

Financial (1898) Department.

ORDINARY MS.

G.O., No. 499

DATED 2-6-88

RECEIVED

8/8

[Despatch Abstract.]

Recording proceedings, Revdpt,
forwarding to the Govt a report
on the general economical condition
of the Wellose District and requesting
the Board of Rev to furnish Govt
with its views on the suggestion to place
more reliance, during the earlier stages
of famine, on relief in the form of
cooked food as a means of ascertaining
the existence or presence of distress.

T 6/16/88

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

Government {1898} of Madras.

REVENUE.

205: 1.3.98
120-1: 10.2.98

Recd. 25/5/98

Enclosures

Regd. 25.6.98

1898.

Spare copies

G.O., No. 193, 2nd April 1898.

APRIL.

ORDER N^o 499. dt 2 June 1898.

Recorded in continuation off.O. N^o 205 Fml:

9.1.3.98

Cms
27.5.98

MA 2.6.98

Economic condition of the Nellore District.

Stating, with remarks, that the report on the general — will be forwarded to the Government of India for information and requesting the Board of Revenue to furnish Government with its views on the suggestion of the Government of India to place more reliance, during the earlier stages of famine, on relief in the form of cooked food as a means of ascertaining the existence or pressure of distress.

WITH ORDER

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

Q READ—Proceedings of the Madras Government, Financial Department, No. 205, dated 1st March 1898.

ABSTRACT.—Communicating to the Revenue Department letter from the Government of India stating, with remarks, that a provision of Rs. 8,50,000 will be made in the budget estimates for 1898-99 for famine expenditure; and requesting to be furnished with a general report in accordance with rule X, article 48 of the Famine Code.

READ—the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture), No. 101, dated 2nd March 1898.

Resolution—No. 101, dated 2nd March 1898.

With reference to Rule X of section 48 of the Famine Code, the Board begs to submit the following report regarding the economic condition, in ordinary times, of the Nellore district of this Presidency, in which test works are now being conducted. A map is attached showing the Government taluks and zamindari divisions into which the district is divided, the main roads, towns and villages, the areas (1) permanently protected, (2) reserved for forests, (3) for which detailed information is not available, * and (4) on which the crops are always precarious.

2. The district lies between the Bay of Bengal on the east and the Eastern Ghâts on the west, and is conterminous on the north with the Kistna and Kurnool districts and on the south with the Chingleput and North Arcot districts.

The principal rivers, by which the district is drained, traverse it from east to west; of these the chief are the Swarnamukhi, which, entering from North Arcot, falls, after a course of about 30 miles within the district, into the Bay of Bengal. It has a very rapid fall and supplies various tanks, but is dry for the greater part of the year. North of this the Kondleru, rising in the Vellakondas, crosses the district from west to east; and again further north the Pennér which, after penetrating the ghâts at Someswaram, runs in an irregular easterly course for 70 miles through the district to the sea. The latter is crossed by two anikats, one at Sangam and the other at Nellore, from which channels are taken off for direct irrigation and to supply numerous tanks. Further north the Manueru, Paléru and Músi rivers rising in the Eastern Ghâts also cross the district, and the Gundlakamma, which rises in the Nallamalas and receives the drainage of the great Cumbum tank in Kurnool, flows through the northern part of the district. The four rivers first named are alone utilized for irrigation purposes in the district, for, the beds of the others lie so far below the level of the adjoining land that it is only from wells (doruvas) sunk in them that water, baled by bullock-power, can be utilized.

The coast line is marked by a narrow band of soils of fluviatile origin, chiefly consisting of blown sands. Within this, a strip of alluvial soil formed by deposition from the rivers falling into the sea generally fills up the area, till the laterite band is reached. The alluvium also extends up the valleys which cross the district, and in soil, much of which is covered with "jungle waste" and is found in all the littoral taluks of Gudur, Nellore, Kavali, Kandukur and Ongole. The northern part of the last named taluk is covered with régada of good quality which extends more or less continuously through the two more southern taluks and is bounded on the west, by a more hilly, broken and stony country which extends into the south-western part of the district, where also large areas of jungle are to be found. In the two central taluks—Atmakur and Nellore—the alluvial beds of the Pennér valley are a marked feature and irrigation works are common. In the extreme west, the soils are poor and there is much jungle, and over the rest of the area the soils are heterogeneous.

