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REVIEW OF THE FAMINE RELIEF ADMINISTRATION IN THE BOMBAY PRESIDENCY DURING THE YEAR 1918- 1919.

Communications under various dates from the Commissioners of Divisions, the Chief Conservator of Forests, and certain other officers in the Presidency reporting on the results of the famine relief and other operations carried out in 1918-1919, giving certain other information; and making remarks.

In their Press Note No. 1627-Fam. dated 22nd October 1919, Government have fully described the measures taken to deal with the famine situation during the year 1918-1919 and the present review gives a short synopsis of the famine relief administration under the several heads mentioned in Annexure A to the Bombay Famine Relief Code.

I.—The Economic and Agricultural Condition of the affected tract before the famine.

2. The famine of 1918-1919 came after a series of fair to good years during which the people had recovered from the effects of past scarcities and (except in parts of the Kaira district) were generally in a prosperous condition. The area affected included the usual famine tracts, viz., the northern parts of Gujarát including a portion of the Broach district, the Káthiáwár and Rewa Kántha Agencies and the plain tracts of the Deccan and the Karnátak where the rainfall was abnormally deficient. In the year under report, although the failure of the rains was almost as complete as in the severe famine of 1899-1900, the conditions of that year, as far as acute distress among the population of this Presidency and the necessity for widespread relief operations are concerned, were not reproduced. The agricultural population throughout the Presidency had acquired far greater powers of resistance. High prices had reduced debts, and increased credit. The economic condition of the labouring classes was distinctly good owing to the high rate of wages for all labour. Industries were flourishing.

II.—The cause of the famine and scarcity and the extent of the failure of harvests.

3. In Appendix I is given the rainfall at selected stations during June to November 1918, compared with the average of normal years. There were ante-monsoon showers or thunderstorms in most of the districts in the Presidency. June and July were practically rainless and crops began to suffer over the greater part of Gujarát, the Konkan, the Deccan and the Karnátak. The rain in August, which was moderately heavy except in parts of the Deccan, raised hopes for a time, but the months of September and October were rainless, and the late sown crops suffered severely in consequence. The failure of the kharif crops was almost general and the rabi crops were confined to tracts with irrigational facilities. *Pat* irrigation also failed everywhere in the Deccan, though canal and well irrigation gave a yield ranging from 6 to 12 annas. The extent of



the crop failure in the Presidency can be gathered from the following statement in which the areas sown and the outturn of food-crops for the last three years are compared :—

Tract.	Area sown (in thousands of acres).			Outturn (in thousands of tons).		
	1916-17.	1917-18.	1918-19.	1916-17.	1917-18.	1918-19.
Gujarát ...	2,427	2,372	1,486	927	686	237
Deccan ...	1,584	11,002	8,353	2,219	2,135	877
Karnátak ...	4,632	4,362	4,298	930	898	698

The total area irrigated from all sources in the Presidency proper amounted to about 10 lakhs of acres against 9 lakhs in the year 1917-18, showing a net increase of 10·7 per cent. Irrigation was resorted to to a great extent from Government canals chiefly in the Ahmednagar, Sholápur and Belgaum districts, and from wells in North Gujarát, North and South Deccan and the Karnátak, and a very large area was brought under fodder-crops to meet fodder scarcity. Owing to the deficiency of water-supply private canals gave no help to irrigation.

4. The existence of famine or scarcity was declared in respect of the under-mentioned areas :—

Famine.

1. The Eastern Maháls (*i.e.*, Dohad táluka and Jhálod petha) of the Panch Maháls district.
2. The Ahmednagar district.
3. The Sirur and Khed tálukas of the Poona district.
4. The Koregaon táluka of the Sátára district.

Scarcity.

1. The Ahmedabad district.
2. The Kaira district.
3. The Western Maháls of the Panch Maháls district.
4. The Jambusar, Wagra and Amod tálukas of the Broach district.
5. The Káthiáwár Agency.
6. The Rewa Kántha Agency.
7. The West Khándesh district.
8. The Bhusáwal táluka and Edlabad petha of the East Khándesh district.
9. The Násik district.
10. The Sátára district with the exception of the Koregaon táluka and of the three tálukas and two pethas which comprise the "Mawal" hilly tract.
11. The Poona district with the exception of the Sirur and Khed tálukas.
12. The Karmála and Málsirás tálukas of the Sholápur district.
13. The Athni and Chikodi tálukas of the Belgaum district.
14. The Bijapur district.

