Public Works (1897) Department.

G.O., No. 328425

DATED 24 Nov 1897

[Despatch Abstract.]

Management of Famine Relief Works. Rec'd
Revenue Dept. not forwarding with remarks
the Famine Commissioner's report, Encl.
of India Resolution on Mr Higham's final
Note on the — and revision of Provincial
Famine Codes and requesting the chief Engineer
to favour Govt with his views on Mr Higham's
proposed changes, Contr & Offrs Concerned.

24 Nov 97

Indexed.

P.W. 20.
5,000—30-11-96.

BACK PAPERS.

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

FURTHER PAPERS.

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F. 21 2,000—1[illegible]6-97.

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I.W. C№ 114324

Govt. of {1897} Madras

REVENUE.

B

P. 3284 W 24-11-97

To

The Chief Engineer.

P. W. D.

Communicated to officers concerned in continuation of G.O. 3176 w d/13 November 1897 - The attention of the Chief Engineer I.W. Dept is invited to para 2.

Dated

Recd. 18 Nov 1897

Encl. 8.9 (2 S.C)

Mis. / P. G.O. 16th Novr. 1897, No. 958 Press.

SUBJECT.

Forwarding with remarks to the Famine Commissioner for report, Govt. of India Resolution forwarding for information and guidance Mr. Higham's final note on the management of famine relief works and revision of Provincial Famine Codes.

S.E.
C.E. W.D. 3/12/97
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III
R.W. 24/11/97
+ Note

This paper, with previous file, is in circulation

18 Nov 97

F 16 1000 -13-10-97.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read Resolution of the Government of India, Revenue and Agricultural Department, No. 31 - 237-2-F. dated 25th October 1897.

Copy attached.

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Order thereon, No. 958 Press. d/16th November 1897.

Forwarded to the Famine Commissioner for report. The questions raised in Mr. Higham's note should be discussed at the Conference ordered in G.O. No. 899, dated 29th October 1897, with special reference to the observations made by the Government of India in the letter read above and the report submitted to Government so as to reach it not later than the 1st February.

2. The Chief Engineer, Public Works Department will also be requested to favour Government with his views on the changes proposed by Mr. Higham.

(True Extract)

Secretary to Government.

To the Famine Commissioner.

To the Chief Engineer, Public Works Department.

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Government {1897} of Madras.

REVENUE.

Recd. } 1897. *Enclosures*

Regd. *Spare copies*

G.O., No. 958, 16th November 1897.

NOVEMBER.

Mr. Higham's final note on the management of famine relief-works and revision of Provincial Famine Codes.

Forwarding, with remarks to the Famine Commissioner, for report, Government of India resolution forwarding for information and guidance —.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

Extracts from the Proceedings of the Government of India in the Department of Revenue and Agriculture, No. 31—237-2-F., dated Simla, the 25th October 1897.

Read—

(1) Government of India Resolution No. 35—33, dated 24th August 1893.
(2) " " Circular No. 16-104—1, dated 13th February 1897.
(3) " " Resolution No. 20—157-1, dated 12th May 1897.

Resolution.—By the last Resolution read in the preamble Mr. T. Higham, C.I.E., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India in the Department of Public Works, was deputed in May last to visit the famine relief-works then in progress in the different provinces, and to make inquiries on matters in connection with them, regarding which the Government of India wished to obtain information which might be useful for a future revision of the Famine Codes, or the administration of the next famine. Mr. Higham completed his tour of inspection by the end of July, and has since submitted full Notes on the management and special features of relief-works in each province, which have been communicated to the several Local Governments and Administrations concerned. These Notes are of great interest and value, and the Governor-General in Council desires to record his acknowledgments to Mr. Higham for the assiduity with which he discharged his inspection duties at the most trying season of the year, and for the care and ability with which he has placed the results of his enquiry before the Government of India.

2. In a Final Note which accompanies this Resolution Mr. Higham makes certain recommendations based on a comparison of the different methods of managing relief-works which came under his notice, and on a consideration of the extent to which the relief-work system embodied in the Famine Codes has in practice proved efficacious and economical. He is of opinion that, regarded as a whole, the system has well stood the severe strain to which it has been subjected. But he points out that numerous departures from the regulations of the Famine Codes with regard to relief-works have been found necessary by several, if not all, the Local Governments, and that the Codes no longer represent the actual practice approved by them. In these circumstances more or less extensive amendments in the chapters of these Codes which deal with the organization of famine labour will be required, and Mr. Higham's recommendations are accordingly now placed before Local Governments in order that they may receive careful consideration in connection with such revision.

3. The first group of recommendations deal with the classificatian and wages of relief-workers employed on task work, and their general purport is towards a simplification of the present Code regulations on the lines adopted in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Bengal and the Central Provinces in the present famine campaign. The Government of India will be glad to know how far Mr. Higham's detailed recommendations under this head (paragraphs 1 to 20) are accepted by Local Governments, and what alterations in the Provincial Codes will be thereby necessitated. Succinctly stated, these recommendations are—

(1) Relief-workers to be classified into three classes, or (I) Special, (II) Diggers, (III) Carriers.

(2) The wages of the three classes to be the cash equivalent of—

42 ounces of grain	in the case of class I.
38 ounces of grain	in the case of class II.
26 ounces of grain	in the case of class III.
16 ounces of grain	in the case of children between 7 and 12.
22 ounces of grain	in the case of adult dependants.
10 ounces of grain	in the case of children dependants.

