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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public works DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 2123 Press / Mis.

370-71

Dated 15 · 7 1869.

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Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
15th July 1867.

No. 370. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the Revenue Department :—

Passing orders on the replies of the Collector of Bellary, Board of Revenue, &c., to the observations of the Sanitary Commissioner on the famine in the Bellary District during the past year. } (Here enter 29th June 1867, No. 1,455A.)

No. 371. ORDER THEREON, 15th July 1867, No. 2,123.

IRRIGATION, No. 20. Communicated to the Superintending Engineer of the 3rd Division.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) CHARLES A. ORR, Colonel, R. E.,
Secretary to Government.

To the Superintending Engineer, 3rd Division.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 29th June 1867.

Read again Proceedings of Government, dated 10th January 1867, No. 73.

Read also the following papers:—

No. 441. From A. WEDDERBURN, Esq., Collector of Bellary, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Camp at Cottacheroo, Pennuconda Talook, 23rd January 1867, No. 4.

1. The Report of the Sanitary Commissioner on the famine in Bellary, during last year, has been sent to me by Government for any observations I may have to make on the remarks contained therein.

2. It appears to me that a simple narrative of the occurrences in Bellary, from the day I joined it, is the most appropriate mode of reply.

3. I arrived in Bellary on Thursday the 21st of June 1866. I learned that there was a great deal of distress amongst the poorest classes, owing to the high prices of grain, and to want of employment arising from the failure of the early rain of the south-west monsoon.

Steps taken on arrival in Bellary.

4. To relieve the very destitute, I called a meeting of influential native gentlemen for the 24th of June, on the day after my arrival, and a liberal response was made to my appeal on behalf of the poor; about 5,000 poor were, on an average, relieved in the month of July. I went to the distribution of grain to about 7,000, chiefly infirm men and women, with young children, and, with the exception of rags and dirt, was glad to see so little outward indications of starvation. The emaciated I would have calculated as less than two or three per cent. These were chiefly of the Beder and other lowest castes. I was in daily contact for three months with gangs amounting to 6,000 persons on the special relief works near Bellary, and observed a similar state.

Local contributions towards relief in July.

Appearance of the people in July and August.

5. Considering that so good a beginning of local charity might be copied elsewhere, Circulars were issued in the District Gazette, and my Division Officers were by letter asked to further such charitable endeavours. Up to 15th September Rupees 25,638 were reported as locally raised and distributed. I cannot be certain that all the local charity came under official notice.

6. The last week of June and first week of July passed without rain. On the 7th of July I wrote officially to the Superintending Engineer, asking him to push on the expenditure of the public funds allotted to his department, as this time was the most favourable opportunity of getting labour cheap and plentiful. There had been complaints when I was in the district for ten months in 1863-64, that labour was difficult to get, and high priced.

Subsequent steps.

7. At this date there were more than two lacs of Rupees to be spent in the district by the Department of Public Works, and even at that time, I understood from the department, that there was up to that time no urgent applications for work. I addressed also the Agent of the North-West Railway, whose construction was being carried on in three very distressed talooks of this district, and requested that instructions might be given to push on the works.

8. Apprehending, however, that if rain continuously kept off there would be increased loss of occupation to agricultural labourers in every part of the district, I requested the Superintending Engineer to come to my assistance in the preparation of a special scheme of village road works, which would be submitted to Government should the season still remain adverse while preparing it, and for the purpose of due allotment. I awaited the receipt of the report of the season from the out-talooks for the first fortnight of July, collated on the 21st, and finding from it that no rain as yet had fallen, and that distress was continuous and wide-spread, I addressed the Board of Revenue on the 23rd July, enclosing a carefully-prepared scheme, which has remained unchanged, and only supplemented by further allotments up to date, adapted to the exigencies of each talook, as ascertained from the reports and from information derived from other sources, including the Police.

9. The Board of Revenue, in their Proceedings of 27th July, supported the scheme, and Government sanctioned it. The general Order of Government, to which allusion is made, is dated the 28th of July, and is recorded as received in this Office on the 30th idem, so that it will be observed that my plans were formed and action taken on them previous to the receipt of any general instructions on the subject.

10. The works now sanctioned by telegram of 31st July, were pushed on with as great despatch as possible. It has been observed that Imperial works were going on at the same time, and that the total extra expenditure on special relief was, in two months, only about half a lac from the beginning of August up to the end of September. But upon the Revenue Department was thrown the duty of providing tools for some additional 10,000 or 12,000 labourers, and distributing them in a district nearly 12,000 square-miles in extent, with roads blocked by cholera, dead cattle, and want of forage. Had the Railway reached this district it would have both prevented the panic arising from shut roads, less importation, and continuous drought, and also brought me more speedily the tools I indented for on other Arsenals. That of Bellary I stripped of every implement that could be wielded by a native hand. We could not get such work executed by contractors, who much facilitate the expenditure of the Department Public Works in their yearly amount of three lacs of Rupees. A list of receipts, distribution, and expenditure is subjoined up to 30th September.

	Collector's Division, 3 Talooks.	Sub-Collector's Division, 5 Talooks.	Head Assistant Collector's Division, 4 Talooks.	General Deputy Collector's Division, 3 Talooks.	Total.
	RS.	RS.	RS.	RS.	RS.
Allotted	37,000	44,500	33,565	18,950	1,34,015
Expended	23,310	6,790	7,756	9,710	47,566

NOTE.—In allotting for the General Deputy Collector's division, the railway works were considered.

Application for special relief famine work funds was made as below:—

	RS.
23rd July	50,000
30th August and 6th September ...	25,000
18th September	1,25,000
	2,00,000

Tahsildars and Division Officers were directed to push on works without delay, and to send periodical accounts of expenditure, number of persons employed, estimates of future requirement in money and tools, which on receipt were immediately complied with.

11. I trust, then, allowance will be made to the unskilled Revenue Department for not spending quite Rupees 50,000 in two months, up to September. I can only say that work was offered to every applicant; that wages, considered with reference to the price of grain, &c., were fixed for each class, and funds despatched without a day's delay; direction for organization and carrying out road work printed and circulated to nearly every village. We were hampered by having had to estimate and indent for tools, and by the delay of despatching them through so vast a district, and into isolated localities. Hindupur, for instance, is nearer to Bangalore than to Bellary, from which it is 125 miles distant.

Reason of presence at head-quarter Station.

12. Having, on my sole responsibility, such pressing matters to arrange for this district, and having to be in constant communication with my subordinates and with Government, it seemed to me that the central talook of Bellary, where a general supervision over the district and immediate power of direction was feasible, with the Treasury and Telegraph at hand, was my post of duty. If I could have deputed to any other competent authority these chief and responsible duties, I might have left my head-quarters and gone through distant villages and into other talooks, personally establishing relief-houses, for which instructions were, from my Central Office, given by letters and orders. As the Chief Magistrate of the district, I had also to consider the possibility of the repetition of the grain riots which took place in 1863, during my absence from Bellary, and which took place in several towns of the Presidency during this last famine, and which were anticipated at Bellary also.

13. *Remittances from the Madras Central Fund.*—I am aware that the amount of Rupees 29,909-8-11 actually disbursed (34,550 were distributed) in the Bellary district up to 30th of September, from the remittances amounting to Rupees 44,000, including Rupees 5,000 of grain not then received, sent by the Secretary to the Madras Central Fund up to that date, was quite inadequate to meet the great distress that prevailed in the district during July, August, and September; but attention is requested to the following dates of receipt and of distribution. The

Madras Central and General Relief Society was only established on the 21st July, and had to supply other districts then afflicted with famine.

Received.	Rs.	*Distributed.*	Rs.
First, on the 30th July	5,000	Same day	5,000
Second, on the 15th August applied for by telegram	4,000	18th August	4,000
Third, on the 3rd September ...	10,000	7th September	9,550
Fourth, on the 18th do. ..	20,000	19th do.	16,000
Total...	39,000		34,550
Grain forwarded on the 22nd August	5,000	did not arrive in full till late in October.	
Grand total...	44,000		

I presume that the Madras Central Relief Committee, on a review of the reports from Bellary, forwarded to me as large sums as were in their power at that time.

