99,744	77,902	37,712	4,977	10,783	1,21,648	50,802	1,580	1,429	1,077	—	8,073	1,033	—	5,29,673	48,844	2,479
"	March	1,29,708	1,07,935	12,250	1,08,354	17,53,191	40,068	47,390	22,144	7,451	92,540	78,790	1,755	532	28	—	—	262	—	5,31,738	95,948	4,900
"	April	1,13,636	82,639	11,140	1,03,756	23,57,203	22,137	1,24,219	45,755	8,039	1,22,669	1,20,915	—	3	—	5	1,103	3,883	—	2,33,682	1,22,593	7,608
"	May	68,056	1,50,436	11,997	95,999	13,32,629	29,000	1,12,399	217	2,095	1,88,592	1,08,236	—	—	—	—	834	2,755	—	3,01,192	2,58,027	12
"	June	55,111	1,55,711	30,806	57,095	4,50,196	33,563	87,152	26,973	1,419	1,35,021	61,446	—	698	—	—	666	982	—	6,50,942	88,653	424
"	July	35,644	1,40,670	32,619	52,094	6,65,396	33,132	45,426	3,364	—	1,50,350	34,978	628	937	—	—	—	—	—	5,19,159	1,61,216	—
TOTAL MAUNDS -		10,45,342	20,37,612	2,14,675	8,44,018	1,15,89,157	3,41,964	5,65,770	1,14,621	41,497	9,25,132	5,22,632	4,962	20,148	3,455	268	17,400	8,895	—	37,87,022	8,80,648	23,078
TOTAL TONS -		38,409	74,857	7,837	31,007	4,25,739	12,563	20,785	4,211	1,524	33,937	19,201	182	740	127	10	639	327	—	1,37,289	32,353	848

* "Up" means sent from below upwards, and "Down" means sent from above downwards.

ABSTRACT.

TOTAL IMPORTS.

Grain	306,697
Pulses	95,113
Rice	440,886
TOTAL	842,696

LETTER from the Secretary to the Government of India, Public Works Department, to the Consulting Engineer to the Government of India, for Guaranteed Railways,—No. 506 R., dated 24th February 1875.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 3407, dated the 29th December last, submitting a report on the railway operations in connection with the dispatch of grain to the distressed districts.

2. The work which devolved upon yourself and the deputy consulting engineers, Captain Wallace, R.E., and Lieutenant Bisset, R.E., from October 1873 to June 1874, was exceedingly arduous and responsible. In order to ensure the success of the relief operations, it was essential that the traffic on the trunk line of railway should be conducted with order and regularity; that it was so conducted is in no small degree due to the energy of yourself and your deputies, and to the cordial manner in which you co-operated with the officials of the railway company.

3. His Excellency the Governor General in Council desires me to convey to you the expression of his entire approval of the manner in which you performed your duties, and to request that you will convey a similar expression of approval to Captain Wallace and Lieutenant Bisset.

From Colonel C. H. Dickens, R.A., Secretary to the Government of India, Public Works Department, to the Chairman of the Board of Agency of the East Indian Railway Company,—No. 455 R., dated 20th February 1875.

I AM directed by his Excellency the Viceroy in Council to convey the thanks of the Government of India to the members of the Board of Agency for the very valuable assistance which they have afforded to the Government in regard to the storage of rice at Howrah when supplies were received in large quantities in Calcutta and there was great difficulty in obtaining sufficient accommodation for it. This assistance has been warmly acknowledged by Lieutenant Colonel Graham, the officer in charge of the rice received at Calcutta, in his letter of the 1st of August last.

2. His Excellency the Governor General in Council congratulates the members of the Board of Agency, Mr. Cecil Stephenson and Mr. G. Sibley, on the highly successful termination of their labours in providing for the dispatch of supplies of food-grain to the distressed districts, and I am to request that you will be so good as to communicate to Mr. J. C. Batchelor, the traffic manager, his deputy, Mr. St. Leger Carter, and his staff, and among them especially to Mr. Urban Broughton, district traffic superintendent at Howrah, as well as to Mr. D. W. Campbell, the locomotive superintendent, and Mr. R. W. Pearce, the carriage and waggon superintendent, and the other officers and staff of the company who were actively engaged at the time of the great strain upon the resources of the line, the thanks of the Government of India for their services which have been brought to notice by Lieutenant Colonel F. S. Taylor, R.E., consulting engineer to the Government of India for Guaranteed Railways, Calcutta.