BUILDINGS AND ROADS.
CIVIL WORKS.

Government {1897} of Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

Recd. } 1897. *Enclosures*
Regd. } *Spare copies*

G.O., No. 3176 W., 13th November 1897.

NOVEMBER.

Famine Relief Operations

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 Waltair 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.

Government of India (Revenue) Resolution, No. 20-F.—157-1, dated 15th 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 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. 361, 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.

Itinerary.

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 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 Ganjám 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 Hola-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 Alúr, 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 Adóni, where we met Mr. LeFanu on the 16th. I left Adóni and the Madras Presidency early in the morning of the 17th *en route* for Simla.

Character of relief works.

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 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.

Distance of works from the affected villages.

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.

Madras G.O., No. 216, Revenue, dated 30th March 1897.

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.

Classification of gangs as ordered in the Government Order.

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 Madas 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 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.

Classification of the gangs as found in practice.

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.

Reduction of the members in gang to child-units.

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.

Deductions in task made under G.O., No. 216.

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.

Distance reductions.

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:—

Weakness reductions.

"(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 so 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 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 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.

Weakness deductions in Kurnool district.

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:—

Weakness deductions in Kurnool continued.

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 ,,

* 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 anæmia. 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 $\frac{1}{2}^6$ 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 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:—

Weakness deductions in Cuddapah.

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 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 Government Order, paragraph 3 (ii)—

Deductions for excessive tasks.

(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 inexpertness 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 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*—

Reduction of tasks by Overseers in chage under general sanction of the Divisional Officer.

"(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.*—Fining 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	5·88 (*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.

Rates of amount paid in wages to value of work done.

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.	
			1,329	139	10	..	
16			258	45	17	..	
7			790	147	18—12	..	
20	Not noted.	Not noted.	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.

Proportion of man's to child's task.

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.

Management of relief works and system of payment.

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 repesentation by the Executive Engineer, the Collector subsequently modified this order in his Circular No. $\frac{218}{F.}$, 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.

Piece-work.

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 Ganjám 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.

Dependants and kitchens.

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.

Interference with the supply of labour to private employers.

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.

Relief works in charge of Civil Officers.

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.

Subordination of Public Works to Civil Officers.

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."

The position of the Superintending Engineer.

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 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.

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

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, and as there defined are

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

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.

Interpretation of terms "Technical" and Professional."

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.

Power given in Madras to the Collector and his Divisional officers in regard to tasks.

29. In one respect the action which has been taken by the Madras Government is justified by postive 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.

Friction engendered by the present regulations.

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.

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

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.

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. 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 2½ miles, or in other words a reduction of $\frac{1}{5}$ for every 2½ 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 1½ 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 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:—

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

2*nd*—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.

3*rd*—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.

4*th*—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.

5*th*—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 Ganjám, 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, Ganjám, 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 Ganjám, 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.

Exd. P. Seetharam.

(3) No distinction in regard to wage to be made between males and females, and children over 12 to be reckoned as adults.

(4) A "standard" task for class III to be fixed in each province; the task for class II being fixed for each work by some competent authority.

(5) On any work on which a Sunday wage is not given, workers in classes II and III to be permitted to earn an extra wage by the performance of a task in excess of that prescribed.

(6) On any work on which a Sunday wage is given and on which the workers in class III exceed by more than 10 per cent. the number actually required, an extra wage to be earnable by class II alone.

4. Paragraphs 21 to 24 and paragraphs 35 and 36 of the note deal with the desirability of substituting "pure piece-work" or "petty contract," as distinguished from the modified forms of task-work which have been experimentally tried in several provinces under the name of "intermediate system," for the task-work system of the present Codes, to a greater extent than has hitherto been done. It will be observed that the note indicates that piece-work, such as is discussed, has not had sufficient trial to enable a conclusion to be formed as to how far it is well adapted for relief purposes: and that all that is urged is that such modifications should be made in the letter of the Famine Codes as will permit of piece-work being resorted to, should this be found desirable, instead of the task-work system, when relief-works are required in a district, especially in the early stage of a famine, and when the relief works consist of works of permanent public utility. In the "Principles for regulating expenditure upon public works in time of Famine" circulated in the early part of the year the Government of India have already expressed approval to petty piece-work as a form of relief when the existence of distress is first indicated by a demand for labour on the part of the able-bodied, and they will consider favourably any amendments for giving recognition to it within due limits in the Famine Codes that may be recommended by Local Governments. With regard to the advantages claimed for piece-work over task-work in the final note, the Government of India think that some, at least, of the defects and inconveniences attending the present Code system of task-work will be considerably reduced by the adoption of the simplified classification and wage-scale proposed by Mr. Higham, and by daily payments of the labourers. The simpler the system, the less occasion there is for large establishments, and the less room for successful fraud.

Circular No. 16-104—1 Famine), dated 13th February 1897.