14. I think that August was (prices then reached their *maxima*) the worst month of distress. Distress diminished with the September rains. Without doubt, if more funds had been available in July and August, they could have been expended to more advantage than in September and October. The talook, which had least and latest rain-fall, and the greatest number of persons applying for relief, was Bellary. The prices ruling in it from first to last were 15 to 25 per cent. above the general average. It has the largest population of any. The tract round Bellary, extending to a distance of ten to fifteen miles on every side, or an area of 500 square-miles, up to the last week of September, greatly contrasted in aridity with the other talooks which had earlier received rain. There was a considerable stock of grain hoarded in the district during the whole time of distress ; but the continuance of drought for the three important months of cultivation, and the prevalence of cholera, and the absence of forage on the roads, chiefly in August, checked natural importation, caused hoarding among the grain-dealers and substantial ryots, enhanced the prices, and brought the distress to a climax in that month.

Concluding remarks.

No. 442. From the same Officer, dated Camp at Dhurmavaram, 28th January 1867, No. 6.

1. I replied to the Proceedings of Government, dated 10th January, received 15th, on the 23rd instant. That letter had reference to occurrences in Bellary commencing with the day of my arrival. I attempted to show that there was no avoidable delay in affording relief to the people then suffering under distress.

2. It occurs to me that Government will not be displeased with me if I attempt to show cause to absolve the memory of the late Collector, Mr. Hathaway, from any imputation of want of energy, or of judgment, in having abstained from the proposal of a scheme of special relief up to the date of his lamented death. It would be wholly superfluous in me to dwell on the high character and unbounded charity which distinguished that able public servant.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 29th June 1867.

3. The loss of a crop over a fourth part of the district was no doubt a calamity. The succeeding drought which destroyed the cattle was a still greater, but I would again refer to the reports made by Mr. Hathaway. He, in the latter part of 1865, wrote strongly on the loss of crop, for the purpose of obtaining from the Board of Revenue sanction to make large remissions on the uncultivated and withered crop-lands, which, when occurring on the very lightly assessed dry soils, averaging 12 Annas per acre, are not usually entitled to such indulgence. The profits of cotton had been enormous, and the high prices of grain press more on persons with small fixed salaries than on labourers, who are usually paid in grain.

16th November 1865, Board's Proceedings, dated 7th December 1865, No. 7,824.

4. Mr. Hathaway's propositions were most liberal, but were made in advance of a thorough inquiry, which was completed by me, and all the indulgence solicited was granted by the Board of Revenue. That the failure of a crop, which is looked to for the forage of the cattle, until the June rains produce grass for pasture, should have necessitated the departure of a large number of petty cultivators from a country where they could not remain and preserve their cattle, may be lamented, but could by no human foresight have been prevented.

5. Spending any amount of money on road-making would have had no useful result, at the commencement of the year, as regards this class of people. Their cattle are their most valued stock, far more so than any immovable property, which they might temporarily abandon. Their wealth is packed in small compass. A few brass pots constitute their furniture, and their gold or silver ornaments their realized capital.

6. In regard also to the distress obtaining among the non-agricultural classes, called the "lowest classes," consisting of gipsy tribes and the like, who were reported to subsist on pounded tamarind seeds. In other countries the privations of such classes would be met by local charity, rather than by a demand on the public purse; and, as regards public works, I have stated in my former letter that there were more than Rupees 2,00,000 available for expenditure in the Department Public Works, besides the Railway under construction.

7th April 1866.

7. I have, during my circuit, had a similar experience with the Sanitary Commissioner of the difficulty of obtaining reliable statistics without the aid of the usual channels of information. I rode through a number of villages in Gooty talook, where the loss of cattle was very great, but when I came to compare the allegations of the ryots with the records of the talook, I found that great exaggerations had been made. The village and talook authorities had no inducement whatever to understate the losses, so I am inclined to credit them, rather than the more interested parties. It had got abroad that the replacement of the lost cattle was under contemplation.

8. A more reliable criterion of the state of a district than carelessly prepared native reports, or limited enquiries is, I think, to be found in the result of the sale of the Abkarry, or liquor monopoly, which shows the use of luxuries by the population. I allude to this subject, which apparently escaped the notice of the Board of Revenue in the letter of reply.

9. The contracts for the district were sold by Mr. Foster on the 24th of May, and instead of Rupees 5,03,900, which was their former amount, and was their upset price, they realized the enormous amount of Rupees 9,02,400. As the sole profit to be derived from these contracts is the supply of liquor at a minimum price on a corresponding large scale to the mass of the population, it must be allowed that the state of the district, up to the date of sale, to justify such competition must have been one of general prosperity. The date from which the new contracts were to run was the 1st of July, and that most of these men are now ruined, their liabilities commencing only from that date, rather supports than invalidates my argument. This fact may also serve to explain why Mr. Foster, in face of such competition, might be slow to perceive the necessity of special relief, which I took it upon myself to apply for in anticipation of its necessity on remarking the lateness of the usual rains.

No. 443. From the same Officer, dated Bellary, 18th February 1867, No. 12.

1. For fear of making my letter to Government of the 23rd ultimo, No. 4, tediously long, I did not advert to the system of relief which was provided with the funds placed at our disposal by the Madras Central Relief Committee. I observe that it has been stated, or implied in the Sanitary Commissioner's report, that the grain was given in an uncooked form; that no liquid food had been thought of for the young, the emaciated, and the aged, and that the quantity given was insufficient.

2. As I had sent a long report on the system of relief, through the Secretary of the Famine Committee at Madras, which contained the whole detail of relief houses and administration of food, I thought it would be an unnecessary repetition to state again what is recorded there; but in case the report adverted to, dated 10th December 1866, should not, as I requested, have been submitted to Government, I have the honour to state, that, with one exception, in the Cowl Bazaar, superintended by a Committee of gentlemen (whom I could advise, but not order), the relief food throughout the district provided by the funds of the Madras Relief Committee was, previously to the Sanitary Commissioner's arrival, given in a cooked form; it was composed of raggy or cholum, boiled with the condiments of salt, chillies, and moistened with tamarind water, which is the usual cooked food of the population; that we tried giving liquid food, *i. e.*, conjee, or rice water, to the young, &c., but that rice in any form not being the food of the population, was not appreciated, and was discontinued at Bellary, and not proposed elsewhere in consequence; and that on comparing the Bellary with the Madras measures, allowing three Bellary to two Madras measures, the quantity of food given to each exactly corresponded with the allowance given in the Madras Relief-houses.

3. I recently learned that the occasion on which an insufficiency of food was provided, was when a greatly increased number of applicants appeared in Kudlighi talook; but this was not the rule, but the exception; and the remedy was simple, to have cooked an additional supply. It would have been a waste of grain to have provided for double the usual number relieved, as cooked grain ferments, and is uneatable the second day.

4. I have visited a great number of Relief-houses, between Bellary and Madacsera, in a 300-mile tour, in eight out of the fifteen talooks, and found that a sufficiency of proper food was prepared, and further that some country blankets and coarse cloths were issued to the most necessitous of the applicants, especially the very aged, and to those who had families of children. There is now a considerable diminution in the number receiving charitable relief.

No. 444. From W. S. FOSTER, Esq., Acting Sub-Collector of Bellary, to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated Raidroog, 16th February 1867, No. 11.

1. I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the Order of Government, No. 73, dated January 10th, 1867, and I beg to make the following observations on Mr. Ellis' remarks regarding me. The only charges made against me are the want of energetic administrative action, and giving in the Season Reports only faint and imperfect pictures of the distress.

2. I must first observe that I was called on to take charge of the Collectorate before I had been a week in the district. During those few days I had not been able to make myself personally acquainted with the state of the distress, and while I was in charge of the district I had most of the Collector's and Sub-Collector's work to perform, and this fully occupied my time every day. I was thus unable to travel about the district, and I trust Government will allow that this was from no unwillingness on my part, considering that as soon as I was relieved by Mr. Wedderburn I went through all the talooks of my division. I was thus, while in charge of the district, unable to judge of its state from personal observations; I had to write the Season Reports from those I received from the Tahsildars, but though I was unable to supplement these reports with particular instances of distress that had come under my own observation, I submit that the Season Reports gave no faint picture of what was really being endured. Government had been informed that the distress was worse than it had ever been before, and they were well aware of what the distress of 1854 was. For a short time rain fell, and it was generally thought that the monsoon had set in, but it ceased as suddenly as it had come, and the season reports returned to their old story of the distress; how that it still continued, and was felt by men and cattle; how that there was want of water, as well as of provisions and fodder, to such an extent that the poor were driven to subsist on tamarind and date seeds.