In the southern taluks and zamindari divisions, the red soils found near the hills are stony and to a great extent covered by jungle, the area under cultivation is inconsiderable, and irrigation works are rare, but nearer the sea coast before the laterite band is reached, the soils are loams and clays of fair quality and irrigation works are common. Large tracts of heavy soil are, however, met with, which are strongly impregnated with saline matter (tehoudu). The areas within which distress is being experienced are the taluks of Atmakur, Udayagiri, Kanigiri and Kandukur and the zamindari divisions of Podili and Darsi. The extent and population of the district and of the affected areas are given in the appended statement:—

Tracts.	Area.	Population.
	SQ. MILES.	
District of Nellore	8,765	1,464,000
Affected area	3,852	533,021

3. *Rainfall.*—The average annual rainfall of the district is nearly 36 inches, an average which includes extremes such as 11 inches in 1876 and nearly 47 inches in 1887, whilst during the 24 years ending in 1893 the fall of the year has been materially below the average in four only. The driest portion of the district is that lying on the west to the north of the Pennér where the North-East monsoon rains are much lighter than in other parts of the district; next to this comes the tract lying along the coast, north of the same river where, though the South-West monsoon rains are heavier, those of the North-East monsoon are lighter than for the district as a whole, whilst over the portion of the district south of the Pennér, owing to the heavier rainfall of the North-East monsoon, the year's fall is above the district average. Particulars of normal and actual rainfall in the affected areas are given below:—

STATEMENT showing the normal rainfall and the amounts registered in 1897 in inches in the affected taluks of the Nellore district.

Taluks.	Recording stations.	Dry months.		South-West monsoon.					
		April and May.		June to August.		September.		Total.	
		Normal.	1897.	Normal.	1897.	Normal.	1897.	Normal.	1897.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Venkatagiri dari.	Darsi	INS.	INS.	INS.	INS.	INS.	INS.	INS.	INS.
Atmakur	Podili	2.02	2.91	8.00	4.75	4.39	11.48	12.39	16.23
Udayagiri	Atmakur	2.24	2.85	6.41	7.88	5.79	12.85	12.20	20.73
Kanigiri	Udayagiri	1.76	0.23	5.71	4.07	2.93	6.67	8.64	10.74
Kandukur	Kanigiri	2.05	0.79	5.47	5.40	2.52	8.05	7.99	13.45
	Kandukur	1.79	4.54	6.33	9.63	3.45	6.46	9.78	16.09
		1.43	0.78	7.72	7.97	4.70	11.79	12.42	19.76

Taluks.	Recording stations.	North-East monsoon.								Total, April to December.	
		October.		November.		December.		Total.		Normal.	1897.
		Normal.	1897.	Normal.	1897.	Normal.	1897.	Normal.	1897.		
		11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Venkatagiri dari.	Darsi	INS.	INS.	INS.	INS.	INS.	INS.	INS.	INS.	INS.	INS.
Atmakur	Podili	5.85	1.48	4.42	0.31	1.14	..	11.41	1.79	24.82	20.93
Udayagiri	Atmakur	6.90	3.54	4.19	0.08	0.13	..	11.22	3.62	25.66	27.20
Kanigiri	Udayagiri	8.81	2.79	8.82	1.37	2.53	0.88	20.16	5.04	30.56	16.01
Kandukur	Kanigiri	8.39	2.38	7.52	0.63	2.14	0.22	18.05	3.23	28.09	17.47
	Kandukur	6.46	0.52	4.56	..	1.10	..	12.12	0.52	23.69	21.20
		8.97	2.26	7.89	0.11	1.87	0.04	18.73	2.41	32.58	22.95

* Average for previous three years.

A glance will show that, although the actual amount of rain that fell during 1897 was, in some of the affected areas, more or less normal, it was most unseasonably distributed. The showers of April and May may be neglected. The fall between June and September was unusually heavy, but the North-East monsoon was an absolute failure, the fall being less than 20 per cent. of the normal.

4. There are two cropping seasons corresponding with the two monsoons. With the South-West monsoon rains the early or *punasa* and the chief or *pedda* crops are sown; with the North-East monsoon rains the late or *paira* crops.