LETTER from the Secretary to the Government of India, Public Works Department, to the Agent, Eastern Bengal Railway Company,—No. 503 R., dated the 23rd February 1875.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL F. S. Taylor, R.E., consulting engineer to the Government of India for Guaranteed Railways, Calcutta, having brought to notice the assistance afforded by the Eastern Bengal Railway Company to the Government in the famine crisis, by expediting, as far as possible, the dispatch of rice from the river-side station at Chitpore to the distressed districts, I am directed by his Excellency the Viceroy in Council to convey the thanks of the Government of India to yourself and to the several heads of departments of the Eastern Bengal Railway for this service.

MEMORANDUM from Lieutenant Colonel C. Pollard, R.E.; Consulting Engineer to the Government of India for Guaranteed Railways, Lahore, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Public Works Department,—No. 101, dated 27th January 1875.

IN compliance with Public Works Department, No. 2379 R., dated 24th September 1874, the undersigned has the honour to forward, for the information of the Government of India, the report therein called for, showing the Scind, Punjab, and Delhi railway operations in connection with the dispatch of food-grains to the distressed districts in Bengal and the North-Western Provinces.

REPORT showing the Scind, Punjab, and Delhi Railway Operations in connection with the Dispatch of Food-grain to the Distressed Districts in Bengal and the North-Western Provinces.

THE accompanying Table, marked (A.), shows the amount of grain dispatched by the Scind, Punjab, and Delhi Railway during the period of nine months (15th November 1873 to 15th August 1874) to have aggregated 45,73,122 maunds, realising in freight 12,77,055 rupees, of which 6,69,017 rupees was paid by Government as compensation for the reduction from one-quarter to one-eighth pie per maund per mile.

An examination of the Table will show that the export from Loodianah was nearly one half (accurately it was 0.48) of the whole quantity dispatched. Umballa and the adjoining stations of Rajpura and Burrara stand also high.

The average number of goods trains run on the down line averaged monthly during this period 108.95 against an average of 35 before the grain traffic commenced. The extra expenditure on the goods sheds, running establishments, loading and storing, averaged 1,194 rupees per mensem.

There is no doubt that this company lost several large consignments of grain from want of waggons. It was not that our rolling stock was insufficient, but that it was impossible for the East Indian Railway to return an equivalent for our waggons thrown upon that line, and delay of five and six days took place before they could be returned. This told against our traffic.

The officials of the company worked arduously and well, and it is very creditable to the traffic manager, Mr. Ross, and his assistant, Mr. A. Saunders, that so much was done with so small an increase to the staff. The locomotive superintendent, Mr. Bocquet, and his assistants, Mr. Sandiford and W. Bocquet, met the demands in their departments promptly and energetically.

(A.)

SCINDE, PUNJAB, AND DELHI RAILWAY.

STATEMENT showing the Weight of GRAIN booked from Scinde, Punjab, and Delhi Railway Stations to FAMINE DISTRICTS in Bengal, and the Amount of Freight received from Government and the Public from 15th November 1873 to 15th August 1874.