3. With reference to the charge of my failing in energetic administrative action, I imagine that the failure is said to consist only in my not applying for relief; as to my not applying for relief in grain, it must be remembered that there was a similar scarcity in Bellary in 1864. Government were then asked to send up some grain, and in their Order No. 931, dated March 17th, 1864, Military Department, they replied that "The Governor in Council has resolved not to entertain the "proopsal to purchase grain and convey it to Bellary with the view of counteracting "the scarcity there." And the Board of Revenue, in communicating this order, remark that "in times of scarcity the only course for the authorities to adopt is to "ensure as far as possible every facility and perfect security to the importers and

"sellers of grain." There are the same reasons against Government giving away grain gratuitously as there are against their selling it, and I therefore considered that I ought not to request Government to send up any grain.

4. I now come to the question, Why I did not apply for relief in money? On being called on by the Board of Revenue to state whether any remedial measures were then called for, I replied that rain had fallen, and I also gave my reasons for not applying for money relief. This letter was submitted to Government, who recorded it. I therefore supposed that Government had no fault to find with the views I expressed. Certainly, the rain ceased in a very short time, but I did not apply for aid for the reasons I had formerly given. It must be borne in mind that the distress consisted of a want of water for drinking purposes, as much as a want of food, and no amount of relief in money would have given the people drinking water. I therefore said that if works were carried on, it would have the effect of massing a number of people together in a place where there was water for but a very few.

5. Mr. Ellis remarks that "there was no real or continuous difficulty in "purchasing grain in moderate quantities," leading one to the conclusion that if only money were given to the poorer classes, it would have enabled them to provide themselves with food. But in this I must beg to differ from him: in one of the Kusbah towns of my division I was unable to purchase grain, offer what price I would. I have also had the people employed on the special relief works throw down their money before me, asking me what was the use of it as it would not buy them grain; and I have had to send long distances to purchase it for relief houses. I believe the merchants were in possession of a much larger supply than they would bring to the market, and a much larger supply than they required for their own use; but I still believe there was an actual insufficiency of grain for the whole people, and I therefore thought that a large amount of money poured into the district would only have the tendency of considerably raising the prices, while it added nothing to the supply, and thus involve a greater number of people in the prevailing distress. I thought all the time that grain was required rather than money, and, as I have before said, I felt myself precluded from asking for it by the Government Order I have referred to.

6. In this letter I have tried to give the reasons that promted my conduct at the time. Subsequent events have proved that to some extent I was wrong. For instance, I found out afterwards that in some talooks, but not all, the poor were flocking into the Kusbah towns, so that employment on the public works had the effect of separating them instead of bringing them together; but this was a state of things I did not know until I had the opportunity of personal examination, and it was a state of things little likely to be foreseen. And I must trust to Government to do me the justice of remembering that they are judging me with the additional information that subsequent events have afforded, while I, besides the Government Order and Board's Proceedings I have already alluded to, had nothing whatever to guide me.

No. 445. From W. S. LILLY, Esq., Head Assistant Collector of Bellary, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort Saint George, dated Bellary, 22nd January 1867.

1. I have the honour to avail myself of the permission given me by Government in paragraph 1 of their Order, No. 73, dated the 10th instant, to submit a few observations on the remarks made regarding me by the Honourable R. S. Ellis in his report on the recent distress in this district.

2. The portions of Mr. Ellis' report which appear to call for notice from me are the following:—

"The Head Assistant in charge of four important talooks, in answer to a return called for, states, that only one of his talooks, with the exception of Hospett, in which he is stationed, was visited by him from April to August 1866, the period when distress was most prevalent in the Bellary district. The talook visited was Hoovinhadagally, in which he spent eight days, halting at three towns, and inspecting the villages adjacent to those towns. The talook of Kudlighee, in which the distress was probably more severe than in any other portion of the Bellary district, was not once visited during this period by the Head Assistant.

"This inactivity on the part of officers in charge of important divisions is at all times injurious to the interests of a district, but it was especially so when all classes in the district required encouragement, and when accurate personal knowledge of the condition of different parts of the district was absolutely necessary in order to apply remedial measures.

"I must exempt from these remarks Mr. Foster, the officer in charge of the "Bellary Sub-division. During July and August he visited every talook in his "charge, remaining in each for a sufficient period."

3. Mr. Ellis appears to consider that I displayed a want of activity especially injurious to the interests of the district, in omitting to visit, during the period he specifies, two of my four talooks, the talook of Kudlighee, which it would seem he has been led to believe was one of the most heavily afflicted talooks, being one of the two.

4. I may at once assign as my chief reasons for not visiting those talooks, that I believed that what I saw in Hospett and Hoovinhadagally gave me an accurate idea of the state of the division generally, and that the work of my office, always heavy, was then so greatly in excess of the normal rate, as to render it undesirable that any time should be devoted to travelling which it was not absolutely necessary for me to undertake.

5. It will probably be sufficient to vindicate myself from the charge of inactivity, if I briefly exhibit the work performed in my Office during May, June, July, and August 1866. In those four months I disposed of 89 criminal cases; heard and passed orders on 285 criminal and miscellaneous petitions; wrote 220 English official letters, besides a large number of demi-officials; and conducted the Settlement of the talook of Hospett, a duty which unexpectedly fell to me on the death of the late Collector Mr. Hathaway. When it is remembered that the hearing and disposal of the vernacular correspondence of four large talooks consumes on an average not less than an hour and a half daily, and that a Revenue Officer in charge of a division has multifarious duties of more or less importance to perform,

which do not in most cases admit of postponement, and which make an equal inroad into his day, I think Government will consider that the business of my office was fully sufficient to occupy the whole of my time. In fact it pressed so heavily on my insufficient establishment that, as I found myself compelled to represent to the Collector, some of them were not only obliged to remain at the Cutcherry until late at night, but had also frequently to give up their Sundays to the accomplishment of their work.

6. It is scarcely too much to say that constant marching during this heavy pressure of business would have thrown it into hopeless arrears. Clerks on Rupees 20 and Rupees 15 a month cannot be expected to travel expeditiously on horseback or by bullock-coach, but have to perform their journeys on foot, and the loss of time while moving about the district is therefore very great. It appeared to me that, under such circumstances, nothing but the orders of my superior officers or the most urgent and patent necessity would have justified me in setting out on a prolonged tour.

7. I received no such orders, nor even an intimation that it was considered desirable that I should visit and report on the whole of my division, nor did the accounts which I received from my Tahsildars lead me to consider that such a course was necessary. From the enquiries I made, I was led to think that the forty or fifty villages I inspected in the talooks of Hospett and Hoovinhadagally gave me a correct impression of the state of my charge generally, and that a tour in Kudlighee and Hurpenhully would have added little to my information regarding the actual condition of the people.

8. The most searching inquiries, subsequently instituted, have not led me to change that opinion. Hurpenhully undoubtedly suffered less than any other part of my charge. The accounts which reached me from Kudlighee in August, when the distress was at its height, certainly gave no such picture of the state of that talook as Mr. Ellis has drawn in his report, nor did the information which I obtained from personal inquiry of the ryots, during my tour in October, lead me to the conclusion that the distress from the high rates of grain and the difficulty of procuring employment had been exceptionally great. The average price of cholum was lower during the period to which Mr. Ellis refers in Kudlighee than in Hospett. Up to the 8th of August no deaths from starvation had occurred in Kudlighee; indeed, up to the end of that month no information of any reached me, while in July eight such had been reported in other parts of my division. From these facts, as well as from the information which reached me from every source, official and unofficial, I came to the conclusion that Kudlighee was not suffering so much as some other parts of my division, and that my presence was less urgently required there. It is true that there was a large emigration from Kudlighee, but this appeared to be chiefly due to the appalling severity with which cholera raged throughout that talook.

