Public Works (1897) Department.

G.O., No. 19445

DATED 17 July 1897.

[Despatch Abstract.]

Relief Works, Rs: Revenue Debt. Directing the adoption in this Residency of the intermediate System of — introduced with success in the N.W. Provinces, Comt. to S.E.S.

[P. W. 25. 5,000—180—21—05.]

Indexed.

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Public works (1897) department

Current No: 6520

Government {1897} of Madras.

REVENUE.

Recd. 5. 7. } 1897.
Regd. 5. 7. }

Enclosures —

Spare copies 16.

G.O., No. 430, 3rd June 1897.

No 1944 W dt 17.7.97

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Communicated to Superintending Engineer for information.

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Superintending Engineer
Ch. Engr. for I.I. & 17/7

Intermediate system of relief works. Engr Mon

Directing the adoption in this Presidency of the — introduced with success in the North-Western Provinces.

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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

Read—again the following G.O., Mis. No. 1245, Revenue, dated 5th March 1897:—

Read—the following letter from T. W. HOLDERNESS, Esq., I.C.S., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, (Department of Revenue and Agriculture—Famine), to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, dated Calcutta, the 13th February 1897, Cir. No. 16—104-I.-F.:—

I am directed to forward, for information and guidance, copy of a memorandum in which are succinctly stated the leading principles regulating expenditure upon public works in time of famine.

2. Paragraphs 5 to 8 of the memorandum should be regarded as supplementing the provisions contained in the Provincial Famine Codes with regard to the expansion of "ordinary" public works and the opening of "test" works when distress is imminent or its extent and acuteness have to be ascertained. It is not proposed at present that the Famine Codes should be amended with a view to bring them into formal agreement (where this is necessary) with the memorandum as to the manner in which such works should be conducted. The statement of principles contained in the memorandum leaves in this respect a large discretion to Local Governments and Administrations, and any amendment of the Codes which may be required in this and other points will be more usefully undertaken when the experience of the present year can be brought under review.

Letter from North-Western Provinces and Oudh Government, No. 417-S., dated 14th December 1896.
Letter from North-Western Provinces and Oudh Government, No. 500, dated 21st December 1896, and enclosure.
Letter to North-Western Provinces and Oudh Government, No. 255-F., dated 16th January 1897.

3. As paragraph 6 of the memorandum refers to the "intermediate or gang piece work" system which has been experimentally adopted in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, the papers marked on the margin, which explain this system, are also forwarded for reference.

Enclosures.

Principles for regulating expenditure upon Public Works in time of famine.

1. In districts where no distress exists, it is the general rule that expenditure upon public works, even within the limits of budget provision, should be contracted with a view to setting funds and establishments at liberty for employment when they are more needed. To this rule, however, exceptions may be made—

(1) where the works could not be contracted without risk of creating distress by reducing the local employment of labour;

(2) where the contraction of the works would result in returning to districts, where distress exists or is threatened, the labourers employed on them.

2. Where distress exists, it will be necessary to provide additional employment upon works. *All* such additional expenditure must be subjected to the relief conditions described below.

3. The essence of relief conditions is, that the remuneration for work done must be so fixed as not to attract labour for which there is existing employment elsewhere. This condition must invariably be enforced. The method of enforcing it will vary with the degree of distress which prevails.

4. Where acute distress or famine prevails, so that the general population is affected, and it is necessary to provide employment not only for able-bodied labourers, but also for a large proportion of inefficient labour, task work must be rigorously enforced, nobody being allowed either to do more than the fixed task or to earn more than the fixed maximum wage. The former condition is necessary in order to economise the supply of useful work upon which labour can be employed; the second, in order to limit expenditure, since, when the dependants of a skilled labourer are paid separately, it is not necessary for purposes of relief to pay him more than a subsistence wage.

5. But when distress, though present, is not so acute as to drive on to the works a large proportion of inefficient labour or of persons unaccustomed to work, payment by results is more economical than task work; for so long as an able-bodied labourer can earn enough, under the conditions laid down in paragraph 3, to enable those of his family who do not work to live at home, he will support himself and them more cheaply than Government can do.

6. Payment by results may take the form, either of an expansion of ordinary works under the usual system of petty-contracts, or of the intermediate or gang-piece-work system of the North-Westren Provinces. The former is sufficient when distress is slight; but as the scarcity becomes more acute and threatens to deepen into famine, the latter should be substituted, since it secures proper remuneration to the individual workman, which, under the urgency of distress, the former fails to do.

7. If the rates offered are regulated by the principle laid down in paragraph 3, gang-piece-work will effectively gauge the intencity of distress, since it will afford to inefficient labour only a bare subsistence.

8. As soon, therefore, as the demand by inefficient labour for employment on these terms begins to be appreciable, additional test-works on the task-work system may usefully be opened; though at a sufficient distance from the piece-work works to ensure that if the man works at piece-work and his women and childen at task work, they shall at least be compelled to live apart. These will provide for the women and children during the intermediate stage, while distress is *becoming* acute. As soon, however, as the demand by inefficient labour for employment upon either system becomes considerable, acute distress is present, and payment by results must then be discontinued and task work substituted for it.

9. It is conceivable that in any district there may be cases in which the rapid and efficient prosecution of a particular public work is of such importance as to justify a relaxation of the above conditions. Such instances will be rare, the works will be of magnitude, and each case will be decided upon its individual merits.

10. It is for Local Governments to judge of the local conditions in each case, and to justify to themselves or to the Government of India, as the case may be, the action to be taken under the principles thus laid down.

From the Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, to the Secretary to the Government of India, dated Allahabad, the 14th December 1896, No. 417-S:—

In his demi-official letter of the 29th November Mr. H. F. Evans enclosed, for the information of the Government of India, copy of a letter addressed to officers, asking them to report what effect had been produced by the late rainfall on the prospects of their respective districts. The Government is still awaiting these replies, but provisional information has been received from Commissioners of Divisions, from which it appears that they are of the opinion that prospects have been so far improved as to justify the expectation that with fair winter rains the numbers who may come on relief will be less by about 25 per cent. than the number of 100,000,000 units for one day, stated in the third column of statement B, paragraph 10 of this office letter No. 196, dated the 23rd November 1896. In this opinion the Lieutenant-Governor generally concurs, and he now sees reason to hope that it will not be necessary in several districts to undertake relief operations to the extent which seemed probable before the late rain had fallen. In view of the altered condition of things, and with the object of avoiding unnecessary expenditure, the Lieutenant-Governor has reconsidered the programme of public works referred to in paragraphs 19 and 20 of the letter mentioned above, and has consulted Commissioners of Divisions on the following point: whether it would be desirable to pursue the policy indicated in paragraph 20 of the letter noticed above, and postpone village works till the hot weather had set in; or whether, in view of the probability that in certain districts the necessity for extensive relief would disappear when the *rabi* had been harvested, it would be better to meet the demand for employment which may arise between now and the harvesting of the *rabi* by a more general use of village works now than had been intended. The Commissioners' official replies are awaited, but from the communications unofficially made by them to His Honour, it seems certain that they will ask for permission to begin some village works at once, and also to maintain a backbone of some large works managed by the Department of Public Works in the various districts. These works are now in operation in many districts.

2. The question also presented itself whether, in districts in which prospects have improved, it was desirable, where village works were not found to afford suitable employment, to open relief works under strict Code rules. Under the Code three classes of work are recognized :—

(1) Ordinary works (article 60) debitable to Provincial or District funds.

(2) Test-relief works debitable to famine relief, and carried out in the general spirit of the Famine Code Rules.

(3) Regular relief works under Chapter VI of the Code, on which the "gang" and "task" work system is rigidly enforced.

In almost all district funds, either provincial or district, for ordinary works have been exhausted; while, at the same time, test works have shown the necessity for some employment, though not on the expensive or extensive system prescribed by the Famine Code. The problem, then, was to provide such employment as would be suitable for districts under observation, but in which distress had not fully declared itself. Such employment is offered, for example, in the Cawnpore district by the Lower Ganges Extension canal project, and in the Azamgarh district, to some extent, by the extensions of the Bengal and North-Western Railway.

3. These facts have suggested to His Honour the adoption in such localities of a modified system of famine-relief works which would be intermediate between works carried out on the ordinary and on the Famine Code systems. Such works, while conducted on principles involving much less expenditure than would be incurred were the system of the Code followed, will serve as test works on a large scale. Their existence, with the establishment thereon, will also enable the Government to at once convert them into Famine Code works without a day's delay should famine supervene. It need hardly be observed that no advantage will be taken of this arrangement to carry through works in the interest of district or provincial funds; and that no work will be begun which is not absolutely essential with the object of preventing suffering from want of food.

I am to add that this plan has been forced on His Honour for two reasons: first economy, and second, the extreme difficulty of obtaining the large number of subordinate officers necessary for Famine Code works.

4. I am to forward a copy of the instructions* which have issued on the subject, which will explain more fully the action which the Lieutenant-Governor has decided to take.

* G.O., No. 357-S.,—73, dated 5th December 1896.

From T. W. HOLDERNESS, Esq., Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, to all Commissioners of Divisions, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, dated Allahabad, the 5th December 1896, No. 357-S.—73.

I am directed to address you on the subject of the employment of the Public Works Department in managing and carrying out famine-relief works. At the present time distress is officially recognised as existing in the districts marginally noted, and the Public Works Department has already commenced relief operations in these districts. Any relief work not being of the article 65 (*a*) class opened in the marginally-noted districts for the future must be treated as relief works under the Code and managed from the outset by the Public Works Department.

Allahabad.
Hamirpur.
Banda.
Jhansi
Jalan.
Jaunpur.
Rae Bareli.
Sitapur.
Hardoi.

2. Article 60 of the Famine Code provides that where distress is commencing, ordinary works may be expanded as a temporary measure to meet the demand for employment. In these districts, that is, districts not officially declared to be distressed, it is open to you to commence test works in order to gauge the necessity for relief works. But experience has shown that test relief works managed by non-professional agency do not always gauge the existence of distress so well as works conducted under the strict safeguards and tests which are necessarily applied by the Public Works Department. I am therefore to request that when the necessity contemplated by article 60 arises, you will ordinarily employ the Public Works Department in controlling test works, or, when ordinary works are exhausted, in affording the employment necessary on a suitable work included in the relief programme, piece-work at rates suitable for the object in view being substituted for contracts. When the pressure of distress becomes such as to render the enforcement of piece-work as above mentioned unsuitable, these works can be readily converted into relief works under articles 70 and 74 of the Famine Code. The existence of a work in progress, with establishments on the spot, will place you in a far better

position to meet any sudden pressure or rush of labourers than if the work had to be opened to meet a sudden and particular demand. Moreover, the existence of a work managed by the Public Works Department on the piece-work system as sketched above may satisfy all the requirements of a tract of country not acutely distressed, while the cost to Government will be much less than would be the case if regular relief works under the provisions of the Famine Code had to be established. You will not fail to observe that this system of works, which are intermediate between "ordinary" and "Code relief works," will be peculiarly useful as a reserve and supplement to the system of village works [article 65 (*a*)] managed by the District officers directly or by local zamindars.

3. Further orders dealing with the manner in which these orders are to be given effect to in detail will issue from the Public Works Department to Superintending Engineers, copies of which will be forwarded to you for information and guidance.

No. 358 S.—73.

Copy forwarded to the Secretary to this Government in the Public Works Department, Buildings and Roads Branch, for necessary action with reference to paragraph 3.

From P. HARRISON, Esq., Under Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, to the Secretary to the Government of India, dated Allahabad, the 21st December 1896, No. 500.

In continuation of this Government's letter No. 417, dated the 14th December 1896, I am directed to forward, for the information of the Government of India, copies of the letter noted on the margin, relative to the adoption in certain localities of a modified system of famine-relief works which will be intermediate between works carried out under the ordinary and on the Famine Code system.

Letter No. 9099-W.A., dated 5th December 1896, from the Secretary to Government, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Public Works Department, to all Superintending Engineers, Provincial Works.

From C. W. ODLING, Esq., Secretary to Government, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Public Works Department, to all Superintending Engineers, Provincial Works, dated Allahabad, the 5th December 1896, No. 9099-W.A.

The Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner has had under consideration the best method of testing the probability or existence of distress, and of affording employment in districts which are under observation, that is, districts in which famine threatens, but in which the existence of famine has not been officially recognised. His Honour is of opinion that the needful test will be best effected and the necessary employment afforded by work carried out on a system intermediate between "ordinary" and "Famine Code works," and this view is expressed in the orders issued in the Scarcity Department, of which a copy will be separately forwarded for your information and guidance.

2. In relief works under the Famine Code (articles 70 and 74) the enforcement of the "gang" and task systems is imperative. The works proposed in the preceding paragraph may be regarded as preliminary to regular relief works under the Code. Should distress supervene it will be very easy to convert these works from the piece-work to the task and gang system, and to expand the establishments.

3. But, while the works remain outside the strict letter of Code rules, it is proposed that the rates given shall, in view of the high price of food, be enhanced by 25 to, in particular cases, 50 per cent., *i.e.*, from Rs. 2 per 1,000 cubic feet of earthwork to Rs. 2–8–0 or Rs. 3. It is not intended that these works shall be given out on contract, but rather to piece-workers or gangers employing not more than 200 persons. Men of the *chaprasi* class, relatives of petty officials, should on no account be employed. Village *pattidars* are very suitable men, but in any case the piece-worker must actually reside on the work, and deal directly with the workers who will then, with the class of men employed, be in a position to insist on a fixed proportion of the rate being paid to them. In giving out the work the wages to be paid to the workers would be specified; and it is considered that ordinarily 20 per cent. of the rate would be a sufficient remuneration to the piece-worker for his own labour, interest on capital and incidental expenses, such as baskets and perishable stores. It would be necessary to pay the piece-worker weekly, or at most fortnightly, as he would generally be a man of very small capital. The workers would usually bring their own *phaoras*, but at times it might be necessary to issue such tools to the piece-worker. In order that the piece-workers employed may comply with the conditions laid down in this letter, it may be necessary to impose the condition that a piece-worker who cannot carry out work to the value of Rs. 150 in a month will be discharged, whilst no piece-worker will be allowed to execute work to the value of more than Rs. 1,000 in one month.

the really needy in the surrounding villages fully employed and will enable them to tide over this season without much difficulty. The railway authorities require a vast quantity of ballast here more than 37,000 cubic yards. They pay to their contractors at the rate of Rs. 18 per 1,000 cubic feet, *i.e.*, very nearly As. 8 per cubic yard. All that the coolies require on piece-work is As. 4 only per cubic yard, but this latter rate is for stacking at the work-site, which is, however, very near the railway line. There can thus be no sort of loss to Government if the work is undertaken as above suggested, and the Government need feel no anxiety on account of the famine, so far as this part of taluk is concerned. I therefore request that, if you approve, you will be pleased to particularly impress this on the Collector and the Government and do the needful without delay.

Endorsement by W. deMORGAN, Executive Engineer, Ganjám Division, dated 26th March 1897, No. 6125.

Copy forwarded to the Collector of Ganjám. What the Sub-Divisional officer says is perfectly correct. If work is provided at ordinary rates, there will be no necessity for relief works, but the difficulty is to make such arrangements agree with the Famine Code.

Endorsement by the Acting Collector of Ganjám, dated Berhampur, 28th March 1897, Ref. on C. No. 513-Famine.

Copy communicated to the Secretary to the Commissioner of Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture.

2. I consider that the remarks of the Sub-Divisional officer are very sound so far as this district is concerned. At present the people are in want of work, but they are not reduced to such straits as to accept famine wage and famine discipline on relief works. The people are accustomed to work by piece-work in small gangs; the large gangs organised under the Famine Code militate against a good outturn. Take for instance the Kaliapalli quarry. Here with difficulty a C class task was performed under test work conditions. After the allotment on this quarry had been fully expended I started another work on piece-work system at reduced rate two miles off. In a few days the work—which was of exactly the same nature as at Kaliapalli—had attracted 2,470 coolies of the same class, of whom *a large proportion were men* and the task turned out per unit was slightly over a B class task. The coolies came, worked hard and went away cheerful and contented, nor was there any waste of funds. On making inquiries in the villages as to the large number of coolies and especially men attached, I was told that it was because the work was on piece-work system and the villagers were allowed to form their own gangs each being paid by results.

3. In connection with the test work at Bendi in January last I suggested that work might advantageously be given out on piece-work to village gangs without the intervention of contractors, and in most places the same theory still holds good. In this opinion I am supported by my Divisional officers. I am inclined to believe that, with the new allotment falling available on 1st April, we shall, so far as this district is concerned by the general adoption of this system, be able to avert the necessity for any relief works except in a few special localities which are badly favoured in respect of ordinary works. The people will work cheerfully and contentedly and will have a margin left over for the support of their children who will not then be forced on to kitchens or gratuitous relief. This principle has been recently endorsed in the Government of India memorandum embodied in B.P. (Revenue Settlement), dated 11th March 1897, No. 216. Some temporary additional establishment may be required, but it will prove to be economy in the long run and much famine expenditure, that might otherwise be rendered necessary, avoided.

4. With regard to the breaking of metal for the East Coast Railway, I should be very glad to see the principle of piece-work adopted; but here there is a difficulty. This is a railway work specially provided against famine and the work has to be executed by the Public Works Department subject to the provisions of the Famine Code—a subsequent adjustment being made from Railway funds. It is not an ordinary work to be executed under the special conditions referred to in paragraph 16 of the Famine Code.

5. I would therefore ask whether, under the special circumstances of this district which show that—while work is demanded and eagerly sought for—, test works prove no attraction, the work of breaking metal (provided as a special famine relief work in the Famine Programme of the district) may not be taken up on the principles suggested, viz., on piece-work given at low rates to village groups without the intervention of contractors. The railway throughout the district runs through the tract where work is most urgently required and it would prove of the greatest possible service to take up this work on the system referred to even before the allotments on all other works are exhausted. I would request that Government may be asked so to relax the provisions of the Famine Code as to permit of funds being granted under 33 Famine, for the execution of this work on the principles enunciated by the Supreme Government in their memorandum quoted above without applying the conditions of chapter VII of the Code.

Resolution—dated 7th April 1897, No. 289.

In his endorsement read above, the Collector of Ganjám asks that, on the principles laid down in paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 of enclosure 1 to Government of India's Circular No. 16—104-1-F., dated 13th February 1897, piece-work on reduced rates may be substituted for test works in his district, and expresses the opinion that, if his suggestion is adopted, a very considerable amount of expenditure upon other forms of relief that necessarily follows in the wake of strictly organized famine relief-works will be saved. He reports "at present the people are in want of work, but they are not reduced to such straits as to accept famine wage, and famine discipline on relief-works." The Collector's experiment shows that even under the disadvantageous terms on which piece-work has been offered, there is a real demand for such employment. This demand shows that there exists a distress of considerable intensity.

2. Employment by piece-work was intended by the Government of India to be only *preliminary* to the introduction of strictly organised test-works, and the Board considers that if relief is necessary at all the time has come for the introduction of works of the latter kind. The Uriya is, no doubt, the most difficult man in the Presidency to deal with in administering Government relief, but the Board does not consider that his prejudices and reluctance to submit to discipline are sufficient reasons for treating him differently from the distressed population of other districts. The conditions of employment set out in G.O., No. 216 of 1897 are more liberal than those hitherto in force, and the Board is not prepared to recommend to Government on behalf of any isolated portion of the Presidency any deviation from the general principles therein expounded. Any work that may be opened for the purpose of relief must be carried out in accordance with the provisions of chapter VII of the Famine Code. In declining to support the Collector, the Board is fully aware of the difficulty with which he has to deal, but a Famine Code is not to be torn in pieces during the progress of distress, except for very serious reasons. The provisions relating to gratuitous relief have been relaxed to a degree not permitted in other districts in view of the recognised singularity of Ganjám, and it is hoped that between this and the very benevolent terms offered in G.O., No. 216 of 1897, which the Collector had not received when he wrote his letter, that officer may succeed in attaining the objects of relief without further experiments. The susceptibilities of the Uriya have been sufficiently met in the matter of gratuitous relief, but he cannot be encouraged to take a step further and dictate to the whole Presidency how relief on works should be administered.

(True Copy and Extract.)

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

To the Collector of Ganjám.

Copy to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
" " Collectors of other affected districts.

Read—the following letter from T. W. HOLDERNESS, Esq., C.S., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue and Agriculture (Famine), to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, dated Simla, the 19th April 1897, Cir. No. 20—91-2-F.:—

I am directed to forward, for the information of the Governor in Council, a copy of a resolution issued by the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, No. 753, dated 16th March 1897, prescribing a modified system of "intermediate" relief works with the object of limiting the earnings of workers to a reasonable subsistence wage for themselves and their dependants.

Enclosures.

Resolution from the Secretary to Government, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Scarcity Department, No. 753—S.-73, dated Allahabad, the 16th March 1897.

Read—

G.O., No. 357, of 5th December 1896, to all Commissioners of Divisions, North-Western Provinces and Oudh.