III. The area, population and classes affected and the degree of distress.

5. The failure of crops affected the three northern districts of Gujarát and to some extent Broach, the Káthiáwár and Rewa Kántha Agencies, almost the whole of the Deccan, the whole of the Bijápur district and parts of the Belgaum district. The area and the population affected by the distress in these districts and Agencies are shown below :—

District or Agency.	Total.		Affected.	
	Area.	Population (census of 1911 : (000s omitted).	Area.	Population (000s omitted).
Ahmedabad ...	3,824	827	3,824	827
Panch Maháls ...	1,606	322	1,606	322
Kaira ...	1,596	691	1,596	691
Broach ...	1,468	307	910	126
East Khándesh ...	4,550	1,034	569	125
West Khándesh ...	5,439	580	5,439	580
Násik ...	5,879	905	5,879	905
Ahmednagar ...	6,613	945	6,613	945
Poona ...	5,366	1,071	5,366	1,071
Sholápur ...	4,556	768	1,316	162
Sátára ...	4,818	1,081	3,595	782
Bijápur ...	5,707	863	5,707	863
Belgaum ...	4,613	944	1,273	283
Káthiáwár Agency ...	2,562	218	2,562	218
Rewa Kántha Agency (Pandu Mewas) ...	91	21	91	21
Total ...	58,688	10,577	46,346	7,921

The whole of this area was affected by high prices and shortage of fodder. The famine was essentially a fodder famine and it accentuated a feeling of desperation induced by the general crop failure. While practically the whole population suffered to some extent, the classes principally affected were (a) those who live on charity, (b) agricultural labourers, (c) cultivators of small holdings and (d) graziers. The Dharalas of the Kaira district and the Bhils of the West Khándesh district would probably have suffered most as a result of their thriftless habits and disinclination to go to large works away from their homes. But the first had shared in the general prosperity brought about by wages and high prices of agricultural products, and the second had benefited from the very extensive grass cutting operations undertaken in Khándesh. There was wonderfully little acute distress amongst human beings, and it was only late in the season and in a few of the worst localities that there was any considerable demand for relief works.

Privation was, however, severe among the low class people in Gujarát, but never reached the stage of emaciation. The non-cultivating classes, especially those with small fixed incomes, were also affected in common with the cultivators owing to high prices of grain and cloth. The year 1911-12 was a year of real scarcity of fodder and not of food, while in 1918-19 both food and fodder were deficient. The most notable feature of the latter year was that it never produced in any district visible signs of emaciation or aimless wandering. There was no famine in the sense of starvation among the people, but the cattle became emaciated and the weakest of them died.

IV and V.—General narrative of the commencement, progress and close of the famine; relief measures and administration, organization of the relief system, public works relief, non-departmental relief, charitable relief.

6. As soon as the kharif rains had more or less totally failed, Government called for special weekly telegraphic season reports on the condition of the people and cattle, and the situation was watched by the local authorities, and the machinery prescribed by the Famine Relief Code was set in motion. Conferences of district officers were held to consider details of the measures to be adopted and the policy to be pursued. The programmes of famine works were also revised and the works to be undertaken in case of necessity were selected.

7. Steps were taken to strengthen the permanent establishment wherever necessary. In order to ensure more efficient inspection of the affected tracts, the ordinary charges of the tálukas (or thánas in Káthiáwár) were split up into relief circles and additional circle inspectors were entertained and trained talátis and men with previous famine experience were selected for the works as far as possible. Relief Mahalkaris and aval karkuns were appointed to help Mamlatdárs. In some districts Collectors were given Personal Assistants to carry on the ordinary routine of the office at headquarters, and in Káthiáwár a special Famine

Officer was appointed. A relief Executive Engineer and three Extra Assistant Engineers were appointed in the Panch Maháls district. Office establishments of the Collector, Treasury Officer, Sub-Divisional officers and Mamlatdárs were also strengthened. In some districts taluka officers were relieved of magisterial work by the appointment of subordinate Judges as First Class Magistrates. Sub-Assistant Surgeons and Medical touring officers were appointed to watch the physical condition of the people.

8. As the season advanced, test works to gauge the existence and extent of distress, were opened in the Ahmedabad, the Panch Maháls, Kaira and Broach districts of Gujarát, in the Ahmednagar, Poona and Sátára districts of the Deccan and in the Rewa Kántha Agency. In none of the other districts or Agencies was the necessity of test works, much less of relief works, felt and the expansion of the ordinary public works together with local board works, and private works, especially those started by liberal takávi grants, were found quite sufficient. In Gujarát local board works were selected, as far as possible, for the purpose of test, but where the local funds had been exhausted, the works were carried out at the expense of Provincial funds. In the Mándvi taluka of the Surat district a test work was opened by the District Local Board. It was subsequently taken over under Government management, but was soon closed.