STATIONS.	Nov. 1873.		December.		TOTAL.		Jan. 1874.		February.		March.		April.		May.		June.		TOTAL.		July 1874.		August.		TOTAL.		GRAND TOTAL.	
	Mds.	s.	Mds.	s.	Mds.	s.	Mds.	s.	Mds.	s.	Mds.	s.	Mds.	s.	Mds.	s.	Mds.	s.	Mds.	s.	Mds.	s.	Mds.	s.	Mds.	s.	Mds.	s.
Berumehal	-	-	831	0	831	0	46,117	30	21,441	30	5,711	20	2,229	10	29,036	20	35,990	20	1,40,527	10	19,057	20	13,214	10	32,271	30	831	0
Meerut City	-	-	28,239	20	34,084	10	46,117	30	21,441	30	5,711	20	2,229	10	29,036	20	35,990	20	1,40,527	10	19,057	20	13,214	10	32,271	30	2,008,883	10
Khatonee	-	-	341	10	341	10	1,512	10	7,224	20	331	20	1,132	20	2,132	30	2,279	0	13,480	0	5,159	10	3,172	30	8,992	0	2,008,883	10
Mozuffernugur	-	-	8,824	10	9,980	10	11,737	20	10,222	30	6,517	30	892	20	9,301	0	4,084	30	36,656	10	4,291	20	3,189	0	7,980	20	54,617	0
Deobund	-	-	846	0	846	0	13,464	20	7,361	10	5,585	0	1,268	30	5,200	10	1,201	10	34,181	0	3,345	20	1,983	20	5,329	0	40,356	0
Sabaraspore	-	-	840	0	840	0	6,179	30	17,915	30	4,337	0	1,420	20	11,705	30	12,106	0	53,664	30	7,724	30	5,263	10	12,988	0	67,492	30
Sirsawa	-	-	901	30	901	30	8,129	0	10,551	10	4,277	30	1,420	20	11,705	30	12,106	0	53,664	30	7,724	30	5,263	10	12,988	0	27,288	10
Jugadice	-	-	1,209	10	1,209	10	21,763	20	14,414	20	18,866	20	1,355	0	9,302	0	1,003	20	24,623	20	938	0	825	0	1,763	0	27,288	10
Barrara	-	-	842	0	842	0	5,863	30	6,214	20	18,866	20	1,355	0	9,302	0	1,003	20	24,623	20	938	0	825	0	1,763	0	27,288	10
Amballa Cantonment	-	-	6,803	20	7,141	30	12,296	20	29,407	10	26,945	10	2,524	30	4,166	10	3,967	30	75,675	30	13,759	10	6,943	10	20,107	20	97,152	30
Umballa City	-	-	1,606	30	15,181	20	39,833	0	26,174	20	43,438	10	29,581	0	59,659	20	50,238	0	1,77,761	30	34,647	0	5,779	20	11,635	20	225,333	10
Rajpura	-	-	410	0	17,353	10	25,747	30	40,433	0	22,096	0	16,307	20	28,700	20	21,134	20	2,48,924	10	34,829	10	4,468	10	39,997	20	3,03,403	10
Sirhind	-	-	351	30	351	30	651	0	9,215	10	13,312	20	472	20	3,632	0	1,330	20	1,54,509	10	8,283	30	6,291	20	15,615	10	1,87,477	30
Khannah	-	-	1,131	0	1,131	0	1,374	20	8,703	10	11,961	20	341	30	5,497	0	2,431	10	28,613	30	1,844	30	2,291	0	4,135	30	33,101	10
Sunehwall	-	-	334	30	334	30	17,505	30	8,055	10	10,094	30	1,355	20	5,375	30	9,032	0	30,359	0	5,874	10	2,219	10	8,092	20	39,582	20
Phulloor	-	-	3,432	0	3,510	30	2,605	30	1,79,803	10	2,70,977	20	1,70,870	0	2,42,976	10	4,95,101	20	62,479	0	10,425	10	3,865	10	14,291	20	77,105	10
Phugwara	-	-	306	0	3,387	30	23,486	10	45,918	0	56,278	30	1,341	20	14,824	20	21,179	20	1,66,038	20	31,841	20	47,601	20	2,82,116	20	21,64,653	10
Jullunder Cantonment	-	-	-	-	5,000	20	625	30	3,598	10	5,244	10	500	10	507	10	2,841	20	1,66,038	20	1,608	20	352	20	1,961	0	17,628	10
Jullunder City	-	-	-	-	7,305	0	11,089	0	12,810	0	24,364	20	8,679	0	25,507	10	35,012	0	1,15,472	0	1,608	20	352	20	1,961	0	16,517	10
Khairpur	-	-	-	-	2,294	30	4,019	10	6,813	20	18,513	30	7,898	30	11,839	30	26,365	10	82,320	0	33,714	30	7,785	10	29,504	0	1,64,517	10
East Bank, Beas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,793	0	3,480	10	1,302	0	1,972	20	6,064	20	20,166	20	9,645	10	6,430	30	16,076	0	1,19,619	0
Beas	-	-	-	-	321	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,671	10	2,519	30	4,191	0	2,369	0	3,650	30	169	10	33,237	10
Jundealla	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	669	30	2,723	10	-	-	835	30	1,066	30	4,385	20	327	10	3,87	0	6,525	30	11,038	10
Attaree	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35,679	30	36,317	10	1,887	0	34,411	30	9,721	30	1,30,810	0	20,020	20	7,204	20	27,225	0	1,03,169	30
Umrissur	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	343	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	343	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	343	20
Mean Meer, East	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,471	10	730	10	-	-	835	30	-	-	4,213	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,021	10
Lahore	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	49,503	20	28,231	30	20,870	30	33,788	30	12,215	30	1,44,597	20	15,492	20	3,000	0	18,492	20	1,63,400	0
Rahind	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	23,855	10	11,399	10	3,617	10	11,555	10	3,688	30	59,899	20	4,697	20	337	0	5,934	20	64,934	0
Okara	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	468	0	2,506	20	712	0	-	-	-	-	3,636	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,636	20
TOTAL WEIGHT	-	-	44,804	20	4,73,250	0	5,40,036	30	5,84,283	0	6,45,391	20	2,84,553	10	6,65,001	10	7,33,319	10	33,98,638	0	5,31,894	10	1,60,340	0	7,01,234	10	45,73,122	10
Amount charged to Government.	Rs.	a.	5,315	4	55,650	8	61,165	12	79,697	4	90,379	3	40,029	14	80,431	7	96,789	14	4,53,463	15	70,951	0	2,744	9	91,696	2	2,071	11
Amount charged to public	Rs.	a.	6,084	8	61,698	1	67,782	9	87,819	13	99,432	9	43,976	4	88,571	14	1,07,196	6	4,99,052	1	78,688	14	23,494	2	1,02,183	-	6,09,017	10
TOTAL AMOUNT	Rs.	a.	11,399	12	1,17,348	9	1,28,948	5	1,67,517	1	1,89,811	12	84,006	2	1,69,003	5	2,03,986	4	9,52,516	-	1,49,640	7	44,238	11	1,93,879	2	12,77,055	2

