Public Works (1899) Department.

G.O., No. 1334 W

DATED 25th May 1899.

Madras Govt. Orders on Famine Conferences

[Despatch Abstract.]

Committee, Approving and sanctioning the proposals of the Chief Engineer for the formation of a — to consider and report on certain questions relating to tasks in Relief works referred to in paras 9, 10 and 11 of Go. 590 Rev: dy 11. Oct 98.

260/15

B

P. W. 26, 250-27-4-99.

BUILDINGS AND ROADS.
CIVIL WORKS.

Government {1899} of Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

Recd. } 1899. *Enclosures*

Regd. } 1899. *Spare copies*

G.O., No. 1334 W., 25th May 1899.

MAY.

Committee

Approving and sanctioning the proposals of the Chief Engineer for the formation of a — to consider and report on certain questions relating to tasks in relief works referred to in paragraphs 9, 10 and 11 of G.O., No. 590, Revenue, dated 11th October 1898.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

Buildings and Roads.
Civil Works.

READ—the following papers:—

G.O., No. 845 W., dated 18th March 1899.

Note by the Chief Engineer, Public Works Department.

With reference to paragraph 2 of G.O., No. 845 W., dated 18th March 1899, I beg to propose that the Committee ordered in paragraph 9 of G.O., No. 590, Revenue, dated 11th October 1898, be composed of the following officers:—

President.

Mr. W. B. deWinton, Chief Engineer.

Members.

Mr. J. C. Johnston, Executive Engineer, 1st grade.
" H. E. Clerk, " " 2nd "
" J. M. Lacey, Assistant " 1st "

Mr. Johnston was in charge of the Kurnool division during a portion of the famine of 1896–97. Mr. Clerk was in charge of the Bellary division during a portion of the famine. Mr. Lacey was in charge of a Sub-division of the Ganjám division throughout the famine.

2. The Committee to meet at Ootacamund on a date to be fixed by the President, and to consider and report upon the matters referred to in paragraphs 9, 10 and 11 of G.O., No. 590, Revenue, dated 11th October 1898.

(Signed) W. B. DEWINTON,
Chief Engineer.

19th May 1899.

ORDER—No. 1334 W., dated 25th May 1899.

The proposals of the Chief Engineer, Public Works Department, are approved and sanctioned.

(True Extract.)

Under Secretary to Government.

To J. C. Johnston, Esq., through Superintending Engineer, III Circle.
" H. E. Clerk, Esq., " " " III "
" J. M. Lacey, Esq., " " " I "
" other Superintending Engineers.
" the Chief Engineer for Irrigation.
" the " Public Works Department.
" the Examiner, Public Works Accounts.
" the Revenue Department.

Exd. P. Seetharam.

P. W. DEPARTMENT.

READ the following:—

G. O. No. 845 W. of 18 March 1899.
Note by the Chief Engineer P. W. Department
of May 1899.

Circulated to

ORDER. No. 1334 W. of 25-5-99

The proposals of the Chief Engineer P. W. Dept. are approved and Sanctioned.

J. C. Johnston Esq. thro' S. E. III circle
H. E. Clerk Esq. — do —
J. M. Lacey Esquire thro' S. E. I circle
Other Supt. Engineers.
Chief Engineer for Irrigation
— do — P. W. Dept.
The Rev. Dept.
The Ex. P. W. A.

P. W. 42-A.
1,000—2-3-99.

P. W. Department

2R

Note by the Chief Engineer P.W.D.

With reference to para 2 of G.O. No. 845 W dated 18 March 1899, I beg to propose that the Committee ordered in Para 9 of G.O. No. 5-90 Rev. of 11th October, 1898, be composed of the following officers.

President

Mr. W. B. Addinton, Chief Engr.

Members

Mr J. C. Johnston, Ex. Engr. 1st Grade.

" H. E. Clark, Ex. Engr. 2nd Grade.

" J. M. Lacey Asst. Engr. 1st Grade.

Mr Johnston was in charge of the Kurnool Division during a portion of the famine of 1896-97. Mr Clark was in charge of the Bellary Dn during a portion of the famine. Mr Lacey

was

was in charge of a Sub-division of the Ganjam Division throughout the famine.

2. The Committee to meet at Ootacamund on a date to be fixed by the President and to consider and report upon the matters referred to in paras 9, 10 and 11 of G.O. 590 Rev: of 11 October 1898.

x Flag 'O'

[signature] 19.5.99

E.C.

P. W. DEPARTMENT.

7

READ the following :—

Go. No: 845 W of 18 March 1899

1334 W

Circulated to ~~His Excellency~~ The Governor

FOR ORDERS

With reference to Para 2 of Go. No: 845 W dated 18 March, which has been left by Colonel Smart for my disposal, I beg to propose that the Committee ordered in Para 9 of Go. No: 590 Rev: of 11 October 1898, be composed of the following officers.

Flag O.

Appd. A.E.H. 18.5.99

President

Mr. W. B. de Winton, Chief Engineer.

Members.

Mr J. C. Johnston, Sn. Engineer, 1st grade.

" H. E. Clerk, Sn. Engineer 2nd grade.

" J. M. Lacey, Asstt Engr, 1st grade.

Mr Johnston was in charge of the Kurnool Division during a portion of the famine of 1896-97. Mr Clerk was in charge of the

Bella

C.A.W.

[P. W. 43. / 1,000—28-2-99.]

H.E. 10.5.99 R 19.5.99

Bellary Division during a portion of the famine. Mr Lacey was in charge of a Sub Division of the Ganjam Division throughout the famine.

2. The Committee to meet at Ootacamund on a date to be fixed by the President, and to consider & report upon the matters referred to in Paras 9, 10 & 11 of G.O. 590 Rev: of 11 October 1898.

Flag. [illegible]

[illegible] 10.5.99

P. W. Dept.

C.No. 3046 re Famine Conference

67

From the Public Works Dept. No. [illegible] W.D. 18 March 1899.

E.W. For orders

Note in order

In para 2 of G.O. No. 845 W.D. 18 March 1899, the Chief Engineer is directed to take early action in regard to paras 9, 10 and 11 of the order in the Rev. Dept.

The following are the points on which action is to be taken.

Para 9: - To submit proposals as to the constitution of a Committee to consider the following matters: -

(1) Whether detailed schedules should not be prepared for each taluk, so as to leave as little room as possible for alterations, and so as to make deductions in account of excessive tasks as few as possible.

(2) The preparation of tables of standard tasks

With refce to para 2 of G.O. No. 590 to detail 18 March, which has been left by Col Smart his [illegible] I beg to propose that the Committee [illegible] in Para 9 of G.O. ~~[illegible]~~ No. 590 Rev. of 11 Oct 1898 be composed of the following officers

President

W. B. de Montin. Chief Engr

Members

J. C. Johnston Ex Engr 1st Grade

H. G. Clark Ex Engr 2nd Grade

J. M. Lacey Asst Engr 1st Grade

Bellary Division during a portion of the famine. Mr Lacey was in charge of a Sub Division of the Ganjam Division throughout the famine.

2. The Committee to meet at Ootacamund on a date to be fixed by the President, and to consider & report upon the matters referred to in Paras 9, 10 & 11 of G.O. 590 Rev: of 11 October 1898.

Flag. [illegible]

[illegible] 10.5.99

P.W. Dept

C.No. 3046 re - Famine Conference

From the Public Works Dept. No. 8 — dd 18 March 1899.

E.W. For orders

Note for orders

In para 2 of G.O. No. 845 W dd 18 March 1899, the Chief Engineer is directed to take early action in regard to paras 9, 10 and 11 of the order in the Rev. Dept.

The following are the points on which action is to be taken.

Para 9: - To submit proposals as to the constitution of a Committee to consider the following matters: -

(1) Whether detailed schedules should not be prepared for each taluk, so as to leave as little room as possible for alterations, and so as to make deductions on account of excessive tasks as few as possible.

(2) The preparation of tables of standard tasks

With refce to para 2 of G.O. No. 845 W dd 18 March, which has been left by Col Smart his [illegible] I beg to propose that the Committee [illegible] in Para 9 of G.O. ~~[illegible]~~ No 590 Rev. of 11 Oct 1898 be composed of the following officers

President

W. B. de Montin. Chief Engr

Members

F. C. Johnston Ex Engr 1st grade

H. G. Clark Ex Engr 2nd grade

J. M. Lacey Asst Engr 1st grade

Para 10 :- In connection with the Subject of tasks the Sanitary Commissioner has suggested that "Gangs should be divided into definite parties for excavation and carrying, and that in metal breaking the task of collection should be separated from breaking." The Chief Engineer is called on to report how far this is feasible in practice.

Para 11 :- The Govt is of opinion that when huts are built on famine works separate huts should be provided for average families and that rules should be drawn up similar to those in appendix IV of the Bombay Code. The Chief Engineer is called upon to report with what modifications these rules may be adopted.

C.S.
26 Ap 99

Mr Johnston was in charge of Kumool Dn during a portion of the famine of 1896/97
Mr Clark was in charge of the Hellay Dn during a portion of the famine.
Mr Lacey was in charge of a ratdn of Ganjam Dn throughout the famine
2. The Committee to meet at Vizagapatam on a date to be fixed by the President ×
As I am not in agreement with Mr. de Winton as to the policy of employing famine labour on large works (even if a sufficient number could be found) and the consequent break up of the family and village system I must leave this for his disposal.

Cust
27/4/99

× & to consider & report upon the matter referred to in Paras 9, 10 & 11 of G.O. 590 Rev. of 11 Oct. 98

[illegible]
9.5.99

G.O. given to Mr Clark
[illegible]
5.5.99

G.O. for [illegible]
[illegible]
9.5.99

P. W. Current No: 3046

No 845W dt 18-3-99
4094 Rev dt 13-10-98
" [illegible] dt 21-2-98
" 854 Pub dt 28-10-89
~~[illegible]~~
5168C dt 20-11-98
5162C dt 19-11-98
[illegible] Rev dt 11-10-98
[illegible] dt 13-11-98
166C dt 11-1-98
47 Rev dt 28-1-98 S.C
List of subjects to be discussed at the Conference
919 Rev dt 8-11-97 S.C
3176W dt 13-11-97 S.C
3015W dt 27-10-97
2533W dt 13-9-97
2521W dt 9-9-97
1944W dt 17-7-97
1308W dt 19-5-97
515W dt 22-2-97
3511W dt 7-12-96
2786W dt 23-10-91
267W dt 18-6-77
3065W dt 4-11-97 [illegible]
2226W dt 16-9-97 [illegible]

BUILDINGS AND ROADS.
CIVIL WORKS.

Government {1899} of Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

Recd. 11-4- } 1899. Enclosures
Regd. 11-4- } 1899. Spare copies

G.O., No. 845 W., 18th March 1899.

MARCH.

Famine Conferences

Proceedings, Revenue Department, passing orders on Board's Proceedings submitting the report of the — held at Madras in December 1897 and at Waltair in January 1898, communicated to officers of the Public Works Department, with remarks.

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O.L.S. 19 R22/5

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

Buildings and Roads.
Civil Works.

Read—the following paper :—

G.O., No. 590, Revenue, dated 11th October 1898 :—

Read—the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture), No. 52, dated 3rd February 1898 :—

Read—the following G.O., No. 893, Revenue, dated 26th October 1897 :—

Read—again G.O., No. 758, Revenue, dated 6th September 1897.

Abstract.—Ordering that a letter be despatched to the Government of India regarding the measures taken for closing relief operations in the Madras Presidency.

Read—again letter No. 759, dated 6th September 1897.

Abstract.—Furnishing the Government of India with copies of G.Os., Nos. 473 and 549 of 1897 on the subject of the measures taken to restrict relief operations in this Presidency, and stating that further orders on the subject issued by this Government will be forwarded in due course.

Read—also 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, Revenue Department, dated Simla, the 24th September 1897, No. 3067—203-8-F. :—

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 759, dated the 6th September 1897, replying to the inquiry as to whether any measures were being taken by the Government of Madras to bring famine-relief operations in the Madras Presidency to a close at an early date.

2. The Government of India are glad to observe from the correspondence accompanying your letter that the allowance made to relief workers for "distance" has been reduced, as it is clear from the letter from the Collector of Bellary, dated the 14th June 1897, to the address of the Board of Revenue that this reduction, along with others, had so diminished the task that it did not fulfil, as it should, its special object and design of testing necessity. The allowance is not made in any other part of the country where relief operations are in progress, nor is it authorized by any Famine Code. This departure from general practice might be perfectly justified, but the Government of India are impressed by the remarks of Mr. Higham in paragraph 9 of his note on the Madras relief works. It is clearly his opinion that the concession is liable in practice to be laxly, if not fraudulently, worked by the subordinate officials immediately in charge of the relief works. Again, it is a common custom in other parts of India when shelter is not provided on the works for the workers, instead of returning home every night, to put up in villages in the vicinity of the works. But, as the "distance allowance" is granted with sole reference to the distance of the workers' permanent place of residence from the works, the persons described above would become entitled to it, though they obviously do not require any such diminution of the hours of labour.

My letter No. 2794—206—2, dated the 18th August 1897.

3. The Government of India observe that in the Madras Government order of the 30th March 1897, a copy of which was received with your letter, No. 661, dated the 2nd August 1897, authorising the "distance allowance," it was laid down that shelter should, as a rule, be provided at or near the relief works; and that the distance allowance should only operate when this had not been done. The Government of India think it unfortunate that this instruction to make residence on the works the rule for persons coming from a distance, and a "distance allowance" the exception, has not been observed, and that the Famine Commissioner in this matter has been influenced by the belief that persons in real need of relief will not resort to a relief work, unless they can return every night to their homes. It has been conclusively proved by the experience of other provinces that though the residential test keeps off from the works persons who are not in actual distress, it does not thus operate when real distress prevails. In the Bombay Presidency, as will appear from the inspection notes of Mr. Higham on the relief works in Bombay, the principle of concentrating relief-labour on a few large works, of providing hutting accommodation, and of refusing a "distance" allowance, has been systematically followed throughout the present scarcity with complete success. It may not be possible in the Madras Presidency, owing to the absence of large projects, to concentrate labour to the extent to which this has been done in Bombay; but the Governor-General in Council considers that the policy is the right one, that, instead of giving them a distance allowance, the people should be indirectly encouraged to reside on the works when their homes are at a distance.

4. I am to enclose a copy of the inspection notes referred to in the preceding paragraph for the information of the Governor in Council.

Order—No. 893, Revenue, dated 26th October 1897.

Miscellaneous.

Communicated to the Famine Commissioner.

2. The question dealt with in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the letter from the Government of India should be fully discussed in the final famine report.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Secretary to Government.

Read—the following 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, Revenue and Agricultural Department, to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, Revenue Department, dated 18th August 1897, No. 2794—206-2-F. :—

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

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. 661, dated 2nd August 1897, a copy of Madras G.O., No. 616, dated 24th July 1897, has been received, which directs that the fourfold classification of works be reverted to, reduces the gratuitous dole to the amount of the ration allowed to class D relief workers, and cancels the restrictions on fining for short work laid down in paragraph 4 of the G.O., No. 216, dated 30th March 1897. These instructions however do not touch on the subject of reductions of the standard tasks, and the Government

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

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

4. In paragraphs 25—31 of the notes the relations of the officers of the Public Works Department employed on relief works with the district revenue authorities are discussed at length, and it is shown that the practice in the Presidency in this respect does not correspond with that of other provinces. The Government of India will be glad to learn the views of the Government of Madras on this very important matter, and they would particularly invite attention to the remark in paragraph 31 of the notes as to the great loss in power involved in the limited authority assigned to the Public Works Department in the control and management of relief works. They may say on the experience of other provinces that although the civil authorities may be competent to manage relief works on a small scale, a really serious famine, involving provision of work for great masses of people, and throwing heavy and multifarious duties on the district civil authorities, requires the full utilization of the Public Works Department. They recognize that in the control of relief works the latter department must be required to conform to the special requirements of the Famine Code and to subordinate to these the ordinary departmental methods of conducting work. But they are assured from the experience of other provinces that this can be secured, and that at the same time larger powers can most advantageously be given to the Department of Public Works than appears to be the case in Madras.

———

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

ABSTRACT.—*Submitting to Government remarks on the note of the Chief Engineer regarding the relative position of Revenue and Public Works officers in the administration of famine relief.*

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

Miscellaneous.

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

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

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Secretary to Government.

Read—the following G.O., No. 919, Revenue, dated 8th November 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 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, dated 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.

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

Read—the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture), Mis. No. 9721, dated 4th December 1897:—

Read—G.Os., Nos. 899, dated 29th October 1897, 919, dated 8th November 1897 and the following G.O., No. 958, dated 16th November 1897.

Read—the following 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) Government of India Circular No. 16-104—1, dated 13th February 1897.
(3) Government of India 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 th 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 the 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 classification 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 between 7 and 12.

(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 37 and 38 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 27 to 31 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 backbone 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 32 to 36, 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 Departmenal 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.

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

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

(True Extract.)

(Signed) T. W. HOLDERNESS,
Deputy Secretary to the Government of India.

Order thereon—No. 958, Press, dated 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.)

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Secretary to Government.

Resolution—Mis. No. 9721, dated 4th December 1897.

In the last order quoted above, the Government of Madras calls for a report, after conference, on the points raised by Mr. Higham in the papers received with the Government of India Resolution above quoted, with special reference to the observations of the Government of India.

2. Mr. Higham's recommendations are, for easy reference, given in the appendix to these proceedings, together with the questions proposed by the Madras Government for discussion at the conference. Printed copies of the questions ordered by Government to be considered at the conference and an abstract of

Mr. Higham's proposals, together with references to the papers in which the matters have been discussed on previous occasions will be communicated hereafter.

3. As the Famine Commissioner's report is due by the 1st February, the conference will be held at Waltair in the beginning of January, and at Bellary immediately afterwards. It is not certain that Bellary is, for all officers concerned, the most convenient place of meeting. Messrs. Stuart and Shipley will have to come some distance, and Guntakal, or even Madras, would be perhaps more accessible to all concerned than Bellary. The permission of Government is requested for leave to summon officers who may have left their districts on transfer to attend the conference. Surgeon-Major Thomson, formerly of Berhampur, is now, it is believed, on plague duty at Guntakal. It would not, probably, be desirable to invite him to attend even at Bellary.

(Signed) R. V. SRINIVASIAR,
Secretary.

APPENDIX.

Mr. Higham's proposals and questions proposed by the Madras Government.

Mr. Higham's recommendations are :—

* * * * *

Summary of recommendations.

