

Public Works (1897) Department.

Wm E. Smith

G.O., No. 3176 W

DATED 13 November 1897

[Despatch Abstract.]

*amine Relief Operations, Pro: Revenue Dept
meeting the Annual Commission with
remarks to arrange for the holding of a Conference
of Revenue, Public Works and Medical Officers at
Bekkan and Walfair to discuss certain questions
in connection with the recent ~~...~~ Compt. to S.E.S
I and III. Cites for guidance and to other officers
of the Department for information.*

Proceedings, Revenue Department, requesting the Famine Commissioner with remarks to arrange for the holding of conferences of Revenue, Public Works and Medical officers at Bellary and Waitair to discuss certain questions in connection with the recent —, communicated to Superintending Engineers, I and III Circles, for guidance and to other officers of the department for information.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

Buildings and Roads.
Civil Works.

Read—the following paper :—

G.O., No. 899, Revenue, dated 29th October 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 Simla, the 18th August 1897, No. 2794 F./206-2.

I am directed to forward, for the information of His Excellency the Governor in Council, a copy of "Notes on the inspection of famine-relief works in the Madras Presidency" by Mr. T. Higham, C.I.E., the officer deputed to report on famine-relief works in the several provinces in which famine operations are in progress.

2. Mr. Higham's notes show that on the relief works inspected by him in the Madras Presidency the method of tasking the workers is more lenient than that prevailing in other provinces, owing to the deductions made for distance, weakness and excessive tasks, and to the suspension of fines for insufficient work. He also remarks on the extensive powers to grant reductions of tasks and to lower the gang classification exercised in some districts by subordinate officials. In paragraph 33 of the notes, Mr. Higham states that at the time of his visit to the Presidency orders were under issue by the Government of Madras for enforcing greater strictness in these respects, though he had not actually seen them. With your letter No. 661, dated 2nd August 1897, a copy of Madras G.O., No. 616, dated 24th July 1897, has been received, which directs that the fourfold classification of works be reverted to, reduces the gratuitous dole to the amount of the ration allowed to class D relief workers, and cancels the restrictions on fining for short work laid down in paragraph 4 of the G.O., No. 216, dated 30th March 1897. These instructions however do not touch on the subject of reductions of the standard tasks, and the Government of India will be glad to learn how the Government of Madras propose to deal with this matter and also to be favoured with any observations which His Excellency the Governor in Council may wish to make on Mr. Higham's report.

3. In paragraphs 17 and 19 and 26 of the notes it is suggested that the table of standard tasks appended to the Madras Famine Code should be revised. A similar suggestion was made in the last paragraph of my letter, No. 2266, of the 14th June 1897, I am to commend the matter to the attention of the Government of Madras, as on the correctness and practical utility of the standard scale of tasks depends in a large measure in the successful management of relief works.

4. In paragraphs 25—31 of the notes the relations of the officers of the Public Works Department employed on relief works with the district revenue authorities are discussed at length, and it is shown that the practice in the Presidency in this respect does not correspond with that of other provinces. The Government of India will be glad to learn the views of the Government of Madras on this very important matter, and they would particularly invite attention to the remark in paragraph 31 of the notes as to the great loss in power involved in the limited authority assigned to the Public Works Department in the control and management of relief works. They may say on the experience of other provinces that although the civil authorities may be competent to manage relief works on a small scale, a really serious famine, involving provision of work for great masses of people, and throwing heavy and multifarious duties on the district civil authorities, requires the full utilization of the Public Works

Department. They recognize that in the control of relief works the latter department must be required to conform to the special requirements of the Famine Code and to subordinate to these the ordinary departmental methods of conducting work. But they are assured from the experience of other provinces that this can be secured, and that at the same time larger powers can most advantageously be given to the Department of Public Works than appears to be the case in Madras.

ENCLOSURE.

Notes on an Inspection of Famine relief-works in the Madras Presidency by Mr. T. Higham, C.I.E., on special duty, Famine Relief Operations.

1. I visited the Madras Presidency after completing my tour in Bombay, the Central Provinces, the North-West Provinces and Bengal, leaving the latter Province on the 4th July by rail from Mokameh, and arriving

Itinerary.

in Bellary on the evening of the 6th. On the following morning I met the Honourable Mr. LeFanu, the Famine Commissioner, who kindly arranged a programme for my tour through the Deccan districts. I did not consider it necessary to visit the Vizagapatam and Ganjam districts, in which the total number of relief workers did not then exceed 60,000, though there were nearly 400,000 in the Cuddapah, Kurnool, Bellary and Anantapur districts.

On the morning of the 8th I left Bellary with Mr. Stuart, the Collector, and Mr. Clerk, the Executive Engineer of the district, for Hala-Harri, 21 miles distant, inspecting on the road two relief charges, comprising together about 9,000 workers. On the following day we went on, through Alur, to Nemakkal, inspecting relief works all along the road; and on the 10th, we went on to Guntakal, which lies just outside the Bellary and within the Anantapur district. At Guntakal I met Mr. Shipley, Collector of Anantapur, and Mr. Romilly, the Executive Engineer; and on the evening of the 10th, we visited together a road work about four miles from Guntakal. On returning to Guntakal I met Mr. deWinton, the Superintending Engineer, and we went on together the following morning by rail to Maddi Khera, in the Kurnool district, where we were met by Mr. Elwin, the Collector, and Mr. Johnstone, the Executive Engineer. After inspecting together some works in the neighbourhood we went on by rail in the night to Belamchera, in the same district, and inspected some road works there on the following morning. In the afternoon I returned with Mr. deWinton to Guntakal, whence we proceeded by rail during the night to Muddanura, in the Cuddapah district, where we arrived early in the morning of the 13th, and were met by Mr. Murray, the Executive Engineer of the Cuddapah district. After inspecting the Muddanura tank work I went on by rail to Madras, where I had an interview on the 14th with the Honourable Mr. Crole, Senior Member of the Board of Revenue and President of the Madras Famine Charitable Fund. On the 15th I returned to Cuddapah, where Mr. deWinton and Mr. Murray were awaiting me, and where I met also Mr. Tate, the Collector, and Surgeon-Colonel King, the Sanitary Commissioner, and we inspected together a relief work (road-metalling), two or three miles out of Cuddapah. We left Cuddapah by the night train, Mr. deWinton and Mr. Murray leaving us en route, and Dr. King accompanying me as far as Adoni, where we met Mr. LeFanu on the 16th. I left Adoni and the Madras Presidency early in the morning of the 17th en route for Simla.

2. The relief works in progress in the four districts visited consisted almost entirely of road work, that is, of the earth work required for repairing old roads and making new ones, and the collection and laying of metalling

Character of relief works.

either on old metalled roads in disrepair or on roads not hitherto metalled. The only other works, with the exception of some town works in Cuddapah were for the construction or clearance of irrigation tanks and channels. The following statement shows the number of different works in progress or immediately about to be started during the second fortnight in June, and the number of labourers employed as reported on the 24th of that month :—

District.	Number of works.		Attendance on 24th June.	
	Road.	Others.	Roads.	Others.
Bellary	25	4	96,751	8,843
Anantapur	33	8	55,328	3,004
Kurnool	36	6	69,659	5,307
Cuddapah	17	11	53,896	27,920
Total	111	29	275,634	45,074

The number of irrigation works was considerable only in Cuddapah, where they included some new channels on the Kurnool-Cuddapah Canal. It is said that there is not much opening for tank works in the Deccan, where the rainfall is ordinarily so scanty that tanks would be of little use, the only eligible sites having for the most part been already occupied. If the distress in these tracts continues, all that is proposed is to open more road works, and I was informed that there would be no difficulty in doing this, though it was certain that there would be a great difficulty in subsequently finding funds for the maintenance of the roads to be newly made or metalled.

3. The relief works are so arranged as to be generally within six or seven miles of the Distance of works from the affected villages. affected villages. It is said that the people cannot possibly be induced to leave their villages and reside on the works, though in the absence of any important works, other than road works, the assertion does not appear to have been very fairly tested.

4. I understand that relief works in the Deccan were originally carried out in strict accordance with the provisions of the Madras Madras G.O., No. 216, Revenue, dated 30th March 1897. Famine Code. The gangs were classified as therein directed, and an attempt was made to enforce the standard tasks laid down in the Code, fines being freely imposed in proportion to the deficiency in the executed tasks and without any minimum wage limit. At the time of my visit, however, this had all been changed, and the works were being conducted in accordance with the later instructions issued in Madras Government G.O., No. 216, Revenue, dated 30th March 1897, and supplementary directions contained in the Board of Revenue Resolution, No. 278, dated 3rd April 1897.

5. The orders of Government on the subject of the classification of the works, as contained in Classification of gangs as ordered in the Government Order. paragraph 2 of the Government Order quoted above, are to the effect that "all persons seeking employment on relief works should, until further orders, be placed as a rule in class A or class B. The very weak, those who can do only nominal work and who will not resort to kitchens, may, however, be placed in class C." The Board of Revenue in paragraph 2 (d) of their Resolution issued the following direction:—

"The C class of worker is abolished, except for the very weak, who do only nominal work and will not resort to kitchens. This abolishes the D class of relief worker as well."

The orders quoted above were referred by the Government of Madras to the Government of India for approval in their letter No. 296, dated 4th May 1897, but the Government of India in their letter No. 2266—116—5-F., dated 14th June 1897, declined to sanction the proposal to place all the very weak who only do nominal tasks in class C instead of in class D, and to place in the B class workers who, being unaccustomed to hard manual labour, were unable to a B task, and who, under the Famine Code, should be put into class C. The orders of the Government of India had not, however, been communicated to the Collectors at the time of my visit, and when I met the Famine Commissioner at Adoni on the 16th July and mentioned these orders to him, he told me that he had not up till then heard of them.

6. In practice, however, the orders of the Government Order have not been carried out, Classification of the gangs as found in practice. and the present actual classification may, subject to a few trifling exceptions, be described in a few words; all are in class B. In Bellary and Cuddapah districts I came across special gangs of very weak persons, who were either wholly untasked or given but a nominal task, and found them all in class B. There was no one in class C, and the wages due to this class were only quoted in Bellary as being the rest-day wage. The D wage is also quoted, but merely as the minimum wage below which a worker must on no account be fined, and down to the limit of which he is not to be fined for more than one week continuously. I saw only one work in Anantapur, but understood from the Collector that in that district the orders of the Local Government are more strictly followed, and the weakly gangs are put into C class and receive the C wage. The rest-day wage in this district is paid at the D rate. The practice in Kurnool will be presently described—see paragraphs 11 and 12, *infra*.

As to class A I found in Bellary that men and women employed on ramming, although classed as B, were allowed to receive the A wage, not as a matter of course, but if the ramming were well done to the satisfaction of the Public Works subordinate in charge. This was simply by way of encouraging the rammers to put their backs into the work, but there were no A class workers properly so called. In Kurnool I found one gang which was classed as A, which is referred to in paragraph 12 below, but with an occasional exception of this kind no one is at present put into any class but B. I was unable to obtain any explanation as to why the weakly gangs or the weak members of gangs were placed in this class, which does not appear to have been contemplated in the Government Order already referred to.

7. We have next to consider the method of tasking the gangs. The entries in the gang register show in separate columns for each gang the number of men, boy adults, nursing mothers (with whom are included women in an advanced stage of pregnancy), other women, and finally children under 12. Boy adults, or boys between the ages of 12 and 16, are shown separately, because, although under the Madras Code such boys are entitled to the pay of adults, they are more lightly tasked, in accordance with paragraph 3 (1) of the Government Order already referred to. The system is to reduce all the members of the gang to their equivalents in child-units, which is the unit of tasking. Thus:—

A man is taken as four units.

A boy adult ... 3 or 4 units.

A nursing mother ... 1½ "

Other women, including girls, from 12 to 16... 2 "

Children under 12 ... 1 unit.

On the basis of these equivalents the strength of the gang is then expressed in a separate column in the register in terms of child-units, and normally the number of such units multiplied by the task per child-unit (*vide* Form F, page 66, Madras Famine Code) should give the task for the gang. It is obvious that if A, B and C classes were recognised, the registers would have to exhibit the number of men, boy adults, nursing mothers, other women and children under each class, each having its appropriate equivalent. This would greatly complicate the form, but the difficulty is at present avoided, because all workers (even those that do but a nominal task) are now put into the single class B.

8. In practice, however, the task for the gang is not that obtained by the normal calculation referred to above. Before the task for the day is finally fixed certain reductions have to be made, in accordance with the instructions contained in paragraph 3 (ii), (iii) and (iv) of the Government Order of March last. A copy of this Government Order was forwarded to the Government of India for information with Madras Government letter, No. 296, dated 4th May 1897, but specific approval of their instructions in regard to the reduction of tasks was not applied for, as the regulation of tasks is of course a matter entirely within the control of the Local Government. I propose to show, however, how these instructions have worked in practice, and it will be convenient to consider them in the reverse of the order in which they appear in the Government Order under reference.

9. Beginning then with the order relating to reduction of tasks on account of distance (paragraph 3 (iv) of the Government Order), it may be remarked that in no work visited by me had much shelter been provided for the labourers at or near the works, and I was told that the people could not be induced to leave their homes for the night, and preferred walking to and from their villages night and morning, even when these were as many as seven miles away. This is hardly to be wondered at when such liberal allowance is made for the work performed in the journey, a walk of 2½ miles being regarded as the equivalent of an hour's work. The time allowed for walking to and from a village a mile from the works is thus 48 minutes, or exactly one-tenth of a working day of eight hours. After the column showing the number of child-units in the gang register, there is therefore a column showing the reduction to be made for distance, in which is entered a fraction of which the denominator is 10, and the numerator the average distance in miles from the work of the villages from which the members of the gang have come. When the work is close up to the doors of the village no deduction is made, but in such a case the whole village of course turns out to the work. But for a village a mile distant, a deduction of 10 per cent. is made from the number of units before striking the task, and so in proportion for greater distances. Deductions of 50 per cent. on this account are common enough, and in some registers I saw deductions of 70 per cent.

This practice, whatever its justification, opens of course another door for fraud. The distances are probably very roughly and liberally calculated, the benefit of any doubt being given to the gang. Thus on the 19th July we mustered a gang of 107 individuals (No. 40) for which a deduction of 30 per cent. had been made for distance, and the Collector discovered that 18 of the members had come from a village alongside the work. It may be added that, although in all provinces, except Bombay (where the labourers at present all reside on the works), the majority of the labourers come every morning from villages as far distant from the works as those in the Deccan, it is only in Madras that any deduction from the task is made on this account.

10. The next reduction of task to be considered is that on account of weakness. Paragraph 3 (iii) of the Government Order runs as follows:—

(iii) *Weakness.*—The case of weakly gangs should also be met by a reduction of the task, and not of the class or wage. The Government has already pointed out in its orders No. 43, dated the 26th January 1897, and No. 108, dated the 19th February 1897, that Collectors can do this under section 107, and Divisional officers should freely exercise this power as to suit the tasks to the capacity of weakly coolies till these recover their health, when the full task of their class should be demanded."

I have already noted that in Bellary and Cuddapah districts it is the practice to form weakly gangs, who are nevertheless put into class B. Similar gangs in Anantapur are, I understand, placed in class C. Apart from this, however, there are in many gangs certain weak individuals belonging to the families of other workers, and who are, very properly, allowed to remain in the gangs. In Bellary I found a gang in which a deduction from the number of units was made on this account, and as long as it is accepted that persons who are unable to work should nevertheless be entitled to a full B wage there is no objection to this practice, and it is immaterial whether such individuals remain in the gang of their own village or are drafted to a special invalid gang. But deductions on account of weakness are not always made in this manner.

11. Some time ago, I think in March, 1914, the Government of Madras issued an order that all these recover their health, when the

11. Some time ago, I think in May last, the Civil Surgeon of Kurnool inspected a number of gangs of relief labourers, the average number in each gang being 100. He found in each a certain number of weakly persons, and after relating the results he declared that those in low condition, while those in which the percentage was 10 or under should be classed as fair. For gangs in low condition he directed that the task should be reduced by 20 per cent., while for fair gangs a reduction of 10 per cent. was to be made. The report did not specify the minimum percentage which would entitle a gang to the same reduction, but among the gang inspected and classed as fair was one in which the members consisted of two women and two children, that is, 4 per cent. of the whole. The Civil Surgeon circulated a copy of this report to his medical subordinates on the relief staff, mostly men of the Hospital Assistant class, and directed them to make similar examinations, and that the tasks should be reduced in accordance with the results.

2. This wholesale system of reduction for

12. This wholesale system of reduction for weakness was brought to my notice on the first occasion of my inspecting a gang in the Kurnool district, at Maddikhera, on the 11th July. I there found a *low* gang from whose task a deduction of 20 per cent. had been made on account of weakness. The Collector, Mr. Elwin, who was present, informed me that under the orders referred to which had emanated from the Civil Surgeon of the district, and to which therefore he had made no objection, every gang in the district had been declared either *fair* or *low*, and the task had been reduced for each, either by 10 or 20 per cent. The gang then under examination was No. 13 and was composed as follows:—

9 men ...

[illegible]

The Hospital Assistant was called and directed to pick out the weak members, who were as below:—

2 nursing mothers	190 "
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2 nursing mothers	...	...	...	...	...	...	=	
12 women	...	...	...	...	...	...	=	3 units.
1 man	...	...	...	...	...	...	=	24 "
3 adult boys	...	...	...	...	...	...	=	4 "
4 children	...	...	...	...	...	...	=	6 "
—	...	...	...	...	...	...	=	4 "
22								41 "
—								

* The term Divisional officer in Madras refers to a Revenue officer, with the powers of an Assistant Collector, and not as in many parts of India to the Executive Engineer of a Public Works Division.

These individuals were said to be suffering generally either from jaundice or anaemia. The Hospital Assistant said that he examined all his gangs in accordance with the orders received, of which he produced a copy, on the 30th May last, and that the existing classification of *low* or *fair* had been made on the basis of that examination, and there had been no subsequent examination, nor had he had orders to repeat these examinations periodically. We endeavoured to ascertain whether the members of gang No. 13, who were put before us as weak, were the same individuals as those upon the strength of whose condition the gang had been classed as low six weeks before, but the Hospital Assistant failed to produce the papers.

In this particular case it would appear, on the authority of a Hospital Assistant, that 22 per cent. of the gang were in a weakly condition, but it is obvious that in such cases the percentage should be struck on the child-units and not on the individuals. The weakly units were 41 out of 190, or about 16 per cent. only, but the invalids were certainly capable of doing some work; and if their own tasks had been reduced by 50 per cent. it would only have been necessary to reduce the task of the whole gang by $\frac{1}{2}$ or 8, instead of by 20 per cent. But it must be borne in mind that under the orders that I found in force, this reduction of 20 per cent. would have also been made if 11 individuals of the gang, say 6 nursing mothers and 5 children, or 14 out of 190 units, had been declared below *par*.

On the following morning I inspected a gang employed on the excavation of a well which had then been carried down to a depth of about 22 feet. The bottom was in fairly hard rock, and the officer in charge had decided that, as the work was of a special character, the gang should be composed of selected individuals and should be classed as A. A so-called A task was given, but I was unable to understand upon what basis it had been calculated, and a careful analysis showed that it was a very light task, even for B workers. However, it appeared that this gang of selected workers had on the 30th May been classed as *low* on account probably of a few weakly individuals having been found among the carriers. It thus happened that, while the whole gang were entitled to the A wage on account of the diggers being picked men, they were entitled to a reduction of 20 per cent. of their task, because six weeks before a few weak individuals had been found among the carriers. This order of the Civil Surgeon seems to me very ill-considered especially when regard is paid to the subordinate agency by which alone it could be carried out.

13. The system of wholesale reductions on account of weakness of gangs is not confined to the Kurnool district, for I was informed that in Cuddapah reductions of one-third or one-half the task are made when gangs are reported weak. In the only two works which I inspected in this district, namely, the

the task are made when gangs are reported weak. In the only two works which I inspected in this district no deductions from the strength of the gangs had been made on account of weakness, though separate gangs of weakly individuals had been found. I have, however, obtained a register for one of these works (the Muddanura tank) for the 14th June from which I have abstracted the following particulars:—

Number of gangs.	Work on which employed.	Men.	Boy adults.	Nursing mothers, &c.	Other women.	Children.	Total.	Child-units.
21	Earthwork on bund ..	403	291	..	796	517	2,007	4,303
4	Watering and tamping ..	83	51	..	168	68	370	838
2	Carrying drinking water ..	32	20	..	201	20	273	590
	Total working gangs ..	518	362	..	1,165	605	2,650	5,731
2	Nursing mothers, &c., employed on "breaking clumps."	..	..	117	27	23	167	239
3	Weak gangs, untasked ..	99	..	..	275	48	422	994
	Grand Total ..	617	362	117	1,467	676	3,239	6,964

The gangs on the first three lines were employed on work, although only those on the first were actually tasked. Those on the last two lines, comprising 789 individuals out of 3,239 or 1,233 units out of 6,964, i.e., nearly 18 per cent., had only nominal work to do, but all received the B wage.

As regards the 21 gangs actually employed on earthwork I find that deductions from the full task, varying from 40 to 70 per cent. and averaging about 50 per cent., were made on account of distance, and that further deductions, varying from 20 to 30 per cent., were made for "other causes" which are not specified. These could hardly have included "weakness" with 18 per cent. of the units drafted to weakly gangs, and were probably on account of time spent in reorganizing the gangs, as there is a note on the form that this had been in progress during half the day. The full task per digger had been fixed at 80 cubic feet per diem, but after reductions from all causes the average task actually set was less than 21 cubic feet, and the work of the carriers was lightened in proportion. At this rate the cost of the earthwork, including allowance for the rest-day wage, would work out to Rs. 53 per thousand cubic feet, though the normal cost would probably not have exceeded Rs. 6.

14. I now come to the case of deductions made on account of "excessive tasks" and will again quote the Government Order, paragraph 3 (ii)—

(ii) "Excessive tasks.—When the task prescribed appears to be excessive, the case should be met by a reduction of the task under section 107, not by reducing the class of the gang to the absence of tools, or to inexperience in the handling of tools. It is well to point out here that "Collector" in section 107 includes Divisional Officers,* and that the "Engineer Officer in charge" means the "Overseer in charge."

An instance of the way in which this order has worked in practice came to my notice when at Belamchera on the 13th July. I found that the tasks for some gangs employed on breaking metal was 0.8 cubic feet of metalling per child-unit per diem. This appeared to me to be a very low task, especially as I had found a task of 1.75 cubic feet, or more than double, on the road work inspected on the 10th in Anantapur district. According to the district task tables the correct task would have been 1.3 cubic feet. On enquiry it appeared that the task originally set had been 1.3 cubic feet, but that it was subsequently reduced (previously to the issue of the new Government Order), to 1.1 cubic feet for some reason that has not been placed on record. The register showed that this task had been pretty regularly accomplished, though fines had occasionally been recorded. Then came the Government Order of March last, which was circulated by the Collector early in May, and under which fining practically ceased as will be presently shown. Since then the task has been twice reduced, first to 0.9 and then to 0.8 cubic feet, under the authority of Mr. Ghose, the Divisional Officer.

Mr. Ghose, who was present, informed me that the Overseer in charge had represented to him that it was quite impossible for him to get the full task out of the workers, and that they must either be fined, or the task reduced, and he had therefore authorized their reduction, under the authority given to him by the order quoted. I asked him if he himself considered the task short, and he said he could not set aside the Overseer's statement, though the Collector and I found on examining the register that the first falling off in the outturn when the task was 1.1 cubic feet did not occur until the practice of fining had ceased, that the reduced task of 0.9 cubic feet had been done without difficulty when first set, the outturn subsequently falling without satisfactory reason being forthcoming. At the time of our visit the task of 0.8 cubic feet, which was also carried out for some days, was no longer worked up to, the task on the 11th being 17 per cent. deficient, and but for the visit the task would probably by this time have been reduced to 0.7 cubic feet or lower. Mr. Ghose himself admitted that he had in March last got a task of 1.3 cubic feet out of a gang at Alupur, although no deductions whatever had there been made on account of weakness or distance, as in the case of the gangs at Belamchera, and if he had more carefully examined the register I do not think he could possibly have approved such gratuitous reductions.

15. Mr. Ghose told us that he had personally authorised reductions of the task on two Reduction of tasks by Overseers in charge under general works, and that indeed he had only visited sanction of the Divisional Officer. two works since the issue of the Government Order. But I have since seen a copy of a Circular No. 489, dated 11th May 1897, issued by him as Divisional Officer direct to all the Overseers in charge of relief works within his division, explaining in greater detail the Government Orders of March last. A copy of this Circular to which I must again presently refer is appended, but paragraph 4 may here be quoted *in extenso*—

"(4) From sub-paragraph (ii) of the Government Order it appears that the intention of Government is to regulate and adjust the task by decreasing it and increasing it till an exact task which a gang can turn out regularly has been ascertained. In doing this, Overseers should not change the class of the gang, but alter the unit of task. This requires the sanction of the undersigned, but as he cannot always be on the spot to accord the necessary action, a general sanction is hereby accorded, and they are informed that their daily work sheets will be carefully scrutinized to guard against any abuse of it. The undersigned hopes to see that before long with a careful working of this system every gang will be able to turn out its allotted task."

The words in italics are mine. The Overseers to whom this Circular was addressed are Upper Subordinates in the Public Works Department, and they have been given *carte-blanche* to reduce the tasks at pleasure, without any reference whatever to the Sub-divisional or Divisional Public Works Officers, who are their departmental superiors, but who have themselves no power whatever to increase or reduce a task, except with the sanction of the Collector. It will thus be seen that tasks can be reduced by Hospital Assistants and Overseers in charge, in some cases with and in others without the approval of the Revenue Divisional Officers until they are whittled away to almost nothing.

* See footnote on paragraph 10.

16. Having thus described the actual practice which has sprung up, under the Government Order of March last, in connection with the reduction of tasks I proceed to the question of fines. I understand that when the works were first started, fining without any reference to a minimum wage was rigorously enforced, even although representations had been made by some of the Public Works Officers that the standard tasks of the Code were in some cases excessive. The latest rule in the subject is contained in paragraph 4 of the Government Order as below:—

Fines.

"(4) Fining.—Finishing should be resorted to only in clear cases of malingering or of insubordination; and even then not so as to reduce the wage below that of the D class, nor for more than one week continuously, without the special permission of the Divisional Officer."

This rule, read as it must be, with the instructions for reduction of tasks in paragraph 3 of the Government Order and with other Resolutions of the Board of Revenue has rightly or wrongly been taken to prohibit the fining of a gang for short work, and to restrict the practice to cases of individuals, who have been clearly guilty of malingering or insubordination. This is clearly shown in paragraph 7 of the Circular by a Divisional Officer referred to in the preceding paragraph. As a result the practice of fining has ceased almost entirely, and the Overseers in charge are afraid to fine. They prefer to meet short work by reduction of task, with the inevitable result that the successive reductions become necessary. On one work I found a case in which a small fine had been imposed, but only the day before, and the Assistant Engineer at Belamchera told me that he had recently ordered a fine for very short work. But beyond this I could get no trace of a fine, and was told by both Civil and Public Works Officers that the practice had ceased. Apart from the unwillingness of the subordinates in charge to show fines in their accounts, it must be admitted that the tasks after all deductions have been made are so low that the gangs can hardly help completing them.

17. I have now shown how the full task of a gang is determined, and the reductions which are in practice made. It remains to consider the task tables in which the normal task per child-unit is given.

Task tables.

A table of standard tasks has been given in Form F, Appendix III, of the Madras Famine Code, but it is difficult to criticise it, because the data on which it is based have not been given, and for the same reason it is difficult to say what modifications should be made in the tabular tasks when the constitution of a gang differs widely from that assumed. The table is not in a practical form, or it would show separately, as do the tables of other Codes, the tasks for diggers and carriers. Subsidiary task tables have been prepared in each district by the Executive Engineer, which are in greater detail, but have the same defect in not distinguishing between the task of the digger and the carrier, or in road metalling between the carrier and the breaker. The following is a comparison as far as is possible of the tasks set forth in these district tables, with the standard table of the Code:—

Nature of task.				Code standard.	Bellary.	Kurnool.	Cuddapah.
Earthwork.				CUB. FT.	CUB. FT.	CUB. FT.	CUB. FT.
Sandy loam.	Lead up 60 feet.	Lift to 6 feet		11.85	9.00	9.00	6.5 (a)
Black cotton soil	do.	do.		10.95	7.50	7.70	5.8 (a)
Gravelly soil, hard				10.13	6.0	4.70	4.50 (a)
Metalling.							
Stone easily procurable and broken.							
Lead—							
0—300 feet				1.88	1.7	1.7	1.7
3—4 furlongs				..	0.6	0.8	0.6
Stone easily procured, but hard to break—							
0—300 feet				..	1.2	1.3	1.2
3—4 furlongs				..	0.5	0.6	0.5
Stone hard to procure and break—							
0—300 feet				..	0.8	0.8	0.8
3—4 furlongs				..	0.3	0.4	0.3

(a) The Cuddapah earthwork rates are for a lead up to 150 feet. The tasks given are for a child-unit of B class.

It will be seen that the Code standard tasks are higher than those now enforced, which agree *inter se* pretty fairly. From several notes taken on the works, I am inclined to think that the standard tasks are too high, but that the district tasks are too low; but without actual experience of the working capacity of the Deccan cooly it is difficult to speak with confidence.

I noted many cases, however, in which a much higher task per unit might have been attained, if more attention had been paid to the distribution of diggers or breakers and carriers. As a general rule the carriers were very under-tasked, often doing only 50 per cent. of a fair task. In some cases this is unavoidable, but it was not so in the cases noticed. This was of course the fault of the Overseer in charge, but if the task tables were drawn up on a sounder principle, not only could a far higher task per unit be realized, but the men in charge would be greatly assisted in making the most advantageous disposition of the workers.

18. It is difficult to say what proportion the amount paid as wages bears to the value of the work done. The accounts are not kept in a manner in which this can be shown readily and without difficulty. I obtained, however, certain registers taken at random in the Bellary district from which the following results have been abstracted relating to the breaking of road metal:—

Number of gangs.	Number of workers.	Percentage of deductions.	Task performed.	Amount paid in wages.	Rate per 100 cubic feet.	Normal value of work done at 3-12 per cent.	Remarks.
16	Not noted.	Not noted.	CUB. FT.	RS.		RS.	
7			1,329	139	10	..	
20			258	45	17	..	
			790	147	18-12	..	
			2,377	431	18	89	
14	428	56	2,377	539	22-11	89	11-seer basis.
31	1,049	56	90	42	42-6	..	8-75 seers.
			296	103	34-12	..	Do.
			2,763	684	35-6	104	Do.

Reducing all results to the basis of 8-75 seers to the rupee, the cost of wages was thus more than six times of that of the normal value of work done. For a basis of 11 seers it would have been a little more than five times.

It may be noted that the gangs on the last two lines of the table consisted entirely of women and a very few children. The men are so few in number that they are usually employed on earthwork or consolidation, and in many cases metalling has been collected simply for the purpose of finding employment for the women.

To the rates given above, one-seventh should be added to allow for the rest-day wage. It would be one-sixth if full rates were paid on the rest-day, but the rate paid is either the C or D wage. Something should be added to for the cost of feeding dependants in the kitchen, but this is not charged direct to the work, and the amounts are not recorded. Probably 5 per cent. would be a sufficient addition on this account.

As regards earthwork I have already noted in paragraph 13 a case in which the cost of earthwork was Rs. 53 per 1,000 cubic feet, but this was no doubt an extreme case. I have notes of two other cases in which the rates were Rs. 27-2-0 and Rs. 16-5-0, excluding rest-day wage, the deductions for all causes amounting to 60 per cent. in each case. The normal rates are said to have been Rs. 7 and Rs. 5 respectively, and if this is correct the working rates are reasonable, when allowance is made for the deductions. But the normal rates appear to have been overstated. The lead and lift are not given for the Rs. 7 rate, but in the case of the Rs. 5 rate the lead is recorded as 25 and the lift as 2. It is not certain whether the unit here is the foot or the yard (both are used in Madras), but even if it be the latter Rs. 5 would be a very high rate.