5. Paragraphs 25 to 29 of the note contain recommendations as to the principles on which the programmes of relief-works should be drawn up and as to the desirability of including in them a greater number of large works of permanent utility. The Government of India concur in the view that large works are preferable to small works as the back bone of famine-relief whenever the necessity arises for employing relief labour on an extensive scale, and they consider that the provisions contained in one or two of the Provincial Codes as to reserving large works for the late stage of a famine should be revised. They would like to receive the opinions of Local Governments as to the possibility of improving the programmes of famine works in the manner suggested by Mr. Higham, and as to the extent to which relief labour can be drafted to considerable distances. If any amendments on these points in the Famine Codes suggest themselves to Local Governments, they should be reported. Mr. Higham's remark in paragraph 29 that in the next great famine there will probably be less room for a programme of small works than hitherto, owing to the exhaustion of this class of works in the late famine, appears to the Government of India to be indisputably true. And this makes it all the more necessary that the question discussed by him should receive the fullest consideration.

6. With regard to paragraphs 31 to 34, which deal with the responsibilities of Civil and Public Works officers in charge of relief-works, the Government of India are aware that the present Codes are on this point somewhat wanting in clearness, and that the degree of control over the management of relief-works exercised by the Divisional Commissioner and the District officer in the present famine, has been greater in some provinces than in others. It is desirable that the recommendations

made in this portion of the Note should be carefully examined in the light of the actual practice and experience of each Local Government, and that amendments may be proposed in the Provincial Famine Codes embodying the final views of the Local Government. It is noticed by Mr. Higham that in most provinces during the present famine the chief responsibility for the management of the relief-works has been placed by the Local Government on Superintending Engineers, and that in practice the Collector of the district has not interfered. But the Government of India apprehend that the District Officer has at least been allowed a voice as to the opening and closing of relief-works in his district, as to the substitution of piece-work or modified task-work for the task-system of the Codes, and as to purely non-technical questions connected with the management of the works. While therefore the Government of India are anxious to define more clearly the respective duties of Civil and Departmental officers, and to give the latter the powers which in practice they have been authorised by Local Governments to exercise, they consider that a case does not exist from departure from the principle laid down in paragraph 130 of the Famine Commission's report.

7. The question of relief-works accounts discussed in paragraph 40 of the Note should be considered in connection with the suggestions made by Mr. Higham in an Appendix, on which the opinions of Local Governments are invited.

8. The Government of India will be glad to have the opinions of Local Governments on the recommendations of the Note not later than the 1st March 1898. They propose to fix that date also for the submission by Local Governments of such amendments to the Provincial Famine Codes as the experience of the present famine may have shown to be necessary, not only in respect of the chapters regarding relief-works, but in respect also of other parts of the present Codes and their Appendices.

Order.—Ordered that a copy of the above resolution be forwarded to Mr. T. Higham, C.I.E., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India in the Public Works Department, for information, and to the Local Governments and Administrations noted in the margin, for information and guidance.

Ordered also that copy be forwarded to the Foreign, Finance and Public Works Departments, for information.

Government of Madras.
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" " the North-Western Provinces and Oudh.
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" " Burma.
Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces.
" " " Assam.
" " " Coorg.
" " " Ajmere.
Resident at Hyderabad.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) J. HOLDERNESS,
Dy. Secretary to the Govt. of India.

To the Secretary to the Government of Madras.

Order—No. 958, Revenue, dated 16th November 1897.

Miscellaneous.

Forwarded to the Famine Commissioner for report. The questions raised in Mr. Higham's note should be discussed at the conference ordered in G.O., No. 899, dated 29th October 1897, with special reference to the observations made by the Government of India in the letter read above, and the report submitted to Government so as to reach it not later than the 1st February.

2. The Chief Engineer, Public Works Department, will also be requested to favour Government with his views on the changes proposed by Mr. Higham.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Secretary to Government.

To the Famine Commissioner.
" the Chief Engineer, Public Works Department.

Exd. Shaik Karim.
250 Copies.

These Reports should be put up into Co 3284 W dy

24/11/97

25.1.98

Government {1897} of Madras.

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G.O., No. 958, 16th November 1897.

No 3284 W a/24-11-97
Communicated to officers
concerned in continuation of
NOVEMBER. G.O No 3176 W a/13th November 1897
The attention of the Chief
Engineer P W D is invited
to para 2.

1897 NB dated
C. E P. W. D
C. E for I
S E's

Mr. Higham's final note on the management of famine relief-works and revision of Provincial Famine Codes.

Forwarding, with remarks to the Famine Commissioner, for report, Government of India resolution forwarding for information and guidance —.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

Extracts from the Proceedings of the Government of India in the Department of Revenue and Agriculture, No. 31—237-2-F., dated Simla, the 25th October 1897.

Read—

(1) Government of India Resolution No. 35—33, dated 24th August 1893.
(2) „ „ Circular No. 16-104—1, dated 13th February 1897.
(3) „ „ Resolution No. 20—157-1, dated 12th May 1897.

Resolution.—By the last Resolution read in the preamble Mr. T. Higham, C.I.E., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India in the Department of Public Works, was deputed in May last to visit the famine relief-works then in progress in the different provinces, and to make inquiries on matters in connection with them, regarding which the Government of India wished to obtain information which might be useful for a future revision of the Famine Codes, or the administration of the next famine. Mr. Higham completed his tour of inspection by the end of July, and has since submitted full Notes on the management and special features of relief-works in each province, which have been communicated to the several Local Governments and Administrations concerned. These Notes are of great interest and value, and the Governor-General in Council desires to record his acknowledgments to Mr. Higham for the assiduity with which he discharged his inspection duties at the most trying season of the year, and for the care and ability with which he has placed the results of his enquiry before the Government of India.