9. The village works in Gujarát consisted almost entirely of village tank clearance, of road repairs and metal-breaking. They were managed by taláts who acted as work managers. No dependants were given any relief on the works except children in arms for whom their working mothers were paid an extra pice. Owing to early rain in June 1919, the attendance began to decline and many of these works had to be closed early.

10. No village works were started in the Karnatak or the Deccan except one in the Ráhuri taluka of the Ahmednagar district, as the purpose of such works was served by the expansion of the Public Works programme of ordinary works and the numerous field works. The number of works managed by the Public Works Agency was small as compared with that of 1899. One of the peculiar characteristics of the relief works in the Deccan was the abnormally high percentage (nearly 50 per cent.) of dependants to workers, which was attributed to the past influenza epidemic. It was not found necessary to open any relief works in the Karnatak or in the Kathiawar Agency.

Gratuitous relief.

11. Gratuitous relief at the expense of the State was given to the decrepit and indigent in the shape of grain dole or cash and also in kitchens or poor-houses. Government dole was not found necessary in the Nasik district. Village servants required for the performance of their duties in villages were also placed on dole lists and their number was reduced to a minimum. Grants were sanctioned for the distribution of such relief to people who could not be expected to go on test or relief works. Owing to the extraordinarily high prices gratuitous relief was allowed on a generous scale in all the affected areas, as also to a modified extent in the Ratnagiri and Dharwar districts and in the Palanpur and Mahi Kantha Agencies.

12. With the contraction of private charity resulting from famine conditions it was found necessary to establish poor-houses at various centres in the affected parts for the relief of the poor. Owing to the influx into the City of Bombay of a number of famine refugees, principally beggars and persons unfit for work, and the apprehension that these numbers would increase rapidly and menace the health of the City, a special poor-house was opened at Chembur in the Thana district to receive such refugees who were collected in a clearing house at Chinchpogli and transferred thence to Chembur. The inmates thus collected were distributed to subsidiary poor-houses established at Ahmedabad, Anand, Broach and Poona, but all these houses had to be closed very soon for want of inmates. Besides these houses for famine immigrants, poor-houses were opened in the West Khandesh and Ahmednagar districts and the Rewa Kantha Agency. Relief in the shape of cooked food in village kitchens was given in the Ahmednagar district only.

13. Patils, whose emoluments and private means were not sufficient for their support, were given extra remuneration.

14. A special measure of relief for the Bhils and other people living in the Akrani tracts of the West Khandesh district was the import of grain into that tract by Government Agency, not only for gratuitous relief but also for the convenience of the workers on the relief works. With a view to helping the distressed weavers in their own craft several grants were sanctioned by Government and all preliminaries for the administration of such relief settled, but in the end no such relief at the hands of Government was found to be necessary except in parts of the Ahmedabad and Kaira districts. The Bombay Presidency Famine Relief Fund Committee also supplied money for the relief of the weavers in the Kaira district and in the Rewa Kantha Agency. The Ahmedabad Famine Relief Committee relieved a number of weavers in the neighbourhood of Bavla, the plan being to advance yarn and take payment in manufactured cloth at a fixed price. In the Mahi Kantha Agency the artisans like weavers who manufacture cloth, and the sweepers who make baskets, were given free grants of yarn and bamboos from charitable funds placed at the disposal of the several local officers.

Private works.

15. In the Northern Division a certain amount of non-famine work was available on the railway lines, but it was inconsiderable. The Tata Hydro-Electric Works in the Mawal taluka gave employment to many unskilled labourers in the Poona district. The railway works provided employment for skilled labourers and helped to maintain the high rates of wages in that district. It was largely due to the existence of these works that Government relief works were not required elsewhere than in Sirur and Khed talukas. In the Southern Division the Gokak and other cotton ginning and pressing companies provided employment to many, and relief works were not found necessary anywhere. Private works were undertaken in the Kathiawar Agency. Besides these, works for the improvement of the existing and construction of new wells were undertaken with takavi advances in many places, which also helped to a certain extent in relieving the situation.

Charitable relief.