41. The recommendations made in this report may now be summarized as follows :—

(*a*) Efforts should be made to include in future programmes of relief-works a greater number of large public works which shall either be of a remunerative character, or of such public utility as to justify their construction when it is incumbent on Government to devote large sums of money to the purpose of famine relief which must otherwise be expended on works of a less useful and perhaps absolutely useless character. It is not essential that such works should be remunerative, but they should not involve future liabilities for maintenance out of all proportion to the public benefit that will be derived from them. Nor should they involve heavy expenditure on materials or on work that will be almost useless for purposes of famine relief, except in the case of projects, the construction of which, sooner or later, has been recognized as necessary, and has been definitely approved by competent authority.

(*b*) Such works may be entered in the programmes of relief-works on the understanding that on the first occurrence of distress it will not be obligatory to provide employment for the people in the immediate neighbourhood of their homes, but that they may, on the contrary, be drafted to works 40 or 50 miles away from their villages. In the case of large and important works, upon which great numbers of labourers can be employed with great public advantage, it may even be contemplated to draft them by rail from greater distances than this, when the requisite facilities exist.

(*c*) As soon as it appears probable that relief-works will be required, test and relief works should, in the first instance, be opened as far as possible on works of the class referred to in (*a*) and with reference rather to the utility of the work than to its proximity to the affected villages, but arrangements may be made when necessary and under proper precautions to convey the people to the works, or to pay the cost of their maintenance during transit.

(*d*) When it is evident that relief-works will be required on an extensive scale in any district, they should be placed under the charge of the Public Works Department which will be solely responsible for the organization and management of such works in accordance with the principles and rules that may be laid down for its guidance by the Local Government, which will be framed with reference to the general provisions of the Famine Code to which these instructions will be subsidiary or supplementary.

(*e*) When relief operations are first started, whether as test or relief works, a strict system of piece-work should be enforced and the people should not be encouraged to expect employment for all as daily labourers, even at the minimum wage, without reference to their capacity for work. As the works proceed, it should be left to the Public Works Department, in free and constant communication with the civil officers, to introduce any system approved in the departmental instructions which may appear most appropriate, with reference to the character of the work, the condition, customs and capacities of the workers, the proportions of men, women and children, the qualifications of the available subordinate and special establishment, the intensity of the distress and other considerations.

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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.

Government of Madras.
Do. Bombay.
Do. Bengal.
Do. the North-Western Provinces and Oudh.
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Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces.
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Resident at Hyderabad. Ajmere.

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(True Extract.)

(Signed) T. W. HOLDERNESS,
Deputy Secretary to the Government of India.

Order thereon—No. 958, Press, dated 16th November 1897.

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(*b*) Such works may be entered in the programmes of relief-works on the understanding that on the first occurrence of distress it will not be obligatory to provide employment for the people in the immediate neighbourhood of their homes, but that they may, on the contrary, be drafted to works 40 or 50 miles away from their villages. In the case of large and important works, upon which great numbers of labourers can be employed with great public advantage, it may even be contemplated to draft them by rail from greater distances than this, when the requisite facilities exist.

(*c*) As soon as it appears probable that relief-works will be required, test and relief works should, in the first instance, be opened as far as possible on works of the class referred to in (*a*) and with reference rather to the utility of the work than to its proximity to the affected villages, but arrangements may be made when necessary and under proper precautions to convey the people to the works, or to pay the cost of their maintenance during transit.

(*d*) When it is evident that relief-works will be required on an extensive scale in any district, they should be placed under the charge of the Public Works Department which will be solely responsible for the organization and management of such works in accordance with the principles and rules that may be laid down for its guidance by the Local Government, which will be framed with reference to the general provisions of the Famine Code to which these instructions will be subsidiary or supplementary.

(*e*) When relief operations are first started, whether as test or relief works, a strict system of piece-work should be enforced and the people should not be encouraged to expect employment for all as daily labourers, even at the minimum wage, without reference to their capacity for work. As the works proceed, it should be left to the Public Works Department, in free and constant communication with the civil officers, to introduce any system approved in the departmental instructions which may appear most appropriate, with reference to the character of the work, the condition, customs and capacities of the workers, the proportions of men, women and children, the qualifications of the available subordinate and special establishment, the intensity of the distress and other considerations.

(*f*) It will be the duty of the Public Works officers to so adapt the system on each work that suitable employment may be offered to all who are drafted to the works by the civil officers who are engaged in the supervision of village relief, and whose duty it will be to send to the works all applicants for gratuitous relief who may be considered capable of performing a moderate task. The inter-dependence of relief-works and village relief must be fully recognized, and though the civil officers should be relieved of all responsibility for the management of the former, they should pay increased attention to the supervision of the latter, not only on account of the great numbers for whom this form of relief is alone suitable, but also because the scrutiny of the village lists afford the most reliable means of testing the efficiency of the relief-works as a means of relief.

In connection with this subject it is most desirable that there should be some fairly uniform standard by which the capacity of an applicant for relief to perform a moderate task may be judged. It should be recognized that, while it is very demoralizing to give gratuitous relief to persons who are capable of working, it is not less so to lower the task standard on relief-works by the admission of large numbers who can only be given an absolutely nominal task.

(*g*) When it is found necessary to substitute a system of daily labour for piece-work upon any work, the classification, wages and tasks of the daily labourers should be regulated in accordance with the suggestions that have been made in paragraphs 8 to 16 of this report, or any modifications of them that may be finally approved by Government.

(*h*) Whenever the more active prosecution of public works already in progress or sanctioned is shown to the satisfaction of the Government of India to be desirable, as a means of obviating the necessity for opening relief-works on the systems approved in the revised Famine Codes, the requisite funds should be provided for an expansion of operations under the usual Public Works system, as a temporary charge, if necessary, against famine relief, without insisting on its being conducted on Code principles.

(*i*) Petty works in the neighbourhood of distressed villages should not be opened in the earlier stages of distress, but should be held in reserve in the event of its becoming necessary to disperse the labour collected on large works, or until the large works are approaching completion, or for the latest stage of distress.

(*j*) Small relief-works which cannot conveniently be placed under the charge of officers of the Public Works Department, and all petty agricultural works for which petty advances have been made, should remain under the charge of the Collector or Deputy Commissioner, and be managed, as far as may be, in general accordance with the principles to be laid down in case of works under the Public Works Department, though the accounts may be kept in less detail.

(*k*) The systems that may be adopted on relief-works may be classed as follows :—

(i) Ordinary public works conducted on the ordinary public works or contract system, under the conditions referred to in (*h*), or when an expansion of operations on such works is considered necessary in the public interests.

(ii) Works conducted on the piece-work system, whether limited or unlimited, and whether under the management of approved contractors or on the pit-gang system, no allowance being in any case made to dependants.

(iii) Piece-work as in (ii), supplemented by relief to dependants, both adult and children, or to children dependants only.

(iv) A combination of piece-work and task-work, with or without relief of dependants, certain parts of the work being set apart for piece-workers, and others for daily labourers ; or workers of the Digger class being paid by the piece and carriers as daily labourers.

(v) Task-work or daily labour throughout, with or without relief to dependants, but without a Sunday wage, the option being given to all tasked workers to earn a higher wage than that pertaining to their class on performance of more than the full task.

(vi) Task-work or daily labour in which no one can earn more than the normal wage of his class and in which all dependants are relieved, and a Sunday wage is given.

It may be contemplated that as distress deepens the system will gradually change from (i) or (ii) to (v) or (vi), and that as prospects improve and the demand for relief is less keen and universal a reversion will be gradually made in the reverse order.

(*l*) The relief of dependants should depend on the degree of distress, and should be given only on the recommendation of the Collector or Deputy Commissioner. When relief is necessary it should, whenever possible, be given by means of kitchens, the children receiving a cooked ration, and adults either a cooked or dry grain ration. The systematic management of these kitchens will be part of the duty of the Public Works Department.

(*m*) On all large works a special civil officer to be appointed, who shall usually be nominated by the Civil Department, but whose services should be at the disposal of the Public Works Department. When there is a Resident Assistant Engineer or Upper Subordinate in charge of a work, the special civil officer will be placed under his orders as Assistant-officer-in-charge, but otherwise he will be the officer-in-charge, and subordinate to the sub-divisional officer in whose charge the work lies. The duties of the officer or assistant officer in charge will be generally as described in paragraph 35 of this report.

(*n*) Payments of daily labourers may be made daily, or at longer intervals, as may be decided by Local Governments, but the adoption of the system of full piece wages and payments through the medium of the gang muharrirs and mates should be permitted only when payments are made daily. Piece-workers may be paid daily, or at longer intervals, as may be directed by the Superintending Engineer.

(*o*) The Collector or Deputy Commissioner should be furnished with a daily report of the number of men, women and children on the works and in receipt of relief as dependants and other information that may be required for the weekly returns of relief operations, but the periodical returns showing expenditure incurred, value of work done and other working statistics should be rendered by the Executive to the Superintending Engineer, by whom copies or abstracts would be forwarded to the Commissioner for inclusion in the periodical returns required by the Local Government or the Government of India. Suggestions as to the form of these returns have been made in Appendix II to this report.

(*p*) A committee of experts should be appointed to consider the more general question of forms of account for relief-works, and the manner of rendering and auditing them, with a view to greater simplicity and uniformity, and an earlier return of properly audited figures relating to all expenditure on famine relief-works incurred in the Public Works Department.

Read—the following Endorsement, Mis. No. 305, Revenue, dated 19th January 1898 :—

Read—the following letter from W. B. DEWINTON, Esq., Acting Chief Engineer to Government, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, dated 11th January 1898, No. 166–C :—

With reference to paragraph 2 of G.O., No. 958, Press, dated 16th November 1897, I have the honour to forward the accompanying Memorandum on the changes in famine relief administration proposed by Mr. Higham.

MEMORANDUM.

It will be convenient to take Mr. Higham's recommendations in the order given in paragraph 41, page 25, of his general report on the management of famine relief works.

(*a*) I quite agree with this. The famine relief programmes of this Presidency need immediate revision in the direction proposed. The Public Works Department should be directed to select at once not less than three works in each taluk likely in the future to be affected by famine, each work being sufficiently large to employ 10,000 people for twelve months.

These works should be either—

(1) Irrigation, (2) new road, (3) new railway, the above being the probable order of their relative importance and utility.

No. (3) will, perhaps, not often be possible, but it certainly is so in Kurnool and Cuddapah districts. It may be difficult to find such works in every taluk, but I am convinced that, with careful investigation, this difficulty may be overcome, and this investigation should commence at once. I would exclude all other works from the relief programme, as tending only to hamper and confuse it with a number of small works which are generally useless for famine relief purposes.

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(*b*) I also agree with this. At the commencement of distress I would open one or more of the above-mentioned selected works, and force all able-bodied people in the taluk needing relief to go to them. There has been no difficulty in making them do this in Bombay, Punjab, North-West Provinces and Central Provinces, and I can see no reason why there should be any difficulty in Madras. Hutting, of course, would be needed, but it should only be put up as required. I cost 8 annas per head in Bombay.

be some fairly a moderate task o give gratuitous andard on relief- ominal task.

(*c*) I agree. The most remunerative of the selected works in the taluk should be opened first, irrespective of its distance from the most affected villages. If it is, as I propose, within the taluk, the people will not need help in going there either in food or money, provided that the work is opened in good time.

piece-work upon be regulated in of this report, or

(*d*) I fully agree. I would place the above selected works *entirely* under the control of the Public Works Department. The Collector of the district, his Divisional officers and Tahsildars should have free access to the work and be empowered to write in the inspection note book such remarks on the health and comfort of the workers as they deem necessary. It would be the duty of the officer in charge of the work to pay prompt attention to these remarks, or if he considers them unsuitable or impracticable, to obtain immediate orders upon them from his superior officer. A copy of the remarks could, of course, be sent at once by the officer making them to either the Sub-Divisional officer, Executive Engineer or Superintending Engineer or to all of them. I am quite sure that this system would work with absolute smoothness, and is the one best calculated to ensure the attainment of the object of all famine relief, viz., to effectively relieve from distress the largest number of people at the smallest cost to the State.

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(*e*) I fully agree. I would have piece-work on all the works above described, and I would prohibit any other form of work on those works without the express sanction of Government. My reason for this is that I am convinced that, if the distress is taken in time, piece-work is the proper form of work for famine relief, because—

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(1) it raises the standard of morality of the people instead of demoralising them,

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(2) it keeps useless people off the works,

(3) it needs far less supervision, and therefore gives room for far less dishonesty.

lependants, rs for daily nd carriers

I would prohibit any other form of work on the large relief works, because piece-work might never otherwise have a fair trial, and it is absolutely essential that it should have. I would undertake, with the utmost confidence, to run every large relief work in a district on piece-work lines with the best results both to workers and the State.

dants, but to earn a than the

(*f*) As stated above I would force only the *able-bodied* people to large relief works under the charge of the Public Works Departm men and women and children over 12, or perhaps 10. All the old, young and infirm, all nursing mothers, and women in pregnancy should remain in their villages, to look after hous either pay the able-bodied people a rate for work as much as the rise in prices demanded, and allow them to su would pay them *the normal rates* and feed all their their respective villages. If the latter was the case I work, do light work about the village, such as clearing cleaning up and sweeping, in return for the food given village relief and all dependants should be entirely under the village authorities being responsible for those needi and also for sending those who are able to work to the re with what Mr. Higham says about the duties of civil offic

ormal wage of wage is given. prove and the demand for gradually made in the reverse ree of distress, and should be given missioner. When relief is necessary hens, the children receiving a cooked The systematic management of these rtment.

relief. This system would prevent all that weary walking to and fro of old and young, infirm and sickly, to a work on which they were useless when they got there, which was often such a distressing sight during last hot weather, and the distance of the relief work from their homes would keep those who do not need relief off the work. The greatest difficulty would be the fixing of the 'able-bodied' standard; but the village authorities know every man and woman in the village, and their ordinary avocations, and should be able to select those capable of a good day's work without difficulty. The Revenue Department should see to this drafting and to the care of the dependants at their homes; the Public Works Department should be solely responsible for the people on relief works. I would give the latter four successive days in every month wherein to return to their homes and see their families if they so desired; otherwise their work should be continuous.

(*g*) As will be seen above, I deprecate any other form of work except piece- for able-bodied people, but, as Government may not approve of this and as may, in any case, be necessary to adopt task-work instead in certain cases, I give below my views on this subject:—

I am not, of course, competent to decide on the sufficiency of the D wage for the large majority of relief workers, but I do not think it necessarily follows that, because it has apparently sufficed in North-West Provinces and Bengal, it would also suffice in Madras. The habits of the people and their staple food introduce large elements of uncertainty into this question, and I am not at all disposed to agree with Mr. Higham in this matter, unless the local medical authorities consider that the D wage may be given a trial. I also object to his classifying all carriers and metal breakers in the D class, because, except in the case of earthwork for roads, and for small irrigation channels it is always possible to give both carriers and metal breakers a sufficiently hard task to entitle them to the same wage as diggers. I would therefore abolish C and D classes altogether and retain only A and B—A class to include head coolies, quarry men and rammers, and such other persons, with specially hard or important work as may be decided; B class to include everyone else on the relief work. I would set the task for average earthwork and average metal breaking, *i.e.*, moderately hard earth and moderately hard stone, at half the amount usually turned out by able-bodied people accustomed to such work, and, I would fine rigorously for any deficiency from this standard, as soon as the work had been fairly started, because the original task given is a light one, and any reduction of it would mean that the work was only a veiled form of gratuitous relief. Thus supposing the man's wage for 110 cubic feet of medium earthwork was one anna and nine pies, I would reduce this to one anna and six pies if he did no more than 100 cubic feet, and to one anna and three pies if he did only 90 cubic feet, to one anna if he did only 75 cubic feet, and to nine pies if he did only 60 cubic feet, and the women and children in proportion. But for the first week, I would give him full wage for 100 cubic feet or over. Thus short work would be punished by reduction of wage, and not by reduction of class, which latter system demoralises the people and vastly increases the cost of the work. If the work was a remunerative one and it was desired to deny late it during the period of distress, an additional incentive to work might Department offering one pice more for 20 per cent. additional work, but this should taluk likely in under special sanction.

to employ 10,000 pe that any elaborate tables of reduced leads are necessary. The 10 yards additional lead for every yard of lift is simple,

These works shou nded of the people' and should continue.

(1) Irrigation, (2 es on the above principles, which are nearly complete,
ble order of ary, showing the tasks for metal breaking in various

No. (3) will, perhaps, e number of diggers and carriers required for various and Cuddapah districts. hich would give every officer in charge of a work all he but I am convinced that, nple and intelligible form. In the above-mentioned come, and this investigak for roads and small irrigation channels, where the other works from the reli be unavoidably light, I would reduce their wage for full it with a number of sm purposes.

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In passing the resolution above recorded, the conferences dismissed Mr. Higham's proposal to allow the workers in class Z, not as a right or as a rule, but "*wherever circumstances will permit*," to earn "a somewhat higher wage." This would introduce the very complications arising from different scales of wages which Mr. Higham is anxious to avoid, and the feeling was that there should be no encouragement to earn a higher wage, as the difficulty of finding a sufficiency of work is great enough already. There was the further objection, founded on a knowledge of human nature, that it was very improbable that the coolies would reap the fruits of their industry. Famine subordinates are very much overtasked, and have their hands full in dealing with the outturn of a gang's work, and paying for the same, without having to probe the exact outturn produced by each individual labourer, or by small gangs of labourers. On the piece-work system, carried out on works of real utility, alluded to below, such an opportunity would be legitimately given; but on the mass of the works it is unnecessary and undesirable. The Board would by no means under-estimate the advantage of "*morale*" on works, on which Mr. Higham in more than one place lays stress; but the first object of relief works, and, in fact, the *rationale* of relief works, is to give relief, not to get work done, and the mere submission to attendance on a relief work, and the performance of a task for the scanty wage allowed, is sufficient to prevent anything like demoralisation, or general pauperisation, of the people. As to children

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The Commissioner or Superintending Engineer may sanction a higher wage, on sufficient reason being shown, for particular classes of workers or on particular works.

Men and women of the same class to receive the same wage.

Nursing mothers to be put in class III, but to get class I wages until the child has two teeth in either jaw, no allowance being made for the child (paragraphs 12—14 of Final Report).

* (*b*) Extra wage to be given for doing 25 per cent. more than the full task—

(i) to both diggers and carriers, if the number of carriers does not exceed the number required by diggers by more than 10 per cent.;

(ii) to diggers alone, if it exceeds 10 per cent.;

(iii) to both diggers and carriers also, if the Sunday wage is abolished on any work.