* On account of under-charges.

LETTER from the Secretary to the Government of India, Public Works Department, to the Agent, Sindh, Punjab, and Delhi Railway Company,—No. 512, dated 24th February 1875.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL C. Pollard, R.E., Consulting Engineer to the Government of India for guaranteed railways at Lahore, having brought to the notice of the Government of India the assistance afforded by the staff under your orders in the despatch of food-grain to the famine-stricken districts in Bengal, I am directed by his Excellency the Governor General in Council to express to you his Excellency's acknowledgment of the service rendered, and to request that you will convey the thanks of the Government of India to the traffic manager, Mr. Ross, and his assistant, Mr. A. Saunders, to the locomotive superintendent, Mr. Bocquet, and his assistants, Mr. Sandiford and Mr. W. Bocquet, and to the rest of the staff.

LETTER from Major J. Graham, on Special Duty, to the Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce,—No. 1772, dated 1st August 1874.

As directed in the last paragraph of your letter, No. 2210, dated 9th ultimo, I have now the honour to submit, for the information of Government, the following report regarding the rice purchased in Calcutta or landed from ships for despatch to the famine districts between the 14th November 1873 and the 31st July 1874.

Incorporating Mr. Toynbee's and Captain Smith's transactions with my own.

2. To make it more complete, I have incorporated with my own proceedings those of my predecessors, Mr. Toynbee and Captain J. Barnard Smith, but kept each separate for easier reference.

3. The quantities of Government rice purchased locally or imported into Calcutta were as follows:—

—	Number of Cargoes brought by Ships and Steamers to Calcutta, exclusive of River Steamers and Sloops.	Received by G. Toynbee, Esq., c.s. to 25th January 1874.		Received by Captain J. B. Smith from 26th January to 25th February.		Received by Major J. Graham from 26th February to 31st July.		Total Number of Bags Received.	Total Number of Maunds Received.	Remarks.
		Bags.	Maunds.	Bags.	Maunds.	Bags.	Maunds.			
30-seer bags -	43 cargoes delivered to G. Toynbee, Esq., c.s. 45 cargoes delivered to Captain J. B. Smith. 208 cargoes delivered to Major J. Graham.	-	-	-	-	2,59,640	1,94,730	—	—	This does not include seed-grain purchased by Mr. Toynbee.
1-maund bags -		-	-	97,211	97,211	4,63,738	4,63,738	—	—	
2-maund bags -		7,50,684	14,73,782	651,031	1,302,162	3,977,409	7,954,818	—	—	
2½-maund bags		-	-	24,633	63,084	25,478	62,984	—	—	
Total Number of Cargoes, 294.		7,50,684	14,73,782	7,72,925	14,62,457	47,26,265	86,76,270	62,49,874	1,16,12,509	