16. A marked feature of the year's operations was the organisation of private charity on a business footing and non-official help not only shared in the work of relief but supplemented Government's efforts by special measures conceived and carried out on distinctive lines. Charitable relief was organised by means of district and taluka famine relief committees and other non-official bodies in almost all the districts of the Presidency proper including the Kathiawar, Palanpur, Rewa Kantha and Mahi Kantha Agencies. In the Broach district the famine relief committee did splendid work under the guidance of Mr. Advani, the District Judge. The most prominent and influential of these private organisations was the Bombay Presidency Famine Relief Fund under the able direction of the Hon'ble Mr. Purshottamdas Thakurdas, C.I.E., M.B.E., as its General Secretary and Treasurer. An account of the activities of this Fund is given in Appendix 2 to this report. The energies of the several relief committees were chiefly directed towards the supply of cheap or free grass for cattle, distribution of clothing to the deserving poor, the grant of maintenance allowance to persons of position who could neither go to the relief works nor accept Government gratuitous relief and the opening of cheap grain shops. The name of the late Sir Shapurji Bharucha, of Bombay, deserves special mention in this Resolution for his donation of Rs. 1,25,000 for the relief of human and cattle distress in the Kathiawar Agency.

VI.—Statistics and cost of relief and nature and utility of famine works constructed with famine labour.

17. Appendix 3 gives the daily average numbers relieved in different ways month by month during the season under report. In Appendix 4 are given the

daily average numbers of men, women and children among relief workers and their dependants and among persons gratuitously relieved in villages during each month. Charts are also appended showing the comparative numbers relieved in certain districts in the present and past famines (*vide* Appendix 5). Appendix 6 gives the direct expenditure on famine relief operations, and Appendix 7 the indirect expenditure under different heads. The total direct cost to Government on account of relief operations amounted to about Rs. 65,28,000 to which may be added Rs. 7,22,000 on account of remissions of land revenue. In Appendix 8 is given a detailed list of works, classed according to utility, carried out during the famine period, the famine expenditure on each work being contrasted with the normal cost.

18. In Gujarat and in the Rewa Kantha Agency famine labour was mainly employed on tanks, road works and metal collection works. The tanks are of undoubted utility, inasmuch as the larger ones promote irrigation while the smaller ones tend to increase the water-supply of the locality. Construction and repair of roads are generally useful, but sufficient care was not taken to ascertain whether maintenance by the local authorities concerned would be possible. Similarly the railway embankments for the Belapur-Shevgaon and Koregaon-Satara railway lines in the Central Division will be useful work if there is not too much delay in completing the work. The same criticism applies to metal breaking and road construction. This class of work must be pushed to completion or its proximate completion be assured. Besides these, many other works were undertaken in several districts in pursuance of the policy of expansion of the Public Works Department programme of works, and these were generally useful.

VII.—Indirect relief: suspensions and remissions of land revenue and other dues, loans and advances.

19. As soon as the season failed, anna valuations of the crops were made and suspensions of land revenue were announced. The following table gives the figure of suspensions and remissions granted during the period of famine:—

District.	Suspensions.	Remissions.
	Rs.	Rs.
Ahmedabad ...	12,61,649	1,39,113
Panch Mahals ...	2,17,932	19,304
Kaira ...	22,47,819	3,32,018
Broach ...	11,94,612	46,715
East Khandesh ...	1,52,650	.....
West Khandesh ...	15,62,767	5,605
Nasik ...	11,80,061	81,127
Ahmednagar ...	15,04,756	1,096
Poona ...	10,62,029	18,856
Sholapur ...	3,60,391	1,005
Satara ...	11,35,555	69,393
Bijapur ...	5,83,749	289
Belgaum ...	3,23,923	7,761
Total ...	1,27,87,893	7,22,282

20. Concurrently with the grant of suspension and remission of land revenue, allotments of takavi were made under the Land Improvement Loans Act and the Agriculturists Loans Act. Takavi was granted on a very liberal scale, the chief object being to save agricultural cattle. It was granted for the purchase of fodder, seed and bullocks, for the construction and repair of wells and also for the maintenance of the people in some of the Gujarat districts. In making such advances the joint bond system was used wherever practicable, and distribution was promptly and methodically carried out. The grant of advances in different ways was the principal weapon with which the famine was fought. Liberal help in this form, which is one of the most effective forms of relief, contributed largely to ease the situation and, apart from the direct benefits conferred, it afforded

considerable employment on useful improvements and put heart into the people. The amounts distributed under the two Acts mentioned above are given below:—