2. In a Final Note which accompanies this Resolution Mr. Higham makes certain recommendations based on a comparison of the different methods of managing relief-works which came under his notice, and on a consideration of the extent to which the relief-work system embodied in the Famine Codes has in practice proved efficacious and economical. He is of opinion that, regarded as a whole, the system has well stood the severe strain to which it has been subjected. But he points out that numerous departures from the regulations of the Famine Codes with regard to relief-works have been found necessary by several, if not all, the Local Governments, and that the Codes no longer represent the actual practice approved by them. In these circumstances more or less extensive amendments in the chapters of these Codes which deal with the organization of famine labour will be required, and Mr. Higham's recommendations are accordingly now placed before Local Governments in order that they may receive careful consideration in connection with such revision.

3. The first group of recommendations deal with the classificatian and wages of relief-workers employed on task work, and their general purport is towards a simplification of the present Code regulations on the lines adopted in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Bengal and the Central Provinces in the present famine campaign. The Government of India will be glad to know how far Mr. Higham's detailed recommendations under this head (paragraphs 1 to 20) are accepted by Local Governments, and what alterations in the Provincial Codes will be thereby necessitated. Succinctly stated, these recommendations are—

(1) Relief-workers to be classified into three classes, or (I) Special, (II) Diggers, (III) Carriers.

(2) The wages of the three classes to be the cash equivalent of—

42 ounces of grain	in the case of class I.
38 ounces of grain	in the case of class II.
26 ounces of grain	in the case of class III.
16 ounces of grain	in the case of children between 7 and 12.
22 ounces of grain	in the case of adult dependants.
10 ounces of grain	in the case of children dependants.

(3) No distinction in regard to wage to be made between males and females, and children over 12 to be reckoned as adults.

(4) A "standard" task for class III to be fixed in each province; the task for class II being fixed for each work by some competent authority.

(5) On any work on which a Sunday wage is not given, workers in classes II and III to be permitted to earn an extra wage by the performance of a task in excess of that prescribed.

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(True Extract.)

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Dy. Secretary to the Govt. of India.

To the Secretary to the Government of Madras.

Order—No. 958, Revenue, dated 16th November 1897.

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Secretary to Government.

To the Famine Commissioner.
" the Chief Engineer, Public Works Department.

Exd. Shaik Karim.
250 Copies.

Public Works Department.

Government {1897} of Madras.

REVENUE.

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G.O., No. 919, 8th November 1897. P 335 / Nov 12 97

Communicated to the officers concerned in continuation of G.O. 3284 W dated 24th November 1897

NOVEMBER. (sd) W.B. deW W

Chief Engineer for Irrigation
Superintending Engineers.

Provincial Famine Code.

Communicating to the Famine Commissioner, with remarks, letter from the Government of India regarding the revision of the —.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

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 25th October 1897, Circular No. 32—237-3-F. :—

With reference to Resolution No. 31—237-2-F. (Famine), dated the 25th October 1897, of the Government of India in the Revenue Department, on the subject of Mr. Higham's deputation to inspect famine-relief works and of the suggestions for the amendment of the Famine Codes in certain respects contained in his final note, I am directed to say that the Government of India have fixed the 1st March next as the date by which all amendments of the Provincial Famine Codes proposed by local Governments should reach them. The Government of India hope that this date will be punctually observed.

2. The most important chapters of the codes are concerned with the organization of relief works, and Mr. Higham's final note, on the suggestions contained in which the opinions of local Governments have already been invited, covers in effect the whole of this subject.

3. With regard to the subject of *gratuitous relief*, it may be observed that the Madras Famine Code provides that at the early stage of distress, unless otherwise directed by the Government, gratuitous relief to those who cannot earn wages on relief works and are otherwise unable to support themselves, shall be given only in the form of cooked food at central kitchens. Village relief in the form of doles to persons in their homes is under this system kept in reserve. In most of the other Provincial Codes, kitchens are regarded as adjuncts to relief works for the relief of the children and non-working dependants of relief labourers. But in the present famine the expedient of kitchens apart from relief works has been largely adopted in Bengal, in the Central Provinces and elsewhere, either with the object of providing for indigent children in the most suitable manner, or as a precaution against adult persons starving on the reduction or cessation of gratuitous relief in the homes of the people, or as a substitute for village relief in the form of doles where distress is not acute or where village relief from special reasons is difficult to administer. The Government of India would like the regulations bearing on kitchens in each Provincial Code to be carefully examined and revised, where necessary, so as to bring them into accordance with the recent practice in each province as regards this form of relief.

4. In the matter of gratuitous relief to respectable families in large towns the codes might, it is thought, embody some of the practical expedients which have been adopted by local Governments in this respect during the late famine. It is believed that in some cases the organization of such relief was placed with local committees, which worked partly with private subscriptions or local funds, and partly with a grant-in-aid from the local Government.

5. In some provinces gratuitous relief to the incapable poor in their homes has been given in the late famine in the form of uncooked grain, and in other provinces, of money. The Government of India would like to have the opinion of local Governments as to which form of relief is, on the whole, best, or in what circumstances the gift of money is preferable to that of grain.

6. With regard to *poor-houses* it is suggested that the regulations respecting them should provide for the systematic weeding of the inmates, with the object of placing those who are fit to work on relief works, and returning to their villages, to be there gratuitously relieved, those who are incapable of work and have settled homes. The question of the transfer of poor-house inmates from the particular poor-house in which they have sought refuge to the poor-house of their own district or sub-division, with a view to their being there dealt with in the manner above described, is one which frequently arises, and which is possibly of sufficient importance to be treated of in the revised regulations.