G.O., No. 9099-W.A, of 5th December 1896, to all Superintending Engineers, Provincial Works, North-Western Provinces and Oudh.

G.O., No. 428, of 16th December 1896, to all Commissioners of Divisions, North-Western Provinces and Oudh.

Government of India Circular No. 3-F., of 24th December 1896, on the exaction of full task in famine-relief operations.

G.O., No. 464, of 13th February 1897, to all Commissioners of Divisions and Collectors of Districts, North-Western Provinces and Oudh (except Meerut and Kumaun).

Government of India Circular No. 16-F., of 13th February 1897, on principles for regulating expenditure upon public works in time of famine.

The advent of the *rabi* harvest and the further experience gained in the conduct of relief works under the Famine Code rules have led the Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner to consider whether, in the districts where distress is less acute, some modification is not required in the arrangements now in force on relief works, and in the method of fixing and paying wages. The commencement of the harvest has renewed the demand for field labour, which ceased when the winter rains put an end to the irrigation of the advanced crops. In some districts a fresh demand has sprung up for more irrigation to counteract the mischief caused by the high winds which prevailed a short time ago. It is unnecessary to say that it is of the highest importance to so regulate the relief works that they may not attract away labour which is required to get in or safeguard the harvest on which the food supply of the country will now largely depend. It is for every reason no less important to arrange tasks and wages with a view to limit the admission to relief works strictly to those persons who cannot find private employment and have no other means of subsistence.

At the same time it may be anticipated that the harvest work will not absorb the usual amount of labour, as the area sown is below normal, and the pressure on all classes will lead tenants and small proprietors to do more field work than usual themselves, and thereby dispense with the services of day labourers.

It is therefore necessary in most districts to maintain for the present relief works in some form, though employment will have to be found only for diminished numbers.

2. Relief works under the Famine Code rules, not only provide employment for all working members of a family, no matter how ineffective, but supply a gratuitous dole to all members who are unable to work. It therefore unavoidably happens that the members of a large family coming all together on the works are able to earn or receive collectively more than the effective working members alone could gain from a private employer and frequently more than suffices for their subsistence only. The presence of large crowds, including very numerous ineffective workers and dependants, renders it very difficult to enforce a full task or, without reducing the wage below subsistence level, to impose fines which will correctly represent short work. A fresh inducement is thereby offered to labourers to remain on relief works after private employment has re-opened.

The problem is to introduce a system which will retain the principle that relief work affording subsistence for the labourers and their dependants shall be provided where it is required, and at the same time to divest the work system of the features which may place it in competition with ordinary labourer where this is available.

3. The Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner believes that such a system may be found in a modification of the scheme of intermediate works sketched in the correspondence noted at the head of this resolution.

That scheme as originally framed required the interposition of petty contractors or middlemen between the Government and the actual labourers. The contractors derived a profit which was set off against the cost of establishment which Government would have had to provide. But it gave contractors an inducement to employ only the more able-bodied and to exclude the weakly who stood most in need of support, and constant supervision, involving expense, was required to counteract this tendency. The system is suited to less considerable works where distress is not very general, but it is less suited to large undertakings designed to afford relief to great numbers of unskilled labourers. A modification of it has recently been tried with success, and the Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner would like to see it generally applied, not merely to intermediate works on the old system, which it has now quite supplanted, but to many works now carried out under Famine Code rules where there is a fair *rabi* area and where the distress is not acute. Under this modified system no contractor or middleman is employed. The work is laid out, supervised, and measured, and payments are made by Government officials; and tools, where necessary, are supplied by Government. But the work will continue to be treated and paid as piece work, not as task work under the Famine Code. No dependants will be recognised, and the payments will be in accordance with the amount of work actually done.

The rates and tasks will be so graduated as to enable an ordinary labourer or family of labourers to earn what the average family now earns in the shape of both wages and gratuitous doles (to dependants) combined. The discontinuance of Sunday labour makes it necessary to arrange for labourers earning on week days enough to provide for themselves and their dependants on Sundays also.

4. The table which accompanies this resolution shows the rates, tasks, and wages which it is proposed to adopt as a standard, and an endeavour has been made to render them suitable for adoption in all parts of the provinces. But in view of the very varying conditions which exist in different districts, some local modifications may be found necessary, and these should be determined in each case by the Commissioner, Collector, and Superintending Engineer.

The point to be borne in mind is to fix rates and tasks which will not render the relief works unduly attractive, and, while securing a fair outturn of work, will not permit labourers to earn more than a reasonable subsistence wage for themselves and their dependants. A maximum task has been fixed, representing the greatest amount of daily work which a labour party can be permitted to perform and the highest daily wage they can be permitted to earn.

The table is framed primarily to meet the case of a labour party (or family) consisting of a digger and two adult carriers; the number of carriers would in practice vary with the employment of minors. The standard task in ordinary soil is taken to be 100 cubic feet, and the rate fixed is Rs. 2-3-0 per 1,000 cubic feet. The party would earn daily for this work 14 pice, which would represent 6 pice for the digger and 8 pice for carriers, being 4 pice each if two adults were actually employed and proportionally less per carrier if there were two or more minors in place of an adult.

It would be the business of the charge officer or work agent and staff to form the parties and distribute the work.

If the full tale of 100 cubic feet were not executed, there would be a proportional abatement made in the total payment, and if the tale were exceeded, the payment would be proportionately raised up to the full or maximum task or wage, but not beyond that.

If the full or maximum task of 125 cubic feet were performed, the total earnings of the party would be 17 pice, representing 7 pice to the digger and 10 pice to the carriers, which, reduced to two adults, would give 5 pice to each. The exact apportionment of the total earnings of the gang or party could be varied as circumstances required. The above distribution is suggested as one generally suitable.

5. The ordinary task, if executed, would enable the average family to earn what it now receives in the shape of wages and doles, and, by a little extra diligence on week days, the full task would make provision for the Sunday wage without requiring labour on that day. At the same time a fair outturn of work would be ensured and proportional deductions made for short work. There would be some reduction in the crowds of dependants and ineffective labourers who throng the works and become a source of danger in the season when cholera is usually prevalent.

The foregoing rates are put forward tentatively as those at which the experiment can be commenced subject to any local variations which may be decided as above explained. Experience may show them liable to alteration.

6. Under instructions already issued, this system will be introduced in the current month into the districts of the Agra Division, the *Holi* festival being taken as a suitable point of departure. It should also be introduced at the same time into any parts of the Rohilkhand Division where it may not be at present in force. In the Fyzabad Division it should be applied to any works which remain open, and in all cases where it may hereafter be found necessary to re-open works.

of it in which the Government deals directly with the labourers. The work is laid out, supervised and measured by Government officials, and tools where necessary are supplied by Government; but payments are made by results as under the piece-work system, and no dependants are recognized.

4. It will thus be seen that the system advocated by the Collector of Ganjám is the same as the modified form of the piece-work system recently adopted with success in the North-Western Provinces. The Board of Revenue objects to its adoption on the ground that it is intended by the Government of India to be only preliminary to the introduction of strictly organized test works, and that if relief is necessary at all in the district the time has come for the introduction of the latter kind of works. The Government has carefully considered the subject and is of opinion that the district of Ganjám is one in which strictly organized test and relief works fail of their intended objects, and that there and perhaps elsewhere also it is necessary to supplement the scheme of works as laid down in the Code by an intermediate system like the one described above. The Uriyas of Ganjám are as a class averse to sending their women to labour at the relief works and none but those belonging to the lowest classes send their children to the kitchens attached to the works; as the earnings of the actual workers are barely sufficient for their own maintenance, Government relief does not reach the women and children of the labouring classes and regular relief works fail of their object. Further it is reported that the people of the district dislike the discipline enforced on such works and will not resort to them unless reduced to great straits. The Koyas of the Bhadráchalam taluk similarly have a strong prejudice against relief works and refuse to accept employment at the Code rates though there is considerable distress among them now; and anxiety has been expressed in some quarters lest this prejudice should lead them to stint and starve themselves. A similar reluctance on the part of the people to resort to relief works has been reported from Vizagapatam. On the other hand payment by results to which the people are accustomed is suited to their habits and tastes, and it appears from the correspondence forwarded by the Collector of Ganjám that the labourers in his district are anxious to have piece-work and willing to accept work at rates considerably below those allowed by the Public Works Department in ordinary years. The Government is of opinion that the proper policy to pursue under the circumstances is to offer relief in the form acceptable to the distressed population instead of waiting till by prolonged stinting they reduce themselves to such a low condition as to make them ready to accept employment on any terms. The intermediate system of payment by results offers the best solution of the difficulty and the experience gained in the North-Western Provinces shows that it is more economical than task work even at rates higher than those allowed by the Public Works Department in ordinary years.

5. The adoption of such a system is also rendered necessary by the concentration of relief works lately ordered by Government which involves the opening of petty village works and improvements for affording employment to people living at a distance from the works centres. These petty works cannot be carried on under the supervision of Government officials and must necessarily be entrusted to the agency of village heads or other middlemen. The system is therefore likely to prove advantageous, not only in Ganjám but in all the affected tracts, and His Excellency the Governor in Council is of opinion that it should be adopted as an integral part of the scheme of famine-relief works. It is no doubt true that the system as originally approved by the Government of India was intended to meet the earlier stages of distress and to be preliminary to the introduction of the regular relief works, but in the modified form in which it has been recently adopted in the North-Western Provinces it can advantageously be made use of even when distress becomes severe.

6. The scheme of relief works to be opened by Government will then stand as follows:—

(i) Expanded ordinary works:	...	To be carried out on the ordinary contract system.
(ii) and (iii) Intermediate works: to be carried out on the gang and piece-work system.		(ii) With the intervention of petty contractors. (iii) Without the intervention of contractors, work being laid out, supervised and paid for by Government officials.
(iv) Test and relief works:	... ...	To be carried out under the Code conditions.

Class (ii) is the same as the modified contract system contemplated by section 16 of the Code, class (iii) works are called "intermediate" in accordance with the designation adopted in the North-Western Provinces, but the Government trusts that in districts like Ganjám where the peculiar habits of the people may render such work necessary, they will be found adequate for the relief of distress in all its stages and will form an efficient substitute for relief works as organized under the Code. The laying out, supervision and measurement of work on this class of works should be undertaken by Government officials, and to prevent a too rapid exhaustion of the works it will be necessary to limit the amount of work to be assigned to each piece-working gang. The rates allowed on works of classes (ii) and (iii) must be so fixed as not to attract labour for which there is existing employment, and should be "such as to constitute a hard bargain even with the skilled labourer, and should be distinctly below what it would be necessary to give in order to attract labour in the absence of distress." It is also well to bear in mind that these works are opened on the supposition that under the system of payment by results an able-bodied labourer can earn enough to maintain himself and the non-working members of his family and that such works are therefore more economical than relief works. As soon therefore as it is apparent that there is a demand by inefficient labour for employment on the terms offered at these intermediate works, one or more works on the task-work system should be opened, and if such demand be found to be considerable the intermediate works should be replaced by regular relief works, or the labourers drafted to the nearest such works.

7. The Famine Commissioner will take immediate steps to carry out the above instructions. It will be for him to decide in consultation with Collectors whether intermediate works can advantageously be opened in any affected district; such works can be readily converted into regular relief works when necessity arises.

8. Ordered that the following letter be despatched to the Government of India.

(True Extract.)

for Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Famine Commissioner.
" the Public Works Department.
" the Local and Municipal Department.
" the Financial Department.
" the Accountant-General.

Exd. W. D'Moss.

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17-7-97

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Government {1897} of Madras.

REVENUE.

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G.O., No. 430, 3rd June 1897.

N° 1944 W of 17 July 1897

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Intermediate system of relief works.

Directing the adoption in this Presidency of the — introduced with success in the North-Western Provinces.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

Read—again the following G.O., Mis. No. 1245, Revenue, dated 5th March 1897:—

Read—the following letter from T. W. HOLDERNESS, Esq., I.C.S., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, (Department of Revenue and Agriculture—Famine), to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, dated Calcutta, the 13th February 1897, Cir. No. 16—104-I.-F.:—

I am directed to forward, for information and guidance, copy of a memorandum in which are succinctly stated the leading principles regulating expenditure upon public works in time of famine.

2. Paragraphs 5 to 8 of the memorandum should be regarded as supplementing the provisions contained in the Provincial Famine Codes with regard to the expansion of "ordinary" public works and the opening of "test" works when distress is imminent or its extent and acuteness have to be ascertained. It is not proposed at present that the Famine Codes should be amended with a view to bring them into formal agreement (where this is necessary) with the memorandum as to the manner in which such works should be conducted. The statement of principles contained in the memorandum leaves in this respect a large discretion to Local Governments and Administrations, and any amendment of the Codes which may be required in this and other points will be more usefully undertaken when the experience of the present year can be brought under review.

Letter from North-Western Provinces and Oudh Government, No. 417-S., dated 14th December 1896.

Letter from North-Western Provinces and Oudh Government, No. 500, dated 21st December 1896, and enclosure.

Letter to North-Western Provinces and Oudh Government, No. 255-F., dated 16th January 1897.

3. As paragraph 6 of the memorandum refers to the "intermediate or gang piece work" system which has been experimentally adopted in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, the papers marked on the margin, which explain this system, are also forwarded for reference.

Enclosures.

Principles for regulating expenditure upon Public Works in time of famine.

1. In districts where no distress exists, it is the general rule that expenditure upon public works, even within the limits of budget provision, should be contracted with a view to setting funds and establishments at liberty for employment when they are more needed. To this rule, however, exceptions may be made—

(1) where the works could not be contracted without risk of creating distress by reducing the local employment of labour;

(2) where the contraction of the works would result in returning to districts, where distress exists or is threatened, the labourers employed on them.

2. Where distress exists, it will be necessary to provide additional employment upon works. *All* such additional expenditure must be subjected to the relief conditions described below.

3. The essence of relief conditions is, that the remuneration for work done must be so fixed as not to attract labour for which there is existing employment elsewhere. This condition must invariably be enforced. The method of enforcing it will vary with the degree of distress which prevails.

4. Where acute distress or famine prevails, so that the general population is affected, and it is necessary to provide employment not only for able-bodied labourers, but also for a large proportion of inefficient labour, task work must be rigorously enforced, nobody being allowed either to do more than the fixed task or to earn more than the fixed maximum wage. The former condition is necessary in order to economise the supply of useful work upon which labour can be employed; the second, in order to limit expenditure, since, when the dependants of a skilled labourer are paid separately, it is not necessary for purposes of relief to pay him more than a subsistence wage.

5. But when distress, though present, is not so acute as to drive on to the works a large proportion of inefficient labour or of persons unaccustomed to work, payment by results is more economical than task work; for so long as an able-bodied labourer can earn enough, under the conditions laid down in paragraph 3, to enable those of his family who do not work to live at home, he will support himself and them more cheaply than Government can do.

6. Payment by results may take the form, either of an expansion of ordinary works under the usual system of petty-contracts, or of the intermediate or gang-piece-work system of the North-Westren Provinces. The former is sufficient when distress is slight; but as the scarcity becomes more acute and threatens to deepen into famine, the latter should be substituted, since it secures proper remuneration to the individual workman, which, under the urgency of distress, the former fails to do.

7. If the rates offered are regulated by the principle laid down in paragraph 3, gang-piece-work will effectively gauge the intencity of distress, since it will afford to inefficient labour only a bare subsistence.

8. As soon, therefore, as the demand by inefficient labour for employment on these terms begins to be appreciable, additional test-works on the task-work system may usefully be opened; though at a sufficient distance from the piece-work works to ensure that if the man works at piece-work and his women and childen at task work, they shall at least be compelled to live apart. These will provide for the women and children during the intermediate stage, while distress is *becoming* acute. As soon, however, as the demand by inefficient labour for employment upon either system becomes considerable, acute distress is present, and payment by results must then be discontinued and task work substituted for it.

9. It is conceivable that in any district there may be cases in which the rapid and efficient prosecution of a particular public work is of such importance as to justify a relaxation of the above conditions. Such instances will be rare, the works will be of magnitude, and each case will be decided upon its individual merits.

10. It is for Local Governments to judge of the local conditions in each case, and to justify to themselves or to the Government of India, as the case may be, the action to be taken under the principles thus laid down.

From the Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, to the Secretary to the Government of India, dated Allahabad, the 14th December 1896, No. 417-S:—

In his demi-official letter of the 29th November Mr. H. F. Evans enclosed, for the information of the Government of India, copy of a letter addressed to officers, asking them to report what effect had been produced by the late rainfall on the prospects of their respective districts. The Government is still awaiting these replies, but provisional information has been received from Commissioners of Divisions, from which it appears that they are of the opinion that prospects have been so far improved as to justify the expectation that with fair winter rains the numbers who may come on relief will be less by about 25 per cent. than the number of 100,000,000 units for one day, stated in the third column of statement B, paragraph 10 of this office letter No. 196, dated the 23rd November 1896. In this opinion the Lieutenant-Governor generally concurs, and he now sees reason to hope that it will not be necessary in several districts to undertake relief operations to the extent which seemed probable before the late rain had fallen. In view of the altered condition of things, and with the object of avoiding unnecessary expenditure, the Lieutenant-Governor has reconsidered the programme of public works referred to in paragraphs 19 and 20 of the letter mentioned above, and has consulted Commissioners of Divisions on the following point: whether it would be desirable to pursue the policy indicated in paragraph 20 of the letter noticed above, and postpone village works till the hot weather had set in; or whether, in view of the probability that in certain districts the necessity for extensive relief would disappear when the *rabi* had been harvested, it would be better to meet the demand for employment which may arise between now and the harvesting of the *rabi* by a more general use of village works now than had been intended. The Commissioners' official replies are awaited, but from the communications unofficially made by them to His Honour, it seems certain that they will ask for permission to begin some village works at once, and also to maintain a backbone of some large works managed by the Department of Public Works in the various districts. These works are now in operation in many districts.

2. The question also presented itself whether, in districts in which prospects have improved, it was desirable, where village works were not found to afford suitable employment, to open relief works under strict Code rules. Under the Code three classes of work are recognized :—

(1) Ordinary works (article 60) debitable to Provincial or District funds.

(2) Test-relief works debitable to famine relief, and carried out in the general spirit of the Famine Code Rules.

(3) Regular relief works under Chapter VI of the Code, on which the "gang" and "task" work system is rigidly enforced.

In almost all district funds, either provincial or district, for ordinary works have been exhausted; while, at the same time, test works have shown the necessity for some employment, though not on the expensive or extensive system prescribed by the Famine Code. The problem, then, was to provide such employment as would be suitable for districts under observation, but in which distress had not fully declared itself. Such employment is offered, for example, in the Cawnpore district by the Lower Ganges Extension canal project, and in the Azamgarh district, to some extent, by the extensions of the Bengal and North-Western Railway.

3. These facts have suggested to His Honour the adoption in such localities of a modified system of famine-relief works which would be intermediate between works carried out on the ordinary and on the Famine Code systems. Such works, while conducted on principles involving much less expenditure than would be incurred were the system of the Code followed, will serve as test works on a large scale. Their existence, with the establishment thereon, will also enable the Government to at once convert them into Famine Code works without a day's delay should famine supervene. It need hardly be observed that no advantage will be taken of this arrangement to carry through works in the interest of district or provincial funds; and that no work will be begun which is not absolutely essential with the object of preventing suffering from want of food.

I am to add that this plan has been forced on His Honour for two reasons: first economy, and second, the extreme difficulty of obtaining the large number of subordinate officers necessary for Famine Code works.

4. I am to forward a copy of the instructions * which have issued on the subject, which will explain more fully the action which the Lieutenant-Governor has decided to take.

* G.O., No. 357-S.,—73, dated 5th December 1896.

From T. W. HOLDERNESS, Esq., Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, to all Commissioners of Divisions, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, dated Allahabad, the 5th December 1896, No. 357-S.—73.

I am directed to address you on the subject of the employment of the Public Works Department in managing and carrying out famine-relief works. At the present time distress is officially recognised as existing in the districts marginally noted, and the Public Works Department has already commenced relief operations in these districts. Any relief work not being of the article 65 (*a*) class opened in the marginally-noted districts for the future must be treated as relief works under the Code and managed from the outset by the Public Works Department.

Allahabad.	Jalan.
Hamirpur.	Jaunpur.
Banda.	Rae Bareli.
Jhansi	Sitapur.
Hardoi.	