19. In connection with the Madras task tables it should be mentioned that they are based on the assumption that a woman will do twice the work of a child and a man four times. In the Bombay Code it is assumed that the work done by man, woman and child will be in the proportions 8, 2 and 1, and this is, I think, more in accordance with general experience. It was often observed to me that a woman would do as much work as a man at metal-breaking, and it may safely be assumed that either at this work or carrying a woman will do not less than two-thirds of a man's task. If the child-unit task is correct, the man's task in Madras is therefore too high, but it may be that the tasks were originally worked out for men, and reduced to the child-unit, by dividing by 4. In this case the tasks for women and children are too light. In practice, however, very few men are employed either in metal-breaking or in carrying, but one difficulty in applying the Madras task tables lies in this questionable assumption that the ordinary famine male labourer can do twice as much work as a female.

20. Each relief work is nominally under the charge of an Upper Subordinate of the Public Works Department. When the charge is a large one he has a Lower Subordinate under him to look after the measurements, &c., and in some cases the Upper Subordinate has charge of two camps, with a Lower Subordinate at each as an assistant. He is responsible for all miscellaneous expenditure, but has nothing whatever to do with the payment of labour. For this purpose an imprest is given by the Executive Engineer to the Tahsildar who supplies under cover of it the necessary cash to a paymaster who is appointed by the Collector. The muster rolls or pay sheets are made over to this official, whose time is mainly occupied in paying the gangs. The rates of payment to be entered in these pay sheets is intimated from time to time to the subordinate in charge by the Tahsildar. In the Kurnool district these rates are based, not on the market rate of the "grain equivalent," but on the market one of all the items in the annual return of the Code. I did not ascertain the practice in this respect in other districts, but believe that it is left to the discretion of the Collector to adopt either alternative. Payments are supposed to be made twice a week, but I was told that there are frequently delays, owing to the paymaster not being kept in funds or in small coin by the Tahsildar, to his not being able to get through his work, or to delay in the submission of the pay sheets by the subordinate in charge. The Public Works Department is responsible only for delay due to the last of these causes.

Referring again to the circular by the Assistant Collector in Kurnool appended to these notes, it will be seen that in paragraph 7 thereof strict orders were issued to paymasters to take no notice of any orders to impose fines on gangs, and that fines on individuals were to be enforced only when the Overseer had distinctly entered in the remarks column that the individual concerned had been found to be malingering or insubordinate. On a representation by the Executive Engineer, the Collector subsequently modified this order in his Circular No. 218, dated 30th June 1897, so far as it prohibited the fining of the whole gangs for malingering or insubordination; but he insisted, as he was of course justified in doing, that the reason for the fine should be clearly indicated on the pay sheet by certain distinguishing letters. To this there can be no objection, but the practice of giving a paymaster any discretion in enforcing fines imposed by the officer in charge of the works is certainly open to objection.

The system of making all payments by means of a subordinate in the Civil departments on works in charge of the Public Works Department has been extolled to me as an excellent safeguard against jobbery. The principle of exciting friction and jealousies between subordinate officials does not commend itself to me as an efficient safeguard against collusion that may be substituted for the more direct checks exercised elsewhere, and as long as reliance is placed on these jealousies, there is always the danger that they may be simulated wherever collusion is most rampant. I will reserve further remarks on this subject, however, for my final report.

21. Piece-work has not been introduced in the Deccan, but I was informed by Mr. Crole that the Government had just sanctioned its introduction in Ganjam and Vizagapatam, where the local officers had made out a very strong case. It was said that the people there were very anxious to be given piece-work, though they could not be induced to attend works conducted on the task work system. The proposal was at first objected to by the Board of Revenue as contrary to the Famine Code, but it is satisfactory to know that a fair trial is now to be given to it.

22. The number of dependants on works is much smaller in proportion to the number of workers than in other provinces. The weekly returns show no dependants at all before the week ending 6th March, when they amounted to 3,439 against 51,272 workers, or less than 7 per cent. For the week ending 17th July the number was 19,011 against 442,893 workers, or little over 4 per cent. Even these numbers include some who are not dependants of the workers, as in many cases the kitchens are placed near a large village and persons are fed there who have no direct connection with the works. About 95 per cent. of the dependants are children. Cash payments are almost unknown, but a cooked ration is distributed. The ration for adults consists of a cake of cholam, or mixed cholam and ragi, containing 25 tolas or 10 ounces of grain, served with a sauce formed of the other items detailed in section 122 of the Code. This ration is given morning and evening, so that an adult receives 20 ounces of raw grain a day. Children receive on an average half this amount, that is, a ten-ounce cake is made up morning and evening for every two children on the roll. In practice the smaller children get less than half and the bigger ones more than half a cake. I found in many kitchens that many, both of the adults and children, were unable to eat more than their ration when offered them out of the surplus, and Mr. Stuart, Collector of Bellary, told me that he often made this experiment, and found a great many refused any additional ration.

It has recently been pointed out by the Government of India that the Madras ration for dependants and others in receipt of gratuitous relief is excessive, the allowance of grain in

other Codes being 16 ounces only for adult. In Bombay children receive only 6 ounces. Dr. King, with whom I discussed this point, remarked that the Bombay ration is expressed in terms of flour and not of raw grain, and that, when allowance is made for this, the Bombay ration expressed in grain could be increased by 10 per cent. He also observed that the Bombay ration allows half an ounce of ghee for adults and quarter of an ounce for small children among "other items," and I understood him to say that, if the Bombay scale were accepted in its entirety, it would not be inferior to the present Madras allowance. It may be noted, however, that the minimum flour allowance for an adult female in Bombay is only 14 ounces.

The kitchens on the works are entirely under the control of the Collector, by whom a Superintendent is appointed. The Overseer in charge and the Public Works Department have nothing whatever to do with the management of the kitchens, nor does the expenditure incurred on them appear in the Public Works accounts.

In considering the high wages paid to workers in this Presidency, the fact that the proportion of dependants is so low must be taken into account, as in other provinces it varies from about 10 to 25 per cent.* It is said that only the lowest castes can be induced to send their children to kitchens, and that they are very unpopular. This has been the experience at first in all other provinces, but where kitchens are well managed, I think the prejudice against them has gradually given way, and if non-working children are to be relieved at all, kitchens are doubtless preferable to a cash wage.

23. I asked Mr. LeFanu if there had been any complaints from private employers that the relief works interfered with the supply of labour. He mentioned three cases in which such complaints had been received from small employers, and said that it was found in each case that the wages offered by the employer were about the same as, or not more than a pice higher than the wage earned on the works, but that the latter was preferred, because private employers would not pay anything to the weaker members of the family or to dependants. In all these cases he had offered to send as many labourers as required, and to allow the weak members and dependants to remain on the works, but when the offer was made it was said that the men were no longer required. The only other complaint that Mr. LeFanu could remember was one from the Railway Office at Vizagapatam to the effect that relief works were preventing labour from coming to the railway works, but enquiry showed that there are no relief works within 13 miles, while the local labour was at the time receiving extravagant wages of from 6 to 8 annas a day in collecting grass for private persons, and would on this account not be likely to go to the railway.

24. As far as I could ascertain there are no relief works of any importance conducted wholly by the Civil Officers. At first a few works were started under the supervision of the Local Fund Engineers, but they were eventually made over to the officers of the Public Works Department.

25. It is, however, hardly correct to say that the relief works are under the control of the Public Works officers, except as regards matters of purely technical detail, or even that these officers have any control over their own subordinates, who are in charge of or employed on the relief works. These men have to take their orders from many masters—the Collector, the Assistant or Deputy Collector, the Tahsildar or his Assistant, the Civil Surgeon of the District, and even, as shown above in paragraph 12, from the Hospital Assistant engaged on the works; and they are responsible to their own departmental superior only for the safe custody of the tools and plant, the submission of certain daily returns, copies of which have also to go to the Revenue Divisional officers, and for work being outturned in accordance with the specification. They are allowed to propose reductions of task to the Revenue Divisional officer, and, as has been shown, in some cases to reduce them of their own accord under cover of a general sanction to that effect, but it is useless for them to recommend any reductions to their own superior officer in the Public Works Department, who has no authority whatever to modify the tasks, except after a reference to the Collector. Nor are these men, although in charge of the work, in any way responsible for the payments to the labourers, which are made by an independent official belonging to the Civil Department, and advisedly removed entirely from their control. Their whole sense of responsibility is weakened by the uncertainty as to whom they are responsible to, or as to who are responsible to them.

The Executive and Assistant Engineers are in no better position. They are out of order if they attempt to give any orders on the work relating to tasks or fines, though such orders may be freely given by others who have had no experience whatever in the organisation of large bodies of labourers. They too have to serve two masters, to take their orders from the Collector on all points not strictly professional, and from their departmental superiors on all other points, it being left to every one to interpret in his own way what is meant by "strictly professional."

26. The position of the Superintending Engineer is still more anomalous. If there is one officer more than any other upon whom Government might rely to control relief works in simultaneous progress in several districts,

The position of the Superintending Engineer.

to assign to each officer and subordinate in the Public Works Department his proper duties and place in the chain of responsibility, to introduce uniformity where uniformity is desirable, and to sanction variation where circumstances demand variation, it is the Superintending Engineer. In Madras, however, the Superintending Engineer is allowed no voice in these matters. Take for instance the question of tasking. I have already stated that the task table of the Code is not in my opinion based on sound and workable principles and it might be considered the first duty of a Superintending Engineer to rectify this. I find that, as long ago as last March, the Superintending Engineer attempted to do this, as regards earth-work, on the occasion of a large work being started in the Cuddapah district, and to introduce the system of tasking the diggers which is in force in every other province that I have visited. He sent detailed instructions on this and other matters connected with the work to the Executive Engineer, who sent them on to the Collector for approval of the non-professional points involved. The Collector forwarded the proposals to the Board of Revenue for orders after expressing his own personal approval. The orders of the Board are contained in Resolution No. 415-A., dated 13th June 1897. In this resolution the merits of the system proposed were admitted, and it was acknowledged that Government in paragraph 3 (i) of G.O., No. 216 of 1897, had recognised the necessity of fixing the task according to the number of diggers and not according to the total number in the gang. But it was objected that it was impossible to carry out the system proposed, and undesirable to add to the complexity of the existing rules for the conduct of works by introducing the proposed system. The Board concluded by observing "that the Superintending Engineer issued orders to the Executive Engineer to introduce a system totally at variance with the provisions of the Famine Code, without consulting the Collector, although the proposed system involved several points of a non-professional nature." The Board was "glad to note, however, that the Executive Engineer thought fit to consult the Collector in the matter."

I am not concerned here to answer the Board's objection to the introduction of the better system of tasking, which has been adopted without any difficulty whatever in every other province in which relief works are in progress. It is sufficient to point out how this effort of the Superintending Engineer to introduce an improved system was met by something very like censure. Other instances of this have come to my notice, but it is unnecessary to adduce them here.

The exclusion of the Superintending Engineer from all control of his own Public Works staff, except in "technical matters," has been emphatically asserted in paragraph 9 of the Government Order of March last, in which it is even directed that the details of the Public Works establishment should be seen and passed by the Collectors before they are sent up to the Board or Government for sanction. The control of the Superintending Engineer is practically confined to such matters as the section to be adopted for a tank embankment, or the size of the ring through which broken metal is to pass.

27. It may be said that the position to which the officers of the Public Works Department are relegated is in accordance with that assigned to them in section 24 of the Madras Code, and that the duties of a Superintending Engineer in time of famine are merely those which are recited in section 42. I do not propose to consider here the language of section 24 of the Code, but will merely observe that it is repeated almost word for word in the corresponding sections of the Codes of other provinces,* excepting Burma and the Central Provinces. But notwithstanding this in all these other provinces, the Superintending

Rules of the Famine Codes on the relation of Public Works to Civil Officers.

* Bombay, sections 31 (d) and (e) and section 38.
Bengal, section 22.
North-West Provinces, section 27.
Punjab, section 49.

Engineer, acting in direct communication with the Commissioner, is in practice the officer who controls the organization and management of all relief works which have been made over to the Public Works Department. In Bombay his duties are already laid down in section 37, and whatever doubts there may be as to the position of other Public Works officers under sections 31 and 38, his authority in respect of all the matters referred to in section 37 is unquestioned. In Bengal the responsibilities of the Superintending Engineer, as far as the Code is concerned, are limited to the matters stated in section 93, corresponding very closely to section 42 of the Madras Code. But in practice two superintendents of works, with the powers of Superintending Engineers as defined in the Public Works Code, have been specially appointed for the control of the relief works under the Public Works Department, and the Chief Engineer himself has devoted the closest attention to the all-important question of tasking and has drawn up the admirable and helpful instructions on the subject which have been issued by the Local Government in the Public Works Department for the general guidance of all officers engaged on relief works. In the North-West Provinces the duties of the officers of the Public Works Department are laid down in sections 30 to 40 of the Famine Code, and as there defined are

not more extensive than in the Madras and Bengal Codes, but in actual practice the whole of that important section of famine policy which relates to relief works has been formulated and controlled in the Public Works Department, the Chief and Superintending Engineers have been consulted by the Local Government at every stage, and a generous and real authority has been accorded to them, which has been exercised in close and harmonious co-operation with the Civil officers.

In the Punjab the duties of Superintending Engineers have been defined in section 56 of the Code, which corresponds very closely with section 37 of the Bombay Code. When relief operations were first started, it was proposed by the Chief Engineer himself that the duties of the Public Works staff should be confined to purely professional matters, but it was soon found that this was not practicable, and when work was started in the Ghaggar canal, it was decided by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, on the unanimous representation of the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner, that the whole of the arrangements should be under the direct control of the Superintending Engineer, for reasons recorded in paragraph 3 of Sir Dennis FitzPatrick's note on the Ghaggar canals relief works, dated 18th January 1897. I have received a communication from the Deputy Commissioner of Hissar, from which I infer that this decision has had the happiest results.

28. It will thus be seen that in the four provinces in which the position of the Public Works officers in relation to the Collector is defined in language identical with that of section 24 of the Madras Code, and in which the results attained on relief works certainly do not compare unfavourably with those accomplished in Madras, a very much wider authority has been accorded to the Superintending Engineer than is allowed in the latter province. The explanation of this is that in all other provinces a wider interpretation has been given to the words "*matters which are not of a merely technical nature*" and "*points strictly professional*." If there is one matter that may be deemed professional, it is the organization and management of large bodies of more or less untrained labourers with what is often a wholly untrained subordinate staff; if there is one matter which is merely technical, it is the proportioning of tasks under varying conditions, and in variously constituted gangs to the capacity of the gang or the individual worker. My tour has given me exceptional opportunities for appreciating the difficulties which attend the management of large relief works on the principles laid down in the Code, and I can conceive no task which more severely taxes the capacities and energies of the best Engineer.

29. In one respect the action which has been taken by the Madras Government is justified by positive enactment of the Famine Code which appears to be peculiar to Madras. In section 107 it is laid down that modifications in the standard task may be made by the Engineer officer in charge of the work, subject to the sanction of the Collector. This is an amplification of the more general direction that the Collector's decision shall be accepted in all matters relating to the employment and wages of labourers which is not to be found in the Codes of other provinces in which this direction is contained. In section 37 (f) of the Bombay Code, the Superintending Engineer is required "to maintain an equal standard of tasks and uniformity of procedure in setting tasks for the various kinds of work," and there is a similar provision in section 56 (e) of the Punjab Code.

In Bengal the rules for tasks are set forth in sections 64 to 66, the language of which implies that the tasks are to be determined by the local officers, though, as before stated, detailed instructions for their guidance have been drawn up by the Chief Engineer, and issued by the Local Government in the Public Works Department. In the North-West Provinces the same practice obtains.

It may be added that under paragraph 3 (ii) of the Madras G.O., No. 216, Revenue, dated 10th March 1897, it has been lately ruled that the word "Collector" in section 107 includes Divisional officers, and that the "Engineer officer in charge" means the Overseer in charge. The practical effect of this ruling has been shown in paragraphs 14 and 15 of these notes.

30. It need hardly be said that the relations between the Civil and Public Works officers in this province are very strained, and in a state of high tension all along the line. The friction that exists is very detrimental.

I have heard both sides, and have come to the conclusion not that there are faults in both sides, but that both are in the right. As long as the sole responsibility for the management of relief works is vested by the express enactment of Government in the Civil officers, those officers cannot but resent the interference of officers of other departments. As long as the officers of a specially trained and independent department are called in to assist in the management of such works, they cannot but resent the ignoring of their authority in matters which they rightly deem to be of a professional nature, and the loosening of all the bonds of departmental organization and discipline. It is an unfortunate but natural result of the existing regulations that

the friction excited is greatest between those officers who are the most capable and energetic, and who take the most serious view of their own individual duties and responsibilities.

31. During the interview that I had with the Famine Commissioner on the 16th, I expressed surprise at the great loss of power involved in the limited authority assigned to the Public Works Department in the control and management of relief works, whereby very heavy duties and responsibilities were thrown on the Civil officers in addition to those incidental to other sections of famine administration, such as village relief, agricultural advances, the distribution of the charitable fund, &c., &c. He told me in reply that this had been done advisedly, and he mentioned instances in previous famines in which particular members of the Public Works Department had shown themselves very hard and unsympathetic in the management of relief works. I venture to think, however, that, if the management of relief works were more distinctly recognized as a special function of the Public Works Department, the idiosyncrasies of its individual members would be better controlled by their own departmental superiors than by officers of other departments. It is the particular business of Engineers to adopt means to ends, and if the principles that should guide them in the management of relief works were set forth in all necessary detail by the head of their own department, and adhesion to their principles were enforced by the usual methods of departmental discipline, I see no reason why relief works in Madras should not be as efficiently and sympathetically managed by the officers of the Public Works Department as they have been in other provinces. As far as I could ascertain, the work of the Public Works Department, as a department of Government, has been confined to the preparation of estimates, the provision of funds, and the supply of the necessary tools and plant.

32. The Public Works Department has hitherto supplied all the Engineer officers required in connection with relief works. This has been done by drafting officers from unaffected districts, in which ordinary operations has been as far as possible contracted, but if distress should extend to other districts, there will probably be some difficulty in providing officers. Upper subordinates have also been freely transferred from other districts, and others who are entertained by Local Funds have also been posted to relief works, but it has been necessary in addition to employ a few temporary men who have done fairly well. The greatest difficulty has been experienced in regard to sub-overseers and head maistris. Most of these have been entertained temporarily, but the supply of competent men was not equal to the demand.

33. The distinctive features of the administration of relief works in Madras are as follows:—

- Concluding remarks.
- All workers are put in the B class and receive the B wage, including even those who can perform only a nominal task, except in Anantapur, where they are put in the C class. A few workers receive the A wage, but the number is insignificant. Dependants also receive a larger ration than in other provinces.
 - The large reductions made in normal tasks on account of distance, weakness, or incapacity, and the almost total suspension of the practice of fining.
 - The exclusion of the Superintending Engineer from all effective control over the management of relief works, and especially over the system of tasking.

The orders of the Government of India have already been passed on (a), and I have nothing to add to the remarks already made in regard to (c).

As regards (b), Mr. LeFanu informed me that the proposals for reduction of tasks, etc., to which effect was given by G.O., No. 216, dated 30th March 1897, were originally made by him in view of the great heat to which the labourers in the Deccan would be exposed during the months of April and May, or until the setting in of the monsoon winds.

He had subsequently proposed that these orders should be modified in the direction of greater stringency as soon as the monsoon sets in. I have seen a Government Order of the Madras Government in this sense, in which it was proposed to increase all tasks by 25 per cent. and give smaller reductions on account of distance after the monsoon had commenced, and officers were warned to be prepared for telegraphic instructions to this effect. I understood from Mr. LeFanu when I met him on the 16th that these instructions had just issued, although I have not seen a copy of them. It may therefore be hoped that fuller tasks may be exacted in future.

The numbers on relief works, including dependants, have increased from 166,723 for the week ending 1st May (when the effects of the Government Order of March last would probably have become appreciable), to 461,904 for the week ending 17th July. It is impossible to say how much of the increase has been due to the great reductions in task, which in many cases have become almost nominal, and how much to the failure of the monsoon and extension of the distressed area.

The large proportion of women and children to men on the Madras relief works, and the fact that the majority of the works are road work, have no doubt increased the difficulty in keeping the workers fully employed and in setting a fairly high task. In this connection it must

be remembered that in the Madras returns boys between the age of 12 and 16 are included among the men, and that women include girls of the same age, so that under *children* only those under twelve years of age are shown. In other provinces boys and girls between the age of 12 or 16 are shown as children.

The numbers of individuals receiving gratuitous relief, including dependants on the works, have hitherto been less in Madras than in other provinces, excepting Bombay and the Punjab. The following are the figures for the week ending 17th July :—

Provinces.	Number of workers.	Dependants on works.	Gratuitous and special relief.	Total columns 3 and 4.	Percentage of column 5 on column 2.
Madras	442,893	19,011	209,202	228,213	51.5
Bombay	245,982	61,821	50,989	112,810	45.9
Bengal	258,172	14,239	449,061	463,300	179.6
North-West Provinces and Oudh	428,255	80,815	452,280	533,095	124.6
Punjab	65,166	7,809	13,308	21,117	32.4
Central Provinces	340,104	52,762	160,254	213,016	62.7

The low proportion of dependants and the unpopularity of the kitchens has already been referred to in paragraph 22.

DATED SIMLA,
28th July 1897.

T. HIGHAM.

APPENDIX.

CIRCULAR.

Tour Dis. No. 489 of 1897.

The following circular is issued to Overseers in charge of relief works in this Division.

2. Government has in its order No. 216, dated the 30th March 1897, laid down fresh rules for the management of relief works, and these must be acted up to by every Overseer, and for that purpose the accompanying extract of paragraphs 3, 4 and 9 is communicated to them for their guidance.

3. They will observe that the work to be given to the different gangs must be suited to their composition, and this is clearly shown by examples in sub-paragraph (i) of paragraph 3.

From the second portion of the same sub-paragraph, it is clear that Government intends that one man should be equivalent to two women and equivalent to four children. No allowance is apparently to be made for nursing mothers or girls who must be strictly considered to be capable of turning out two units of work.

The only exception made is in favour of boys between 12 and 16 who are to be reckoned as two or three units according to their capacity, but are to be paid the full wages of a man.

4. From sub-paragraph (ii) of the Government Order, it appears that the intention of Government is to regulate and adjust the task by decreasing it and increasing it till an exact task which a gang can turn out regularly has been ascertained. In doing this, Overseers should not change the class of the gang, but alter the unit of task. This requires the sanction of the undersigned, but as he cannot always be on the spot to accord the necessary action, a general sanction is hereby accorded, and they are informed that their daily work sheets will be carefully scrutinised to guard against any abuse of it. The undersigned hopes to see that before long with a careful working of this system, every gang will be able to turn out its allotted task.

5. Sub-paragraph (iii) provides for the same latitude being extended to the case of weakly gangs.

6. Sub-paragraph (iv) allows for a reduction being made from the task on account of distance on works where accommodation has not been provided. The scale laid down is an abatement of an hour's work for every $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, or in other words a reduction of $\frac{1}{8}$ for every $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, taking the working day to be 8 hours from 7-30 A.M. to 2 noon, and 2 P.M. to 5-30 P.M.

7. From paragraph 4 of the Government Order it is clear that Government does not wish fines to be imposed for short work. It should only be resorted to in clear cases of malingering or insubordination; and as no entire gang can hardly be said to be in a body lazy or insubordinate, the fining of entire gangs is practically abolished. The names of the lazy and contumacious characters, however, should be noted down by the Overseer, with a view to imposing individual fines, and that not beyond the extent to which the gang would otherwise be fined for short work, for the Code contemplates fining only for short work (*vide* section 28, Appendix VI).

The undersigned has strictly ordered the paymasters to take no notice of any orders to impose fines on gangs. They have, however, been instructed to impose fines on individuals only in such cases where the Overseer has entered in the remarks column that such individual has been found to be malingering or insubordinate.

Such fines imposed on contumacious or lazy characters should not allow of their wages being reduced below D class, nor should it continue for more than a week continuously without the sanction of the undersigned previously obtained in writing.

8. Overseers will see from the spirit of the Government Order now issued that it has the effect of cancelling the circular issued to them by the late Executive Engineer to the effect that Revenue officers have no concern with scrutinising tasks, mustering gangs, check measuring work, &c., for the Government Order gives full control of the works to the Revenue Divisional Officers.

9. Overseers are strictly ordered to carry out these instructions to the very letter, and failure to do so will be reported to the Collector, with a view to the matter being brought to the notice of Government.

CAMP, ALLAGADDA,
Dated 11th May 1897.

(Signed) M. M. GHOSE,
Ag. Head Assistant Collector.

NOTE.—Since the issue of this circular G.O., No. 284-Press, dated 1st May 1897, ordering that nursing mothers and women in an advanced stage of pregnancy should be treated as equivalent to $1\frac{1}{2}$ units has been received, and Overseers should carry out the above order at once.

(Signed) M. M. GHOSE,
Ag. Head Assistant Collector.

Read—the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture), No. 596, dated 28th August 1897 :—

W. J. H. LEFANU, Esq.

(Famine Commissioner).

Read—the following G.O., Mis. No. 3713, Revenue, dated 19th July 1897 :—

Read—the following note by the Chief Engineer and Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, No. 739D., dated 7th July 1897 :—

As head of the Public Works Department and a servant of Government, I think it my duty to acquaint the Government with my views as to the effect of the proposed order, as I feel convinced that it will make matters far worse than at present.

2. With reference to the remarks of the Honourable Mr. Grose to the effect that I am not aware of the difference between ordinary works carried out by ordinary coolies and relief works, I beg to submit that I am quite well aware of the difference as, during my service, I have had considerable experience both of ordinary works and relief works; and I am still of opinion that a Public Works officer knows more of the ordinary task to be demanded from an ordinary cooly than a Collector does and that, consequently, he is in a better position to suit the task according to the condition of the famine cooly; there is absolutely no reason to apprehend that a Public Works officer has less common sense than a Collector, or that he is more hard-hearted and unsympathetic. The other extreme of being too weak and soft-hearted is likely to lead to serious consequences, as it demoralises the people and causes needless waste of money, and there is no department more capable of striking the correct mean than the Public Works Department. It seems to me a most extraordinary notion that because the Public Works Department has been accustomed to deal with ordinary coolies on ordinary works, that it should not be considered capable of dealing with coolies on relief works. It might as well be said that a Revenue Officer, who had been in the habit of collecting the revenues of a district for years, is not fit to do so during seasons of failure of crops, as he would be too hard-hearted and unsympathetic, and therefore during these seasons the work should be done by the Salt, or Police, or some other department.

3. I think I was quite justified in saying that the famine works had been wrongly managed from the beginning by the fact that the Government is now trying to alter the system hitherto in force, and have a few large works on which coolies could be massed, instead of a vast number of scattered small works. In my tour report I have shown that, if the famine becomes widespread and the relief works are managed as hitherto, more than 1,600 upper subordinates will be required, and surely a system that necessitates such an immense amount of supervision cannot be called correct.

4. By the proposed order, the Collector and the Divisional Officers can issue orders direct to the subordinates in charge of relief works apparently on all subjects, while the Executive Engineer is debarred from giving orders to his own subordinates, except on strictly professional matters (which have not been clearly defined). By this order, the Executive Engineer is reduced to a nonentity, and it becomes absolutely impossible for him to maintain discipline on the works: moreover, the subordinate has to serve two masters. He may receive one order from the Collector, which may clash with one given by the Executive Engineer, even though the former order may be on a non-professional subject, and the result may be that he is fined by both officers. I think it will be far better, if this order is to hold good, that the Executive Engineer should have nothing to do with the work, and the Collector took entire management with the help of subordinates lent by this department; the latter would then not have to serve two masters. I feel perfectly convinced that the present friction which is so much to be regretted will be immensely increased by the proposed order; the Revenue officials or even with others who are zealous. I feel sure there is not an officer in the department, who would object to the Collector visiting a work and discussing and arranging matters with him; but when Deputy Collectors, Deputy Tahsildars, Revenue Inspectors and others give orders regarding works in charge of an Executive Engineer, it is most galling to the latter, and it is still worse when a Collector acts on complaints made by his subordinates, who are only too glad to try and show their zeal by finding fault with the work of another department. It may be stated as a general rule that the Revenue officials are far younger and junior in service to those of the Public Works Department, which tends to make interference on the part of the former more distasteful. My remarks are actuated entirely by a sense of the responsibility I owe to Government in my capacity as head of the Public Works Department, and I trust therefore they may have as much consideration given to them as to those of the Board of Revenue, in accordance with whose views the order seems to have been drafted. I have done all I can and the results of the proposed system must be awaited: what they will be, I hardly like to contemplate. I think it advisable that I should explain what I consider would be the best manner of carrying out relief works. The Bombay Code contemplates the division of relief works into large and small—the former being in charge of a Public Works officer assisted by a Civil officer if possible; the latter to be in charge of the Collector—and my proposals, which are as follows, are almost similar:—

1st—Large works should be concentrated as far as possible, not more than about twelve works being carried on in each district.

2nd—The distressed persons should be made to resort to these works, the arrangement for their conveyance and keep while travelling being entirely under the Revenue Department.

3rd—These large works should be entirely under the Public Works Department, assisted, if necessary, by a civil officer, who should be under the orders of the Executive Engineer in charge of the work, who, however, would not have the power of punishing or censuring him, except through the Collector.

4th—All small works started for the purpose of village relief should be under the Collector, subordinates, if necessary, being lent by the Public Works Department: these latter would be entirely under the orders of the Revenue Department.

5th—These small works should be restricted to deepening village tanks, repairing village roads, clearing prickly-pear, forest works and minor irrigation works.

5. By this arrangement I firmly believe that everything would work smoothly and be carried on much better than at present. The Revenue Department have now quite as much as, if not more than, it can do satisfactorily. The distribution of gratuitous relief is alone a duty that requires the most careful supervision, and if the Revenue Department look properly after that and also after kitchens, poor-houses, execution of small works and the many other duties connected with famine relief, it is as much as they can do satisfactorily, and interference with the work of the Public Works Department only adds to their work, does no good and causes endless friction and dissatisfaction.

6. I would call attention to the orders issued for the guidance of officers employed on relief works in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, issued with G.O., No. 14, Revenue, dated 9th January 1897, from which it will be seen that the Collector has not much control over relief works, which seem to be left almost entirely to the Public Works Department.

Order thereon—Mis. No. 3713, Revenue, dated 19th July 1897.

Forwarded to the Famine Commissioner for very early remarks with reference to G.O., No. 593, dated 19th July 1897.

(True Extract.)

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

To the Famine Commissioner.

Resolution—No. 596, dated 28th August 1897.

The question underlying the present reference is in no sense a new one. The matter was thrashed out in the reports on the famine of 1877-78, and the policy, to which the Chief Engineer and Secretary to Government objects, was formulated by the Commission specially selected to report on the lessons taught by that famine, and adopted in full by Government.

2. The position of the officers of the Public Works Department in the earlier stages of that famine was, according to their views, even less acceptable than it is now. Under G.O., No. 681, dated 15th February 1877, all works—two only excepted—were to be considered as being carried out by the Revenue Department, the Public Works Department giving advice and help. In that G.O., it was further observed that “their (Public Works Department) subordinates can probably be best employed in supervising the execution of relief works, and, when this is the case, they should be considered as under the orders of the Collector or Divisional Officer.”

3. The Public Works Department is the only department of Government which is permitted to say *non possumus*, which is often equivalent to *non volumus*. The cohesiveness and *esprit de corps* of the Royal Engineers are well known. The Civil Engineers have not only professional traditions to bind them together, but, hailing from one centre—the Engineering Eton—and mostly members, or associates, of the Institute of Civil Engineers, they have strong common sentiments, and are saturated with an impatience of laical interference, which leads them occasionally to treat orders with contempt. Referring to the G.O., above quoted, the Madras Government, in its review of the Madras famine, observed that the order in question “remained practically a dead letter, because, although communicated to the Public Works Department, no action was taken on it in that department till the month of April, and it was then simply recorded and communicated to District Engineers later on, who, however, for the most part, did not consider that they were to act on it.”

4. As now, so in 1877-78, there was considerable friction between the Public Works and Revenue Departments. This is mentioned in many places in the “Replies to questions circulated by the Famine Commission,” and, after referring to the want of harmony which prevailed, one Collector—volume II, page 508—very happily

summed up by observing that the Engineers, as a rule, looked upon their department as entirely a separate one and not part of the district machinery, of which the Collector should be the sole controlling power, adding that "there was too much tendency in this department to the *imperium in imperio*." This is really the sentiment which is at the bottom of the present difficulty, which need not be called an *impasse*, for it needs only one word from Government to cause all officers of the department to accept the position, assigned to them in famine matters, loyally.