District.	Under Land Improvement Loans Act.	Under Agriculturists Loans Act.	Total.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Ahmedabad ...	.....	.....	23,10,800
Panch Mahals ...	36,476	5,51,029	5,87,505
Kaira ...	2,31,101	22,59,858	24,90,959
Broach ...	29,575	21,83,683	22,13,268
East Khandesh ...	1,45,190	1,78,185	3,23,375
West Khandesh ...	.....	.....	9,83,788
Nasik ...	2,59,145	4,08,072	6,67,217
Ahmednagar ...	6,85,686	19,64,810	26,50,496
Poona ...	10,90,892	9,47,779	20,38,671
Sholapur ...	1,06,625	54,888	1,61,513
Satara ...	3,41,630	3,39,474	6,81,104
Bijapur ...	4,02,403	2,77,008	6,79,471
Belgaum ...	1,06,927	1,78,372	2,85,299
Kathiawar ...	.....	.....	4,78,731
Rewa Kantha ...	.....	.....	27,595
Total ...	.....	.....	1,65,79,792

In the Ahmedabad district money was advanced to weavers for the purchase of yarn, while in the Kaira district it was advanced to Bhangis and Dheds for purchasing materials for their craft.

VIII.—Food-stocks, trade and prices and the effect of high prices on crime.

21. As cotton prices ruled higher and paid the cultivator better, the people in Kathiawar, parts of Gujarat, the Deccan and the Karnatak had taken to excessive sowing of cotton at the sacrifice of food-grains. Moreover, the continuous rainfall of 1917 had spoiled the kharif crops in Kathiawar and parts of Gujarat and the people here as well as elsewhere have abandoned the practice of stocking grain and grass against future bad years. Again, in the Presidency proper the area under food-crops was short of the normal and the stock of food-grains in the country was therefore limited. Moreover, the upward tendency of prices, especially since the war, also contributed to the depletion of stocks generally.

22. Imports and exports of grains were regulated under Government control which in the circumstances was inevitable, but trade was perforce hampered thereby and by the impaired ability of railways to carry goods. The mill industry made great profits. The chief imports were Rangoon rice and Punjab and Australian wheat which somewhat eased the food situation.

23. Appendix 9 shows the prices of staple food-grains at the headquarter of the affected districts as compared with the normal. The prices ruled high when the season commenced, but owing to depleted stocks and transport difficulties, they rose to unprecedented heights during the year, and had it not been for the introduction of the control system and the importation of large quantities of rice from Burma and wheat from Australia, the Punjab, the United Provinces and the Central Provinces, food-grains would have been almost unobtainable. The rise in prices was more than one hundred per cent. To alleviate the distress among the poor classes caused by high prices, cheap grain shops were started in almost all the districts and Agencies and Thana Circles. In these shops grain was sold either at cost price or at a loss. The shops had a very beneficial effect on the bazar as they steadied prices which otherwise would have reached an impossible figure.

24. It is satisfactory to note that notwithstanding high prices and consequent distress there was on the whole no marked increase in crime except some railway thefts of food-grains.

IX.—Public health and the mortality of the famine period.

25. In the beginning of the famine period, *i.e.*, from September to November 1918, a virulent type of influenza epidemic raged over the country and took a very heavy toll; otherwise the public health was on the whole good. There were no cases of emaciation and a very few deaths from starvation.

Cholera broke out in several districts and on certain relief works, but here it yielded promptly to the measures taken to check its spread, which indicates that the stamina of the affected people was not seriously impaired. Appendix 10 shows the mortality in the districts affected. It will be seen that increased mortality was recorded in the Panch Mahals, Broach, West Khandesh, Nasik and Bijapur districts, the increase being due to all causes except plague.

X.—Immigration and emigration.

26. There was practically no immigration except that in the Panch Mahals district there were temporary incursions on the famine works by the inhabitants of the neighbouring States and that in the Ahmednagar district a few people from His Exalted Highness the Nizam's dominions came into the adjoining British territory for work. The City of Bombay attracted many beggars and famine refugees and for a time it was apprehended that their numbers would increase to such an extent as to endanger the health of the City, and, as described previously, a special poor-house was opened at Chembur in the Thana district to receive such refugees. But these anticipations were falsified and the poor-house had soon to be closed.

27. There was no abnormal emigration except in the Ahmednagar, Poona and Satara districts whence from November to April large numbers of people emigrated to Bombay, the Berars and other labour centres. The exodus was particularly heavy in the case of the Poona district and accounts for the large number of women and children on the relief works.

XI.—Water and fodder supply and the preservation of cattle.