2. Article 60 of the Famine Code provides that where distress is commencing, ordinary works may be expanded as a temporary measure to meet the demand for employment. In these districts, that is, districts not officially declared to be distressed, it is open to you to commence test works in order to gauge the necessity for relief works. But experience has shown that test relief works managed by non-professional agency do not always gauge the existence of distress so well as works conducted under the strict safeguards and tests which are necessarily applied by the Public Works Department. I am therefore to request that when the necessity contemplated by article 60 arises, you will ordinarily employ the Public Works Department in controlling test works, or, when ordinary works are exhausted, in affording the employment necessary on a suitable work included in the relief programme, piece-work at rates suitable for the object in view being substituted for contracts. When the pressure of distress becomes such as to render the enforcement of piece-work as above mentioned unsuitable, these works can be readily converted into relief works under articles 70 and 74 of the Famine Code. The existence of a work in progress, with establishments on the spot, will place you in a far better position to meet any sudden pressure or rush of labourers than if the work had to be opened to meet a sudden and particular demand. Moreover, the existence of a work managed by the Public Works Department on the piece-work system as sketched above may satisfy all the requirements of a tract of country not acutely distressed, while the cost to Government will be much less than would be the case if regular relief works under the provisions of the Famine Code had to be established. You will not fail to observe that this system of works, which are intermediate between "ordinary" and "Code relief works," will be peculiarly useful as a reserve and supplement to the system of village works [article 65 (*a*)] managed by the District officers directly or by local zamindars.

3. Further orders dealing with the manner in which these orders are to be given effect to in detail will issue from the Public Works Department to Superintending Engineers, copies of which will be forwarded to you for information and guidance.

No. 358 S.—73.

Copy forwarded to the Secretary to this Government in the Public Works Department, Buildings and Roads Branch, for necessary action with reference to paragraph 3.

From P. HARRISON, Esq., Under Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, to the Secretary to the Government of India, dated Allahabad, the 21st December 1896, No. 500.

In continuation of this Government's letter No. 417, dated the 14th December 1896, I am directed to forward, for the information of the Government of India, copies of the letter noted on the margin, relative to the adoption in certain localities of a modified system of famine-relief works which will be intermediate between works carried out under the ordinary and on the Famine Code system.

Letter No. 9099-W.A., dated 5th December 1896, from the Secretary to Government, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Public Works Department, to all Superintending Engineers, Provincial Works.

From C. W. ODLING, Esq., Secretary to Government, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Public Works Department, to all Superintending Engineers, Provincial Works, dated Allahabad, the 5th December 1896, No. 9099-W.A.

The Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner has had under consideration the best method of testing the probability or existence of distress, and of affording employment in districts which are under observation, that is, districts in which famine threatens, but in which the existence of famine has not been officially recognised. His Honour is of opinion that the needful test will be best effected and the necessary employment afforded by work carried out on a system intermediate between "ordinary" and "Famine Code works," and this view is expressed in the orders issued in the Scarcity Department, of which a copy will be separately forwarded for your information and guidance.

2. In relief works under the Famine Code (articles 70 and 74) the enforcement of the "gang" and task systems is imperative. The works proposed in the preceding paragraph may be regarded as preliminary to regular relief works under the Code. Should distress supervene it will be very easy to convert these works from the piece-work to the task and gang system, and to expand the establishments.

3. But, while the works remain outside the strict letter of Code rules, it is proposed that the rates given shall, in view of the high price of food, be enhanced by 25 to, in particular cases, 50 per cent., *i.e.*, from Rs. 2 per 1,000 cubic feet of earthwork to Rs. 2–8–0 or Rs. 3. It is not intended that these works shall be given out on contract, but rather to piece-workers or gangers employing not more than 200 persons. Men of the *chaprasi* class, relatives of petty officials, should on no account be employed. Village *patwaris* are very suitable men, but in any case the piece-worker must actually reside on the work, and deal directly with the workers who will then, with the class of men employed, be in a position to insist on a fixed proportion of the rate being paid to them. In giving out the work the wages to be paid to the workers would be specified; and it is considered that ordinarily 20 per cent. of the rate would be a sufficient remuneration to the piece-worker for his own labour, interest on capital and incidental expenses, such as baskets and perishable stores. It would be necessary to pay the piece-worker weekly, or at most fortnightly, as he would generally be a man of very small capital. The workers would usually bring their own *phaoras*, but at times it might be necessary to issue such tools to the piece-worker. In order that the piece-workers employed may comply with the conditions laid down in this letter, it may be necessary to impose the condition that a piece-worker who cannot carry out work to the value of Rs. 150 in a month will be discharged, whilst no piece-worker will be allowed to execute work to the value of more than Rs. 1,000 in one month.

4. Works on the lines mentioned will also serve as test works, the number and class of labourers resorting to the work being indicative of the sufficiency of the work to meet the degree of pressure, or the necessity for relief works under the Code. But they will not prevent test works under Code rules and on subsistence wages being also established, provided that they are some distance (5 miles or more) apart. It will not, however, be possible to carry out works on the plan sketched above in a tract declared to be distressed, such as the districts mentioned in the margin. In these districts, and in any other district recognised as distressed, the Code rules must be strictly followed. A manual of these rules is under issue for your guidance.

Banda.	Jaunpur.
Hamirpur.	Rae Bareli.
Jhansi.	Sitapur.
Jalaun.	Hardoi.
Allahabad.	

5. The works to be carried out under the terms mentioned in paragraph 3 above will be confined to those for which detailed estimates have been sanctioned, and you should at once place yourself in communication with Commissioners of divisions in your circle with the view of putting one or more works in hand in those districts where they consider them to be required. The work put in hand must, unless with the express sanction of Government, be limited to what can be carried out by famine labour. Subject to the restrictions mentioned above, the works should be selected by Commissioners and may (provided there is an allotment for famine relief works for the district in which the work is situated, *but not otherwise*) be commenced under your orders in anticipation of the approval of Government. An immediate report giving the name of the work, the amount of the estimate, and date of commencement, should, however, be made. The rate it is proposed to pay for earthwork should be mentioned.

6. Works carried out under the orders contained in this letter will be charged to the head Famine Relief and provided for from the allotment made, under that head, for such works in the district concerned. The usual weekly famine reports to the Chief Engineer will be required, and arrangements must be made to keep a record of the number of men employed.

Copy forwarded to all Commissioners of divisions and Collectors of districts, to the Examiner, Public Works Accounts, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, and to the Scarcity Department of this Government, for information.

From DENZIL IBBETSON, Esq., C.S.I., I.C.S., Secretary to the Government of India, to the Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Scarcity Department, dated Calcutta, the 16th January 1897, No. 255-F.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letters Nos. 417 and 500, dated the 14th and 21st December 1896, respectively, regarding the adoption in certain localities of a modified system of relief works which will be carried out under a system of piece-work by gangs, the members of which will be entitled to certain payments, and which will occupy a position intermediate between works carried out on the ordinary system of petty contract and those conducted under the strict conditions of the Famine Code.

2. His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor has been led to introduce this intermediate system by the difficulty of obtaining the large establishments that are necessary for work under the strict provisions of the Famine Code and by the great cost of such works. The Government of India understand that the economy of this new system depends upon the fact that, in tracts where the distress, though real, has not deepened into famine, if the able-bodied workers are employed on piece-work, the women and children will in the main be supported at home by the earnings of the workers, supplemented by such additions to them as they can obtain in their own villages; whereas if the task-work system is strictly enforced, the women and children must at once come on to the works, since the famine wage is sufficient only to support the workers themselves. If this be so, piece-work appears to be advisable so long as the mass of inefficient labour can find support without relief from Government.

3. It is, however, very necessary, as already explained in my Circular No. 3—77-1 F., dated the 24th December 1896, that the rates given should be so regulated as to act as an efficient test of the intensity of distress. They should be such as to constitute a somewhat hard bargain even with the skilled labourer; and should be distinctly below what it would be necessary to give in order to attract labour in the absence of distress. When this is the case, inefficient labour paid by the piece will earn but a bare subsistence, so that the extent of the demand by inefficient labour for employment on these terms will sufficiently gauge the intensity of the distress.

4. The Government of India understand these to be the principles on which His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor has introduced his intermediate system of piece-work, and that as soon as the demand for employment by inefficient labour indicates that distress has reached an acute stage, the ordinary task-work system of the Famine Code will be substituted.

5. The Governor-General in Council gives his hearty approval to the proposals.

Order—Mis. No. 1245, Revenue, dated 5th March 1897.

Communicated to the Board of Revenue.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Ag. Secretary to Government.

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

Read—the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture), dated 7th April 1897, No. 289:—

Read—the following letter from M.R.Ry. S. A. SWAMINATHA AIYER, Subdivisional Officer, Chicacole, to the Executive Engineer, Ganjám Division, dated 18th March 1897, No. 2231, and endorsements thereon:—

I have the honour to report as below on my attempt to open a test work at the Kota Bommali Railway quarry.

Your order to open the test work was received by me on the 15th evening. The next day I sent the necessary tools and rings, and on the 17th I was myself on the spot. In the meantime notice was given by beat of tom tom in all the adjacent villages (about thirty in number) that the test work would be begun on the 18th morning. The Deputy Tahsildar of Tekkali joined me on the 17th. About fifty coolies gathered together on the morning of the 18th, and these were mainly from the gangs working on petty piece-work on our Garebullagedda channel. A few village naidus also attended. The Deputy Tahsildar and myself explained to them the conditions of the test work. As ragi is selling at 15·22 seers per rupee, the wage of A class gangs was fixed at As. 1–5 and As. 1–3 per each man and woman, respectively. They were glad to hear that the wages are greater than what was notified on the previous occasion. Still they did not like the idea of working in gangs of 100 persons each on the ground that they will be universally fined if the actual work turned out by them falls below the allotted task, and the idleness of some of them will be visited on the other diligent workers in the same gang which will thus get demoralized. They wanted to form themselves into gangs of 10 to 25 each as they choose and do the work on piece-work system. I may here remark that the quarry here is very convenient, and a large part of the metalling will simply have to be dug by the crowbar and a small percentage alone broken by the hammers. Besides, ever since the railway work was begun here, a lot of coolies have been working at this quarry, and have learnt the knack of doing the work properly. They therefore, unlike the coolies in other parts of the district, take to this work in preference to the earthwork in our channel near (where no doubt the soil is hard). They want piece-work at the rate of As. 4 per cubic yard of metalling, the same rate that the railway contractors were paying them before. The village naidus promise that in case this work is started in petty piece-work system as in the Garibullagedda channel near, about 1,000 and more of the adjacent villagers who are now unemployed and in a distressed condition, will come in at once and they can be so employed till this scarcity is over. The coolies that were present positively refused to come on daily wages in gangs of 100.

I beg to add that about a week ago when I inspected and check-measured the earthwork on the Garibullagedda channel, I found the soil hard, and I at once raised the rates. I now pay Rs. 2–14–0 and Rs. 3–4–0 per 1,000 cubic feet of hard earth and gravel, respectively, against the estimate rate of Rs. 3–8–0. Even this as not appreciably attracted more labour up to date, and the future effects will be watched. The coolies prefer metal collection at the particular quarry to the hard earthwork at the channel for the reasons noted above. I therefore beg leave to suggest that it will be very useful, if the ballast work here be opened on petty piece-work on the same system in which our channel earthwork is being done now, with a special overseer in charge of it, payments being made at least twice a week. This will keep

the really needy in the surrounding villages fully employed and will enable them to tide over this season without much difficulty. The railway authorities require a vast quantity of ballast here more than 37,000 cubic yards. They pay to their contractors at the rate of Rs. 18 per 1,000 cubic feet, *i.e.*, very nearly As. 8 per cubic yard. All that the coolies require on piece-work is As. 4 only per cubic yard, but this latter rate is for stacking at the work-site, which is, however, very near the railway line. There can thus be no sort of loss to Government if the work is undertaken as above suggested, and the Government need feel no anxiety on account of the famine, so far as this part of taluk is concerned. I therefore request that, if you approve, you will be pleased to particularly impress this on the Collector and the Government and do the needful without delay.

Endorsement by W. deMORGAN, Executive Engineer, Ganjám Division, dated 26th March 1897, No. 6125.

Copy forwarded to the Collector of Ganjám. What the Sub-Divisional officer says is perfectly correct. If work is provided at ordinary rates, there will be no necessity for relief works, but the difficulty is to make such arrangements agree with the Famine Code.

Endorsement by the Acting Collector of Ganjám, dated Berhampur, 28th March 1897, Ref. on C. No. 513-Famine.

Copy communicated to the Secretary to the Commissioner of Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture.

2. I consider that the remarks of the Sub-Divisional officer are very sound so far as this district is concerned. At present the people are in want of work, but they are not reduced to such straits as to accept famine wage and famine discipline on relief works. The people are accustomed to work by piece-work in small gangs; the large gangs organised under the Famine Code militate against a good outturn. Take for instance the Kaliapalli quarry. Here with difficulty a C class task was performed under test work conditions. After the allotment on this quarry had been fully expended I started another work on piece-work system at reduced rate two miles off. In a few days the work—which was of exactly the same nature as at Kaliapalli—had attracted 2,470 coolies of the same class, of whom *a large proportion were men* and the task turned out per unit was slightly over a B class task. The coolies came, worked hard and went away cheerful and contented, nor was there any waste of funds. On making inquiries in the villages as to the large number of coolies and especially men attached, I was told that it was because the work was on piece-work system and the villagers were allowed to form their own gangs each being paid by results.

3. In connection with the test work at Bendi in January last I suggested that work might advantageously be given out on piece-work to village gangs without the intervention of contractors, and in most places the same theory still holds good. In this opinion I am supported by my Divisional officers. I am inclined to believe that, with the new allotment falling available on 1st April, we shall, so far as this district is concerned by the general adoption of this system, be able to avert the necessity for any relief works except in a few special localities which are badly favoured in respect of ordinary works. The people will work cheerfully and contentedly and will have a margin left over for the support of their children who will not then be forced on to kitchens or gratuitous relief. This principle has been recently endorsed in the Government of India memorandum embodied in B.P. (Revenue Settlement), dated 11th March 1897, No. 216. Some temporary additional establishment may be required, but it will prove to be economy in the long run and much famine expenditure, that might otherwise be rendered necessary, avoided.

4. With regard to the breaking of metal for the East Coast Railway, I should be very glad to see the principle of piece-work adopted; but here there is a difficulty. This is a railway work specially provided against famine and the work has to be executed by the Public Works Department subject to the provisions of the Famine Code—a subsequent adjustment being made from Railway funds. It is not an ordinary work to be executed under the special conditions referred to in paragraph 16 of the Famine Code.

5. I would therefore ask whether, under the special circumstances of this district which show that—while work is demanded and eagerly sought for—, test works prove no attraction, the work of breaking metal (provided as a special famine relief work in the Famine Programme of the district) may not be taken up on the principles suggested, viz., on piece-work given at low rates to village groups without the intervention of contractors. The railway throughout the district runs through the tract where work is most urgently required and it would prove of the greatest possible service to take up this work on the system referred to even before the allotments on all other works are exhausted. I would request that Government may be asked so to relax the provisions of the Famine Code as to permit of funds being granted under 33 Famine, for the execution of this work on the principles enunciated by the Supreme Government in their memorandum quoted above without applying the conditions of chapter VII of the Code.

Resolution—dated 7th April 1897, No. 289.

In his endorsement read above, the Collector of Ganjám asks that, on the principles laid down in paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 of enclosure 1 to Government of India's Circular No. 16—104-1-F., dated 13th February 1897, piece-work on reduced rates may be substituted for test works in his district, and expresses the opinion that, if his suggestion is adopted, a very considerable amount of expenditure upon other forms of relief that necessarily follows in the wake of strictly organized famine relief-works will be saved. He reports "at present the people are in want of work, but they are not reduced to such straits as to accept famine wage, and famine discipline on relief-works." The Collector's experiment shows that even under the disadvantageous terms on which piece-work has been offered, there is a real demand for such employment. This demand shows that there exists a distress of considerable intensity.

2. Employment by piece-work was intended by the Government of India to be only *preliminary* to the introduction of strictly organised test-works, and the Board considers that if relief is necessary at all the time has come for the introduction of works of the latter kind. The Uriya is, no doubt, the most difficult man in the Presidency to deal with in administering Government relief, but the Board does not consider that his prejudices and reluctance to submit to discipline are sufficient reasons for treating him differently from the distressed population of other districts. The conditions of employment set out in G.O., No. 216 of 1897 are more liberal than those hitherto in force, and the Board is not prepared to recommend to Government on behalf of any isolated portion of the Presidency any deviation from the general principles therein expounded. Any work that may be opened for the purpose of relief must be carried out in accordance with the provisions of chapter VII of the Famine Code. In declining to support the Collector, the Board is fully aware of the difficulty with which he has to deal, but a Famine Code is not to be torn in pieces during the progress of distress, except for very serious reasons. The provisions relating to gratuitous relief have been relaxed to a degree not permitted in other districts in view of the recognised singularity of Ganjám, and it is hoped that between this and the very benevolent terms offered in G.O., No. 216 of 1897, which the Collector had not received when he wrote his letter, that officer may succeed in attaining the objects of relief without further experiments. The susceptibilities of the Uriya have been sufficiently met in the matter of gratuitous relief, but he cannot be encouraged to take a step further and dictate to the whole Presidency how relief on works should be administered.

(True Copy and Extract.)

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

To the Collector of Ganjám.

Copy to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
" " Collectors of other affected districts.

Read—the following letter from T. W. HOLDERNESS, Esq., C.S., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue and Agriculture (Famine), to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, dated Simla, the 19th April 1897, Cir. No. 20—91-2-F.:—

I am directed to forward, for the information of the Governor in Council, a copy of a resolution issued by the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, No. 753, dated 16th March 1897, prescribing a modified system of "intermediate" relief works with the object of limiting the earnings of workers to a reasonable subsistence wage for themselves and their dependants.

—

Enclosures.

Resolution from the Secretary to Government, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Scarcity Department, No. 753—S.-73, dated Allahabad, the 16th March 1897.

Read—

G.O., No. 357, of 5th December 1896, to all Commissioners of Divisions, North-Western Provinces and Oudh.

G.O., No. 9099-W.A, of 5th December 1896, to all Superintending Engineers, Provincial Works, North-Western Provinces and Oudh.

G.O., No. 428, of 16th December 1896, to all Commissioners of Divisions, North-Western Provinces and Oudh.

Government of India Circular No. 3-F., of 24th December 1896, on the exaction of full task in famine-relief operations.

G.O., No. 464, of 13th February 1897, to all Commissioners of Divisions and Collectors of Districts, North-Western Provinces and Oudh (except Meerut and Kumaun).

Government of India Circular No. 16-F., of 13th February 1897, on principles for regulating expenditure upon public works in time of famine.

The advent of the *rabi* harvest and the further experience gained in the conduct of relief works under the Famine Code rules have led the Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner to consider whether, in the districts where distress is less acute, some modification is not required in the arrangements now in force on relief works, and in the method of fixing and paying wages. The commencement of the harvest has renewed the demand for field labour, which ceased when the winter rains put an end to the irrigation of the advanced crops. In some districts a fresh demand has sprung up for more irrigation to counteract the mischief caused by the high winds which prevailed a short time ago. It is unnecessary to say that it is of the highest importance to so regulate the relief works that they may not attract away labour which is required to get in or safeguard the harvest on which the food supply of the country will now largely depend. It is for every reason no less important to arrange tasks and wages with a view to limit the admission to relief works strictly to those persons who cannot find private employment and have no other means of subsistence.

At the same time it may be anticipated that the harvest work will not absorb the usual amount of labour, as the area sown is below normal, and the pressure on all classes will lead tenants and small proprietors to do more field work than usual themselves, and thereby dispense with the services of day labourers.

It is therefore necessary in most districts to maintain for the present relief works in some form, though employment will have to be found only for diminished numbers.

2. Relief works under the Famine Code rules, not only provide employment for all working members of a family, no matter how ineffective, but supply a gratuitous dole to all members who are unable to work. It therefore unavoidably happens that the members of a large family coming all together on the works are able to earn or receive collectively more than the effective working members alone could gain from a private employer and frequently more than suffices for their subsistence only. The presence of large crowds, including very numerous ineffective workers and dependants, renders it very difficult to enforce a full task or, without reducing the wage below subsistence level, to impose fines which will correctly represent short work. A fresh inducement is thereby offered to labourers to remain on relief works after private employment has re-opened.

The problem is to introduce a system which will retain the principle that relief work afford, ing subsistence for the labourers and their dependants shall be provided where it is required, and at the same time to divest the work system of the features which may place it in competition with ordinary labourer where this is available.

3. The Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner believes that such a system may be found in a modification of the scheme of intermediate works sketched in the correspondence noted at the head of this resolution.

That scheme as originally framed required the interposition of petty contractors or middlemen between the Government and the actual labourers. The contractors derived a profit which was set off against the cost of establishment which Government would have had to provide. But it gave contractors an inducement to employ only the more able-bodied and to exclude the weakly who stood most in need of support, and constant supervision, involving expense, was required to counteract this tendency. The system is suited to less considerable works where distress is not very general, but it is less suited to large undertakings designed to afford relief to great numbers of unskilled labourers. A modification of it has recently been tried with success, and the Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner would like to see it generally applied, not merely to intermediate works on the old system, which it has now quite supplanted, but to many works now carried out under Famine Code rules where there is a fair *rabi* area and where the distress is not acute. Under this modified system no contractor or middleman is employed. The work is laid out, supervised, and measured, and payments are made by Government officials; and tools, where necessary, are supplied by Government. But the work will continue to be treated and paid as piece work, not as task work under the Famine Code. No dependants will be recognised, and the payments will be in accordance with the amount of work actually done.