5. Sir W. Robinson, colleague of the Duke of Buckingham during the famine, wrote strongly on the matter—Vol. I *ibid*, page 54—as follows :—

"Works should, as far as possible, be organized under Department of Public Works Officers, but that department should be under the direct control of the Civil Administration of the district. Nothing could have been more embarrassing, more detrimental to public interests, and the real object of providing life-saving labour than the want of rapport which, more or less, prevailed in many, if not most, of the famine districts of this Presidency during the early months of our famine, and more or less throughout, as between the district administration and executives of works. This weakness of rapport was perhaps inherent in the organization, and will not, I fear, be lessened by the recent changes made. I was a member of the Department of Public Works Commission which sat in 1869-70, as respects the organization of the Department of Public Works as we found that it then worked—and again, more recently, I have had to record my views on this important matter. To the former report I must refer for my general judgment, and I submit my more matured reflections noted in two recent minutes on Department of Public Works organization. The more the executive is localized and made part and parcel of the district administration, and placed in rapport with local officers and District Boards, the less will be the friction in times of trouble. The present organization fails seriously in this respect, but *Department of Public Works Officers shun what they deem subordination to local authority and interest.*"

6. The scientific officers often find great difficulty in accommodating themselves to the altered circumstances of Famine Administration, and, in straining at producing work which will bring them professional credit, and at impossible discipline and outturn, forget the prime object for which that work is taken in hand. In their recommendations contained in paragraph 129, the Famine Commission observed that "it is to be clearly understood by these officers that their duty is not, as in ordinary times, to get the greatest quantity of work done at the cheapest rate, but to give effectual relief to the labouring population, inasmuch as the work is undertaken, not for its own sake, but for the sake of the people employed on it", and their deliberate conclusion is embodied in paragraph 130 of the same :—

"The Collector of the district should exercise general supervision over all works, as over all other arrangements for giving relief, within his district, and should be responsible to Government for their efficiency. Pending reference to the Government or other superior authority, his decision should be accepted by the Public Works Officers, in all matters relating to the task and wage of the people employed, as well as in opening or closing works, and generally in every thing, except arrangements of a merely technical nature."

The reference under reply would probably not have been made, had it been remembered that the President of the Commission which made these recommendations was an officer of the Royal Engineers, General Sir R. Strachey.

7. The Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, observes in the memorandum now under consideration, that "he has done all he can, and the results of the proposed system must be awaited. What they will be he hardly likes to contemplate." It would almost seem that the Chief Engineer's interpretation of "doing all that he can" takes the form of setting an example to his department of challenging the order of Government before the ink is dry upon the paper, and that the *mot d'ordre* amongst his officers will be to follow suit. A serious word from Colonel McNeil Campbell would put an end to all the friction which exists.

8. The Famine Commissioner entirely repudiates any intention to treat either Colonel McNeil Campbell's representations, or the *amour propre* of the department over which he presides, with anything but the most sincere respect. Firstly, he is aware that, at least on one occasion, the Chief Engineer has used his influence in the interests of peace. It is quite conceivable, and even natural, that a body of gentlemen of high scientific training, and accustomed ordinarily to interference from officers of their own profession only, should find a certain difficulty in accommodating

themselves to temporarily altered circumstances. If, however, they would grasp, and their senior officers insist on their grasping, the situation, these clouds would clear away. After all, it is a very small minority who have caused friction, the majority of the Public Works Officers on famine duty having loyally and cordially worked with Collectors. There has been no trouble in Cuddapah, where the Executive Engineer, one small explosion excepted, and his two chief Assistants, one of them a Royal Engineer, have loyally set aside professional prejudice, and worked side by side with the Collector, without friction. Two successive Executive Engineers, and an Assistant, a Royal Engineer, have done the same in Anantapur. The present Executive Engineer, in Kurnool, has, after certain preliminary misunderstandings, for which he can hardly be held responsible, found no difficulty in doing all that the Collector wants. The Executive Engineer—up to a certain date—and his Assistant, in Ganjām, have co-operated well with the Collector. The work of the Executive Engineer in charge of relief, during the preliminary stages of distress, in communication with the then Collector of Bellary, left nothing to be desired in the matter of cordiality. The only officers who have been really difficult have been Superintending Engineers in charge of the 1st and 3rd Divisions, the Executive Engineer in charge during the first months of distress in Kurnool, and the present Executive Engineer in Vizagapatam. The relations between the Collector of Bellary and the Executive Engineer have not been as cordial as could be desired. It will be seen, therefore, that the great majority of the scientific officers have found it possible to work on the lines of the Code.

9. As for the officers who have failed to do so, the Famine Commissioner will not say that their object has been to prove the position accorded to them by the Code to be impossible; but, had this been their object, they could not have worked better towards that end. When the Superintending Engineer, 3rd Division, is not railing at kitchen mismanagement, his diatribes are generally directed to the insufficiency of tasks and failure to enforce the same. It must be known to the Superintending Engineer that all the district task schedules were framed, no doubt with the approval of the Collectors concerned, by officers of his own department, and that even G.O., No. 216, dated 30th March 1897, left his subordinates ample power to enforce tasks. It is doubtful if, during the several successive days in which the delegate of the Government of India was the recipient of the Superintending Engineer's confidences, sufficient, or any, prominence was given to these points. These schedule tasks, except where the Superintending Engineer, without authority, enhanced them, and where a young Assistant Engineer took upon himself to enhance the Superintending Engineer's enhancements, have been generally in force all through the hot weather, and, if there has been any failure to enforce them, the subordinates of the Public Works Department are primarily responsible for the omission. If the position assigned to the Public Works Department by the report of the Famine Commission, 1878, and by the Famine Code, had been duly maintained, all these matters would have been settled between the Executive Engineer of the district and the Collector. The Executive Engineer, Ganjām, has recently been remarking on the subject of tasks, &c. So has his Assistant. The Assistant Engineer's remarks go first to the Executive Engineer; then to the Superintending Engineer; then to the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department; then to the Revenue Secretary; then to the Famine Commissioner, then to the Collector of Ganjām, and possibly might work the whole way round to the Assistant Engineer again. This is intolerable circumlocution. One of the first principles of Famine Administration, and an indispensable condition precedent to its success, is that *the district should be the unit of administration*, and that all questions should be settled in the district. It would be perfectly impossible for Government to go into such matters, even if the *personnel* of Government were quadrupled. Hypothesising that the position, contended for by the Public Works Department, were conceded, what would be the result? Wherever the Collector ventured to challenge the action even of an overseer, he would have to write to the Famine Commissioner, and he to the Revenue Secretary to Government, when the matter would probably be referred to the Chief Engineer, and the answer would have to filter down through the same channels. There would be this further drawback that, whereas the Engineer is always tolerably certain of support from the head of his department, the Revenue officer is never certain how he may be supported, and, after one or two failures, would simply

drop the matter in despair. Any one who had experience of the great famine can call up instances of the kind. For example, during 1877-78, in Salem, two Royal Engineers were simply impracticable, and it is to them specially that the Collector of Salem referred, when speaking of the want of harmony which characterised operations in his district (Famine Commission, 1878, Volume II, Chapter III, page 508). The complaint was a common one, and the want of control by the Revenue Department was found to be so fatal to efficiency, that the present position was defined in the Code in accordance with the recommendations of the Famine Commission.

10. It was this recognition of the essential principle, that disputed questions should be settled in the district, which led to the elimination, in all matters not strictly technical, of the Superintending Engineer from the purview of the Madras Famine Code. The Bombay Code *does* assign him, or the Chief Engineer—as he is there termed—a place, but it is a place in the district—section 37, Bombay Code—and that Code does not contemplate that Government should be troubled with petty correspondence or complaints, for it provides—section 38—that, when the Collector and Executive Engineer differ, the matter is to be referred for disposal, *through* the Chief (i.e., Superintending) Engineer to the Famine Commissioner; differences between subordinate officers of the two departments are to be referred, *through* the Executive Engineer to the Collector. When the Executive Engineer “sees any shortcomings, or any reason for alarm, he is to report them to the Collector” direct, “even though they may not lie within his official sphere”—section 39 (b)—but he is *not* to report them, through a round—about channel, to Government. The Bombay Code also provides that all executive officers of the Public Works Department employed on relief works shall be subordinates, in all matters not strictly professional, to the Collector,—section 38 (a)—and similarly, officers of the Public Works Department below the rank of Assistant Engineer are subordinates to the Divisional Officer, section 38 (b). Section 36 of the Bombay Code enunciates the principles referred to in paragraph 6 *supra*, being founded on the report of the Famine Commission, and winds up with a most important recommendation, which, if acted on, would have rendered the present reference unnecessary: “It is essential that hearty and friendly co-operation should exist between the Land Revenue and Public Works staffs.” The Famine Commissioner has, on several occasions, refrained from bringing cases of serious friction to the notice of Government, and trusts that his reticence may not be imputed to him for a fault. Had he not done so, Government would have been in a better position to judge of the extent to which the Public Works Department officers arrogate independence, and of the urgent necessity for speaking out, once and for all, on the subject. Had the scientific corps devoted, to the working of the Code position, the same energy which they have given to proving it to be impossible; had they co-operated with the Collector, instead of shooting at him round the corner, every shortcoming, if any, of which they complain would have been promptly remedied.

11. In paragraph 2 of the Chief Engineer's note, he seems to beg the question when he affirms that “there is no department more capable of striking the correct mean than the Public Works Department,” in the matter of tasking. There is nothing esoteric about tasking. It is a matter which any man may master with a very little trouble. The Famine Commissioner is not sure that the Chief Engineer is not mixing up the question of *rates*, in which the Public Works Department have special experience, with that of tasks, of which, in ordinary times, they have no experience at all. Rates ought to be founded on tasks, but it is very doubtful if they ever, in practice, are. The Railway has its rates, so has the Public Works Department, so has the Local Fund Department, all differing. Lastly come the rates, best of all, at which, in simple work, an intelligent ryot can get work done, superintending the labour himself. That the officers of the Public Works Department come to famine work with very minute information on the subject of tasks is very doubtful, as the best of them have to work out these tasks for themselves, and, in fact, no Code of tasks can suit varying circumstances, and differently constituted gangs. The Famine Commissioner has found it necessary recently to take objection to tasks fixed by the Superintending Engineer himself (Proceedings of Famine Commissioner, No. 555, dated 7th August 1897, and No. 558, dated 10th August 1897).

He was very much struck with the zeal shown in this matter by the Executive Engineer, Anantapur, who took the extreme step of performing part of a task, both in stone-breaking and in excavation, with his own hands, though this was only what any other officer could do himself. The Famine Commissioner pointed out, however, to the Executive Engineer that he could not safely argue from the performance of part of a day's work as to what could be done in the whole day, for the fresh workman will always do more than a man tired at the close of a day's work. In fact, to make certain, it would be necessary to do a whole day's work, which it would be too much to expect of any Executive Engineer. The safest way is to watch an average gang, working honestly for a whole day, and this any one can do. The Chief Engineer states that the Revenue officials are, as a general rule, far younger and junior in service to those of the Public Works Department. The question of youth cuts both ways. A young Assistant Engineer, fresh from the Engineering College, took upon himself, without reference to the Collector, to enhance a task which the Superintending Engineer, also without reference to the Collector, had already enhanced. According to the Chief Engineer, the Collector should have no power to rectify such an interference.

12. If Government are not to be overwhelmed with continual references, and engaged in deciding continual quarrels (they have had one such undisposed of for nearly three months—Board's Proceedings, Mis., No. 4186, dated 10th June 1897), it is necessary that some one person must be recognised as paramount in district administration. That person can only be the Collector. He may be old, or he may be young, but the average Collector is an officer with whom, and, in non-professional matters, under whom, no officer of another department could reasonably object to work. The Police Superintendents, often Colonels, never objected to this, and, in famine matters, officers of rank, as Major C. D. Baynes, and others, worked loyally, in every sense, under Collectors. The other Scientific Department—the Medical—has never objected to work with, or under, the Collector. There is no reason why the Public Works Officers should do so. The recalcitrants are only a very few, and one earnest word would put an end to all obstructions.

13. Paragraph 3 of the Chief Engineer's note may be disposed of very briefly. He knows well that there are no large works available for the employment of famine labour in any of the affected districts; and that, as regards the Deccan, it would be very difficult, though not impossible, to find any. That some are not forthcoming is due to the fact that, year after year, the Public Works Department has never taken its due share in the framing of famine works programmes, partly on the *non possumus* ground, and partly owing to the rule that no work should be examined, and estimated for, which is not likely to be carried out within four years. It is most urgent that the Public Works Department should thoroughly examine the Famine zone and determine what irrigation works are possible, and this enquiry should not be conducted solely from the standpoint of whether such works will pay interest on their cost or not. Whenever famine comes there must be waste, and especially in the Deccan. That waste would just cover, or more than cover, the difference of cost between the estimate of a work which will pay interest on capital expenditure and one which will not. At the end of the famine, there would be a useful work to show, and a certain area would be permanently safe-guarded—a happy contrast to miles of broken metal.

14. The position taken up in paragraph 4 is one which cannot be accepted. There is nothing to prevent the Engineer from issuing orders direct to his subordinates in all professional matters, and, in the non-professional matters, with the Collector's consent. As the Executive Engineer cannot be everywhere, it is urgent that some one should have the power of correcting, on the spot, whatever is wrong, and this power may safely be given to the Collector and his Divisional Officers. For famine purposes, the Executive Engineer becomes the Collector's Famine Assistant; so far from being a “nonentity,” he is the Collector's *alter ego* for the organisation and working of famine labour. As such, he can readily bring to the Collector's notice anything which he finds wrong in non-professional matters. This he ought to do, instead of writing reports to his departmental superiors and the Chief Engineer. If the proper relation between the Collector and the Executive Engineer were insisted on, all these differences of opinion would be discussed, and settled locally, to the great

advantage of administration. The Chief Engineer has consistently encouraged the reverse action by accepting, and passing on to Government, petty complaints which the local officers should have made to the Collector, not to him, thereby discouraging the very *entente cordiale* which it should be his first object to foster. The Famine Commissioner does not anticipate any undue interference on the part of native Revenue officials. They would have little room for interference, once the Executive Engineer gets into his proper position, as assigned to him by Government and the Famine Code. As to interference by Deputy Tahsildars and Revenue Inspectors, &c., the Chief Engineer does not seem to have grasped the purport of the order against which he protests. The power of interference is limited to the Collector and Divisional Officers. The Famine Commissioner is not aware of any instance of such interference. It must be observed that the Code contemplates the appointment of Civil officers to large works, and such officers are so employed in Bombay on petty salaries. The Famine Commissioner deprecated their appointment here, for the very reason that, as said by Colonel McNeil Campbell, interference from such persons would be exceedingly "galling" to the Engineers. This officer, however, whatever his pay, could not, any more than a paymaster, be placed under the orders of the Executive Engineer. They are intended as a check, and they could not be a check to their own superior. The Famine Commissioner has purposely refrained from recommending their employment from dread of additional friction, as much as because, except on the largest works, they would rarely be of use.

15. As to the proposals in paragraph 4 (1), this is the distance test, condemned by the Famine Commission and by the Madras Government, pure and simple, and there are no such large works anywhere available. This disposes of paragraph 4 (2) and (3); paragraph 4 (4) and (5) is the intermediate system, which Collectors have been ordered to introduce, where possible.

16. As to paragraph 6, the Famine Commissioner most strongly deprecates any importation from the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, unless, indeed, the 50 lakhs of the Famine fund be imported along with it. The Madras Presidency has nothing to learn from any part of India, and one of the most striking things in the famine of 1877-78 was the astonishment and admiration expressed by Bengal officers for the advanced state of administration in Madras.

17. In communicating G.O., No. 593, dated 19th July 1897, to Collectors, the Famine Commissioner observed as follows:—

"The rules now laid down have been made for the public interest, and in the exceptional circumstances of famine administration. Exceptional tact and conciliation should be ever present in acting on them. As an order of Government, they will be accepted loyally by the officers of the Public Works Department, and Collectors will therefore find it conduce best to good relations to act, as far as possible, with, and through, the officers of that department, rather than independently. When, in 1877, an order of Government placed a Royal Engineer Officer—Sir Michael Kennedy—in control of Famine administration, the Revenue Department accepted the position loyally. In the present case, it is only in matters not strictly professional and technical that the Revenue Department can interfere."

The authority now given to the Collector, and the powers of interference permitted to him and his Divisional Officers are not likely to be abused. The mere fact that such power exists should be sufficient to attain the end desired, without the exercise of it. In fact, the Famine Commissioner would require that the case should be a very strong one indeed to satisfy him that any Collector had been justified in using the power given to him. Tact is what is most wanted, and tact is the velvet glove which covers strength.

18. There has been some delay in replying to the Government Order, as reference was necessary to bulky volumes which could not well be sent to camp.

(True Copy and Extract.)

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

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

Order—No. 899, Revenue, dated 29th October 1897.

The Government is of opinion that the importance of the questions dealt with in the above papers requires that they and other important questions should be thoroughly discussed by officers who have had practical experience of the working of the Famine Code during the distress which is now coming to a close; and directs that a conference of Revenue, Public Works and Medical officers be held for the purpose under the presidency of the Famine Commissioner at Bellary in the case of the Deccan districts and at Waltair in the case of the Northern districts. The Famine Commissioner is requested to arrange for the holding of these conferences and to inform Government of the arrangements he may make.

2. The attention of the Famine Commissioner is invited to paragraph 4 of the letter communicated with G.O., No. 841, dated 5th October 1897, in which the Government of India desires that proposals for amending or supplementing the Famine Code should not be incorporated in the final famine report, but should be submitted separately. The historical part of the report should be got ready and submitted to Government before the close of the calendar year; the proposals of the Famine Commissioner for amending or supplementing the Code may be submitted later after the holding of the conferences.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Secretary to Government.

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

ORDER—No. 3176 W., dated 13th November 1897.

Communicated to the Superintending Engineers, I and III Circles, for information and guidance and to other officers of the department for information.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) W. B. DEWINTON,
Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Chief Engineer for Irrigation.
" the Consulting Engineer for Railways.
" Superintending Engineers.
" the Examiner, Public Works Accounts.
" Superintendent of Works, Lighthouse Division.

urgent
Public Works (1897) Department.

*A
Print into
all newspapers*
*(Copy taken
for press)
11/11/97*
CURRENT No. 10905

12-31766, 13-11-97
Communicated
to the Suptg. Engineers
I & III Circles for infor-
mation and guidance
and to the officers of the
Order Dept. for information.

From

The Revenue Department.

11.11.97
Press No. 899

Dated 29th October 1897.

Received

Registered

Enclosures

Spare copies

SUBJECT.

*Requesting the famine
Commissioners to arrange
for the holding of Confe-
rences to discuss certain
Questions in connection
with the recent famine.*

No.	Date.
862 y	9-10-97
3015 w	27-10-97
2533 w	13-9-97
2107 w	3-8-97
2009 w	24-7-97
644 w	21-7-97
8078	14-7-97
7398	7-7-97
1046 w	14-4-97
515 w	22-2-97

all persons who could do a reasonable amount of work were made to work, but as stated in my reply to question 18 I consider that the amount of work they were called upon to do was usually not sufficient -

yes, but nursing mothers were given only nominal tasks, and never fined

- (a) no
(b) no, except on one or two works - earthworks
(c) yes I think so. with grain at 13 seers per rupee a family of 1 man, 1 woman & 2 children, in B class would earn Rs. 8.2.3 per month which I consider more than "a bare subsistence wage" for a family of that size.

Question 20

Question 22

Question 23

I do not know what area is comprised by a "sub division" nor in the Cuddalore District during the famine they were seven or eight works in each affected taluk - say 900 sq. miles - and in very few instances did any workers reside on them. Residence on a work did not seem popular and I should call it an "effective and fair test of necessity"

all the new roads constructed during the famine practically followed the line of existing cart tracks and so they are likely to be always used, nor I do not think there is the slightest probability of the majority of them being effectively maintained and as they gradually dig

Question 55

back their former state

Metal collection is a useful form of relief work from an employment giving point of view - all classes of coolies can be given suitable work on it. The able bodies of both sexes to break the old people and children to collect the time to be broken. as a rule however the time when it is broken is not required or else is used to make a road which will not be maintained so from a permanently useful point of view it is anything but satisfactory - employing famine labour on the formation of a new tank, the restoration of an old one or the excavation of a new channel is incomparably a better way of spending Govt. money even if these works cannot be shown to be remunerative. They do a certain amount of work, but metal does not -

Question 70

The provisions of the Madras Code will be found in arts 4.5. et seq. - I am afraid the Code was not strictly followed in my district that plans were not ready for all works entered in the Famine Programme. The reason for this was that I had not sufficient staff to carry

on the ordinary work of the Division also investigate the proposals for famine works which in many instances were very sketchy

Question 71

(a) No direct attempts were made by Govt. so far as I am aware to induce coolies to attend works during the late famine, nor I know of cases where coolies walked daily 10 miles to work.

I am averse to forced residence on works, and provided suitable hutting accommodation is

provided other arrangements made I should enable coolies

to live on works I would leave it to them whether they came

daily or lived on works, nor in the former case I would give them no concessions.

The "allowance for distance" in the late famine was most popular. There were several instances of coolies passing a relief work going to more distant one in the hopes of getting a greater allowance.

(b) In my note of evidence I have advocated one or two large works in each taluk. This would probably mean that

Question 71 (con)

Question 72

Question 73

Question 74

Question 75

Question 76

no village would be more than 20 miles from a work, which is not a bit too far -

Yes -

I think that useful works could almost always be found much nearer the affected area than there would be no necessity to draft coolies to such a distance. I do not think that in any cases coolies should be made to leave their own district.

The exception, partly because there were so many works that they were within reach of all and also because the very liberal distance allowance given was a great incentive to the coolies to live off the works and walk to them daily -

No attempt was made to enforce residence on works. There were very few cases of it.

As already stated, I am not in favour of forcing residence on works, nor I would induce it indirectly by limiting the number of works. I cannot prove

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that owing to the large number
of works provided in the late
famine a large number of
people, who would not have gone
when it had been further
off, much less would have lived
on them, were relieved, but I am
very certain in my own mind
that it was so -

I consider that not too many
works, & low rate of wage and
a high task - if you must have
task work - are in themselves
sufficient tests

Residence on works is not
popular, the people naturally
preferring to get back to their own
homes every evening, but I do
not think they would undergo
extreme privation before
submitting to live on works.

During the late famine I know
of instances where coolies from
certain villages refused to come
to works on the plea that the
work was too far from their
homes ^{for them to come daily} that they would not live
on the works. This however
was an attempt to force the
hand of Government. certain
works had been proposed near
these villages the coolies thought

Question 77

Question 78

Question 79

that by refusing to accept work
at a distance they would oblige
the Government to open works
near their homes -

no, certainly not. There was
great difficulty in getting
sufficient establishment
during the late famine, and
considerably less than $\frac{1}{3}$ of the
district was affected

Yes, reductions in task for the
distance walked daily were
allowed in my district.
The allowance given at first was,
so far as I remember, one hour
for every three miles walked.
That is to say a coolie coming
from a village 6 miles from the
work would be able to count
two hours work for coming and
two hours for going, so he would
only have to do four hours actual
work i.e. half task.

Later on the allowance was increased
to one hour for every two miles
walked, and this reduced the task
to a mere farce - a coolie
coming 8 miles to a work
would do his day's work by
coming and going and so would
be given no task at all, but
to conform to the provisions of
the Code he was made to do

on present on the work at 7.30 am
and wait there till the afternoon
will call. Needless to say this
distance allowance was most
popular and coolies began
to go to more distant works in
preference to those near at
hand. To prevent this, when
starting a new work, I used
to draw up a list of the surrounding
villages give the deduction to be
made for each. If after the
work was started coolies came
from some village not in my
list it was at once reported to me
and I informed the Officer in
charge of the work what deduction
to make. There was no difficulty
in finding out when villagers
from a distance were living
temporarily in adjacent villages
and I do not think there were
many mistakes made in ~~these~~
such cases -

see my separate note

I would make 4 diggers
with their complement of
carriers into one party for
purposes of work and payment.

yes
The system was unfortunately
lost -

Questions 84-89

Question 90

Question 91

Question 93

Question 94

Question 96 A

Question 97

Question 98

Question 99

Question 100

9.

No. I do not think there
would be any difficulty. all
persons really in need of
relief would take to it readily

I approve of Mr Highams
classification, but would always
give a man who is entitled to be
in the "Y" class his wage for
that class even if no "Y" class
task can be found for him
and he is only called upon to do
"Z" class task (see concluding
part of para 3 of sec. 12 of
Mr Highams final report - p 6)

- No -

- (i) as adults
- (ii) as $\frac{1}{2}$ adults

seven years -

I would give them as laid
down in the Madras Code
but subject to no minimum -

No the Officer in charge of
the work can be trusted to fine
fairly and with discretion
and any restrictions only
hamper him and reduce
his authority -

no -

on Piecework - yes -

on Task work - no -

on both piece and task work I would have one compulsory rest day in seven - on the former the coolies would earn nothing for that day and on the latter the minimum wage which would be earned by attendance on the six days previous to the rest day -

I do not think it is necessary. a sufficiently accurate working rule is that a carrier should walk 10 miles a day and carry 0.2 c. of goods per trip per unit

I think Mr. Highams formula is theoretically correct but too elaborate for practice. The old rule of considering every gallon of kerosene as equal to 10 gallons of coal is practically all that is required -

I think there would be no difficulty in drawing up a

Question 101

Question 102

Question 103

Question 104

Question 105 & 106

Question 107

Question 108

Question 114

Question 115

Question 116

Question 117

Question 119

Question 120

Question 121

table showing the proper proportion of carriers to diggers for different soils and varying loads - in fact I have prepared such a table which I venture to think is sufficiently accurate for working purposes -

see reply to Question 90 -

see my separate note -

Do Do

In the case of works entrusted to the S.P.W. I would hold the Executive Engineer solely responsible for their management

no - certainly not -

see my separate note

Do Do

On big works where there are a large number of coolies residing permanently I would give the Officer in charge, provided he is a gazetted Officer, sufficient magisterial power to enable him to

(1) on first opening & work
for the first few days
pay daily, if possible,
or three times a week
after a little while ~~then~~
^{twice} ~~times~~ a week if paid
regularly will do

So the nearest pie

It has not been the practice
so far as I am aware, and
I do not think it would be at
all desirable. Have your
works open to all who are
willing to work for theatis
offered -

12-2-58

Question 125

Question 126

Question 127

W

Rec
12/7/87

ms

12/7/87

Though I do not see a whole
 which much endorses it
 & compares well with what is
^{mine} the opinion of an
 impartial person who is
 not taken in by such a
 effort the ~~the~~ famini
 body of the Lord & some
 others. I think the subject
 of which I have been talking
 deserves discussion, & is better
 on a ~~former~~ ^{whole} ~~discuss~~ ^{discuss}
~~the~~ ^{viz} The relation between
 the O. W. & Moral Reform is
 the ~~the~~ famini

12/7/95

Not by the Chief Justice Henry D. Phelps
As head of the Court

and a servant of God
I think it my duty to

(interpose - almost again)

the proper use of
feel convinced that it

will make matters far
better than is present

(I am sure that the State

of New York should have thought
that I am not aware of

the difference between
advising with caution and

advising with relief
I hope to find that

there is an great deal more
of the difference in advising

my service I have had
considerable experience both

of advising with caution and
and I am (maintain my)

of opinion that a. A. Miller
than seems more of the

advising with caution to be abandoned

main the first with my
as to the effect of

with reference to the
errors of the State
prior to the effect

By the purpose and the
 Collection the more and more
 to the satisfaction is cheap &
 not only appearing in the
 papers which the he has
 is different from my own
 to his own satisfaction but
 on every paper and in others
 (which have not been doing
 before) of this man the
 he has is as good as he
 from every & is become absolutely
 impossible for him to be mistaken

discipline on the part: because
 the individual has to some
 two months he has been
 on now ~~and~~ is on from the
 collector which is of course
 with an eye of the law
 and about the form ^{and} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~and~~
 he is now performing ^{and} ~~and~~
 the work of the other he is
 some of his office. I think
 it will be for better if the
 now is to hold for the
 C. he should have nothing to
 do with the work of the collector
 but on the other hand
 the help of the collector
 of the other, the latter was
 then as he has to see the collector
 I feel perfectly convinced that
 the present position which is
 so much to be regretted is
 a very ^{and} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~and~~
 paper one, the other
 saying, ^{and} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~and~~
 but I am afraid ^{and} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~and~~

on both the action necessary
affairs a case with others
like an one before
There is not an office with
I think it will
about the collection money
a lot of the money & money
on other last time. But when
Super Collector, Super Secretary
Revenue Inspector & other
notes & regarding work in
charge of an office it is not
getting to the letter & it is
there some other & others
but in connection with it
in connection, the one only
the other the other the
year of funding funds with
the rest of the other
It is by I stated as a
General rule that the Revenue
Officers, are for purpose &
purpose is to be to others
the S.O. & the
the S.O. & the

My remarks are
actuated entirely by a sense
of the responsibility I owe to
you in my capacity as
head of the P.W. Dept, and I
trust therefore they may
have as much consideration
given to them as to those

23 years since the
of the collection in the
consequently
the other it is the
force on the part of the
from a more
I am afraid that any
again the new
the other (I have thought
it is duty to do so
the other as I am
opinion by person who has
with the other
the other of the
in connection with the other
the other it has been
supplied, the other I have done
as I can & the result of
the other system must be
an action upon this
I have been to the
I think it is correct that I
should not be the
some for the last
every one will be.

1st The Bombay Letter
 contains the names
 of the men who have
 made the former being in
 charge of the P.W. Office
 Assistant of the Civil Office is
 Smith, the latter the
 charge of the Collection of
 my papers which are in
 follow in the same manner
 for the whole of the
 Collection as far as
 Smith has been then
 about 12 men being
 taken on in each of the

of large water I mean water
 being 1/2 of the & more.

2nd The assistance from the
 to make it more efficient
 into the managers of the
 Company & then this
 monthly being being
 was the reason that

3rd Then last water when
 to being under the P.W.
 Assistant of Melanchy & the
 Office the same to under the
 of the P.W. Office in charge

of the last the former one
 no less the same of the
 a coming in with them
 the Collection.

4th All male water when
 for the purpose of making
 which shows the water under
 the Collection, water under of
 making being last of the
 P.W. Office, then the same to
 being under the order of
 the Water Supply.

5th Then male water when
 to assist the disposal
 under the water, making water
 was, being being for the
 same water, making water

water.
 By the assistance of the
 which the water was
 water mostly to be coming in
 for the same to be made.
 The reason for this was
 the water to much, a
 the same, then to the P.W. Office

The distribution of the
which is shown & which the
again the same character
of the same
but taking into
the & the other
from home, however
the into the
the other character
familiar which is in the
the the the
the the the
of the O. & S. of the
the the the
Came the the
the the the

I have been attending to
the work done for the
President of the
on which the
the the the

the L. O. No 14

the 9th Jan 193

from which it is
the the the

the the the
into the the
the the the

1/7/33

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

1897.

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

Recd.

Regd.

} 1897.

Enclosures

Spare copies

Printed September th.

Proceedings, No. 596, 28th August 1897.

AUGUST.

Famine Administration.—Submitting to Government, Revenue Department, remarks on the Chief Engineer's note regarding the relative positions of Revenue and Public Works officers in —.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE
(REVENUE SETTLEMENT, LAND RECORDS AND AGRICULTURE).

W. J. H. LEFANU, ESQ.
(Famine Commissioner.)

6-16-807D
14-7-97
READ—the following G.O., Mis. No. 3713, Revenue, dated 19th July 1897:—

Read—the following note by the Chief Engineer and Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, No. 739D., dated 7th July 1897:—

As head of the Public Works Department and a servant of Government, I think it my duty to acquaint the Government with my views as to the effect of the proposed order, as I feel convinced that it will make matters far worse than at present.