9. Another consideration which rendered any lengthened absence from my head-quarters undesirable, was the grave apprehensions which were entertained during the scarcity of an outbreak in the neighbouring town of Chitawadigi, the great grain market of the division. The consequences of such an outbreak would

have been most serious, and the example thus set would probably have been widely followed.

10. Mr. Ellis, after passing nineteen days in the town of Bellary, one day in an outlying village of that talook, six days in the talook of Hospett, three days in the talook of Kudlighee, and two days in the talook of Alur, found himself, as he states in page 1 of his Report, able to convey a correct idea of what had been the condition of the fifteen talooks of the Bellary District during the preceding nine months. Living as I did in the midst of my division, during the time when the distress was greatest, there would seem to be nothing very unreasonable in the supposition that I might have acquired an accurate impression of the condition of the four talooks under my charge by visiting those two, which all accounts which reached me led me to think were the most heavily afflicted.

11. I must, in passing, beg leave to advert to a remark made by Mr. Ellis in page 3 of his Report, that the Talook Returns of the deaths from starvation are grossly incorrect. It is with the greatest diffidence that I take upon myself to question the correctness of any opinion expressed by Mr. Ellis; but it would appear to be due to the heads of the villages and the officers in charge of the talooks of my division, to state that, so far from shewing any disposition to extenuate the severity of the distress, they appeared to be desirous, in every instance which came under my notice, to give the darkest descriptions of the sufferings which prevailed in their respective charges. On several occasions I found on actual inspection that the state of things in villages, where the greatest misery was alleged to prevail, was barely such as to justify the language which has been used. I am unable to see what object our subordinates can be supposed to have had in concealing the amount of destitution, or understating the mortality which resulted from it.

12. It will not, I trust, be considered an unreasonable request if I ask that my administration of my charge during the distress be judged by its results rather than by the number of miles I rode in particular months. As soon as special remedial measures had been judged to be necessary, and had been determined on by those whose position and experience enabled them to judge best of the requirements of the district, the poor-houses in my division were among the first opened, and there was no delay on the part of myself or my subordinates in providing famine works in the localities where they were required. At the time* of Mr. Ellis' visit to my division Rupees 12,293 had been expended upon the famine works sanctioned by Government, and Rupees 17,316 had been contributed by the people under my charge for the relief of their destitute infirm-poor, from which fund, supplemented by a portion of the donation of the Madras Committee, more than fifty poor-houses were being maintained.

* October 1866.

13. The number of poor-houses opened at the same time in the five talooks under the Sub-Collector's charge, which it is admitted, I believe, suffered far more severely than my division, was eleven; the amount which had been subscribed by the people for their support on the 31st of October was Rupees 3,713, and the total expenditure in the Sub-division on famine relief works, up to the same date, was Rupees 10,614. It is with the greatest reluctance that I place in juxtaposition facts which suggest a comparison, the good taste of which may seem to be so open to

question; but the laudation bestowed by Mr. Ellis on the Acting Sub-Collector's locomotion in July and August, following immediately as it does on his remarks regarding my inactivity, appears to render it necessary for me in self-defence to exhibit, for the information of Government, the practical measures which had actually been adopted by each officer for the relief of the distress before the Sanitary Commissioner's visit to my division.

14. I trust the gravity of the censure which Mr. Ellis' remarks regarding me imply, will excuse the length to which these observations have extended.

No. 446. From P. IYALOO NAIDU, Deputy Collector of Bellary, on sick leave, to the Under Secretary to Government, Madras, dated Madras, 21st February 1867.

1. I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the Government Proceedings, dated 10th ultimo, No. 73, calling upon me to submit any observations I may wish to offer on Mr. Ellis' remarks made regarding me in his report on the famine of Bellary.

2. The remarks alluded to are these: "In like manner, the Deputy Collector who was in charge of the four important talooks of Alur, Adoni, Gooty, and Tadpatry, appears to have remained almost entirely at his head-quarters, Gooty. One of the most heavily afflicted talook, Alur, was in this officer's charge, and I can only discover from the return furnished by himself that from March to August he passed three days in that talook, and one day in Adoni."

3. In reply I beg to submit that the Jamabandi settlement of the Gooty talook, the disposal of criminal cases, which were on the increase owing to the famine, the settlement of compensation for lands appropriated for the Railway purposes, and the carrying on of the Vernacular and English correspondence Police, Magistrate, Revenue, and Railway, did not permit me to travel more frequently and visit more places than I have done, as shewn in the accompanying statement, which is a copy of one furnished to the Honourable Ellis, C.B., on requisition.

4. Having joined the Bellary District on the 16th March last, I visited all the talooks of my division soon afterwards. The work connected with Railway having rendered my return to Gooty necessary, I remained a few days at that place, but being attacked with dysentery and fever, was not able to leave it before the 18th April for Tadpatry, where I had to settle compensation for lands taken for the Railway.

5. In the Tadpatry talook I spent a few days in visiting a few villages and disposing of some cases of compensation, but the death of Mr. Hathaway having increased my charge by the addition of the Raidroog talook to it, required my removal to Gooty, at which I arrived on the 27th of April.

6. Shortly afterwards I commenced the Jamabandi of that talook, and could complete it only in the latter part of June. The distress by famine increased crime, and swelled my criminal file. Talook prison was over-crowded, and I considered its speedy delivery more necessary in order to prevent mortality from epidemics. In May and June I disposed of 14 and 13 criminal cases respectively, in addition to the Jamabandi work, and in July no less than 43 cases, involving 77 prisoners, 46 prosecutors, and 129 witnesses, were decided.

7. I was obliged to hold my Office at Gooty the whole of July, and at Tadpatry during the month of August, in which criminal cases disposed of, in additional to the Railway work, were thirty-six in number.

8. The very heavy work that devolved upon me in the Bellary District obliged me to devote to its performance not less than ten hours a day, and has severely told upon my constitution, which was already rendered weak by my employment for twenty-four years on arduous duties in several districts.

9. I am sorry to add that ill-health prevented me from submitting this reply earlier.

Statement shewing the places visited by the General Deputy Collector of Bellary from 16th March up to August 1866.

Places halted and visited.	From what to what date.	Number of days.	Remarks.
Jackkulchervoo, Gooty talook ...	16th March 1866.		Visited several other villages on my way from one talook to another, and along the Railway under construction in the talooks of Gooty and Tadpatry.
Tadpatry	17th and 18th do. ,,		
Gooty	19th to 28th do. ,,	10	
Guntakul, Gooty talook	29th do. ,,		
Alur	30th and 31st do. ,,		
From Alur to Adoni	1st April ,,		
Adoni	2nd do. ,,		
Travelling to Gooty	3rd do. ,,		
Gooty	4th to 17th do. ,,	14	
Royelchervoo, Tadpatry talook ...	18th and 19th do. ,,		
Jootoor	20th do. ,,		
Tadpatry	21st to 26th do. ,,	6	
Gooty	27th do. ,,		
Gooty	28th to 30th do. ,,	3	
Gooty	1st to 31st May ,,	31	
Gooty	1st to 18th June ,,	18	
Pamecdee	19th do. ,,		
Gooty	20th to 28th do. ,,	9	
From Gooty to Bellary	29th do. ,,		
Bellary	30th do. ,,		
From Bellary to Gooty	1st and 2nd July ,,		
Gooty	3rd to 9th do. ,,		
Yadakee, Tadpatry talook	10th do. ,,	7	
Gooty	11th to 18th do. ,,	8	
Kristipad and Gooty	19th do. ,,		
Gooty	20th and 21st do. ,,	2	
Narsapoor and Gooty	22nd do. ,,		
Gooty	23rd to 31st do. ,,	9	
Gooty	1st to 6th August ,,	6	
Royelchervoo, Tadpatry talook ...	7th do. ,,		
Tadpatry	8th to 31st do. ,,	24	

(Signed) P. IYALOO NAIDU,
Deputy Collector.

GOOTY,
19th November 1866.

No. 447. From H. E. SULLIVAN, Esq., Acting Civil and Session Judge of Bellary, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort Saint George, dated Bellary, 23rd January 1867, No. 5.