In the northern taluks the crops are almost all sown with the early monsoon, whilst in the southern, almost the only *punasa* crop is varagu (*Paspalum scrobiculatum*) and there is but little of that grown. The only late crops largely grown in the northern taluks are horse-gram, Bengal-gram and variga (*Panicum miliaceum*), the latter being almost entirely confined to Ongole and Kandukur, whilst the bulk of the horse-gram is found in Kanigiri and Udayagiri. The latter crop is a very hardy one and usually follows cumbu, the greater portion of the area under which is also found in the same taluks. In the southern taluks cholam is often grown as a late crop on the same land without any intermission, but it usually receives whatever manure may still be available after the wet and garden lands have been attended to. On the whole, about 80 per cent. of the total area of crop consists of food-grains, of which paddy is an important crop only in the Nellore and Gudur taluks. The principal industrial crops are indigo, cotton and oil-seeds. The greater portion of the indigo is found in Ongole and Kandukur but the crop is raised to some extent in all parts of the district. The cotton is also to be found chiefly in the four northern taluks, but the area occupied by this crop is of importance only in Kandukur and Kanigiri. Castor is a tolerably important crop in all taluks except Gudur and Nellore, where, as well as in other southern taluks of Rapur and Atmakur, gingelly occupies some considerable area. Of the large area under condiments and spices in Ongole taluk, the principal is coriander—a crop also very extensively cultivated in the adjacent district of Kistna. There is a large extent under “miscellaneous crops” in Gudur and Ongole taluks which includes considerable areas of casuarinas in the former, and of babul trees in the latter taluk.

The acreage occupied by the chief crops in the affected areas is shown below :—

Taluks.	Cereals.										Pulses.								Condiments and spices.			
	Rice.		Cholam.	Cumbu.	Ragi.	Varagu.	Korra.	Chama.	Others.	Bengal-gram.	Horse-gram.	Red-gram.	Green-gram.	Black-gram.	Others.	Chillies.	Tamarind.	Others.	Total area of crops.			
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18					
1	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.			
Atmakur	17,025	84,976	3,623	10,647	9,224	90	18	352	2,569	45	872	111	46	1,081	1,023	2	2	2				
Udayagiri	1,092	30,052	3,796	6,502	9,488	945	102	104	4,433	9	116	1	1	114	106	21	21	21				
Kanigiri	336	19,869	10,829	10,234	12,217	8,842	443	1,062	5,998	71	1,158	..	19	162	60	1	1	1				
Kandukur	15,209	77,108	8,837	4,100	10,729	1,836	28	12,240	610	12,302	493	2,159	281	33	656	1,318	52	52				
Taluks.	Orchard and garden produce.										Oil-seeds.		Sugars.		Fibres.		Indigo.	Drugs and narcotics.	Fuel-trees and topes.	Total area of crops.		
	Vegetables including starches.		Plantains	Mangoes.	Cocoanuts.	Other fruit-trees.	Gingelly.	Castor.	Others.			Cotton.	Others.									
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33							
	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.			
	Atmakur	154	57	1,470	189	302	251	7,598	5	1	2,307	3,289	14	4,748	290	1,217	141,775	61,757	68,387	166,046		
Udayagiri	44	..	112	2	16	45	5,510	..	..	3,289	4	..	2,276	284	..	..	61,757	68,387	166,046			
Kanigiri	61	..	45	..	24	184	6,326	..	..	4,033	8	230	1,378	118	..	..	61,757	68,387	166,046			
Kandukur	222	7	798	11	87	128	10,015	4	271	1,880	4	848	20,000	586	6,411	166,046	61,757	68,387	166,046			

5. Statistics of the actual outturn of the early crops (those harvested up to November) are alone at present available; they may be studied in the following statement:—

Crops.	Atmakúr.				Udayagiri.			
	Area sown.	Area harvested.	Area withered.	Average outturn on the remainder harvested.	Area sown.	Area harvested.	Area withered.	Average outturn on the remainder harvested.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<i>Food-grains.</i>	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ANNAS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ANNAS.
Paddy	8,547	70	176	5	..	..	..	..
Cholam	44,819	231	18	6	9,712	759	48	..
Cumbu	5,581	5,460	121	6	4,831	4,745	86	4
Ragi	298	3	3	6	592	21	21	7
Varagu	12,950	..	208	..	10,573	..	302	2
All others including pulses ..	4,937	22	..	4	6,221	513	23	..
<i>Industrial crops.</i>								
Castor and lamp-oil seeds ..	7,214	..	32	..	4,761	..	24	..
Gingelly	9	9	..	5	..	2	3	..
Cotton	2,163	..	..	..	3,178	..	..	6
Indigo	4,200	3,373	523	5	1,244	1,211	10	..
Tobacco	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
Other crops including topes ..	2,524	272	..	5	380	32	1	6