2. With reference to the remarks of the Honourable Mr. Grose to the effect that I am not aware of the difference between ordinary works carried out by ordinary coolies and relief works, I beg to submit that I am quite well aware of the difference as, during my service, I have had considerable experience both of ordinary works and relief works; and I am still of opinion that a Public Works officer knows more of the ordinary task to be demanded from an ordinary cooly than a Collector does and that, consequently, he is in a better position to suit the task according to the condition of the famine cooly; there is absolutely no reason to apprehend that a Public Works officer has less common sense than a Collector, or that he is more hard-hearted and unsympathetic. The other extreme of being too weak and soft-hearted is likely to lead to serious consequences, as it demoralises the people and causes needless waste of money, and there is no department more capable of striking the correct mean than the Public Works Department. It seems to me a most extraordinary notion that because the Public Works Department has been accustomed to deal with ordinary coolies on ordinary works, that it should not be considered capable of dealing with coolies on relief works. It might as well be said that a Revenue Officer, who had been in the habit of collecting the revenues of a district for years, is not fit to do so during seasons of failure of crops, as he would be too hard-hearted and unsympathetic, and therefore during these seasons the work should be done by the Salt, or Police, or some other department.

3. I think I was quite justified in saying that the famine works had been wrongly managed from the beginning by the fact that the Government is now trying to alter the system hitherto in force, and have a few large works on which coolies could be massed, instead of a vast number of scattered small works. In my tour report I have shown that, if the famine becomes widespread and the relief works are managed as hitherto, more than 1,600 upper subordinates will be required, and surely a system that necessitates such an immense amount of supervision cannot be called correct.

4. By the proposed order, the Collector and the Divisional Officers can issue orders direct to the subordinates in charge of relief works apparently on all subjects, while the Executive Engineer is debarred from giving orders to his own subordinates, except on strictly professional matters (which have not been clearly defined). By this order, the Executive Engineer is reduced to a nonentity, and it becomes absolutely impossible for him to maintain discipline on the works: moreover, the subordinate has to serve two masters. He may receive one order from the Collector, which may clash with one given by the Executive Engineer, even though the former order may be on

a non-professional subject, and the result may be that he is fined by both officers. I think it will be far better, if this order is to hold good, that the Executive Engineer should have nothing to do with the work, and the Collector took entire management with the help of subordinates lent by this department; the latter would then not have to serve two masters. I feel perfectly convinced that the present friction which is so much to be regretted will be immensely increased by the proposed order; the clause regarding needless interference will, I am afraid, have little effect on the native Revenue officials or even with others who are zealous. I feel sure there is not an officer in the department, who would object to the Collector visiting a work and discussing and arranging matters with him; but when Deputy Collectors, Deputy Tahsildars, Revenue Inspectors and others give orders regarding works in charge of an Executive Engineer, it is most galling to the latter, and it is still worse when a Collector acts on complaints made by his subordinates, who are only too glad to try and show their zeal by finding fault with the work of another department. It may be stated as a general rule that the Revenue officials are far younger and junior in service to those of the Public Works Department, which tends to make interference on the part of the former more distasteful. My remarks are actuated entirely by a sense of the responsibility I owe to Government in my capacity as head of the Public Works Department, and I trust therefore they may have as much consideration given to them as to those of the Board of Revenue, in accordance with whose views the order seems to have been drafted. I have done all I can and the results of the proposed system must be awaited: what they will be, I hardly like to contemplate. I think it advisable that I should explain what I consider would be the best manner of carrying out relief works. The Bombay Code contemplates the division of relief works into large and small—the former being in charge of a Public Works officer assisted by a Civil officer if possible; the latter to be in charge of the Collector—and my proposals, which are as follows, are almost similar:—

1st—Large works should be concentrated as far as possible, not more than about twelve works being carried on in each district.

2nd—The distressed persons should be made to resort to these works, the arrangement for their conveyance and keep while travelling being entirely under the Revenue Department.

3rd—These large works should be entirely under the Public Works Department, assisted, if necessary, by a civil officer, who should be under the orders of the Executive Engineer in charge of the work, who, however, would not have the power of punishing or censuring him, except through the Collector.

4th—All small works started for the purpose of village relief should be under the Collector, subordinates, if necessary, being lent by the Public Works Department: these latter would be entirely under the orders of the Revenue Department.

5th—These small works should be restricted to deepening village tanks, repairing village roads, clearing prickly-pear, forest works and minor irrigation works.

5. By this arrangement I firmly believe that everything would work smoothly and be carried on much better than at present. The Revenue Department have now quite as much as, if not more than, it can do satisfactorily. The distribution of gratuitous relief is alone a duty that requires the most careful supervision, and if the Revenue Department look properly after that and also after kitchens, poor-houses, execution of small works and the many other duties connected with famine relief, it is as much as they can do satisfactorily, and interference with the work of the Public Works Department only adds to their work, does no good and causes endless friction and dissatisfaction.

6. I would call attention to the orders issued for the guidance of officers employed on relief works in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, issued with G.O., No. 14, Revenue, dated 9th January 1897, from which it will be seen that the Collector has not much control over relief works, which seem to be left almost entirely to the Public Works Department.

515W
22-2-97

Order thereon—Mis. No. 3713, dated 19th July 1897.

Forwarded to the Famine Commissioner for very early remarks with reference to G.O., No. 593, dated 19th July 1897.

(True Extract.)

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

To the Famine Commissioner.

RESOLUTION—No. 596, dated 28th August 1897.

The question underlying the present reference is in no sense a new one. The matter was thrashed out in the reports on the famine of 1877-78, and the policy, to which the Chief Engineer and Secretary to Government objects, was formulated by the Commission specially selected to report on the lessons taught by that famine, and adopted in full by Government.

2. The position of the officers of the Public Works Department in the earlier stages of that famine was, according to their views, even less acceptable than it is now. Under G.O., No. 681, dated 15th February 1877, all works—two only excepted—were to be considered as being carried out by the Revenue Department, the Public Works Department giving advice and help. In that G.O., it was further observed that “their (Public Works Department) subordinates can probably be best employed in supervising the execution of relief works, and, when this is the case, they should be considered as under the orders of the Collector or Divisional Officer.”

3. The Public Works Department is the only department of Government which is permitted to say *non possumus*, which is often equivalent to *non volumus*. The cohesiveness and *esprit de corps* of the Royal Engineers are well known. The Civil Engineers have not only professional traditions to bind them together, but, hailing from one centre—the Engineering Eton—and mostly members, or associates, of the Institute of Civil Engineers, they have strong common sentiments, and are saturated with an impatience of laical interference, which leads them occasionally to treat orders with contempt. Referring to the G.O., above quoted, the Madras Government, in its review of the Madras famine, observed that the order in question “remained practically a dead letter, because, although communicated to the Public Works Department, no action was taken on it in that department till the month of April, and it was then simply recorded and communicated to District Engineers later on, who, however, for the most part, did not consider that they were to act on it.”

4. As now, so in 1877-78, there was considerable friction between the Public Works and Revenue Departments. This is mentioned in many places in the “Replies to questions circulated by the Famine Commission,” and, after referring to the want of harmony which prevailed, one Collector—volume II, page 508—very happily summed up by observing that the Engineers, as a rule, looked upon their department as entirely a separate one and not part of the district machinery, of which the Collector should be the sole controlling power, adding that “there was too much tendency in this department to the *imperium in imperio*.” This is really the sentiment which is at the bottom of the present difficulty, which need not be called an *impasse*, for it needs only one word from Government to cause all officers of the department to accept the position, assigned to them in famine matters, loyally.

5. Sir W. Robinson, colleague of the Duke of Buckingham during the famine, wrote strongly on the matter—Vol. I *ibid*, page 54—as follows:—

“Works should, as far as possible, be organized under Department of Public Works Officers, but that department should be under the direct control of the Civil Administration of the district. Nothing could have been more embarrassing, more detrimental to public interests, and the real object of providing life-saving labour than the want of rapport which, more or less, prevailed in many, if not most, of the famine districts of this Presidency during the early months of our

famine, and more or less throughout, as between the district administration and executives of works. This weakness of rapport was perhaps inherent in the organization, and will not, I fear, be lessened by the recent changes made. I was a member of the Department of Public Works Commission which sat in 1869-70, as respects the organization of the Department of Public Works as we found that it then worked—and again, more recently, I have had to record my views on this important matter. To the former report I must refer for my general judgment, and I submit my more matured reflections noted in two recent minutes on Department of Public Works organization. The more the executive is localized and made part and parcel of the district administration, and placed in rapport with local officers and District Boards, the less will be the friction in times of trouble. The present organization fails seriously in this respect, but *Department of Public Works Officers shun what they deem subordination to local authority and interest.*”

6. The scientific officers often find great difficulty in accommodating themselves to the altered circumstances of Famine Administration, and, in straining at producing work which will bring them professional credit, and at impossible discipline and outturn, forget the prime object for which that work is taken in hand. In their recommendations contained in paragraph 129, the Famine Commission observed that “it is to be clearly understood by these officers that their duty is not, as in ordinary times, to get the greatest quantity of work done at the cheapest rate, but to give effectual relief to the labouring population, inasmuch as the work is undertaken, not for its own sake, but for the sake of the people employed on it”, and their deliberate conclusion is embodied in paragraph 130 of the same:—

“The Collector of the district should exercise general supervision over all works, as over all other arrangements for giving relief, within his district, and should be responsible to Government for their efficiency. Pending reference to the Government or other superior authority, his decision should be accepted by the Public Works Officers, in all matters relating to the task and wage of the people employed, as well as in opening or closing works, and generally in every thing, except arrangements of a merely technical nature.”

The reference under reply would probably not have been made, had it been remembered that the President of the Commission which made these recommendations was an officer of the Royal Engineers, General Sir R. Strachey.

7. The Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, observes in the memorandum now under consideration, that “he has done all he can, and the results of the proposed system must be awaited. What they will be he hardly likes to contemplate.” It would almost seem that the Chief Engineer’s interpretation of “doing all that he can” takes the form of setting an example to his department of challenging the order of Government before the ink is dry upon the paper, and that the *mot d’ordre* amongst his officers will be to follow suit. A serious word from Colonel McNeil Campbell would put an end to all the friction which exists.

8. The Famine Commissioner entirely repudiates any intention to treat either Colonel McNeil Campbell’s representations, or the *amour propre* of the department over which he presides, with anything but the most sincere respect. Firstly, he is aware that, at least on one occasion, the Chief Engineer has used his influence in the interests of peace. It is quite conceivable, and even natural, that a body of gentlemen of high scientific training, and accustomed ordinarily to interference from officers of their own profession only, should find a certain difficulty in accommodating themselves to temporarily altered circumstances. If, however, they would grasp, and their senior officers insist on their grasping, the situation, these clouds would clear away. After all, it is a very small minority who have caused friction, the majority of the Public Works Officers on famine duty having loyally and cordially worked with Collectors. There has been no trouble in Cuddapah, where the Executive Engineer, one small explosion excepted, and his two chief Assistants, one of them a Royal Engineer, have loyally set aside professional prejudice, and worked side by side with the Collector, without friction. Two successive Executive Engineers, and an Assistant, a Royal Engineer, have done the same in Anantapur. The present Executive Engineer, in Kurnool, has, after certain preliminary misunderstandings, for which he can hardly be held responsible, found no difficulty in doing all that the Collector wants. The Executive Engineer—up to a certain date—and his Assistant, in Ganjām, have co-operated well with the Collector. The work of the Executive Engineer in charge of relief, during the preliminary stages of distress, in communication with the then

Collector of Bellary, left nothing to be desired in the matter of cordiality. The only officers who have been really difficile have been Superintending Engineers in charge of the 1st and 3rd Divisions, the Executive Engineer in charge during the first months of distress in Kurnool, and the present Executive Engineer in Vizagapatam. The relations between the Collector of Bellary and the Executive Engineer have not been as cordial as could be desired. It will be seen, therefore, that the great majority of the scientific officers have found it possible to work on the lines of the Code.

9. As for the officers who have failed to do so, the Famine Commissioner will not say that their object has been to prove the position accorded to them by the Code to be impossible; but, had this been their object, they could not have worked better towards that end. When the Superintending Engineer, 3rd Division, is not railing at kitchen mismanagement, his diatribes are generally directed to the insufficiency of tasks and failure to enforce the same. It must be known to the Superintending Engineer that all the district task schedules were framed, no doubt with the approval of the Collectors concerned, by officers of his own department, and that even G.O., No. 216, dated 30th March 1897, left his subordinates ample power to enforce tasks. It is doubtful if, during the several successive days in which the delegate of the Government of India was the recipient of the Superintending Engineer's confidences, sufficient, or any, prominence was given to these points. These schedule tasks, except where the Superintending Engineer, without authority, enhanced them, and where a young Assistant Engineer took upon himself to enhance the Superintending Engineer's enhancements, have been generally in force all through the hot weather, and, if there has been any failure to enforce them, the subordinates of the Public Works Department are primarily responsible for the omission. If the position assigned to the Public Works Department by the report of the Famine Commission, 1878, and by the Famine Code, had been duly maintained, all these matters would have been settled between the Executive Engineer of the district and the Collector. The Executive Engineer, Ganjam, has recently been remarking on the subject of tasks, &c. So has his Assistant. The Assistant Engineer's remarks go first to the Executive Engineer; then to the Superintending Engineer; then to the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department; then to the Revenue Secretary; then to the Famine Commissioner, then to the Collector of Ganjam, and possibly might work the whole way round to the Assistant Engineer again. This is intolerable circumlocution. One of the first principles of Famine Administration, and an indispensable condition precedent to its success, is that *the district should be the unit of administration*, and that all questions should be settled in the district. It would be perfectly impossible for Government to go into such matters, even if the *personnel* of Government were quadrupled. Hypothesising that the position, contended for by the Public Works Department, were conceded, what would be the result? Wherever the Collector ventured to challenge the action even of an overseer, he would have to write to the Famine Commissioner, and he to the Revenue Secretary to Government, when the matter would probably be referred to the Chief Engineer, and the answer would have to filter down through the same channels. There would be this further drawback that, whereas the Engineer is always tolerably certain of support from the head of his department, the Revenue officer is never certain how he may be supported, and, after one or two failures, would simply drop the matter in despair. Any one who had experience of the great famine can call up instances of the kind. For example, during 1877-78, in Salem, two Royal Engineers were simply impracticable, and it is to them specially that the Collector of Salem referred, when speaking of the want of harmony which characterised operations in his district (Famine Commission, 1878, Volume II, Chapter III, page 508). The complaint was a common one, and the want of control by the Revenue Department was found to be so fatal to efficiency, that the present position was defined in the Code in accordance with the recommendations of the Famine Commission.

10. It was this recognition of the essential principle, that disputed questions should be settled in the district, which led to the elimination, in all matters not strictly technical, of the Superintending Engineer from the purview of the Madras Famine Code. The Bombay Code *does* assign him, or the Chief Engineer—as he is there termed—a place, but it is a place in the district—section 37, Bombay Code—and that Code

does not contemplate that Government should be troubled with petty correspondence or complaints, for it provides—section 38—that, when the Collector and Executive Engineer differ, the matter is to be referred for disposal, *through* the Chief (i.e., Superintending) Engineer to the Famine Commissioner; differences between subordinate officers of the two departments are to be referred, *through* the Executive Engineer to the Collector. When the Executive Engineer “sees any shortcomings, or any reason for alarm, he is to report them *to the Collector*” direct, “even though they may not lie within his official sphere”—section 39 (b)—but he is *not* to report them, through a round-about channel, to Government. The Bombay Code also provides that all executive officers of the Public Works Department employed on relief works shall be subordinates, in all matters not strictly professional, to the Collector,—section 38 (a)—and similarly, officers of the Public Works Department below the rank of Assistant Engineer are subordinates to the Divisional Officer, section 38 (b). Section 36 of the Bombay Code enunciates the principles referred to in paragraph 6 *supra*, being founded on the report of the Famine Commission, and winds up with a most important recommendation, which, if acted on, would have rendered the present reference unnecessary: “It is essential that hearty and friendly co-operation should exist between the Land Revenue and Public Works staffs.” The Famine Commissioner has, on several occasions, refrained from bringing cases of serious friction to the notice of Government, and trusts that his reticence may not be imputed to him for a fault. Had he not done so, Government would have been in a better position to judge of the extent to which the Public Works Department officers arrogate independence, and of the urgent necessity for speaking out, once and for all, on the subject. Had the scientific corps devoted, to the working of the Code position, the same energy which they have given to proving it to be impossible; had they co-operated with the Collector, instead of shooting at him round the corner, every shortcoming, if any, of which they complain would have been promptly remedied.

11. In paragraph 2 of the Chief Engineer's note, he seems to beg the question when he affirms that “there is no department more capable of striking the correct mean than the Public Works Department,” in the matter of tasking. There is nothing esoteric about tasking. It is a matter which any man may master with a very little trouble. The Famine Commissioner is not sure that the Chief Engineer is not mixing up the question of *rates*, in which the Public Works Department have special experience, with that of *tasks*, of which, in ordinary times, they have no experience at all. Rates ought to be founded on tasks, but it is very doubtful if they ever, in practice, are. The Railway has its rates, so has the Public Works Department, so has the Local Fund Department, all differing. Lastly come the rates, best of all, at which, in simple work, an intelligent ryot can get work done, superintending the labour himself. That the officers of the Public Works Department come to famine work with very minute information on the subject of tasks is very doubtful, as the best of them have to work out these tasks for themselves, and, in fact, no Code of tasks can suit varying circumstances, and differently constituted gangs. The Famine Commissioner has found it necessary recently to take objection to tasks fixed by the Superintending Engineer himself (Proceedings of Famine Commissioner, No. 555, dated 7th August 1897, and No. 558, dated 10th August 1897).

He was very much struck with the zeal shown in this matter by the Executive Engineer, Anantapur, who took the extreme step of performing part of a task, both in stone-breaking and in excavation, with his own hands, though this was only what any other officer could do himself. The Famine Commissioner pointed out, however, to the Executive Engineer that he could not safely argue from the performance of part of a day's work as to what could be done in the whole day, for the fresh workman will always do more than a man tired at the close of a day's work. In fact, to make certain, it would be necessary to do a whole day's work, which it would be too much to expect of any Executive Engineer. The safest way is to watch an average gang, working honestly for a whole day, and this any one can do. The Chief Engineer states that the Revenue officials are, as a general rule, far younger and junior in service to those of the Public Works Department. The question of youth cuts both ways. A young Assistant

Engineer, fresh from the Engineering College, took upon himself, without reference to the Collector, to enhance a task which the Superintending Engineer, also without reference to the Collector, had already enhanced. According to the Chief Engineer, the Collector should have no power to rectify such an interference.

12. If Government are not to be overwhelmed with continual references, and engaged in deciding continual quarrels (they have had one such undisposed of for nearly three months—Board's Proceedings, Mis., No. 4186, dated 10th June 1897), it is necessary that some one person must be recognised as paramount in district administration. That person can only be the Collector. He may be old, or he may be young, but the average Collector is an officer with whom, and, in non-professional matters, under whom, no officer of another department could reasonably object to work. The Police Superintendents, often Colonels, never objected to this, and, in famine matters, officers of rank, as Major C. D. Baynes, and others, worked loyally, in every sense, under Collectors. The other Scientific Department—the Medical—has never objected to work with, or under, the Collector. There is no reason why the Public Works Officers should do so. The recalcitrants are only a very few, and one earnest word would put an end to all obstructions.

13. Paragraph 3 of the Chief Engineer's note may be disposed of very briefly. He knows well that there are no large works available for the employment of famine labour in any of the affected districts; and that, as regards the Deccan, it would be very difficult, though not impossible, to find any. That some are not forth-coming is due to the fact that, year after year, the Public Works Department has never taken its due share in the framing of famine works programmes, partly on the *non possumus* ground, and partly owing to the rule that no work should be examined, and estimated for, which is not likely to be carried out within four years. It is most urgent that the Public Works Department should thoroughly examine the Famine zone and determine what irrigation works are possible, and this enquiry should not be conducted solely from the standpoint of whether such works will pay interest on their cost or not. Whenever famine comes there must be waste, and especially in the Deccan. That waste would just cover, or more than cover, the difference of cost between the estimate of a work which will pay interest on capital expenditure and one which will not. At the end of the famine, there would be a useful work to show, and a certain area would be permanently safe-guarded—a happy contrast to miles of broken metal.

14. The position taken up in paragraph 4 is one which cannot be accepted. There is nothing to prevent the Engineer from issuing orders direct to his subordinates in all professional matters, and, in the non-professional matters, with the Collector's consent. As the Executive Engineer cannot be everywhere, it is urgent that some one should have the power of correcting, on the spot, whatever is wrong, and this power may safely be given to the Collector and his Divisional Officers. For famine purposes, the Executive Engineer becomes the Collector's Famine Assistant; so far from being a "nonentity," he is the Collector's *alter ego* for the organisation and working of famine labour. As such, he can readily bring to the Collector's notice anything which he finds wrong in non-professional matters. This he ought to do, instead of writing reports to his departmental superiors and the Chief Engineer. If the proper relation between the Collector and the Executive Engineer were insisted on, all these differences of opinion would be discussed, and settled locally, to the great advantage of administration. The Chief Engineer has consistently encouraged the reverse action by accepting, and passing on to Government, petty complaints which the local officers should have made to the Collector, not to him, thereby discouraging the very *entente cordiale* which it should be his first object to foster. The Famine Commissioner does not anticipate any undue interference on the part of native Revenue officials. They would have little room for interference, once the Executive Engineer gets into his proper position, as assigned to him by Government and the Famine Code. As to interference by Deputy Tahsildars and Revenue Inspectors, &c., the Chief Engineer does not seem to have grasped the purport of the order against which he protests. The power of interference is limited to the Collector and Divisional Officers. The Famine Commissioner is not aware of any instance of such interference. It must

be observed that the Code contemplates the appointment of Civil officers to large works, and such officers are so employed in Bombay on petty salaries. The Famine Commissioner deprecated their appointment here, for the very reason that, as said by Colonel McNeil Campbell, interference from such persons would be exceedingly "galling" to the Engineers. This officer, however, whatever his pay, could not, any more than a paymaster, be placed under the orders of the Executive Engineer. They are intended as a check, and they could not be a check to their own superior. The Famine Commissioner has purposely refrained from recommending their employment from dread of additional friction, as much as because, except on the largest works, they would rarely be of use.

15. As to the proposals in paragraph 4 (1), this is the distance test, condemned by the Famine Commission and by the Madras Government, pure and simple, and there are no such large works anywhere available. This disposes of paragraph 4 (2) and (3); paragraph 4 (4) and (5) is the intermediate system, which Collectors have been ordered to introduce, where possible.

16. As to paragraph 6, the Famine Commissioner most strongly deprecates any importation from the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, unless, indeed, the 50 lakhs of the Famine fund be imported along with it. The Madras Presidency has nothing to learn from any part of India, and one of the most striking things in the famine of 1877-78 was the astonishment and admiration expressed by Bengal officers for the advanced state of administration in Madras.

17. In communicating G.O., No. 593, dated 19th July 1897, to Collectors, the Famine Commissioner observed as follows:—

"The rules now laid down have been made for the public interest, and in the exceptional circumstances of famine administration. Exceptional tact and conciliation should be ever present in acting on them. As an order of Government, they will be accepted loyally by the officers of the Public Works Department, and Collectors will therefore find it conduce best to good relations to act, as far as possible, with, and through, the officers of that department, rather than independently. When, in 1877, an order of Government placed a Royal Engineer Officer—Sir Michael Kennedy—in control of Famine administration, the Revenue Department accepted the position loyally. In the present case, it is only in matters not strictly professional and technical that the Revenue Department can interfere."

The authority now given to the Collector, and the powers of interference permitted to him and his Divisional Officers are not likely to be abused. The mere fact that such power exists should be sufficient to attain the end desired, without the exercise of it. In fact, the Famine Commissioner would require that the case should be a very strong one indeed to satisfy him that any Collector had been justified in using the power given to him. Tact is what is most wanted, and tact is the velvet glove which covers strength.

18. There has been some delay in replying to the Government Order, as reference was necessary to bulky volumes which could not well be sent to camp.

(True Copy and Extract.)

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

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

Notes on an Inspection of Famine Relief Works in the Madras Presidency, by Mr. T. Higham, C.I.E., on special duty, Famine Relief Operations.

1. I visited the Madras Presidency after completing my tour in Bombay, the Central Provinces, the North-West Provinces and Bengal, leaving the latter Provinces on the 4th July by rail from Mokameh, and arriving in Bellary on the evening of the 6th. On the following morning I met the Honourable Mr. Le Fanu, the Famine Commissioner, who kindly arranged a programme for my tour through the Deccan districts. I did not consider it necessary to visit the Vizagapatam and Ganjam Districts, in which the total number of relief workers did not then exceed 60,000, though there were nearly 400,000 in the Cuddapah, Kurnool, Bellary and Anantapur Districts.

Itinerary.

On the morning of the 8th I left Bellary with Mr. Stuart, the Collector, and Mr. Clerk, the Executive Engineer of the District, for Hala-Harri, 21 miles distant, inspecting on the road two relief charges, comprising together about 9,000 workers. On the following day we went on, through Alur, to Nemakal, inspecting relief works all along the road; and on the 10th, we went on to Guntakal, which lies just outside the Bellary and within the Anantapur District. At Guntakal I met Mr. Shipley, Collector of Anantapur, and Mr. Romilly, the Executive Engineer; and on the evening of the 10th, we visited together a road work about four miles from Guntakal. On returning to Guntakal I met Mr. De Winton, the Superintending Engineer, and we went on together the following morning by rail to Maddi Khera, in the Kurnool District, where we were met by Mr. Elwin, the Collector, and Mr. Johnstone, the Executive Engineer. After inspecting together some works in the neighbourhood we went on by rail in the night to Belamchera, in the same district, and inspected some road works there on the following morning. In the afternoon I returned with Mr. De Winton to Guntakal, whence we proceeded by rail during the night to Muddanura, in the Cuddapah District, where we arrived early in the morning of the 13th, and were met by Mr. Murray, the Executive Engineer of the Cuddapah District. After inspecting the Muddanura Tank work I went on by rail to Madras, where I had an interview on the 14th with the Honourable Mr. Crole, Senior Member of the Board of Revenue, and President of the Madras Famine Charitable Fund. On the 15th I returned to Cuddapah, where Mr. De Winton and Mr. Murray were awaiting me, and where I met also Mr. Tate, the Collector, and Surgeon-Colonel King, the Sanitary Commissioner, and we inspected together a relief work (road-metalling), two or three miles out of Cuddapah. We left Cuddapah by the night train, Mr. De Winton and Mr. Murray leaving us *en route*, and Dr. King accompanying me as far as Adoni, where we met Mr. Le Fanu on the 16th. I left Adoni and the Madras Presidency early in the morning of the 17th *en route* for Simla.

2. The relief works in progress in the four districts visited consisted almost entirely of road work, that is, of the earth work required for repairing old roads and making new ones, and the collection and laying of metalling either on old metalled roads in disrepair or on roads not hitherto metalled. The only other works, with the exception of some town works in Cuddapah were for the construction or clearance of irrigation tanks and channels. The following statement shews the number of different works in progress or immediately about to be started during the second fortnight in June, and the number of labourers employed as reported on the 24th of that month:—

Character of relief works.

District.	NUMBER OF WORKS.		ATTENDANCE ON 24TH JUNE.	
	Road.	Others.	Roads.	Others.
Bellary	25	4	96,751	8,843
Anantapur	33	8	55,328	3,004
Kurnool	36	6	69,659	5,307
Cuddapah	17	11	53,896	27,920
TOTAL	111	29	275,634	45,074

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The number of irrigation works was considerable only in Cuddapah, where they included some new channels on the Kurnool-Cuddapah Canal. It is said that there is not much opening for tank works in the Deccan, where the rainfall is ordinarily so scanty that tanks would be of little use, the only eligible sites having for the most part been already occupied. If the distress in these tracts continues, all that is proposed is to open more road works, and I was informed that there would be no difficulty in doing this, though it was certain that there would be a great difficulty in subsequently finding funds for the maintenance of the roads to be newly made or metalled.

3. The relief works are so arranged as to be generally within six or seven miles of the affected villages. It is said that the people cannot possibly be induced to leave their villages and reside on the works, though in the absence of any important works, other than road works, the assertion does not appear to have been very fairly tested.

4. I understand that relief works in the Deccan were originally carried out in strict accordance with the provisions of the Madras Famine Code. The gangs were classified as therein directed, and an attempt was made to enforce the standard tasks laid down in the Code, fines being freely imposed in proportion to the deficiency in the executed tasks and without any minimum wage limit. At the time of my visit, however, this had all been changed, and the works were being conducted in accordance with the later instructions issued in Madras Government G. O. No. 216-Revenue, dated 30th March 1897, and supplementary directions contained in the Board of Revenue Resolution No. 278, dated 3rd April 1897.

5. The orders of Government on the subject of the classification of the works, as contained in paragraph 2 of the G. O. quoted above, are to the effect that "all persons seeking employment on relief works should, until further orders, be placed as a rule in class A or class B. The very weak, those who can do only nominal work and who will not resort to kitchens, may, however, be placed in class C." The Board of Revenue in paragraph 2 (d) of their Resolution issued in the following direction:—

"The C class of worker is abolished, except for the very weak, who do only nominal work and will not resort to kitchens. This abolishes the D class of relief worker as well."

The orders quoted above were referred by the Government of Madras to the Government of India for approval in their letter No. 296, dated 4th May 1897, but the Government of India in their letter No. 2206-F, dated 14th June 1897, declined to sanction the proposals to place all the very weak who only do nominal tasks in class C instead of in class D, and to place in the B class workers who, being unaccustomed to hard manual labour, were unable to a B task, and who under the Famine Code should be put into class C. The orders of the Government of India had not, however, been communicated to the Collectors at the time of my visit, and when I met the Famine Commissioner at Adoni on the 16th July and mentioned these orders to him, he told me that he had not up till then heard of them.

6. In practice, however, the orders of the G. O. have not been carried out, and the present actual classification may, subject to a few trifling exceptions, be described in a few words; all are in class B. In Bellary and Cuddapah Districts I came across special gangs of very weak persons, who were either wholly untasked or given but a nominal task, and found them all in class B. There was no one in class C, and the wages due to this class were only quoted in Bellary as being the rest-day wage. The D wage is also quoted, but merely as the minimum wage below which a worker must on no account be fined, and down to the limit of which he is not to be fined for more than one week continuously. I saw only one

work in Anantapur, but understood from the Collector that in that district the orders of the Local Government are more strictly followed, and the weakly gangs are put into C class and receive the C wage. The rest-day wage in this district is paid at the D rate. The practice in Kurnool will be presently described—see paragraphs 11 and 12, *infra*.

As to class A I found in Bellary that men and women employed on ramming, although classed as B, were allowed to receive the A wage, not as a matter of course, but if the ramming were well done to the satisfaction of the Public Works subordinate in charge. This was simply by way of encouraging the rammers to put their backs into the work, but there were no A class workers properly so called. In Kurnool I found one gang which was classed as A, which is referred to in paragraph 12 below, but with an occasional exception of this kind no one is at present put into any class but B. I was unable to obtain any explanation as to why the weakly gangs or the weak members of gangs were placed in this class, which does not appear to have been contemplated in the G. O. already referred to.

7. We have next to consider the method of tasking the gangs. The entries in the gang register shew in separate columns for each gang the number of men, boy adults, nursing mothers (with whom are included women in an advanced stage of pregnancy), other women, and finally children under 12. Boy adults, or boys between the ages of 12 and 16, are shown separately, because, although under the Madras Code such boys are entitled to the pay of adults, they are more lightly tasked, in accordance with paragraph 3 (1) of the G. O. already referred to. The system is to reduce all the members of the gang to their equivalents in child-units, which is the unit of tasking. Thus:—

A man is taken as four units.	...	...	...	3 or 4 units.
A boy adult	...	...	...	1 1/2 "
A nursing mother	...	...	...	2 "
Other women, including girls, from 12 to 16...	...	...	...	1 unit.
Children under 12	...	...	...	

On the basis of these equivalents the strength of the gang is then expressed in a separate column in the register in terms of child-units, and normally the number of such units multiplied by the task per child-unit (*vide* Form F, page 66, Madras Famine Code) should give the task for the gang. It is obvious that if A, B and C classes were recognised, the registers would have to exhibit the number of men, boy adults, nursing mothers, other women and children under each class, each having its appropriate equivalent. This would greatly complicate the form, but the difficulty is at present avoided, because all workers (even those that do but a nominal task) are now put into the single class B.

8. In practice, however, the task for the gang is not that obtained by the normal calculation referred to above. Before the task for the day is finally fixed certain reductions have to be made, in accordance with the instructions contained in paragraph 3 (ii), (iii) and (iv) of the G. O. of March last. A copy of this G. O. was forwarded to the Government of India for information with Madras Government letter No. 296, dated 4th May 1897, but specific approval of their instructions in regard to the reduction of tasks was not applied for, as the regulation of tasks is of course a matter entirely within the control of the Local Government. I propose to show, however, how these instructions have worked in practice, and it will be convenient to consider them in the reverse of the order in which they appear in the G. O. under reference.