1. I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of the Order of Government, dated 10th instant, No. 73, transmitting the Sanitary Commissioner's report on the distressed districts of Bellary and Kurnool, and on the arrangements made for the relief of the inhabitants by the local authorities, and availing myself of the permission therein conveyed, will as briefly as possible explain the course of action followed by me with reference to the distress which prevailed amongst the inhabitants of the Putticondah talook during the short period I was in charge of the Kurnool district. As I write chiefly from memory, I trust that any inaccuracies into which I may be betrayed as to dates, &c., may be excused.

2. Mr. Ellis seems to be of opinion that the local officers in the Bellary and Kurnool districts failed in their duty—

1*st*.—In not foreseeing and providing against the distress which resulted.

2*nd*.—In the tardy application of remedial measures when the crisis arrived.

3*rd*.—In failing to visit the localities where distress prevailed.

3. With regard to the first point, so far as the Putticondah talook in the Kurnool district is concerned—Because there had been an unfavourable harvest in 1865 the Sanitary Commissioner asserts that "there were early indications that "there would be severe suffering among the poorer ryots and labourers" in the ensuing year. I was perfectly aware of the partial failure of the crops in this talook in 1865, and I was also aware that in consequence of the representations of my predecessor, the Board of Revenue, departing from the established rule in such cases, had sanctioned a remission of the assessment on the dry crops to the extent of nearly 30,000 Rupees. Taking this indulgence into consideration, the known fact that in preceding years the ryots had realized large profits by the cultivation of cotton; that there was a demand for labour on the railway works, which were being carried on in the vicinity; that grain, though high in price, was plentiful in the adjoining talook of Koilgoontla, and that the interval between the two monsoons is always a dull season for agricultural labour, it did not appear to me when I took charge of the Kurnool district in April 1866, that at that time the condition of the ryots of Putticondah was of a nature to entitle them to any special relief. Whether such a measure might eventually be necessary, was dependent on the failure or otherwise of the south-west monsoon. In the meantime I was in constant communication with the Deputy Collector in charge of the talook, and we both agreed, up to the month of June, that though undoubtedly the ryots of Putticondah felt the pressure of the times more than the inhabitants of other parts of the district, they were not reduced to such straits as to render special relief necessary.

4. This brings me to the second point noticed by Mr. Ellis. The advent of the rains from the south-west was late. Early in June storms and partial showers indicated their approach; but if my recollection serves me right, the monsoon did not fairly set in till the latter end of the month or the beginning of July. Reports of abundance of rain reached me from all parts of the district except Putticondah, and I determined to visit the talook and judge for myself what was best to be done. I arrived there, I think, in the first week of August, why I did not get there earlier

will be explained below. I certainly was agreeably surprised at the first aspect of the country. All around my camp the young crops, which had been sown during the showers which had fallen in June, were looking well, and I was inclined to think that the state of affairs had been somewhat exaggerated. A little inquiry, however, shewed me that the resources of the poorer part of the population had now been strained to the utmost. The rains which were falling in other parts of the district only descended partially in Putticondah, the prospect of even the next harvest was precarious, and in the meantime many were hard put to it for the means of subsistence. Under these circumstances I lost no time in recommending the commencement of those works which are still being carried on in the talook.

5. With reference to the third point noticed by Mr. Ellis, I would observe that I took charge of the district in April. I had always been employed in the south of the Presidency, and then found myself in a country entirely new to me, with a good amount of arrears of work to bring up. Several administrative measures, some partially carried out and others proposed had to be reported on, which, together with the necessity of acquiring some insight into the past history and system of the district, prevented my leaving Kurnool during the months of April and May. In June I started on a tour through the Nundial and Sirwell talooks, intending to work round through Koilgoontlah and Putticondah, but having got as far as Sirwell various causes obliged me to return to Kurnool. I had no experienced Assistant to leave in charge* of the town, grain riots were anticipated, the new Municipal Act had to be inaugurated, and I was urged to return to headquarters for a time. The introduction of the new Act, restoring confidence to the grain dealers, the institution of a Relief Fund, and a somewhat tedious inquiry into a criminal charge preferred by the Municipality against an ex-Deputy Collector, prevented my leaving Kurnool till the end of July. I then proceeded direct to the Putticondah talook, and remained there for the best part of the ensuing month. During my stay there I proposed certain relief works, which were promptly sanctioned by Government. On receipt of this sanction I at once entered into arrangements with the Irrigation Company for a supply of tools, which were despatched as fast as carriage could be procured for them to the Deputy Collector in charge of the talook. It was my full intention to have returned myself to see that the funds were properly applied, but about a week after my return to Kurnool I received a telegram directing me to proceed to Bellary.

* My anxiety to visit the Putticondah talook, and my regret at being so long prevented from doing so, find expression I think in the letter I addressed to Government, asking for a passed Assistant to be permanently stationed at Kurnool.

6. Mr. Ellis says that the sufferings endured by the people of this talook were similar to those endured by the inhabitants of the Bellary district. There he says "It was not an unusual thing to find lying on the roads and streets the "dead bodies of famished wayfarers," who had left their homes and sought employment elsewhere. What the state of the Bellary district was I have no means of knowing, but I put it fairly to Mr. Ellis whether he has evidence to substantiate an assertion of this nature with reference to the Putticondah talook in the Kurnool district. When he visited it he describes this part of the district as "most promising." "All the crops," he says, "except the cholum, give a fair promise of a more

than average harvest." Now, how were these crops raised if the labouring population had emigrated and perished by the way-side for want of food, and the cattle for want of forage, and who was in the best position to ascertain the real state of the case? A gentleman who paid a passing visit to the place after the storm had blown over, or the Collector of the district who was encamped there when it was at its height. He (Mr. Ellis) must have had means of obtaining information after the event, which failed me at the time it occurred, for during the period I was at Peapully, and in the course of my rides about the country, the state of things described by him did *not* come under my notice. Prices were very high, and there was an outbreak of cholera, but the Putticondah talook did not differ from the rest of the district in either of these respects. Had the people been actually dying for want of food, as Mr. Ellis' report would lead one to believe, should I not have been daily besieged by clamorous multitudes? or should I not in the course of my rides have seen some indications of it? It would have been very easy for me to have depicted the condition of the people in colours as dark as those used by the Sanitary Commissioner, and, under ordinary circumstances, I should probably have applied for relief earlier than I did, but I had always before me the fact that famine and disease in their worst aspects were devastating other parts of India, and feeling that though the distress of the people under my charge was undoubtedly great, the necessities of others were greater, I postponed diverting the channels of relief in our direction as long as possible. Whether I delayed too long is a matter of opinion; but at the present moment I think my judgment was correct. When in the Putticondah talook I recommended, at the suggestion of Mr. Forbes, the Civil Judge, that employment should be found for the able-bodied poor in the vicinity of Kurnool, by an advance of money being made to the Irrigation Company. This proposition the Government were unable to entertain; but signified their willingness to grant a sum to be expended on relief works. I returned just at this time to Kurnool, and finding that the rate of wages for daily labour was high, and that the people resolutely stood out for it, and that the aged and infirm from all parts of the district were fed at the Kurnool relief-house, I declined the proffered grant, feeling convinced that when the labouring population refused to follow their ordinary avocations, except on their own terms, it was useless to offer them a mere subsistence wage.

7. I give Mr. Ellis every credit for having simply recorded his honest convictions; but at the same time I think he has jumped a little too hastily at his conclusions, and I cannot but regret that when he was here or after he had visited Kurnool and Putticondah he did not think it necessary to ask me a single question regarding the state of the district during the time I presided over it. I am not aware whence he derived his information, but I am in a position to shew that some of his statements are incorrect, and others calculated to mislead. For instance, he says that "cholera prevailed during June, July, August, and September." The disease was most virulent at Peapully where I was, but it disappeared entirely from the talook early in August, and towards the end of the month the place was so healthy that my family were able to join me in camp. Again, it is quite true that cholum was at one time selling at 4½ and 5 measures the rupee in the Putticondah talook, but it sold at the same rate in other parts of the district, and at

Kurnool itself, so that the people there were not worse off than their neighbours. But I have already written at greater length than I intended. In conclusion, I will only say that though prices were high throughout the district, and there was in consequence a good deal of distress, there was, strictly speaking, no famine; for the markets were well-supplied, and the stock of grain in the district was sufficient to admit of large quantities being exported to Bellary. Under these circumstances, I submit that it would have been most injudicious if I had sought to divert the stream of public benevolence from the localities where it was most needed earlier than I did. I should thereby have perhaps cheaply earned a reputation for energy and humanity, and should not, as now, have been branded as indifferent to the sufferings of the people under my charge. Whether I really was so or not I now leave to Government to determine. I may have committed an error of judgment, but to a charge of indifference or neglect I plead not guilty.