7. The reference to *orphans* contained in the present codes is brief, and the Government of India would be glad to know what additions, if any, to existing provisions of the codes with respect to the care and disposal of orphans, commend themselves to the local Governments.

8. *Relief to weavers and artizans* has not, so far as the Government of India are aware, been given to any great extent, except in the Madras Presidency during the late famine. The Government of India would like to learn whether the codes require any alteration or expansion on this point.

Order—No. 919, Revenue, 8th November 1897.

Miscellaneous.

Communicated to the Famine Commissioner with reference to G.O., No. 899, dated 29th October 1897. The questions raised in paragraphs 3 to 8 of the letter read above should be discussed at the conference as well as those raised in papers already communicated to the Famine Commissioner and of which a memorandum is appended to this order.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Secretary to Government.

To the Famine Commissioner (with memorandum).
,, the Public Works Department.
,, the Public Department.
,, the Local and Municipal Department.
,, the Financial Department.
,, the Accountant-General.

APPENDIX.

Memorandum of questions to be discussed at the conference.

1. Whether the intermediate gang piece-work system can be introduced on works with success.

2. Whether gratuitous relief should be given to the dependants of workers on test works.

3. The Government of India objects to the Madras system of classifying relief workers under which the gang is the unit of classification, and suggests the system in force elsewhere under which the individual workers composing a gang are first classified with reference to their capacity and the task of the gang is then fixed with reference to the number of A, B, C and D units it contains. May the latter system be adopted?

4. It also takes exception to children of 12 to 16 years belonging to the labouring classes being classed as B adults. Are these children capable of turning out adult tasks? If not, may they be classed as C adults as in Bombay? (Section 73, Bombay Code).

5. Are the present equivalents 1 man = 2 women = 4 children adopted in the code task-tables correct? The North-West Provinces equivalents are 1 man = 2 women = 3 children.

6. Mr. Higham states that the code tasks are too high and those of the district schedules too low. How are proper tasks to be fixed? Should tasks be fixed authoritatively for each description of soil and work, or would it be better to fix standard averages to be modified at the discretion of the local officers to suit local conditions?

7. It was usual during the past distress to make deductions of one-tenth and one-fifth, respectively, from the standard tasks in the case of labourers in fair or low physical condition. Are such deductions necessary or desirable?

8. When a gang, without being actually weakly, is unable to turn out the prescribed task, should the case be met by a reduction of the class of the gang or of its task only?

9. The Government of India objects to deductions from tasks on account of the distance which the labourers have to walk to and from the works, and expresses the opinion that as in Bombay labourers must be encouraged to live at the works and that no distance allowance should be made. May the Government of India's opinion above be acted on?

10. Does section 106 of the code as last revised meet all the requirements of the case in regard to fining for short work?

11. It was frequently reported, especially from the northern districts, that the code wage for the woman differed but little from that of the man, and that the works consequently proved unduly attractive to the woman. Should the woman's wage be reduced?

12. The system of relieving weavers contemplated by the framers of the Famine Code is that described in Appendix VII. Under this system, the Government buys from any weaver all cloths of specified descriptions which he may wish to sell on behalf of himself or any one else, paying him partly in materials and partly in money. It will be noted that no initial advances are contemplated, and that no limitation is placed on the number of cloths bought nor account taken as to whether the cloths are woven by the weavers and their families only or with the aid of coolies, the restriction on excessive expenditure being the payment of C wages and the fixing of suitable tasks. This system has been entirely departed from during the present distress. Initial advances have been allowed; advances have been limited to the cloths which could be woven only by the weavers and their families. The tasks fixed have been very light generally with the result that large numbers have come on Government relief; instructions have had therefore to be issued that relief should be restricted to owners of single looms, and latterly, that advances should not be made oftener than once in the period prescribed in the task-table as necessary for weaving; considerable difficulty is also experienced in the recovery of the initial advances. What is the proper system of relieving weavers? How and under what limitations are their non-working dependants to be relieved?

13. Do the instructions issued in G.O., No. 593, dated 19th July 1897, sufficiently define the relative positions of the Revenue and the Public Works Departments in the administration of relief works?

14. With reference to paragraph 6 of the order, which of the following should be deemed strictly professional and be assigned to the Public Works Department:—

(i) Classification.
(ii) Ganging.
(iii) Tasking.
(iv) Regulation of wages.
(v) Measuring up of work.
(vi) Fining.
(vii) Water-supply.
(viii) Hutting.
(ix) Kitchens.
(x) Doles to children of workers.
(xi) Provision and custody of tools.
(xii) Locality, opening and closing of works.
(xiii) Provision of work in the specified locality.
(xiv) Provision of funds and establishments for works.

15. *Payment of wages.*—Mr. Higham objects to the principle enunciated in paragraph 23 of Appendix VI that paymasters should be independent of the Public Works Department. May these be made subordinate to the Public Works Department?

16. The Government of India suggests that greater powers should be given to the Public Works Department than allowed by the above order. In what directions may this be done?

Exd. Shaik Karim.

80 Copies.

Government {1897} of Madras.

REVENUE.

Recd. } 1897. *Enclosures*
Regd. } *Spare copies*

G.O., No. 958, 16th November 1897.

NOVEMBER.