The rates and tasks will be so graduated as to enable an ordinary labourer or family of labourers to earn what the average family now earns in the shape of both wages and gratuitous doles (to dependants) combined. The discontinuance of Sunday labour makes it necessary to arrange for labourers earning on week days enough to provide for themselves and their dependants on Sundays also.

4. The table which accompanies this resolution shows the rates, tasks, and wages which it is proposed to adopt as a standard, and an endeavour has been made to render them suitable for adoption in all parts of the provinces. But in view of the very varying conditions which exist in different districts, some local modifications may be found necessary, and these should be determined in each case by the Commissioner, Collector, and Superintending Engineer.

The point to be borne in mind is to fix rates and tasks which will not render the relief works unduly attractive, and, while securing a fair outturn of work, will not permit labourers to earn more than a reasonable subsistence wage for themselves and their dependants. A maximum task has been fixed, representing the greatest amount of daily work which a labour party can be permitted to perform and the highest daily wage they can be permitted to earn.

The table is framed primarily to meet the case of a labour party (or family) consisting of a digger and two adult carriers; the number of carriers would in practice vary with the employment of minors. The standard task in ordinary soil is taken to be 100 cubic feet, and the rate fixed is Rs. 2-3-0 per 1,000 cubic feet. The party would earn daily for this work 14 pice, which would represent 6 pice for the digger and 8 pice for carriers, being 4 pice each if two adults were actually employed and proportionally less per carrier if there were two or more minors in place of an adult.

It would be the business of the charge officer or work agent and staff to form the parties and distribute the work.

If the full tale of 100 cubic feet were not executed, there would be a proportional abatement made in the total payment, and if the tale were exceeded, the payment would be proportionately raised up to the full or maximum task or wage, but not beyond that.

If the full or maximum task of 125 cubic feet were performed, the total earnings of the party would be 17 pice, representing 7 pice to the digger and 10 pice to the carriers, which, reduced to two adults, would give 5 pice to each. The exact apportionment of the total earnings of the gang or party could be varied as circumstances required. The above distribution is suggested as one generally suitable.

5. The ordinary task, if executed, would enable the average family to earn what it now receives in the shape of wages and doles, and, by a little extra diligence on week days, the full task would make provision for the Sunday wage without requiring labour on that day. At the same time a fair outturn of work would be ensured and proportional deductions made for short work. There would be some reduction in the crowds of dependants and ineffective labourers who throng the works and become a source of danger in the season when cholera is usually prevalent.

The foregoing rates are put forward tentatively as those at which the experiment can be commenced subject to any local variations which may be decided as above explained. Experience may show them liable to alteration.

6. Under instructions already issued, this system will be introduced in the current month into the districts of the Agra Division, the *Holi* festival being taken as a suitable point of departure. It should also be introduced at the same time into any parts of the Rohilkhand Division where it may not be at present in force. In the Fyzabad Division it should be applied to any works which remain open, and in all cases where it may hereafter be found necessary to re-open works.

In the Gorakhpur Division such a system is practically in force in half the district. In the other part of the district and in Azamgarh it can be introduced at once as the Commissioner finds it possible to do so. It is believed that all necessity for relief works in Basti has now ceased or will shortly cease. Should any be retained or re-opened, the system now indicated should be adopted.

It will be necessary to retain the works under the Famine Code system in the Hardoi district; but the Commissioner of Lucknow is at liberty to introduce the system above described into the whole or part of any other district in his division, and should take early steps to effect the change where it seems possible.

In the Allahabad Division, the system should be introduced into the Cawnpore and Fatehpur districts, and into the north part of the Allahabad district, consisting of the Doáb portion, and the three tahsíls (Phulpur, Handia, and Soraon) across the Ganges.

The Commissioner of Benares should consider and report whether the system should be introduced into the Jaunpur district.

It is not proposed to make any change at present in the system of relief works under full Famine Code rules in those districts where the distress is very acute, and the contracted area of the *rabí* crop and its defective condition do not hold out any prospect of considerable occupation for labour in harvesting it. In this category come the Bundelkhand districts, South Allahabad, Mirzapur, and Hardoi. No attempt will therefore be made to introduce the intermediate system into these parts.

Where action is to be taken under these orders, it should be taken promptly as the harvest season has already begun.

Table showing rates to be paid for earthwork—intermediate system.

Kind of soil.	Ordinary task.					Full task (provides for dependants).		
	Task adapted to ordinary workers.	Rate per 1,000 cubic feet.	Rate per 100 cubic feet.	Wages earned by performing task.	Remarks.	Task which can be performed by hard work.	Wages earned by performing task.	Remarks.
	C. FT.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.		C. FT.	RS. A. P.	
I.—Soft	120	1 14 0	0 3 0	0 3 6	Re. 0-3-7, but taken as Re. 0-3-6.	141	0 4 3	..
II.—Ordinary standard rate.	100	2 3 0	0 3 6	0 3 6	..	125	0 4 3	Re. 0-4-4, but taken as Re. 0-4-3.

N.B.—(*a*) The rate No. II is the standard. The 14 pice earned would be distributed between the digger and carrier or carriers in proportions varying with the locality: in the 2nd Circle the digger would receive six pice and two carriers four pice each for an ordinary task, and the digger seven pice and two carriers five pice each for a full task.

(*b*) The rate No. II would be followed in the absence of special orders by the District Engineer, to be reported to the Divisional and Superintending Engineer.

(*c*) These rates are adapted for roads where the lead is not materially in excess of 50 feet or the depth of excavation much in excess of 5 feet.

(*d*) In the case of tanks where greater lifts and leads would be met with special rates providing for the extra lift and lead would be sanctioned by Superintending Engineers, following generally Appendix D, Famine Code.

(*e*) The above rates are for earthwork only thrown up to section. Dressing and finishing would usually be separately paid for at a rate not exceeding for roads eight annas per 1,000 cubic feet of earthwork, to be fixed by the Superintending Engineer. Where the dressing could be done by the same gang, the earthwork rates would be increased by five annas per 1,000 cubic feet.

Order.—Ordered that copies be forwarded to all Commissioners of Divisions and District Officers, North-Western Provinces and Oudh (except those of the Meerut and Kumaun Divisions), for information and necessary action.

Ordered also that copies be forwarded to the Secretary to this Government in the Public Works Department, Buildings and Roads Branch, for information and necessary action.

(Signed) T. STOKER,
Secy. to Govt., N.-W. P. and Oudh.

Order—No. 430, Revenue, dated 3rd June 1897.

Miscellaneous.

In the second of the papers read above, the Board of Revenue disallows a proposal made by the Collector of Ganjám to substitute piece-work on reduced rates and without the intervention of contractors for the task-work system in force on the relief works in progress in the district. The proposal is based on principles recently adopted in the North-Western Provinces, with the approval of the Government of India, and described in paragraphs 5—8 of the memorandum printed in the first of the papers read above.

2. Section 16 of the Madras Famine Code recognises that in tracts where distress is just commencing, it may be desirable to expand, as a temporary measure, the ordinary works of the Public Works Department so as to give employment to larger numbers than usual, the labourers being employed on the additional works thus undertaken on the usual contract system at the rates prevailing in the labour market. Such additional works may in many cases be sufficient to meet all requirements in the earlier stages of distress, as demand for employment by inefficient labour will not then be appreciable and the earnings of able-bodied workers on the piece-work system supplemented by such additions as can be obtained in the villages by their women and infirm dependants will be sufficient for the maintenance of the whole family. Section 16 further contemplates that it may be necessary to modify the usual contract system on these ordinary works so as to admit of their giving employment to the largest number possible, contracts for small works or where possible for portions of large works being given to such heads of villages as can be relied on to give employment to their most needy fellow villagers. But when distress deepens and gives rise to demand for employment by inefficient labour, since the ordinary contract system fails to secure proper remuneration to the individual worker, one or more test works are to be opened to gauge the extent of distress and of the demand for employment under the conditions of the Famine Code.

3. The above appears also in the main to be the course prescribed in the North-Western Provinces Famine Code, but the experience gained in that province shows that in tracts where distress, though considerable, is not so acute as to drive on to the works a large proportion of inefficient labour, payment by results is more economical than the gang and task work system of the Code which involves the payment of a subsistence wage to all workers however inefficient, besides the gratuitous maintenance of their children and infirm dependants. In view of the costliness of relief works and of the extreme difficulty of obtaining the large number of subordinate officers required for their supervision, the Government of the North-Western Provinces has adopted a system of works intermediate between ordinary and relief works, which are to take the place of ordinary works when distress becomes pronounced, to be replaced in their turn by regular relief works when distress deepens into famine. These works are to be given out on the system of payment by results to piece-workers or gangers, preferably village headmen, at rates which allow them a fair remuneration for their trouble and expense, the proportion of the rates to be paid as wages to the workmen being fixed beforehand. The above is in effect, the modified contract system contemplated by section 16 of the Madras Code and the advantage of it is that it secures proper remuneration to the individual worker which, under the urgency of distress, the ordinary contract system fails to do, while at the same time it enables able-bodied workers to earn enough to maintain their women and children. But it gives the contractors and middlemen interposed between Government and the actual workers an inducement to employ only the more able-bodied labourers to the exclusion of the weakly who stand most in need of relief, and constant supervision involving expense is required to counteract this tendency. It has therefore been found that though suitable to less considerable works where distress is not general, the system is not adapted to large undertakings designed to afford relief to considerable numbers of unskilled labourers, and it appears from the last of the papers read above that the North-Western Provinces Government has found it necessary to adopt a modified form

of it in which the Government deals directly with the labourers. The work is laid out, supervised and measured by Government officials, and tools where necessary are supplied by Government; but payments are made by results as under the piece-work system, and no dependants are recognized.

4. It will thus be seen that the system advocated by the Collector of Ganjám is the same as the modified form of the piece-work system recently adopted with success in the North-Western Provinces. The Board of Revenue objects to its adoption on the ground that it is intended by the Government of India to be only preliminary to the introduction of strictly organized test works, and that if relief is necessary at all in the district the time has come for the introduction of the latter kind of works. The Government has carefully considered the subject and is of opinion that the district of Ganjám is one in which strictly organized test and relief works fail of their intended objects, and that there and perhaps elsewhere also it is necessary to supplement the scheme of works as laid down in the Code by an intermediate system like the one described above. The Uriyas of Ganjám are as a class averse to sending their women to labour at the relief works and none but those belonging to the lowest classes send their children to the kitchens attached to the works; as the earnings of the actual workers are barely sufficient for their own maintenance, Government relief does not reach the women and children of the labouring classes and regular relief works fail of their object. Further it is reported that the people of the district dislike the discipline enforced on such works and will not resort to them unless reduced to great straits. The Koyas of the Bhadráchalam taluk similarly have a strong prejudice against relief works and refuse to accept employment at the Code rates though there is considerable distress among them now; and anxiety has been expressed in some quarters lest this prejudice should lead them to stint and starve themselves. A similar reluctance on the part of the people to resort to relief works has been reported from Vizagapatam. On the other hand payment by results to which the people are accustomed is suited to their habits and tastes, and it appears from the correspondence forwarded by the Collector of Ganjám that the labourers in his district are anxious to have piece-work and willing to accept work at rates considerably below those allowed by the Public Works Department in ordinary years. The Government is of opinion that the proper policy to pursue under the circumstances is to offer relief in the form acceptable to the distressed population instead of waiting till by prolonged stinting they reduce themselves to such a low condition as to make them ready to accept employment on any terms. The intermediate system of payment by results offers the best solution of the difficulty and the experience gained in the North-Western Provinces shows that it is more economical than task work even at rates higher than those allowed by the Public Works Department in ordinary years.

5. The adoption of such a system is also rendered necessary by the concentration of relief works lately ordered by Government which involves the opening of petty village works and improvements for affording employment to people living at a distance from the works centres. These petty works cannot be carried on under the supervision of Government officials and must necessarily be entrusted to the agency of village heads or other middlemen. The system is therefore likely to prove advantageous, not only in Ganjám but in all the affected tracts, and His Excellency the Governor in Council is of opinion that it should be adopted as an integral part of the scheme of famine-relief works. It is no doubt true that the system as originally approved by the Government of India was intended to meet the earlier stages of distress and to be preliminary to the introduction of the regular relief works, but in the modified form in which it has been recently adopted in the North-Western Provinces it can advantageously be made use of even when distress becomes severe.

6. The scheme of relief works to be opened by Government will then stand as follows:—

(i) Expanded ordinary works:	...	To be carried out on the ordinary contract system.
(ii) and (iii) Intermediate works: to be carried out on the gang and piece-work system.	(ii)	With the intervention of petty contractors.
	(iii)	Without the intervention of contractors, work being laid out, supervised and paid for by Government officials.
(iv) Test and relief works:	... ...	To be carried out under the Code conditions.

Class (ii) is the same as the modified contract system contemplated by section 16 of the Code, class (iii) works are called "intermediate" in accordance with the designation adopted in the North-Western Provinces, but the Government trusts that in districts like Ganjám where the peculiar habits of the people may render such work necessary, they will be found adequate for the relief of distress in all its stages and will form an efficient substitute for relief works as organized under the Code. The laying out, supervision and measurement of work on this class of works should be undertaken by Government officials, and to prevent a too rapid exhaustion of the works it will be necessary to limit the amount of work to be assigned to each piece-working gang. The rates allowed on works of classes (ii) and (iii) must be so fixed as not to attract labour for which there is existing employment, and should be "such as to constitute a hard bargain even with the skilled labourer, and should be distinctly below what it would be necessary to give in order to attract labour in the absence of distress." It is also well to bear in mind that these works are opened on the supposition that under the system of payment by results an able-bodied labourer can earn enough to maintain himself and the non-working members of his family and that such works are therefore more economical than relief works. As soon therefore as it is apparent that there is a demand by inefficient labour for employment on the terms offered at these intermediate works, one or more works on the task-work system should be opened, and if such demand be found to be considerable the intermediate works should be replaced by regular relief works, or the labourers drafted to the nearest such works.

7. The Famine Commissioner will take immediate steps to carry out the above instructions. It will be for him to decide in consultation with Collectors whether intermediate works can advantageously be opened in any affected district; such works can be readily converted into regular relief works when necessity arises.

8. Ordered that the following letter be despatched to the Government of India.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Famine Commissioner.
" the Public Works Department.
" the Local and Municipal Department.
" the Financial Department.
" the Accountant-General.

Exd. W. D'Moss.

150 Copies.

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L. Ramniah

Ag. Head Clerk

R.D.

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Government {1897} of Madras.

REVENUE.

Recd. } 1897. Enclosures

Regd. } Spare copies

G.O., No. 430, 3rd June 1897.

JUNE.

Intermediate system of relief works.

Directing the adoption in this Presidency of the — introduced with success in the North-Western Provinces.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

Read—again the following G.O., Mis. No. 1245, Revenue, dated 5th March 1897:—

Read—the following letter from T. W. HOLDERNESS, Esq., I.C.S., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India (Department of Revenue and Agriculture—Famine), to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, dated Calcutta, the 13th February 1897, Cir. No. 16—104-I.-F.:—

I am directed to forward, for information and guidance, copy of a memorandum in which are succinctly stated the leading principles regulating expenditure upon public works in time of famine.

2. Paragraphs 5 to 8 of the memorandum should be regarded as supplementing the provisions contained in the Provincial Famine Codes with regard to the expansion of "ordinary" public works and the opening of "test" works when distress is imminent or its extent and acuteness have to be ascertained. It is not proposed at present that the Famine Codes should be amended with a view to bring them into formal agreement (where this is necessary) with a memorandum as to the manner in which such works should be conducted. The statement of principles contained in the memorandum leaves in this respect a large discretion to Local Governments and Administrations, and any amendment of the Codes which may be required in this and other points will be more usefully undertaken when the experience of the present year can be brought under review.

Letter from North-Western Provinces and Oudh Government, No. 417-S., dated 14th December 1896.
Letter from North-Western Provinces and Oudh Government, No. 500, dated 21st December 1896, and enclosure.
Letter to North-Western Provinces and Oudh Government, No. 255-F., dated 16th January 1897.

3. As paragraph 6 of the memorandum refers to the "intermediate or gang-piece-work" system which has been experimentally adopted in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, the papers marked on the margin, which explain this system, are also forwarded for reference.

Enclosures.

Principles for regulating expenditure upon Public Works in time of famine.

1. In districts where no distress exists, it is the general rule that expenditure upon public works, even within the limits of budget provision, should be contracted with a view to setting funds and establishments at liberty for employment when they are more needed. To this rule, however, exceptions may be made—

(1) where the works could not be contracted without risk of creating distress by reducing the local employment of labour;

(2) where the contraction of the works would result in returning to districts, where distress exists or is threatened, the labourers employed on them.

2. Where distress exists, it will be necessary to provide additional employment upon works. *All* such additional expenditure must be subjected to the relief conditions described below.

3. The essence of relief conditions is that the remuneration for work done must be so fixed as not to attract labour for which there is existing employment elsewhere. This condition must invariably be enforced. The method of enforcing it will vary with the degree of distress which prevails.

4. Where acute distress or famine prevails, so that the general population is affected, and it is necessary to provide employment not only for able-bodied labourers, but also for a large proportion of inefficient labour, task work must be rigorously enforced, nobody being allowed either to do more than the fixed task or to earn more than the fixed maximum wage. The former condition is necessary in order to economise the supply of useful work upon which labour can be employed; the second, in order to limit expenditure, since, when the dependents of a skilled labourer are paid separately, it is not necessary for purposes of relief to pay him more than a subsistence wage.

5. But when distress, though present, is not so acute as to drive on to the works a large proportion of inefficient labour or of persons unaccustomed to work, payment by results is more economical than task work; for so long as an able-bodied labourer can earn enough, under the conditions laid down in paragraph 3, to enable those of his family who do not work to live at home, he will support himself and them more cheaply than Government can do.

6. Payment by results may take the form, either of an expansion of ordinary works under the usual system of petty contracts, or of the intermediate or gang-piece-work system of the North-Western Provinces. The former is sufficient when distress is slight; but as the scarcity becomes more acute and threatens to deepen into famine, the latter should be substituted, since it secures proper remuneration to the individual workman, which, under the urgency of distress, the former fails to do.

7. If the rates offered are regulated by the principle laid down in paragraph 3, gang-piece-work will effectively gauge the intensity of distress, since it will afford to inefficient labour only a bare subsistence.

8. As soon, therefore, as the demand by inefficient labour for employment on these terms begins to be appreciable, additional test-works on the task-work system may usefully be opened; though at a sufficient distance from the piece-work works to ensure that if the man works at piece-work and his women and children at task work, they shall at least be compelled to live apart. These will provide for the women and children during the intermediate stage, while distress is *becoming* acute. As soon, however, as the demand by inefficient labour for employment upon either system becomes considerable, acute distress is present, and payment by results must then be discontinued and task work substituted for it.

9. It is conceivable that in any district there may be cases in which the rapid and efficient prosecution of a particular public work is of such importance as to justify a relaxation of the above conditions. Such instances will be rare, the works will be of magnitude, and each case will be decided upon its individual merits.

10. It is for Local Governments to judge of the local conditions in each case, and to justify to themselves or to the Government of India, as the case may be, the action to be taken under the principles thus laid down.

From the Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, to the Secretary to the Government of India, dated Allahabad, the 14th December 1896, No. 417-S.:—

In his demi-official letter of the 29th November Mr. H. F. Evans enclosed, for the information of the Government of India, copy of a letter addressed to officers, asking them to report what effect had been produced by the late rainfall on the prospects of their respective districts. The Government is still awaiting these replies, but provisional information has been received from Commissioners of Divisions, from which it appears that they are of the opinion that prospects have been so far improved as to justify the expectation that with fair winter rains the numbers who may come on relief will be less by about 25 per cent. than the number of 100,000,000 units for one day, stated in the third column of statement B, paragraph 10 of this office letter No. 196, dated the 23rd November 1896. In this opinion the Lieutenant-Governor generally concurs, and he now sees reason to hope that it will not be necessary in several districts to undertake relief operations to the extent which seemed probable before the late rain had fallen. In view of the altered condition of things, and with the object of avoiding unnecessary expenditure, the Lieutenant-Governor has reconsidered the programme of public works referred to in paragraphs 19 and 20 of the letter mentioned above, and has consulted Commissioners of Divisions on the following point: whether it would be desirable to pursue the policy indicated in paragraph 20 of the letter noticed above, and postpone village works till the hot weather had set in; or whether, in view of the probability that in certain districts the necessity for extensive relief would disappear when the *rabi* had been harvested, it would be better to meet the demand for employment which may arise between now and the harvesting of the *rabi* by a more general use of village works now than had been intended. The Commissioners' official replies are awaited, but from the communications unofficially made by them to His Honour, it seems certain that they will ask for permission to begin some village works at once, and also to maintain a backbone of some large works managed by the Department of Public Works in the various districts. These works are now in operation in many districts.