28. (i) *Water-supply.*—Owing to the scanty rainfall of the year 1918 the deficiency of water became apparent in most parts of the Presidency at the end of the winter season, and the difficulties of obtaining water were considerably aggravated in the hot season of 1919. In addition to the usual annual grants, special grants had to be sanctioned by Government to improve the water-supply, and every effort was made wherever possible to meet this scarcity by digging new wells or deepening old ones, by the erection of temporary dams in streams and by clearing the existing wells. In the Ahmednagar district wells with water in them had in some cases to be rented and in some cases water carriers had also to be provided for low caste people. In the Bara villages of the Jambusar and Vagra talukas and Hansot Mahál of the Broach district a cart water supply service was run for the purpose. In the West Khandesh district special measures were taken to provide water as far as possible for the immense herds of cattle that were taken to the Sátapurás. Boring operations were also undertaken in certain parts and proved successful.

29. (ii) *Fodder supply.*—As a result of the failure of the monsoon there was a complete failure of grass and fodder crops. The supply of local fodder was totally inadequate almost everywhere in the Presidency except in parts of the Deccan and the Karnátak where also stocks were soon exhausted by export and consumption, and prices rose extraordinarily high. Apart from the failure of pasturage in the affected areas, the large stocks of fodder, which are usually carried over from year to year, were practically non-existent owing to the heavy demands made by the Army Department. The fodder scarcity was keenly felt all over the Presidency as early as August and Government at once started inquiries as to whether any large stocks of old grass or fodder were available anywhere for immediate import, and in order to arrive at an approximate estimate of the total amount of grass required for the Presidency, the district officers were asked to report their requirements. About the middle of August 1918 when things assumed a very serious aspect in parts of Gujarát, the Deccan and Káthiáwár, Government arranged for the despatch of the whole of the Khandesh reserve of 25 lakhs of pounds of baled grass to North Gujarát while the local reserve of 20 lakhs of pounds at Chharodi was also drawn upon. Arrangements were also made to secure the 300 lakhs of pounds of grass belonging to the Military Department at Manmád and the contractor for the Khandesh fodder area was called upon to get ready his stipulated 225 lakhs lbs. of grass. Soon after, i.e., about the end of October, Government

appointed a special officer as Controller of Famine Fodder for the collection, allotment and transport of all the available supplies of grass to the affected districts. Appendix II contains a concise report on the fodder operations carried out during the past season. From October 1918 to July 1919 the Controller distributed 2,008 lakhs of pounds of grass as detailed below:—

Supplied to.	From the N. C.	From the C. C.	From the Military Department.	From the S. C.	From other sources.	Total.
	Lakhs of Lbs.	Lakhs of Lbs.	Lakhs of Lbs.	Lakhs of Lbs.	Lakhs of Lbs.	Lakhs of Lbs.
Ahmedabad	7½	110½	98½	.....	143½	368½
Broach	10½	28½	32½	.....	116½	193½
Kaira	88½	43	55½	.....	214½	401½
Panch Mahals	3½	24½	15	.....	67½	111½
Káthiáwár	.....	11½	26	.....	206½	244½
Rajapur Taluka	.....	2½	.....	.....	1½	4½
Palanpur	.....	1	.....	.....	.....	1
Mahi Kántha	.....	1	.....	.....	.....	1
Ahmednagar	.....	7½	164½	.....	9½	181½
West Khandesh	.....	15½	10½	.....	.....	25½
East Khandesh	.....	9	5	.....	.....	14
Násik	.....	96½	18½	.....	.....	115
Poona	.....	21½	26½	139½	4	209½
Sátara	.....	10	30½	14	.....	62½
Sholapur	.....	.....	10½	.....	.....	10½
Akalkot	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Belgaum	.....	.....	.....	31	.....	31
Bijapur	.....	.....	7½	18	.....	25½
Dhárwár	.....	.....	4	2	.....	6
<i>Police Department.</i>						
East Khandesh	.....	.....	1	.....	.....	1
West Khandesh	.....	.....	1	.....	.....	1
Násik	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Total	234	300	627	69	778½	2,008½

30. For the storage and sale of this grass several depôts were established at convenient centres. In addition to the above, local grass operations were carried on by the Divisional Forest Officers, Panch Mahals, Poona, Sátara and Belgaum and all available grass was cut and baled from Government waste lands also. The details are as under:—

- (1) About 27 lakhs pounds of grass in the Panch Mahals Division,
- (2) About 9½ lakhs pounds in the Peint Range of the West Násik Division, and
- (3) About 26½ lakhs pounds in the Poona and Sátara Forest Divisions were collected and supplied for local consumption by the Divisional Forest officers of the respective districts.

Of the total collection of 108½ lakhs pounds of grass made in the Belgaum Division about 51 lakhs pounds were despatched by the Divisional Officer, Belgaum, to stations in the Belgaum, Bijapur and Dhárwár districts. This was in addition to the 18 lakhs pounds which were despatched to stations in the Poona and Sátara districts under distribution made by the Controller of Famine Fodder. About 15 lakhs pounds were sold locally for consumption in the Belgaum district, about 8½ lakhs were removed free by villagers, etc., and about 16½ lakhs pounds were destroyed by fire and rains.