9. Beginning then with the order relating to reduction of tasks on account of distance (paragraph 3 (iv) of the G. O.), it may be remarked that in no work visited by me had much shelter been provided for the labourers at or near the works, and I was told that the people could not be induced to leave their homes for the night, and preferred walking to and from their villages

night and morning, even when these were as many as seven miles away. This is hardly to be wondered at when such liberal allowance is made for the work performed in the journey, a walk of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles being regarded as the equivalent of an hour's work. The time allowed for walking to and from a village a mile from the works is thus 48 minutes, or exactly one-tenth of a working day of eight hours. After the column showing the number of child-units in the gang register, there is therefore a column showing the reduction to be made for distance, in which is entered a fraction of which the denominator is 10, and the numerator the average distance in miles from the work of the villages from which the members of the gang have come. When the work is close up to the doors of the village no deduction is made, but in such a case the whole village of course turns out to the work. But for a village a mile distant, a deduction of 10 per cent. is made from the number of units before striking the task, and so in proportion for greater distances. Deductions of 50 per cent. on this account are common enough, and in some registers I saw deductions of 70 per cent.

This practice, whatever its justification, opens of course another door for fraud. The distances are probably very roughly and liberally calculated, the benefit of any doubt being given to the gang. Thus on the 19th July we mustered a gang of 107 individuals (No. 40) for which a deduction of 30 per cent. had been made for distance, and the Collector discovered that 18 of the members had come from a village alongside the work. It may be added that, although in all provinces, except Bombay, (where the labourers at present all reside on the works), the majority of the labourers come every morning from villages as far distant from the works as those in the Deccan, it is only in Madras that any deduction from the task is made on this account.

10. The next reduction of task to be considered is that on account of weakness. Paragraph 3 (iii) of the G. O. runs as follows:—

"(iii) *Weakness*.—The case of weakly gangs should also be met by a reduction, of the task, and not of the class or wage. The Government has already pointed out in its orders No. 43, dated the 26th January 1897, and No. 108, dated the 19th February 1897, that Collectors can do this under section 107, and Divisional Officers* should freely exercise health, when the full task of their class should be demanded."

I have already noted that in Bellary and Cuddapah Districts it is the practice to form weakly gangs, who are nevertheless put into class B. Similar gangs in Anantapur are, I understand, placed in class C. Apart from this, however, there are in many gang certain weak individuals belonging to the families of other workers, and who are, very properly, allowed to remain in the gangs. In Bellary account, and as long as it is accepted that persons who are unable to work should nevertheless be entitled to a full B wage there is no objection to this practice, and it is immaterial whether such individuals remain in the gang of their own village or are drafted to a special invalid gang. But deductions on account of weakness are not always made in this manner.

11. Some time ago, I think in May last, the Civil Surgeon of Kurnool inspected a number of gangs of relief labourers, the average number in each gang being 100. He found in each a certain number of weakly persons, and after tabulating the results he declared that those in which the proportion of weak individuals exceeded 10 per cent. should be classed as in *low* condition, while those in which the percentage was 10 or under should be classed as *fair*. For gangs in *low* condition he directed that the task should be reduced by 20 per cent., while for *fair* gangs a reduction of 10 per cent. was to be made. The report did not specify the minimum percentage which would entitle a gang to the 10 per cent. reduction, but among the gang inspected and classed as *fair* was one in which the weak members consisted of two women and two children, that is, 4 per

* The term Divisional Officer in Madras refers to a Revenue Officer, with the powers of an Assistant Collector, and not as in many parts of India to the Executive Engineer of a Public Works Division.

cent. of the whole. The Civil Surgeon circulated a copy of this report to his medical subordinates on the relief works, mostly men of the Hospital Assistant class, and directed them to make similar examinations, and that the tasks should be reduced in accordance with the results.

12. This wholesale system of reduction for weakness was brought to my notice on the first occasion of my inspecting a gang in the Kurnool District, at Maddikhera, on the 11th July. I there found a *low* gang from whose task a deduction of 20 per cent. had been made on account of weakness. The Collector, Mr. Elwin, who was present, informed me that under the orders referred to which had emanated from the Civil Surgeon of the District, and to which therefore he had made no objection, every gang in the district had been declared either *fair* or *low*, and the task had been reduced for each, either by 10 or 20 per cent. The gang then under examination was No. 13 and was composed as follows:—

9 men	...	...	...	= 36 units.
16 adult boys	...	...	...	= 32 "
10 nursing mothers	...	...	...	= 15 "
1 pregnant woman	...	...	...	= 1½ "
41 other women	...	...	...	= 82 "
23 children	...	...	...	= 23 "
100				190 "

The Hospital Assistant was called and directed to pick out the weak members, who were as below:—

2 nursing mothers	...	...	...	= 3 units.
12 women	...	...	...	= 24 "
1 man	...	...	...	= 4 "
3 adult boys	...	...	...	= 6 "
4 children	...	...	...	= 4 "
22				41 "

These individuals were said to be suffering generally either from jaundice or anaemia. The Hospital Assistant said that he examined all his gangs in accordance with the orders received, of which he produced a copy, on the 30th May last, and that the existing classification of *low* or *fair* had been made on the basis of that examination, and there had been no subsequent examination, nor had he had orders to repeat these examinations periodically. We endeavoured to ascertain whether the members of gang No. 13, who were put before us as weak, were the same individuals as those upon the strength of whose condition the gang had been classed as *low* six weeks before, but the Hospital Assistant failed to produce the papers.

In this particular case it would appear, on the authority of a Hospital Assistant, that 22 per cent. of the gang were in a weakly condition, but it is obvious that in such cases the percentage should be struck on the child-units and not on the individuals. The weakly units were 41 out of 190, or about 16 per cent. only, but the invalids were certainly capable of doing some work; and if their own tasks had been reduced by 50 per cent. it would only have been necessary to reduce the task of the whole gang by $\frac{1}{2}$ or 8, instead of by 20 per cent. But it must be borne in mind that under the orders that I found in force, this reduction of 20 per cent. would have also been made if 11 individuals of the gang, say 6 nursing mothers and 5 children, or 14 out of 190 units, had been declared below *par*.

On the following morning I inspected a gang employed on the excavation of a well which had then been carried down to a depth of about 22 feet. The bottom was in fairly hard rock, and the officer in charge had decided that, as the work was of a special character, the gang should be composed of selected individuals and should be classed as A. A so-called A task was given, but I was unable to understand upon what basis it had been calculated, and a careful analysis shewed that it was a very light task, even for B workers. However, it appeared that this gang of selected workers had on the 30th May been classed as low on account probably of a few weakly individuals having been found among the carriers. It thus happened that, while the whole gang were entitled to a reduction of 20 per cent. of their task, because six weeks before a few weak individuals had been found among the carriers. This order of the Civil Surgeon seems to me very ill-considered especially when regard is paid to the subordinate agency by which alone it could be carried out.

13. The system of wholesale reductions on account of weakness of gangs is not confined to the Kurnool District, for Weakness deductions in Cuddapah. I was informed that in Cuddapah reductions of one-third or one-half the task are made when gangs are reported weak. In the only two works which I inspected in this district no deductions from the strength of the gangs had been made on account of weakness, though separate gangs of weakly individuals had been found. I have, however, obtained a register for one of these works (the Muddanura tank) for the 14th June from which I have abstracted the following particulars:—

Number of gangs.	Work on which employed.	Men.	Boy adults.	Nursing mothers, etc.	Other women.	Children.	Total.	Child-units.
21	Earthwork on bund ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
4	Watering and tamping ...	403	291	...	796	517	2,007	4,303
2	Carrying drinking water ...	83	51	...	168	68	370	838
		32	20	...	201	20	273	590
	Total working gangs	518	362	...	1,165	605	2,650	5,731
2	Nursing mothers, etc., employed on "breaking clumps."	...	...	117	27	23	167	239
3	Weak gangs, untasked ...	99	...	...	275	48	422	994
	GRAND TOTAL	617	362	117	1,467	676	3,239	6,964

The gangs on the first three lines were employed on work, although only those on the first were actually tasked. Those on the last two lines, comprising 589 individuals out of 3,239, or 1,233 units out of 6,964, i.e., nearly 18 per cent., had only nominal work to do, but all received the B wage.

As regards the 21 gangs actually employed on earthwork I find that deductions from the full task, varying from 40 to 70 per cent. and averaging about 50 per cent., were made on account of distance, and that further deductions, varying from 20 to 30 per cent., were made for "other causes" which are not specified. These could hardly have included "weakness" with 18 per cent. of the units drafted to weakly gangs, and were probably on account of time spent in reorganizing the gangs, as there is a note on the form that this had been in progress

during half the day. The full task per digger had been fixed at 80 cubic feet per diem, but after reductions from all causes the average task actually set was less than 21 cubic feet, and the work of the carriers was lightened in proportion. At this rate the cost of the earthwork, including allowance for the rest-day wage, would work out to Rs. 53 per thousand cubic feet, though the normal cost would probably not have exceeded Rs. 6.

14. I now come to the case of deductions made on account of "excessive tasks" and will again quote the G. O., paragraph 3 (ii)—

(ii) "Excessive tasks.—When the task prescribed appears to be excessive the case should be met by a reduction of the task under section 107, not by reducing the class of the gang under section 97. A similar reduction should be made when gangs turn out short work owing to the absence of tools, or to inexperience in the handling of tools. It is well to point out here that "Collector" in section 107 includes Divisional Officers,* and that the "Engineer Officer in charge" means the "Overseer in charge."

An instance of the way in which this order has worked in practice came to my notice when at Belamchera on the 13th July. I found that the tasks for some gangs employed on breaking metal was 0.8 cubic feet of metalling per child-unit per diem. This appeared to me to be a very low task, especially as I had found a task of 1.75 cubic feet, or more than double, on the road work inspected on the 10th in Anantapur District. According to the district task tables the correct task would have been 1.3 cubic feet, but that it was subsequently reduced (previously to the issue of the new G. O.) to 1.1 cubic feet for some reason that has not been placed on record. The register shewed that this task had been pretty regularly accomplished, though fines had occasionally been recorded. Then came the G. O. of March last, which was circulated by the Collector early in May, and under which fining practically ceased as will be presently shewn. Since then the task has been twice reduced, first to 0.9 and then to 0.8 cubic feet, under the authority of Mr. Ghose, the Divisional Officer.

Mr. Ghose, who was present, informed me that the Overseer in charge had represented to him that it was quite impossible for him to get the full task out of the workers, and that they must either be fined, or the task reduced, and he had therefore authorised their reduction, under the authority given to him by the order quoted. I asked him if he himself considered the task short, and he said he could not set aside the Overseer's statement, though the Collector and I found on examining the register that the first falling off in the outturn when the task was 1.1 cubic feet did not occur until the practice of fining had ceased, that the reduced task of 0.9 cubic feet had been done without difficulty when first set, the outturn subsequently falling without satisfactory reason being forthcoming. At the time of our visit the task of 0.8 cubic feet, which was also carried out for some days, was no longer worked up to, the task on the 11th being 17 per cent. deficient, and but for the visit the task would probably by this time have been reduced to 0.7 cubic feet or lower. Mr. Ghose himself admitted that he had in March last got a task of 1.3 cubic feet out of a gang at Alupur, although no deductions whatever had there been made on account of weakness or distance, as in the case of the gangs at Belamchera, and if he had more carefully examined the register I do not think he could possibly have approved such gratuitous reductions.

15. Mr. Ghose told us that he had personally authorised reductions of the task on two works, and that indeed he had only visited two works since the issue of the G. O. But I have since seen a copy of a Circular No. 489, dated 11th May 1897, issued by him as Divisional Officer direct to all the Overseers in charge of relief works within his division, explaining in greater detail the G. Os.

* See footnote on paragraph 10.

of March last. A copy of this Circular to which I must again presently refer is appended, but paragraph 4 may here be quoted *in extenso*—

"(4) From sub-paragraph (ii) of the G. O. it appears that the intention of Government is to regulate and adjust the task by decreasing it and increasing it till an exact task which a gang can turn out regularly has been ascertained. In doing this, Overseers should not change the class of the gang, but alter the unit of task. This requires the sanction of the undersigned, *but as he cannot always be on the spot to accord the necessary action, a general sanction is hereby accorded*, and they are informed that their daily work sheets will be carefully scrutinized to guard against any abuse of it. The undersigned hopes to see that before long with a careful working of this system every gang will be able to turn out its allotted task."

The words in italics are mine. The Overseers to whom this Circular was addressed are Upper Subordinates in the Public Works Department, and they have been given *carti-blanch* to reduce the tasks at pleasure, without any reference whatever to the Sub-divisional or Divisional Public Works Officers, who are their departmental superiors, but who have themselves no power whatever to increase or reduce a task, except with the sanction of the Collector. It will thus be seen that tasks can be reduced by Hospital Assistants and Overseers in charge, in some cases with and in others without the approval of the Revenue Divisional Officers until they are whittled away to almost nothing.

16. Having thus described the actual practice which has sprung up, under the G. O. of March last, in connection with the reduction of tasks I proceed to the question of fines. I understand that when the works were first started, fining without any reference to a minimum wage was rigorously enforced, even although representations had been made by some of the Public Works Officers that the standard tasks of the Code were in some cases excessive. The latest rule in the subject is contained in paragraph 4 of the G. O. as below:—

"4. *Fining*.—Finning should be resorted to only in clear cases of malingering or of insubordination; and even then not so as to reduce the wage below that of the D class, nor for more than one week continuously, without the special permission of the Divisional Officer."

This rule, read as it must be, with the instructions for reduction of tasks in paragraph 3 of the G. O. and with other Resolutions of the Board of Revenue has rightly or wrongly been taken to prohibit the fining of a gang for short work, and to restrict the practice to cases of individuals, who have been clearly guilty of malingering or insubordination. This is clearly shewn in paragraph 7 of the Circular by a Divisional Officer referred to in the preceding paragraph. As a result the practice of fining has ceased almost entirely, and the Overseers in charge are afraid to fine. They prefer to meet short work by reduction of task, with the inevitable result that the successive reductions become necessary. On one work I found a case in which a small fine had been imposed, but only the day before, and the Assistant Engineer at Betamcherla told me that he had recently ordered a fine for very short work. But beyond this I could get no trace of a fine, and was told by both Civil and Public Works Officers that the practice had ceased. Apart from the unwillingness of the subordinates in charge to shew fines in their accounts, it must be admitted that the tasks after all deductions have been made are so low that the gangs can hardly help completing them.

17. I have now shewn how the full task of a gang is determined, and the reductions which are in practice made. It remains to consider the task tables in which the normal task per child-unit is given.

A table of standard tasks has been given in Form F, Appendix III, of the Madras Famine Code, but it is difficult to criticise it, because the data on which it is based have not been given, and for the same reason it is difficult to say what modifications should be made in the tabular tasks when the constitution of a gang differs widely from that assumed. The table is not in a practical form, or it would shew separately, as do the tables of other Codes, the tasks for diggers and carriers. Subsidiary task tables have been prepared in each district by the

Executive Engineer, which are in greater detail, but have the same defect in not distinguishing between the task of the digger and the carrier, or in road metalling between the carrier and the breaker. The following is a comparison as far as is possible of the tasks set forth in these district tables, with the standard table of the Code:—

Nature of task.	Code standard.	Bellary.	Kurnool.	Cuddapah.
	Cub. ft.	Cub. ft.	Cub. ft.	Cub. ft.
<i>Earthwork.</i>				
Sandy loam. Lead up 60 feet. Lift to 6 feet	11'85	9'00	9'00	6'5 (a)
Black cotton soil ditto	10'95	7'50	7'70	5'88 (a)
Gravelly soil, hard	10'13	6'0	4'70	4'50 (a)
<i>Metalling.</i>				
Stone easily procurable and broken.				
Lead—				
0—300 feet	1'88	1'7	1'7	1'7
3—4 furlongs	...	0'6	0'8	0'6
Stone easily procured, but hard to break—				
0—300 feet	...	1'2	1'3	1'2
3—4 furlongs	...	0'5	0'6	0'5
Stone hard to procure and break—				
0—300 feet	...	0'8	0'8	0'8
3—4 furlongs	...	0'3	0'4	0'3

(a) The Cuddapah earthwork rates are for a lead up to 150 feet.
The tasks given are for a child-unit of B class.

It will be seen that the Code standard tasks are higher than those now enforced, which agree *inter se* pretty fairly. From several notes taken on the works, I am inclined to think that the standard tasks are too high, but that the district tasks are too low; but without actual experience of the working capacity of the Deccan cooly it is difficult to speak with confidence.

I noted many cases, however, in which a much higher task per unit might have been attained, if more attention had been paid to the distribution of diggers or breakers and carriers. As a general rule the carriers were very under-tasked, often doing only 50 per cent. of a fair task. In some cases this is unavoidable, but it was not so in the cases noticed. This was of course the fault of the Overseer in charge, but if the task tables were drawn up on a sounder principle, not only could a far higher task per unit be realized, but the men in charge would be greatly assisted in making the most advantageous disposition of the workers.

18. It is difficult to say what proportion the amount paid as wages bears to the value of the work done. The accounts are not kept in a manner in which this can be shewn readily and without difficulty. I obtained, however, certain

registers taken at random in the Bellary District from which the following results have been abstracted relating to the breaking of road metal :—

Number of gangs.	Number of workers.	Percentage of deductions.	Task performed.	Amount paid in wages.	Rate per 100 cub. ft.	Normal value of work done at 3-12 per cent.	REMARKS.
			Cub. ft.	Rs.		Rs.	
16	Not noted.	Not noted.	1,329	139	10	...	
7			258	45	17	...	
20			790	147	18-12	...	
			2,377	431	18	89	11-seer basis.
			2,377	539	22-11	89	8-75 seers.
14	428	56	90	42	42-6	...	Ditto.
31	1,049	56	296	103	34-12	...	Ditto.
			2,763	684	35-6	104	

Reducing all results to the basis of 8-75 seers to the rupee, the cost of wages was thus more than six times of that of the normal value of work done. For a basis of 11 seers it would have been a little more than five times.

It may be noted that the gangs on the last two lines of the table consisted entirely of women and a very few children. The men are so few in number that they are usually employed on earthwork or consolidation, and in many cases metalling has been collected simply for the purpose of finding employment for the women.

To the rates given above, one-seventh should be added to allow for the rest-day wage. It would be one-sixth if full rates were paid on the rest-day, but the rate paid is either the C or D wage. Something should be added to for the cost of feeding dependants in the kitchen, but this is not charged direct to the work, and the amounts are not recorded. Probably 5 per cent. would be a sufficient addition on this account.

As regards earthwork I have already noted in paragraph 13 a case in which the cost of earthwork was Rs. 53 per 1,000 cubic feet, but this was no doubt an extreme case. I have notes of two other cases in which the rates were Rs. 27-2-0 and Rs. 16-5-0, excluding rest-day wage, the deductions for all causes amounting to 60 per cent. in each case. The normal rates are said to have been Rs. 7 and Rs. 5 respectively, and if this is correct the working rates are reasonable, when allowance is made for the deductions. But the normal rates appear to have been overstated. The lead and lift are not given for the Rs. 7 rate, but in the case of the Rs. 5 rate the lead is recorded as 25 and the lift as 2. It is not certain whether the unit here is the foot or the yard (both are used in Madras), but even if it be the latter Rs. 5 would be a very high rate.

19. In connection with the Madras task tables it should be mentioned that they are based on the assumption that a woman will do twice the work of a child and a man four times. In the Bombay Code it is assumed that the work done by

man, woman and child will be in the proportions 3, 2 and 1, and this is I think more in accordance with general experience. It was often observed to me that a woman would do as much work as a man at metal breaking, and it may safely be assumed that either at this work or carrying a woman will do not less than two-thirds of a man's task. If the child-unit task is correct, the man's task in Madras is therefore too high, but it may be that the tasks were originally worked out for men, and reduced to the child-unit, by dividing by 4. In this case the tasks for women and children are too light. In practice, however, very few men are employed either in metal breaking or in carrying, but one difficulty in applying the Madras task tables lies in this questionable assumption that the ordinary famine male labourer can do twice as much work as a female.

20. Each relief work is nominally under the charge of an Upper Subordinate of the Public Works Department. When the Management of relief works and system of payment. charge is a large one he has a Lower Subordinate under him to look after the measurements, etc., and in some cases the Upper Subordinate has charge of two camps, with a Lower Subordinate at each as an assistant. He is responsible for all miscellaneous expenditure, but has nothing whatever to do with the payment of labour. For this purpose an imprest is given by the Executive Engineer to the Tahsildar who supplies under cover of it the necessary cash to a paymaster who is appointed by the Collector. The muster rolls or pay sheets are made over to this official, whose time is mainly occupied in paying the gangs. The rates of payment to be entered in these pay sheets is intimated from time to time to the subordinate in charge by the Tahsildar. In the Kurnool District these rates are based, not on the market rate of the "grain equivalent," but on the market one of all the items in the annual return of the Code. I did not ascertain the practice in this respect in other districts, but believe that it is left to the discretion of the Collector to adopt either alternative. Payments are supposed to be made twice a week, but I was told that there are frequently delays, owing to the paymaster not being kept in funds or in small coin by the Tahsildar, to his not being able to get through his work, or to delay in the submission of the pay sheets by the subordinate in charge. The Public Works Department is responsible only for delay due to the last of these causes.

Referring again to the Circular by the Assistant Collector in Kurnool appended to these notes, it will be seen that in paragraph 7 thereof strict orders were issued to paymasters to take no notice of any orders to impose fines on gangs, and that fines on individuals were to be enforced only when the Overseer had distinctly entered in the remarks column that the individual concerned had been found to be malingering or insubordinate. On a representation by the Executive Engineer, the Collector subsequently modified this order in his Circular No. 218, dated 30th June 1897, so far as it prohibited the fining of the whole gangs for malingering or insubordination; but he insisted, as he was of course justified in doing, that the reason for the fine should be clearly indicated on the pay sheet by certain distinguishing letters. To this there can be no objection, but the practice of giving a paymaster any discretion in enforcing fines imposed by the officer in charge of the works is certainly open to objection.

The system of making all payments by means of a subordinate in the Civil Departments on works in charge of the Public Works Department has been extolled to me as an excellent safeguard against jobbery. The principle of exciting friction and jealousies between subordinate officials does not commend itself to me as an efficient safeguard against collusion that may be substituted for the more direct checks exercised elsewhere, and as long as reliance is placed on these jealousies, there is always the danger that they may be simulated wherever collusion is most rampant. I will reserve further remarks on this subject, however, for my final report.

21. Piece-work has not been introduced in the Deccan, but I was informed by Mr. Crole that the Government had just sanctioned its introduction in Ganjam and Vizagapatam, where the local officers had made out a very strong case. It was said that the people there were very anxious to be given piece-work, though

they could not be induced to attend works conducted on the task work system. The proposal was at first objected to by the Board of Revenue as contrary to the Famine Code, but it is satisfactory to know that a fair trial is now to be given to it.

22. The number of dependants on works is much smaller in proportion to the number of workers than in other provinces. The weekly returns show no dependants at all before the week ending 6th March, when they amounted to 3,439 against 51,272 workers, or less than 7 per cent. For the week ending 17th July the number was 19,011 against 442,893 workers, or little over 4 per cent. Even these numbers include some who are not dependants of the workers, as in many cases the kitchens are placed near a large village and persons are fed there who have no direct connexion with the works. About 95 per cent. of the dependants are children. Cash payments are almost unknown, but a cooked ration is distributed. The ration for adults consists of a cake of cholum, or mixed cholum and ragi, containing 25 tolahs or 10 ounces of grain, served with a sauce formed of the other items detailed in section 122 of the Code. This ration is given morning and evening, so that an adult receives 20 ounces of raw grain a day. Children receive on an average half this amount, that is, a ten-ounce cake is made up morning and evening for every two children on the roll. In practice the smaller children get less than half and the bigger ones more than half a cake. I found in many kitchens that many, both of the adults and children, were unable to eat more than their ration when offered them out of the surplus, and Mr. Stuart, Collector of Bellary, told me that he often made this experiment, and found a great many refused any additional ration.

It has recently been pointed out by the Government of India that the Madras ration for dependants and others in receipt of gratuitous relief is excessive, the allowance of grain in other Codes being 16 ounces only for adult. In Bombay children receive only 6 ounces. Dr. King, with whom I discussed this point, remarked that the Bombay ration is expressed in terms of flour and not of raw grain, and that, when allowance is made for this, the Bombay ration expressed in grain could be increased by 10 per cent. He also observed that the Bombay ration allows $\frac{1}{2}$ an ounce of ghi for adults and $\frac{1}{4}$ of an ounce for small children among "other items," and I understood him to say that, if the Bombay scale were accepted in its entirety, it would not be inferior to the present Madras allowance. It may be noted, however, that the minimum flour allowance for an adult female in Bombay is only 14 ounces.

The kitchens on the works are entirely under the control of the Collector, by whom a Superintendent is appointed. The Overseer in charge and the Public Works Department have nothing whatever to do with the management of the kitchens, nor does the expenditure incurred on them appear in the Public Works accounts.

In considering the high wages paid to workers in this Presidency, the fact that the proportion of dependants is so low must be taken into account, as in other provinces it varies from about 10 to 25 per cent. It is said that only the lowest castes can be induced to send their children to kitchens, and that they are very unpopular. This has been the experience at first in all other provinces, but where kitchens are well managed, I think the prejudice against them has gradually given way, and if non-working children are to be relieved at all, kitchens are doubtless preferable to a cash wage.

23. I asked Mr. Le Fanu if there had been any complaints from private employers that the relief works interfered with the supply of labour. He mentioned three cases in which such complaints had been received from small employers, and said that it was found in each case that the wages offered by the employer were about the same as, or not more than a pice higher than, the wage earned on the works, but that the latter was preferred, because private employers would not pay anything to the weaker members of the family, or to dependants. In all these cases he had offered to send as many labourers as required, and to allow

the weak members and dependants to remain on the works, but when the offer was made it was said that the men were no longer required. The only other complaint that Mr. Le Fanu could remember was one from the Railway Office at Vizagapatam to the effect that relief works were preventing labour from coming to the railway works, but enquiry shewed that there are no relief works within 13 miles, while the local labour was at the time receiving extravagant wages of from 6 to 8 annas a day in collecting grass for private persons, and would on this account not be likely to go to the railway.

24. As far as I could ascertain there are no relief works of any importance conducted wholly by the Civil Officers. Relief works in charge of Civil Officers. At first a few works were started under the supervision of the Local Fund Engineers, but they were eventually made over to the officers of the Public Works Department.

25. It is, however, hardly correct to say that the relief works are under the control of the Public Works Officers, except as regards matters of purely technical detail, or even that these officers have any control over their own subordinates, who are in charge of or employed on the relief works. These men have to take their orders from many masters—the Collector, the Assistant or Deputy Collector, the Tahsildar or his Assistant, the Civil Surgeon of the District, and even, as shown above in paragraph 12, from the Hospital Assistant engaged on the works; and they are responsible to their own departmental superior only for the safe custody of the tools and plant, the submission of certain daily returns, copies of which have also to go to the Revenue Divisional Officers, and for work being outturned in accordance with the specification. They are allowed to propose reductions of task to the Revenue Divisional Officer, and, as has been shown, in some cases to reduce them of their own accord under cover of a general sanction to that effect, but it is useless for them to recommend any reductions to their own superior officer in the Public Works Department, who has no authority whatever to modify the tasks, except after a reference to the Collector. Nor are these men, although in charge of the work, in any way responsible for the payments to the labourers, which are made by an independent official belonging to the Civil Department, and advisedly removed entirely from their control. Their whole sense of responsibility is weakened by the uncertainty as to whom they are responsible to, or as to who are responsible to them.

The Executive and Assistant Engineers are in no better position. They are out of order if they attempt to give any orders on the work relating to tasks or fines, though such orders may be freely given by others who have had no experience whatever in the organisation of large bodies of labourers. They too have to serve two masters, to take their orders from the Collector on all points not strictly professional, and from their departmental superiors on all other points, it being left to every one to interpret in his own way what is meant by "strictly professional."

26. The position of the Superintending Engineer is still more anomalous. If there is one officer more than any other upon whom Government might rely to control relief works in simultaneous progress in several districts, to assign to each officer and subordinate in the Public Works Department his proper duties and place in the chain of responsibility, to introduce uniformity where uniformity is desirable, and to sanction variation where circumstances demand variation, it is the Superintending Engineer. In Madras, however, the Superintending Engineer is allowed no voice in these matters. Take for instance the question of tasking. I have already stated that the task table of the Code is not in my opinion based on sound and workable principles and it might be considered the first duty of a Superintending Engineer to rectify this. I find that, as long ago as last March, the Superintending Engineer attempted to do this, as regards earthwork, on the occasion of a large work being started in the Cuddapah District, and to introduce the system of tasking the diggers which is in

force in every other province that I have visited. He sent detailed instructions on this and other matters connected with the work to the Executive Engineer, who sent them on to the Collector for approval of the non-professional points involved. The Collector forwarded the proposals to the Board of Revenue for orders after expressing his own personal approval. The orders of the Board are contained in Resolution No. 415-A., dated 13th June 1897. In this Resolution the merits of the system proposed were admitted, and it was acknowledged that Government in paragraph 3 (i) of G. O. No. 216 of 1897 had recognised the necessity of fixing the task according to the number of diggers and not according to the total number in the gang. But it was objected that it was impossible to carry out the system proposed, and undesirable to add to the complexity of the existing rules for the conduct of works by introducing the proposed system. The Board concluded by observing "that the Superintending Engineer issued orders to the Executive Engineer to introduce a system totally at variance with the provisions of the Famine Code, without consulting the Collector, although the proposed system involved several points of a non-professional nature." The Board was "glad to note, however, that the Executive Engineer thought fit to consult the Collector in the matter."

I am not concerned here to answer the Board's objection to the introduction of the better system of tasking, which has been adopted without any difficulty whatever in every other province in which relief works are in progress. It is sufficient to point out how this effort of the Superintending Engineer to introduce an improved system was met by something very like censure. Other instances of this have come to my notice, but it is unnecessary to adduce them here.

The exclusion of the Superintending Engineer from all control of his own Public Works staff, except in "technical matters," has been emphatically asserted in paragraph 9 of the G. O. of March last, in which it is even directed that the details of the Public Works establishment should be seen and passed by the Collectors before they are sent up to the Board or Government for sanction. The control of the Superintending Engineer is practically confined to such matters as the section to be adopted for a tank embankment, or the size of the ring through which broken metal is to pass.

27. It may be said that the position to which the officers of the Public Works Department are relegated is in accordance with that assigned to them in section 24 of the Madras Code, and that the duties of a Superintending Engineer in time of famine are merely those which are recited in section 42. I do not propose to consider here the language of section 24 of the Code, but will merely observe that it is repeated almost word for word in the corresponding sections of the Codes of other provinces*, excepting Burma and the Central Provinces. But notwithstanding this in all these other provinces, the Superintending Engineer, acting in direct communication with the Commissioner, is in practice the officer who controls the organization and management of all relief works which have been made over to the Public Works Department. In Bombay his duties are already laid down in section 37, and whatever doubts there may be as to the position of other Public Works officers under sections 31 and 38, his authority in respect of all the matters referred to in section 37 is unquestioned. In Bengal the responsibilities of the Superintending Engineer, as far as the Code is concerned, are limited to the matters stated in section 93, corresponding very closely to section 42 of the Madras Code. But in practice two Superintendents of Works, with the powers of Superintending Engineers as defined in the Public Works Code, have been specially appointed for the control of the relief works under the Public Works Department, and the Chief Engineer himself has devoted the closest attention to the all-important question of tasking and has drawn up the admirable and helpful instructions on the subject which have been issued by the Local Government in the Public Works Department for the general guidance of all officers engaged on relief works. In the North-West Provinces the duties of the officers of the Public Works Department are laid down in sections 30 to 40 of the Famine Code,

* Rules of the Famine Codes on the relation of Public Works to Civil Officers.

38. * Bombay, sections 31 (d) and (e) and section 38.
Bengal, section 22.
North-West Provinces; section 27.
Punjab, section 49.

and as there defined are not more extensive than in the Madras and Bengal Codes, but in actual practice the whole of that important section of famine policy which relates to relief works has been formulated and controlled in the Public Works Department, the Chief and Superintending Engineers have been consulted by the Local Government at every stage, and a generous and real authority has been accorded to them, which has been exercised in close and harmonious co-operation with the Civil Officers.