* (*c*) Sunday wage to be abolished, except when work of any kind was so difficult to procure that a restriction of progress was desirable and extra wage should not be granted.

† (*d*) Wages of non-working children and dependents of relief-workers to be—

		Cash equivalent of
Adult dependents ...	...	22 oz. of grain.
Children below 12 years	...	10 oz. of grain (paragraph 20 of Final Report).

As to (*a*) both Conferences disapproved the proposal to give men and women the same wage. The classification proposed by Mr. Higham having been negatived, the question of wage for classes I and II did not arise. The Madras Conference disapproved of the wage proposed for class III, and the Waltair Conference agreed, adding that it was a question for experts. The disapproval of Mr. Higham's scale of wages does not imply any opinion regarding the adequacy or inadequacy of the Code wages for C and D classes. The Conferences considered that this matter had not been in any way referred to them for consideration.

The Madras Government and the Sanitary Commissioner have never contested the A wage of the Code, nor has the Sanitary Commissioner made any serious attack on the B wage. For sake of simplicity Mr. Higham would give the A wage for males to all workers in his class I, and the B wage for males to all workers in his class II. With the table H of the Code before them, the paymasters should have no difficulty in differentiating the wages of Code classes A and B according to sex, and Mr. Higham's proposals appear to be unnecessarily liberal. The liberality is, however, considerably discounted when it is remembered that, under the arrangements proposed by him, the great mass of the workers would fall under his class III. For this he does not propose the Code C class wage for males, or even the Code D class wage for males, but the Code D class wage for females—a wage not intended to cover anything but the most nominal labour, and condemned already, both by the Madras Government on more than one occasion, and by the Sanitary Commissioner. No doubt, the question is one for experts, and the expert for this Presidency—supported by the figures arrived at by the first experts in Europe—is against this and the C class wage.

As to nursing mothers, the Madras Conference was doubtful if they should be allowed on the works at all, but was clear that the present Code allowance on works was insufficient for mother and child. It would give the mother the A wage until the child was six months old, without exacting any task, and, after the child has got four teeth, would put the mother in the class to which she properly belongs—A, B, C or D —with the wage of that class, *plus* the allowance for the infant given under Appendix 5 for non-working children by the Bombay Code. The Waltair Conference thought that, if the mother is fit to work, a very important limitation to be decided in each case on the merits, she ought to be tasked according to her class.

The question of nursing mothers and their infants is one of very great importance. As has been found by Surgeon-Lieutenant-Colonel King, the Sanitary Commissioner, they have been treated with a most commendable consideration in Bombay. In Madras they got just what the Code gave them and no more. The very large number of infants in bad condition on some of the Madras works showed that the present Code rules for nursing mothers cannot be maintained without serious damage to health and life. That a nursing mother should leave her home in the morning and be absent

* Mr. Higham considers that the adoption of (*b*) and (*c*) would improve the *morale* on works (paragraphs 9 and 16 of his Final Report, and paragraph 20 of North-Western Provinces Notes).
The question of extra wage on Madras works is dealt with in Board's Proceedings, No. 402, dated 26th May 1897.
† Under the Madras Code these are granted the D class ration.

from it all day, on the side of a road, without shade, breaking stones, while the child is exposed to all the rigour of the season without shelter and often without clothing, and that she should do this on a wage equivalent to the wage for males of the C class, providing out of this sustenance for her child also, is so contrary to the customs of the country, and the dictates of humanity, to say nothing of the conclusions of science, that it is plain that some departure is necessary. It was urged at the Waltair Conference that, if all nursing mothers are treated with the proposed lenity, there will be a rush of nursing mothers on the works. This is possible, though the increase in number present would probably not be considerable. Possibly some enquiry could be made in their villages, by responsible relief officers, in order to weed out the undeserving. The Board, with experience of three famines, cannot solve the question solely by the suggestion that the mother and infant should be sent to kitchens, for this disregards the insurmountable objection amongst the more respectable poor to entering the Government kitchens, and it presupposes that there will always be a kitchen within reach. The Board cannot recall a single case during the recent famine in which it was possible to obtain a wet-nurse for any infant deprived of its natural sustenance, as proposed in section 125 of the Famine Code. The experiments in feeding infants both on milk and on Mellin's food, though conducted in many cases with care and sympathy, have not always been successful; nor would it be a satisfactory solution to refer all such cases to gratuitous relief in their villages, for Government may refuse, as they did during the last famine, to permit gratuitous relief to be given for months after distress has commenced. The Board would be inclined to recommend that the proposal of the Madras Conference should be acted on until gratuitous relief is started, and that the nursing mothers should then be placed on gratuitous relief in their villages, with the Bombay allowance, in addition to their own dole, for the child. The Board would suggest that the assistance of female medical practitioners should be obtained during periods of distress. The women and children often want help, which only a woman can give.

As to (*c*) both Conferences were for maintaining the Sunday wage as now given, and, as to (*b*), they held that no extra wage should be given or earnable, with the exception, noted by the Waltair Conference, of the case of works which, on their own merits and on grounds of public utility, it is desirable to finish, such as large irrigation schemes, canals, &c., which will add to the wealth of the country and the revenue of the Government.

Mr. Higham's proposal (*b*) strikes at section 58 of the Code and at one of the fundamental principles laid down by the Famine Commission of 1877–78. It ignores the principle that the work exists for the benefit of the workers, not the workers for the benefit of the work. If *morale* is to be cultivated by encouraging extra industry, then the need for such encouragement exists equally whether the proportion of the workers in each class comes up to the standard scientifically perfect or not.

With reference to (*d*) the Madras Conference held that, when dependants of workers come on the works, relief to them should be limited to food in kitchens on the works, where they will get the usual kitchen ration. If they remain in their villages they should be put on gratuitous relief. They did not object to the children of workers being fed in kitchens, but added that they would like to see section 107 of the Bombay Code * adopted for the case of children between 7 and 12 years of age. The Waltair Conference deprecated the D class ration for these people, and proposed that section 122 of the Famine Code should be restored to its original place for their benefit.

* Ration for children, age 7 to 12.

Flour.	Other items.			
	Dal.	Salt.	Ghee.	Condiments and vegetables.
oz. 12	oz. 2	oz. $\frac{1}{3}$	oz. $\frac{1}{3}$	oz. $\frac{1}{2}$

8. The following question † was propounded by the Government of Madras:—

† *Note.*—The question was raised in the case of Ganjám—*vide* discussions in Board's Proceedings, No. 591, dated 27th August 1897. Mr. Higham makes no distinction between men and women, his classification being solely with reference to the capacity to turn out a prescribed task.

It was frequently reported, especially from the Northern districts, that the Code wages 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?

The Madras Conference saw no reasons for modifying existing practice. The Waltair Conference held that the woman's wage should not exceed three-fourths of a man's wage. Mr. Higham would give the same wage to both sexes. The existing custom is to give the woman less than the man, and the Waltair custom would accentuate this difference by making the man's wage at least 33⅓ per cent. higher than that of the woman. The two northern districts have long been isolated, and wages ruled low. The advent of the railway has not even yet had its usual effect of raising wages generally. The workers do not discriminate the reasons on which the Code wages have been fixed. Prices have generally been much lower in these districts, especially in Ganjám, than elsewhere. They are now levelling up, but the normal wage which, in ordinary times, purchases a woman enough food to eat, has been and is small in money. The result is that the Code wage for females, in money, is not far from the normal woman's wage, and the Code wages for the sexes differ but slightly. The workers do not know, but District Officers know, that the Code wage has been fixed on a scale sliding with prices, to admit of the purchase of a defined quantity of food. This scale is not one to be tampered with to suit the fancy of the workers. The probability is that wages will rise in the future in these districts, and, when the next famine comes, there will be an appreciable distinction between the woman's normal money wage and the famine wage. There seems to be no reason for making any change. As a fact females have always predominated on relief-works, and always will. They have a predominance in the census returns, and this is enhanced by the necessity which will always exist for some of the males to remain at home to look after the cattle and other interests which cannot be neglected.

9. The Government of Madras asks—

Does section 106 * of the Code as last revised meet all the requirements in regard to fining for short work?

The Madras Conference recommended, and the Waltair Conference concurred with it, that the following alterations should be made in section 106 as last revised:—

(1) In line 1 of section 106 (*a*) for the word "may" substitute the word "shall."

(2) In line 1 of (*b*) after the word "ordinarily" insert "the gang," and after the word "shall" insert "not", omitting "no relief-worker."

In line 3 after the word "fining" insert "of the gang or of any member thereof."

10. The next subject discussed was a recommendation of Mr. Higham to the following effect:—

The adoption of a system † of daily payments on a pice wage: whenever the true wage exceeds an aliquot number of pice by 1½ pie or more the next higher number of pice should be given, and ready reckoners for pice wages should be worked out on this principle. The payment is to be made through maistries.

* Section 106 as last revised stands thus—

"106 (*a*) Fines may be inflicted for short work when the officer in charge is satisfied that the deficiency is due to wilfulness and not weakness; but he shall exercise patience and discretion and warn the relief-workers before putting the penalties in force.

(*b*) Ordinarily no relief-worker shall be fined, so as to reduce the wages below the minimum fixed by section 120 below; if, however, in the hope of forcing the authorities to relax discipline, there is continued and deliberate refusal to do the allotted task, the fining may be carried more severely down to the proportionate payment for work actually done, or the contumacious characters may be sent to the poor-house.

(*c*) The fining may be extended to the gangers and even to the writers when the officer in charge considers that they are to blame.

(*d*) In all cases, the number of persons fined, with the amounts, shall be entered in the weekly report."

In G.O., No. 216, dated 30th March 1897, the following rule was prescribed "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." Mr. Higham considers that this rule, coupled with the reduction of tasks, operated to practically abolish fines on works—*vide* paragraph 16 of his Madras Notes. The rule was, however, cancelled in G.O., No. 257, dated 21st April 1897.

† The advantages and disadvantages of the system are discussed in paragraphs 17 and 18 of his final report. The Madras system of payments is criticised in paragraph 20 of the Madras Notes. G.O., No. 616, dated 24th July 1897.

e opinion of both conferences was against the proposal. The value of a pie to er is not a matter to be underestimated, and by the provision of a ready r there would be no difficulty in making payments in pies. It was not con- that daily payments were necessary. Such payments are made, under the g Code, when work is first started, but, after that, bi-weekly payments are ered to be sufficient.

1. The following is a summary of the proposals next considered:—

Mr. Higham proposes that, when relief operations are first started, a pure system of piece-work and not task-work should be enforced. The systems that may be adopted on relief works are classed by him as follows, in the order of time in which each should be taken up:—

(i) Ordinary public works conducted on the ordinary contract system, the requisite funds being provided as a temporary charge, if necessary, against famine relief, without insisting on its being conducted on Code principles (paragraph 39 of Final Report).

(ii) Works conducted on the piece-work system, whether limited or unlimited, and whether under the management of approved contractors or on the pit-gang system, no allowance being, in any case, made to dependants.

(iii) Piece-work (ii) supplemented by relief to dependants, both adult and children, or to children dependants only.

(iv) A combination of piece-work and task-work, with or without relief of dependants, certain parts of the work being set apart for piece-workers and others for daily labourers; or workers of the digger class being paid by the piece and carriers as daily labourers.

(v) Task-work or daily labour throughout, with or without relief to dependants, but without a Sunday wage, the option being given to all tasked workers to earn an extra wage.

(vi) Task-work * or daily labour in which no one can earn more than the normal wage of his class, and in which all dependants are relieved and a Sunday wage is given.

As distress deepens the system will gradually change from (*i*) or (*ii*) to (*v*) or (*vi*), and as prospects improve and the demand for relief is less keen and universal, a reversion will be gradually made in the reverse order (paragraphs 37 and 38 of Final Report).

As to (i) the Conferences did not object to the use of ordinary public works as relief works, but were unanimous against the employment of contractors.

With reference to the other proposals, the Madras Conference held that the system under sections 16 and 17 of the existing Famine Code seems to answer all practical purposes, considering that, in the press of famine, it will almost always be found that task-work is the only form of relief which will generally meet requirements. The Conference was of opinion that, in the earlier stages of famine, a trial of piece-work should be made, *whenever the Engineer and Collector think it desirable*, and the rate to be paid on piece-work should be based on the proposals of the committee of experts referred to in paragraph 5 *supra*. The Waltair Conference also expressed a preference for sections 16 and 17 of the existing Code, but thought that proposals (ii) and (iv) should have a trial in the earlier stages of relief. It objected altogether to (iii), considering that, if piece-work is to be tried at all, and get a fair trial, the dependants should be supported by the earnings of the piece-workers. Proposal No. (v) has been already disposed of, in the resolution adhering to the Sunday wage, and (vi) is the ordinary system.

The Board is not aware that what is called the intermediate piece-work system was ever seriously tried anywhere. The system was propounded, but probably not carried into practice. The Board believes that, in all times of distress in this Presidency, the task-work system, No. (vi) will be found to be the only system generally suited to the people, and that there are no serious objections to its retention. No doubt, as Mr. Higham says, there is a general feeling of obligation to maintain one's own dependants among the people of India, but famine is a wonderful solvent of domestic ties,

* The arguments for and against the task-work system are given in paragraphs 21 to 26 of Mr. Higham's final report. The objections to task-works are briefly (*a*) it weakens that sense of an obligation to maintain one's own dependants which is so universal throughout India, (*b*) it necessitates the maintenance of voluminous records and huge establishments and leads to peculation by underlings, (*c*) it is inelastic and imposes vexatious and unnecessary restrictions in the matter of attendance, &c., on the labourers, and (*d*) the cost of work done under it is disproportionately great as compared with the normal cost. The Government of India expresses its willingness to consider favourably any amendments for giving recognition to petty piece-work within due limits in the Famine Code, but observes, with reference to the advantages claimed for piece-work over task-work in Mr. Higham's report, 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."

and the lowest stratum of society cannot be imbued with sentiments of brotherly love and self-sacrifice by a paragraph in a Famine Code. It is, and always will be the case in this Presidency that, in the earlier stages of distress, when alone piece-work is proposed as a panacea, the women and children will predominate on our relief works. If, by any new system of relief, it is made impossible for them to earn a living, the final catastrophe will only be thereby hastened. For many reasons, to look after their cattle especially, the men will stay at home, and piece-work, except perhaps stone-breaking, for women and children is only a specious offer of relief in a form not adapted to them. No doubt piece-work at stone-breaking *within a reasonable distance of their homes* might be a fair mode of relief for the latter, but coupled with a distance test "40 or 50 miles away from their villages," as Mr. Higham proposes, it would be tantamount to a refusal of relief. No doubt *some* will stray to such a work, but what about those who stay away? It is not possible for the Board to discuss cases elsewhere in which a distance test may have been enforced. The varying conditions of the people, their habits and surroundings, the extent to which relief of other kinds was given, would all have to be considered before a verdict in favour of a distance test would be possible. It is true that in Madras, in the great famine, the distance test was tried, notably on the Buckingham canal, but what of the thousands who dropped out or died on the way? It was with a full knowledge of the working of a distance test that the Famine Commission, presided over by a Royal Engineer, admitted piece-work only under limitations—section 132—and said of task work that "the only safe course for providing for proper management and economy on the one hand, and the interests of humanity on the other, is to give all those who can do a reasonable amount of work a task carefully adjusted to their powers, and pay them a wage on which life and health can be maintained; piece-work being employed only under the conditions mentioned in the preceding paragraph and gratuitous aid, as described in the succeeding section, being confined to those who are incapable of working." The words of the Indian Famine Commission on the subject are worth quoting:—"We are of opinion that experience has proved that the portion of the population not accustomed to work for wages on public works will not spontaneously seek for such employment until forced to do so by want, and that it must be anticipated that many will be reduced in strength, and, at first at all events, incapable of earning a livelihood on the public works, assuming that the work to be done to earn a livelihood by every one must be that of an able-bodied labourer. An unusual proportion will certainly be women, and a large fraction will consist of children unfit for labour, the aged and infirm, and those who are unaccustomed to the sort of work and otherwise unable to work up to the standard performed in the case of skilled labourers in ordinary times. Any attempt, therefore, to make these classes earn their living by ordinary piece-work could not fail to result in great suffering and mortality."

The principles expressed in the third of the introductory paragraphs of the Famine Code are beyond praise. For the first time since it was framed an opportunity has arisen of carrying these principles—on a large scale—into practice, and it is found that this costs money. Hence has arisen a new school to which the practical experience of 1877–78 is wanting; to this school the disasters of that period are known only by tradition; it has seen a period of distress in which generally, the Central Provinces excepted, severe distress has occurred without serious mortality; it has seen money freely spent and has no personal knowledge of the results of a parsimonious policy, and it thinks that the same results might be attained by reverting to methods condemned by the Famine Commission. If this school should have its way, the expenditure on works may be reduced and the outturn increased; but, if there is not a demoralizing expenditure on gratuitous relief, if the coffers of the State are not emptied in other directions, and if private charity is not profuse, the result will be disastrous.

The "voluminous records, huge establishments and peculations by underlings" are difficulties viewed through a magnifying glass. The general recent experience is that peculation is a very small factor. The voluminous records, such as they are, have become familiar to those who have to deal with them. Mr. Higham himself looks to task-work as the main form of relief when distress is at its height, and so some form of record must be prescribed. If in any way the committee of experts which he proposes for famine accounts can reduce the bulk of records, this result will, no doubt, be highly desirable. It is hardly fair to call a single supervisor or overseer for each

work, and one or two extra engineers for each district a "huge establishment." It has yet to be ascertained what the expenditure on establishments elsewhere was. As to the task system being "inelastic," the main fault found with it has been that it was too elastic. The "restrictions as to hours of attendance" on labourers have, no doubt, often been a real drawback, especially when unpunctuality was held to mean a loss of a whole day's pay. This is a matter which might be easily rectified. As to the "cost of work done under the task-work system being disproportionately great as compared with the normal cost," this is not a disproportion found in the recent famine for the first time: it was a disproportion recognized as a necessity by the Famine Commission, the object of employment given being, not to get work done, but to give relief. Economy is specifically stated to be a secondary consideration. No one would deny its importance, but relief is the first object; so much has this always been so that the word "relief" has found a home on the lips of the poor in all districts as a synonym for "famine time," and it is a very touching tribute to the work of the English in India—the Board speaks for this Presidency only—that the word "relief" should be a home-word with the people, the masses of whom are not aware that it has a foreign origin.