4. The above quantities were delivered or landed by—

Steel, Mackintosh & Company -	-	-	-	-	6,133	12,266	6,133	12,266
Macknight, Anderson & Company -	12,000	24,000	32,245	64,490	3,16,984	6,33,968	3,61,229	7,22,458
Robert & Charriol -	-	-	-	-	6,33,970	9,43,390	6,33,970	9,43,390
Marcus, Samuel & Company -	1,35,199	2,17,078	1,25,086	1,53,002	1,59,187	1,59,187	4,19,472	5,29,267
Bird and Company (landing agents) -	4,47,706	9,21,093	6,15,594	12,44,965	36,09,991	69,27,459	46,73,291	90,93,517
Local purchases by Mr. Toynbee -	1,55,779	3,11,611	-	-	-	-	1,55,779	3,11,611
TOTAL - - -	7,50,684	14,73,782	7,72,925	14,62,457	47,26,265	86,76,270	62,49,874	1,16,12,509

5. They consisted of—

Burma rice -	3,11,322	6,54,237	4,94,367	10,02,552	30,86,955	58,82,854	38,92,644	75,99,643		
Saigon rice -	1,35,199	2,17,078	1,25,086	1,53,002	7,93,157	11,02,577	10,53,442	14,72,657		
Orissa rice -	92,851	1,80,093	46,099	92,157	1,00,876	2,00,285	2,39,826	4,72,555		
Chittagong rice -	12,000	24,000	32,245	64,490	3,16,984	6,33,968	3,61,229	7,22,458		
Madras rice -	43,333	86,666	75,128	1,50,256	4,28,293	8,56,586	5,46,951	10,93,605		
Bengal (locally purchased) -	1,55,779	3,11,611	-	-	-	-	1,55,779	3,11,611		
TOTAL - - -	7,50,684	14,73,782	7,72,925	14,62,457	47,26,265	86,76,270	62,49,874	1,16,12,509		

6. The quantities dispatched from 18th November 1873 to 31st July 1874, were forwarded as follows:—

	Dispatched by G. Toynbee, Esq., c.s.		Dispatched by Captain J. B. Smith.		Dispatched by Major J. Graham.		Total Quantities Dispatched.	
	Bags.	Maunds.	Bags.	Maunds.	Bags.	Maunds.	Bags.	Maunds.
East Indian Railway -	5,97,372	11,77,735	5,31,488	12,76,753	31,76,410	58,45,338	44,05,270	82,99,826
Eastern Bengal Railway.	1,38,971	2,67,365	1,27,412	1,57,651	7,40,568	13,06,237	10,06,951	17,31,256
River steamers and flats.	14,341	28,682	14,025	28,050	53,942	1,02,318	82,308	1,59,050
TOTAL - - -	7,50,684	14,73,782	7,72,925	14,62,457	39,70,920	72,53,893	54,94,529	1,01,90,132

7. The average daily and total monthly deliveries made by Messrs. Bird & Company, the Government Landing Contractors, during the whole of their contracts, were—

MONTHS.		Average Daily Deliveries.	Monthly Deliveries.	MONTHS.		Average Daily Deliveries.	Monthly Deliveries.
		Tons.	Tons.			Tons.	Tons.
November	- - -	111	1,444	April	- - -	2,800	84,012
December	- - -	316	8,859	May	- - -	2,007	62,205
January	- - -	1,136	35,200	June	- - -	1,028	25,709
February	- - -	1,654	46,309	July	- - -	1,674	2,570
March	- - -	2,540	78,820				

Messrs. Bird & Company alone had at one time employed in this work 450 cargo boats carrying about 25 tons each, 5,000 coolies, and 920 carts.