2. The question also presented itself whether, in districts in which prospects have improved, it was desirable, where village works were not found to afford suitable employment, to open relief works under strict Code rules. Under the Code three classes of works are recognized:—

(1) Ordinary works (article 60) debitable to Provincial or District funds.

(2) Test-relief works debitable to famine relief, and carried out in the general spirit of the Famine Code Rules.

(3) Regular relief works under Chapter VI of the Code, on which the "gang" and "task" work system is rigidly enforced.

In almost all district funds, either provincial or district, for ordinary works have been exhausted; while, at the same time, test works have shown the necessity for some employment, though not on the expensive or extensive system prescribed by the Famine Code. The problem, then, was to provide such employment as would be suitable for districts under observation, but in which distress had not fully declared itself. Such employment is offered, for example, in the Cawnpore district by the Lower Ganges Extension canal project, and in the Azamgarh district, to some extent, by the extensions of the Bengal and North-Western Railway.

3. These facts have suggested to His Honour the adoption in such localities of a modified system of famine-relief works which would be intermediate between works carried out on the ordinary and on the Famine Code systems. Such works, while conducted on principles involving much less expenditure than would be incurred were the system of the Code followed, will serve as test works on a large scale. Their existence, with the establishment thereon, will also enable the Government to at once convert them into Famine Code works without a day's delay should famine supervene. It need hardly be observed that no advantage will be taken of this arrangement to carry through works in the interest of district or provincial funds; and that no work will be begun which is not absolutely essential with the object of preventing suffering from want of food.

I am to add that this plan has been forced on His Honour for two reasons: first economy, and second, the extreme difficulty of obtaining the large number of subordinate officers necessary for Famine Code works.

4. I am to forward a copy of the instructions * which have issued on the subject, which will explain more fully the action which the Lieutenant-Governor has decided to take.

* G.O., No. 357-S.—73, dated 5th December 1896.

From T. W. HOLDERNESS, Esq., Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, to all Commissioners of Divisions, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, dated Allahabad, the 5th December 1896, No. 357-S.—73.

I am directed to address you on the subject of the employment of the Public Works Department in managing and carrying out famine-relief works. At the present time distress is officially recognised as existing in the districts marginally noted, and the Public Works Department has already commenced relief operations in these districts. And relief work not being of the article 65 (*a*) class opened in the marginally-noted districts for the future must be treated as relief works under the Code and managed from the outset by the Public Works Department.

Allahabad.
Hamirpur.
Banda.
Jhansi.
Hardoi.
Jalan.
Jaunpur.
Rae Bareli.
Sitapur.

2. Article 60 of the Famine Code provides that where distress is commencing, ordinary works may be expanded as a temporary measure to meet the demand for employment. In these districts, that is, districts not officially declared to be distressed, it is open to you to commence test works in order to gauge the necessity for relief works. But experience has shown that test relief-works managed by non-professional agency do not always gauge the existence of distress so well as works conducted under the strict safeguards and tests which are necessarily applied by the Public Works Department. I am therefore to request that when the necessity contemplated by article 60 arises, you will ordinarily employ the Public Works Department in controlling test works, or, when ordinary works are exhausted, in affording the employment necessary on a suitable work included in the relief programme, piece-work at rates suitable for the object in view being substituted for contracts. When the pressure of distress becomes such as to render the enforcement of piece-work as above mentioned unsuitable, these works can be readily converted into relief works under articles 70 and 74 of the Famine Code. The existence of a work in progress, with establishments on the spot, will place you in a far better position to meet any sudden pressure or rush of labourers than if the work had to be opened to meet a sudden and particular demand. Moreover, the existence of a work managed by the Public Works Department on the piece work system as sketched above may satisfy all the requirements of a tract of country not acutely distressed, while the cost to Government will be much less than would be the case if regular relief works under the provisions of the Famine Code had to be established. You will not fail to observe that this system of works, which are intermediate between "ordinary" and "Code relief works," will be peculiarly useful as a reserve and supplement to the system of village works [article 65 (*a*)] managed by the District officers directly or by local zamindars.

3. Further orders dealing with the manner in which these orders are to be given effect to in detail will issue from the Public Works Department to Superintending Engineers, copies of which will be forwarded to you for information and guidance.

No. 358 S.—73.

Copy forwarded to the Secretary to this Government in the Public Works Department, Buildings and Roads Branch, for necessary action with reference to paragraph 3.

From P. HARRISON, Esq., Under Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, to the Secretary to the Government of India, dated Allahabad, the 21st December 1896, No. 500.

In continuation of this Government's letter No. 417, dated the 14th December 1896, I am directed to forward, for the information of the Government of India, copies of the letter noted on the margin, relative to the adoption in certain localities of a modified system of famine-relief works which will be intermediate between works carried out under the ordinary and on the Famine Code system.

Letter No. 9099-W.A., dated 5th December 1896, from the Secretary to Government, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Public Works Department, to all Superintending Engineers, Provincial Works.

From C. W. ODLING, Esq., Secretary to Government, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Public Works Department, to all Superintending Engineers, Provincial Works, dated Allahabad, the 5th December 1896, No. 9099-W.A.

The Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner has had under consideration the best method of testing the probability or existence of distress, and of affording employment in districts which are under observation, that is, districts in which famine threatens, but in which the existence of famine has not been officially recognised. His Honour is of opinion that the needful test will be best effected and the necessary employment afforded by work carried out on a system intermediate between "ordinary" and "Famine Code works," and this view is expressed in the orders issued in the Scarcity Department, of which a copy will be separately forwarded for your information and guidance.

2. In relief works under the Famine Code (articles 70 and 74) the enforcement of the "gang" and task systems is imperative. The works proposed in the preceding paragraph may be regarded as preliminary to regular relief works under the Code. Should distress supervene it will be very easy to convert these works from the piece-work to the task and gang system, and to expand the establishments.

3. But, while the works remain outside the strict letter of Code rules, it is proposed that the rates given shall, in view of the high price of food, be enhanced by 25 to, in particular cases, 50 per cent., *i.e.*, from Rs. 2 per 1,000 cubic feet of earthwork to Rs 2-8-0 or Rs. 3. It is not intended that these works shall be given out on contract, but rather to piece-workers or gangers employing not more than 200 persons. Men of the *chaprasi* class, relatives of petty officials, should on no account be employed. Village *pattidars* are very suitable men, but in any case the piece-worker must actually reside on the work, and deal directly with the workers who will then, with the class of men employed, be in a position to insist on a fixed proportion of the rate being paid to them. In giving out the work the wages to be paid to the workers would be specified; and it is considered that ordinarily 20 per cent. of the rate would be a sufficient remuneration to the piece-worker for his own labour, interest on capital and incidental expenses, such as baskets and perishable stores. It would be necessary to pay the piece-worker weekly, or at most fortnightly, as he would generally be a man of very small capital. The workers would usually bring their own *phaoras*, but at times it might be necessary to issue such tools to the piece-worker. In order that the piece-workers employed may comply with the conditions laid down in this letter, it may be necessary to impose the condition that a piece-worker who cannot carry out work to the value of Rs. 150 in a month will be discharged, whilst no piece-worker will be allowed to execute work to the value of more than Rs. 1,000 in one month.

4. Works on the lines mentioned will also serve as test works, the number and class of labourers resorting to the work being indicative of the sufficiency of the work to meet the degree of pressure, or the necessity for relief works under the Code. But they will not prevent test works under Code rules and on subsistence wages being also established, provided that they are some distance (5 miles or more) apart. It will not, however, be possible to carry out works on the plan sketched above in a tract declared to be distressed, such as the districts mentioned in the margin. In these districts, and in any other district recognised as distressed, the Code rules must be strictly followed. A manual of these rules is under issue for your guidance.

Banda.	Jaunpur.
Hamirpur.	Rae Bareli.
Jhansi.	Sitapur.
Jalaun.	Hardoi.
Allahabad.	

5. The works to be carried out under the terms mentioned in paragraph 3 above will be confined to those for which detailed estimates have been sanctioned, and you should at once place yourself in communication with Commissioners of divisions in your circle with the view of putting one or more works in hand in those districts where they consider them to be required. The work put in hand must, unless with the express sanction of Government, be limited to what can be carried out by famine labour. Subject to the restrictions mentioned above, the works should be selected by Commissioners and may (provided there is an allotment for famine relief works for the district in which the work is situated, *but not otherwise*) be commenced under your orders in anticipation of the approval of Government. An immediate report giving the name of the work, the amount of the estimate, and date of commencement, should, however, be made. The rate it is proposed to pay for earthwork should be mentioned.

6. Works carried out under the orders contained in this letter will be charged to the head Famine Relief and provided for from the allotment made under that head, for such works in the district concerned. The usual weekly famine reports to the Chief Engineer will be required, and arrangements must be made to keep a record of the number of men employed.

Copy forwarded to all Commissioners of divisions and Collectors of districts, to the Examiner, Public Works Accounts, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, and to the Scarcity Department of this Government, for information.

From DENZIL IBBETSON, Esq., C.S.I., I.C.S., Secretary to the Government of India, to the Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Scarcity Department, dated Calcutta, the 16th January 1897, No. 255-F.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letters, Nos. 417 and 500, dated the 14th and 21st December 1896, respectively, regarding the adoption in certain localities of a modified system of relief works which will be carried out under a system of piece-work by gangs, the members of which will be entitled to certain payments, and which will occupy a position intermediate between works carried out on the ordinary system of petty contract and those conducted under the strict conditions of the Famine Code.

2. His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor has been led to introduce this intermediate system by the difficulty of obtaining the large establishments that are necessary for work under the strict provisions of the Famine Code and by the great cost of such works. The Government of India understand that the economy of this new system depends upon the fact that, in tracts where the distress, though real, has not deepened into famine, if the able-bodied workers are employed on piece-work, the women and children will in the main be supported at home by the earnings of the workers, supplemented by such additions to them as they can obtain in their own villages; whereas if the task-work system is strictly enforced, the women and children must at once come on to the works, since the famine wage is sufficient only to support the workers themselves. If this be so, piece-work appears to be advisable so long as the mass of inefficient labour can find support without relief from Government.

3. It is, however, very necessary, as already explained in my Circular No. 3—77-1 F., dated the 24th December 1896, that the rates given should be so regulated as to act as an efficient test of the intensity of distress. They should be such as to constitute a somewhat hard bargain even with the skilled labourer; and should be distinctly below what it would be necessary to give in order to attract labour in the absence of distress. When this is the case, inefficient labour paid by the piece will earn but a bare subsistence, so that the extent of the demand by inefficient labour for employment on these terms will sufficiently gauge the intensity of the distress.

4. The Government of India understand these to be the principles on which His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor has introduced his intermediate system of piece-work, and that as soon as the demand for employment by inefficient labour indicates that distress has reached an acute stage, the ordinary task-work system of the Famine Code will be substituted.

5. The Governor-General in Council gives his hearty approval to the proposals.

Order—Mis. No. 1245, Revenue, dated 5th March 1897.

Communicated to the Board of Revenue.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Ag. Secretary to Government.

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

Read—also the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture), dated 7th April 1897, No. 289:—

Read—the following letter from M.R.Ry. S. A. SWAMINATHA AIYER, Subdivisional officer, Chicacole, to the Executive Engineer, Ganjám Division, dated 18th March 1897, No. 2231, and endorsements thereon:—

I have the honour to report as below on my attempt to open a test work at the Kota Bommali Railway quarry.

Your order to open the test work was received by me on the 15th evening. The next day I sent the necessary tools and rings, and on the 17th I was myself on the spot. In the meantime notice was given by beat of tom-tom in all the adjacent villages (about thirty in number) that the test work would be begun on the 18th morning. The Deputy Tahsildar of Tekkali joined me on the 17th. About fifty coolies gathered together on the morning of the 18th, and these were mainly from the gangs working on petty piece-work on our Garebullagedda channel. A few village naidus also attended. The Deputy Tahsildar and myself explained to them the conditions of the test work. As ragi is selling at 15·22 seers per rupee, the wage of A class gangs was fixed at As. 1–5 and As. 1–3 per each man and woman, respectively. They were glad to hear that the wages are greater than what was notified on the previous occasion. Still they did not like the idea of working in gangs of 100 persons each on the ground that they will be universally fined if the actual work turned out by them falls below the allotted task, and the idleness of some of them will be visited on the other diligent workers in the same gang which will thus get demoralized. They wanted to form themselves into gangs of 10 to 25 each as they choose and do the work on piece-work system. I may here remark that the quarry here is very convenient, and a large part of the metalling will simply have to be dug by the crowbar and a small percentage alone broken by the hammers. Besides, ever since the railway work was begun here, a lot of coolies have been working at this quarry, and have learnt the knack of doing the work properly. They therefore, unlike the coolies in other parts of the district, take to this work in preference to the earthwork in our channel near (where no doubt the soil is hard). They want piece-work at the rate of As. 4 per cubic yard of metalling, the same rate that the railway contractors were paying them before. The village naidus promise that in case this work is started in petty piece-work system as in the Garibullagedda channel near, about 1,000 and more of the adjacent villagers who are now unemployed and in a distressed condition, will come in at once and they can be so employed till this scarcity is over. The coolies that were present positively refused to come on daily wages in gangs of 100.

I beg to add that about a week ago when I inspected and check-measured the earthwork on the Garibullagedda channel, I found the soil hard, and I at once raised the rates. I now pay Rs. 2–14–0 and Rs. 3–4–0 per 1,000 cubic feet of hard earth and gravel, respectively, against the estimate rate of Rs. 3–8–0. Even this has not appreciably attracted more labour up to date, and the future effects will be watched. The coolies prefer metal-collection at the particular quarry to the hard earthwork at the channel for the reasons noted above. I therefore beg leave to suggest that it will be very useful if the ballast work here be opened on petty piece-work on the same system in which our channel earthwork is being done now, with a special overseer in charge of it, payments being made at least twice a week. This will keep the really

needy in the surrounding villages fully employed and will enable them to tide over this season without much difficulty. The railway authorities require a vast quantity of ballast here, more than 37,000 cubic yards. They pay to their contractors at the rate of Rs. 18 per 1,000 cubic feet, *i.e.*, very nearly As. 8 per cubic yard. All that the coolies require on piece-work is As. 4 only per cubic yard, but this latter rate is for stacking at the work-site, which is, however, very near the railway line. There can thus be no sort of loss to Government if the work is undertaken as above suggested, and the Government need feel no anxiety on account of the famine, so far as this part of taluk is concerned. I therefore request that, if you approve, you will be pleased to particularly impress this on the Collector and the Government and do the needful without delay.

Endorsement by W. C. DeMORGAN, Esq., Executive Engineer, Ganjám Division, dated 26th March 1897, No. 6125.

Copy forwarded to the Collector of Ganjám. What the Sub-divisional officer says is perfectly correct. If work is provided at ordinary rates, there will be no necessity for relief works, but the difficulty is to make such arrangements agree with the Famine Code.

Endorsement by the Acting Collector of Ganjám, dated Berhampur, 28th March 1897, Ref. on C. No. 513-Famine.

Copy communicated to the Secretary to the Commissioner of Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture.

2. I consider that the remarks of the Sub-divisional officer are very sound so far as this district is concerned. At present the people are in want of work, but they are not reduced to such straits as to accept famine wage and famine discipline on relief works. The people are accustomed to work by piece-work in small gangs; the large gangs organized under the Famine Code militate against a good outturn. Take for instance the Kaliapalli quarry. Here with difficulty a C class task was performed under test-work conditions. After the allotment on this quarry had been fully expended, I started another work on piece-work system at reduced rate 2 miles off. In a few days the work—which was of exactly the same nature as at Kaliapalle—had attracted 2,470 coolies of the same class, of whom *a large proportion were men* and the task turned out per unit was slightly over a B class task. The coolies came, worked hard and went away cheerful and contented, nor was there any waste of funds. On making inquiries in the villages as to the large number of coolies and especially men attached, I was told that it was because the work was on piece-work system and the villagers were allowed to form their own gangs each being paid by results.

3. In connection with the test work at Bendi in January last, I suggested that work might advantageously be given out on piece-work to village gangs without the intervention of contractors, and in most places the same theory still holds good. In this opinion I am supported by my Divisional officers. I am inclined to believe that, with the new allotment falling available on 1st April, we shall, so far as this district is concerned by the general adoption of this system, be able to avert the necessity for any relief works except in a few special localities which are badly favoured in respect of ordinary works. The people will work cheerfully and contentedly and will have a margin left over for the support of their children who will not then be forced on to kitchens or gratuitous relief. This principle has been recently endorsed in the Government of India memorandum embodied in B.P. (Revenue Settlement), dated 11th March 1897, No. 216. Some temporary additional establishment may be required, but it will prove to be economy in the long run and much famine expenditure, that might otherwise be rendered necessary, avoided.

4. With regard to the breaking of metal for the East Coast Railway, I should be very glad to see the principle of piece-work adopted; but here there is a difficulty. This is a railway work specially provided against famine and the work has to be executed by the Public Works Department subject to the provisions of the Famine

Code—a subsequent adjustment being made from Railway funds. It is not an ordinary work to be executed under the special conditions referred to in paragraph 16 of the Famine Code.

5. I would therefore ask whether, under the special circumstances of this district which show that—while work is demanded and eagerly sought for—test works prove no attraction, the work of breaking metal (provided as a special famine-relief work in the Famine Programme of the district) may not be taken up on the principles suggested, viz., on piece-work given at low rates to village groups without the intervention of contractors. The railway throughout the district runs through the tract where work is most urgently required, and it would prove of the greatest possible service to take up this work on the system referred to even before the allotments on all other works are exhausted. I would request that Government may be asked so to relax the provisions of the Famine Code as to permit of funds being granted under 33. Famine, for the execution of this work on the principles enunciated by the Supreme Government in their memorandum quoted above without applying the conditions of chapter VII of the Code.

Resolution—dated 7th April 1897, No. 289.

In his endorsement read above, the Collector of Ganjám asks that, on the principles laid down in paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 of enclosure 1 to Government of India's Circular No. 16—104-1-F., dated 13th February 1897, piece-work on reduced rates may be substituted for test-works in his district, and expresses the opinion that, if his suggestion is adopted, a very considerable amount of expenditure upon other forms of relief that necessarily follows in the wake of strictly organized famine-relief works will be saved. He reports "at present the people are in want of work, but they are not reduced to such straits as to accept famine wage and famine discipline on relief-works." The Collector's experiment shows that even under the disadvantageous terms on which piece-work has been offered, there is a real demand for such employment. This demand shows that there exists a distress of considerable intensity.

2. Employment by piece-work was intended by the Government of India to be only *preliminary* to the introduction of strictly organized test works, and the Board considers that if relief is necessary at all, the time has come for the introduction of works of the latter kind. The Uriya is, no doubt, the most difficult man in the Presidency to deal with in administering Government relief, but the Board does not consider that his prejudices and reluctance to submit to discipline are sufficient reasons for treating him differently from the distressed population of other districts The conditions of employment set out in G.O., No. 216 of 1897, are more liberal than those hitherto in force, and the Board is not prepared to recommend to Government on behalf of any isolated portion of the Presidency any deviation from the general principles therein expounded. Any work that may be opened for the purpose of relief must be carried out in accordance with the provisions of chapter VII of the Famine Code. In declining to support the Collector, the Board is fully aware of the difficulty with which he has to deal, but a Famine Code is not to be torn in pieces during the progress of distress, except for very serious reasons. The provisions relating to gratuitous relief have been relaxed to a degree not permitted in other districts in view of the recognised singularity of Ganjám, and it is hoped that between this and the very benevolent terms offered in G.O., No. 216 of 1897, which the Collector had not received when he wrote his letter, that officer may succeed in attaining the objects of relief without further experiments. The susceptibilities of the Uriya have been sufficiently met in the matter of gratuitous relief, but he cannot be encouraged to take a step further and dictate to the whole Presidency how relief on works should be administered.

(True Copy and Extract.)

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

To the Collector of Ganjám.

Copy to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
" " Collectors of other affected districts.

Read—also the following letter from T. W. HOLDERNESS, Esq., C.S., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue and Agriculture (Famine), to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, dated Simla, the 19th April 1897, Cir. No. 20—91-2-F.:—

I am directed to forward, for the information of the Governor in Council, a copy of a resolution issued by the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, No. 753, dated 16th March 1897, prescribing a modified system of "intermediate" relief works with the object of limiting the earnings of workers to a reasonable subsistence wage for themselves and their dependants.

Enclosures.

Resolution from the Secretary to Government, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Scarcity Department, No. 753—S.-73, dated Allahabad, the 16th March 1897.

Read—

G.O., No. 357 of 5th December 1896, to all Commissioners of Divisions, North-Western Provinces and Oudh.