Crops.	Kanigiri.				Kandukúr.			
	Area sown.	Area harvested.	Area withered.	Average outturn on the remainder harvested.	Area sown.	Area harvested.	Area withered.	Average outturn on the remainder harvested.
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
<i>Food-grains.</i>	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ANNAS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ANNAS.
Paddy	..	..	..	..	13,048	372	356	7
Cholam	9,316	330	328	3	13,548	3,041	942	2
Cumbu	11,831	11,439	359	5	10,709	10,420	1,188	4
Ragi	646	10	43	5	..	..	..	..
Varagu	12,883	..	4	..	13,652	3	3	..
All others including pulses ..	14,009	1,208	719	2	8,254	800	20	2
<i>Industrial crops.</i>								
Castor and lamp-oil seeds ..	7,627	..	..	..	11,422	39	39	..
Gingelly	199	..	..	..	69	10	..	..
Cotton	3,988	..	..	..	1,833	..	..	10
Indigo	487	438	12	7	18,179	17,535	519	7
Tobacco	11	..	..	..	68	..	..	..
Other crops including topes ..	368	61	2	6	9,166	520	3	9

6. In the subjoined statement information is given as to the number of live-stock maintained in proportion to the area cultivated:—

Taluk.	Area cultivated in fasli 1306 (Government and Minor Inam).	Number of tilling cattle.	Area tilled per pair.	Number of cattle of all sorts.		Number of sheep and goats.	
				Total.	Per 100 acres cultivated.	Total.	Per 100 acres cultivated.
Atmakúr	ACS. 141,775	22,297	ACS. 12.7	76,970	54	108,872	77
Udayagiri	61,757	7,614	16.2	31,853	52	73,675	119
Kanigiri	68,387	7,677	17.8	39,126	57	69,420	102
Kandukúr	166,045	20,259	16.4	43,972	26	78,185	47

The affected area comprises a considerable portion of the tract within which are to be found the breeding grounds of the celebrated Nellore cattle.

7. In the following table will be found particulars of the average size of holdings and the average revenue payable on each holding:—

Taluk.	Average size of holdings.			Percentage of pattadars paying				
	Area.			Assessment.	Under Rs. 10.	From Rs. 10 to 30.	From Rs. 30 to 100.	From Rs. 100 upwards.
	Dry.	Wet.	Total.					
	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	RS. A. P.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.	ACS.
Atmakúr	8.47	1.20	9.67	14 13 2	56.17	30.90	11.83	1.10
Udayagiri	8.83	0.26	9.09	8 2 6	73.24	22.41	4.20	0.15
Kanigiri	10.79	0.09	10.88	8 13 10	70.25	24.58	5.03	0.14
Kandukúr	9.20	0.88	10.08	17 1 4	49.37	35.17	13.63	1.83

The figures call for little comment. There is practically no wet land except in Atmakúr and Kandukúr. The average assessment paid is small, especially in Udayagiri and Kanigiri, more than 60 per cent. of the ryots paying but Rs. 10 or less to Government. The condition of the cultivating classes is poor.

8. *Communications and food-supplies.*—Possessed of a line of sea coast 150 miles in length, in which are situated seven ports at which supplies of grain may be landed; traversed throughout its length by the Buckingham Canal which connects the district with the Kistna and Godavari deltas on the north and the port of Madras on the south; touched in its north-east corner by the Southern Mahratta Railway; and traversed in the south for about 83 miles by the South Indian Railway, from Renigunta on the Madras Railway, the district is fairly well provided with main channels of traffic to allow of supplies of food being thrown into it in cases of scarcity. The East Coast Railway, which will traverse the district from south to north, connecting it on the one side with the port of Madras, and in the other with the rich delta of the Kistna is nearing completion and will shortly be opened. Besides the means of supply mentioned, the district is well supplied with main roads throughout its area, and there can seldom be much difficulty in distributing the necessary supplies of food, if local stocks fail.

The course of prices.—Cholam (*Sorghum vulgare*), by far the most important of the dry food-grains, was obtainable at about the normal rate during 1896 up to the end of September. In October 1896, as the North-East monsoon showed symptoms of failure, the price rose rapidly, and, in November 1896, considerably exceeded the warning rate. It fell in the succeeding month to about the warning rate, near which it remained for about three months. In April 1897, the price again began to rise, though gradually; the scarcity rate was practically reached in September 1897, but the rise continued till the price of the grain was 15 per cent. above the scarcity rate, and 133 above the normal. Prices of other dry grains followed a more or less similar course.