The largest landing made by them was on 6th April, consisting of—

Bags.	Tons.	Maunds.
55,544	4,114	1,11,078

8. The average daily and total monthly dispatches made by the East Indian Railway Company from 18th November 1873 to 31st July 1874 were—

MONTHS.	Daily Average Number of Wagons Dispatched.	Daily Average Number of Bags Dispatched.	Monthly Number of Wagons Dispatched.	Monthly Number of Bags Dispatched.
November	19	1,917	212	21,083
December	39	3,860	966	96,491
January	116	11,663	3,499	3,49,899
February	224	22,460	6,291	6,28,885
March	266	26,657	8,264	8,26,366
April	361	36,117	10,832	10,83,635
May	271	27,111	8,404	8,40,439
June	62	6,494	1,812	1,88,334
July	63	8,447	1,977	2,61,856

Mr. Broughton,
district traffic manager,
East Indian
Railway.

Company, and of dispatching by Mr. Broughton, the district traffic manager of the East Indian Railway.

The former had an unlimited supply of boats. Their working partner, Mr. S. Bird, superintending their enormous landings, never failed by his presence and arrangements to overcome every difficulty.

Of Mr. Broughton I will only say that on all occasions and at all times he gave me the most ready and willing assistance, often at great inconvenience to himself. As to the work they effected, the details above given speak for themselves.

Had it not been for the manner in which they worked most cordially with Mr. Toynbee, the dispatching officer, and myself, the work would have been much more difficult; and it was no little gain to have had such able and willing hands to assist in the arrangements for landing above 11½ millions and dispatching above 10 millions of maunds.

P. S.—I had hoped to have been able to furnish with this report a memorandum showing the very small loss which Government has incurred from having rice damaged either on board ships or when in my charge here. I am preparing it in communication with the Assistant Comptroller General, and will furnish it hereafter.

Losses.

LETTER from A. P. Howell, Esq., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce, to Major J. Graham, on special duty.—No. 2505, dated 11th September 1874.

I AM desired to acknowledge your letter, No. 1,772, dated 1st ultimo, reporting on the arrangements connected with the receipt and dispatch up country of the rice purchased in Calcutta or ordered from beyond sea for the supply of the famine-stricken districts of Bengal.

2. It appears from your report that between the 14th November and the 31st July last, 294 cargoes of Government rice were brought by ships and steamers to Calcutta, exclusive of sloops and river steamers, the whole aggregating 62,49,874 bags, or 1,16,12,509 maunds of about 82 lbs. each. This amount was of course exclusive of the Government purchases in Calcutta, which, however, were comparatively inconsiderable. The dispatches during the same period from Calcutta were 1,01,90,132 maunds, of which 82,99,826 maunds were carried away by the East Indian Railway, the largest dispatch in one day being 88,478 maunds, on the 16th April. The bulk of the whole quantity was taken from on board ship and delivered over to the railway authorities by the Government contractors, Messrs. Bird & Company, who were entrusted with the entire contract in view to avoid, as far as possible, competition in the labour market and disturbance of the ordinary rates of coolies and boats. Their total deliveries amounted to 93,87,481 maunds, their largest monthly delivery being 22,85,126 maunds, or 84,012 tons, giving a daily average during the month of 76,160 maunds, or 2,800 tons. There were of course many difficulties in arranging at the same time for such large receipts from so many different quarters and for dispatches from only two railway stations, and these difficulties were aggravated, on the one hand, by the rate of discharge required by some of the charter parties and by the state in which some of the cargoes were received, and, on the other, by the limited river frontage and accommodation afforded by the railways and by the requirements of private trade with which special instructions had been issued not to interfere. These difficulties, however, appear to have been overcome by multiplying the points of receipt, reserve, and dispatch, by your constant personal supervision, by the efficiency of the Government contractors, and by the cordial co-operation of the railway companies.

3. The whole arrangements have been exceedingly well managed throughout, and the Governor General in Council is of opinion that the successful conduct, without hindrance or delay, of such a large operation at a very important stage when there were many elements of failure, and failure would have been serious, is highly creditable to you, and you have well earned the thanks of Government. You bring to notice the services of the Government contractors, Messrs. Bird & Company, and of Mr. Broughton, the district traffic manager of the East Indian Railway, as well as the liberal arrangements made by the Company for the accommodation of the rice previous to its dispatch by their line. When the operations have been brought to a close, a suitable opportunity will be taken of acknowledging these services.