G.O., No. 9099-W.A. of 5th December 1896, to all Superintending Engineers, Provincial Works, North-Western Provinces and Oudh.

G.O., No. 428 of 16th December 1896, to all Commissioners of Divisions, North-Western Provinces and Oudh.

Government of India Circular, No. 3-F. of 24th December 1896, on the exaction of full task in famine-relief operations.

G.O., No. 464 of 13th February 1897, to all Commissioners of Divisions and Collectors of Districts, North-Western Provinces and Oudh (except Meerut and Kumaun).

Government of India Circular, No. 16-F. of 13th February 1897, on principles for regulating expenditure upon public works in time of famine.

The advent of the cooler weather, the commencement of the harvest and the demand for field labour, which ceased when the winter rains put an end to the irrigation of the advanced crops. In some districts a fresh demand has sprung up for more irrigation to counteract the mischief caused by the high winds which prevailed a short time ago. It is unnecessary to say that it is of the highest importance to so regulate the relief works that they may not attract away labour which is required to get in or safeguard the harvest on which the food-supply of the country will now largely depend. It is for every reason no less important to arrange tasks and wages with a view to limit the admission to relief works strictly to those persons who cannot find private employment and have no other means of subsistence.

At the same time it may be anticipated that the harvest work will not absorb the usual amount of labour, as the area sown is below normal, and the pressure on all classes will lead tenant and small proprietors to do more field work than usual themselves, and thereby dispense with the services of day labourers.

It is therefore necessary in most districts to maintain for the present relief works in some form, though employment will have to be found only for diminished numbers.

2. Relief works under the Famine Code rules not only provide employment for all working members of a family, no matter how ineffective, but supply a gratuitous dole to all members who are unable to work. It therefore unavoidably happens that the members of a large family coming all together on the works are able to earn or receive collectively more than the effective working members alone could gain from a private employer and frequently more than suffices for their subsistence only. The presence of large crowds, including very numerous ineffective workers and dependants, renders it very difficult to enforce a full task or, without reducing the wage below subsistence level, to impose fines which will correctly represent short work. A fresh inducement is thereby offered to labourers to remain on relief works after private employment has re-opened.

The problem is to introduce a system which will retain the principle that relief work affording subsistence for the labourers and their dependants shall be provided where it is required, and at the same time to divest the work system of the features which may place it in competition with ordinary labourer where this is available.

3. The Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner believes that such a system may be found in a modification of the scheme of intermediate works sketched in the correspondence noted at the head of this resolution.

That scheme as originally framed required the interposition of petty contractors or middlemen between the Government and the actual labourers. The contractors derived a profit which was set off against the cost of establishment which Government would have had to provide. But it gave contractors an inducement to employ only the more able-bodied and to exclude the weakly who stood most in need of support, and constant supervision, involving expense, was required to counteract this tendency. The system is suited to less considerable works where distress it not very general, but it is less suited to large undertakings designed to afford relief to great numbers of unskilled labourers. A modification of it has recently been tried with success, and the Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner would like to see it generally applied, not merely to intermediate works on the old system, which it has now quite supplanted, but to many works now carried out under Famine Code rules where there is a fair *rabi* area and where the distress is not acute. Under this modified system no contractor or middleman is employed. The work is laid out, supervised, and measured, and payments are made by Government officials; and tools, where necessary, are supplied by Government. But the work will continue to be treated and paid as piece work, not as task work under the Famine Code. No dependants will be recognised, and the payments will be in accordance with the amount of work actually done.

The rates and tasks will be so graduated as to enable an ordinary labourer or family of labourers to earn what the average family now earns in the shape of both wages and gratuitous doles (to dependants) combined. The discontinuance of Sunday labour makes it necessary to arrange for labourers earning on week days enough to provide for themselves and their dependants on Sundays also.

4. The table which accompanies this resolution shows the rates, tasks, and wages which it is proposed to adopt as a standard, and an endeavour has been made to render them suitable for adoption in all parts of the provinces. But in view of the very varying conditions which exist in different districts, some local modifications may be found necessary, and these should be determined in each case by the Commissioner, Collector, and Superintending Engineer.

The point to be borne in mind is to fix rates and tasks which will not render the relief works unduly attractive, and, while securing a fair outturn of work, will not permit labourers to earn more than a reasonable subsistence wage for themselves and their dependants. A maximum task has been fixed, representing the greatest amount of daily work which a labour party can be permitted to perform and the highest daily wage they can be permitted to earn.

The table is framed primarily to meet the case of a labour party (or family) consisting of a digger and two adult carriers; the number of carriers would in practice vary with the employment of minors. The standard task in ordinary soil is taken to be 100 cubic feet, and the rate fixed is Rs. 2-3-0 per 1,000 cubic feet. The party would earn daily for this work 14 pice, which would represent 6 pice for the digger and 8 pice for carriers, being 4 pice each if two adults were actually employed and proportionally less per carrier if there were two or more minors in place of an adult.

It would be the business of the charge officer or work agent and staff to form the parties and distribute the work.

If the full tale of 100 cubic feet were not executed, there would be a proportional abatement made in the total payment, and if the tale were exceeded, the payment would be proportionately raised up to the full or maximum task or wage, but not beyond that.

If the full or maximum task of 125 cubic feet were performed, the total earnings of the party would be 17 pice, representing 7 pice to the digger and 10 pice to the carriers, which, reduced to two adults, would give 5 pice to each. The exact apportionment of the total earnings of the gang or party could be varied as circumstances required. The above distribution is suggested as one generally suitable.

5. The ordinary task, if executed, would enable the average family to earn what it now receives in the shape of wages and doles, and, by a little extra diligence on week days, the full task would make provision for the Sunday wage without requiring labour on that day. At the same time a fair outturn of work would be ensured and proportional deductions made for short work. There would be some reduction in the crowds of dependants and ineffective labourers who throng the works and become a source of danger in the season when cholera is usually prevalent.

The foregoing rates are put forward tentatively as those at which the experiment can be commenced subject to any local variations which may be decided as above explained. Experience may show them liable to alteration.

6 Under instructions already issued, this system will be introduced in the current month into the districts of the Agra Division, the *Holi* festival being taken as a suitable point of departure. It should also be introduced at the same time into any parts of the Rohilkhand Division where it may not be at present in force. In the Fyzabad Division it should be applied to any works which remain open, and in all cases where it may hereafter be found necessary to re-open works.

In the Gorakhpur Division such a system is practically in force in half the district. In the other part of the district and in Azamgarh it can be introduced at once as the Commissioner finds it possible to do so. It is believed that all necessity for relief works in Basti has now ceased or will shortly cease. Should any be retained or re-opened, the system now indicated should be adopted.

It will be necessary to retain the works under the Famine Code system in the Hardoi district; but the Commissioner of Lucknow is at liberty to introduce the system above described into the whole or part of any other district in his division, and should take early steps to effect the change where it seems possible.

In the Allahabad Division, the system should be introduced into the Cawnpore and Fatehpur districts, and into the north part of the Allahabad district, consisting of the Doáb portion, and the three tahsils (Phulpur, Handia, and Soraon) across the Ganges.

The Commissioner of Benares should consider and report whether the system should be introduced into the Jaunpur district.

It is not proposed to make any change at present in the system of relief works under full Famine Code rules in those districts where the distress is very acute, and the contracted area of the *rabi* crop and its defective condition do not hold out any prospect of considerable occupation for labour in harvesting it. In this category come the Bundelkhand districts, South Allahabad, Mirzapur, and Hardoi. No attempt will therefore be made to introduce the intermediate system into these parts.

Where action is to be taken under these orders, it should be taken promptly as the harvest season has already begun.

Table showing rates to be paid for earthwork—intermediate system.

Kind of soil.	Ordinary task.					Full task (provides for dependants).		
	Task adapted to ordinary workers.	Rate per 1,000 cubic feet.	Rate per 100 cubic feet.	Wages earned by performing task.	Remarks.	Task which can be performed by hard work.	Wages earned by performing task.	Remarks.
	C. FT.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.		C. FT.	RS. A. P.	
I.—Soft	120	1 14 0	0 3 0	0 3 6	Re. 0-3-7, but taken as Re. 0-3-6, ..	141	0 4 3	..
II.—Ordinary standard rate.	100	2 3 0	0 3 6	0 3 6		125	0 4 3	Re. 0-4-4, but taken as Re. 0-4-3.

N.B.—(*a*) The rate No. II is the standard. The 14 pice earned would be distributed between the digger and carrier or carriers in proportions varying with the locality: in the 2nd Circle the digger would receive six pice and two carriers four pice each for an ordinary task, and the digger seven pice and two carriers five pice each for a full task.

(*b*) The rate No. II would be followed in the absence of special orders by the District Engineer, to be reported to the Divisional and Superintending Engineer.

(*c*) These rates are adapted for roads where the lead is not materially in excess of 50 feet or the depth of excavation much in excess of five feet.

(*d*) In the case of tanks where greater lifts and leads would be met with special rates providing for the extra lift and lead would be sanctioned by Superintending Engineers, following generally Appendix D, Famine Code.

(*e*) The above rates are for earthwork only thrown up to section. Dressing and finishing would usually be separately paid for at a rate not exceeding for roads eight annas per 1,000 cubic feet of earthwork, to be fixed by the Superintending Engineer. Where the dressing could be done by the same gang, the earthwork rates would be increased by five annas per 1,000 cubic feet.

Order.—Ordered that copies be forwarded to all Commissioners of Divisions and District Officers, North-Western Provinces and Oudh (except those of the Meerut and Kumaun Divisions), for information and necessary action.

Ordered also that copies be forwarded to the Secretary to this Government in the Public Works Department, Buildings and Roads Branch, for information and necessary action.

(Signed) T. STOKER,
Secy. to Govt., N.-W. P. and Oudh.

Order—No. 430, Revenue, dated 3rd June 1897.

Miscellaneous.

In the second of the papers read above, the Board of Revenue disallows a proposal made by the Collector of Ganjám to substitute piece-work on reduced rates and without the intervention of contractors for the task-work system in force on the relief works in progress in the district. The proposal is based on principles recently adopted in the North-Western Provinces, with the approval of the Government of India, and described in paragraphs 5—8 of the memorandum printed in the first of the papers read above.

2. Section 16 of the Madras Famine Code recognises that in tracts where distress is just commencing, it may be desirable to expand, as a temporary measure, the ordinary works of the Public Works Department so as to give employment to larger numbers than usual, the labourers being employed on the additional works thus undertaken on the usual contract system at the rates prevailing in the labour market. Such additional works may in many cases be sufficient to meet all requirements in the earlier stages of distress, as demand for employment by inefficient labour will not then be appreciable and the earnings of able-bodied workers on the piece-work system supplemented by such additions as can be obtained in the villages by their women and infirm dependants will be sufficient for the maintenance of the whole family. Section 16 further contemplates that it may be necessary to modify the usual contract system on these ordinary works so as to admit of their giving employment to the largest number possible, contracts for small works or where possible for portions of large works being given to such heads of villages as can be relied on to give employment to their most needy fellow villagers. But when distress deepens and gives rise to demand for employment by inefficient labour, since the ordinary contract system fails to secure proper remuneration to the individual worker, one or more test works are to be opened to gauge the extent of distress and of the demand for employment under the conditions of the Famine Code.

3. The above appears also in the main to be the course prescribed in the North-Western Provinces Famine Code, but the experience gained in that province shows that in tracts where distress, though considerable, is not so acute as to drive on to the works a large proportion of inefficient labour, payment by results is more economical than the gang and task work system of the Code which involves the payment of a subsistence wage to all workers however inefficient, besides the gratuitous maintenance of their children and infirm dependants. In view of the costliness of relief works and of the extreme difficulty of obtaining the large number of subordinate officers required for their supervision, the Government of the North-Western Provinces has adopted a system of works intermediate between ordinary and relief works, which are to take the place of ordinary works when distress becomes pronounced, to be replaced in their turn by regular relief works when distress deepens into famine. These works are to be given out on the system of payment by results to piece-workers or gangers, preferably village headmen, at rates which allow them a fair remuneration for their trouble and expense, the proportion of the rates to be paid as wages to the workmen being fixed beforehand. The above is in effect, the modified contract system contemplated by section 16 of the Madras Code and the advantage of it is that it secures proper remuneration to the individual worker which, under the urgency of distress, the ordinary contract system fails to do, while at the same time it enables able-bodied workers to earn enough to maintain their women and children. But it gives the contractors and middlemen interposed between Government and the actual workers an inducement to employ only the more able-bodied labourers to the exclusion of the weakly who stand most in need of relief, and constant supervision involving expense is required to counteract this tendency. It has therefore been found that though suitable to less considerable works where distress is not general, the system is not adapted to large undertakings designed to afford relief to considerable numbers of unskilled labourers, and it appears from the last of the papers read above that the North-Western Provinces Government has found it necessary to adopt a modified form

of it in which the Government deals directly with the labourers. The work is laid out, supervised and measured by Government officials, and tools where necessary are supplied by Government; but payments are made by results as under the piece-work system, and no dependants are recognised.

4. It will thus be seen that the system advocated by the Collector of Ganjám is the same as the modified form of the piece-work system recently adopted with success in the North-Western Provinces. The Board of Revenue objects to its adoption on the ground that it is intended by the Government of India to be only preliminary to the introduction of strictly organized test works, and that if relief is necessary at all in the district the time has come for the introduction of the latter kind of works. The Government has carefully considered the subject and is of opinion that the district of Ganjám is one in which strictly organized test and relief works fail of their intended objects, and that there and perhaps elsewhere also it is necessary to supplement the scheme of works as laid down in the Code by an intermediate system like the one described above. The Uriyas of Ganjám are as a class averse to sending their women to labour at the relief works and none but those belonging to the lowest classes send their children to the kitchens attached to the works; as the earnings of the actual workers are barely sufficient for their own maintenance, Government relief does not reach the women and children of the labouring classes and regular relief works fail of their object. Further it is reported that the people of the district dislike the discipline enforced on such works and will not resort to them unless reduced to great straits. The Koyas of the Bhadráchalam taluk similarly have a strong prejudice against relief works and refuse to accept employment at the Code rates though there is considerable distress among them now; and anxiety has been expressed in some quarters lest this prejudice should lead them to stint and starve themselves. A similar reluctance on the part of the people to resort to relief works has been reported from Vizagapatam. On the other hand payment by results to which the people are accustomed is suited to their habits and tastes, and it appears from the correspondence forwarded by the Collector of Ganjám that the labourers in his district are anxious to have piece work and willing to accept work at rates considerably below those allowed by the Public Works Department in ordinary years. The Government is of opinion that the proper policy to pursue under the circumstances is to offer relief in the form acceptable to the distressed population instead of waiting till by prolonged stinting they reduce themselves to such a low condition as to make them ready to accept employment on any terms. The intermediate system of payment by results offers the best solution of the difficulty and the experience gained in the North-Western Provinces shows that it is more economical than task work even at rates higher than those allowed by the Public Works Department in ordinary years.

5. The adoption of such a system is also rendered necessary by the concentration of relief works lately ordered by Government which involves the opening of petty village works and improvements for affording employment to people living at a distance from the works centres. These petty works cannot be carried on under the supervision of Government officials and must necessarily be entrusted to the agency of village heads or other middlemen. The system is therefore likely to prove advantageous, not only in Ganjám but in all the affected tracts, and His Excellency the Governor in Council is of opinion that it should be adopted as an integral part of the scheme of famine-relief works. It is no doubt true that the system as originally approved by the Government of India was intended to meet the earlier stages of distress and to be preliminary to the introduction of the regular relief works, but in the modified form in which it has been recently adopted in the North-Western Provinces it can advantageously be made use of even when distress becomes severe.

6. The scheme of relief works to be opened by Government will then stand as follows:—

(i) Expanded ordinary works:	...	To be carried out on the ordinary contract system.
(ii) and (iii) Intermediate works: to be carried out on the gang and piece-work system.	(ii)	With the intervention of petty contractors.
	(iii)	Without the intervention of contractors, work being laid out, supervised and paid for by Government officials.
(iv) Test and relief works:	... ...	To be carried out under the Code conditions.

Class (ii) is the same as the modified contract system contemplated by section 16 of the Code, class (iii) works are called "intermediate" in accordance with the designation adopted in the North-Western Provinces, but the Government trust that in districts like Ganjám where the peculiar habits of the people may render such work necessary, they will be found adequate for the relief of distress in all its stages and will form an efficient substitute for relief works as organized under the Code. The laying out, supervision and measurement of work on this class of works should be undertaken by Government officials, and to prevent a too rapid exhaustion of the works it will be necessary to limit the amount of work to be assigned to each piece-working gang. The rates allowed on works of classes (ii) and (iii) must be so fixed as not to attract labour for which there is existing employment, and should be "such as to constitute a hard bargain even with the skilled labourer, and should be distinctly below what it would be necessary to give in order to attract labour in the absence of distress." It is also well to bear in mind that these works are opened on the supposition that under the system of payment by results an able-bodied labourer can earn enough to maintain himself and the non-working members of his family and that such works are therefore more economical than relief works. As soon therefore as it is apparent that there is a demand by inefficient labour for employment on the terms offered at these intermediate works, one or more works on the task-work system should be opened, and if such demand be found to be considerable the intermediate works should be replaced by regular relief works, or the labourers drafted to the nearest such works.

7. The Famine Commissioner will take immediate steps to carry out the above instructions. It will be for him to decide in consultation with Collectors whether intermediate works can advantageously be opened in any affected district; such works can be readily converted into regular relief works when necessity arises.

8. Ordered that the following letter be despatched to the Government of India.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Famine Commissioner.
„ the Public Works Department.
„ the Local and Municipal Department.
„ the Financial Department.
„ the Accountant-General.

Exd. W. D'Moss.

150 Copies.

Government {1897} of Madras.

REVENUE.

Recd. } 1897. *Enclosures*

Regd. } *Spare copies*

G.O., No. 430, 3rd June 1897.

JUNE.

Intermediate system of relief works.

Directing the adoption in this Presidency of the — introduced with success in the North-Western Provinces.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

Read—again the following G.O., Mis. No. 1245, Revenue, dated 5th March 1897 :—

Read—the following letter from T. W. HOLDERNESS, Esq., I.C.S., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India (Department of Revenue and Agriculture—Famine), to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, dated Calcutta, the 13th February 1897, Cir. No. 16—104-I.-F. :—

I am directed to forward, for information and guidance, copy of a memorandum in which are succinctly stated the leading principles regulating expenditure upon public works in time of famine.

2. Paragraphs 5 to 8 of the memorandum should be regarded as supplementing the provisions contained in the Provincial Famine Codes with regard to the expansion of "ordinary" public works and the opening of "test" works when distress is imminent or its extent and acuteness have to be ascertained. It is not proposed at present that the Famine Codes should be amended with a view to bring them into formal agreement (where this is necessary) with a memorandum as to the manner in which such works should be conducted. The statement of principles contained in the memorandum leaves in this respect a large discretion to Local Governments and Administrations, and any amendment of the Codes which may be required in this and other points will be more usefully undertaken when the experience of the present year can be brought under review.

Letter from North-Western Provinces and Oudh Government, No. 417-S., dated 14th December 1896.
Letter from North-Western Provinces and Oudh Government, No. 500, dated 21st December 1896, and enclosure.
Letter to North-Western Provinces and Oudh Government, No. 255-F., dated 16th January 1897.

3. As paragraph 6 of the memorandum refers to the "intermediate or gang-piece-work" system which has been experimentally adopted in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, the papers marked on the margin, which explain this system, are also forwarded for reference.

ENCLOSURES.

Principles for regulating expenditure upon Public Works in time of famine.

1. In districts where no distress exists, it is the general rule that expenditure upon public works, even within the limits of budget provision, should be contracted with a view to setting funds and establishments at liberty for employment when they are more needed. To this rule, however, exceptions may be made—

(1) where the works could not be contracted without risk of creating distress by reducing the local employment of labour;

(2) where the contraction of the works would result in returning to districts, where distress exists or is threatened, the labourers employed on them.

2. Where distress exists, it will be necessary to provide additional employment upon works. *All* such additional expenditure must be subjected to the relief conditions described below.

3. The essence of relief conditions is that the remuneration for work done must be so fixed as not to attract labour for which there is existing employment elsewhere. This condition must invariably be enforced. The method of enforcing it will vary with the degree of distress which prevails.

4. Where acute distress or famine prevails, so that the general population is affected, and it is necessary to provide employment not only for able-bodied labourers, but also for a large proportion of inefficient labour, task work must be rigorously enforced, nobody being allowed either to do more than the fixed task or to earn more than the fixed maximum wage. The former condition is necessary in order to economise the supply of useful work upon which labour can be employed; the second, in order to limit expenditure, since, when the dependents of a skilled labourer are paid separately, it is not necessary for purposes of relief to pay him more than a subsistence wage.