Mr. Higham's final note on the management of famine relief-works and revision of Provincial Famine Codes.

Forwarding, with remarks to the Famine Commissioner, for report, Government of India resolution forwarding for information and guidance —.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

Extracts from the Proceedings of the Government of India in the Department of Revenue and Agriculture, No. 31—237-2-F., dated Simla, the 25th October 1897.

Read—

(1) Government of India Resolution No. 35—33, dated 24th August 1893.
(2) " " Circular No. 16-104—1, dated 13th February 1897.
(3) " " Resolution No. 20—157-1, dated 12th May 1897.

Resolution.—By the last Resolution read in the preamble Mr. T. Higham, C.I.E., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India in the Department of Public Works, was deputed in May last to visit the famine relief-works then in progress in the different provinces, and to make inquiries on matters in connection with them, regarding which the Government of India wished to obtain information which might be useful for a future revision of the Famine Codes, or the administration of the next famine. Mr. Higham completed his tour of inspection by the end of July, and has since submitted full Notes on the management and special features of relief-works in each province, which have been communicated to the several Local Governments and Administrations concerned. These Notes are of great interest and value, and the Governor-General in Council desires to record his acknowledgments to Mr. Higham for the assiduity with which he discharged his inspection duties at the most trying season of the year, and for the care and ability with which he has placed the results of his enquiry before the Government of India.

2. In a Final Note which accompanies this Resolution Mr. Higham makes certain recommendations based on a comparison of the different methods of managing relief-works which came under his notice, and on a consideration of the extent to which the relief-work system embodied in the Famine Codes has in practice proved efficacious and economical. He is of opinion that, regarded as a whole, the system has well stood the severe strain to which it has been subjected. But he points out that numerous departures from the regulations of the Famine Codes with regard to relief-works have been found necessary by several, if not all, the Local Governments, and that the Codes no longer represent the actual practice approved by them. In these circumstances more or less extensive amendments in the chapters of these Codes which deal with the organization of famine labour will be required, and Mr. Higham's recommendations are accordingly now placed before Local Governments in order that they may receive careful consideration in connection with such revision.

3. The first group of recommendations deal with the classificatian and wages of relief-workers employed on task work, and their general purport is towards a simplification of the present Code regulations on the lines adopted in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Bengal and the Central Provinces in the present famine campaign. The Government of India will be glad to know how far Mr. Higham's detailed recommendations under this head (paragraphs 1 to 20) are accepted by Local Governments, and what alterations in the Provincial Codes will be thereby necessitated. Succinctly stated, these recommendations are—

(1) Relief-workers to be classified into three classes, or (I) Special, (II) Diggers, (III) Carriers.

(2) The wages of the three classes to be the cash equivalent of—

42 ounces of grain	in the case of class I.
38 ounces of grain	in the case of class II.
26 ounces of grain	in the case of class III.
16 ounces of grain	in the case of children between 7 and 12.
22 ounces of grain	in the case of adult dependants.
10 ounces of grain	in the case of children dependants.

Government {1897} of Madras.

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Public Works (187) Department

Government {1897} of Madras.

REVENUE.

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G.O., No. 958, 16th November 1897.

No 3284 W dy 24.11.97.
Copy to officers concerned

NOVEMBER. In Continuation of G.O.
3176 W dy 13th November 1897
the attention of the Chief
Engineer P.W. Dept is invited
to para 2.
(1) WB dew

To
C.E P.W.D
C.E for I
S.E.S.

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(3) No distinction in regard to wage to be made between males and females, and children over 12 to be reckoned as adults.

(4) A "standard" task for class III to be fixed in each province; the task for class II being fixed for each work by some competent authority.

(5) On any work on which a Sunday wage is not given, workers in classes II and III to be permitted to earn an extra wage by the performance of a task in excess of that prescribed.

(6) On any work on which a Sunday wage is given and on which the workers in class III exceed by more than 10 per cent. the number actually required, an extra wage to be earnable by class II alone.

4. Paragraphs 21 to 24 and paragraphs 35 and 36 of the note deal with the desirability of substituting "pure piece-work" or "petty contract," as distinguished from the modified forms of task-work which have been experimentally tried in several provinces under the name of "intermediate system," for the task-work system of the present Codes, to a greater extent than has hitherto been done. It will be observed that the note indicates that piece-work, such as is discussed, has not had sufficient trial to enable a conclusion to be formed as to how far it is well adapted for relief purposes: and that all that is urged is that such modifications should be made in the letter of the Famine Codes as will permit of piece-work being resorted to, should this be found desirable, instead of the task-work system, when relief-works are required in a district, especially in the early stage of a famine, and when the relief works consist of works of permanent public utility. In the "Principles for regulating expenditure upon public works in time of Famine" circulated in the early part of the year the Government of India have already expressed approval to petty piece-work as a form of relief when the existence of distress is first indicated by a demand for labour on the part of the able-bodied, and they will consider favourably any amendments for giving recognition to it within due limits in the Famine Codes that may be recommended by Local Governments. With regard to the advantages claimed for piece-work over task-work in the final note, the Government of India think that some, at least, of the defects and inconveniences attending the present Code system of task-work will be considerably reduced by the adoption of the simplified classification and wage-scale proposed by Mr. Higham, and by daily payments of the labourers. The simpler the system, the less occasion there is for large establishments, and the less room for successful fraud.

Circular No. 16-104—1 Famine), dated 13th February 1897.