8. A re-perusal of Mr. Ellis' report induces me to add one more remark. He says "In consultation with the Collector, Mr. Pochin, and the Superintending Engineer, Major Moberly, relief works calculated to cost Rupees 24,120 have been "*projected and commenced* in the Putticondah talook," an enumeration of the works then follows. Any one reading the report would imagine that these works originated with the Sanitary Commissioner. I respectfully beg leave to refer the Government to my reports on the subject written in August last, where they will find that the identical works, with the exception of repairs to tanks and channels, were proposed by me, and a sum allotted by Government for their commencement just before I was removed from the district.

No. 448. Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 12th March 1867, No. 1,517.

Read Government Order, dated 7th January 1867, forwarding, for Board's remarks, special report from Sanitary Commissioner, on distressed districts of Bellary and Kurnool.

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1. With the foregoing Order the Board have been furnished by Government with a copy of the Honourable Mr. Ellis's second report of his special mission to Bellary, with a view to their submitting "any observations they wish to offer" on it.

2. The Board presume that it is not the intention of Government that they should review Mr. Ellis's statements *seriatim*. They will, therefore, limit their remarks to the really important points discussed by him, so as to enable Government to judge how far their measures were adequate to meet the actual state of affairs at each stage. They observe that the local officers have been desired to submit their observations direct to Government.

3. Mr. Ellis's information on the state of the district prior to his arrival is derived from inquiries made during a month's residence and travelling in October last. There can be no doubt, as he remarks, that "it is always difficult in India to obtain accurate information," and in his case the difficulty must have been enhanced by the circumstance that the object of his mission, viz., to afford relief to the people, was generally known, and must naturally have operated as an incentive to them to exaggerate their past and present distress.

4. Mr. Ellis is apparently of opinion that, with the information which was before them in November 1865, the Board shewed a want of foresight in not then considering that the state of the Bellary District was "critical." He quotes the tenor of their orders to the Collector in December of that year, as proving that they did not appreciate the danger of a scarcity, and he submits that, with the knowledge which they possessed of the peculiar circumstances of the district, they ought then to have made every preparation to meet the impending crisis. He then proceeds to summarize the reports which were addressed to the Board on the state of the district between the early part of April and the end of July, and he implies that a want of promptness was even then exhibited in directing the adoption of the remedial measures which the facts stated in the several reports in his opinion rendered undoubtedly necessary.

5. In support of his belief that the tardy application of relief was in part owing to the want of a proper appreciation by the Board of the danger of the crisis, Mr. Ellis adduces arguments to shew that the state of the Bellary District previous to the year 1866 was such as to justify grave apprehensions on the part of the controlling authority, but the description which Mr. Ellis gives of the "condition of the Bellary district previous to 1866" is in several respects erroneous, and is generally overcoloured. Mr. Ellis declares that its state towards the end of 1865, from various causes, was such as made "even a partial failure of the ordinary rains a matter for serious anxiety." The chief of these causes according to Mr. Ellis, was the substitution of cotton for cereals "over a large extent of country," but Mr. Ellis is altogether wrong in this statement, for so far from there having been any reduction in the extent of land devoted to cereals, there was an actual net increase of 84,000 acres, exclusive of Inam lands, in the three years preceding 1865-66. Thus the great increase of *cotton* was not at the expense of grain cultivation, and if, as Mr. Ellis seems to hold, the safety of a district from famine depends not on its possessing ample means of buying food, but on its actually growing what it consumes, then, even from that point of view, Bellary was not in the imminent danger he represents; and this is in fact admitted by Mr. Ellis, who in another part of his report says, "I believe that there "was throughout the year a sufficient store of grain within the district itself for "the maintenance of the population."

Fusly.	Total cultivation of Government land, *exclusive* of Inams.	Total cotton cultivation, *inclusive* of Inams.	Area devoted to ordinary grain cultivation.
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
1271 ...	22,76,785	2,94,287	19 82,498
1272 ..	23,96,725	3,89,527	20,07,193
1273 ...	24,18,365	4,66,013	19,52,352
1274 ...	24,88,665	4,16,741	20,71,924

6. The Board have noticed in their former Proceedings the remarks made by Mr. Ellis in his first report, and now repeated in his second, on their reply to Mr. Hathaway's application, dated the 16th November 1865, for leave to remit a portion of the assessment. Mr. Hathaway stated that, owing to the failure of the rains, 6,24,000 acres, (or 25 per cent. of the whole area occupied for cultivation,) assessed at Rupees 5,54,000, had been left waste, and he requested permission to remit the assessment on all lands left waste, and on all withered crops both on irrigated and unirrigated land. Before shewing how they dealt with this application, the Board would point out that Mr. Hathaway's proposals applied only to one class of the population, viz., the landholder class, (numbering 125,000 in a population of 1¼ millions). They did not extend to the general population, as might be inferred from Mr. Ellis's remarks, nor did Mr. Hathaway's anxiety for an early reply indicate either that there was a want of grain in the district, or any fear of an impending famine. He was urgent on that point from his wish to prepare the necessary accounts in time for the Settlement. The Board referred Mr. Hathaway to the standing orders, which enabled him, without reference to them, to remit the Government demand on irrigated land left waste for want of water, and on irrigated land on which the crops had withered, and they specially authorized him to grant remissions at his discretion for unirrigated land left waste. Under this sanction Mr. Hathaway was at liberty to remit the entire sum of Rupees 5,54,000 abovementioned. But as regards withered crops on unirrigated land they reserved their decision, until he should furnish them with the further information which he had stated he was engaged in collecting. On making the settlement of the district some months after the date of this report of Mr. Hathaway's it was found by the District Officers that, instead of 6,24,000 acres as supposed by Mr. Hathaway, only 2,86,879 acres had been actually left waste, and, eventually, it was found necessary to remit only Rupees 1,60,956 of the assessment.

7. It will thus be seen that the Board immediately granted a large portion of the relief considered necessary by the local officers, and ultimately allowed all that was required. In pointing out to the Collector that care was necessary in dealing with applications for remission, the Board were guided by the *then* circumstances of the district. The enormous prices which the ryots had been realizing for their cotton, and indeed for all produce, had added greatly to their resources, and the taxation of the district had been considerably lightened by the abolition of the Moturpha and the Income taxes, by a reduction in the rates of the assessment, by the abolition of the special tax on wells, and by the enfranchisement of Inams. The Board have already estimated the profits from cotton alone at a million and three-quarters sterling, and hence they submit that in December 1865, when there was no reason to anticipate failure of rain in July 1866, there was nothing inappropriate in their pressing these circumstances on the Collector's attention.

Vide Board's Proceedings, 12th December 1866, No. 8,819, paragraph 11.

8. Mr. Ellis also calls attention to the "isolation" of the Bellary District as a special reason why the Board should have been prepared to take alarm at any signs of an approaching scarcity; but as he himself declares that there was an ample store of food in it throughout the year, this is evidently an unimportant characteristic even if it were strictly correct.

9. As to those "preparations" which Mr. Ellis thinks the Board should have made immediately on their becoming aware of the failure of the north-east monsoon in the latter part of 1865, (by calling for frequent and accurate reports,) the answer is obvious. The Board are as a rule furnished with accurate reports of the state of the country and the progress of the season. The fact that in February 1866, they considered it advisable, under special circumstances, to call for special Periodical Reports, does not prove the contrary. The Board wish that Mr. Ellis

had been more explicit in stating what "preparations" were needed, and what "specific measures" he would have had the Board adopt so early as November 1865. He has himself admitted that there was enough grain in the district so that the importation of food was unnecessary. Water, the great want of the district, could not be supplied, and the Government could not be reasonably expected to set relief works on foot merely in anticipation of an emergency that might never occur; and on the other hand, little previous preparation is needed when such works are really called for by an existing state of distress, for on such occasions the kind of work that requires skilled labour, and previously prepared estimates, is not suitable.