12. In connection with Mr. Higham's proposals referred to in paragraph 11 *supra*, the Government of Madras asks whether the intermediate gang piece-work system can be introduced on works with success. The system is described in G.O., No. 430, dated 3rd June 1897. The Government says "that the scheme of relief works to be opened by Government will then stand as follows:—

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

The intermediate gang piece-work system is practically piece-work pure and simple. Both conferences thought that it should have a trial, but that contractors should not be employed either on this system or on expanded ordinary works.

13. The next subject for consideration was Mr. Higham's recommendations * for the improvement of programmes† of relief works:—

(*a*) Efforts should be made to include in future programmes a greater number of large public works which shall be of a remunerative character or of such public utility as to justify their construction when it is incumbent on Government to devote large sums of money to the purpose of famine relief which must otherwise be expended on works of a less useful and perhaps absolutely useless character. It is not essential that such works should be remunerative, but they should not involve future liabilities for maintenance out of all proportion to the public benefit that will be derived from them. Nor should they involve heavy expenditure on materials or on work that will be almost useless for purposes of famine relief, except in the case of projects, the construction of which, sooner or later, has been recognized as necessary and has been definitely approved by competent authority (paragraph 30 of final report).

(*b*) Such works may be entered in the programme on the understanding that, on the first occurrence of distress, it will not be obligatory to provide employment for the people in the immediate neighbourhood of their homes, but that they may, on the contrary, be drafted to works 40 or 50 miles or even more away from their villages (paragraph 29 of final report).

(*c*) As soon as it appears probable that relief works will be required, test and relief works should, in the first instance, be opened as far as possible on works of the class referred to in (*a*), and with reference rather to utility than to proximity to affected villages (paragraph 31 of final report).

* The Government of India invited the opinion of the Local Government on the above suggestions, and as to the extent to which relief labour can be drafted to considerable distances. It concurs in the view that large work should be the backbone of famine relief whenever labour on an extensive scale has to be employed, and considers that provisions in any Famine Code, which reserve large works for the late stage of a famine, should be revised.

† The rules for the preparation of programmes are contained in sections 4 to 10 of the Madras Famine Code, and they contain provision for the inclusion of large works. As regards the nature of relief works to be started at the commencement of distress, section 36 of the Code gives "preference to those which are calculated to increase the outturn of the forthcoming crops, and which are most easily accessible to the distressed population, and capable of employing large numbers of persons for a considerable time." Mr. Higham states: "As long as employment can be found in the vicinity of the villages, the inhabitants will profess a great disinclination to go further afield, but I have found no evidence that they cannot be induced to attend large works at a distance from their homes when others are not provided close at hand, and when proper arrangements are made for their maintenance during transit and for their accommodation on the works."

(*d*) Petty works in the neighbourhood of distressed villages should not be opened in the earlier stages of distress, but should be held in reserve in the event of its being necessary to disperse the labour collected on large works or until the large works are approaching completion, or for the latest stage of distress (paragraph 28 of final report—*vide* also paragraph 40 (*a*) to (*c*) and (*i*) of final report.

Sub-head (*a*) was approved with special reference to the following remarks on p. 17 of Mr. Higham's general report :—

At present many projects are shelved after a preliminary investigation which indicates that they will not be financially remunerative, or on the ground that there is little prospect of funds being available for them. But it should be remembered that in reserving works of this kind for purposes of famine relief, it is not necessary that they should be remunerative in the sense of yielding an adequate return on the outlay incurred. Such works may be recommended if they will not impose a permanent charge on the community out of all proportion to the benefits derivable from them, including their protective value in case of future famines, and if they will be less useless than other works that may be proposed. Again, as regards funds, the position is that in time of famine funds have to be found for the relief of distress, and it is only a question of the works on which they may be most advantageously applied. As regards railways and other works involving heavy charges which will be useless for purposes of famine relief, it is no doubt of great importance that such works should never be started unless and until their construction has been decided on upon other grounds than that of affording employment for relief labourers. But as regards railways there are now programmes of lines to be constructed all over India in which the position of each in order of urgency has been laid down and the prosecution of which depends mainly on the extent to which funds can be provided. When the construction of a line has been decided on, relief workers cannot be better employed than on the earthwork, especially in an undulating country, and perhaps on the collection of ballast. Even if the permanent way be not laid down until ten years after, such labour is not thrown away.

These remarks were fully endorsed by both conferences.

The question involved in sub-head (*b*) imports such an important question that the conferences were both asked, as a preliminary, to record their opinion as to the "distance test." Both disapproved the distance test as a test, though not disapproving of concentration of works *under the safeguard referred to below*, and the Waltair Conference distinctly recorded its opinion that the workers will not, as a rule, go to relief works at a distance, unless they are "professional labourers"—class A of the Code. The safeguard referred to was this:—Village works should be opened at an early stage of distress for those who are unable to travel or who cannot, for various reasons, leave their homes. It is certain that, if the two kinds of work are open at the same time, no one will go to the more distant work, unless it be a professional labourer (class A) attracted by high piece-work rates, and if the workers are to be divided, so that those only who should properly be admitted should go to the village works, then village inspection and relief should be started in the early stage of the famine. The hutting, too, should be complete before the larger works are opened. The Waltair Conference, endorsing these views, laid stress on the need for the early appointment of taluk relief officers, considering that it is useless to appoint village circle relief officers, unless there are also taluk relief officers to supervise them, and this, too, not on grounds of efficient relief only, but also on grounds of economy. The same conference also urged that, even under the most favourable circumstances, one taluk relief officer is required for each taluk, and often three or four would be necessary, instancing the Goomsur taluk which had four taluk relief officers in 1889. It will be observed that Mr. Higham's proposal (*d*) was distinctly negatived by both conferences.

14. With reference to gratuitous relief, the Madras Government asked whether gratuitous relief should be given to the dependants of workers on test works. *

The reply of both conferences was that it would be sufficient if the children of test-workers are fed in a kitchen, adding that a test-work ought to answer its purpose within a fortnight, and that, when relief is once found to be necessary, gratuitous relief in villages should be simultaneously introduced. This, during the recent famine, was withheld for months after distress had declared itself. Relief circle inspectors were not sanctioned until March 1897, and then only for small tracts. General sanction was not given for them until April 1897, and the appointment of taluk relief officers was not sanctioned until June.

* The question is discussed in Board's Proceedings, No. 693, dated 1st November 1897.

15. The next matter which claimed the attention of the conferences was the desire of the Government of India that the regulations bearing on kitchens in each Provincial Code should 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 (*vide* letter in G.O., No. 919, dated 8th September 1897, paragraph 3).

The departures from the provisions of the Code in reference to this form of relief in this Presidency were few, but one of them was important, viz., the substitution of the Code D wage for section 122 of the Code. Both conferences were against this innovation. The Waltair Conference was strong for reverting to section 122, but held that, if the D wage, which distinguishes between the sexes were to be retained, then the man's wage under the D class should be given to both sexes. In any case the Madras Conference considered that the provisions of section 107 of the Bombay Code should be introduced for the benefit of children between 7 and 12 years of age. The matter has been already touched on in paragraph 7 (*d*) *supra*.

Another change, a trifling one, was made in Madras, viz.: permission was given to vary the quantities of salt, chillies and tamarind without exceeding the total cost of the ration, it being found, in some places, that salt was in defect and chillies in excess.

16. The next point considered was the suggestion of the Government of India that, in the matter of gratuitous relief to respectable families in large towns, the Code might embody some of the practical expedients which have been adopted by Local Governments in this respect during the late famine, such as the organization of such relief through Local Committees which worked partly with private subscriptions or local funds and partly with a grant-in-aid from the Local Government (*vide* letter in G.O., No. 919, dated 8th September 1897, paragraph 4).

Section 134 contemplates the co-operation of local residents in framing the lists of recipients of gratuitous relief, and there does not seem to be any necessity for expanding it. The circle inspectors and taluk relief officers, with the assistance of local revenue officers and the opinion of local residents, ought to be able to get accurate information. There would, however, be no objection to a direction that committees should be formed to assist in framing the lists, though it might often happen that members of the committees would have logs to roll.

In the distribution of the Indian Charitable Relief Fund, local committees were largely utilized, and in some districts with advantage, though in others the members were indifferent and useless. It must be observed, in regard to the reference of the Government of India, that the law in this Presidency does not permit of the expenditure of local funds on gratuitous relief, and the Waltair Conference doubted the propriety of permitting such committees to mix up the work of Government gratuitous relief and the distribution of charitable funds.

17. The next subject of consideration was a reference to the Local Government by the Government of India as to whether grain dole * or money dole is, on the whole, best or in what circumstances the gift of money is preferable to that of grain (*vide* letter in G.O., No. 919, dated 8th September 1897, paragraph 5).

The Madras Conference was for the grain dole, mainly on the ground that the grain dole is a fixed quantity, whereas the money dole would vary week by week according to prices: it considered, however, that the dole required to be simplified if the D wage was to be retained for the dole, the calculation of quantities, such as ·83 of a tola, being impossible to work out in practice, in which opinion the Waltair Conference concurred, as also that section 122 of the Code should be restored. It costs only ·1 of a pie more than the D wage, and its diatetic advantages were dwelt on by the Madras Sanitary Commissioner.

He showed that the minimum ration suggested in section 120 of the Madras Famine Code, which is the equivalent of the D wage, yields, if ragi be the grain adopted, but 1·623 oz. albuminoids, and 14·373 oz. starch equivalent, against

* The question of grain dole *versus* money dole is discussed in Board's Proceedings, No. 35, dated 18th January 1897; No. 107, dated 8th February 1897; No. 387, dated 21st May 1897; No. 396, dated 25th May 1897; No. 422, dated 8th June 1897; No. 468-A, dated 28th June 1897.

1·924 oz. albuminoids and 16·657 oz. starch equivalent in the case of the 'gratuitous relief ration' of section 122 of the Madras Famine Code. He held, therefore, having regard to the small additional cost, that the better nutritive value of the latter ration was much in its favour. He further pointed out (and in this both confer-ences unanimously agreed with him) that it was advisable to urge, should it be insisted that the ration allowed under section 122 be abolished, that the advantage afforded to children between 7 and 12 under section 107 of the Bombay Famine Code should be secured. The section alluded to provides that, although children between these ages shall receive less flour than the adult, 'other items' are not to be proportionately diminished. The result of this ruling is to highly increase the nutritive value of the ration for children of these ages, so that, when compared with arrangements existing in Madras, where it is customary to allow children a maximum of half the adult diet (although the Code permits the issue of from one-fourth to three-quarters), both cost and nutritive value are greatly increased. He illustrated these various contentions by handing in the following calculations. In these instances, Cholam (Jowari) is the grain employed :—

Statement showing comparative cost of the D ration under various circumstances, and of the Madras grain dole.

D ration.	Cost (allowing for wastage) in kitchens. (a)	D ration if issued at 1¾ lb. grain for the gratuitous relief dole. Cost. (b)	Children's ration from 7 to 12 in Bombay (section 107, Bombay Famine Code).	Cost (allowing for wastage). (c)	Adult dole ration in Madras (section 122, Madras Famine Code).	Cost of the ration. (d)	Cost of the child's ration from 7 to 12 in Madras. (e)
				ps.		ps.	
16 oz. flour (*plus* 10 per cent. for wastage).	12·5		12 oz. flour	9·357	20 oz. "raw grain" § ...	14·035	Half the value of the dole ration = 9·267 pies.
Grinding charges *	0·85		Grinding charges	0·641	2 oz. dal §	2·0	
2 oz. dal †	2·06		2 oz. dal	2·06	Salt, 0·75 oz.	0·75	
0·33 oz. salt	0·33		0·33 oz. salt	0·33	Tamarind, 0·5 oz.	0·5	
0·33 oz. oil	0·83	As. 1–7·65	0·33 oz. oil	0·83	Chillies, 0·5 oz.	1·25	
Vegetables and condiments ‡—					.....	.....	
Tamarind, 0·25 oz.	0·25		0·5 oz. condiments and vegetables.	0·875			
Chillies, 0·25 oz.	0·625						
	17·45			14·093	Total cost ...	18·535	
Total cost ...	or As. 1–5·45		Total cost ...	or As. 1–2·093		or As. 1–6·535	

* Bellary rates of 2·5 pies per 3¼ lb. adopted — the local rate of Kurnool being unknown.
† 3 per cent. wastage.
‡ It is, of course, impossible to give vegetables in an allowance of one *half ounce* to be distributed between "condiments *and* vegetables."
§ No wastage allowed for.

Comparative nutritive value and cost of Child's ration.

		Nutritive value.	Money value.
Child's ration from 7 to 12 years of age (Bombay Famine Code, section 107), D ration.	Albuminoids	1·571 oz.	As. 1–2·093 (17·1 lb. per rupee Jowari).
	Starch equivalent	11·337 ,,	
Half the Madras dole (Madras Famine Code, section 122) per child of 7 to 12 years.	Albuminoids	1·069 ,,	9·267 pies (17·1 lb. per rupee Jowari).
	Starch equivalent	7·613 ,,	

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				rs.		rs.	
16 oz. flour (*plus* 10 per cent. for wastage).	12·5		12 oz. flour	9·357	20 oz. "raw grain" § ...	14·035	Half the value of the dole ration = 9·267 pies.
Grinding charges *	0·85		Grinding charges	0·641	2 oz. dal §	2·0	
2 oz. dal †	2·06		2 oz. dal	2·06	Salt, 0·75 oz.	0·75	
0·33 oz. salt	0·33		0·33 oz. salt	0·33	Tamarind, 0·5 oz.	0·5	
0·33 oz. oil	0·83	As. 1–7·65	0·33 oz. oil	0·83	Chillies, 0·5 oz.	1·25	
Vegetables and condiments ‡—					.....	.....	
Tamarind, 0·25 oz.	0·25		0·5 oz. condiments and vegetables.	0·875			
Chillies, 0·25 oz.	0·625					18·535	
	17·45			14·093	Total cost ...	or As. 1–6·535	
Total cost ...	or As. 1–5·45		Total cost ...	or As. 1–2·093			

* Bellary rates of 2·5 pies per 3¼ lb. adopted — the local rate of Kurnool being unknown.
† 3 per cent. wastage.
‡ It is, of course, impossible to give vegetables in an allowance of one *half ounce* to be distributed between "condiments *and* vegetables."
§ No wastage allowed for.

Comparative nutritive value and cost of Child's ration.

		Nutritive value.	Money value.
Child's ration from 7 to 12 years of age (Bombay Famine Code, section 107), D ration.	Albuminoids	1·571 oz.	As. 1–2·093 (17·1 lb. per rupee Jowari).
	Starch equivalent	11·337 ,,	
Half the Madras dole (Madras Famine Code, section 122) per child of 7 to 12 years.	Albuminoids	1·069 ,,	9·267 pies (17·1 lb. per rupee Jowari).
	Starch equivalent	7·613 ,,	

The Waltair Conference was in favour of grain doles as a rule, admitting that this was liable to exceptions, and dwelt strongly on the fact that Government *must sometimes* have its own depots and import its own grain. Regarding this the Collector of Ganjám has written as follows :—

"Money-doles are really a better method of relief than grain-doles, and not more demoralising. My reasons for arriving at the conclusion may be briefly stated. We have fewer intermediaries to deal with. With grain-doles there is, firstly the Circle Inspector and then the contractor : given a slack Circle Inspector and a dishonest contractor, the latter can manipulate his account at will (for I have no faith in this district in the supervision of the village panchayats who are generally in league with the contractor). He can use light weight, or short measure, and adulterate his grain, or supply damaged provision. With the money-dole, on the other hand, there is only the Circle Inspector to deal with, and a fraud in actual payment of a fixed sum is much more easily detected by village enquiry than a fraud in measurement. The payment of cash takes less time and is more capable of personal supervision by the Deputy Tahsildar or Taluk relief officer; while contractors cannot possibly combine against Government to raise prices to a fictitious level. Neither can Circle Inspectors exceed their allotments, while grain-doles they purchase on credit."

The Collector of Ganjám also urged that people do not always wish to buy exactly the constituents of the grain ration prescribed, and urged that, for Ganjám generally, if the grain dole is to be given, Government depots are indispensable.

18. The Government of Madras referred for consideration the following remark of the Government of India :—

It is suggested that the regulations respecting poor-houses * 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 prescribed, is one which frequently arises, and which is possibly of sufficient importance to be treated of in the revised regulations (*vide* letter in G.O., No. 919, dated 8th September 1897, paragraph 6).

Both conferences considered that, as regards this Presidency, this matter is one of academic interest, as, under proper administration, the poor-house stage should never be reached. The only instance of a poor-house, and that on a very small scale, and for a very short time, during the recent distress, was at Cocanada, where one was established to check the influx of emigrants from Vizagapatam, during the height of distress, to the Deltaic Eldorado. The Board is not at all sure that, if a trial on a large scale were made of Mr. Higham's piece-work and distance test, poor-houses would remain a matter of academic interest. The need for them would indicate a failure in relief operations. The emigration to the Gódávari took place exactly at the time when prices in Vizagapatam were 150 per cent. higher than the normal; when the Government of India and Government of Madras were calling on Collectors to account for the numbers on gratuitous relief; when the Collector of Vizagapatam was urging the necessity for the appointment of more Taluk Relief Officers; and when the Collector's application for funds was left six weeks unanswered.

In reference to the above, the Collector of Ganjám, at the Waltair conference, recurred to his suggestion † that legislation should be had recourse to to enable Government officers to seize and deport to kitchens or poor-houses the children of parents who misappropriated the doles and starved their children. Such cases were not uncommon in his district. It is not probable that any legislation will be introduced to this end. In reply to the Sanitary Commissioner, the Collector stated that these parents do not starve their children in ordinary times, which the Sanitary Commissioner thought to be an indication that there was some mistake in the administration of relief, which must be in some respect inadequate. The fact is worth noting in reference to Mr. Higham's faith in piece-work as stimulating the "sense of an obligation to maintain one's own dependents which is so universal throughout India"—vide

* *Vide* sections 68—74 and Appendix V of the Code.

† "One of the most difficult questions that I have to deal with is the want of parental feeling evinced by the Uriyas. They keep their children at starvation point, in order that the latter may be granted grain doles which they themselves consume. The only way out of the difficulty is to compel the children by force into the kitchens and leave the well-nourished parent to expostulate outside. The introduction of an Act for the prevention of cruelty to children in this country would be a most excellent thing in these emergencies."—Fortnightly Narrative of the Ganjám district for period ending 15th August 1897.

e to p. 11 (vi) *ante*—and the Board's remark as to famine being a solvent to mestic ties (*vide* paragraphs 53 and 71 of the "Narrative of the Famine in India in 96–97," by F. W. Holderness, Esq., C.S.I.). Much of the misery and low physique, ticeable at Adóni, is due to the well-paid males, who work at the cotton press on od wages, spending a large share of their earnings in drink, and it was not found, nen the stress of famine came, that these persons in any way recognized the "sense an obligation to maintain their own dependents."