LETTER from Major J. Graham, on special duty, to the Under Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce.—No. 2070, dated 4th February 1875.

I HAVE now the honour to report, for the information of Government, that the last rice godowns have been emptied.

2. I beg to annex a statement showing in detail the disposal of all the rice (86,96,548, eight

eight millions six hundred and ninety-six thousand five hundred and forty-eight maunds, about 319,465 tons), which was received by me.

From the statement it will be seen that—

238,884 tons were dispatched by the East Indian Railway,

49,464 tons by the Eastern Bengal Railway,

9,632 tons by river steamers, &c.,

73 tons made over to the civil authorities in Calcutta,

84 tons lost by the landing contractors, of which the price has been recovered from them, and

6 lost by damage in godown. The remainder (21,320 tons) was sold.

3. In my letter, No. 1976,* of the 16th November last, I reported the care I had taken and was taking in recovering all sweepings from ships, boats, platforms, &c., and I beg to report that the quantity collected in this way (712½ tons) has been sold for Rs. 29,095. 8. * Proceedings for December 1874 No. 16.

4. The total amount realised by the sales was Rs. 8,09,283. 5. 6., which has been duly received and credited to Government.

5. I have been informed by different members of the mercantile community that the rice brought much higher prices than they expected. I know many European merchants came to the sales to buy, and could not give the prices given by natives. The very high rates of freight prevailing during the last three months were greatly against the sales.

These rates, which were 30 s. a ton when the first sale took place, had, I understand, risen to sixty when the last auction was held.

6. The average price which the whole sales brought was Rs. 1. 6. 6. per maund net, about Rs. 38. 4. 6. (or say 3 l. 16 s. 6 d.) per ton.

7. The rice sold in Calcutta has been shipped to England, France, Ceylon, Singapore, the Maldives, Aden, Jedda, and to Bombay for the Persian Gulf; a considerable quantity has been retailed on the spot, and a good deal sent through the neighbouring districts by country boats.

8. Much of the rice was rebagged and weighed at the sheds before removal, and the loss was ascertained (according to the statements of the purchasers) to be about 6 per cent.

9. The rebagging was particularly necessary as regards the Madras rice, which was found in some stacks almost in bulk, the bags from their own rottenness and the attacks of birds and rats having become entirely useless.

10. The rice all through the season suffered more from birds than any kind of vermin, and it was only latterly when the most of it was removed and that the rats concentrated their forces on the small quantity remaining that the stacks suffered much. There was little or no loss, however, as off the floors and from the ground under them I collected hundreds of maunds.

11. The Docking Company's premises, after having been put in order by the Department of Public Works, were made over, on the 15th ultimo, by the executive engineer and myself to the superintendent of that company, who expressed himself fully satisfied in every way. I have made over the sheds on the East Indian Railway Company's premises at Sulkea to the Department of Public Works. The last lot of rice was removed from them yesterday.

12. All the unserviceable tarpaulins, gunny bags, scales, weights, &c., were sold by auction on the 25th ultimo, as sanctioned in your letter† No. 2805, dated 29th December 1874. I have not as yet received the account sales from Messrs. Mackenzie, Lyall & Company, but the amount will be duly realised by me and credited to Government. † Proceedings for December 1874, No. 15.

13. Every establishment has been discharged and every account paid. I know of nothing unsettled or unadjusted with the exception mentioned in last paragraph.

14. I have asked the Comptroller General if there is any objection to my closing this office either as regards his own accounts or my accounts with him, and he has replied that there is none.

15. I have now therefore only to solicit the permission of Government to close my office, and orders regarding the disposal of its records.

RICE SALES STATEMENT showing the Quantities and Descriptions of Rice Sold, the Amounts realised, and the Average Prices obtained per Maund, net.