In the Punjab the duties of Superintending Engineers have been defined in section 56 of the Code, which corresponds very closely with section 37 of the Bombay Code. When relief operations were first started, it was proposed by the Chief Engineer himself that the duties of the Public Works Staff should be confined to purely professional matters, but it was soon found that this was not practicable, and when work was started in the Ghaggar Canal, it was decided by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, on the unanimous representation of the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner, that the whole of the arrangements should be under the direct control of the Superintending Engineer, for reasons recorded in paragraph 3 of Sir Dennis FitzPatrick's note on the Ghaggar Canals Relief Works, dated 18th January 1897. I have received a communication from the Deputy Commissioner of Hissar from which I infer that this decision has had the happiest results.

28. It will thus be seen that in the four provinces in which the position of the Public Works officers in relation to the Collector is defined in language identical with that of section 24 of the Madras Code, and in which the results attained on relief works certainly do not compare unfavourably with those accomplished in Madras, a very much wider authority has been accorded to the Superintending Engineer than is allowed in the latter province. The explanation of this is that in all other provinces a wider interpretation has been given to the words "matters which are not of a merely technical nature" and "points strictly professional." If there is one matter that may be deemed professional, it is the organization and management of large bodies of more or less untrained labourers with what is often a wholly untrained subordinate staff; if there is one matter which is merely technical, it is the proportioning of tasks under varying conditions, and in variously constituted gangs to the capacity of the gang or the individual worker. My tour has given me exceptional opportunities for appreciating the difficulties which attend the management of large relief works on the principles laid down in the Code, and I can conceive no task which more severely taxes the capacities and energies of the best Engineer.

29. In one respect the action which has been taken by the Madras Government is justified by positive enactment. Power given in Madras to the Collector and his Divisional Officers in regard to tasks. The Famine Code which appears to be peculiar to Madras. In section 107 it is laid down that modifications in the standard task may be made by the Engineer Officer in charge of the work, subject to the sanction of the Collector. This is an amplification of the more general direction that the Collector's decision shall be accepted in all matters relating to the employment and wages of labourers which is not to be found in the Codes of other provinces in which this direction is contained. In section 37 (f) of the Bombay Code, the Superintending Engineer is required "to maintain an equal standard of tasks and uniformity of procedure in setting tasks for the various kinds of work," and there is a similar provision in section 56 (e) of the Punjab Code.

In Bengal the rules for tasks are set forth in sections 64 to 66, the language of which implies that the tasks are to be determined by the Local Officers, though as before stated detailed instructions for their guidance have been drawn up by the Chief Engineer, and issued by the Local Government in the Public Works Department. In the North-West Provinces the same practice obtains.

It may be added that under paragraph 3 (ii) of the Madras G. O. No. 216-Revenue, dated 10th March 1897, it has been lately ruled that the word "Collector" in section 107 includes Divisional Officers, and that the

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"Engineer Officer in charge" means the Overseer in charge. The practical effect of this ruling has been shown in paragraphs 14 and 15 of these notes.

30. It need hardly be said that the relations between the Civil and Public Works Officers in this province are very strained, and in a state of high tension all along the line. The friction that exists is very detrimental.

I have heard both sides, and have come to the conclusion not that there are faults in both sides, but that both are in the right. As long as the sole responsibility for the management of relief works is vested by the express enactment of Government in the Civil Officers, those officers cannot but resent the interference of officers of other departments. As long as the officers of a specially trained and independent department are called in to assist in the management of such works, they cannot but resent the ignoring of their authority in matters which they rightly deem to be of a professional nature, and the loosening of all the bonds of departmental organization and discipline. It is an unfortunate but natural result of the existing regulations that the friction excited is greatest between those officers who are the most capable and energetic, and who take the most serious view of their own individual duties and responsibilities.

31. During the interview that I had with the Famine Commissioner on the 16th, I expressed surprise at the great loss of power involved in the limited authority assigned to the Public Works

Department in the control and management of relief works, whereby very heavy duties and responsibilities were thrown on the Civil Officers in addition to those incidental to other sections of famine administration, such as village relief, agricultural advances, the distribution of the charitable fund, etc., etc. He told me in reply that this had been done advisedly, and he mentioned instances in previous famines in which particular members of the Public Works Department had shown themselves very hard and unsympathetic in the management of relief works. I venture to think, however, that if the management of relief works were more distinctly recognized as a special function of the Public Works Department, the idiosyncrasies of its individual members would be better controlled by their own departmental superiors than by officers of other departments. It is the particular business of Engineers to adapt means to ends, and if the principles that should guide them in the management of relief works were set forth in all necessary detail by the head of their own department, and adhesion to their principles were enforced by the usual methods of departmental discipline, I see no reason why relief works in Madras should not be as efficiently and sympathetically managed by the officers of the Public Works Department as they have been in other provinces. As far as I could ascertain the work of the Public Works Department, as a department of Government, has been confined to the preparation of estimates, the provision of funds, and the supply of the necessary tools and plant.

32. The Public Works Department has hitherto supplied all the Engineer Officers required in connection with relief works. This has been done by drafting officers from unaffected districts in which ordinary operations have been as far as possible contracted, but if distress should extend to other districts there will probably be some difficulty in providing officers. Upper Subordinates have also been freely transferred from other districts, and others who are entertained by Local Funds have also been posted to relief works, but it has been necessary in addition to employ a few temporary men who have done fairly well. The greatest difficulty has been experienced in regard to Sub-Overseers and Head Maistris. Most of these have been entertained temporarily, but the supply of competent men was not equal to the demand.

Concluding remarks.

33. The distinctive features of the administration of relief works in Madras are as follows:—

- (a) All workers are put in the B class and receive the B wage, including even those who can perform only a nominal task, except in Anantapur, where they are put in the C class. A few workers receive the

A wage, but the number is insignificant. Dependants also receive a larger ration than in other provinces.

- (b) The large reductions made in normal tasks on account of distance, weakness, or incapacity, and the almost total suspension of the practice of fining.
- (c) The exclusion of the Superintending Engineer from all effective control over the management of relief works, and especially over the system of tasking.

The orders of the Government of India have already been passed on (a), and I have nothing to add to the remarks already made in regard to (c).

As regards (b), Mr. Le Fanu informed me that the proposals for reduction of tasks, etc., to which effect was given by G. O. No. 216, dated 30th March 1897, were originally made by him in view of the great heat to which the labourers in the Deccan would be exposed during the months of April and May, or until the setting in of the monsoon winds.

He had subsequently proposed that these orders should be modified in the direction of greater stringency as soon as the monsoon sets in. I have seen a G. O. of the Madras Government in this sense, in which it was proposed to increase all tasks by 25 per cent. and give smaller reductions on account of distance after the monsoon had commenced, and officers were warned to be prepared for telegraphic instructions to this effect. I understood from Mr. Le Fanu when I met him on the 16th that these instructions had just issued, although I have not seen a copy of them. It may therefore be hoped that fuller tasks may be exacted in future.

The numbers on relief works, including dependants, have increased from 166,723 for the week ending 1st May (when the effects of the G. O. of March last would probably have become appreciable), to 461,904 for the week ending 17th July. It is impossible to say how much of the increase has been due to the great reductions in task, which in many cases have become almost nominal, and how much to the failure of the monsoon and extension of the distressed area.

The large proportion of women and children to men on the Madras relief works, and the fact that the majority of the works are road work, have no doubt increased the difficulty in keeping the workers fully employed and in setting a fairly high task. In this connection it must be remembered that in the Madras returns boys between the age of 12 and 16 are included among the men, and that women include girls of the same age, so that under *children* only those under twelve years of age are shown. In other provinces boys and girls between the age of 12 or 16 are shown as children.

The numbers of individuals receiving gratuitous relief, including dependants on the works, have hitherto been less in Madras than in other provinces, excepting Bombay and the Punjab. The following are the figures for the week ending 17th July:—

Provinces.	Number of workers.	Dependants on works.	Gratuitous and special relief.	Total columns 3 and 4.	Percentage of column 5 on column 2.
Madras	442,893	19,011	209,202	228,213	51.5
Bombay	245,982	61,821	50,989	112,810	45.9
Bengal	258,172	14,239	449,061	463,300	179.5
North-West Provinces and Oudh.	428,255	80,815	452,280	533,095	124.5
Punjab	65,156	7,809	13,308	21,117	32.4
Central Provinces	340,104	52,762	160,254	213,016	62.7

The low proportion of dependants and the unpopularity of the kitchens has already been referred to in paragraph 22.

Dated Simla, 28th July 1897.

T. HIGHAM.

APPENDIX.

CIRCULAR.

Tour Dis. No. 489 of 1897.

The following circular is issued to Overseers in charge of relief works in this Division.

2. Government has in its order No. 216, dated the 30th March 1897, laid down fresh rules for the management of relief works, and these must be acted up to by every Overseer, and for that purpose the accompanying extract of paragraphs 3, 4 and 9 is communicated to them for their guidance.

3. They will observe that the work to be given to the different gangs must be suited to their composition, and this is clearly shewn by examples in sub-paragraph (i) of paragraph 3.

From the 2nd portion of the same sub-paragraph, it is clear that Government intends that one man should be equivalent to two women and equivalent to four children. No allowance is apparently to be made for nursing mothers or girls who must be strictly considered to be capable of turning out two units of work.

The only exception made is in favour of boys between 12 and 16 who are to be reckoned as two or three units according to their capacity, but are to be paid the full wages of a man.

4. From sub-paragraph (ii) of the G. O., it appears that the intention of Government is to regulate and adjust the task by decreasing it and increasing it till an exact task which a gang can turn out regularly has been ascertained. In doing this, Overseers should not change the class of the gang, but alter the unit of task. This requires the sanction of the undersigned, but as he cannot always be on the spot to accord the necessary action, a general sanction is hereby accorded, and they are informed that their daily work sheets will be carefully scrutinised to guard against any abuse of it. The undersigned hopes to see that before long with a careful working of this system, every gang will be able to turn out its allotted task.

5. Sub-paragraph (iii) provides for the same latitude being extended to the case of weakly gangs.

6. Sub-paragraph (iv) allows for a reduction being made from the task on account of distance on works where accommodation has not been provided. The scale laid down is an abatement of an hour's work for every $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, or in other words a reduction of $\frac{1}{8}$ for every $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, taking the working day to be 8 hours from 7-30 A.M., to 2 noon and 2 P.M. to 5-30 P.M.

7. From paragraph 4 of the G. O., it is clear that Government does not wish fines to be imposed for short work. It should only be resorted to in clear cases of malingering or insubordination; and as no entire gang can hardly be said to be in a body lazy or insubordinate, the fining of entire gangs is practically abolished. The names of the lazy and contumacious characters, however, should be noted down by the Overseer, with a view to imposing individual fines, and that not beyond the extent to which the gang would otherwise be fined for short work, for the Code contemplates fining only for short work (*vide* section 28, Appendix VI).

The undersigned has strictly ordered the paymasters to take no notice of any orders to impose fines on gangs. They have, however, been instructed to impose fines on individuals only in such cases where the Overseer has entered in the remarks column that such individual has been found to be malingering or insubordinate.

Such fines imposed on contumacious or lazy characters should not allow of their wages being reduced below D class, nor should it continue for more than a week continuously without the sanction of the undersigned previously obtained in writing.

8. Overseers will see from the spirit of the G. O. now issued that it has the effect of cancelling the circular issued to them by the late Executive Engineer to the effect that Revenue Officers have no concern with scrutinizing tasks, mustering gangs, check measuring work, etc., for the G. O. gives full control of the works to the Revenue Divisional Officers.

9. Overseers are strictly ordered to carry out these instructions to the very letter, and failure to do so will be reported to the Collector, with a view to the matter being brought to the notice of Government.

(Signed) GHOSE,

CAMP ALLAGADDA; }

Dated 11th May 1897. }

Acting Head Assistant Collector.

NOTE.—Since the issue of this circular G. O. No. 284-Press, dated 1st May 1897, ordering that nursing mothers and women in an advanced stage of pregnancy should be treated as equivalent to $1\frac{1}{2}$ units has been received, and Overseers should carry out the above order at once.

(Signed) GHOSE,

Acting Head Assistant Collector.

From

T. W. Holderness, Esquire, I. C. S.,
Deputy Secretary to the Govt. of India,
Department of Rev: & Agri: (Famine).

To

The Secretary to the Government of Madras.

Department of Revenue
and Agriculture, Famine.

Sinle, the 18th August 1897.

Sir,

I am directed to forward for the information of His
Excellency the Governor in Council a copy of "Notes on the
inspection of famine relief works in the Madras Presidency"
by Mr. T. Higham, C. I. E., the officer deputed to report on
famine relief works in the several Provinces in which famine

Government of India (Revenue) Resolution : operations are in progress.
No. 20 F/157-1, dated 12th May 1897.

2. Mr. Higham's notes show that on the relief works
inspected by him in the Madras Presidency the method of
tasking the workers is more lenient than that prevailing in
other Provinces, owing to the deductions made for distance,
weakness and excessive tasks, and to the suspension of fines
for insufficient work. He also remarks on the extensive powers
to grant reductions of task and to lower the gang
classification exercised in some districts by subordinate
officials. In paragraph 33 of the notes Mr. Higham states
that at the time of ^{his} visit to the Presidency orders were under
issue by the Government of Madras for enforcing greater
strictness in these respects, though he had not actually seen
them. With your letter No. 661, dated 2nd August 1897, a
copy of Madras G. O. No. 616 dated 24th July 1897 has been
received, which directs that the fourfold classification of

works

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works be reverted to, reduces the gratuitous dole to the amount of the ration allowed to class D relief workers, and cancels the restrictions on fining for short work laid down in paragraph 4 of the G. O. No. 216, dated 30th March 1897. These instructions however do not touch on the subject of reductions of the standard tasks, and the Government of India will be glad to learn how the Government of Madras propose to deal with this matter, and also to be favoured with any observations which His Excellency the Governor in Council may wish to make on Mr. Higham's report.

3. In paragraphs 17 and 19 and 26 of the Notes it is suggested that the table of standard tasks appended to the Madras Famine Code should be revised. A similar suggestion was made in the last paragraph of my letter No. 2286 of the 14th June 1897, I am to commend the matter to the attention of the Government of Madras, as on the correctness and practical utility of the standard scale of tasks depends in a large measure the successful management of relief works.

4. In paragraphs 25-31 of the Notes the relations of the officers of the Public Works Department employed on relief works with the District Revenue authorities are discussed at length, and it is shown that the practice in the Presidency in this respect does not correspond with that of the other Provinces. The Government of India will be glad to learn the views of the Government of Madras on this very important matter, and they would particularly invite attention to the remark in paragraph 31 of the Notes as to the great loss in power involved in the limited authority assigned to the Public Works Department in the control and management of relief works. They may say on the experience of other Provinces that although the civil authorities may be competent to manage relief works on a small scale, a really serious famine, involving provision of work for great masses of people, and throwing heavy and multifarious duties on the district civil authorities, requires the full utilization of the Public Works Department. They recognize that in the control of relief works the latter Department must be required to conform to the special requirements of the Famine Code, and to subordinate

to these the ordinary departmental methods of conducting work. But they are assured from the experience of other Provinces that this can be secured, and that at the same time larger powers can most advantageously be given to the Department of Public Works than appears to be the case in Madras.

I have &c,

(Signed) T. W. Holderness,
Deputy Secretary.

(True Copy)

✓
H. M. P. S. B. S.
Ag. Under Secy. to Govt. 28-31

Revenue Department.
Proceedings of the Madras Government.

Read letter from the Government of India, Revenue and Agricultural Department, No. 3794/306-2 P. dated 18th August 1897.

Read also Proceedings of the Board of Revenue --- (Revenue Sett. Co.) dated 28th August 1897, No. 596 Press.

Order thereon No. 399 Press, dated 29th October 1897.

The Government is of opinion that the importance of the questions dealt with in the above papers requires that they and other important questions should be thoroughly discussed by officers who have had practical experience of the working of the Famine Code during the distress which is now coming to a close; and directs that a conference of Revenue, Public Works and Medical officers be held for the purpose under the presidency of the Famine Commissioner at Bellary in the case of the Deccan districts and at Waltaire in the case of the Northern districts. The Famine Commissioner is requested to arrange for the holding of these conferences and to inform Government of the arrangements he may make.

2. The attention of the Famine Commissioner is invited to para 4 of the letter communicated with G.O. No. 941 dated 5th October 1897 in which the Government of India desires that proposals for amending ^{or supplementing} the Famine Code should not be incorporated in the final Famine Report but should be submitted separately. The historical part of the report should be got ready and submitted to Government before the close of the calendar year; the proposals of the Famine Commissioner for amending or supplementing the Code may be submitted later after the holding of the conferences.

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G. Parker

Secretary to Government.

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Public Works (189) Department.

CURRENT No. 10905

Order

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Print with
all enclosures

Communicated to
the Supdg. Engineers I
and III circles for
information and
guidance and to other
officers of the Dept
for information.

(Ld) W. B. de W
11-11-97

Chief Engr for Durg ✓
Consig. Engr for Rys ✓
Supdg. Engrs ✓
Exr. P.W. Accts ✓
The E.E. Lt. H. D. ✓

23/11/97
25/11/97

SUBJECT.
Requesting the
famine commissioner
to arrange for the holding
of conferences to discuss
certain questions in
connection with the
recent famine.

FURTHER PAPERS.

Proceedings of the Board of
Revenue (Revenue Settlement,
Land Records & Agriculture)
No. 596 Dated 28th August
1897.

Notes on an Inspection of
Famine Relief works in the
Madras Presidency by Mr. T.
Higham C. I. E. on special
duty, Famine Relief Operations

Note for Press

for Press
This is being
printed by the Reserve
Dept. Please arrange
for printing in there
P.O. also.

PAPERS.

Date.

No. 2794 F.

206-2

From

T. W. Holderness Esq. I.C.S.

Deputy Secretary to the Govt.

of India Dept. of Rev. & Agri.
(Famine)

To.

The Secretary to the
Govt. of Madras.

Department of Revenue
Agriculture, Famine.

Simla, the 18th August 1897

Sir,

I am directed to forward for the information of His Excellency the Governor in Council a copy of "Notes on the inspection of famine relief works in the Madras Presidency" by Mr. T. Higham B.I.E. the officer deputed to report on famine relief works in the several Provinces in which famine operations are in progress.

Govt. of India
(Rev) Resolution
No 203/157-1d/
12th May 1897

2. Mr. Higham's notes show that on the relief works inspected by him in the Madras Presidency the method of tasking the workers is more lenient than that prevailing in other Provinces, owing to the deductions made for distance, weakness and excessive

tasks, and to the suspension of fines for insufficient work. He also remarks on the extensive powers to grant reductions of task and to lower the gang classification exercised in some districts by subordinate officials. In paragraph 33 of the notes Mr. Higham states that at the time of his visit to the Presidency orders were under issue by the Government of Madras for enforcing greater strictness in these respects, though he had not actually seen them. With your letter No 661 dated 2nd August 1897, a copy of Madras S.O. No 616 dated 24th July 1897 has been received, which directs that the fourfold classification of works he reverted to, reduces the gratuitous dole to the amount of the ration allowed to Class D relief workers, and cancels the restrictions on fining for short work laid down in paragraph 4 of the S.O. No 216 dated 20th March 1897. These instructions however do not touch on the

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subject of reductions of the standard tasks, and the Government of India will be glad to learn how the Government of Madras propose to deal with this matter, and also to be favoured with any observations which His Excellency the Governor in Council may wish to make on Mr. Higham's report.

3. In paragraphs 17 and 19 and 26 of the Notes it is suggested that the table of standard tasks appended to the Madras Famine Code should be revised. A similar suggestion was made in the last paragraph of my letter No ²²⁶⁶~~3266~~ of the 14th June 1897, I am to ~~commend~~ commend the matter to the attention of the Government of Madras, as on the correctness and practical utility of the standard scale of tasks depends in a large measure on the successful management of relief works.

4. In paragraphs 25-31 of the Notes the relations of the officers of the Public Works Department employed on relief works with the District

to District Revenue authorities are
discussed at length, and it is shown
that the practice in the Presidency
in this respect does not correspond
with that of the other Provinces. The
Government of India will be glad
to learn the views of the Government
of Madras on this very important
matter, and they would particularly
invite attention to the remark in
paragraph 31 of the Notes as to the
great loss in power involved in the
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control and management of relief
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of other Provinces that although
the civil authorities may be
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on the district civil authorities,
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recognize that in the control of
relief works the latter Department
must be required to conform to the
special requirements of the Famine
Code, and to subordinate to these
the ordinary departmental methods
of conducting work. But they are
assured from the experience of other
Provinces that this can be secured,
and that at the same time larger
powers can most advantageously be
given to the Department of Public
Works than appears to be ^{the} case in
Madras.

I have &c
(sd) J. W. Holderness
Deputy Secretary

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

READ ^{letter} the following.

from the Government of India, Revenue & Agricultural Department, No. 2794/206-2 F. dated 18th August 1897.

Read also Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement &c) dated 28th August 1897, No. 596 Revs.

Order thereon No. 899. Press. dated 29th October 1897.

The Government is of opinion that the importance of the questions dealt with in the above papers requires that they and other important questions should be thoroughly discussed by officers who have had practical experience of the working of the famine Code during the distress which is now coming to a close; and directs that a Conference of Revenue, Public Works and Medical officers be held for the purpose under the presidency of the Famine Commissioner at Bellary in the case of the Deccan districts and at Waltair in the case of the Northern districts. The Famine Commissioner is requested to arrange for the holding of these Conferences and to inform Government of the arrangements he may make.

2. The attention of the Famine Commissioner is invited to para 4 of the letter communicated with G.O. No. 841 dated 5th October 1897 in which

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Note for notes of work

1. I wrote from S.O. No 295 dated 29 Oct 1897 in the Rev. diff that the Famine Commission is to preside over the conference to be held at the Hay Hall in to discuss questions of future Famine administration - and I wish to point out that the results of these conferences will be of most vital importance in future Famine. ^{that is understood} ^{to be} ~~that~~ the Famine Commission is not really prejudiced in favour of his own views or methods of Famine administration, though satisfactory results are not likely to be obtained under his ~~presidency~~ presidency.
2. I would therefore ask Govt to consider whether it would not be better to appoint as

Decident of these very important
conference true thorough
able a impartial officer
such as Mr. Lindbergh
or Mr. Willock, in whose
wisdom & dissection the
whole Presidency would have
entire confidence.

W. H. S. 11

3. Mr. Stephens note, & the
Govt of India remarks
thereon show how not have
been the circumstances of the
O.W. left against the dual control
of chief works & I greatly
fear that this point, which
is of supreme importance to
the future success of the
Presidency, will not receive adequate
or impartial treatment at the
hands of Mr. de la Harpe & Mr. S. 11

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The future success of the
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P. H. Dept

Government (1897) of Madras.
REVENUE.

G.O. 3176 W
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Enclosures

1897.

Regd.

Spare copies

G.O., No. 899, 29th October 1897.

OCTOBER.

Conference:

Directing that a — of Revenue, Public Works and Medical officers be held under the Presidency of the Famine Commissioner at Bellary in the case of the Deccan districts and at Waltair in the case of the Northern districts for the purpose of discussing certain important questions that have arisen during the distress which is now coming to a close.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following letter from T. W. HOLDERNESS, Esq., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Revenue and Agricultural Department, to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, Revenue Department, dated 18th August 1897, No. 2794—206-2-F. :—

I am directed to forward, for the information of His Excellency the Governor in Council, a copy of "Notes on the inspection of famine-relief works in the Madras Presidency" by Mr. T. Higham, C.I.E., the officer deputed to report on famine-relief works in the several provinces in which famine operations are in progress.

2. Mr. Higham's notes show that on the relief works inspected by him in the Madras Presidency the method of tasking the workers is more lenient than that prevailing in other provinces, owing to the deductions made for distance, weakness and excessive tasks, and to the suspension of fines for insufficient work. He also remarks on the extensive powers to grant reductions of tasks and to lower the classification exercised in some districts by subordinate officials. In paragraph 33 of the notes, Mr. Higham states that at the time of his visit to the Presidency orders were under issue by the Government of Madras for enforcing greater strictness in these respects, though he had not actually seen them. With your letter No. 661, dated 2nd August 1897, a copy of Madras G.O., No. 616, dated 24th July 1897, has been received, which directs that the fourfold classification of works be reverted to, reduces the gratuitous dole to the amount of the ration allowed to class D relief workers, and cancels the restrictions on fining for short work laid down in paragraph 4 of the G.O., No. 216, dated 30th March 1897. These instructions however do not touch on the subject of reductions of the standard tasks, and the Government of India will be glad to learn how the Government of Madras propose to deal with this matter and also to be favoured with any observations which His Excellency the Governor in Council may wish to make on Mr. Higham's report.

3. In paragraphs 17 and 19 and 26 of the notes it is suggested that the table of standard tasks appended to the Madras Famine Code should be revised. A similar suggestion was made in the last paragraph of my letter, No. 2266, of the 14th June 1897, I am to commend the matter to the attention of the Government of Madras, as on the correctness and practical utility of the standard scale of tasks depends in a large measure in the successful management of relief works.

4. In paragraphs 25—31 of the notes the relations of the officers of the Public Works Department employed on relief works with the district revenue authorities are discussed at length, and it is shown that the practice in the Presidency in this respect does not correspond with that of other provinces. The Government of India will be glad to learn the views of the Government of Madras on this very important matter, and they would particularly invite attention to the remark in paragraph 31 of the notes as to the great loss in power involved in the limited authority assigned to the Public Works Department in the control and management of relief works. They may say on the experience of other provinces that although the civil authorities may be competent to manage relief works on a small scale, a really serious famine, involving provision of work for great masses of people, and throwing heavy and multifarious duties on the district civil authorities, requires the full utilization of the Public Works

Department. They recognize that in the control of relief works the latter department must be required to conform to the special requirements of the Famine Code and to subordinate to these the ordinary departmental methods of conducting work. But they are assured from the experience of other provinces that this can be secured, and that at the same time larger powers can most advantageously be given to the Department of Public Works than appears to be the case in Madras.

ENCLOSURE.

Notes on an Inspection of Famine relief-works in the Madras Presidency by Mr. T. Higham, C.I.E., on special duty, Famine Relief Operations.

1. I visited the Madras Presidency after completing my tour in Bombay, the Central Provinces, the North-West Provinces and Bengal, leaving the latter Province on the 4th July by rail from Mokameh, and arriving

Itinerary.

in Bellary on the evening of the 6th. On the following morning I met the Honourable Mr. LeFanu, the Famine Commissioner, who kindly arranged a programme for my tour through the Deccan districts. I did not consider it necessary to visit the Vizagapatam and Ganjam districts, in which the total number of relief workers did not then exceed 60,000, though there were nearly 400,000 in the Cuddapah, Kurnool, Bellary and Anantapur districts.

On the morning of the 8th I left Bellary with Mr. Stuart, the Collector, and Mr. Clerk, the Executive Engineer of the district, for Hala-Harri, 21 miles distant, inspecting on the road two relief charges, comprising together about 9,000 workers. On the following day we went on, through Alur, to Nemakkal, inspecting relief works all along the road; and on the 10th, we went on to Guntakal, which lies just outside the Bellary and within the Anantapur district. At Guntakal I met Mr. Shipley, Collector of Anantapur, and Mr. Romilly, the Executive Engineer; and on the evening of the 10th, we visited together a road work about four miles from Guntakal. On returning to Guntakal I met Mr. deWinton, the Superintending Engineer, and we went on together the following morning by rail to Maddi Khera, in the Kurnool district, where we were met by Mr. Elwin, the Collector, and Mr. Johnstone, the Executive Engineer. After inspecting together some works in the neighbourhood we went on by rail in the night to Belamchera, in the same district, and inspected some road works there on the following morning. In the afternoon I returned with Mr. deWinton to Guntakal, whence we proceeded by rail during the night to Muddanura, in the Cuddapah district, where we arrived early in the morning of the 13th, and were met by Mr. Murray, the Executive Engineer of the Cuddapah district. After inspecting the Muddanura tank work I went on by rail to Madras, where I had an interview on the 14th with the Honourable Mr. Crole, Senior Member of the Board of Revenue and President of the Madras Famine Charitable Fund. On the 15th I returned to Cuddapah, where Mr. deWinton and Mr. Murray were awaiting me, and where I met also Mr. Tate, the Collector, and Surgeon-Colonel King, the Sanitary Commissioner, and we inspected together a relief work (road-metalling), two or three miles out of Cuddapah. We left Cuddapah by the night train, Mr. deWinton and Mr. Murray leaving us en route, and Dr. King accompanying me as far as Adoni, where we met Mr. LeFanu on the 16th. I left Adoni and the Madras Presidency early in the morning of the 17th en route for Simla.

2. The relief works in progress in the four districts visited consisted almost entirely of road work, that is, of the earth work required for repairing old roads and making new ones, and the collection and laying of metalling

Character of relief works.

either on old metalled roads in disrepair or on roads not hitherto metalled. The only other works, with the exception of some town works in Cuddapah were for the construction or clearance of irrigation tanks and channels. The following statement shows the number of different works in progress or immediately about to be started during the second fortnight in June, and the number of labourers employed as reported on the 24th of that month :—

District.	Number of works.		Attendance on 24th June.	
	Road.	Others.	Roads.	Others.
Bellary	25	4	96,751	8,843
Anantapur	33	8	55,328	3,004
Kurnool	36	6	69,659	5,307
Cuddapah	17	11	53,896	27,920
Total	111	29	275,634	45,074

The number of irrigation works was considerable only in Cuddapah, where they included some new channels on the Kurnool-Cuddapah Canal. It is said that there is not much opening for tank works in the Deccan, where the rainfall is ordinarily so scanty that tanks would be of little use, the only eligible sites having for the most part been already occupied. If the informed that there would be no difficulty in doing this, though it was certain that there would be a great difficulty in subsequently finding funds for the maintenance of the roads to be newly made or metalled.

3. The relief works are so arranged as to be generally within six or seven miles of the affected villages. It is said that the people cannot possibly be induced to leave their villages and reside on the works, though in the absence of any important works, other than road works, the assertion does not appear to have been very fairly tested.

4. I understand that relief works in the Deccan were originally carried out in strict accordance with the provisions of the Madras Famine Code. The gangs were classified as Code, fines being freely imposed in proportion to the deficiency in the executed tasks and without any minimum wage limit. At the time of my visit, however, this had all been changed, and the works were being conducted in accordance with the later instructions issued in Madras Government G.O., No. 216, Revenue, dated 30th March 1897, and supplementary directions contained in the Board of Revenue Resolution, No. 278, dated 3rd April 1897.

5. The orders of Government on the subject of the classification of the works, as contained in paragraph 2 of the Government Order quoted above, are to the effect that "all persons seeking employment on relief works should, until further orders, be placed as a rule in class A or class B. The very weak, those who can do only nominal work and who will not resort to kitchens, may, however, be placed in class C." The Board of Revenue in paragraph 2 (d) of their Resolution issued the following direction:—

"The C class of worker is abolished, except for the very weak, who do only nominal work and will not resort to kitchens. This abolishes the D class of relief worker as well."

The orders quoted above were referred by the Government of Madras to the Government of India for approval in their letter No. 296, dated 4th May 1897, but the Government of India in their letter No. 2266—116—5—F., dated 14th June 1897, declined to sanction the proposals to place all the very weak who only do nominal tasks in class C instead of in class D, and to place in the B class workers who, being unaccustomed to hard manual labour, were unable to do a B task, and who, under the Famine Code, should be put into class C. The orders of the Government of India had not, however, been communicated to the Collectors at the time of my visit, and when I met the Famine Commissioner at Adoni on the 16th July and mentioned these orders to him, he told me that he had not up till then heard of them.

6. In practice, however, the orders of the Government Order have not been carried out, and the present actual classification may, subject to a few trifling exceptions, be described in a few words; all are in class B. In Bellary and Cuddapah districts I came across special gangs of very weak persons, who were either wholly untasked or given but a nominal task, and found them all in class B. There was no one in class C, and the wages due to this class were only quoted in Bellary as being the rest-day wage. The D wage is also quoted, but merely as the minimum wage below which a worker must on no account be fined, and down to the limit of which he is not to be fined for more than one week continuously. I saw only one work in Anantapur, but understood from the Collector that in that district the orders of the Local Government are more strictly followed, and the weakly gangs are put into C class and receive the C wage. The rest-day wage in this district is paid at the D rate. The practice in Kurnool will be presently described—see paragraphs 11 and 12, *infra*.