In Ganjám, however, the case was that of parents who could, but would not, me to work. When their children fell off in physique they would not, owing to ste prejudices, allow them to attend the relief kitchens, and the dole given to the ildren they misappropriated. This "sense of an obligation" is felt generally ough when times are good, but is apt to vanish when the squeeze of distress comes.

19. The next point for consideration was a reference from the Government of ndia desiring to know what additions, if any, to existing provisions of the Codes ith respect to the care and disposal of orphans * are necessary, the reference to phans in the present Code being but brief (*vide* letter in G.O., No. 919, dated 8th ptember 1897, paragraph 7).

This question was also held, by both conferences, to be of purely academical terest as regards this Presidency. It is one which ought not to arise when famine is operly administered. There were no orphans to speak of anywhere, the largest number eing about twenty in Bellary, and existing regulations provide all that is necessary.

20. The following is a précis of the next subject which came under consider-ion :—

Position of Public Works Officers.†

Mr. Higham recommends —

(*a*) that the Public Works Department should be declared solely responsible for the proper organization and management of all relief works entrusted to its control, the Civil department being responsible only for famine administration outside such relief works. Thus, the duty of the Civil officers will be to send to the works all who are in need of out-door employment, and of the Public Works officer to find suitable employment for all who come, in accordance with the rules that may be prescribed for his guidance by the Local Government in his own department, and subject to the control of his own departmental superior, the Superintending Engineer (paragraph 34 of Final Report);

(*b*) that the Collectors should be kept fully informed of all that is being done, and their advice taken on all important points, and they may, when necessary, issue orders to the officers in charge of works; their Revenue subordinates however should have no authority to interfere with the arrangements on works, but they may visit all works freely and report to Collectors the results of their inspections in a form which can be passed on at once to the Public Works officer for any immediate action that may be necessary (paragraph 34 of Final Report and 14 of Central Provinces Notes);

(*c*) that the Public Works Department should be responsible for the systematic management of kitchens attached to works, such gratuitous relief being given only on the recommendation of the Collector (paragraph 41 (*l*) of Final Report);

(*d*) that the Public Works Department should be responsible for payment to coolies (paragraph 35 of Final Report and paragraph 20 of Madras Notes);

(*e*) that on large works a special Civil officer usually nominated by the Civil department, but acting under the orders of the Public Works Department should be employed. His special duties should be to receive all applications for relief, to draft them to the work, to arrange for and supervise the bazaar, to look after the sanitary arrangements and health of the people with the aid of the medical subordinate, to check the musters and move about among the gangs so as to receive complaints, to be present as frequently as possible at the distribution of wages, to prepare and despatch the periodical reports and returns, and when there is no Sub-Divisional officer resident on the works, to have the care of the cash-chest, and to be responsible for all payments (paragraph 35);

(*f*) that small relief works which cannot conveniently be placed under the charge of the officers of the Public Works Department, and all petty agricultural works for which petty advances have been made should remain under the charge of the Collector, and be managed, as far as may be, in general accordance with the principles to be laid down in the case of Public Works Department works, though the accounts may be kept in less detail (paragraph 34 of Final Report).

* *Vide* section 90 of the Code.

† The Madras system is criticised in paragraphs 25–31 of his Madras Notes.

The Government of India desires * that the above recommendations should be carefully examined in the light of the actual practice and experience of the Local Government and the necessary amendments, if any, proposed in the Famine Code. It observes (*vide* resolution in G.O., No. 958, dated 16th November 1897) that, while it is 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, it considers that a case does not exist for departing from the principle laid down in paragraph 130 of the Famine Commission Report, which is as follows:—

"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 everything except arrangements of a merely technical nature."

The main point for consideration in the above is a proposal to set aside the conclusions of the Indian Famine Commission, and to make the Engineer Officer practically independent in all matters of the Revenue officers. In reporting the conclusions arrived at by the Conferences, the Board has not thought it necessary to notice minor differences of opinion, and, practically, there was no important dissenting minority on any of the points referred, except in reference to the questions summarized above and in the next paragraph. The Board thinks it, however, only fair to state that, as regards the position of the Public Works Department in reference to the Revenue officers, the great majority of the professional officers present at the Madras Conference, as also, somewhat less emphatically, of those present at the Waltair Conference, went strongly for Mr. Higham's proposals. On the other hand the senior and most experienced professional officer present at Madras considered that, on the outbreak of distress, a special Famine Department should be organized, in which the professional officers should be the Divisional officers of the Collector for large famine works as the Revenue Divisional officers would be at his disposal for minor works and relief generally. He would give the Superintending Engineer power to issue orders "as to construction and to ensure uniformity of work." He would also give Revenue officers, down to and including the rank of Tahsildar, the right of mustering gangs and testing the accuracy of the D form. He would also give this power to the Paymaster, if of a higher class than hitherto appointed, considering that the taluk gumastah class is not fitted for the post, which should be held by pensioned Deputy Collectors, Military officers, or the better-paid subordinates of the Opium, Revenue Survey and Revenue Settlement Departments. These are the views of a senior officer with experience of the great famine, in which none of the other officers, of executive grade, present at the Conferences, had been employed.

On the other hand there was a conciliatory spirit in the ranks of the majority, which quite recognized that professional *amour propre* required concessions, and some of the conclusions arrived at, notably that in which the Revenue Divisional officers are thrown overboard, are in the nature of a compromise. The Board believes that a *modus vivendi* is possible on the lines of these conclusions.

The first resolution of the Madras Conference traverses the main principle of Mr. Higham's proposals: it was of opinion that "the Collector should be solely responsible for the administration of relief in his district," to which the Waltair Conference, assenting, added that "this could only be so if he is invested with the necessary authority."

Both Conferences considered that section 24 † of the present Code should stand unaltered.

Both Conferences considered that the Executive or Assistant Engineer should be the Assistant of the Collector for famine matters.

They were of opinion that special Civil officers should be appointed for large works only; that the Revenue Department should appoint him, but that he should be

* *Vide* note to paragraph 21 (*b*) *infra*.

† "The district will be the unit of relief administration, and the Collector will be the Agent of Government for carrying out the measures of relief which may be determined on. He will exercise general supervision over all works and arrangements for giving relief within his district, and will be responsible to Government for their efficiency. His decision should be accepted in all matters relating to the employment and wages of the labourers, the opening or closing of works and generally in all matters which are not of a merely technical nature. Officers of all departments employed on famine duty will take their orders from him on all points not strictly professional."

under the orders of the Executive Engineer in his capacity of Assistant to the Collector, and of the Engineer officer in charge of the work, if not of lower rank than that of Supervisor.

The Conferences preferred section 55 of the Code to Mr. Higham's proposal in paragraph 20 (*e*) above; this would give the Civil officer the power of enquiring into, and not merely of receiving, complaints, and to his other duties as enumerated in (*e*) should be added the duty of attending to conservancy, assigning new-comers to their huts and having general charge of the camp. Clause (*b*) is disposed of with paragraph 21 (*a*) *infra* and clause (*d*) in considering paragraph 21 (*d*). The Conferences accepted clause (*f*).

As to (*c*), if the Engineer is the Assistant of the Collector, the kitchen management will be (through the Engineer) under the management of the Collector.

The matters discussed above are germane to those considered in the following paragraph.

21. The following references were made by the Government of Madras:—

(*a*) 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?

(*b*) 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:—

1. Classification.
2. Ganging.
3. Tasking.
4. Regulation of wages.
5. Measuring up of works.
6. Fining.
7. Water-supply.
8. Hutting.
9. Kitchens.
10. Doles to children of relief-workers.
11. Provision and custody of tools.
12. Locality, opening and closing of works.
13. Provision of work in the specified locality.
14. Provision of funds and establishments for works.

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

(*d*) *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? (*Vide paragraph* 20 (*d*) *supra*).

As to (*a*) both Conferences held that G.O., No. 593, dated 19th July 1897, should be adhered to, but—and this was in the spirit of concession to the feelings of the professional officers—Revenue Divisional officers, which of course includes their subordinates, should not have the power to pass orders on works. Section 38 (*b*) † of the Bombay Famine Code was not approved of; the Revenue Divisional officer should be limited to full power of inspection, and should bring matters which, he thinks, require rectification to the notice of the Engineer officers in charge of the work, sending a copy of his remarks to the Collector. This partly coincides with Mr. Higham's proposal as given in paragraph 20 (*b*) above.

This elimination of the Revenue Divisional officer was not approved of by the majority of the Revenue Divisional officers present at the Madras Conference, and instances were given of very scanty courtesy paid to their representations by the officers in charge of works. If, however, the Engineer officers are, for famine

* Mr. Higham states: "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" (paragraph 28 of his Madras Notes).

The Government of India invites attention to the remark in paragraph 31 of Mr. Higham's Madras 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. It observes that it may be said "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. The Government of India recognise 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." (*Vide* letter in G.O., No. 899, dated 29th October 1897.)

† "Officers of the Public Works Department below the rank of Assistant Engineer shall be subordinate in the same manner to the Sub-Divisional officer."

purposes, the Assistants of the Collector, it may be hoped that a new spirit will be present on the next occasion when relief has to be administered. The concession was politic, for there seemed to be a general willingness on the part of professional officers to accept the position of the Collector as the chief in command for the district, provided he, and he only, should issue orders.

At the same time it must be remembered that Madras districts are large, and it may take a long time for a reference to reach the Collector from his Divisional officer, and for orders thereon to reach a work.

The Board would observe that the Government of India appears to have been under a misapprehension when passing the order quoted in the note to paragraph 21 (*b*). There was, practically, no attempt—a few initial test works and petty village works excepted—on the part of the Civil authorities to manage relief works in this Presidency. From a very early stage of the famine all relief works were placed in charge of the Public Works Department. All the task schedules in force in all the distressed districts were drawn up by the Public Works officers, and, though submitted to the Collector and Famine Commissioner, passed without comment of importance. In many—in the majority of cases—there was no friction whatever, and, when there was friction, it was due, as a rule, not to the Code provisions, but to the disregard of them.

The points involved in (*b*) were fully debated, with a desire to meet, if possible, the wishes of Government. In the end, however, the Madras Conference held that, if the Collector is to be responsible for the administration of relief in his district, he must have a general power of supervision in all matters. Even in reference to item 11, the Collector might have an opinion as to the adequacy of provision of tools, and, as to item 14, all the Engineers agreed that cases might arise in which the Engineer would require the assistance of the Collector in procuring establishment, &c. The Waltair Conference held that, unless the Collector is absolutely relieved of all responsibility in connection with the items under consideration, they could not counsel handing over any of them to the Public Works Department. If, however, the Collector were declared no longer in any way responsible, they would hand over to the Public Works officers items 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13 and 14 as strictly professional.

The question arising from (*c*) has practically been answered above. The position taken up by both Conferences was that the only persons who should issue orders to the Executive Engineer were the Collector and the Famine Commissioner; that there would be no objection to the introduction of paragraph 37 * of the Bombay Code, if the powers of the Collector and of the Famine Commissioner are maintained, but the Superintending Engineer should be the adviser of the Famine Commissioner, and correspondence should not, as in Bombay, go beyond the latter. The proceedings of the Famine Commissioner go to Government, who can interfere if they think fit.

As to (*d*) the Waltair Conference held that the paymaster should be the subordinate of the Public Works Department—this in view of the recommendation that the Executive Engineer should be the Collector's assistant.

* Section 37 of Bombay Code:—

"The duties of Chief Engineers, by which designation are meant, in this and subsequent sections, the Chief and Superintending Engineers of Divisions, shall be—

(*a*) to restrict the ordinary Public Works expenditure to the amounts unavoidably necessary for the prevention of serious loss on, or damage to, existing works;

(*b*) to maintain the programme of well considered works with matured plans and estimates up to the required mark, by preparing plans and estimates for fresh works to take the place of those commenced, completed or eliminated;

(*c*) to arrange with the Divisional or the Famine Commissioner, as the case may be, the most suitable works or portions of works to be carried out by relief labour and to avoid undertaking any work which may subsequently entail heavy expenditure for completion or maintenance;

(*d*) to draft the engineering staff at their disposal to the districts where relief works are in progress; to give early information to Government of the number and character of any additional engineering staff that may be required as the famine develope and the need of further large relief works becomes clear; and as each important work is commenced to see that a sufficient staff, including such number of cashiers as is required, is appointed to ensure sound work being done;

(*e*) to collect the available tools and plant of their own divisions at the distressed portions; to utilise to the full the stock available in other divisions; and if necessary to sanction the purchase by Executive Engineers of additional tools and plant required, reporting to Government the amount so sanctioned;

(*f*) to maintain an equal standard of tasks and uniformity of procedure in setting tasks for the various kinds of work;

(*g*) to restrict the number of returns and reports required from Executive Engineers to the lowest efficient limit and especially to see that measurements and accounts are made out in the most simple and the least laborious form;

(*h*) to dispose of engineering questions and to do so promptly;

(*i*) to visit the more important relief works and see that the work done is suitable, that the manner in which it is being carried out is efficient and that the works establishment is sufficient and not excessive."

The Madras Conference, on the same understanding, held that the paymaster should be the subordinate of the Public Works Department Sub-Divisional officers—and of course of the Executive Engineer—but should not be the subordinate of the officer immediately in charge of the work, unless that officer should hold the rank of a gazetted officer, or the work should form a sub-divisional charge.

22. With reference to weavers' relief the following reference was received from the Government of Madras:—

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 description which he may wish to sell on behalf of himself or any one else; paying himself 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 restricting relief to the 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 dependents to be relieved?

The Government of India also desires to know whether the provisions of the Code relating to the relief of weavers and artisans require any alteration or expansion. (*Vide* letter in G.O., No. 919, dated 8th September 1897, paragraph 8.)

The reference made by Government does not seem to be altogether in accordance with the actual facts, as to which, evidently, some misunderstanding has arisen. The Board would premise by observing that the rules in Appendix VII were generally followed in the beginning, and modifications were made to suit peculiar circumstances, as experience was gained in working the scheme. The rules in question have never before been tried in practice.

Initial advance of wages was given by the Collectors of Bellary and Cuddapah at first, as the weavers were represented to be in danger of starvation, but, Government having disapproved of this, no further advances of the kind appear to have been given (*vide* G.O., No. 727, dated 18th December 1896 and G.O., No. 49, dated 26th, January 1897); these advances seem to have been recovered. Initial advances of materials are contemplated by section 131 of the Code, though not by Appendix VII.

The number of cloths bought has been limited to the number for which materials were advanced, as it was represented that local merchants were trying to dispose of their stock through the weavers (B.P., No. 474, dated 31st December 1897). Advances have also been restricted to the number of cloths which can be woven by the weavers and their families with the aid of such coolies as are absolutely necessary, as it was found that, otherwise, the loom owners acted the part of middlemen, and intercepted a part of the wages intended for the subsistence of the actual weavers. The tasks originally fixed have been revised in the light of experiments conducted by the Special Deputy Collector and Deputy Tahsildars. The numbers returned as relieved are not quite trustworthy, as they are only estimates and do not represent the actual numbers relieved. (*Vide* B.P., No. 594, dated 27th August 1897.)

It was proposed, by the Famine Commissioner, to materially alter the mode of tasking prescribed in the Code, by ordering the determination of tasks with reference to the time taken for weaving only, the persons engaged in subsidiary operations being paid for the whole period taken for weaving, even though they are occupied only for a part of it. Government modified this proposal by allowing payment to those engaged in subsidiary operations for those days only on which they are actually employed, a part of a day being counted however as one day, and by requiring them to be fed in kitchens for the remaining period. (G.O., No. 741, dated 31st August 1897.)

"It is not necessary, and may often be undesirable, to offer to every one, work close to his door, but, on the other hand, it is unreasonable to expect people to travel great distances in order to obtain relief, or to make such a journey a condition precedent of their being received on relief works; and we think that such a test should not be applied."

Again, in reviewing the operations of the famine of 1876—78, the Madras Government stated as follows:—

"As regards the test of real need by an individual of relief on a relief work, the Governor in Council is satisfied that the only test necessary is readiness to work, and that if the conditions precedent really exist, which have been laid down as justifying the conclusion that the people are suffering privation from inability to buy enough food to keep themselves and their families in health and strength with the wages of their daily labour, no other test is needed. The mere absence of emaciation or the possession of a few trifling personal ornaments should not be construed as proving the absence of want, and no such test as the distance test laid down by Sir Richard Temple should ever be insisted on. If one work is opened in every area of a given size (say of 50 or 100 square * miles) throughout the distressed region, then those who wish to work have their sincerity tested sufficiently by their readiness to go to such a work, which, in many instances, would be situated at a considerable distance from their homes."

The test may or may not be suited to other parts of India. Sundry uncertain factors would have to be determined before this point could be accepted as settled. Mr. Higham's executive experience has been acquired in Northern India, peopled by a sturdy race, stiffened by six months of cold weather every year. They may possibly accept a distance test; this would explain why Public Works officers serving under the Government of India, and contractors, export these men to long distances, *e.g.*, the Kistna bridge was built by Punjabi coolies. The Board is, however, satisfied that the distance test is generally unsuited to this Presidency, and it is a radical innovation to propose to introduce it. Poor as their huts may be, the Madras workers have a strong attachment to them, and will be slow to abandon them. There will often be a relation who cannot, without danger, be abandoned, though, if all stay behind, they will suffer together. The ablest males are just the ones who will be the last to fall out of employment. If they have any cattle they will take them to the hills, or they will take the cattle of richer ryots, or they will earn a better wage than Government will give them at cutting grass, or in eradicating *nuth* grass, or in digging wells for ryots who have received advances, or they will migrate in search of work to Mysore or the deltas, where the work will be congenial and the pay better than on relief works, while discipline will be *nil*. The real "professional cooly"—the navvy "Wudder"—will rarely come to work at all; he scarcely exists in the Telugu famine zone, and, as long as loans are given for agricultural improvements, he will have the first call from the farmer. Even, too, if, as Mr. Higham would wish, the abler-bodied could be attracted to the work at a distance, it is very doubtful if any of his handsome wage would filter back to his family. His first thought would be to "get a bellyful," and to do this twice a day, at famine prices, would make a considerable inroad on the highest piece-work wage. The balance would, probably, go to the nearest toddy-shop. Mr. Higham himself is by no means sure on this subject. He uses—para. 22—the phrase "*if it be true* that what is not required by the workers for their own subsistence will be applied to the support of their non-working dependents." Mr. Higham considers it demoralising to give a full wage for less than a full task; but he considers that it conduces to *morale* to pay much more than its actual value for piece-work, when it is not certain that the surplus earned would in most cases reach the dependents. The liberal wage which would support dependents must, especially in famine times, when prices range up to 300 per cent. above normal, be considerably more than the work done is worth. Whether it is more demoralising to pay a subsistence wage for a low task, or an excessive wage for a high task, without the certainty that the surplus from the latter will reach dependents, is a matter very much open to question. As a fact, rural society and home affections are always more or less demoralised in time of famine. It seems safe to act on the opinion that this is and must be so. It is not alone in Madras, or in Ganjám, that famine weakens family ties. Mr. Higham records that the same tendency to misappropriate the children's dole was noticed in the North-Western Provinces. As a fact it will always be the case that, in this

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"It is not necessary, and may often be undesirable, to offer to every one, work close to his door, but, on the other hand, it is unreasonable to expect people to travel great distances in order to obtain relief, or to make such a journey a condition precedent of their being received on relief works; and we think that such a test should not be applied."