10. Though the season during the latter months of 1865 had been very unfavourable, the Board could not foresee, at the beginning of 1866, that in almost every district of the Presidency the rains which usually fall in May, June, and July, would fail in that year, nor, if they had deemed such an event probable, could they have done more in the early part of the year than watch the progress of events. They had this object in view when they called for fortnightly reports from the end of February. They had previously reported to Government that the Season Reports from almost every district were "most disastrous." The Government in replying, desired the Board to instruct the Collectors of the Districts referred to, to keep the Board apprized of the state of the season, and to suggest such remedial measures as they might consider necessary. The Board then issued their orders requiring fortnightly reports.

11. The Government will doubtless thus perceive that Mr. Ellis attaches too much importance to the failure of the seasonable rain in the latter months of 1865, and not enough importance to the failure of the rains in May, June, and July 1866. In an ordinary year the greater portion of the land is brought into cultivation in June, July, and August, and is therefore dependent in a great measure upon the south-west monsoon. Consequently until the Board were aware of the character of this monsoon in 1866, any special action on their part would have been premature; and if by the special remedial measures, to which Mr. Ellis refers as necessary in the early part of 1866, he means the establishment of relief-houses and the commencement of famine works, they submit that such measures would have been at that period most mischievous, as tending to pauperize the people, and to draw away the available labour from those agricultural operations which, with a favourable south-west monsoon, would have been general throughout the district in the months of June and July.

12. The Board will now proceed to consider how far Mr. Ellis is justified in ascribing to them a want of promptness in acting upon the reports received in April, May, and June 1866. The first special report from Bellary (the Report for the first fortnight in March) was not submitted by Mr. Hathaway, the then Collector, till the 7th April, when, as remarked by Mr. Ellis, Mr. Hathaway suggested the cleaning out and deepening old wells in those villages where there was most distress, and vaguely suggested that the people should be employed in making a few district roads. If these suggestions were vague, the fact that nothing more was proposed by Mr. Hathaway proved that at the beginning of April he did not see that more in the way of Government help was needed. The Board immediately replied to Mr.

Hathaway, and desired him to submit his proposals in a definite shape without delay.

13. The next report was forwarded by the Acting Head Assistant in charge* on the 19th April. This was for the second fortnight in March, and was the one to which Mr. Ellis refers as that in which it was distinctly stated that the distress was greater than in 1854. The words used were, "the distress in the district at present is worse than it ever was." The Board did not think it necessary to do more in respect to this report, than submit it for the information of Government, as only a few days previously (the 13th) they had desired the Collector to submit his proposed measures of relief in a more specific form.

* Mr. Hathaway having died suddenly on the 17th idem.

14. On the 23rd April the Acting Sub-Collector in charge forwarded the report for the first fortnight in April, and at the same time promised to send the definite proposals for which the Board had called from Mr. Hathaway. In this report it was stated that much distress was felt both by men and cattle from want of water, and from the scarcity of provisions and fodder. On the 10th May Mr. Foster reported that the Engineer's funds had been all allotted, and that no part of them was available, for cleaning out wells, or making the district roads proposed by the late Mr. Hathaway, but as the distress had been somewhat lessened by the late rain, he concurred with the Superintending Engineer that no further aid was then needed. The Board expressed surprise that Mr. Foster had not specially reported the fall of rain to which he referred, but this report was of course a cause of hope that the then opening season would be a fair one.

15. The same Officer forwarded on the 22nd May the report for the first fortnight in May. Slight rain had fallen in that fortnight. "Prices had not risen. "The distress arising from want of water and scarcity of provisions still continued." The Board may remark in passing that in the Administration Report for 1865-66, (dated 16th May 1866,) Mr. Foster has explained why prices had continued up to that date much the same as in the preceding official year. The reason assigned was that imports from Mysore and the Nizam's territories had served to keep prices down.

16. The two reports for June were forwarded by Mr. Wedderburn, the late Mr. Hathaway's successor, the first on the 23rd June, and the 2nd on the 7th July. All these reports were likewise submitted to Government as soon as received.

17. On the 18th July the Government ordered the formation of Local Relief Societies, and promised Government aid to the extent of one-third the amount raised by private exertions. But previous to this, Mr. Wedderburn had stated (in a letter to the Acting Secretary to Government, dated 6th July 1866, No. 52,) that he had put public works in progress out of funds in hand, and would address Government "when any further measures of relief were required." In the meanwhile attention was being paid "to the early expenditure of the Budget grants, "which in some measure tends to the present relief of the people."

18. The real crisis had now arrived in consequence of the failure of the south-west monsoon over a large extent of country. Prices which had been high throughout the early part of the year suddenly rose to an alarming extent, and the agricul-

tural classes were left without work at the usual season for work. Steps were *then* taken, both by the public in Madras, and by the Government, to deal with the emergency. On the 22nd of July a public meeting was convened at Madras, to raise subscriptions for the distressed districts ; and on the 25th idem the Government recorded their views on the subject. In the orders passed on that date the Government, after adverting to the very unfavourable nature of the reports which had been received from several of the districts, and to the fact that the south-west monsoon had not reached the districts in the south-eastern portions of the Presidency, engaged to supplement private subscriptions wherever raised by granting equivalent sums to the amount subscribed, in order to relieve those of the sufferers who were unable to work, and further desired that in certain districts named, the Collectors should at once commence relief works for the employment of those who were capable of earning something by their labour. From this time the duty of providing relief for the general population devolved on the Relief Committee, of which Mr. Ellis was himself President.

19. In the foregoing remarks the Board have explained the course of their Proceedings up to the date on which a system of relief works and relief-houses was organized, independently of them. The Board from the first were in the receipt of monthly Season Reports, and from the first they anxiously watched the progress of the threatening distress. They desired the Collector to send in specific reports of what he required when he vaguely generalized; they laid all the reports as received before Government; and when the early rains, which at one time promised well and gave encouragement and hope, again disappointed expectations, full powers were given to the Collector to act as occasion might require. It is true that the order conferring these powers was the act of the Government, but before it was passed the First Member of the Board had been in personal communication on the subject with the Chief Secretary to Government, and the Board were well aware that full authority and ample means of relief would be given to the Collectors as soon as the circumstances of the case really required it. They, therefore, fail to see that more could have been expected from the Board. Mr. Ellis refers to their order of the 8th May, calling upon the Acting Collector (the Acting Sub-Collector in charge) "to report whether special measures of relief seemed now called for," as having been "*at last*" issued; but the idea which this expression conveys, viz., that the Board were only then becoming alive to the danger threatening the district, is certainly a wrong one. This order was merely a repetition of the order issued in February, and its object was to apprise Mr. Foster on his assuming charge of the district that the local officers had been already called upon to bring forward any remedial measures they might consider necessary. In the same way the like order was repeated when Mr. Wedderburn subsequently joined the district and forwarded the second report for June. In fact, the three orders, viz., that issued on the 2nd February, and the two subsequent ones, were practically one order pointing out to each Officer, as he took charge of the district, that it rested with him to suggest special and remedial measures whenever they became really necessary. It should also be remarked that shortly before Mr. Wedderburn joined, the Board had been informed that no further aid beyond the Public Works allotments of 1866-67 was needed.

20. The Board, after a careful review of the question, are quite unable to concur with Mr. Ellis in thinking that, at the beginning of the year 1866, or in any of the earlier months antecedent to June and July, the people were in such distress that Government ought to have come to their help with relief works and relief-houses. They have already stated that, in their opinion, such action at that period would have been premature and mischievous. No doubt there was considerable distress in these months, but not of such magnitude that private charity could not cope with it, and had there been an ordinary season (from after May) in 1866, the people would not, as the Board believe, have needed any help from Government. The First Member of the Board was in constant private communication with residents of the Bellary District during the months of April, May, and June, and from the tenor of the letters received by him, the Board are quite satisfied that all Mr. Ellis's observations on the condition of the district during these months are the result simply of incorrect information.

21. Mr. Ellis discredits the returns of mortality submitted by the local officers, and considers that the loss of life was very great. The Collector will doubtless touch upon this important question in his reply to the Order of Government, and the Board will only remark that they deem it highly improbable that the District Officers, while carefully reporting deaths of cattle, should have omitted to notice the far more serious matter of the loss of human life.