STATEMENT showing the course of prices of the principal food-grains in the affected taluks of the Nellore district in seers of 80 tolas per rupee.

Taluk.	Recording stations.	Grain.	July.			August.			September.		
			1876.	1891.	1897.	1876.	1891.	1897.	1876.	1891.	1897.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Venkatagiri zamindari.	Darsi ..	Ragi ..	31.5	23.8	15.2	27.5	23.8	14.8	25.4	22.7	16.1
		Cholam ..	26.9	21.7	..	25.2	21.7	..	24.5	21.7	..
		Cumbu ..	24.1	19.7	11.7	22.6	19.7	11.6	21.9	18.6	13.1
	Podili ..	Ragi ..	32.5	27.2	15.7	29.1	26.0	15.0	25.7	23.9	14.5
		Cholam ..	28.4	22.6	13.1	26.2	22.0	12.7	23.5	21.7	12.7
		Cumbu ..	25.9	19.7	11.8	24.1	19.4	11.5	21.6	18.3	11.5
Atmakur ..	Atmakur ..	Ragi ..	30.9	24.7	19.1	27.3	23.7	18.3	25.5	22.9	18.3
		Cholam ..	26.9	24.4	17.7	25.9	22.9	16.7	25.0	21.7	16.7
		Cumbu ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Udayagiri ..	Udayagiri ..	Ragi ..	27.2	27.2	19.0	24.7	25.9	17.7	23.0	24.1	16.3
		Cholam ..	23.9	24.4	15.4	22.6	22.9	13.0	21.3	20.6	12.7
		Cumbu ..	..	23.0	13.9	..	22.1	..	..	..	..
Kanigiri ..	Kanigiri ..	Ragi ..	31.6	27.7	17.1	26.9	28.3	17.0	23.7	25.3	17.0
		Cholam ..	26.9	26.4	14.8	26.9	27.1	14.0	23.5	24.9	13.6
		Cumbu ..	24.6	21.2	12.5	23.9	21.5	12.8	21.6	20.1	11.6
Kandukur ..	Kandukur ..	Ragi ..	31.6	..	11.3	28.9	..	15.8	28.4	..	15.3
		Cholam ..	30.2	26.2	15.2	27.1	23.5	13.8	26.7	22.6	13.6
		Cumbu ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

Taluk.	Recording stations.	Grain.	October.			November.			December.		
			1876.	1891.	1897.	1876.	1891.	1897.	1876.	1891.	1897.
			13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Venkatagiri zamindari.	Darsi ..	Ragi ..	21.4	22.1	14.2	14.9	21.9	12.8	10.8	17.5	12.1
		Cholam ..	22.3	21.7	..	17.8	..	21.3	..	16.7	..
		Cumbu ..	20.0	18.0	11.9	..	17.8	..	..	14.8	11.6
	Podili ..	Ragi ..	20.1	23.8	14.5	13.0	22.8	12.7	9.1	17.5	11.1
		Cholam ..	18.5	21.7	12.7	13.4	20.8	11.9	9.7	16.1	10.9
		Cumbu ..	16.9	19.3	11.5	12.3	18.8	10.8	8.9	14.5	9.8
Atmakur ..	Atmakur ..	Ragi ..	18.2	23.0	18.3	10.9	21.8	15.8	9.1	17.2	12.9
		Cholam ..	17.3	20.8	16.7	10.5	20.1	16.4	8.6	16.2	12.4
		Cumbu ..	18.3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Udayagiri ..	Udayagiri ..	Ragi ..	15.8	24.2	15.7	11.2	24.0	15.4	9.0	19.5	12.3
		Cholam ..	16.6	21.1	12.7	10.9	21.4	12.7	8.8	18.8	12.0
		Cumbu ..	13.6	21.9	16.4	10.6	22.0	14.8	8.6	17.4	11.5
Kanigiri ..	Kanigiri ..	Ragi ..	20.5	27.0	16.1	14.6	24.5	13.0	9.5	17.8	12.2
		Cholam ..	19.3	26.2	13.6	14.3	24.2	12.7	10.1	18.4	..
		Cumbu ..	17.7	21.5	11.6	13.1	20.3	11.1	9.2	14.8	9.9
Kandukur ..	Kandukur ..	Ragi ..	24.6	22.5	15.3	20.9	22.1	12.9	..	14.6	11.8
		Cholam ..	20.3	21.8	13.6	13.6	20.7	10.7	10.7	12.9	10.3
		Cumbu ..	..	22.7	..	..	21.8	11.2	..	15.5	8.1

District average price—			Cholam.			Ragi.		Cumbu.	
Normal rate	..	..	..	..	..	26.0	28.0	24.0	..
Warning "	..	..	..	..	..	19.5	21.0	18.0	..
Scarcity "	..	..	..	..	..	13.0	14.0	12.0	..