Again, in reviewing the operations of the famine of 1876—78, the Madras Government stated as follows:—

"As regards the test of real need by an individual of relief on a relief work, the Governor in Council is satisfied that the only test necessary is readiness to work, and that if the conditions precedent really exist, which have been laid down as justifying the conclusion that the people are suffering privation from inability to buy enough food to keep themselves and their families in health and strength with the wages of their daily labour, no other test is needed. The mere absence of emaciation or the possession of a few trifling personal ornaments should not be construed as proving the absence of want, and no such test as the distance test laid down by Sir Richard Temple should ever be insisted on. If one work is opened in every area of a given size (say of 50 or 100 square * miles) throughout the distressed region, then those who wish to work have their sincerity tested sufficiently by their readiness to go to such a work, which, in many instances, would be situated at a considerable distance from their homes."

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26. *Thirdly.*—The Indian Famine Commission laid down, as one of the first principles permeating relief operations, that the wage offered to the worker should be "a wage on which life and health can be maintained." Mr. Higham, very properly, considers that forms of accounts should be settled by a "Committee of experts" and that tasks should be settled by "experts" or by "high authority"; but, when it comes to wages he does not propose that they should be settled by experts; *assuming* the Code D-class wage to be sufficient as a pure *subsistence* wage, he proposes that the mass of his workers of both sexes who would "be entitled to what may be considered an adequate *subsistence* wage" (paragraph 8) should be placed on a *working* wage equivalent to the D-class wage for females, a wage which has been declared by one of the first experts in India to be insufficient for bare subsistence. A *subsistence* wage for females, the adequacy of which has been disputed even for that purpose, is proposed for the mass of

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28. From Mr. Higham's report it might be gathered that the Code system had been tried and failed, and the Government of India even seem to be under the impression that the civil officers in Madras were managing relief works. This is not so, except in very rare cases of petty village works, and test-works * at the commencement; nor can it be said that the Code system got a fair trial. It would be, perhaps, not unfair to say that, in certain quarters, every endeavour was made to prevent it from having a fair trial. In paragraph 33 of his report, Mr. Higham speaks, with approval, of the Superintending Engineer, in other provinces, "working in close communication with the Commissioners"; in paragraph 34 of his report on the North-Western Provinces, he speaks with approval of "the able organisation of the relief work system having been entrusted to the Superintending Engineers and the Public Works officers serving under them, *subject only to the general control of the Commissioners, who are consulted before any important order is issued*, and to that of the Chief Engineer and Secretary to Government in the Public Works Department." As a fact, the Madras Code assigns no place to the Superintending Engineer. This may or may not be right; but, when a Code exists, the Superintending Engineer ought to have accepted the position. On the other hand, a cordial co-operation on his part would have been met more than half way. Instead, however, of accepting the Code position, or co-operating, the Superintending Engineer for the Deccan districts assumed to himself the right of direct interference, and issued orders on works without any reference to the civil officers. So far from "working in close communication with the Commissioner," the Superintending Engineer did not, during the whole of the famine, address one single communication to the Commissioner: he did communicate with Collectors, or at least he certainly did so once, when he told the Collector of Bellary that he was "disingenuous"—a remark against which the Collector protested, but which still remains, unrebuked, on record. Instead of working "in close communication with the Commissioner" or "subject to the general control of the Commissioner, and consulting him before any general order was issued," the Superintending Engineer was the channel of a continual stream of complaints against the civil officers. The Assistant Engineer's complaints went to the Executive Engineer, and on, backed by the remarks of the latter, to the Superintending Engineer, who added his own, criticising kitchen management also, with which the Public Works Department had nothing to do, and

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their capacity, as the nature of the work on which they are employed admits of; that is, not the task which they can do, but the lesser task which scientific martinetism considers consistent with the interest of the work; not such a wage as they could earn, but such lesser wage as the professional bent for showing outturn and value for money will permit them to earn. "When the work is of such a character that proper employment on work ordinarily given to men of class Y cannot be regularly found for all of this class that come to the work, the number actually required for this work would be selected for this class, the remainder, which should include the weakest workers, being relegated to class Z, and given the Z task and wage." This is, practically, a sacrifice of the worker to the work; of the interest of relief to expert zeal for symmetry and outturn; a setting aside of the principle that relief comes first and economy second; that the object of relief works is, not to get the greatest quantity of work done, but to give effectual relief. Mr. Higham dwells often on *morale*, and, for the sake of *morale*, he would allow the workers to earn a higher wage which he would refuse to their physical requirements; but *morale* loses its importance when the nature of the work and professional symmetry prohibit it; when workers are not present in the exact proportion which scientific training dictates, or when work is difficult to procure, and a restriction of progress is, on this ground desirable—paragraph 16 of Final Report. The Famine Code, paragraph 58, following the lines of the Famine Commission's report, lays down that "*the first duty of all professional officers in charge of famine-relief works is to realize* that for a time new duties are required of them, and that the system on which works are conducted in ordinary years must give place to that prescribed for famine-relief. They will remember that, whereas ordinarily the primary object is to get the work done as cheaply and as effectually as possible, with no special regard for the well being of the labourer, the principal object in time of famine is to keep him alive," and, yet, Mr. Higham must have had the above in view when, in paragraph 37 of his Final Report, he puts very clearly the true principles which should govern famine-relief as follows:—"The problem is not how to get a maximum outturn of work for a given outlay or even for every unit receiving relief, but how to supply adequate relief to all who apply for employment at a minimum ultimate cost to the community as a whole." He adds, too, the very pregnant remark that "if the work is one of very great utility, and especially if it is likely to prove remunerative, this will not much affect the ultimate cost to the community, because the more work a man does the greater will be the present value of that work, and the less the actual cost, inasmuch as the greater the progress, the lighter will be the incidence of establishment and miscellaneous expenses. But if the work is one of very doubtful or limited utility, there is little advantage in a full tale of work, and under such circumstances it would be better not to introduce piece-work." It is possible that Mr. Higham's practice might not be altogether in accord with his theory as to piece-work and distance test, for which, after all, his predilections are only half-hearted. In the great dearth of useful works, especially in the Deccan, the remark above quoted might be held to justify a general recourse to task-work. Mr. Higham contemplates task-work as the culminating form of relief, and—paragraph 26—admits that in many cases, and perhaps in the majority of cases, the daily labour system, with all its faults, will be the only one possible; but adds that "it is on this account that the classification of daily labourers have been considered at full length," from which it is evident that he contemplates his classes X, Y, and Z, and his attenuated wage being adhered to.

26. *Thirdly.*—The Indian Famine Commission laid down, as one of the first principles permeating relief operations, that the wage offered to the worker should be "a wage on which life and health can be maintained." Mr. Higham, very properly, considers that forms of accounts should be settled by a "Committee of experts" and that tasks should be settled by "experts" or by "high authority"; but, when it comes to wages he does not propose that they should be settled by experts; *assuming* the Code D-class wage to be sufficient as a pure *subsistence* wage, he proposes that the mass of his workers of both sexes who would "be entitled to what may be considered an adequate *subsistence* wage" (paragraph 8) should be placed on a *working* wage equivalent to the D-class wage for females, a wage which has been declared by one of the first experts in India to be insufficient for bare subsistence. A *subsistence* wage for females, the adequacy of which has been disputed even for that purpose, is proposed for the mass of

workers, both male and female; even the Government of India has never made such a proposal; but Mr. Higham does not think it to be "radical" or "inconsistent with the recommendations of the Famine Commission."

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sent them on—not to the Commissioner—but to the Chief Engineer to Government, who sent them to the Revenue Secretary to Government, from whom they filtered down to the Commissioner and so on to the Collector and other civil officers, and explanations and replies filtered back through the same circuitous channel. It would hardly be denied that this system was absolutely inconsistent with efficiency, and hampered the civil officers of all ranks at every turn. In his evidence before the Famine Commission the late Superintending Engineer, III Circle, stated that, at an early stage of operations, he had ordered a book to be kept on each work, showing the actual value of work done. It would appear as if, from the commencement, the Superintending Engineer had been digging a pit for the civil officers. The interference of the civil officers had no reference whatever to purely technical matters. The batter of a road or the level of a channel, and everything really technical was always in the hands of the Public Works officers. All the task schedules were drawn up by them with no interference, practically, beyond accepting them, from the civil officers. The latter did interfere with tasks and wages. They had the power to do so. Mr. Higham has specially referred to the matter in speaking of the Kurnool district.* Mr. Higham did not go into the reason why Mr. Ghose issued the circular of 11th May 1897 referred to in paragraph 15 of his report. Had he done so, he would have found that, practically, G.O., No. 216, dated 30th March 1897, did not come into force in the Kurnool district until about the beginning of June. It is not expedient to discuss why this was so, but this fact goes far to explain how it came that, failing effect being given to the Government Order in question, various other devices were resorted to by the civil officers with the view of mitigating the condition of the workers. The wonder is, seeing the attitude taken up by the Superintending Engineer, that there was not more, instead of so little, friction between the Engineering and Civil departments. The example set did not, certainly, tend to cordial co-operation. The Board is satisfied that, had the Code been adhered to, there would have been no friction at all, and it is to be regretted that, during his tour in this Presidency, Mr. Higham should have continually been the recipient of the Superintending Engineer's biassed views on the subject, which seem to have created an impression on Mr. Higham's mind not justified by facts.†

29. One of the special reasons why Mr. Higham wishes for a revision of the system of accounts is "the want of uniformity in provincial returns, which renders comparisons of results attained almost impossible"—paragraph 40. The Board is quite in accord with Mr. Higham that, if it is possible to simplify the accounts, this should be done, but would deprecate the reason assigned for doing so. Comparisons are dangerous and likely to mislead. There can be no comparison between a three-legged stool and the Röntgen rays; and, unless all the conditions prevailing in different provinces and districts are alike, comparisons are only likely to lead to carping criticism and acrimonious references. Nothing is more perilous to real efficiency than the tendency, in Indian administration, to judge by tabulated results, and nothing is more demoralizing. This has already been seriously felt in at least two of the great departments of the State.

30. Mr. Higham admitted to the Famine Commissioner that there might be circumstances which would vitiate comparisons, *e.g.*, that, possibly, the people in one place had means of eking out their wages which were not available in another, as for example, the mohwa crop in the Central Provinces. He admitted, also, that he had not noticed that, in estimating pay and rations, the Codes of some other provinces used the word "flour" when the Madras Code uses the word "grain", *i.e.*, unhusked grain, or that "oil" and "ghee" are included in some Codes and excluded from others. In

* The Board would take the opportunity to correct here a mistake into which Mr. Higham has plainly fallen through inadvertence, viz., when—in paragraph 15 of his report on Madras—he states that the Divisional-officer had only visited two works between the dates of G.O., No. 216, dated 30th March 1897, and that of Mr. Higham's visit. As a fact he visited eighteen.

† To prevent possibility of misapprehension the Board takes leave to state that, apart from this unhappy difference of opinion, the late Superintending Engineer is an officer most cordially esteemed by all who have the fortune to be brought in contact with him.

instituting comparisons between the value of work turned out and its cost in wages, the efficiency of relief administration generally, and the sufficiency of the D wage, there are a great many factors to be considered.

Amongst the first of these is the physique of the people: are they, as in the Deccan districts of this Presidency, the survival of long years of alternate famine and irregular crops, with rare instances of prosperous years, spare and lean in person, with little or no luxuries which can be cut down in time of trouble, conservative and home-abiding in temperament, or are they a people of fine physique, enterprising, accustomed to good seasons, rarely acquainted with famine and with a margin of comfort to be trenched on when the pinch comes? * What are their relative savings in grain, money or jewels? How do they compare as to facilities for grazing their cattle, fuel and fodder reserves, &c.? Are they alike in facilities for eking out subsistence by the use of jungle products, sea or river fisheries, &c. Has the rise in prices been the same in the provinces compared? High prices may be compatible with great prosperity.

It is much more important to consider what the percentage of the rise in prices has been, than how the actual prices themselves compare, *e.g.*, the percentage of

* The following statement, extracted from paragraph 70 of the Indian Famine Commission Report, 1878, shows the necessity for treating Madras with special tenderness in matters of famine administration:—

—	Bengal.			North-Western Provinces and Punjab.			Rajputana and Central India.			Bombay.			Madras.		
		Years.			Years.			Years.			Years.			Years.	
	Severity.	Duration.	Interval.	Severity.	Duration.	Interval.	Severity.	Duration.	Interval.	Severity.	Duration.	Interval.	Severity.	Duration.	Interval.
1769–70	***	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
1782–83	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	13	**	2	13
1783–84	*	1	13	***	1	14	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
1791–92	..	..	..	..	..	..	*	1	22	***	1	8	**	1	7
1802–3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	**	1	10	..	..	..
1803–4	..	..	..	**	1	19	*	1	11	..	..	..	**	1	13
1806–7	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	**	1	16
1812–13	..	..	..	*	1	8	*	1	8	**	1	9	..	..	..
1823–24	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	**	1	8
1824–25	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	*	1	11	..	..	..
1832–33	..	..	..	*	1	20	*	1	20	*	1	8	..	..	..
1833–34	..	..	..	***	1	8	**	1	3	..	..	..	..	..	..
1837–38	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	*	1	4	..	..	..
1838–39	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	*	1	5	..	..	..
1844–45	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	**	1	20
1853–54	..	..	..	**	1	22	*	1	22	..	..	..	..	..	..
1860–61	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	**	1	11
1865–66	***	2	81	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
1868–69	..	..	..	**	1	7	***	2	7	..	..	..	..	..	..
1873–74	**	1	6	*	1	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
1876–77	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	***	2	31	***	2	10
1877–78	..	..	4	**	1	8	*	1	7	..	..	..	..	..	..
1889	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	**	1	10
1891–92	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	*	1	2
Severity ..	*9	..	..	*17	..	..	*13	..	..	*16	..	..	*21	..	..
Total number of years affected ..	..	5	..	..	9	..	..	9	..	..	10	..	..	12	..
Total number of years of interval without famine	..	..	122	..	..	118	..	..	118	..	..	117	..	..	114
Average number of years of interval between famines	..	..	30½	..	..	13	..	..	15	..	..	13	..	..	11½

* Denotes severe scarcity. ** Denotes famine. *** Denotes intense famine.

It will be seen from the above that, omitting the last famine, and taking information available for a period of more than one hundred and twenty years, Madras stands first in the intensity of famines from which it has suffered; that the number of famine years has been largest in Madras; that the total number of years without famine has been the fewest in Madras, and that the average number of years between famines has been smallest in Madras.

rise in prices in Madras, during 1897, has been higher than in any other Province, and has been approached only in the Central Provinces and the Punjab.*

Are assessments in the provinces compared the same and is the soil the same? Do the people raise grain crops consumed on the spot, or export crops which profit by a low exchange, such as the wheat crops of Northern India, cotton, &c.? It is generally believed that the assessments in Bombay are lighter than in Madras, and the same is believed to be the case with the Central Provinces; it certainly was the case under Sir Richard Temple's settlement; and yet, notwithstanding this, there has, notoriously, been mortality in the Central Provinces which has not been equalled or approached in Madras. Is this fact wholly explained by the reluctance of the Sonthals to accept Government relief, or is it in any way due to the more timely and adequate aid granted in this Presidency? Have any of the populations compared profited by special class legislation, as, *e.g.*, the Bombay ryots have, for the last quarter of a century, profited by the Deccan Ryots Relief Act. Are the populations compared accustomed to emigrate, or to travel far for work? Do they bring their families with them? How do the latter fare when left behind? Are there large factories to accommodate some of the surplus population? In the case of those who accepted the distance test, is it ascertained, *as a fact*, not from mere rumour or the gossip of Karkuns, that they maintained their relatives from their surplus earnings on piece-work, or were the latter on gratuitous relief? It does not seem probable that, when the able-bodied were 50 miles off or more, the relatives left behind in the villages would be unable to substantiate a claim to relief of some kind, gratuitous, or from the Indian Charitable Relief Fund. How far is the army recruited from the different populations and on what conditions as to marriage, &c.? In what proportion are the resources of each province spent within its limits or appropriated to imperial wants? What is the wealth and solvency of the Native Princes or great proprietors? What was the amount distributed from the Indian Charitable Relief Fund? Was the latter used, as in Bombay, to supplement the Government wage on works, or were the workers left, as in Madras, solely dependent on the wages earned? Of the 165 lakhs of the Indian Charitable

* COMPARATIVE statement showing percentage of rise in prices in the several provinces in 1897.

Province.	District.	Grain.	Normal price.	Average price, October 1896 to August 1897.	Percentage of increase.
North-West Provinces and Oudh.	Cawnpore	Wheat	14·00	9·31	50
		Barley	20·00	10·96	82
		Gram	22·00	9·60	129
		Jawar	19·00	10·51	81
Punjab	Lahore	Wheat	17·00	9·74	75
		Barley	28·51	11·93	139
		Gram	25·56	10·48	144
		Maize	22·08	9·84	124
Bengal	Patna	Rice	16·48	9·46	74
		Barley	22·77	12·36	84
	Darbhanga	Marua	23·96	12·26	95
		Maize	21·70	10·11	115
Central Provinces ..	Nagpur	Wheat	14·77	8·93	65
		Jawar	19·45	11·10	75
	Mandla	Wheat	16·96	8·59	97
	Bilaspur	Gram	24·39	9·64	153
	Betul	Rice	18·42	9·11	102
		Jawar	20·57	9·40	119
Bombay	Poona	Wheat	11·69	7·27	61
	Bijapur	Jawar	17·82	9·44	89
		Jawar	22·61	10·27	120
Madras	Bellary	Cholam	30·00	11·59	159
		Ragi	32·00	15·62	104
		Rice	13·20	8·50	55

Whether barley and gram can be held to be staples of consumption is, also, a matter for consideration.