5. Paragraphs 25 to 29 of the note contain recommendations as to the principles on which the programmes of relief-works should be drawn up and as to the desirability of including in them a greater number of large works of permanent utility. The Government of India concur in the view that large works are preferable to small works as the back bone of famine-relief whenever the necessity arises for employing relief labour on an extensive scale, and they consider that the provisions contained in one or two of the Provincial Codes as to reserving large works for the late stage of a famine should be revised. They would like to receive the opinions of Local Governments as to the possibility of improving the programmes of famine works in the manner suggested by Mr. Higham, and as to the extent to which relief labour can be drafted to considerable distances. If any amendments on these points in the Famine Codes suggest themselves to Local Governments, they should be reported. Mr. Higham's remark in paragraph 29 that in the next great famine there will probably be less room for a programme of small works than hitherto, owing to the exhaustion of this class of works in the late famine, appears to the Government of India to be indisputably true. And this makes it all the more necessary that the question discussed by him should receive the fullest consideration.

6. With regard to paragraphs 31 to 34, which deal with the responsibilities of Civil and Public Works officers in charge of relief-works, the Government of India are aware that the present Codes are on this point somewhat wanting in clearness, and that the degree of control over the management of relief-works exercised by the Divisional Commissioner and the District officer in the present famine, has been greater in some provinces than in others. It is desirable that the recommendations

made in this portion of the Note should be carefully examined in the light of the actual practice and experience of each Local Government, and that amendments may be proposed in the Provincial Famine Codes embodying the final views of the Local Government. It is noticed by Mr. Higham that in most provinces during the present famine the chief responsibility for the management of the relief-works has been placed by the Local Government on Superintending Engineers, and that in practice the Collector of the district has not interfered. But the Government of India apprehend that the District Officer has at least been allowed a voice as to the opening and closing of relief-works in his district, as to the substitution of piece-work or modified task-work for the task-system of the Codes, and as to purely non-technical questions connected with the management of the works. While therefore the Government of India are anxious to define more clearly the respective duties of Civil and Departmental officers, and to give the latter the powers which in practice they have been authorised by Local Governments to exercise, they consider that a case does not exist from departing from the principle laid down in paragraph 130 of the Famine Commission's report.

7. The question of relief-works accounts discussed in paragraph 40 of the Note should be considered in connection with the suggestions made by Mr. Higham in an Appendix, on which the opinions of Local Governments are invited.

8. The Government of India will be glad to have the opinions of Local Governments on the recommendations of the Note not later than the 1st March 1898. They propose to fix that date also for the submission by Local Governments of such amendments to the Provincial Famine Codes as the experience of the present famine may have shown to be necessary, not only in respect of the chapters regarding relief-works, but in respect also of other parts of the present Codes and their Appendices.

Order.—Ordered that a copy of the above resolution be forwarded to Mr. T. Higham, C.I.E., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India in the Public Works Department, for information, and to the Local Governments and Administrations noted in the margin, for information and guidance.

Ordered also that copy be forwarded to the Foreign, Finance and Public Works Departments, for information.

Government of Madras.
" " Bombay.
" " Bengal.
" " the North-Western Provinces and Oudh.
" " the Punjab.
" " Burma.
Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces.
" " " Assam.
" " " Coorg.
" " " Ajmere.
Resident at Hyderabad.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) J. HOLDERNESS,
Dy. Secretary to the Govt. of India.

To the Secretary to the Government of Madras.

Order—No. 958, Revenue, dated 16th November 1897.

Miscellaneous.

Forwarded to the Famine Commissioner for report. The questions raised in Mr. Higham's note should be discussed at the conference ordered in G.O., No. 899, dated 29th October 1897, with special reference to the observations made by the Government of India in the letter read above, and the report submitted to Government so as to reach it not later than the 1st February.

2. The Chief Engineer, Public Works Department, will also be requested to favour Government with his views on the changes proposed by Mr. Higham.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Secretary to Government.

To the Famine Commissioner.
" the Chief Engineer, Public Works Department.

Exd. Shaik Karim.
250 Copies.

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5. Paragraphs 25 to 29 of the note contain recommendations as to the principles on which the programmes of relief-works should be drawn up and as to the desirability of including in them a greater number of large works of permanent utility. The Government of India concur in the view that large works are preferable to small works as the back bone of famine-relief whenever the necessity arises for employing relief labour on an extensive scale, and they consider that the provisions contained in one or two of the Provincial Codes as to reserving large works for the late stage of a famine should be revised. They would like to receive the opinions of Local Governments as to the possibility of improving the programmes of famine works in the manner suggested by Mr. Higham, and as to the extent to which relief labour can be drafted to considerable distances. If any amendments on these points in the Famine Codes suggest themselves to Local Governments, they should be reported. Mr. Higham's remark in paragraph 29 that in the next great famine there will probably be less room for a programme of small works than hitherto, owing to the exhaustion of this class of works in the late famine, appears to the Government of India to be indisputably true. And this makes it all the more necessary that the question discussed by him should receive the fullest consideration.