22. As has been already pointed out, everything tended towards Mr. Ellis's receiving an exaggerated picture of the distress which had been prevalent in the district before his arrival, and a reference to figures and to existing facts renders it quite incredible that the state of things he depicts could have had any real existence. When it can be deduced from the price lists of the Bellary district, that in March, April, and May 1866, the average price of cholum, the staple food of the population, was not ten per cent. in excess of what it had been in some of the previous years, and that the price of second sort rice was considerably below what it had been in the corresponding months of 1864, it is impossible to believe that there was then famine in the land. Nor is it consistent with probability that, (as reported in the Board's Proceedings, dated 27th February 1867, No. 1,207,) the cultivation of the district in the month of January last should be within two per cent. of what it ever was, and that the Collector of the district, after a three months' tour in various parts of it, should have deliberately stated his opinion that there was no occasion to offer any specially favourable terms to the landholders of Bellary, if that province had suffered the serious losses of population and agricultural stock which Mr. Ellis deplores. The Board fully believe that no special measures of relief were needed until the failure of the south-west monsoon was placed beyond doubt. This was not the case until the end of June, and in July those special measures were undertaken. As noticed

Average price per garce of Cholum and second sort rice in the Bellary District.

	Cholum.			Second sort rice.		
	March.	April.	May.	March.	April.	May.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1864.. ...	420	405	389	620	630	601
1865.. ...	331	320	283	551	522	496
1866... ...	451	413	432	583	538	551

Cultivation up to January.	Acres.
1865	23,12,899
1866	20,74,469
1867	20,52,718

in paragraph 18 above, the direction of these measures was delegated to the General Relief Committee, and their execution devolved upon the local officers.

23. A considerable portion of the foregoing observations apply with equal force to Mr. Ellis's remarks upon the Kurnool District. The Collector's application for permission to grant certain extraordinary remissions of assessment in consequence of the failure of the season in 1865, received the Board's immediate sanction, and until the failure of the south-west monsoon was known, any special measures of assistance would have been premature, the more so as no applications were made by the District Officers on the subject.

24. For the relief of such distress as still exists, no further measures seem requisite. The Collectors of both districts have, the Board believe, ample funds for keeping open the relief-houses and continuing the public works in progress so long as they may be needed, for most, if not all, the projected works entered by Mr. Ellis, in the appendix to his Report were, the Board believe, sanctioned by Government before the receipt of the report. The Collector of Bellary has also been authorized to suspend the collection of the revenue at his discretion beyond the current month. The Government have concurred with the Board in rejecting Mr. Ellis's proposal to make advances to the ryots of the Bellary District on a large scale, and the circumstances of that district have so materially improved, the present season being one of great promise, that such aid is no longer necessary, as has been already reported to Government in the Board's Proceedings, dated 27th February 1867, No. 1,207.

25. As to measures for preventing the recurrence of famine, the Board have addressed the Government in the Proceedings just quoted. They will now only again urge the importance of speedily and vigorously prosecuting the Toombudra Irrigation scheme and completing the Railway, as the most important and certain means of attaining this end.

No. 449. Minute by the Honourable H. D. PHILLIPS.
(Here enter —— June 1867.)

No. 450. Minute by the Honourable Sir T. PYCROFT, K. C. S. I.,
(Here enter 8th May 1867.)

No. 451. Minute by His Excellency the Governor.
(Here enter 6th June 1867.)

No. 452. Do. do.
(Here enter 29th June 1867.)

No. 453. ORDER THEREON, 29th June 1867, No. 1,455A.

Miscellaneous.

1. In G. O. dated 25th September 1866, No. 1,510, the Government directed the Sanitary Commissioner (Honourable Mr. Ellis) to "proceed to Bellary and Kurnool, visit the most distressed parts of both "districts, and in concert with the local authorities initiate fresh and improve "existing arrangements for the relief of distress, the employment of the able-bodied "poor, and the preservation of the public health." It was desired that his final report should "embrace the prospects of the season, and the measures likely to be

"required until the next harvest affords permanent relief, and beyond that period "should the approaching harvest fail in producing the necessary provision for the "sustenance of the people."

2. On 24th December 1866, Mr. Ellis submitted his final report, in which he animadverted on the measures and conduct of the Board of Revenue and local Officers, whose replies to his observations are recorded in these Proceedings.

3. Mr. Ellis, judging after the event, expressed his opinion that there had been a want of foresight and appreciation of the critical position of the district, on the part of the Board, at the end of 1865 and in the earlier months of 1866, and inactivity and an absence of energy on that of the local officers, except Mr. Foster, in dealing with the matter when the crisis arrived.

4. It is unnecessary for the Government to enter here into the details of the case. It will suffice to record their opinion that the Board and the Officers concerned have successfully cleared themselves from the imputation of blame thus raised against them, and that the Government find no reason to endorse the opinion expressed by Mr. Ellis.

5. Neither, happily, is it now necessary for the Government to consider how far the continuance of measures of relief is requisite. The present circumstances of the district of Bellary are very favourable, and it has rapidly recovered from the distressed state to which it was reduced in the months of June, July, August, and September 1866. The expenditure of some four and a half lacs of Rupees on relief works sanctioned by Government, in addition to the valuable aid afforded by liberal private subscriptions, doubtless materially contributed to this result, but the fact evidences that the resources of the district cannot have been seriously impaired, and that the loss of men and cattle must have been less than was supposed.

6. The Collector writing in May reports that "prices are falling and have "reached the level of prosperous years," except in regard to rice, which does not in Bellary constitute the staple food of the people, and that "the cultivation has exceeded that of the year 1865-66 up to April "last by acres 6,662." The people have evinced no inclination to avail themselves of advances from Government beyond what have been already sanctioned to the extent of 1,20,000 Rupees.

(See Collector's Report of 26th March 1867, in Board's Proceedings dated 29th April 1867, No. 2,696.)

7. While recording the above remarks, the Government desire to express their sense of the value of Mr. Ellis's services in organizing measures of relief in the districts he visited, and urging attention to remedial measures to guard against such calamitous seasons in time to come.

8. The great project, however, to which all look as of the first importance for Bellary, if practicable, viz., what is known as the "Upper and Lower Bellary project," forms part of the Irrigation Company's scheme for utilising the waters of the Toongabudra river, and its practicability has yet to be established, while its execution must in any case occupy a very extended period of time.

9. The efforts of Government are meanwhile being directed to the improvement of the minor sources of irrigation in the district, and special assistance has been given to enable the Superintending Engineer to examine thoroughly and throw into shape speedily all promising projects for attaining this most important

object. The Government will be prepared to make the most liberal provision of funds in their power for the execution of the approved works when the plans are matured.

10. The Government also desire to place on record their high appreciation of the munificent benevolence of Buddha Rungah Reddy, of the village of Oilwada, Koilgoontla talook, which is brought to special notice by Mr. Ellis, and they desire that the Collector of Kurnool will convey to that gentleman the expression of the admiration of Government at his large-hearted liberality, which must have mitigated the sufferings of thousands, and probably saved many lives.

(True Extract.)

Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
,, the Department Public Works.
,, the Honourable R. S. Ellis, C. B.
,, the Collector of Kurnool.
,, the Sanitary Commissioner.
,, A. Wedderburn, Esq.
,, W. S. Foster, Esq.
,, W. S. Lilly, Esq.
,, H. E. Sullivan, Esq.
,, P. Iyaloo Nayudu.
,, the Collector of Bellary.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

Lieut. Col. Hon. Sir Lintorn Arabin Simmons K.C.B. Inspector General of Fortifications

Sir,

I have the honor to transmit herewith for your information a Report from Captain Mundy R.E. Commanding Royal Engineer at Bellary, dated the 29th ultimo, on the Sanitary condition of that Station.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient
humble Servant
J. Fergusson
Secretary to the Govt. of India

Simla
The 11th July 1867

No. 2123.

Forwarding orders on the re
Sanitary condition of the Cols. [illegible]
Bellary, [illegible] Station.

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4340-3/1

Lieut

2123

No. 2123

Commd to the
Supy Engineer of
the 3 Div

Fort St George
15th July 1867

Dispd 16/7/67