5. But when distress, though present, is not so acute as to drive on to the works a large proportion of inefficient labour or of persons unaccustomed to work, payment by results is more economical than task work; for so long as an able-bodied labourer can earn enough, under the conditions laid down in paragraph 3, to enable those of his family who do not work to live at home, he will support himself and them more cheaply than Government can do

6. Payment by results may take the form, either of an expansion of ordinary works under the usual system of petty contracts, or of the intermediate or gang-piece-work system of the North-Western Provinces. The former is sufficient when distress is slight; but as the scarcity becomes more acute and threatens to deepen into famine, the latter should be substituted, since it secures proper remuneration to the individual workman, which, under the urgency of distress, the former fails to do.

7. If the rates offered are regulated by the principle laid down in paragraph 3, gang-piece-work will effectively gauge the intensity of distress, since it will afford to inefficient labour only a bare subsistence.

8. As soon, therefore, as the demand by inefficient labour for employment on these terms begins to be appreciable, additional test-works on the task-work system may usefully be opened; though at a sufficient distance from the piece-work works to ensure that if the man works at piece-work and his women and children at task work, they shall at least be compelled to live apart. These will provide for the women and children during the intermediate stage, while distress is *becoming* acute. As soon, however, as the demand by inefficient labour for employment upon either system becomes considerable, acute distress is present, and payment by results must then be discontinued and task work substituted for it.

9. It is conceivable that in any district there may be cases in which the rapid and efficient prosecution of a particular public work is of such importance as to justify a relaxation of the above conditions. Such instances will be rare, the works will be of magnitude, and each case will be decided upon its individual merits.

10. It is for Local Governments to judge of the local conditions in each case, and to justify to themselves or to the Government of India, as the case may be, the action to be taken under the principles thus laid down.

From the Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, to the Secretary to the Government of India, dated Allahabad, the 14th December 1896, No. 417-S. :—

In his demi-official letter of the 29th November Mr. H. F. Evans enclosed, for the information of the Government of India, copy of a letter addressed to officers, asking them to report what effect had been produced by the late rainfall on the prospects of their respective districts. The Government is still awaiting these replies, but provisional information has been received from Commissioners of Divisions, from which it appears that they are of the opinion that prospects have been so far improved as to justify the expectation that with fair winter rains the numbers who may come on relief will be less by about 25 per cent. than the number of 100,000,000 units for one day, stated in the third column of statement B, paragraph 10 of this office letter No. 196, dated the 23rd November 1896. In this opinion the Lieutenant-Governor generally concurs, and he now sees reason to hope that it will not be necessary in several districts to undertake relief operations to the extent which seemed probable before the late rain had fallen. In view of the altered condition of things, and with the object of avoiding unnecessary expenditure, the Lieutenant-Governor has reconsidered the programme of public works referred to in paragraphs 19 and 20 of the letter mentioned above, and has consulted Commissioners of Divisions on the following point: whether it would be desirable to pursue the policy indicated in paragraph 20 of the letter noticed above, and postpone village works till the hot weather had set in; or whether, in view of the probability that in certain districts the necessity for extensive relief would disappear when the *rabi* had been harvested, it would be better to meet the demand for employment which may arise between now and the harvesting of the *rabi* by a more general use of village works now than had been intended. The Commissioners' official replies are awaited, but from the communications unofficially made by them to His Honour, it seems certain that they will ask for permission to begin some village works at once, and also to maintain a backbone of some large works managed by the Department of Public Works in the various districts. These works are now in operation in many districts.

2. The question also presented itself whether, in districts in which prospects have improved, it was desirable, where village works were not found to afford suitable employment, to open relief works under strict Code rules. Under the Code three classes of works are recognized:—

(1) Ordinary works (article 60) debitable to Provincial or District funds.

(2) Test-relief works debitable to famine relief, and carried out in the general spirit of the Famine Code Rules.

(3) Regular relief works under Chapter VI of the Code, on which the "gang" and "task" work system is rigidly enforced.

In almost all district funds, either provincial or district, for ordinary works have been exhausted; while, at the same time, test works have shown the necessity for some employment, though not on the expensive or extensive system prescribed by the Famine Code. The problem, then, was to provide such employment as would be suitable for districts under observation, but in which distress had not fully declared itself. Such employment is offered, for example, in the Cawnpore district by the Lower Ganges Extension canal project, and in the Azamgarh district, to some extent, by the extensions of the Bengal and North-Western Railway.

3. These facts have suggested to His Honour the adoption in such localities of a modified system of famine-relief works which would be intermediate between works carried out on the ordinary and on the Famine Code systems. Such works, while conducted on principles involving much less expenditure than would be incurred were the system of the Code followed, will serve as test works on a large scale. Their existence, with the establishment thereon, will also enable the Government to at once convert them into Famine Code works without a day's delay should famine supervene. It need hardly be observed that no advantage will be taken of this arrangement to carry through works in the interest of district or provincial funds; and that no work will be begun which is not absolutely essential with the object of preventing suffering from want of food.

I am to add that this plan has been forced on His Honour for two reasons: first economy, and second, the extreme difficulty of obtaining the large number of subordinate officers necessary for Famine Code works.

4. I am to forward a copy of the instructions * which have issued on the subject, which will explain more fully the action which the Lieutenant-Governor has decided to take.

* G.O., No. 357-S.—73, dated 5th December 1896.

From T. W. HOLDERNESS, Esq., Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, to all Commissioners of Divisions, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, dated Allahabad, the 5th December 1896, No. 357-S.—73.

I am directed to address you on the subject of the employment of the Public Works Department in managing and carrying out famine-relief works. At the present time distress is officially recognised as existing in the districts marginally noted, and the Public Works Department has already commenced relief operations in these districts. And relief work not being of the article 65 (*a*) class opened in the marginally-noted districts for the future must be treated as relief works under the Code and managed from the outset by the Public Works Department.

Allahabad.		Jalan.
Hamirpur.		Jaunpur.
Banda.		Rae Bareli.
Jhansi.		Sitapur.
	Hardoi.	

2. Article 60 of the Famine Code provides that where distress is commencing, ordinary works may be expanded as a temporary measure to meet the demand for employment. In these districts, that is, districts not officially declared to be distressed, it is open to you to commence test works in order to gauge the necessity for relief works. But experience has shown that test relief-works managed by non-professional agency do not always gauge the existence of distress so well as works conducted under the strict safeguards and tests which are necessarily applied by the Public Works Department. I am therefore to request that when the necessity contemplated by article 60 arises, you will ordinarily employ the Public Works Department in controlling test works, or, when ordinary works are exhausted, in affording the employment necessary on a suitable work included in the relief programme, piece-work at rates suitable for the object in view being substituted for contracts. When the pressure of distress becomes such as to render the enforcement of piece-work as above mentioned unsuitable, these works can be readily converted into relief works under articles 70 and 74 of the Famine Code. The existence of a work in progress, with establishments on the spot, will place you in a far better position to meet any sudden pressure or rush of labourers than if the work had to be opened to meet a sudden and particular demand. Moreover, the existence of a work managed by the Public Works Department on the piece work system as sketched above may satisfy all the requirements of a tract of country not acutely distressed, while the cost to Government will be much less than would be the case if regular relief works under the provisions of the Famine Code had to be established. You will not fail to observe that this system of works, which are intermediate between "ordinary" and "Code relief works," will be peculiarly useful as a reserve and supplement to the system of village works [article 65 (*a*)] managed by the District officers directly or by local zamindars.

3. Further orders dealing with the manner in which these orders are to be given effect to in detail will issue from the Public Works Department to Superintending Engineers, copies of which will be forwarded to you for information and guidance.

No. 358 S.—73.

Copy forwarded to the Secretary to this Government in the Public Works Department, Buildings and Roads Branch, for necessary action with reference to paragraph 3.

From P. HARRISON, Esq., Under Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, to the Secretary to the Government of India, dated Allahabad, the 21st December 1896, No. 500.

In continuation of this Government's letter No. 417, dated the 14th December 1896, I am directed to forward, for the information of the Government of India, copies of the letter noted on the margin, relative to the adoption in certain localities of a modified system of famine-relief works which will be intermediate between works carried out under the ordinary and on the Famine Code system.

Letter No. 9099-W.A., dated 5th December 1896, from the Secretary to Government, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Public Works Department, to all Superintending Engineers, Provincial Works.

From C. W. ODLING, Esq., Secretary to Government, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Public Works Department, to all Superintending Engineers, Provincial Works, dated Allahabad, the 5th December 1896, No. 9099-W.A.

The Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner has had under consideration the best method of testing the probability or existence of distress, and of affording employment in districts which are under observation, that is, districts in which famine threatens, but in which the existence of famine has not been officially recognised. His Honour is of opinion that the needful test will be best effected and the necessary employment afforded by work carried out on a system intermediate between "ordinary" and "Famine Code works," and this view is expressed in the orders issued in the Scarcity Department, of which a copy will be separately forwarded for your information and guidance.

2. In relief works under the Famine Code (articles 70 and 74) the enforcement of the "gang" and task systems is imperative. The works proposed in the preceding paragraph may be regarded as preliminary to regular relief works under the Code. Should distress supervene it will be very easy to convert these works from the piece-work to the task and gang system, and to expand the establishments.

3. But, while the works remain outside the strict letter of Code rules, it is proposed that the rates given shall, in view of the high price of food, be enhanced by 25 to, in particular cases, 50 per cent., *i.e.*, from Rs. 2 per 1,000 cubic feet of earthwork to Rs 2-8-0 or Rs. 3 It is not intended that these works shall be given out on contract, but rather to piece-workers or gangers employing not more than 200 persons. Men of the *chaprasi* class, relatives of petty officials, should on no account be employed. Village *pattidars* are very suitable men, but in any case the piece-worker must actually reside on the work, and deal directly with the workers who will then, with the class of men employed, be in a position to insist on a fixed proportion of the rate being paid to them. In giving out the work the wages to be paid to the workers would be specified; and it is considered that ordinarily 20 per cent. of the rate would be a sufficient remuneration to the piece-worker for his own labour, interest on capital and incidental expenses, such as baskets and perishable stores. It would be necessary to pay the piece-worker weekly, or at most fortnightly, as he would generally be a man of very small capital. The workers would usually bring their own *phaoras*, but at times it might be necessary to issue such tools to the piece-worker. In order that the piece-workers employed may comply with the conditions laid down in this letter, it may be necessary to impose the condition that a piece-worker who cannot carry out work to the value of Rs. 150 in a month will be discharged, whilst no piece-worker will be allowed to execute work to the value of more than Rs. 1,000 in one month.

4. Works on the lines mentioned will also serve as test works, the number and class of labourers resorting to the work being indicative of the sufficiency of the work to meet the degree of pressure, or the necessity for relief works under the Code. But they will not prevent test works under Code rules and on subsistence wages being also established, provided that they are some distance (5 miles or more) apart. It will not, however, be possible to carry out works on the plan sketched above in a tract declared to be distressed, such as the districts mentioned in the margin. In these districts, and in any other district recognised as distressed, the Code rules must be strictly followed. A manual of these rules is under issue for your guidance.

Banda.	Jaunpur.
Hamirpur.	Rae Bareli.
Jhansi.	Sitapur.
Jalaun.	Hardoi.
Allahabad.	

5. The works to be carried out under the terms mentioned in paragraph 3 above will be confined to those for which detailed estimates have been sanctioned, and you should at once place yourself in communication with Commissioners of divisions in your circle with the view of putting one or more works in hand in those districts where they consider them to be required. The work put in hand must, unless with the express sanction of Government, be limited to what can be carried out by famine labour. Subject to the restrictions mentioned above, the works should be selected by Commissioners and may (provided there is an allotment for famine relief works for the district in which the work is situated, *but not otherwise*) be commenced under your orders in anticipation of the approval of Government. An immediate report giving the name of the work, the amount of the estimate, and date of commencement, should, however, be made. The rate it is proposed to pay for earthwork should be mentioned.

6. Works carried out under the orders contained in this letter will be charged to the head Famine Relief and provided for from the allotment made under that head, for such works in the district concerned. The usual weekly famine reports to the Chief Engineer will be required, and arrangements must be made to keep a record of the number of men employed.

Copy forwarded to all Commissioners of divisions and Collectors of districts, to the Examiner, Public Works Accounts, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, and to the Scarcity Department of this Government, for information.

From DENZIL IBBETSON, Esq., C.S.I., I.C.S., Secretary to the Government of India, to the Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Scarcity Department, dated Calcutta, the 16th January 1897, No. 255-F.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letters, Nos. 417 and 500, dated the 14th and 21st December 1896, respectively, regarding the adoption in certain localities of a modified system of relief works which will be carried out under a system of piece-work by gangs, the members of which will be entitled to certain payments, and which will occupy a position intermediate between works carried out on the ordinary system of petty contract and those conducted under the strict conditions of the Famine Code.

2. His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor has been led to introduce this intermediate system by the difficulty of obtaining the large establishments that are necessary for work under the strict provisions of the Famine Code and by the great cost of such works. The Government of India understand that the economy of this new system depends upon the fact that, in tracts where the distress, though real, has not deepened into famine, if the able-bodied workers are employed on piece-work, the women and children will in the main be supported at home by the earnings of the workers, supplemented by such additions to them as they can obtain in their own villages; whereas if the task-work system is strictly enforced, the women and children must at once come on to the works, since the famine wage is sufficient only to support the workers themselves. If this be so, piece-work appears to be advisable so long as the mass of inefficient labour can find support without relief from Government.

3. It is, however, very necessary, as already explained in my Circular No. 3—77-1 F., dated the 24th December 1896, that the rates given should be so regulated as to act as an efficient test of the intensity of distress. They should be such as to constitute a somewhat hard bargain even with the skilled labourer; and should be distinctly below what it would be necessary to give in order to attract labour in the absence of distress. When this is the case, inefficient labour paid by the piece will earn but a bare subsistence, so that the extent of the demand by inefficient labour for employment on these terms will sufficiently gauge the intensity of the distress.

4. The Government of India understand these to be the principles on which His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor has introduced his intermediate system of piece-work, and that as soon as the demand for employment by inefficient labour indicates that distress has reached an acute stage, the ordinary task-work system of the Famine Code will be substituted.

5. The Governor-General in Council gives his hearty approval to the proposals.

Order—Mis. No. 1245, Revenue, dated 5th March 1897.

Communicated to the Board of Revenue.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Ag. Secretary to Government.

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

Read—also the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture), dated 7th April 1897, No. 289:—

Read—the following letter from M.R.Ry. S. A. SWAMINATHA AIYER, Subdivisional officer, Chicacole, to the Executive Engineer, Ganjám Division, dated 18th March 1897, No. 2231, and endorsements thereon:—

I have the honour to report as below on my attempt to open a test work at the Kota Bommali Railway quarry.

Your order to open the test work was received by me on the 15th evening. The next day I sent the necessary tools and rings, and on the 17th I was myself on the spot. In the meantime notice was given by beat of tom-tom in all the adjacent villages (about thirty in number) that the test work would be begun on the 18th morning. The Deputy Tahsildar of Tekkali joined me on the 17th. About fifty coolies gathered together on the morning of the 18th, and these were mainly from the gangs working on petty piece-work on our Garebullagedda channel. A few village naidus also attended. The Deputy Tahsildar and myself explained to them the conditions of the test work. As ragi is selling at 15·22 seers per rupee, the wage of A class gangs was fixed at As. 1–5 and As. 1–3 per each man and woman, respectively. They were glad to hear that the wages are greater than what was notified on the previous occasion. Still they did not like the idea of working in gangs of 100 persons each on the ground that they will be universally fined if the actual work turned out by them falls below the allotted task, and the idleness of some of them will be visited on the other diligent workers in the same gang which will thus get demoralized. They wanted to form themselves into gangs of 10 to 25 each as they choose and do the work on piece-work system. I may here remark that the quarry here is very convenient, and a large part of the metalling will simply have to be dug by the crowbar and a small percentage alone broken by the hammers. Besides, ever since the railway work was begun here, a lot of coolies have been working at this quarry, and have learnt the knack of doing the work properly. They therefore, unlike the coolies in other parts of the district, take to this work in preference to the earthwork in our channel near (where no doubt the soil is hard). They want piece-work at the rate of As. 4 per cubic yard of metalling, the same rate that the railway contractors were paying them before. The village naidus promise that in case this work is started in petty piece-work system as in the Garibullagedda channel near, about 1,000 and more of the adjacent villagers who are now unemployed and in a distressed condition, will come in at once and they can be so employed till this scarcity is over. The coolies that were present positively refused to come on daily wages in gangs of 100.

I beg to add that about a week ago when I inspected and check-measured the earthwork on the Garibullagedda channel, I found the soil hard, and I at once raised the rates. I now pay Rs. 2–14–0 and Rs. 3–4–0 per 1,000 cubic feet of hard earth and gravel, respectively, against the estimate rate of Rs. 3–8–0. Even this has not appreciably attracted more labour up to date, and the future effects will be watched. The coolies prefer metal-collection at the particular quarry to the hard earthwork at the channel for the reasons noted above. I therefore beg leave to suggest that it will be very useful if the ballast work here be opened on petty piece-work on the same system in which our channel earthwork is being done now, with a special overseer in charge of it, payments being made at least twice a week. This will keep the really

needy in the surrounding villages fully employed and will enable them to tide over this season without much difficulty. The railway authorities require a vast quantity of ballast here, more than 37,000 cubic yards. They pay to their contractors at the rate of Rs. 18 per 1,000 cubic feet, *i.e.*, very nearly As. 8 per cubic yard. All that the coolies require on piece-work is As. 4 only per cubic yard, but this latter rate is for stacking at the work-site, which is, however, very near the railway line. There can thus be no sort of loss to Government if the work is undertaken as above suggested, and the Government need feel no anxiety on account of the famine, so far as this part of taluk is concerned. I therefore request that, if you approve, you will be pleased to particularly impress this on the Collector and the Government and do the needful without delay.

Endorsement by W. C. DeMORGAN, Esq., Executive Engineer, Ganjám Division, dated 26th March 1897, No. 6125.

Copy forwarded to the Collector of Ganjám. What the Sub-divisional officer says is perfectly correct. If work is provided at ordinary rates, there will be no necessity for relief works, but the difficulty is to make such arrangements agree with the Famine Code.

Endorsement by the Acting Collector of Ganjám, dated Berhampur, 28th March 1897, Ref. on C. No. 513-Famine.

Copy communicated to the Secretary to the Commissioner of Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture.

2. I consider that the remarks of the Sub-divisional officer are very sound so far as this district is concerned. At present the people are in want of work, but they are not reduced to such straits as to accept famine wage and famine discipline on relief works. The people are accustomed to work by piece-work in small gangs; the large gangs organized under the Famine Code militate against a good outturn. Take for instance the Kaliapalli quarry. Here with difficulty a C class task was performed under test-work conditions. After the allotment on this quarry had been fully expended, I started another work on piece-work system at reduced rate 2 miles off. In a few days the work—which was of exactly the same nature as at Kaliapalle—had attracted 2,470 coolies of the same class, of whom *a large proportion were men* and the task turned out per unit was slightly over a B class task. The coolies came, worked hard and went away cheerful and contented, nor was there any waste of funds. On making inquiries in the villages as to the large number of coolies and especially men attached, I was told that it was because the work was on piece-work system and the villagers were allowed to form their own gangs each being paid by results.

3. In connection with the test work at Bendi in January last, I suggested that work might advantageously be given out on piece-work to village gangs without the intervention of contractors, and in most places the same theory still holds good. In this opinion I am supported by my Divisional officers. I am inclined to believe that, with the new allotment falling available on 1st April, we shall, so far as this district is concerned by the general adoption of this system, be able to avert the necessity for any relief works except in a few special localities which are badly favoured in respect of ordinary works. The people will work cheerfully and contentedly and will have a margin left over for the support of their children who will not then be forced on to kitchens or gratuitous relief. This principle has been recently endorsed in the Government of India memorandum embodied in B.P. (Revenue Settlement), dated 11th March 1897, No. 216. Some temporary additional establishment may be required, but it will prove to be economy in the long run and much famine expenditure, that might otherwise be rendered necessary, avoided.

4. With regard to the breaking of metal for the East Coast Railway, I should be very glad to see the principle of piece-work adopted; but here there is a difficulty. This is a railway work specially provided against famine and the work has to be executed by the Public Works Department subject to the provisions of the Famine

Code—a subsequent adjustment being made from Railway funds. It is not an ordinary work to be executed under the special conditions referred to in paragraph 16 of the Famine Code.

5. I would therefore ask whether, under the special circumstances of this district which show that—while work is demanded and eagerly sought for— test works prove no attraction, the work of breaking metal (provided as a special famine-relief work in the Famine Programme of the district) may not be taken up on the principles suggested, viz., on piece-work given at low rates to village groups without the intervention of contractors. The railway throughout the district runs through the tract where work is most urgently required, and it would prove of the greatest possible service to take up this work on the system referred to even before the allotments on all other works are exhausted. I would request that Government may be asked so to relax the provisions of the Famine Code as to permit of funds being granted under 33. Famine, for the execution of this work on the principles enunciated by the Supreme Government in their memorandum quoted above without applying the conditions of chapter VII of the Code.