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made in this portion of the Note should be carefully examined in the light of the actual practice and experience of each Local Government, and that amendments may be proposed in the Provincial Famine Codes embodying the final views of the Local Government. It is noticed by Mr. Higham that in most provinces during the present famine the chief responsibility for the management of the relief-works has been placed by the Local Government on Superintending Engineers, and that in practice the Collector of the district has not interfered. But the Government of India apprehend that the District Officer has at least been allowed a voice as to the opening and closing of relief-works in his district, as to the substitution of piece-work or modified task-work for the task-system of the Codes, and as to purely non-technical questions connected with the management of the works. While therefore the Government of India are anxious to define more clearly the respective duties of Civil and Departmental officers, and to give the latter the powers which in practice they have been authorised by Local Governments to exercise, they consider that a case does not exist from departing from the principle laid down in paragraph 130 of the Famine Commission's report.

7. The question of relief-works accounts discussed in paragraph 40 of the Note should be considered in connection with the suggestions made by Mr. Higham in an Appendix, on which the opinions of Local Governments are invited.

8. The Government of India will be glad to have the opinions of Local Governments on the recommendations of the Note not later than the 1st March 1898. They propose to fix that date also for the submission by Local Governments of such amendments to the Provincial Famine Codes as the experience of the present famine may have shown to be necessary, not only in respect of the chapters regarding relief-works, but in respect also of other parts of the present Codes and their Appendices.

Order.—Ordered that a copy of the above resolution be forwarded to Mr. T. Higham, C.I.E., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India in the Public Works Department, for information, and to the Local Governments and Administrations noted in the margin, for information and guidance.

Ordered also that copy be forwarded to the Foreign, Finance and Public Works Departments, for information.

Government of Madras.
" " Bombay.
" " Bengal.
" " the North-Western Provinces and Oudh.
" " the Punjab.
" " Burma.
Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces.
" " " Assam.
" " " Coorg.
" " " Ajmere.
Resident at Hyderabad.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) J. HOLDERNESS,
Dy. Secretary to the Govt. of India.

To the Secretary to the Government of Madras.

ORDER—No. 958, Revenue, dated 16th November 1897.

Miscellaneous.

Forwarded to the Famine Commissioner for report. The questions raised in Mr. Higham's note should be discussed at the conference ordered in G.O., No. 899, dated 29th October 1897, with special reference to the observations made by the Government of India in the letter read above, and the report submitted to Government so as to reach it not later than the 1st February.

2. The Chief Engineer, Public Works Department, will also be requested to favour Government with his views on the changes proposed by Mr. Higham.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Secretary to Government.

To the Famine Commissioner.
" the Chief Engineer, Public Works Department.

Exd. Shaik Karim.
250 Copies.

(3) No distinction in regard to wage to be made between males and females, and children over 12 to be reckoned as adults.

(4) A "standard" task for class III to be fixed in each province; the task for class II being fixed for each work by some competent authority.

(5) On any work on which a Sunday wage is not given, workers in classes II and III to be permitted to earn an extra wage by the performance of a task in excess of that prescribed.

(6) On any work on which a Sunday wage is given and on which the workers in class III exceed by more than 10 per cent. the number actually required, an extra wage to be earnable by class II alone.

4. Paragraphs 21 to 24 and paragraphs 35 and 36 of the note deal with the desirability of substituting "pure piece-work" or "petty contract," as distinguished from the modified forms of task-work which have been experimentally tried in several provinces under the name of "intermediate system," for the task-work system of the present Codes, to a greater extent than has hitherto been done. It will be observed that the note indicates that piece-work, such as is discussed, has not had sufficient trial to enable a conclusion to be formed as to how far it is well adapted for relief purposes: and that all that is urged is that such modifications should be made in the letter of the Famine Codes as will permit of piece-work being resorted to, should this be found desirable, instead of the task-work system, when relief-works are required in a district, especially in the early stage of a famine, and when the relief works consist of works of permanent public utility. In the "Principles for regulating expenditure upon public works in time of Famine" circulated in the early part of the year the Government of India have already expressed approval to petty piece-work as a form of relief when the existence of distress is first indicated by a demand for labour on the part of the able-bodied, and they will consider favourably any amendments for giving recognition to it within due limits in the Famine Codes that may be recommended by Local Governments. With regard to the advantages claimed for piece-work over task-work in the final note, the Government of India think that some, at least, of the defects and inconveniences attending the present Code system of task-work will be considerably reduced by the adoption of the simplified classification and wage-scale proposed by Mr. Higham, and by daily payments of the labourers. The simpler the system, the less occasion there is for large establishments, and the less room for successful fraud.

(Circular No. 16-104—1 Famine), dated 13th February 1897.

5. Paragraphs 25 to 29 of the note contain recommendations as to the principles on which the programmes of relief-works should be drawn up and as to the desirability of including in them a greater number of large works of permanent utility. The Government of India concur in the view that large works are preferable to small works as the back bone of famine-relief whenever the necessity arises for employing relief labour on an extensive scale, and they consider that the provisions contained in one or two of the Provincial Codes as to reserving large works for the late stage of a famine should be revised. They would like to receive the opinions of Local Governments as to the possibility of improving the programmes of famine works in the manner suggested by Mr. Higham, and as to the extent to which relief labour can be drafted to considerable distances. If any amendments on these points in the Famine Codes suggest themselves to Local Governments, they should be reported. Mr. Higham's remark in paragraph 29 that in the next great famine there will probably be less room for a programme of small works than hitherto, owing to the exhaustion of this class of works in the late famine, appears to the Government of India to be indisputably true. And this makes it all the more necessary that the question discussed by him should receive the fullest consideration.

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Ed. Shaik Karim.
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