Probable duration of the distress.—Distress in the district is the result of a failure of the North-East monsoon following upon a year during which prices were verging upon scarcity rates. The early crop, which depended on the North-East monsoon to be brought to maturity, have after a fair promise largely failed, while the area of late sowings has been enormously reduced. Early cultivation is, as above stated, more general in the northern taluks, and it is in these that distress now exists. With a timely South-West monsoon, work should be freely available in the fields, and the necessity for State relief, may be expected to disappear about July 1898.

(True Copy and Extract).

(Signed) L. E. BUCKLEY,
Famine Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
Collector of Nellore.

READ—Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement), Mis. No. 1765, dated 11th March 1898.

ABSTRACT.—Requesting permission to defer the submission of the general report on the condition of the districts in which distress is apprehended, till April next and requesting orders on the suggestion of the Government of India regarding the grant of relief in the form of cooked food in the test-work stage.

ORDER—No. 193, Revenue, dated 2nd April 1898.

Miscellaneous.

The report on the general economical condition of the Nellore district will be forwarded to the Government of India for information, and the Board of Revenue will, as requested, be allowed to submit in the course of the current month similar reports in the case of the other districts for which budget provision has been made on account of famine relief in 1898-99. Meanwhile, copies of the reports, already received, on the state of the season in the Chingleput and North Arcot districts will be transmitted to the Government of India with the remark that so far as it can be judged at present, these two districts and Nellore are the only districts in which apprehension of distress continues and that distress is not likely at any rate in the near future to affect any wider area.

2. As regards the suggestion of the Government of India to place more reliance, during the earlier stages of distress, on relief in the form of cooked food as a means of ascertaining the existence or the pressure of distress, the Government notes that in Nellore, where alone relief measures are in progress, the *test* stage is passed and that the question of offering cooked food as a test does not therefore arise. It will, however, be pointed out to the Government of India that the proposed test would have diametrically opposite effects in different parts of the country; while in some parts of the Presidency cooked food would be accepted only by persons in extreme want who had arrived at the stage of starvation, there are other districts where large classes of the people would accept it readily whether in want or not, and their doing so would furnish no real test of the necessity of relief measures. The Government will, however, be glad to receive the Board's views on the proposal.

3. The following letter will be addressed to the Government of India.

(True Extract.)

Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement,
Land Records and Agriculture).
the Public Works Department.
the Financial Department.
the Local and Municipal Department.

Exd. Shaik Karim.

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STATEMENT showing the course of prices of the principal food-grains in the affected taluks of the Nellore district in seers of 80 tolas per rupee.

Taluk.	Recording stations.	Grain.	July.			August.			September.		
			1876.	1891.	1897.	1876.	1891.	1897.	1876.	1891.	1897.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Venkatagiri zamindari.	Darsi	Ragi	31.5	23.8	15.2	27.5	23.8	14.8	25.4	22.7	16.1
		Cholam	26.9	21.7	..	25.2	21.7	..	24.5	21.7	..
		Cumbu	24.1	19.7	11.7	22.6	19.7	11.6	21.9	18.6	13.1
	Podili	Ragi	32.5	27.2	15.7	29.1	26.0	15.0	25.7	23.9	14.5
		Cholam	28.4	22.6	13.1	26.2	22.0	12.7	23.5	21.7	12.7
		Cumbu	25.9	19.7	11.8	24.1	19.4	11.5	21.6	18.3	11.5
Atmakur	Atmakur	Ragi	30.9	24.7	19.1	27.3	23.7	18.3	25.5	22.9	18.3
		Cholam	26.9	24.4	17.7	25.9	22.9	16.7	25.0	21.7	16.7
		Cumbu	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Udayagiri	Udayagiri	Ragi	27.2	27.2	19.0	24.7	25.9	17.7	23.0	24.1	16.3
		Cholam	23.9	24.4	15.4	22.6	22.9	13.0	21.3	20.6	12.7
		Cumbu	..	23.0	13.9	..	22.1	..	..	..	..
Kanigiri	Kanigiri	Ragi	31.6	27.7	17.1	26.9	28.3	17.0	23.7	25.3	17.0
		Cholam	26.9	26.4	14.8	26.9	27.1	14.0	23.5	24.9	13.6
		Cumbu	24.6	21.2	12.5	23.9	21.5	12.8	21.6	20.1	11.6
Kandukur	Kandukur	Ragi	31.6	..	11.3	28.9	..	15.8	28.4	..	15.3
		Cholam	30.2	26.2	15.2	27.1	23.5	13.8	26.7	22.6	13.6
		Cumbu	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