Relief Fund, only 13½ lakhs were spent in Madras, and much of that after distress had reached its height. This leaves one crore and a half for other provinces. The North-West Provinces, at the very outset, obtained over 50 lakhs. The diffusion of this immense sum amongst the rural population must have tended largely to lighten the pressure on Government relief, and must have tended also to reduce the demands of dependents on workers. It can hardly be certain that none of the sums so distributed reached workers, and helped to eke out their wages. Again, how much money was spent from the State treasury in loans in each province? It cannot be doubted that all money lent operates to reduce the pressure on the agricultural classes. In Madras only 18½ lakhs were given in loans in the affected districts. From the summary and remarks published by His Excellency the Viceroy on the closing of the famine, it would appear that more than two crores in all were distributed in loans. This leaves one crore and 81½ lakhs for provinces other than Madras. In fact, from the Indian Charitable Relief Fund and from loans Madras got 32 lakhs against 342 lakhs distributed in other provinces. This is a factor requiring consideration when comparisons are instituted. In Madras the amount remitted was 23 lakhs, and the amount suspended 10 lakhs. The whole of the latter sum will be recovered. In all India the amount suspended was "over two crores of Land Revenue of which a substantial proportion will not be recovered." How do the sums suspended in different provinces compare? In what way do the Code grain wages and diets compare? They are not identical: thus the Bombay Code allows ghee or oil as part of the gratuitous relief ration, some of this being given in "flour", whereas section 122 of the Madras Code allows no ghee or oil, and specifies "raw grain" as the main article of the ration. Are the diets calculated on flour or on unhusked grain? In Bombay the grain part of the ration was issued as flour, and for this purpose loss by wastage was duly met and also the cost of grinding.* Has allowance been made, in estimating the sufficiency of the wage, for the fact that, up to May 1897, the wage in Madras was calculated on unhusked grain? What is the standard grain on which prices are quoted in different provinces? Is it wheat, or maize and peas, as would seem to be the case in the North-West Provinces, or is it first-class white cholam, as was found to be the case in at least part of Bombay, or is it the cheaper cholam and millet as generally in Madras? What is the standard article of diet on which wages were paid? Was it the more nutritious and expensive wheat flour or white cholam, or was it the yellow cholam and ragi as generally in Madras? Did the standard on which wages were computed remain fixed throughout the whole period of distress, or did it vary, as in Madras, commencing with ragi, then advancing to the cheaper kind of cholam and reverting to a mixture of cholam and ragi or to ragi only? Did the grain-price, computed on an expensive staple, admit of a much larger ration of a cheaper grain being purchased? Was it possible to purchase the A diet out of the D wage? Was it anywhere the case that, between members of the same families, the recipients of the A and D wage were able to provide a diet superior to the A diet? As the distress went on, and as people varied their staple of consumption, was the standard grain on which wages were computed levelled down to the inferior staple to which the people had actually taken, as in Madras? Thus, when it was found that the North-West Provinces were importing ragi, was the staple for wages taken to be ragi or did it continue to be wheat? Was the treatment of nursing mothers the same? Were they limited to the Code allowance, as in Madras, or did they get the A wage for doing nothing, as for a time in Bombay, and afterwards a lower wage *plus* an allowance of one anna for the infant? A similar, but smaller, allowance was given in the North-West Provinces. Had the people the means, or any means, of supplementing the C and D wages? Mr. Higham quotes medical opinion to the effect that the C and D wages were adequate in Bombay. He does not appear to have been aware of the drafts made, on the Indian Charitable Relief Fund, to supplement the wage, and the latter, if calculated on white cholam, may have been quite sufficient to purchase an A diet of an inferior grain. This is a point

* This point has been disputed: there seems to be no doubt about it. Under section 105 of the Bombay Famine Code, the grain portion of the ration is calculated in "flour". In section 111 the grain equivalent of the minimum ration is given as 1¾ lbs., or 28 oz., and, in section 114, the grain equivalent of the "other items" of the minimum ration is stated to be 12 oz.; so that the grain portion is = (28—12) 16 oz. Now this amount (16 oz.) is expressed in section 105 in terms of "flour". The inference seems to be correct that the grain portion of the Bombay ration, as distinct from the grain which purchases the "other items", is husked grain or "flour".

rise in prices in Madras, during 1897, has been higher than in any other Province, and has been approached only in the Central Provinces and the Punjab.*

Are assessments in the provinces compared the same and is the soil the same? Do the people raise grain crops consumed on the spot, or export crops which profit by a low exchange, such as the wheat crops of Northern India, cotton, &c.? It is generally believed that the assessments in Bombay are lighter than in Madras, and the same is believed to be the case with the Central Provinces; it certainly was the case under Sir Richard Temple's settlement; and yet, notwithstanding this, there has, notoriously, been mortality in the Central Provinces which has not been equalled or approached in Madras. Is this fact wholly explained by the reluctance of the Sonthals to accept Government relief, or is it in any way due to the more timely and adequate aid granted in this Presidency? Have any of the populations compared profited by special class legislation, as, *e.g.*, the Bombay ryots have, for the last quarter of a century, profited by the Deccan Ryots Relief Act. Are the populations compared accustomed to emigrate, or to travel far for work? Do they bring their families with them? How do the latter fare when left behind? Are there large factories to accommodate some of the surplus population? In the case of those who accepted the distance test, is it ascertained, *as a fact*, not from mere rumour or the gossip of Karkuns, that they maintained their relatives from their surplus earnings on piece-work, or were the latter on gratuitous relief? It does not seem probable that, when the able-bodied were 50 miles off or more, the relatives left behind in the villages would be unable to substantiate a claim to relief of some kind, gratuitous, or from the Indian Charitable Relief Fund. How far is the army recruited from the different populations and on what conditions as to marriage, &c.? In what proportion are the resources of each province spent within its limits or appropriated to imperial wants? What is the wealth and solvency of the Native Princes or great proprietors? What was the amount distributed from the Indian Charitable Relief Fund? Was the latter used, as in Bombay, to supplement the Government wage on works, or were the workers left, as in Madras, solely dependent on the wages earned? Of the 165 lakhs of the Indian Charitable

* Comparative statement showing percentage of rise in prices in the several provinces in 1897.

Province.	District.	Grain.	Normal price.	Average price, October 1896 to August 1897.	Percentage of increase.
North-West Provinces and Oudh.	Cawnpore	Wheat	14·00	9·31	50
		Barley	20·00	10·96	82
		Gram	22·00	9·60	129
		Jawar	19·00	10·51	81
Punjab	Lahore	Wheat	17·00	9·74	75
		Barley	28·51	11·93	139
		Gram	25·56	10·48	144
		Maize	22·08	9·84	124
Bengal	Patna	Rice	16·48	9·46	74
		Barley	22·77	12·36	84
	Darbhanga	Marua	23·96	12·26	95
		Maize	21·70	10·11	115
Central Provinces	Nagpur	Wheat	14·77	8·93	65
		Jawar	19·45	11·10	75
	Mandla	Wheat	16·96	8·59	97
		Gram	24·39	9·64	153
	Bilaspur	Rice	18·42	9·11	102
	Betul	Jawar	20·57	9·40	119
Bombay	Poona	Wheat	11·69	7·27	61
	Bijapur	Jawar	17·82	9·44	89
		Jawar	22·61	10·27	120
Madras	Bellary	Cholam	30·00	11·59	159
		Ragi	32·00	15·62	104
		Rice	13·20	8·50	55

Whether barley and gram can be held to be staples of consumption is, also, a matter for consideration.

Relief Fund, only 13½ lakhs were spent in Madras, and much of that after distress had reached its height. This leaves one crore and a half for other provinces. The North-West Provinces, at the very outset, obtained over 50 lakhs. The diffusion of this immense sum amongst the rural population must have tended largely to lighten the pressure on Government relief, and must have tended also to reduce the demands of dependents on workers. It can hardly be certain that none of the sums so distributed reached workers, and helped to eke out their wages. Again, how much money was spent from the State treasury in loans in each province? It cannot be doubted that all money lent operates to reduce the pressure on the agricultural classes. In Madras only 18½ lakhs were given in loans in the affected districts. From the summary and remarks published by His Excellency the Viceroy on the closing of the famine, it would appear that more than two crores in all were distributed in loans. This leaves one crore and 81½ lakhs for provinces other than Madras. In fact, from the Indian Charitable Relief Fund and from loans Madras got 32 lakhs against 332 lakhs distributed in other provinces. This is a factor requiring consideration when comparisons are instituted. In Madras the amount remitted was 23 lakhs, and the amount suspended 10 lakhs. The whole of the latter sum will be recovered. In all India the amount suspended was "over two crores of Land Revenue of which a substantial proportion will not be recovered." How do the sums suspended in different provinces compare? In what way do the Code grain wages and diets compare? They are not identical: thus the Bombay Code allows ghee or oil as part of the gratuitous relief ration, some of this being given in "flour", whereas section 122 of the Madras Code allows no ghee or oil, and specifies "raw grain" as the main article of the ration. Are the diets calculated on flour or on unhusked grain? In Bombay the grain part of the ration was issued as flour, and for this purpose loss by wastage was duly met and also the cost of grinding.* Has allowance been made, in estimating the sufficiency of the wage, for the fact that, up to May 1897, the wage in Madras was calculated on unhusked grain? What is the standard grain on which prices are quoted in different provinces? Is it wheat, or maize and peas, as would seem to be the case in the North-West Provinces, or is it first-class white cholam, as was found to be the case in at least part of Bombay, or is it the cheaper cholam and millet as generally in Madras? What is the standard article of diet on which wages were paid? Was it the more nutritious and expensive wheat flour or white cholam, or was it the yellow cholam and ragi as generally in Madras? Did the standard on which wages were computed remain fixed throughout the whole period of distress, or did it vary, as in Madras, commencing with ragi, then advancing to the cheaper kind of cholam and reverting to a mixture of cholam and ragi or to ragi only? Did the grain-price, computed on an expensive staple, admit of a much larger ration of a cheaper grain being purchased? Was it possible to purchase the A diet out of the D wage? Was it anywhere the case that, between members of the same families, the recipients of the A and D wage were able to provide a diet superior to the A diet? As the distress went on, and as people varied their staple of consumption, was the standard grain on which wages were computed levelled down to the inferior staple to which the people had actually taken, as in Madras? Thus, when it was found that the North-West Provinces were importing ragi, was the staple for wages taken to be ragi or did it continue to be wheat? Was the treatment of nursing mothers the same? Were they limited to the Code allowance, as in Madras, or did they get the A wage for doing nothing, as for a time in Bombay, and afterwards a lower wage *plus* an allowance of one anna for the infant? A similar, but smaller, allowance was given in the North-West Provinces. Had the people the means, or any means, of supplementing the C and D wages? Mr. Higham quotes medical opinion to the effect that the C and D wages were adequate in Bombay. He does not appear to have been aware of the drafts made, on the Indian Charitable Relief Fund, to supplement the wage, and the latter, if calculated on white cholam, may have been quite sufficient to purchase an A diet of an inferior grain. This is a point

* This point has been disputed: there seems to be no doubt about it. Under section 105 of the Bombay Famine Code, the grain portion of the ration is calculated in "flour". In section 111 the grain equivalent of the minimum ration is given as 1¾ lbs., or 28 oz., and, in section 114, the grain equivalent of the "other items" of the minimum ration is stated to be 12 oz.; so that the grain portion is = (28—12) 16 oz. Now this amount (16 oz.) is expressed in section 105 in terms of "flour". The inference seems to be correct that the grain portion of the Bombay ration, as distinct from the grain which purchases the "other items", is husked grain or "flour".

which was not brought to his notice; and, fair as he always is, he adds that his informants "were careful to state that they did not know to what extent the people were dependent on the works, or whether they had any supplementary resources of their own."

A further very important consideration is the date on which gratuitous relief in villages was introduced. It was totally refused in the earlier stages of distress* in Madras: introduced only partially in two tracts in March and generally in April and May. It seems to have been profusely given in the earlier stages in Bombay, and was always in excess, in proportion to the workers, in that Presidency as compared † with Madras, where the two forms of relief mounted up side by side as prices rose. This fact has been obscured by the manner in which the Government of India tabulated the returns; to this method of tabulation exception has already been taken, but, to judge from the Narrative of the Famine in India, in vain. As long as the method of tabulation of the Government of India is adhered to, no true comparisons can be made. Under that system, those gratuitously relieved on works are returned as employed on works, while weavers, who do a task, are returned as gratuitously relieved.

Now one of the results of the withholding of gratuitous village relief in the earlier months of distress in Madras was that a very large proportion of feeble workers came on the works, and, even later on, it was not possible to eliminate them; for the prejudice against kitchens seems to be ineradicable. The Board cannot understand how it is that kitchen relief has been more popular elsewhere than in Madras, and even Mr. Higham (p. 20) admits that kitchens "are very unpopular with the people, and are not willingly resorted to, except by those of the lower castes." The Board can only affirm as a fact that they are very unpopular in this Presidency, and not with the caste people only. At this moment, in Nellore, on the Pedárikatla test-work, where about 2,600 coolies, most of whom are Panchamas and Madigas, are employed, there are only six children in the kitchen. Their own missionaries, who try to reason with the people, say that such ridicule has been cast on the people whose children went to kitchens in the famine of 1891–92 that even the outcastes will not face it. This reason, and the assertion that those who went to kitchens in the famine of 1877–78 all died, has been generally assigned for non-attendance at kitchens in 1896–97. Pregnant women, who, under section 62, of the Famine Code, ought to be relieved in kitchens, refused to enter them. The Code presumes that nursing mothers will work, and they too preferred it to kitchen relief. It came to pass, therefore, that either relief must be altogether withheld, or that the weakly, and sometimes children obviously under 7 years of age, had to be admitted to works in this Presidency. The latter was an abuse, but it had to be winked at. How, then, can comparisons be fairly instituted between the cost of works in a Presidency, where gratuitous relief was lavish from the outset, and in one where the works received persons who ought to have been on gratuitous relief? Before a comparison is made, all the wages paid to such persons and children should be deducted from the cost of the work and debited to gratuitous relief.

Again, when considering the prevalence of the B wage in Madras, it should be remembered that, practically, the A wage was never ‡ given. In fact, as the definition of class A is understood in this Presidency, this wage should never be given unless the Wudder, or professional navvy, comes to the works. Then, again, in the early stage of the famine, the B wage also was rarely given, the mass of the coolies being on the C and D wage. It took time to obtain recognition of the fact that, as Mr. Higham admits, the Code task schedule was too high, and the coolies were mercilessly fined down to the exact value of work done. There were signs that this, coupled with the unhusked ragi standard, was telling on the health of the workers, and

* Except the very small attendance at kitchens on works.

† In fact, in Madras the numbers on relief followed prices, not measures. Was this the case in other provinces?

‡ The instances were so few that they may be discarded.

concessions were found necessary between the beginning of May * and the middle of July. What the exposure on works from November to August meant should be learnt from actual inspection. Words could not bring home the facts. Men, women and children, with tender infants, exposed from early morning till evening to the blazing Deccan sun, breaking stone monotonously with numbed fingers and weary arms. A trudge to the work in the morning carrying the infants, and a trudge home in the evening, to be followed by the preparation of the evening meal, and a brief sleep before it was time to trudge to the work again in the morning. It was no wonder that tasks had to be reduced, as mind and body wearied under this treadmill existence. In the North-West Provinces it would appear that the workers were recalled and employed in their villages during the fierce heat of April and May. † No such concession was made in Madras, and it was only at a late period that any attempt was made to provide a slight shelter for the workers from the sun. Even on the Ootacamund ghât, where the heat is mitigated by vegetation, by occasional cool breaths from the hills and by rain, the professional stone-breaker puts up a little leaf shelter under which to work; but, during the greater period of the distress, there was nothing of the kind in the famine districts. All these matters must be considered when the cost of work done is estimated.

Again, it is very difficult for the Public Works officers to do the latter, and it is very uncertain what items of work they will allow for in calculating cost. It cannot be possible that they will test the actual quality of all stone broken, nor can they tell from what distance it was carried. When, also, to give employment to workers, broken metal was carried for long leads, a mile or more, to the roadside, the Engineer may estimate from the cost of metal collected and broken on the roadside. He should, too, allow for cases in which water had to be carried from long distances. When a road has been made, it is very difficult, months afterwards, to ascertain exactly what materials and work were put into it, and the comparison should be, not with similar work carried out in ordinary years, but with similar work carried out in the same months in ordinary years. No sane contractor would think of executing road works ‡ in this Presidency in the hot months. Assuming every intent to be fair, the professional officers' estimate of cost, so long after the event, can scarcely be approximate.

Again, when, as in Bombay, the workers were hutted, it should be considered whether the cost of the huts, the establishment and watchers, Police and Civil officers and other special agency employed, has been added in to the cost of the work done. If, on the one hand, the expenditure properly debitable to gratuitous relief were deducted from cost of works in Madras, and the whole camp expenditure debited to them in Bombay, the Board doubts if the result would be unfavourable to this Presidency. §

In making comparisons, the mortality of the different provinces should be considered: when the question of the C or D wage, and relief generally, being sufficient is raised, that of mortality also comes in. Mr. Higham is silent about this, and probably had no figures before him.

Another item in estimating the extent to which high prices pressed on the people is that of allowances to village officers. Unless this was uniform in all provinces, comparison would be unfair. The factor is not one to be neglected: the village officers in a representative district would number about 8,000, and, allowing five to each family, a total of 40,000 persons for a district, or 240,000 persons for six districts, neglecting Bhadráchalam, would be involved.

* G.O., No. 216, dated 30th March 1897, did not come into general effect until a period varying from the last week in April up to the first week in June.

† "The difficulty (in regard to hutting) will, of course, not arise if it is found possible to carry out the policy of contracting large relief works and withdrawing the people to their villages for employment on village works on the advent of the hot weather.—" Paragraph 27 of North-West Provinces Circular, dated 1st December 1896, printed in G.O., No. 14, Revenue, dated 9th January 1898.

‡ Mr. Higham has attempted to compare the actual and normal cost of work in page 10 of his report of his inspection of Famine Relief works in Madras. The case of the two last gangs, for which he quotes figures, may be neglected, as they are admittedly weakly gangs. The figures relating to the first three gangs are vitiated by an error in totalling the figures in the 5th column. The total is 331, not 431. This of course affects the entries in column 6. The result is that, on an 11-seer basis, the cost of the work done in the cases cited was considerably less than four times the normal, instead of a little more than five times the normal.