At the instance of the Commissioner, Northern Division, a contract was made for the supply of grass to Ahmedabad city and about 65 lakhs pounds thus obtained were sold at fixed rates.

The grass was billed for at Rs. 15 per 1,000 lbs. the concession rate allowed by Government in the case of the bona-fide cultivators. The cost of the difference between this rate and the purchase rate, which amounted approximately to Rs. 25 per 1,000 lbs. for steam-pressed grass and from Rs. 14 to Rs. 22, per 1,000 lbs. for hand-pressed grass, was borne by Government.

A total grant of Rs. 37,61,000 was sanctioned by Government for fodder operations in charge of the Controller of Famine Fodder and the several Divisional Forest Officers. The net loss incurred by Government over the grass

moved by the Controller of Famine Fodder alone is roughly over Rs. 15 lakhs. The operations were on a far more extensive scale than in any previous famine.

The financial results of the famine fodder transactions of the year under report as exhibited by the accounts of the several supplying officers were as follows :—

To end of February 1920.

	Revenue.	Expenditure.
	Rs.	Rs.
Northern Circle	4,85,890	4,80,292
Central Circle	5,28,050	7,48,254
Southern Circle	88,934	43,965
Controller, F. F.	22,01,047	36,29,195
Total	33,03,921	49,01,706

Note.—The above figures of expenditure do not contain the amounts of railway freight charges for the carriage of grass.

31 Besides the grass distributed by the Government Agency, large quantities were supplied by the Bombay Presidency Famine Relief Fund, the approximate amounts supplied being as shown below :—

	Lbs.
Ahmedabad district.	8,32,062
Panch Mahals "	47,18,069
Kaira "	4,21,312
Broach "	41,33,719
Násik "	9,34,349
Poona "	1,91,320
Ahmednagar "	36,98,973
Sátára "	15,35,246
Káthiáwár Agency	2,06,68,631
Rewa Kántha "	5,99,283
Rájppla State "	5,065
Cambay "	15,88,584
Mahi Kántha Agency	10,63,074
Miscellaneous	1,77,570
Total	5,18,47,630

The arrangements made by this Fund for the distribution of grass were efficient. A close touch was kept with the needs of every district and agents were employed to purchase and despatch grass on behalf of the Fund.

An account of the operation is given in Appendix 4 to this Resolution.

32. Very little grass could be imported on private account, as during the greater part of the season the railways were carrying Government grass up to their full capacity.

33. (iii) *Preservation of cattle.*—The measures adopted for the preservation of cattle consisted in throwing open Government forests and military kurans for free grazing, the grant of concession to gather leaves of trees, collection of local grass, importing grass by Government agency into the affected districts and advancing some portion of it as takavi and digging up and collecting stubble and roots of grass. Every facility was given for raising fodder crops on existing wells and by digging new ones by means of takavi. The Agricultural Department carried out several experiments for the production of fodder by means of pump irrigation. Several pumping plants were established at various places, the principal plants being those fixed on the Narabada, Krishna and Godavari rivers. On the whole about 400 thousand acres of fodder crops were irrigated and produced about two crores of pounds of green fodder. The operations of this Department are described in the extracts of paragraphs 7 to 15 of the Report of the Department of Agriculture for 1918-19 (Appendix 12). Further, with a view to the preservation of useful cattle, Government sanctioned allotments amounting to about a lakh of rupees for the purchase of cattle for maintenance in the cattle camps at Poona and Ahmednagar. At the end of the famine the cattle were resold to cultivators at reasonable prices. The scheme on the whole was successful in that it saved many useful animals.