Taluk.	Recording stations.	Grain.	October.			November.			December.		
			1876.	1891.	1897.	1876.	1891.	1897.	1876.	1891.	1897.
			13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Venkatagiri zamindari.	Darsi	Ragi	21.4	22.1	14.2	14.9	21.9	12.8	10.8	17.5	12.1
		Cholam	22.3	21.7	..	..	21.3	..	..	16.7	..
		Cumbu	20.0	18.0	11.9	..	17.8	11.7	..	14.8	11.6
	Podili	Ragi	20.1	23.8	14.5	13.0	22.8	12.7	9.1	17.5	11.1
		Cholam	18.5	21.7	12.7	13.4	20.8	11.9	9.7	16.1	10.9
		Cumbu	16.9	19.3	11.5	12.3	18.8	10.8	8.9	14.5	9.8
Atmakur	Atmakur	Ragi	18.2	23.0	18.3	10.9	21.8	15.8	9.1	17.2	12.9
		Cholam	17.3	20.8	16.7	10.5	20.1	16.4	8.6	16.2	12.4
		Cumbu	18.3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Udayagiri	Udayagiri	Ragi	15.8	24.2	15.7	11.2	24.0	15.4	9.0	19.5	12.3
		Cholam	16.6	21.1	12.7	10.9	21.4	12.7	8.8	18.8	12.0
		Cumbu	13.6	21.9	16.4	10.6	22.0	14.8	8.6	17.4	11.5
Kanigiri	Kanigiri	Ragi	20.5	27.0	16.1	14.6	24.5	13.0	9.5	17.8	12.2
		Cholam	19.3	26.2	13.6	14.3	24.2	12.7	10.1	18.4	..
		Cumbu	17.7	21.5	11.6	13.1	20.3	11.1	9.2	14.8	9.9
Kandukur	Kandukur	Ragi	24.6	22.5	15.3	20.9	22.1	12.9	..	14.6	11.8
		Cholam	20.3	21.8	13.6	13.6	20.7	10.7	10.7	12.9	10.3
		Cumbu	..	22.7	..	..	21.8	11.2	..	15.5	8.1

District average price—			Cholam.	Ragi.	Cumbu.
Normal rate	..	..	26.0	28.0	24.0
Warning "	..	..	19.5	21.0	18.0
Scarcity "	..	..	13.0	14.0	12.0

Probable duration of the distress.—Distress in the district is the result of a failure of the North-East monsoon following upon a year during which prices were verging upon scarcity rates. The early crop, which depended on the North-East monsoon to be brought to maturity, have after a fair promise largely failed, while the area of late sowings has been enormously reduced. Early cultivation is, as above stated, more general in the northern taluks, and it is in these that distress now exists. With a timely South-West monsoon, work should be freely available in the fields, and the necessity for State relief, may be expected to disappear about July 1898.

(True Copy and Extract).

(Signed) L. E. BUCKLEY,
Famine Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
Collector of Nellore.

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2. As regards the suggestion of the Government of India to place more reliance, during the earlier stages of distress, on relief in the form of cooked food as a means of ascertaining the existence or the pressure of distress, the Government notes that in Nellore, where alone relief measures are in progress, the *test* stage is passed and that the question of offering cooked food as a test does not therefore arise. It will, however, be pointed out to the Government of India that the proposed test would have diametrically opposite effects in different parts of the country; while in some parts of the Presidency cooked food would be accepted only by persons in extreme want who had arrived at the stage of starvation, there are other districts where large classes of the people would accept it readily whether in want or not, and their doing so would furnish no real test of the necessity of relief measures. The Government will, however, be glad to receive the Board's views on the proposal.