Resolution—dated 7th April 1897, No. 289.

In his endorsement read above, the Collector of Ganjám asks that, on the principles laid down in paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 of enclosure 1 to Government of India's Circular No. 16—104-1-F., dated 13th February 1897, piece-work on reduced rates may be substituted for test-works in his district, and expresses the opinion that, if his suggestion is adopted, a very considerable amount of expenditure upon other forms of relief that necessarily follows in the wake of strictly organized famine-relief works will be saved. He reports "at present the people are in want of work, but they are not reduced to such straits as to accept famine wage and famine discipline on relief-works." The Collector's experiment shows that even under the disadvantageous terms on which piece-work has been offered, there is a real demand for such employment. This demand shows that there exists a distress of considerable intensity.

2. Employment by piece-work was intended by the Government of India to be only *preliminary* to the introduction of strictly organized test-works, and the Board considers that if relief is necessary at all, the time has come for the introduction of works of the latter kind. The Uriya is, no doubt, the most difficult man in the Presidency to deal with in administering Government relief, but the Board does not consider that his prejudices and reluctance to submit to discipline are sufficient reasons for treating him differently from the distressed population of other districts The conditions of employment set out in G.O., No. 216 of 1897, are more liberal than those hitherto in force, and the Board is not prepared to recommend to Government on behalf of any isolated portion of the Presidency any deviation from the general principles therein expounded. Any work that may be opened for the purpose of relief must be carried out in accordance with the provisions of chapter VII of the Famine Code. In declining to support the Collector, the Board is fully aware of the difficulty with which he has to deal, but a Famine Code is not to be torn in pieces during the progress of distress, except for very serious reasons. The provisions relating to gratuitous relief have been relaxed to a degree not permitted in other districts in view of the recognised singularity of Ganjám, and it is hoped that between this and the very benevolent terms offered in G.O., No. 216 of 1897, which the Collector had not received when he wrote his letter, that officer may succeed in attaining the objects of relief without further experiments. The susceptibilities of the Uriya have been sufficiently met in the matter of gratuitous relief, but he cannot be encouraged to take a step further and dictate to the whole Presidency how relief on works should be administered.

(True Copy and Extract.)

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

To the Collector of Ganjám.

Copy to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
" " Collectors of other affected districts.

Read—also the following letter from T. W. HOLDERNESS, Esq., C.S., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue and Agriculture (Famine), to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, dated Simla, the 19th April 1897, Cir. No. 20—91-2-F.:—

I am directed to forward, for the information of the Governor in Council, a copy of a resolution issued by the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, No. 753, dated 16th March 1897, prescribing a modified system of "intermediate" relief works with the object of limiting the earnings of workers to a reasonable subsistence wage for themselves and their dependants.

Enclosures.

Resolution from the Secretary to Government, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Scarcity Department, No. 753—S.-73, dated Allahabad, the 16th March 1897.

Read—

G.O., No. 357 of 5th December 1896, to all Commissioners of Divisions, North-Western Provinces and Oudh.

G.O., No. 9099-W.A. of 5th December 1896, to all Superintending Engineers, Provincial Works, North-Western Provinces and Oudh.

G.O., No. 428 of 16th December 1896, to all Commissioners of Divisions, North-Western Provinces and Oudh.

Government of India Circular, No. 3-F. of 24th December 1896, on the exaction of full task in famine-relief operations.

G.O., No. 464 of 13th February 1897, to all Commissioners of Divisions and Collectors of Districts, North-Western Provinces and Oudh (except Meerut and Kumaun).

Government of India Circular, No 16-F. of 13th February 1897, on principles for regulating expenditure upon public works in time of famine.

The advent of the *rabi* harvest and the further experience gained in the conduct of relief works under the Famine Code rules have led the Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner to consider whether, in the districts where distress is less acute, some modification is not required in the arrangements now in force on relief works, and in the method of fixing and paying wages. The commencement of the harvest has renewed the demand for field labour, which ceased when the winter rains put an end to the irrigation of the advanced crops. In some districts a fresh demand has sprung up for more irrigation to counteract the mischief caused by the high winds which prevailed a short time ago. It is unnecessary to say that it is of the highest importance to so regulate the relief works that they may not attract away labour which is required to get in or safeguard the harvest on which the food-supply of the country will now largely depend. It is for every reason no less important to arrange tasks and wages with a view to limit the admission to relief works strictly to those persons who cannot find private employment and have no other means of subsistence.

At the same time it may be anticipated that the harvest work will not absorb the usual amount of labour, as the area sown is below normal, and the pressure on all classes will lead tenant and small proprietors to do more field work than usual themselves, and thereby dispense with the services of day labourers.

It is therefore necessary in most districts to maintain for the present relief works in some form, though employment will have to be found only for diminished numbers.

2. Relief works under the Famine Code rules not only provide employment for all working members of a family, no matter how ineffective, but supply a gratuitous dole to all members who are unable to work. It therefore unavoidably happens that the members of a large family coming all together on the works are able to earn or receive collectively more than the effective working members alone could gain from a private employer and frequently more than suffices for their subsistence only. The presence of large crowds, including very numerous ineffective workers and dependants, renders it very difficult to enforce a full task or, without reducing the wage below subsistence level, to impose fines which will correctly represent short work. A fresh inducement is thereby offered to labourers to remain on relief works after private employment has re-opened.

The problem is to introduce a system which will retain the principle that relief work affording subsistence for the labourers and their dependants shall be provided where it is required, and at the same time to divest the work system of the features which may place it in competition with ordinary labourer where this is available.

3. The Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner believes that such a system may be found in a modification of the scheme of intermediate works sketched in the correspondence noted at the head of this resolution.

That scheme as originally framed required the interposition of petty contractors or middlemen between the Government and the actual labourers. The contractors derived a profit which was set off against the cost of establishment which Government would have had to provide. But it gave contractors an inducement to employ only the more able-bodied and to exclude the weakly who stood most in need of support, and constant supervision, involving expense, was required to counteract this tendency. The system is suited to less considerable works where distress it not very general, but it is less suited to large undertakings designed to afford relief to great numbers of unskilled labourers. A modification of it has recently been tried with success, and the Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner would like to see it generally applied, not merely to intermediate works on the old system, which it has now quite supplanted, but to many works now carried out under Famine Code rules where there is a fair *rabi* area and where the distress is not acute. Under this modified system no contractor or middleman is employed. The work is laid out, supervised, and measured, and payments are made by Government officials; and tools, where necessary, are supplied by Government. But the work will continue to be treated and paid as piece work, not as task work under the Famine Code. No dependants will be recognised, and the payments will be in accordance with the amount of work actually done.

The rates and tasks will be so graduated as to enable an ordinary labourer or family of labourers to earn what the average family now earns in the shape of both wages and gratuitous doles (to dependants) combined. The discontinuance of Sunday labour makes it necessary to arrange for labourers earning on week days enough to provide for themselves and their dependants on Sundays also.

4. The table which accompanies this resolution shows the rates, tasks, and wages which it is proposed to adopt as a standard, and an endeavour has been made to render them suitable for adoption in all parts of the provinces. But in view of the very varying conditions which exist in different districts, some local modifications may be found necessary, and these should be determined in each case by the Commissioner, Collector, and Superintending Engineer.

The point to be borne in mind is to fix rates and tasks which will not render the relief works unduly attractive, and, while securing a fair outturn of work, will not permit labourers to earn more than a reasonable subsistence wage for themselves and their dependants. A maximum task has been fixed, representing the greatest amount of daily work which a labour party can be permitted to perform and the highest daily wage they can be permitted to earn.

The table is framed primarily to meet the case of a labour party (or family) consisting of a digger and two adult carriers; the number of carriers would in practice vary with the employment of minors. The standard task in ordinary soil is taken to be 100 cubic feet, and the rate fixed is Rs. 2–3–0 per 1,000 cubic feet. The party would earn daily for this work 14 pice, which would represent 6 pice for the digger and 8 pice for carriers, being 4 pice each if two adults were actually employed and proportionally less per carrier if there were two or more minors in place of an adult.

It would be the business of the charge officer or work agent and staff to form the parties and distribute the work.

If the full tale of 100 cubic feet were not executed, there would be a proportional abatement made in the total payment, and if the tale were exceeded, the payment would be proportionately raised up to the full or maximum task or wage, but not beyond that.

If the full or maximum task of 125 cubic feet were performed, the total earnings of the party would be 17 pice, representing 7 pice to the digger and 10 pice to the carriers, which, reduced to two adults, would give 5 pice to each. The exact apportionment of the total earnings of the gang or party could be varied as circumstances required. The above distribution is suggested as one generally suitable.

5. The ordinary task, if executed, would enable the average family to earn what it now receives in the shape of wages and doles, and, by a little extra diligence on week days, the full task would make provision for the Sunday wage without requiring labour on that day. At the same time a fair outturn of work would be ensured and proportional deductions made for short work. There would be some reduction in the crowds of dependants and ineffective labourers who throng the works and become a source of danger in the season when cholera is usually prevalent.

The foregoing rates are put forward tentatively as those at which the experiment can be commenced subject to any local variations which may be decided as above explained. Experience may show them liable to alteration.

6 Under instructions already issued, this system will be introduced in the current month into the districts of the Agra Division, the *Holi* festival being taken as a suitable point of departure. It should also be introduced at the same time into any parts of the Rohilkhand Division where it may not be at present in force. In the Fyzabad Division it should be applied to any works which remain open, and in all cases where it may hereafter be found necessary to re-open works.

In the Gorakhpur Division such a system is practically in force in half the district. In the other part of the district and in Azamgarh it can be introduced at once as the Commissioner finds it possible to do so. It is believed that all necessity for relief works in Basti has now ceased or will shortly cease. Should any be retained or re-opened, the system now indicated should be adopted.

It will be necessary to retain the works under the Famine Code system in the Hardoi district; but the Commissioner of Lucknow is at liberty to introduce the system above described into the whole or part of any other district in his division, and should take early steps to effect the change where it seems possible.

In the Allahabad Division, the system should be introduced into the Cawnpore and Fatehpur districts, and into the north part of the Allahabad district, consisting of the Doáb portion, and the three tahsils (Phulpur, Handia, and Soraon) across the Ganges.

The Commissioner of Benares should consider and report whether the system should be introduced into the Jaunpur district.

It is not proposed to make any change at present in the system of relief works under full Famine Code rules in those districts where the distress is very acute, and the contracted area of the *rabi* crop and its defective condition do not hold out any prospect of considerable occupation for labour in harvesting it. In this category come the Bundelkhand districts, South Allahabad, Mirzapur, and Hardoi. No attempt will therefore be made to introduce the intermediate system into these parts.

Where action is to be taken under these orders, it should be taken promptly as the harvest season has already begun.

Table showing rates to be paid for earthwork—intermediate system.

Kind of soil.	Ordinary task.					Full task (provides for dependants).		
	Task adapted to ordinary workers.	Rate per 1,000 cubic feet.	Rate per 100 cubic feet.	Wages earned by performing task.	Remarks.	Task which can be performed by hard work.	Wages earned by performing task.	Remarks.
	C. FT.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.		C. FT.	RS. A. P.	
I.—Soft	120	1 14 0	0 3 0	0 3 6	Re. 0-3-7, but taken as Re. 0-3-6.	141	0 4 3	..
II.—Ordinary standard rate.	100	2 3 0	0 3 6	0 3 6	..	125	0 4 3	Re. 0-4-4, but taken as Re. 0-4-3.

N.B.—(*a*) The rate No. II is the standard. The 14 pice earned would be distributed between the digger and carrier or carriers in proportions varying with the locality: in the 2nd Circle the digger would receive six pice and two carriers four pice each for an ordinary task, and the digger seven pice and two carriers five pice each for a full task.

(*b*) The rate No. II would be followed in the absence of special orders by the District Engineer, to be reported to the Divisional and Superintending Engineer.

(*c*) These rates are adapted for roads where the lead is not materially in excess of 50 feet or the depth of excavation much in excess of five feet.

(*d*) In the case of tanks where greater lifts and leads would be met with special rates providing for the extra lift and lead would be sanctioned by Superintending Engineers, following generally Appendix D, Famine Code.

(*e*) The above rates are for earthwork only thrown up to section. Dressing and finishing would usually be separately paid for at a rate not exceeding for roads eight annas per 1,000 cubic feet of earthwork, to be fixed by the Superintending Engineer. Where the dressing could be done by the same gang, the earthwork rates would be increased by five annas per 1,000 cubic feet.

Order.—Ordered that copies be forwarded to all Commissioners of Divisions and District Officers, North-Western Provinces and Oudh (except those of the Meerut and Kumaun Divisions), for information and necessary action.

Ordered also that copies be forwarded to the Secretary to this Government in the Public Works Department, Buildings and Roads Branch, for information and necessary action.

(Signed) T. STOKER,
Secy. to Govt., N.-W. P. and Oudh.

Order—No. 430, Revenue, dated 3rd June 1897.

Miscellaneous.

In the second of the papers read above, the Board of Revenue disallows a proposal made by the Collector of Ganjám to substitute piece-work on reduced rates and without the intervention of contractors for the task-work system in force on the relief works in progress in the district. The proposal is based on principles recently adopted in the North-Western Provinces, with the approval of the Government of India, and described in paragraphs 5—8 of the memorandum printed in the first of the papers read above.

2. Section 16 of the Madras Famine Code recognises that in tracts where distress is just commencing, it may be desirable to expand, as a temporary measure, the ordinary works of the Public Works Department so as to give employment to larger numbers than usual, the labourers being employed on the additional works thus undertaken on the usual contract system at the rates prevailing in the labour market. Such additional works may in many cases be sufficient to meet all requirements in the earlier stages of distress, as demand for employment by inefficient labour will not then be appreciable and the earnings of able-bodied workers on the piece-work system supplemented by such additions as can be obtained in the villages by their women and infirm dependants will be sufficient for the maintenance of the whole family. Section 16 further contemplates that it may be necessary to modify the usual contract system on these ordinary works so as to admit of their giving employment to the largest number possible, contracts for small works or where possible for portions of large works being given to such heads of villages as can be relied on to give employment to their most needy fellow villagers. But when distress deepens and gives rise to demand for employment by inefficient labour, since the ordinary contract system fails to secure proper remuneration to the individual worker, one or more test works are to be opened to gauge the extent of distress and of the demand for employment under the conditions of the Famine Code.

3. The above appears also in the main to be the course prescribed in the North-Western Provinces Famine Code, but the experience gained in that province shows that in tracts where distress, though considerable, is not so acute as to drive on to the works a large proportion of inefficient labour, payment by results is more economical than the gang and task work system of the Code which involves the payment of a subsistence wage to all workers however inefficient, besides the gratuitous maintenance of their children and infirm dependants. In view of the costliness of relief works and of the extreme difficulty of obtaining the large number of subordinate officers required for their supervision, the Government of the North-Western Provinces has adopted a system of works intermediate between ordinary and relief works, which are to take the place of ordinary works when distress becomes pronounced, to be replaced in their turn by regular relief works when distress deepens into famine. These works are to be given out on the system of payment by results to piece-workers or gangers, preferably village headmen, at rates which allow them a fair remuneration for their trouble and expense, the proportion of the rates to be paid as wages to the workmen being fixed beforehand. The above is in effect, the modified contract system contemplated by section 16 of the Madras Code and the advantage of it is that it secures proper remuneration to the individual worker which, under the urgency of distress, the ordinary contract system fails to do, while at the same time it enables able-bodied workers to earn enough to maintain their women and children. But it gives the contractors and middlemen interposed between Government and the actual workers an inducement to employ only the more able-bodied labourers to the exclusion of the weakly who stand most in need of relief, and constant supervision involving expense is required to counteract this tendency. It has therefore been found that though suitable to less considerable works where distress is not general, the system is not adapted to large undertakings designed to afford relief to considerable numbers of unskilled labourers, and it appears from the last of the papers read above that the North-Western Provinces Government has found it necessary to adopt a modified form

of it in which the Government deals directly with the labourers. The work is laid out, supervised and measured by Government officials, and tools where necessary are supplied by Government; but payments are made by results as under the piece-work system, and no dependants are recognised.

4. It will thus be seen that the system advocated by the Collector of Ganjám is the same as the modified form of the piece-work system recently adopted with success in the North-Western Provinces. The Board of Revenue objects to its adoption on the ground that it is intended by the Government of India to be only preliminary to the introduction of strictly organized test works, and that if relief is necessary at all in the district the time has come for the introduction of the latter kind of works. The Government has carefully considered the subject and is of opinion that the district of Ganjám is one in which strictly organized test and relief works fail of their intended objects, and that there and perhaps elsewhere also it is necessary to supplement the scheme of works as laid down in the Code by an intermediate system like the one described above. The Uriyas of Ganjám are as a class averse to sending their women to labour at the relief works and none but those belonging to the lowest classes send their children to the kitchens attached to the works; as the earnings of the actual workers are barely sufficient for their own maintenance, Government relief does not reach the women and children of the labouring classes and regular relief works fail of their object. Further it is reported that the people of the district dislike the discipline enforced on such works and will not resort to them unless reduced to great straits. The Koyas of the Bhadráchalam taluk similarly have a strong prejudice against relief works and refuse to accept employment at the Code rates though there is considerable distress among them now; and anxiety has been expressed in some quarters lest this prejudice should lead them to stint and starve themselves. A similar reluctance on the part of the people to resort to relief works has been reported from Vizagapatam. On the other hand payment by results to which the people are accustomed is suited to their habits and tastes, and it appears from the correspondence forwarded by the Collector of Ganjám that the labourers in his district are anxious to have piece work and willing to accept work at rates considerably below those allowed by the Public Works Department in ordinary years. The Government is of opinion that the proper policy to pursue under the circumstances is to offer relief in the form acceptable to the distressed population instead of waiting till by prolonged stinting they reduce themselves to such a low condition as to make them ready to accept employment on any terms. The intermediate system of payment by results offers the best solution of the difficulty and the experience gained in the North-Western Provinces shows that it is more economical than task work even at rates higher than those allowed by the Public Works Department in ordinary years.

5. The adoption of such a system is also rendered necessary by the concentration of relief works lately ordered by Government which involves the opening of petty village works and improvements for affording employment to people living at a distance from the works centres. These petty works cannot be carried on under the supervision of Government officials and must necessarily be entrusted to the agency of village heads or other middlemen. The system is therefore likely to prove advantageous, not only in Ganjám but in all the affected tracts, and His Excellency the Governor in Council is of opinion that it should be adopted as an integral part of the scheme of famine-relief works. It is no doubt true that the system as originally approved by the Government of India was intended to meet the earlier stages of distress and to be preliminary to the introduction of the regular relief works, but in the modified form in which it has been recently adopted in the North-Western Provinces it can advantageously be made use of even when distress becomes severe.

6. The scheme of relief works to be opened by Government will then stand as follows:—

(i) Expanded ordinary works: ...		To be carried out on the ordinary contract system.
(ii) and (iii) Intermediate works: to be carried out on the gang and piece-work system.	(ii)	With the intervention of petty contractors.
	(iii)	Without the intervention of contractors, work being laid out, supervised and paid for by Government officials.
(iv) Test and relief works:		To be carried out under the Code conditions.

Class (ii) is the same as the modified contract system contemplated by section 16 of the Code, class (iii) works are called "intermediate" in accordance with the designation adopted in the North-Western Provinces, but the Government trust that in districts like Ganjám where the peculiar habits of the people may render such work necessary, they will be found adequate for the relief of distress in all its stages and will form an efficient substitute for relief works as organized under the Code. The laying out, supervision and measurement of work on this class of works should be undertaken by Government officials, and to prevent a too rapid exhaustion of the works it will be necessary to limit the amount of work to be assigned to each piece-working gang. The rates allowed on works of classes (ii) and (iii) must be so fixed as not to attract labour for which there is existing employment, and should be "such as to constitute a hard bargain even with the skilled labourer, and should be distinctly below what it would be necessary to give in order to attract labour in the absence of distress." It is also well to bear in mind that these works are opened on the supposition that under the system of payment by results an able-bodied labourer can earn enough to maintain himself and the non-working members of his family and that such works are therefore more economical than relief works. As soon therefore as it is apparent that there is a demand by inefficient labour for employment on the terms offered at these intermediate works, one or more works on the task-work system should be opened, and if such demand be found to be considerable the intermediate works should be replaced by regular relief works, or the labourers drafted to the nearest such works.

7. The Famine Commissioner will take immediate steps to carry out the above instructions. It will be for him to decide in consultation with Collectors whether intermediate works can advantageously be opened in any affected district; such works can be readily converted into regular relief works when necessity arises.

8. Ordered that the following letter be despatched to the Government of India.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Famine Commissioner.
" the Public Works Department.
" the Local and Municipal Department.
" the Financial Department.
" the Accountant-General.

Exd. W. D'Moss.

150 Copies.