As to class A I found in Bellary that men and women employed on ramming, although classed as B, were allowed to receive the A wage, not as a matter of course, but if the ramming were well done to the satisfaction of the Public Works subordinate in charge. This was simply by way of encouraging the rammers to put their backs into the work, but there were no A class workers properly so called. In Kurnool I found one gang which was classed as A, which is referred to in paragraph 12 below, but with an occasional exception of this kind no one is at present put into any class but B. I was unable to obtain any explanation as to why the weakly gangs or the weak members of gangs were placed in this class, which does not appear to have been contemplated in the Government Order already referred to.

7. We have next to consider the method of tasking the gangs. The entries in the gang register show in separate columns for each gang the number of men, boy adults, nursing mothers (with whom are included women in an advanced stage of pregnancy), other women, and finally children under 12. Boy adults, or boys between the ages of 12 and 16, are shown separately, because, although under the Madras Code such boys are entitled to the pay of adults, they are more lightly tasked, in accordance with paragraph 3 (1) of the Government Order already referred to. The system is to reduce all the members of the gang to their equivalents in child-units, which is the unit of tasking.

Thus:—

A man is taken as four units.						
A boy adult	...	...	...	...	...	3 or 4 units.
A nursing mother	...	...	...	...	...	1½ "
Other women, including girls, from 12 to 16	..	...	...	...	...	2 "
Children under 12	...	...	...	...	...	1 unit.

On the basis of these equivalents the strength of the gang is then expressed in a separate column in the register in terms of child-units, and normally the number of such units multiplied by the task per child-unit (*vide* Form F, page 66, Madras Famine Code) should give the task for the gang. It is obvious that if A, B and C classes were recognised, the registers would have to exhibit the number of men, boy adults, nursing mothers, other women and children under each class, each having its appropriate equivalent. This would greatly complicate the form, but the difficulty is at present avoided, because all workers (even those that do but a nominal task) are now put into the single class B.

8. In practice, however, the task for the gang is not that obtained by the normal calculation referred to above. Before the task for the day is finally fixed certain reductions have to be made, in accordance with the instructions contained in paragraph 3 (ii), (iii) and (iv) of the Government Order of March last. A copy of this Government Order was forwarded to the Government of India for information with Madras Government letter, No. 296, dated 4th May 1897, but specific approval of their instructions in regard to the reduction of tasks was not applied for, as the regulation of tasks is of course a matter entirely within the control of the Local Government. I propose to show, however, how these instructions have worked in practice, and it will be convenient to consider them in the reverse of the order in which they appear in the Government Order under reference.

9. Beginning then with the order relating to reduction of tasks on account of distance (paragraph 3 (iv) of the Government Order), it may be remarked that in no work visited by me had much shelter been provided for the labourers at or near the works, and I was told that the people could not be induced to leave their homes for the night, and preferred walking to and from their villages night and morning, even when these were as many as seven miles away. This is hardly to be wondered at when such liberal allowance is made for the work performed in the journey, a walk of 2½ miles being regarded as the equivalent of an hour's work. The time allowed for walking to and from a village a mile from the works is thus 48 minutes, or exactly one-tenth of a working day of eight hours. After the column showing the number of child-units in the gang register, there is therefore a column showing the reduction to be made for distance, in which is entered a fraction of which the denominator is 10, and the numerator the average distance in miles from the work of the villages from which the members of the gang have come. When the work is close up to the doors of the village no deduction is made, but in such a case the whole village of course turns out to the work. But for a village a mile distant, a deduction of 10 per cent. is made from the number of units before striking the task, and so in proportion for greater distances. Deductions of 50 per cent. on this account are common enough, and in some registers I saw deductions of 70 per cent.

This practice, whatever its justification, opens of course another door for fraud. The distances are probably very roughly and liberally calculated, the benefit of any doubt being given to the gang. Thus on the 19th July we mustered a gang of 107 individuals (No. 40) for which a deduction of 30 per cent. had been made for distance, and the Collector discovered that 18 of the members had come from a village alongside the work. It may be added that, although in all provinces, except Bombay (where the labourers at present all reside on the works), the majority of the labourers come every morning from villages as far distant from the works as those in the Deccan, it is only in Madras that any deduction from the task is made on this account.

14. I now come to the case of deductions made on account of "excessive tasks" and will again quote the Government Order, paragraph 3 (ii)—

(ii) "Excessive tasks.—When the task prescribed appears to be excessive, the case should be met by a reduction of the task under section 107, not by reducing the class of the gang to the absence of tools, or to inexperience in the handling of tools. It is well to point out here in charge" means the "Overseer in charge."

An instance of the way in which this order has worked in practice came to my notice when at Belamchera on the 13th July. I found that the tasks for some gangs employed on breaking metal was 0·8 cubic feet of metalling per child-unit per diem. This appeared to me to be a very low task, especially as I had found a task of 1·75 cubic feet, or more than double, on the road work inspected on the 10th in Anantapur district. According to the district task tables set had been 1·3 cubic feet, but that it was subsequently reduced (previously to the issue of the new Government Order), to 1·1 cubic feet for some reason that has not been placed on record. The register showed that this task had been pretty regularly accomplished, though fines had occasionally been recorded. Then came the Government Order of March last, which was circulated by the Collector early in May, and under which fining practically ceased as will be presently shown. Since then the task has been twice reduced, first to 0·9 and then to 0·8 cubic feet, under the authority of Mr. Ghose, the Divisional Officer.

Mr. Ghose, who was present, informed me that the Overseer in charge had represented to him that it was quite impossible for him to get the full task out of the workers, and that they must either be fined, or the task reduced, and he had therefore authorized their reduction, under the authority given to him by the order quoted. I asked him if he himself considered the task short, and he said he could not set aside the Overseer's statement, though the Collector and I found on examining the register that the first falling off in the outturn when the task was 1·1 cubic feet did not occur until the practice of fining had ceased, that the reduced task of 0·9 cubic feet had been done without difficulty when first set, the outturn subsequently falling without satisfactory reason being forthcoming. At the time of our visit the task of 0·8 cubic feet, which was also carried out for some days, was no longer worked up to, the task on the 11th being 17 per cent. deficient, and but for the visit the task would probably by this time have been reduced to 0·7 cubic feet or lower. Mr. Ghose himself admitted that he had in March last got a task of 1·3 cubic feet out of a gang at Alupur, although no deductions whatever had there been made on account of weakness or distance, as in the case of the gangs at Belamchera, and if he had more carefully examined the register I do not think he could possibly have approved such gratuitous reductions.

15. Mr. Ghose told us that he had personally authorised reductions of the task on two works, and that indeed he had only visited two works since the issue of the Government Order. But I have since seen a copy of a Circular No. 489, dated 11th May 1897, issued by him as Divisional Officer direct to all the Overseers in charge of relief works within his division, explaining in greater detail the Government Orders of March last. A copy of this Circular to which I must again presently refer is appended, but paragraph 4 may here be quoted *in extenso*—

"(4) From sub-paragraph (ii) of the Government Order it appears that the intention of Government is to regulate and adjust the task by decreasing it and increasing it till an exact task which a gang can turn out regularly has been ascertained. In doing this, Overseers should not change the class of the gang, but alter the unit of task. This requires the sanction of the undersigned, but as he cannot always be on the spot to accord the necessary action, a general sanction is hereby accorded, and they are informed that their daily work sheets will be carefully scrutinized to guard against any abuse of it. The undersigned hopes to see that before long with a careful working of this system every gang will be able to turn out its allotted task."

The words in italics are mine. The Overseers to whom this Circular was addressed are Upper Subordinates in the Public Works Department, and they have been given *carte-blanc* to reduce the tasks at pleasure, without any reference whatever to the Sub-divisional or Divisional Public Works Officers, who are their departmental superiors, but who have themselves no power whatever to increase or reduce a task, except with the sanction of the Collector. It will thus be seen that tasks can be reduced by Hospital Assistants and Overseers in charge, in some cases with and in others without the approval of the Revenue Divisional Officers until they are whittled away to almost nothing.

* See footnote on paragraph 10.

16. Having thus described the actual practice which has sprung up, under the Government Order of March last, in connection with the reduction of tasks I proceed to the question of fines. I understand that when the works were first started, fining without any reference to a minimum wage was rigorously enforced, even although representations had been made by some of the Public Works Officers that the standard tasks of the Code were in some cases excessive. The latest rule in the subject is contained in paragraph 4 of the Government Order as below:—

"(4) *Finning*.—Finning should be resorted to only in clear cases of malingering or of insubordination; and even then not so as to reduce the wage below that of the D class, nor for more than one week continuously, without the special permission of the Divisional Officer."

This rule, read as it must be, with the instructions for reduction of tasks in paragraph 3 of the Government Order and with other Resolutions of the Board of Revenue has rightly or wrongly been taken to prohibit the fining of a gang for short work, and to restrict the practice to cases of individuals, who have been clearly guilty of malingering or insubordination. This is clearly shown in paragraph 7 of the Circular by a Divisional Officer referred to in the preceding paragraph. As a result the practice of fining has ceased almost entirely, and the Overseers in charge are afraid to fine. They prefer to meet short work by reduction of task, with the inevitable result that the successive reductions become necessary. On one work I found a case in which a small fine had been imposed, but only the day before, and the Assistant Engineer at Belamchera told me that he had recently ordered a fine for very short work. But beyond this I could get no trace of a fine, and was told by both Civil and Public Works Officers that the practice had ceased. Apart from the unwillingness of the subordinates in charge to show fines in their accounts, it must be admitted that the tasks after all deductions have been made are so low that the gangs can hardly help completing them.

17. I have now shown how the full task of a gang is determined, and the reductions which are in practice made. It remains to consider the task tables in which the normal task per child-unit is given.

A table of standard tasks has been given in Form F, Appendix III, of the Madras Famine Code, but it is difficult to criticise it, because the data on which it is based have not been given, and for the same reason it is difficult to say what modifications should be made in the tabular tasks when the constitution of a gang differs widely from that assumed. The table is not in a practical form, or it would show separately, as do the tables of other Codes, the tasks for diggers and carriers. Subsidiary task tables have been prepared in each district by the Executive Engineer, which are in greater detail, but have the same defect in not distinguishing between the task of the digger and the carrier, or in road metalling between the carrier and the breaker. The following is a comparison as far as is possible of the tasks set forth in these district tables, with the standard table of the Code:—

Nature of task.		Code standard.	Bellary.	Kurnool.	Cuddapah.
		CUB. FT.	CUB. FT.	CUB. FT.	CUB. FT.
<i>Earthwork.</i>					
Sandy loam.	Lead up 60 feet. Lift to 6 feet	11·85	9·00	9·00	6·5 (a)
Black cotton soil	do. do.	10·95	7·50	7·70	5·88 (a)
Gravelly soil, hard		10·13	6·0	4·70	4·50 (a)
<i>Metalling.</i>					
Stone easily procurable and broken.					
Lead—		1·88	1·7	1·7	1·7
0—300 feet		..	0·6	0·8	0·6
3—4 furlongs		..			
Stone easily procured, but hard to break—					
0—300 feet		..	1·2	1·3	1·2
3—4 furlongs		..	0·5	0·6	0·5
Stone hard to procure and break—					
0—300 feet		..	0·8	0·8	0·8
3—4 furlongs		..	0·3	0·4	0·3

(a) The Cuddapah earthwork rates are for a lead up to 150 feet. The tasks given are for a child-unit of B class.

It will be seen that the Code standard tasks are higher than those now enforced, which agree *inter se* pretty fairly. From several notes taken on the works, I am inclined to think that the standard tasks are too high, but that the district tasks are too low; but without actual experience of the working capacity of the Deccan cooly it is difficult to speak with confidence.

I noted many cases, however, in which a much higher task per unit might have been attained, if more attention had been paid to the distribution of diggers or breakers and carriers. As a general rule the carriers were very under-tasked, often doing only 50 per cent. of a fair task. In some cases this is unavoidable, but it was not so in the cases noticed. This was of course the fault of the Overseer in charge, but if the task tables were drawn up on a sounder principle, not only could a far higher task per unit be realized, but the men in charge would be greatly assisted in making the most advantageous disposition of the workers.

18. It is difficult to say what proportion the amount paid as wages bears to the value of the work done. The accounts are not kept in a manner in which this can be shown readily and without difficulty. I obtained, however, certain registers taken at random in the Bellary district from which the following results have been abstracted relating to the breaking of road metal:—

Number of gangs.	Number of workers.	Percentage of deductions.	Task performed.	Amount paid in wages.	Rate per 100 cubic feet.	Normal value of work done at 3-12 per cent.	Remarks.
			CUB. FT.	RS.		RS.	
16	Not noted.	Not noted.	1,329	139	10	..	
7			258	45	17	..	
20			790	147	18-12	..	
			2,377	431	18	89	11-seer basis.
			2,377	539	22-11	89	8-75 seers.
14	428	56	90	42	42-6	..	Do.
31	1,049	56	296	103	34-12	..	Do.
			2,763	684	35-6	104	

Reducing all results to the basis of 8-75 seers to the rupee, the cost of wages was thus more than six times of that of the normal value of work done. For a basis of 11 seers it would have been a little more than five times.

It may be noted that the gangs on the last two lines of the table consisted entirely of women and a very few children. The men are so few in number that they are usually employed on earthwork or consolidation, and in many cases metalling has been collected simply for the purpose of finding employment for the women.

To the rates given above, one-seventh should be added to allow for the rest-day wage. It would be one-sixth if full rates were paid on the rest-day, but the rate paid is either the C or D wage. Something should be added to for the cost of feeding dependants in the kitchen, but this is not charged direct to the work, and the amounts are not recorded. Probably 5 per cent. would be a sufficient addition on this account.

As regards earthwork I have already noted in paragraph 13 a case in which the cost of earthwork was Rs. 53 per 1,000 cubic feet, but this was no doubt an extreme case. I have notes of two other cases in which the rates were Rs. 27-2-0 and Rs. 16-5-0, excluding rest-day wage, the deductions for all causes amounting to 60 per cent. in each case. The normal rates are said to have been Rs. 7 and Rs. 5 respectively, and if this is correct the working rates are reasonable, when allowance is made for the deductions. But the normal rates appear to have been overstated. The lead and lift are not given for the Rs. 7 rate, but in the case of the Rs. 5 rate the lead is recorded as 25 and the lift as 2. It is not certain whether the unit here is the foot or the yard (both are used in Madras), but even if it be the latter Rs. 5 would be a very high rate.

19. In connection with the Madras task tables it should be mentioned that they are based on the assumption that a woman will do twice the work of a child and a man four times. In the Bombay Code it is assumed that the work done by man, woman and child will be in the proportions 3, 2 and 1, and this is, I think, more in accordance with general experience. It was often observed to me that a woman would do as much work as a man at metal-breaking, and it may safely be assumed that either at this task or carrying a woman will do not less than two-thirds of a man's task. If the child-unit were originally worked out for men, and reduced to the child-unit, by dividing by 4. In this case the tasks for women and children are too light. In practice, however, very few men are employed either in metal-breaking or in carrying, but one difficulty in applying the Madras task tables lies in this questionable assumption that the ordinary famine male labourer can do twice as much work as a female.

20. Each relief work is nominally under the charge of an Upper Subordinate of the Public Works Department. When the charge is a large one he has a Lower Subordinate under him to look after the measurements, &c., and in some cases the Upper Subordinate has charge of two camps, with a Lower Subordinate at each as an assistant. He is responsible for all miscellaneous expenditure, but has nothing whatever to do with the payment of labour. For this purpose an imprest is given by the Executive Engineer to the Tahsildar who supplies under cover of it the necessary cash to a paymaster who is appointed by the Collector. The muster rolls or pay sheets are made over to this official, whose time is mainly occupied in paying the gangs. The rates of payment to be entered in these pay sheets is intimated from time to time to the subordinate in charge by the Tahsildar. In the Kurnool district these rates are based, not on the market rate of the "grain equivalent," but on the market one of all the items in the annual return of the Code. I did not ascertain the practice in this respect in other districts, but believe that it is left to the discretion of the Collector to adopt either alternative. Payments are supposed to be made twice a week, but I was told that there are frequently delays, owing to the paymaster not being kept in funds or in small coin by the Tahsildar, to his not being able to get through his work, or to delay in the submission of the pay sheets by the subordinate in charge. The Public Works Department is responsible only for delay due to the last of these causes.

Referring again to the circular by the Assistant Collector in Kurnool appended to these notes, it will be seen that in paragraph 7 thereof strict orders were issued to paymasters to take no notice of any orders to impose fines on gangs, and that fines on individuals were to be enforced only when the Overseer had distinctly entered in the remarks column that the individual concerned had been found to be malingering or insubordinate. On a representation by the Executive Engineer, the Collector subsequently modified this order in his Circular No. 218, dated 30th June 1897, so far as it prohibited the fining of the whole gangs for malingering or insubordination; but he insisted, as he was of course justified in doing, that the reason for the fine should be clearly indicated on the pay sheet by certain distinguishing letters. To this there can be no objection, but the practice of giving a paymaster any discretion in enforcing fines imposed by the officer in charge of the works is certainly open to objection.

The system of making all payments by means of a subordinate in the Civil departments on works in charge of the Public Works Department has been extolled to me as an excellent safeguard against jobbery. The principle of exciting friction and jealousies between subordinate officials does not commend itself to me as an efficient safeguard against collusion that may be substituted for the more direct checks exercised elsewhere, and as long as reliance is placed on these jealousies, there is always the danger that they may be simulated wherever collusion is most rampant. I will reserve further remarks on this subject, however, for my final report.

21. Piece-work has not been introduced in the Deccan, but I was informed by Mr. Crole that the Government had just sanctioned its introduction in Ganjam and Vizagapatam, where the local officers had made out a very strong case. It was said that the people there were very anxious to be given piece-work, though they could not be induced to attend works conducted on the task work system. The proposal was at first objected to by the Board of Revenue as contrary to the Famine Code, but it is satisfactory to know that a fair trial is now to be given to it.

22. The number of dependants on works is much smaller in proportion to the number of workers than in other provinces. The weekly returns show no dependants at all before the week ending 6th March, when they amounted to 3,439 against 51,272 workers, or less than 7 per cent. For the week ending 17th July the number was 19,011 against 442,893 workers, or little over 4 per cent. Even these numbers include some who are not dependants of the workers, as in many cases the kitchens are placed near a large village and persons are fed there who have no direct connection with the works. About 95 per cent. of the dependants are children. Cash payments are almost unknown, but a cooked ration is distributed. The ration for adults consists of a cake of cholam, or mixed cholam and ragi, containing 25 tolas or 10 ounces of grain, served with a sauce formed of the other items detailed in section 122 of the Code. This ration is given morning and evening, so that an adult receives 20 ounces of raw grain a day. Children receive on an average half this amount, that is, a ten-ounce cake is made up morning and evening for every two children on the roll. In practice the smaller children get less than half and the bigger ones more than half a cake. I found in many kitchens that many, both of the adults and children, were unable to eat more than their ration when offered them out of the surplus, and Mr. Stuart, Collector of Bellary, told me that he often made this experiment, and found a great many refused any additional ration.

It has recently been pointed out by the Government of India that the Madras ration for dependants and others in receipt of gratuitous relief is excessive, the allowance of grain in

other Codes being 16 ounces only for adult. In Bombay children receive only 6 ounces. Dr. King, with whom I discussed this point, remarked that the Bombay ration is expressed in terms of flour and not of raw grain, and that, when allowance is made for this, the Bombay ration expressed in grain could be increased by 10 per cent. He also observed that the Bombay ration allows half an ounce of ghee for adults and quarter of an ounce for small children among "other items," and I understood him to say that, if the Bombay scale were accepted in its entirety, it would not be inferior to the present Madras allowance. It may be noted, however, that the minimum flour allowance for an adult female in Bombay is only 14 ounces.

The kitchens on the works are entirely under the control of the Collector, by whom a Superintendent is appointed. The Overseer in charge and the Public Works Department have nothing whatever to do with the management of the kitchens, nor does the expenditure incurred on them appear in the Public Works accounts.

In considering the high wages paid to workers in this Presidency, the fact that the proportion of dependants is so low must be taken into account, as in other provinces it varies from about 10 to 25 per cent. It is said that only the lowest castes can be induced to send their children to kitchens, and that they are very unpopular. This has been the experience at first in all other provinces, but where kitchens are well managed, I think the prejudice against them has gradually given way, and if non-working children are to be relieved at all, kitchens are doubtless preferable to a cash wage.

23. I asked Mr. LeFanu if there had been any complaints from private employers that the relief works interfered with the supply of labour. He mentioned three cases in which such complaints had been received from small employers, and said that it was found in each case that the wages offered by the employer were about the same as, or not more than a pice higher than the wage earned on the works, but that the latter was preferred, because private employers would not pay anything to the weaker members of the family or to dependants. In all these cases he had offered to send as many labourers as required, and to allow the weak members and dependants to remain on the works, but when the offer was made it was said that the men were no longer required. The only other complaint that Mr. LeFanu could remember was one from the Railway Office at Vizagapatam to the effect that relief works were preventing labour from coming to the railway works, but enquiry showed that there are no relief works within 13 miles, while the local labour was at the time receiving extravagant wages of from 6 to 8 annas a day in collecting grass for private persons, and would on this account not be likely to go to the railway.

24. As far as I could ascertain there are no relief works of any importance conducted wholly by the Civil Officers. At first a few works were started under the supervision of the Local Fund Engineers, but they were eventually made over to the officers of the Public Works Department.

25. It is, however, hardly correct to say that the relief works are under the control of the Public Works officers, except as regards matters of purely technical detail, or even that these officers have any control over their own subordinates, who are in charge of or employed on the relief works. These men have to take their orders from many masters—the Collector, the Assistant or Deputy Collector, the Tahsildar or his Assistant, the Civil Surgeon of the District, and even, as shown above in paragraph 12, from the Hospital Assistant engaged on the works; and they are responsible to their own departmental superior only for the safe custody of the tools and plant, the submission of certain daily returns, copies of which have also to go to the Revenue Divisional officers, and for work being outturned in accordance with the specification. They are allowed to propose reductions of task to the Revenue Divisional officer, and, as has been shown, in some cases to reduce them of their own accord under cover of a general sanction to that effect, but it is useless for them to recommend any reductions to their own superior officer in the Public Works Department, who has no authority whatever to modify the tasks, except after a reference to the Collector. Nor are these men, although in charge of the work, in any way responsible for the payments to the labourers, which are made by an independent official belonging to the Civil Department, and advisedly removed entirely from their control. Their whole sense of responsibility is weakened by the uncertainty as to whom they are responsible to, or as to who are responsible to them.

The Executive and Assistant Engineers are in no better position. They are out of order if they attempt to give any orders on the work relating to tasks or fines, though such orders may be freely given by others who have had no experience whatever in the organisation of large bodies of labourers. They too have to serve two masters, to take their orders from the Collector on all points not strictly professional, and from their departmental superiors on all other points, it being left to every one to interpret in his own way what is meant by "strictly professional."

26. The position of the Superintending Engineer is still more anomalous. If there is one officer more than any other upon whom Government might rely to control relief works in simultaneous progress in several districts, to assign to each officer and subordinate in the Public Works Department his proper duties and place in the chain of responsibility, to introduce uniformity where uniformity is desirable, and to sanction variation where circumstances demand variation, it is the Superintending Engineer. In Madras, however, the Superintending Engineer is allowed no voice in these matters. Take for instance the question of tasking. I have already stated that the task table of the Code is not in my opinion based on sound and workable principles and it might be considered the first duty of a Superintending Engineer to rectify this. I find that, as long ago as last March, the Superintending Engineer attempted to do this, as regards earth-work, on the occasion of a large work being started in the Cuddapah district, and to introduce the system of tasking the diggers which is in force in every other province that I have visited. He sent detailed instructions on this and other matters connected with the work to the Executive Engineer, who sent them on to the Collector for approval of the non-professional points involved. The Collector forwarded the proposals to the Board of Revenue for orders after expressing his own personal approval. The orders of the Board are contained in Resolution No. 415-A., dated 13th June 1897. In this resolution the merits of the system proposed were admitted, and it was acknowledged that Government in paragraph 3 (i) of G.O., No. 216 of 1897, had recognised the necessity of fixing the task according to the number of diggers and not according to the total number in the gang. But it was objected that it was impossible to carry out the system proposed, and undesirable to add to the complexity of the existing rules for the conduct of works by introducing the proposed system. The Board concluded by observing "that the Superintending Engineer issued orders to the Executive Engineer to introduce a system totally at variance with the provisions of the Famine Code, without consulting the Collector, although the proposed system involved several points of a non-professional nature." The Board was "glad to note, however, that the Executive Engineer thought fit to consult the Collector in the matter."

The position of the Superintending Engineer.

I am not concerned here to answer the Board's objection to the introduction of the better system of tasking, which has been adopted without any difficulty whatever in every other province in which relief works are in progress. It is sufficient to point out how this effort of the Superintending Engineer to introduce an improved system was met by something very like censure. Other instances of this have come to my notice, but it is unnecessary to adduce them here.

The exclusion of the Superintending Engineer from all control of his own Public Works staff, except in "technical matters," has been emphatically asserted in paragraph 9 of the Government Order of March last, in which it is even directed that the details of the Public Works establishment should be seen and passed by the Collectors before they are sent up to the Board or Government for sanction. The control of the Superintending Engineer is practically confined to such matters as the section to be adopted for a tank embankment, or the size of the ring through which broken metal is to pass.

27. It may be said that the position to which the officers of the Public Works Department are relegated is in accordance with that assigned to them in section 24 of the Madras Code, and that the duties of a Superintending Engineer in time of famine are merely those which are recited in section 42. I do not propose to consider here the language of section 24 of the Code, but will merely observe that it is repeated almost word for word in the corresponding sections of the Codes of other provinces,* excepting Burma and the Central Provinces. But notwithstanding this in all these other provinces, the Superintending

* Bombay, sections 31 (d) and (e) and section 38.
Bengal, section 22.
North-West Provinces, section 27.
Punjab, section 49.

Engineer, acting in direct communication with the Commissioner, is in practice the officer who controls the organization and management of all relief works which have been made over to the Public Works Department. In Bombay his duties are already laid down in section 37, and whatever doubts there may be as to the position of other Public Works officers under sections 31 and 38, his authority in respect of all the matters referred to in section 37 is unquestioned. In Bengal the responsibilities of the Superintending Engineer, as far as the Code is concerned, are limited to the matters stated in section 93, corresponding very closely to section 42 of the Madras Code. But in practice two superintendents of works, with the powers of Superintending Engineers as defined in the Public Works Code, have been specially appointed for the control of the relief works under the Public Works Department, and the Chief Engineer himself has devoted the closest attention to the all-important question of tasking and has drawn up the admirable and helpful instructions on the subject which have been issued by the Local Government in the Public Works Department for the general guidance of all officers engaged on relief works. In the North-West Provinces the duties of the officers of the Public Works Department are laid down in sections 30 to 40 of the Famine Code, and as there defined are

not more extensive than in the Madras and Bengal Codes, but in actual practice the whole of that important section of famine policy which relates to relief works has been formulated and controlled in the Public Works Department, the Chief and Superintending Engineers have been consulted by the Local Government at every stage, and a generous and real authority has been accorded to them, which has been exercised in close and harmonious co-operation with the Civil officers.

In the Punjab the duties of Superintending Engineers have been defined in section 56 of the Code, which corresponds very closely with section 37 of the Bombay Code. When relief operations were first started, it was proposed by the Chief Engineer himself that the duties of the Public Works staff should be confined to purely professional matters, but it was soon found that this was not practicable, and when work was started in the Ghaggar canal, it was decided by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, on the unanimous representation of the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner, that the whole of the arrangements should be under the direct control of the Superintending Engineer, for reasons recorded in paragraph 3 of Sir Dennis FitzPatrick's note on the Ghaggar canals relief works, dated 18th January 1897. I have received a communication from the Deputy Commissioner of Hissar, from which I infer that this decision has had the happiest results.

28. It will thus be seen that in the four provinces in which the position of the Public Works officers in relation to the Collector is defined in language identical with that of section 24 of the Madras Code, and in which the results attained on relief works certainly do not compare unfavourably with those accomplished in Madras, a very much wider authority has been accorded to the Superintending Engineer than is allowed in the latter province. The explanation of this is that in all other provinces a wider interpretation has been given to the words "matters which are not of a merely technical nature" and "points strictly professional." If there is one matter that may be deemed professional, it is the organization and management of large bodies of more or less untrained labourers with what is often a wholly untrained subordinate staff; if there is one matter which is merely technical, it is the proportioning of tasks under varying conditions, and in variously constituted gangs to the capacity of the gang or the individual worker. My tour has given me exceptional opportunities for appreciating the difficulties which attend the management of large relief works on the principles laid down in the Code, and I can conceive no task which more severely taxes the capacities and energies of the best Engineer.

29. In one respect the action which has been taken by the Madras Government is justified by positive enactment of the Famine Code which appears to be peculiar to Madras. In section 107 it is laid down that modifications in the standard task may be made by the Collector's decision shall be accepted in all matters relating to the employment and wages of labourers which is not to be found in the Codes of other provinces in which this direction is contained. In section 37 (f) of the Bombay Code, the Superintending Engineer is required "to maintain an equal standard of tasks and uniformity of procedure in setting tasks for the various kinds of work," and there is a similar provision in section 56 (e) of the Punjab Code.

In Bengal the rules for tasks are set forth in sections 64 to 66, the language of which implies that the tasks are to be determined by the local officers, though, as before stated, detailed instructions for their guidance have been drawn up by the Chief Engineer, and issued by the Local Government in the Public Works Department. In the North-West Provinces the same practice obtains.

It may be added that under paragraph 3 (ii) of the Madras G.O., No. 216, Revenue, dated 10th March 1897, it has been lately ruled that the word "Collector" in section 107 includes Divisional officers, and that the "Engineer officer in charge" means the Overseer in charge. The practical effect of this ruling has been shown in paragraphs 14 and 15 of these notes.

30. It need hardly be said that the relations between the Civil and Public Works officers in this province are very strained, and in a state of high tension all along the line. The friction that exists is very detrimental.

I have heard both sides, and have come to the conclusion not that there are faults in both sides, but that both are in the right. As long as the sole responsibility for the management of relief works is vested by the express enactment of Government in the Civil officers, those officers cannot but resent the interference of officers of other departments. As long as the officers of a specially trained and independent department are called in to assist in the management of such works, they cannot but resent the ignoring of their authority in matters which they rightly deem to be of a professional nature, and the loosening of all the bonds of departmental organization and discipline. It is an unfortunate but natural result of the existing regulations that

the friction excited is greatest between those officers who are the most capable and energetic, and who take the most serious view of their own individual duties and responsibilities.

31. During the interview that I had with the Famine Commissioner on the 16th, I expressed surprise at the great loss of power involved in the limited authority assigned to the Public Works Department in the control and management of relief works, whereby very heavy duties and responsibilities were thrown on the Civil officers in addition to those incidental to other sections of famine administration, such as village relief, agricultural advances, the distribution of the charitable fund, &c., &c. He told me in reply that this had been done advisedly, and he mentioned instances in previous famines in which particular members of the Public Works Department had shown themselves very hard and unsympathetic in the management of relief works. I venture to think, however, that, if the management of relief works were more distinctly recognized as a special function of the Public Works Department, the idiosyncrasies of its individual members would be better controlled by their own departmental superiors than by officers of other departments. It is the particular business of Engineers to adopt means to ends, and if the principles that should guide them in the management of relief works were set forth in all necessary detail by the head of their own department, and adherence to their principles were enforced by the usual methods of departmental discipline, I see no reason why relief works in Madras should not be as efficiently and sympathetically managed by the officers of the Public Works Department as they have been in other provinces. As far as I could ascertain, the work of the Public Works Department, as a department of Government, has been confined to the preparation of estimates, the provision of funds, and the supply of the necessary tools and plant.

Views of the Famine Commissioner on the relation of the two departments.

32. The Public Works Department has hitherto supplied all the Engineer officers required in connection with relief works. This has been done by drafting officers from unaffected districts, in which ordinary operations has been as far as possible contracted, but if distress should extend to other districts, there will probably be some difficulty in providing officers. Upper subordinates have also been freely transferred from other districts, and others who are entertained by Local Funds have also been posted to relief works, but it has been necessary in addition to employ a few temporary men who have done fairly well. The greatest difficulty has been experienced in regard to sub-overseers and head maistris. Most of these have been entertained temporarily, but the supply of competent men was not equal to the demand.