34. The most important measure for the preservation of cattle was the prickly-pear fodder propaganda. Throughout the Presidency systematic efforts were made to popularise the use of this fodder, but in spite of strenuous efforts, its use did not find favour with the people of Gujarát and the Karnatak. The case was otherwise in the Deccan where it was tried more or less in almost all the districts, but its results were most remarkable in Ahmednagar and Poona. As the prickly-pear operations of 1911-12 were reported to have met with some success in the Ahmednagar district, the cactus campaign was vigorously prosecuted from the outset by the Collector Mr. C. A. Beyts. It achieved such a remarkable success that from April to June about 40,000 head of cattle are reported to have subsisted for two months very largely on cactus. A detailed report sent by Mr. Beyts on his cactus campaign has been published as a bulletin by the Agricultural Department. In Poona the experiment was not started early, and efforts had to be made to overcome popular prejudice which, however, gradually disappeared, and by the end of June 1919 there were in this district 52 cattle camps, in all of which prickly-pear fodder was the main source of subsistence. It is estimated that at least 10,000 cattle were kept alive by this means, and though Poona cannot in this respect claim the phenomenal success of Ahmednagar, yet the campaign achieved very satisfactory results. Prickly-pear feeding made no head-way in the other Deccan districts, though cattle camps, where this kind of fodder was more or less used, were established in the West Khándesh, Násik and Sátára districts. In the Panch Mahals district of the Northern Division Major Wilson of the Salvation Army ran a small cattle camp at Dhond with prickly-pear as the staple food and by his untiring personal supervision and influence made it a success in spite of many difficulties. The Bombay Presidency Famine Relief Committee also started a camp of their own at the same place and continued it similarly for nearly two months. Thus, by this experiment a very large number of cattle were saved from starvation, and valuable lessons were learnt as to the preparation and use of the prickly-pear fodder. The proportion of really useful animals lost cannot be ascertained, although this fact has to be taken into account in calculating the real loss to the agricultural stock of the Presidency.

35. The last cattle census was taken in 1914-15. That for 1919-20 was held only six months after the present famine broke out. The loss of cattle as compared with the previous famines is small, 11.5 per cent. against 31 per cent. in 1901-1902. It was greatest (17.7 per cent.) among the young stock. Plough cattle suffered to the extent of 6 per cent. (equal to about 1,93,000 animals) but these as usual included many worthless animals. In the Deccan the main area of loss was confined to a strip from Poona due north, including Ahmednagar, Násik and West Khándesh, and Sátára in the south. In Gujarát the Panch Mahals suffered the most with Ahmedabad and Broach standing next; but the loss in no part of Gujarát approached that in Poona district. In Sind the reduction in the total number of all kinds of cattle is much greater than in the Presidency proper. The loss was greatest in Karáchi and least in Thar Párkár, where plough and milch cattle were heavily affected. In Upper Sind Frontier the loss was extraordinarily heavy among young stock. A note on the census is given in Appendix 14 to this report.

XII.—Influence of railways and irrigation works on the mitigation of distress.

36. All the affected districts and Agencies are served by railways, and in spite of the great congestion and want of rolling stock, they were of the greatest utility in importing grass and foodstuffs and thus preventing terrible suffering and heavy mortality among men and cattle. In the month of June 1919, when the rains held off for a time in Káthiáwár, the fodder situation became so critical that, but for the railways, every surviving animal would have died of starvation. Government must express their admiration for the way in which grass was railed into Káthiáwár from Bombay through the exertions of the Controller of Famine Fodder and the railway officials concerned.

37. There are no large irrigation works worth mentioning either in Káthiáwár or Gujarát. But in the Deccan there are large canals which produce food and fodder crops over thousands of acres and during the last famine these proved a boon to the tracts under their command. Irrigation facilities

on the Godavari Right and Left Bank canals were utilised to the utmost. The area irrigated was over 45,000 acres and the gross revenue exceeded five lakhs. The area irrigated under the Nira Left Bank Canal and the gross revenue from all sources were much above the average. In a few years' time the Nira Right Bank Canal and the Pravara canals systems will be completed, and it is estimated that the value of the irrigated crops under these systems will eventually reach some crores of rupees. In the Karnatak there are no important irrigation works. Under the Gokak Canal in the Belgaum district 9,095 acres of land were brought under irrigation in 1918-19 compared with 6,541 in 1917-18.

XIII.—General remarks on the working of the Famine Code; the measure of success attained; the attitude of the people; the future outlook.

38. The provisions of the Famine Code were on the whole found to be satisfactory. The following were the few deviations:

(1) The task on the village works was reduced to the level of that on public works.

(2) A sliding scale of reductions in the task on the public works was allowed in the case of workers coming from villages more than three miles distant.

(3) The provisions of section 74 of the Famine Relief Code were relaxed, and cash wages were allowed not on the price of the cheapest grain but on that of the grain commonly used by the people.

39. The only general criticism that suggests itself is that relief works as such with all their elaborations and artificial conditions are generally unnecessary. The mobility of the people has considerably increased and experience here, as in the Central Provinces, shows that an expansion of ordinary works is both economical and adequate as the principal measure of famine relief.

40. It only remains to acknowledge the good work done by the officers of all Departments and the extremely valuable aid rendered by many non-official gentlemen.

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