DESCRIPTION.	Quantities Sold.		Amounts realised.	Price per Maund, net, after Deduction of Loss.
	Bags.	Maunds, net.		
Burma - - - -	2,46,915	4,40,074	Rs. a. p. 5,97,644 9 6	Rs. a. p. 1 5 8
Madras - - - -	69,650	1,33,035	2,08,601 14 -	1 9 1
Saigon - - - -	1,034	2,055	2,976 14 -	1 7 2
Orissa - - - -	12	23	60 - -	2 9 8
TOTAL - - - -	3,17,611	5,75,187	8,09,282 5 6	1 6 6

Gross quantity sold, 5,99,776 maunds.

Average loss allowed at the sales, $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

Calcutta, 4 February 1875.

J. Graham, Major,
On special duty.

LETTER from C. J. Lyall, Esq., Under Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce, to Lieutenant Colonel J. Graham, on special duty,—No. 75, dated Calcutta, the 22nd February 1875.

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 2070, dated the 4th instant, reporting on the arrangements connected with the receipt and disposal of the rice, amounting to 8,696,548 maunds, with the charge of which you have been entrusted.

2. I am to repeat the thanks of the Government of India for the very satisfactory manner in which you have performed the arduous and responsible duties which have devolved upon you from the end of February 1874 to the close of the relief operations, and the disposal of the rice remaining on hand.

3. I am to request that you will convey to Messrs. Bird & Company, and especially to Mr. S. Bird, the thanks of the Government of India for the efficient manner in which their work was performed.

The Lieutenant Governor of Bengal has already conveyed his thanks to Mr. Toynbee, who has managed exceedingly well the business of receiving the grain from you and dispatching it by train.

4. Your office may now be closed, and the records handed over to the office of the Comptroller General.

5. I am to add that this letter, together with your letter of the 1st August last, and the reply thereto of the 11th September 1874, No. 2505, will be published for general information.

6. A separate letter has been sent to the agent, East Indian Railway Company, thanking the agency and Mr. Broughton for their co-operation in facilitating the transport of rice.

Dr. Major James Graham (on special duty) in account current with the Government of India.

Cr.

	Bags.	Maunds.		Bags.	Maunds.
To Burma, rice received - - -	32,58,984	62,25,125 ¹⁸³	By quantities made over to the Government of Bengal and dispatched by—		
„ Saigon „ - - -	7,93,170	11,02,590	East Indian Railway - - -	33,30,497	65,02,964 ¹¹³
„ Madras „ - - -	4,27,493	8,54,986	Eastern Bengal Railway - - -	7,62,676	13,46,520
„ Chittagong „ - - -	1,46,781	2,93,562	River steamers and flats - - -	1,33,887	2,62,307 ¹¹³
„ Orissa „ - - -	1,00,876	2,00,285	By Collector of Howrah - - -	400	800
„ Rancee of Bobilly, rice received -	10,000	20,000	By Collector of 24 Pergunnahs - - -	600	1,200
„ Collected from sweepings, &c. -	10,507	19,307	By Alipore Gaol (Dr. McKenzie) - - -	1	2
			By sales - - - - -	3,17,611	5,99,776
			By damaged rice ex steamship "Asia"; value recovered from Messrs. Bird & Company.	350	700
			By damaged and short delivered rice ex steamship "Socotra"; value recovered from Messrs. Bird & Company.	713	1,426
			By damaged rice ex steamship "Bræmer Castle"; value recovered from India General Steam Navigation Company.	79	153
			By short delivered ex steamship "Bræmer Castle"; value recovered from Messrs. Finlay, Muir & Company.	8	16
			By losses sanctioned and written off accounts	80	175 ¹¹³
TOTAL - - -	47,46,911	87,15,945 ¹⁸³	TOTAL - - -	47,46,911	87,15,945 ¹¹³

Calcutta, 4 February 1875.

J. Graham, Major,
On special duty.

Short Page
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12/19/96

STATEMENT showing the Quantity of RICE (distinguishing Table and other Kinds), PADDY, WHEAT, GRAM, and other Food-grains Exported from the Presidency of Bengal in the 12 Months, from 1st October to 30th September of the Years 1872-73 and 1873-74.

IN THE 12 MONTHS FROM 1ST OCTOBER TO 30TH SEPTEMBER.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																		
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Note.—The figures for table-rice represent those for the port of Calcutta only, as these for the minor ports cannot be distinguished; but it is believed that the exports of table rice from the latter ports are unimportant.

2 December 1874.

E. F. Harrison.