33. The distinctive features of the administration of relief works in Madras are as follows:—

Concluding remarks.

- All workers are put in the B class and receive the B wage, including even those who can perform only a nominal task, except in Anantapur, where they are put in the C class. A few workers receive the A wage, but the number is insignificant. Dependants also receive a larger ration than in other provinces.
- The large reductions made in normal tasks on account of distance, weakness, or incapacity, and the almost total suspension of the practice of fining.
- The exclusion of the Superintending Engineer from all effective control over the management of relief works, and especially over the system of tasking.

The orders of the Government of India have already been passed on (a), and I have nothing to add to the remarks already made in regard to (c).

As regards (b), Mr. LeFanu informed me that the proposals for reduction of tasks, etc., to which effect was given by G.O., No. 216, dated 30th March 1897, were originally made by him in view of the great heat to which the labourers in the Deccan would be exposed during the months of April and May, or until the setting in of the monsoon winds.

He had subsequently proposed that these orders should be modified in the direction of greater stringency as soon as the monsoon sets in. I have seen a Government Order of the Madras Government in this sense, in which it was proposed to increase all tasks by 25 per cent. and give smaller reductions on account of distance after the monsoon had commenced, and officers were warned to be prepared for telegraphic instructions to this effect. I understood from Mr. LeFanu when I met him on the 16th that these instructions had just issued, although I have not seen a copy of them. It may therefore be hoped that fuller tasks may be exacted in future.

The numbers on relief works, including dependants, have increased from 166,723 for the week ending 1st May (when the effects of the Government Order of March last would probably have become appreciable), to 461,904 for the week ending 17th July. It is impossible to say how much of the increase has been due to the great reductions in task, which in many cases have become almost nominal, and how much to the failure of the monsoon and extension of the distressed area.

The large proportion of women and children to men on the Madras relief works, and the fact that the majority of the works are road work, have no doubt increased the difficulty in keeping the workers fully employed and in setting a fairly high task. In this connection it must

be remembered that in the Madras returns boys between the age of 12 and 16 are included among the men, and that women include girls of the same age, so that under children only those under twelve years of age are shown. In other provinces boys and girls between the age of 12 or 16 are shown as children.

The numbers of individuals receiving gratuitous relief, including dependants on the works, have hitherto been less in Madras than in other provinces, excepting Bombay and the Punjab. The following are the figures for the week ending 17th July :—

Provinces.	Number of workers.	Dependants on works.	Gratuitous and special relief.	Total columns 3 and 4.	Percentage of column 5 on column 2.
Madras	442,893	19,011	209,202	228,213	51.5
Bombay	245,982	61,821	50,989	112,810	45.9
Bengal	258,172	14,239	449,061	463,300	179.5
North-West Provinces and Oudh	428,255	80,815	452,280	533,095	124.5
Punjab	65,156	7,809	13,308	21,117	32.4
Central Provinces	340,104	52,762	160,254	213,016	62.7

The low proportion of dependants and the unpopularity of the kitchens has already been referred to in paragraph 22.

DATED SIMLA,
28th July 1897.

T. HIGHAM.

APPENDIX.

CIRCULAR.

Tour Dis. No. 489 of 1897.

The following circular is issued to Overseers in charge of relief works in this Division.

2. Government has in its order No. 216, dated the 30th March 1897, laid down fresh rules for the management of relief works, and these must be acted up to by every Overseer, and for that purpose the accompanying extract of paragraphs 3, 4 and 9 is communicated to them for their guidance.

3. They will observe that the work to be given to the different gangs must be suited to their composition, and this is clearly shown by examples in sub-paragraph (i) of paragraph 3.

From the second portion of the same sub-paragraph, it is clear that Government intends that one man should be equivalent to two women and equivalent to four children. No allowance is apparently to be made for nursing mothers or girls who must be strictly considered to be capable of turning out two units of work.

The only exception made is in favour of boys between 12 and 16 who are to be reckoned as two or three units according to their capacity, but are to be paid the full wages of a man.

4. From sub-paragraph (ii) of the Government Order, it appears that the intention of Government is to regulate and adjust the task by decreasing it and increasing it till an exact task which a gang can turn out regularly has been ascertained. In doing this, Overseers should not change the class of the gang, but alter the unit of task. This requires the sanction of the undersigned, but as he cannot always be on the spot to accord the necessary action, a general sanction is hereby accorded, and they are informed that their daily work sheets will be carefully scrutinised to guard against any abuse of it. The undersigned hopes to see that before long with a careful working of this system, every gang will be able to turn out its allotted task.

5. Sub-paragraph (iii) provides for the same latitude being extended to the case of weakly gangs.

6. Sub-paragraph (iv) allows for a reduction being made from the task on account of distance on works where accommodation has not been provided. The scale laid down is an abatement of an hour's work for every $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, or in other words a reduction of $\frac{1}{8}$ for every $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, taking the working day to be 8 hours from 7-30 A.M. to 2 noon, and 2 P.M. to 5-30 P.M.

7. From paragraph 4 of the Government Order it is clear that Government does not wish fines to be imposed for short work. It should only be resorted to in clear cases of malingering or insubordination; and as no entire gang can hardly be said to be in a body lazy or insubordinate, the fining of entire gangs is practically abolished. The names of the lazy and contumacious characters, however, should be noted down by the Overseer, with a view to imposing individual fines, and that not beyond the extent to which the gang would otherwise be fined for short work, for the Code contemplates fining only for short work (*vide* section 28, Appendix VI).

The undersigned has strictly ordered the paymasters to take no notice of any orders to impose fines on gangs. They have, however, been instructed to impose fines on individuals only in such cases where the Overseer has entered in the remarks column that such individual has been found to be malingering or insubordinate.

Such fines imposed on contumacious or lazy characters should not allow of their wages being reduced below D class, nor should it continue for more than a week continuously without the sanction of the undersigned previously obtained in writing.

8. Overseers will see from the spirit of the Government Order now issued that it has the effect of cancelling the circular issued to them by the late Executive Engineer to the effect that Revenue officers have no concern with scrutinising tasks, mustering gangs, check measuring work, &c., for the Government Order gives full control of the works to the Revenue Divisional Officers.

9. Overseers are strictly ordered to carry out these instructions to the very letter, and failure to do so will be reported to the Collector, with a view to the matter being brought to the notice of Government.

CAMP, ALLAGADDA,
Dated 11th May 1897.

(Signed) GHOSE,
Ag. Head Assistant Collector.

NOTE.—Since the issue of this circular G.O., No. 284-Press, dated 1st May 1897, ordering that nursing mothers and women in an advanced stage of pregnancy should be treated as equivalent to $1\frac{1}{2}$ units has been received, and Overseers should carry out the above order at once.

(Signed) GHOSE,
Ag. Head Assistant Collector.

READ—the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture), No. 596, dated 23th August 1897 :—

W. J. H. LEFANU, Esq.

(Famine Commissioner.)

Read—the following G.O., Mis. No. 3713, Revenue, dated 19th July 1897 :—

Read—the following note by the Chief Engineer and Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, No. 739D., dated 7th July 1897 :—

As head of the Public Works Department and a servant of Government, I think it my duty to acquaint the Government with my views as to the effect of the proposed order, as I feel convinced that it will make matters far worse than at present.

2. With reference to the remarks of the Honourable Mr. Grose to the effect that I am not aware of the difference between ordinary works carried out by ordinary coolies and relief works, I beg to submit that I am quite well aware of the difference as, during my service, I have had considerable experience both of ordinary works and relief works; and I am still of opinion that a Public Works officer knows more of the ordinary task to be demanded from an ordinary cooly than a Collector does and that, consequently, he is in a better position to suit the task according to the condition of the famine cooly; there is absolutely no reason to apprehend that a Public Works officer has less common sense than a Collector, or that he is more hard-hearted and unsympathetic. The other extreme of being too weak and soft-hearted is likely to lead to serious consequences, as it demoralises the people and causes needless waste of money, and there is no department more capable of striking the correct mean than the Public Works Department. It seems to me a most extraordinary notion that because the Public Works Department has been accustomed to deal with ordinary coolies on ordinary works, that it should not be considered capable of dealing with coolies on relief works. It might as well be said that a Revenue Officer, who had been in the habit of collecting the revenues of a district for years, is not fit to do so during seasons of failure of crops, as he would be too hard-hearted and unsympathetic, and therefore during these seasons the work should be done by the Salt, or Police, or some other department.

3. I think I was quite justified in saying that the famine works had been wrongly managed from the beginning by the fact that the Government is now trying

to alter the system hitherto in force, and have a few large works on which coolies could be massed, instead of a vast number of scattered small works. In my tour report I have shown that, if the famine becomes widespread and the relief works are managed as hitherto, more than 1,600 upper subordinates will be required, and surely a system that necessitates such an immense amount of supervision cannot be called correct.

4. By the proposed order, the Collector and the Divisional Officers can issue orders direct to the subordinates in charge of relief works apparently on all subjects, while the Executive Engineer is debarred from giving orders to his own subordinates, except on strictly professional matters (which have not been clearly defined). By this order, the Executive Engineer is reduced to a nonentity, and it becomes absolutely impossible for him to maintain discipline on the works: moreover, the subordinate has to serve two masters. He may receive one order from the Collector, which may clash with one given by the Executive Engineer, even though the former order may be on a non-professional subject, and the result may be that he is fined by both officers. I think it will be far better, if this order is to hold good, that the Executive Engineer should have nothing to do with the work, and the Collector took entire management with the help of subordinates lent by this department; the latter would then not have to serve two masters. I feel perfectly convinced that the present friction which is so much to be regretted will be immensely increased by the proposed order; the clause regarding needless interference will, I am afraid, have little effect on the native Revenue officials or even with others who are zealous. I feel sure there is not an officer in the department, who would object to the Collector visiting a work and discussing and arranging matters with him; but when Deputy Collectors, Deputy Tahsildars, Revenue Inspectors and others give orders regarding works in charge of an Executive Engineer, it is most galling to the latter, and it is still worse when a Collector acts on complaints made by his subordinates, who are only too glad to try and show their zeal by finding fault with the work of another department. It may be stated as a general rule that the Revenue officials are far younger and junior in service to those of the Public Works Department, which tends to make interference on the part of the former more distasteful. My remarks are actuated entirely by a sense of the responsibility I owe to Government in my capacity as head of the Public Works Department, and I trust therefore they may have as much consideration given to them as to those of the Board of Revenue, in accordance with whose views the order seems to have been drafted. I have done all I can and the results of the proposed system must be awaited: what they will be, I hardly like to contemplate. I think it advisable that I should explain what I consider would be the best manner of carrying out relief works. The Bombay Code contemplates the division of relief works into large and small—the former being in charge of a Public Works officer assisted by a Civil officer if possible; the latter to be in charge of the Collector—and my proposals, which are as follows, are almost similar:—

1st—Large works should be concentrated as far as possible, not more than about twelve works being carried on in each district.

2nd—The distressed persons should be made to resort to these works, the arrangement for their conveyance and keep while travelling being entirely under the Revenue Department.

3rd—These large works should be entirely under the Public Works Department, assisted, if necessary, by a civil officer, who should be under the orders of the Executive Engineer in charge of the work, who, however, would not have the power of punishing or censuring him, except through the Collector.

4th—All small works started for the purpose of village relief should be under the Collector, subordinates, if necessary, being lent by the Public Works Department: these latter would be entirely under the orders of the Revenue Department.

5th—These small works should be restricted to deepening village tanks, repairing village roads, clearing prickly-pear, forest works and minor irrigation works.

5. By this arrangement I firmly believe that everything would work smoothly and be carried on much better than at present. The Revenue Department have now quite

as much as, if not more than, it can do satisfactorily. The distribution of gratuitous relief is alone a duty that requires the most careful supervision, and if the Revenue Department look properly after that and also after kitchens, poor-houses, execution of small works and the many other duties connected with famine relief, it is as much as they can do satisfactorily, and interference with the work of the Public Works Department only adds to their work, does no good and causes endless friction and dissatisfaction.

6. I would call attention to the orders issued for the guidance of officers employed on relief works in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, issued with G.O., No. 14, Revenue, dated 9th January 1897, from which it will be seen that the Collector has not much control over relief works, which seem to be left almost entirely to the Public Works Department.

Order thereon—Mis. No. 3713, dated 19th July 1897.

Forwarded to the Famine Commissioner for very early remarks with reference to G.O., No. 593, dated 19th July 1897.

(True Extract.)

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

To the Famine Commissioner.

Resolution—No. 596, dated 28th August 1897.

The question underlying the present reference is in no sense a new one. The matter was thrashed out in the reports on the famine of 1877-78, and the policy, to which the Chief Engineer and Secretary to Government objects, was formulated by the Commission specially selected to report on the lessons taught by that famine, and adopted in full by Government.

2. The position of the officers of the Public Works Department in the earlier stages of that famine was, according to their views, even less acceptable than it is now. Under G.O., No. 631, dated 15th February 1877, all works—two only excepted—were to be considered as being carried out by the Revenue Department, the Public Works Department giving advice and help. In that G.O., it was further observed that "their (Public Works Department) subordinates can probably be best employed in supervising the execution of relief works, and, when this is the case, they should be considered as under the orders of the Collector or Divisional Officer."

3. The Public Works Department is the only department of Government which is permitted to say *non possumus*, which is often equivalent to *non volumus*. The cohesiveness and *esprit de corps* of the Royal Engineers are well known. The Civil Engineers have not only professional traditions to bind them together, but, hailing from one centre—the Engineering Eton—and mostly members, or associates, of the Institute of Civil Engineers, they have strong common sentiments, and are saturated with an impatience of laical interference, which leads them occasionally to treat orders with contempt. Referring to the G.O., above quoted, the Madras Government, in its review of the Madras famine, observed that the order in question "remained practically a dead letter, because, although communicated to the Public Works Department, no action was taken on it in that department till the month of April, and it was then simply recorded and communicated to District Engineers later on, who, however, for the most part, did not consider that they were to act on it."

4. As now, so in 1877-78, there was considerable friction between the Public Works and Revenue Departments. This is mentioned in many places in the "Replies to questions circulated by the Famine Commission," and, after referring to the

want of harmony which prevailed, one Collector—volume II, page 508—very happily summed up by observing that the Engineers, as a rule, looked upon their department as entirely a separate one and not part of the district machinery, of which the Collector should be the sole controlling power, adding that “there was too much tendency in this department to the *imperium in imperio*.” This is really the sentiment which is at the bottom of the present difficulty, which need not be called an *impasse*, for it needs only one word from Government to cause all officers of the department to accept the position, assigned to them in famine matters, loyally.

5. Sir W. Robinson, colleague of the Duke of Buckingham during the famine, wrote strongly on the matter—Vol. I *ibid*, page 54—as follows :—

“Works should, as far as possible, be organized under Department of Public Works Officers, but that department should be under the direct control of the Civil Administration of the district. Nothing could have been more embarrassing, more detrimental to public interests, and the real object of providing life-saving labour than the want of rapport which, more or less, prevailed in many, if not most, of the famine districts of this Presidency during the early months of our famine, and more or less throughout, as between the district administration and executives of works. This weakness of rapport was perhaps inherent in the organization, and will not, I fear, be lessened by the recent changes made. I was a member of the Department of Public Works Commission which sat in 1869–70, as respects the organization of the Department of Public Works as we found that it then worked—and again, more recently, I have had to record my views on this important matter. To the former report I must refer for my general judgment, and I submit my more matured reflections noted in two recent minutes on Department of Public Works organization. The more the executive is localized and made part and parcel of the district administration, and placed in rapport with local officers and District Boards, the less will be the friction in times of trouble. The present organization fails seriously in this respect, but *Department of Public Works Officers shun what they deem subordination to local authority and interest.*”

6. The scientific officers often find great difficulty in accommodating themselves to the altered circumstances of Famine Administration, and, in straining at producing work which will bring them professional credit, and at impossible discipline and outturn, forget the prime object for which that work is taken in hand. In their recommendations contained in paragraph 129, the Famine Commission observed that “it is to be clearly understood by these officers that their duty is not, as in ordinary times, to get the greatest quantity of work done at the cheapest rate, but to give effectual relief to the labouring population, inasmuch as the work is undertaken, not for its own sake, but for the sake of the people employed on it”, and their deliberate conclusion is embodied in paragraph 130 of the same :—

“The Collector of the district should exercise general supervision over all works, as over all other arrangements for giving relief, within his district, and should be responsible to Government for their efficiency. Pending reference to the Government or other superior authority, his decision should be accepted by the Public Works Officers, in all matters relating to the task and wage of the people employed, as well as in opening or closing works, and generally in every thing, except arrangements of a merely technical nature.”

The reference under reply would probably not have been made, had it been remembered that the President of the Commission which made these recommendations was an officer of the Royal Engineers, General Sir R. Strachey.

7. The Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, observes in the memorandum now under consideration, that “he has done all he can, and the results of the proposed system must be awaited. What they will be he hardly likes to contemplate.” It would almost seem that the Chief Engineer’s interpretation of “doing all that he can” takes the form of setting an example to his department of challenging the order of Government before the ink is dry upon the paper, and that the *mot d’ordre* amongst his officers will be to follow suit. A serious word from Colonel McNeil Campbell would put an end to all the friction which exists.

8. The Famine Commissioner entirely repudiates any intention to treat either Colonel McNeil Campbell’s representations, or the *amour propre* of the department over which he presides, with anything but the most sincere respect. Firstly, he is aware that, at least on one occasion, the Chief Engineer has used his influence in the interests of peace. It is quite conceivable, and even natural, that a body of gentlemen of high scientific training, and accustomed ordinarily to interference from

officers of their own profession only, should find a certain difficulty in accommodating themselves to temporarily altered circumstances. If, however, they would grasp, and their senior officers insist on their grasping, the situation, these clouds would clear away. After all, it is a very small minority who have caused friction, the majority of the Public Works Officers on famine duty having loyally and cordially worked with Collectors. There has been no trouble in Cuddapah, where the Executive Engineer, one small explosion excepted, and his two chief Assistants, one of them a Royal Engineer, have loyally set aside professional prejudice, and worked side by side with the Collector, without friction. Two successive Executive Engineers, and an Assistant, a Royal Engineer, have done the same in Anantapur. The present Executive Engineer, in Kurnool, has, after certain preliminary misunderstandings, for which he can hardly be held responsible, found no difficulty in doing all that the Collector wants. The Executive Engineer—up to a certain date—and his Assistant, in Ganjam, have co-operated well with the Collector. The work of the Executive Engineer in charge of relief, during the preliminary stages of distress, in communication with the then Collector of Bellary, left nothing to be desired in the matter of cordiality. The only officers who have been really difficult have been Superintending Engineers in charge of the 1st and 3rd Divisions, the Executive Engineer in charge during the first months of distress in Kurnool, and the present Executive Engineer in Vizagapatam. The relations between the Collector of Bellary and the Executive Engineer have not been as cordial as could be desired. It will be seen, therefore, that the great majority of the scientific officers have found it possible to work on the lines of the Code.

9. As for the officers who have failed to do so, the Famine Commissioner will not say that their object has been to prove the position accorded to them by the Code to be impossible; but, had this been their object, they could not have worked better towards that end. When the Superintending Engineer, 3rd Division, is not railing at kitchen mismanagement, his diatribes are generally directed to the insufficiency of tasks and failure to enforce the same. It must be known to the Superintending Engineer that all the district task schedules were framed, no doubt with the approval of the Collectors concerned, by officers of his own department, and that even G.O., No. 216, dated 30th March 1897, left his subordinates ample power to enforce tasks. It is doubtful if, during the several successive days in which the delegate of the Government of India was the recipient of the Superintending Engineer’s confidences, sufficient, or any, prominence was given to these points. These schedule tasks, except where the Superintending Engineer, without authority, enhanced them, and where a young Assistant Engineer took upon himself to enhance the Superintending Engineer’s enhancements, have been generally in force all through the hot weather, and, if there has been any failure to enforce them, the subordinates of the Public Works Department are primarily responsible for the omission. If the position assigned to the Public Works Department by the report of the Famine Commission, 1878, and by the Famine Code, had been duly maintained, all these matters would have been settled between the Executive Engineer of the district and the Collector. The Executive Engineer, Ganjam, has recently been remarking on the subject of tasks, &c. So has his Assistant. The Assistant Engineer’s remarks go first to the Executive Engineer; then to the Superintending Engineer; then to the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department; then to the Revenue Secretary; then to the Famine Commissioner, then to the Collector of Ganjam, and possibly might work the whole way round to the Assistant Engineer again. This is intolerable circumlocution. One of the first principles of Famine Administration, and an indispensable condition precedent to its success, is that *the district should be the unit of administration*, and that all questions should be settled in the district. It would be perfectly impossible for Government to go into such matters, even if the *personnel* of Government were quadrupled. Hypothesising that the position, contended for by the Public Works Department, were conceded, what would be the result? Wherever the Collector ventured to challenge the action even of an overseer, he would have to write to the Famine Commissioner, and he to the Revenue Secretary to Government, when the matter would probably be referred to the Chief Engineer, and the answer would have to filter down through the same channels. There would be this further drawback that, whereas the Engineer is always

tolerably certain of support from the head of his department, the Revenue officer is never certain how he may be supported, and, after one or two failures, would simply drop the matter in despair. Any one who had experience of the great famine can call up instances of the kind. For example, during 1877-78, in Salem, two Royal Engineers were simply impracticable, and it is to them specially that the Collector of Salem referred, when speaking of the want of harmony which characterised operations in his district (Famine Commission, 1878, Volume II, Chapter III, page 508). The complaint was a common one, and the want of control by the Revenue Department was found to be so fatal to efficiency, that the present position was defined in the Code in accordance with the recommendations of the Famine Commission.

10. It was this recognition of the essential principle, that disputed questions should be settled in the district, which led to the elimination, in all matters not strictly technical, of the Superintending Engineer from the purview of the Madras Famine Code. The Bombay Code *does* assign him, or the Chief Engineer—as he is there termed—a place, but it is a place *in* the district—section 37, Bombay Code—and that Code does not contemplate that Government should be troubled with petty correspondence or complaints, for it provides—section 38—that, when the Collector and Executive Engineer differ, the matter is to be referred for disposal, *through* the Chief (i.e., Superintending) Engineer to the Famine Commissioner; differences between subordinate officers of the two departments are to be referred, *through* the Executive Engineer to the Collector. When the Executive Engineer “sees any shortcomings, or any reason for alarm, he is to report them to the Collector” direct, “even though they may not lie within his official sphere”—section 39 (b)—but he is *not* to report them, through a round—about channel, to Government. The Bombay Code also provides that all executive officers of the Public Works Department employed on relief works shall be subordinates, in all matters not strictly professional, to the Collector,—section 38 (a)—and similarly, officers of the Public Works Department below the rank of Assistant Engineer are subordinates to the Divisional Officer, section 38 (b). Section 36 of the Bombay Code enunciates the principles referred to in paragraph 6 *supra*, being founded on the report of the Famine Commission, and winds up with a most important recommendation, which, if acted on, would have rendered the present reference unnecessary: “It is essential that hearty and friendly co-operation should exist between the Land Revenue and Public Works staffs.” The Famine Commissioner has, on several occasions, refrained from bringing cases of serious friction to the notice of Government, and trusts that his reticence may not be imputed to him for a fault. Had he not done so, Government would have been in a better position to judge of the extent to which the Public Works Department officers arrogate independence, and of the urgent necessity for speaking out, once and for all, on the subject. Had the scientific corps devoted, to the working of the Code position, the same energy which they have given to proving it to be impossible; had they co-operated with the Collector, instead of shooting at him round the corner, every shortcoming, if any, of which they complain would have been promptly remedied.

11. In paragraph 2 of the Chief Engineer's note, he seems to beg the question when he affirms that “there is no department more capable of striking the correct mean than the Public Works Department,” in the matter of tasking. There is nothing esoteric about tasking. It is a matter which any man may master with a very little trouble. The Famine Commissioner is not sure that the Chief Engineer is not mixing up the question of *rates*, in which the Public Works Department have special experience, with that of *tasks*, of which, in ordinary times, they have no experience at all. Rates ought to be founded on tasks, but it is very doubtful if they ever, in practice, are. The Railway has its rates, so has the Public Works Department, so has the Local Fund Department, all differing. Lastly come the rates, best of all, at which, in simple work, an intelligent ryot can get work done, superintending the labour himself. That the officers of the Public Works Department come to famine work with very minute information on the subject of tasks is very doubtful, as the best of them have to work out these tasks for themselves, and, in fact, no Code of tasks can suit varying circumstances, and differently constituted gangs. The Famine

Commissioner has found it necessary recently to take objection to tasks fixed by the Superintending Engineer himself (Proceedings of Famine Commissioner, No. 555, dated 7th August 1897, and No. 558, dated 10th August 1897).

He was very much struck with the zeal shown in this matter by the Executive Engineer, Anantapur, who took the extreme step of performing part of a task, both in stone-breaking and in excavation, with his own hands, though this was only what any other officer could do himself. The Famine Commissioner pointed out, however, to the Executive Engineer that he could not safely argue from the performance of part of a day's work as to what could be done in the whole day, for the fresh workman will always do more than a man tired at the close of a day's work. In fact, to make certain, it would be necessary to do a whole day's work, which it would be too much to expect of any Executive Engineer. The safest way is to watch an average gang, working honestly for a whole day, and this any one can do. The Chief Engineer states that the Revenue officials are, as a general rule, far younger and junior in service to those of the Public Works Department. The question of youth cuts both ways. A young Assistant Engineer, fresh from the Engineering College, took upon himself, without reference to the Collector, to enhance a task which the Superintending Engineer, also without reference to the Collector, had already enhanced. According to the Chief Engineer, the Collector should have no power to rectify such an interference.

12. If Government are not to be overwhelmed with continual references, and engaged in deciding continual quarrels (they have had one such undisposed of for nearly three months—Board's Proceedings, Mis., No. 4186, dated 10th June 1897), it is necessary that some one person must be recognised as paramount in district administration. That person can only be the Collector. He may be old, or he may be young, but the average Collector is an officer with whom, and, in non-professional matters, under whom, no officer of another department could reasonably object to work. The Police Superintendents, often Colonels, never objected to this, and, in famine matters, officers of rank, as Major C. D. Baynes, and others, worked loyally, in every sense, under Collectors. The other Scientific Department—the Medical—has never objected to work with, or under, the Collector. There is no reason why the Public Works Officers should do so. The recalcitrants are only a very few, and one earnest word would put an end to all obstructions.

13. Paragraph 3 of the Chief Engineer's note may be disposed of very briefly. He knows well that there are no large works available for the employment of famine labour in any of the affected districts; and that, as regards the Deccan, it would be very difficult, though not impossible, to find any. That some are not forthcoming is due to the fact that, year after year, the Public Works Department has never taken its due share in the framing of famine works programmes, partly on the *non possumus* ground, and partly owing to the rule that no work should be examined, and estimated for, which is not likely to be carried out within four years. It is most urgent that the Public Works Department should thoroughly examine the Famine zone and determine what irrigation works are possible, and this enquiry should not be conducted solely from the standpoint of whether such works will pay interest on their cost or not. Whenever famine comes there must be waste, and especially in the Deccan. That waste would just cover, or more than cover, the difference of cost between the estimate of a work which will pay interest on capital expenditure and one which will not. At the end of the famine, there would be a useful work to show, and a certain area would be permanently safe-guarded—a happy contrast to miles of broken metal.

14. The position taken up in paragraph 4 is one which cannot be accepted. There is nothing to prevent the Engineer from issuing orders direct to his subordinates in all professional matters, and, in the non-professional matters, with the Collector's consent. As the Executive Engineer cannot be everywhere, it is urgent that some one should have the power of correcting, on the spot, whatever is wrong, and this power may safely be given to the Collector and his Divisional Officers. For famine purposes, the Executive Engineer becomes the Collector's Famine Assistant; so far

from being a "nonentity," he is the Collector's *alter ego* for the organisation and working of famine labour. As such, he can readily bring to the Collector's notice anything which he finds wrong in non-professional matters. This he ought to do, instead of writing reports to his departmental superiors and the Chief Engineer. If the proper relation between the Collector and the Executive Engineer were insisted on, all these differences of opinion would be discussed, and settled locally, to the great advantage of administration. The Chief Engineer has consistently encouraged the reverse action by accepting, and passing on to Government, petty complaints which the local officers should have made to the Collector, not to him, thereby discouraging the very *entente cordiale* which it should be his first object to foster. The Famine Commissioner does not anticipate any undue interference on the part of native Revenue officials. They would have little room for interference, once the Executive Engineer gets into his proper position, as assigned to him by Government and the Famine Code. As to interference by Deputy Tahsildars and Revenue Inspectors, &c., the Chief Engineer does not seem to have grasped the purport of the order against which he protests. The power of interference is limited to the Collector and Divisional Officers. The Famine Commissioner is not aware of any instance of such interference. It must be observed that the Code contemplates the appointment of Civil officers to large works, and such officers are so employed in Bombay on petty salaries. The Famine Commissioner deprecated their appointment here, for the very reason that, as said by Colonel McNeil Campbell, interference from such persons would be exceedingly "galling" to the Engineers. This officer, however, whatever his pay, could not, any more than a paymaster, be placed under the orders of the Executive Engineer. They are intended as a check, and they could not be a check to their own superior. The Famine Commissioner has purposely refrained from recommending their employment from dread of additional friction, as much as because, except on the largest works, they would rarely be of use.

15. As to the proposals in paragraph 4 (1), this is the distance test, condemned by the Famine Commission and by the Madras Government, pure and simple, and there are no such large works anywhere available. This disposes of paragraph 4 (2) and (3); paragraph 4 (4) and (5) is the intermediate system, which Collectors have been ordered to introduce, where possible.

16. As to paragraph 6, the Famine Commissioner most strongly deprecates any importation from the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, unless, indeed, the 50 lakhs of the Famine fund be imported along with it. The Madras Presidency has nothing to learn from any part of India, and one of the most striking things in the famine of 1877-78 was the astonishment and admiration expressed by Bengal officers for the advanced state of administration in Madras.

17. In communicating G.O., No. 593, dated 19th July 1897, to Collectors, the Famine Commissioner observed as follows:—

"The rules now laid down have been made for the public interest, and in the exceptional circumstances of famine administration. Exceptional tact and conciliation should be ever present in acting on them. As an order of Government, they will be accepted loyally by the officers of the Public Works Department, and Collectors will therefore find it conduce best to good relations to act, as far as possible, with, and through, the officers of that department, rather than independently. When, in 1877, an order of Government placed a Royal Engineer Officer—Sir Michael Kennedy—in control of Famine administration, the Revenue Department accepted the position loyally. In the present case, it is only in matters not strictly professional and technical that the Revenue Department can interfere."

The authority now given to the Collector, and the powers of interference permitted to him and his Divisional Officers are not likely to be abused. The mere fact that such power exists should be sufficient to attain the end desired, without the exercise of it. In fact, the Famine Commissioner would require that the case should be a very strong one indeed to satisfy him that any Collector had been justified in using the power given to him. Tact is what is most wanted, and tact is the velvet glove which covers strength.

18. There has been some delay in replying to the Government Order, as reference was necessary to bulky volumes which could not well be sent to camp.

(True Copy and Extract.)

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

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

ORDER—No. 899, Revenue, dated 29th October 1897.

Miscellaneous.

The Government is of opinion that the importance of the questions dealt with in the above papers requires that they and other important questions should be thoroughly discussed by officers who have had practical experience of the working of the Famine Code during the distress which is now coming to a close; and directs that a conference of Revenue, Public Works and Medical officers be held for the purpose under the Presidency of the Famine Commissioner at Bellary in the case of the Deccan districts and at Waltair in the case of the Northern districts. The Famine Commissioner is requested to arrange for the holding of these conferences and to inform Government of the arrangements he may make.

2. The attention of the Famine Commissioner is invited to paragraph 4 of the letter communicated with G.O., No. 841, dated 5th October 1897, in which the Government of India desires that proposals for amending or supplementing the Famine Code should not be incorporated in the final Famine report but should be submitted separately. The historical part of the report should be got ready and submitted to Government before the close of the calendar year; the proposals of the Famine Commissioner for amending or supplementing the Code may be submitted later after the holding of the conferences.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Secretary to Government.

To the Famine Commissioner.

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

Exd. C. Parthasarathy.