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S. S. Roberts
for Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement,
Land Records and Agriculture).

the Public Works Department.
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Exd. Shaik Karim.

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26/5/98

1898

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE AND AGRICULTURE.

The Government of Fort St. George.

1898

Letter, No. 194, 2nd April 1898.

APRIL

1898.

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE AND AGRICULTURE.

From

The Government of Fort St. George.

Recd.

Enclosures

Regd.

1898.

Spare copies

Letter, No. 194, 2nd April 1898.

APRIL.

FORWARDING, with remarks, a copy of the report on the general economic condition of the Nellore district and stating, with remarks, that the suggestion of the Government of India as to the gauging of distress will, however, receive the careful attention of the Government, when the revision of Famine Code comes under consideration.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

From

THE HON'BLE MR. G. S. FORBES, I.C.S.,
Ag. Secretary to the Government of Madras,

To

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,
DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE AND AGRICULTURE,

Dated Fort St. George, 2nd April 1898.

SIR,

I am directed to address you with reference to paragraphs 2 and 3 of your letter dated 23rd February 1898, No. 408-30 —1-F., requesting to be furnished as required by rule X, article 48 of the Famine Code, with a report on the general

Miscellaneous.

situation in the distressed districts and making certain suggestions as to the gauging of distress.

2. Referring to the Nellore district in which relief operations are now in progress, the Government of India desire to be furnished with some information in regard to the difference in local conditions which renders it necessary to open such measures in this district at a time when they have been discontinued in the adjacent districts of Cuddapah and Kurnool. I am to explain that the affected portion of the Nellore district is not contiguous to those parts of Cuddapah and Kurnool in which relief operations have recently been discontinued, but adjoins the portions of those districts, which though unaffected in 1897, have given cause for anxiety in the past few months. Further, the Nellore district is separated from Cuddapah wholly and from Kurnool in part, by the range of the Eastern Ghâts, and the conditions of the tracts on either side of the ghâts are dissimilar.

3. As desired by the Government of India, I enclose a copy of the report on the general economic condition of the Nellore district, submitted by the Board of Revenue with reference to rule X, section 48 of the Madras Famine Code. As regards the other districts in respect of which budget provision on account of famine relief has been made, I am to state that so far as can be judged at present, it is hoped that Chingleput and North Arcot may be the only other districts in which distress, or distress to an appreciable extent, need be apprehended, at any rate in the near future. The Collectors of these districts have been instructed to report further on the condition of their charges and their reports are now due. The general report in regard to the remaining districts will accordingly be forwarded to the Government of India in the course of this month. Meanwhile, I am to transmit for information the marginally-noted papers which embody reports on the state of the season in the Chingleput and North Arcot districts.

1. G.O., No. 6342, dated 8th February 1897.
2. Board's Proceedings, No. 23, dated 15th January 1898 (Settlement).
3. Board's Proceedings, No. 76, dated 14th February 1898 (Settlement).
4. G.O., No. 6536, dated 30th December 1897.
5. " 1128, " 5th March 1898.

4. Lastly in regard to the suggestion in paragraph 3 of your letter, as to the expediency of placing more reliance during the earlier stages of distress, on relief given in the form of cooked food as a means of ascertaining the existence or the pressure of distress, I am to state that in Nellore, where alone relief operations are now being undertaken, the *test* stage has been passed and relief is being afforded under the intermediate piece-work system. The question does not therefore arise at present as a practical question. But with regard to the suggestion generally, I am to say that, in the opinion of His Excellency the Governor in Council, the acceptance of cooked food as the test of distress cannot be effectively applied in circumstances such as present themselves in Nellore where over a considerable area the rural population, generally the able-bodied as well as the weakly and indigent, are unable to procure employment of any kind and must starve unless work is provided for them. In such circumstances the most suitable test seems to be a test which has a relation to work and not to food. Moreover, the proposed test would have diametrically opposite effects in different parts of the country. While in some parts of the Presidency cooked food would be accepted only by persons in extreme want who had arrived at the stage of starvation; there are other districts, Nellore for instance, where large classes of the people would accept it readily whether they were in want or not, and their doing so would furnish no real test of the necessity of introducing measures of relief. The suggestion of the Government of India will, however, receive the careful attention of this Government when the revision of the Famine Code in the light of the experience gained in the recent distress comes under consideration.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

Ag. Secretary to Government.

Exd. Shaik Karim.

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