§ According to the preliminary narrative of Mr. Holderness, the cost of relief per unit is the same—·098 of a rupee—in both Presidencies up to the end of September (*vide* page 51 of the preliminary narrative, paragraph 99).

Another is, when did relief cease? It is obvious that a more generous form of relief may admit of closure, and consequent economy, at an earlier date than in a province where the wage was smaller.

When all the above factors have been considered and reduced to a common denominator, when the personal equations of the Governments of each province and the officers administering, and criticising, relief have been allowed for, then, and then only, would comparisons between relief in one province and that in another be fair and possible.

31. With endorsement, Mis. No. 305, dated 19th January 1898, received on the afternoon of the 25th January, Government refers for consideration in connection with this report, the remarks of the Acting Chief Engineer on Mr. Higham's report. It is not possible for the Board, at such short notice, to discuss this paper at length; nor, after the preceding paragraphs, is this necessary. The views of the Conferences, and of the Board, on the points in question have been already stated. A few, however, of the Acting Chief Engineer's observations call for remark.

The proposal, (*a*) (3), to start investigation in every taluk as to new railways is rather startling, and to exclude all other works from the relief programme is not practical. In the opinion of the Board, preference, in all inquiries, should be given to (*a*) (1)—irrigation works.

As to (*b*), if hutting is only to be put up "when required" this would not be giving the system a fair trial. The people are not likely to come and hang about the works for weeks until the Public Works officers put up hutting. The cost in Bombay is stated to have been As. 8 per head. Adequate hutting is not likely to be provided at this cost in the Deccan. The initial cost in Bellary was found to be Rs. 1-2-0 per head. The shelter should be a shelter, not only against the sun, but also against the wind and the rain. It is somewhat strange that the Acting Chief Engineer did not give the cost of hutting—such as it was—in Madras.

Under (*d*), the Acting Chief Engineer would give the Collector power to write such remarks—limited to questions of health and comfort—in the inspection book, as he thinks necessary. The officer in charge, who may be a supervisor or an overseer, is at liberty to disregard these "remarks" if he likes, and the orders of his professional superior are to be final. The Acting Chief Engineer, however, would permit the Collector to send copies of his remarks to "the Sub-Divisional officer, Executive Engineer or Superintending Engineer, or to all of them." It is not worth while to dwell on the absurdity of these proposals. The Acting Chief Engineer is of opinion that "this system would work with absolute smoothness" and is probably correct, for no Collector with any self-respect would think of making any "remarks" whatever under such a system.

Under (*e*), the Acting Chief Engineer goes farther than Mr. Higham, and would have no form of relief except piece-work. The question has been sufficiently discussed above. Mr. Higham has certainly gone far enough. In (*e*) (3) the Acting Chief Engineer supplies a reason—"it needs far less supervision"—which has probably been allowed due weight in the crusade against task work.

In (*f*) he proposes a large addition to gratuitous relief, and would either pay his workers excessive wages and "allow" them to support their dependents, which they probably would not do, or would feed the dependents in kitchens, which, practically, means that he would not feed many of them at all. They—the majority of the present workers—are to be "entirely under the Revenue Department," which is supposed to be equal to any amount of "supervision" and should employ them "in light work about their villages." The Acting Chief Engineer hardly realises the cynicism of these proposals.

Mr. H. E. Clerk, Executive Engineer of Bellary, takes the same views in somewhat greater detail. The Public Works Department claims for itself independent and unrestricted powers in the management of works, that is, all works employing 5,000 persons and upwards. All smaller works to be under the Civil officers. The Public Works Department protest that their trained staff are unequal to the management of scattered works; but the Revenue officers, without the much-extolled special training, and branded as unfit to have a voice in the management of works, can manage scattered works

without number. The same accounts and records would be necessary for small as for large works. Those who, for admitted reasons, cannot go to the large works, are to be employed "near their villages;" but, when pressed into a corner, Mr. Clerk would limit these works to a miximum of ten per taluk. It does not, then, appear how these persons could, generally, be employed "near their villages," or how, attending distant works, they could also procure water and fodder for cattle, cook for, and tend sick relatives, &c. What is certain is that, if employed by the Revenue officers, there would, after the next famine, be a repetition of the cry that, for outturn of work as compared with money expended, the Public Works Department is incomparable; while if, as the alternative proposal runs, these people were relieved gratuitously, there would be an outcry from all quarters that gratuitous relief was being overdone. In either case the professional officers would have a minimum of touring and harassing work, while the great burden of relief would fall on the Civil officers.

The Acting Chief Engineer proposes also to give his "distance test" workers the privilege of taking—at their own expense—a holiday of four successive days in each month to go and see their families; otherwise, work should be continuous—even on the Sabbath. This proposal does not commend itself to the Board.

Under (*g*), the Acting Chief Engineer joins issue with Mr. Higham about the C and D wages, and would retain only the A and B wages. In this the Board is with him, but it is for experts to decide. The conferences have already pronounced about standard tasks and fining. If the Committee, * proposed by the conferences, is permitted to sit, the Acting Chief Engineer would have an opportunity of criticising its task schedules. This is to a certain extent a matter for experts, and the Board would deprecate the acceptance of any one schedule drawn up by any one expert. The Acting Chief Engineer differs from Mr. Higham on the subject of elaborate tables, and, bearing in mind the opinion of the conference that no absolutely perfect task-table is possible, the Board would be inclined to think that it would be better to try and include in one schedule all cases ordinarily conceivable, so as to give as little room as possible for future deviations.

The Acting Chief Engineer—after declaring for the A and B wages—proposes to reduce the carrier wage by one pice, because their work would be unavoidably light. One pice is a serious matter in a famine wage and the workers should not be sacrificed to the work. It is for the experts to decide whether the B wage—and the C and D wages—are sufficient or not; but the wage required, once fixed, should not be trenched upon for reasons for which the workers are not responsible. The Acting Chief Engineer contemplates works being opened, and he is right in saying that this should always be done "before people become weak," but in all cases there will be weak workers. Too much has been said about *morale*, and it is inconsistent to say, under (*g*) that there is a loss of *morale* when people are given a nominal task, and that "it should be an axiom of famine relief that a nominal task should never be paid for in money," when, under *k* (v) and (vi), the Acting Chief Engineer holds that "all who are capable of doing any work at all should be given task-work" whenever task-work is necessary. The latter is the opinion of the Board. When it is a choice between one form of loss of *morale* and another, that should be preferred in which people who can do some work, however little, are required to do it.

32. It is abundantly recognized, even by Mr. Higham, that cooked food and kitchens are not a universal panacea. It is, no doubt, difficult to draw the line between those who should get doles and those who can be required to go to kitchens, but it is better that such line should be left in the hands of relief officers than that a hard-and-fast line should be drawn limiting dependents to cooked food.

The Board agrees with the Acting Chief Engineer as to the necessity to simplify, if possible, the number of forms in use and reducing the number of daily forms. It is a matter for experts.

33. Other questions of a contentious nature have come to the front in the past year, and although they have not been referred for discussion at the conferences, it is as well to recapitulate them that they may not be overlooked. The first of these is

* *Vide* paragraph 5 *supra*.

whether famine batta should be granted to public servants when the cheapest grain ordinarily in use rises beyond a certain price fixed for all India, or when it rises by a fixed percentage over the local average. Intimately connected with this question is the second—Should the allowance be calculated with reference to the price of the cheapest grain ordinarily in use? If not, on what price or prices should it be calculated? These questions have already been referred to Local Governments and Administrations by the Government of India, and no further remarks are called for here.

The latter of the above two questions is again intimately connected with a third —What, for each district, is to be taken as the description of grain in ordinary use, referred to in section 121 of the Famine Code? The Board considers that the decision of the staple grain for each district for the purpose of calculating wages should rest with the Commissioner of Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture, or the Famine Commissioner, if one be appointed.

During the past year great difficulty was experienced in affording adequate and suitable relief to jungle tribes. Work, of a nature to be tasked, they will not do; discipline they will not submit to. Light work in the jungles, or the rough fashioning of timber is all that can be got out of them. In Bhadráchalam, during 1897, gratuitous relief on a large scale was the only practicable measure of relief. Doles were distributed to the absolutely indigent and depôts were established for the sale of grain at reduced rates. Such relief as this seems the most suitable that can be devised, and is probably in the end less costly than would be any attempt to introduce the hard-and-fast conditions of the Famine Code.

34. Mr. H. E. Clerk and Mr. A. G. Romilly, Executive Engineers of Bellary and Anantapur during the famine operations, have submitted minutes of dissent from the conclusions arrived at by the conferences. These have been printed as appendices. Both gentlemen apprehend that justice may not be done, in the report, to the support given by a professional minority to some of Mr. Higham's proposals. The matter has been referred to in paragraph 20 above. Mr. Clerk further objects that copies of Mr. Higham's paper were not in the hands of the members of the conferences and that they would have come to different conclusions had they seen Mr. Higham's report sooner. The Public Works officers had received copies from their own department. The number of copies of Mr. Higham's report at the Board's disposal was very limited, but a copy was sent to each Collector concerned, for the use of himself and his officers. These seem to have miscarried, possibly owing to all the Deccan Collectors having been transferred; but every officer attending both conferences had a copy of the summary of questions to be discussed prepared by the Board, and a perusal of this will make it clear that everything essential was within the knowledge of the delegates before they assembled. A copy of the same is submitted for the information of Government, and another will be sent to the Famine Commission. These officers had an opportunity, after perusing Mr. Higham's report, of modifying their views, in replying to the questions put by the Famine Commission, but not one of them has done so.

(True Copy and Extract.)

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

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

APPENDIX I.

Minute of Dissent from Resolutions arrived at by the Famine Conference of Ceded Districts held at Madras on the 30th and 31st December 1897.

CLASSIFICATION OF RELIEF WORKERS.

1. The conference has resolved almost unanimously to perpetuate the Madras Code classification; I strongly dissent from this.

The classification should be according to the capability of the worker, and not according to nominal professions; I would accept Mr. Higham's proposals which are most excellent. I would, however, make this modification: I would give all workers who would be classed in Y class, were there employment for them, Y class wage, even though they were permanently employed on Z class work, provided they did 50 per cent. more than the Z class task.

2. (*a*) As a corollary to the foregoing opinion I object to the conclusion come to by the majority under this head, that the A, B, C and D classes should be adhered to.

WAGES.

The conference almost unanimously condemned Mr. Higham's class III wage of 26 oz. of grain. The members were, however, debarred from discussing whether the wages given in Madras during the last famine were not unduly high. I think that this is a great pity and wish to place on record my opinion, after careful observation throughout the famine, that the indiscriminate grant of B class wage is extravagant and demoralizing. The proposed Z or class III wage may be too low, but a wage somewhat approaching it should be given to the great bulk of the workers.

POSITION OF PUBLIC WORKS OFFICERS.

Paragraphs 17 and 18 may be taken together. The position taken up by the majority of members of the conference amounted to this. The Government of India having affirmed its adherence to the principle laid down in paragraph 130 of the Famine Commission Report that the sole responsibility for relief of all kinds in a district rests with the Collector or Deputy Commissioner, the conference considered that it was absolutely necessary that the Collector should have power to remedy any defects in the administration of relief works which might come to his notice. I cannot believe that the Government of India intended this to be taken in the literal sense in which it has been interpreted by the Madras Government and the Revenue Department.

It seems to me that his responsibility may be fully satisfied if he directs when and where works should be opened and if his opinions with regard to the health of the people are received with due attention.

This is the interpretation which has been put on this section in other parts of India, and, I believe, with the happiest results. I do not see that what has been done elsewhere with success cannot be done in Madras. If, however, the full responsibility of the Collector is rigidly insisted on, the resolution of the conference seems perfectly logical. If the responsibility of the Collector for the proper administration of large works supervised by the Public Works Department is enforced, it is obvious that he should have the fullest powers to control all matters which in any way concern the well-being of the workers. It was on this understanding that the arrangements proposed at the conference were agreed to by practically all the members, and I consider that they are probably the best which could be devised under the circumstances.

2. The scheme is, however, open to serious objections which may be enumerated as follows :—

(*a*) The Superintending Engineer is practically eliminated from all share in relief operations. This is a most serious waste of power, and perpetuates the defect which Mr. Higham brought especially to notice with reference to famine administration in Madras (paragraph 27, Mr. Higham's Madras Famine Report). The Superintending Engineer will, in times of famine, have little or no ordinary work to do, and at the same time he is by education and experience the man most fitted to manage with efficiency the large bodies of workers collected under the control of Public Works officers. A system which relegates to absolute ineffectiveness the officer who, above others, has been found most fitted for the management of works of this description, stands condemned on its own evidence.

(*b*) The Executive Engineers of districts will lose the advice and assistance which they are entitled to look for in any cases of doubt or difficulty. In many cases the methods of carrying out the work are so inevitably mixed up with points which will be declared to be not *purely professional* that the Superintending Engineer will find himself unable to interfere. Further, the matters about which he is entitled to have a voice are so limited that it is most probable that he would refuse to concern himself with famine relief works at all.

(*c*) The Chief Engineer, Public Works Department, is also eliminated from the scheme, and thus the experience of the only Public Works officers who have actually served in previous famines will, in times of distress, be lost to Government. I hope I shall not be accused of disrespect or of insubordination when I affirm that the inconsistent and vacillating policy pursued during the recent famine, which proved so demoralizing to worker and subordinate staff alike, would never have been carried out, had the advice of the senior officers of the Public Works Department been obtained and acted on.

(*d*) The position to be taken up by the Executive Engineer under the system now proposed is a very difficult one, and, with all the best intentions in the world, difficulties are likely to arise. Should the Collector agree to accept the views of his Public Works Department *Famine Assistant*, or should the latter succeed in subordinating all his ideas to that of the Collector, all will probably go smoothly. It is, however, almost inevitable that cases will arise in which an Executive Engineer of experience and strong views will find himself at variance with the Collector and obliged to carry out orders on subjects, regarding which he believes himself to be better fitted to form a competent judgment than his temporary superior. Such a position cannot fail to produce undesirable and unnecessary friction in a machine which must be made to work not only rapidly but smoothly.

3. All the defects I have above enumerated can at once be done away with, if the Government of India would consent to modify their dictum that the Collector must have sole responsibility in the matter of saving life in his district (*vide* section 24, Madras Famine Code); although this section or one very similar to it exists in all Codes except that of Burma and the Central Provinces, throughout India, during the recent famine, very extensive powers were given to Superintending Engineers, and I believe the results have been most successful. Please see Mr. Higham's report on Madras famine works, paragraphs 27 and 28.

It is a great pity, therefore, that the Government of India should have so worded the resolution with which Mr. Higham's Madras report was forwarded as to prevent the conference from accepting his proposals. I understand from the leading Revenue officers, whom I met at the conference, that, were the direct responsibility which is laid on them removed, they would have no objection to the acceptance of Mr. Higham's scheme.

All that appears necessary is to explain that the words "solely responsible" are not to be taken to literally, or to modify them if necessary.

4. I would suggest that, as soon as works are placed under the Public Works Department, the responsibility for every thing connected with the work should be transferred to that department. The Collector should have power to inspect and advise with regard to the general condition of the workers, and the principles on which the works should be carried out. The fullest weight should be given to all recommendations which he may make, but the final responsibility for their rejection or acceptance should rest with the Superintending Engineer. With this alteration, I believe, there would be no objection to the introduction into Madras of a system which has worked so successfully in other provinces.

ACCOUNTS.

It is a pity that this subject was not thought worthy of attention at the conference. It is a very important one, and merits careful attention. The subject is too long to go into here, but I would suggest that, if Government agrees to the deputation of Public Works officer to draw up a task-table, they should also be directed to discuss the question of Famine Accounts.

(Signed) H. E. CLERK,
Executive Engineer, Bellary Division.

APPENDIX II.

Minute of Dissent.

In the proceedings of the Famine Conference held during the Christmas holidays, if I remember rightly, no record was made of there being a strong minority in favour of Mr. Higham's views with regard to the relative position of Public Works Department and Revenue officers during famine operations.

I have the honour to request therefore that you will record my concurrence with Mr. Higham's views.

I fully recognise the fact that during famine, as during ordinary seasons, the Collector should be looked on as the head authority of the district; but at the same time I am of opinion that if famine works on a large scale are opened in a district, the most efficient way of carrying them out is to hand them over entirely to the Public Works Department, who would then be entirely responsible. This would not interfere with the Collector's authority as head of the district and, while increasing the efficiency of the works, would leave the Revenue officers more time to devote to the enormous extra work imposed on them by supervision of gratuitous relief, &c.

The arrangement finally come to at the meeting can, I consider, only be looked on as a compromise between two Departments and not as a final settlement of the problem of the best method of carrying out relief operations and relief works.

(Signed) A. G. ROMILLY,
Assistant Engineer.

15th February 1898.

Order—No. 590, Revenue, dated 11th October 1898.

Miscellaneous.

With the Proceedings read above, the Board of Revenue submits the report of the Famine Conferences held at Madras and Waltair last December and January for the discussion of questions in connection with which differences of opinion had arisen among officers engaged in the administration of relief during the late famine, and of subjects which had been referred to this Government by the Government of India for opinion.

With the Board's Proceedings are printed G.Os., No. 899, dated 29th October 1897; No. 893, dated 26th October 1897; No. 958, dated 16th November 1897; and No. 919, dated 8th November 1897, which refer these various questions affecting almost every branch of relief administration to the Famine Commissioner for opinion or for discussion at the conferences.

2. The order first cited (G.O., No. 899, dated 29th October 1897) directs the holding of the Conferences and refers for discussion the marginally-noted questions raised by the Government of India on Mr. Higham's notes of inspection of the Madras relief works, as well as the remarks of the Famine Commissioner on the Chief Engineer's protest against G.O., No. 593, dated 19th July 1897. The second order (G.O., No. 893, dated 26th October 1897) refers to the Famine Commissioner a later resolution of the Government of India in which that Government suggested the advisability of adopting the principle of *concentrating relief labour on a few large works*, of providing *hutting accommodation* for labourers and of *refusing a distance allowance*. The third order (G.O., No. 958, dated 16th November 1897), which embodies the resolution of the Government of India on Mr. Higham's final report on his inspections of relief works throughout India, relates to the *classification, the tasks*, and the *wages* of relief workers, the mode of *carrying out relief works, the programmes of works, &c.* The fourth order (G.O., No. 919, dated 8th November 1897) relates to *gratuitous relief, relief to weavers and artizans*, and the disposal of *orphans*, and embodies a list of questions drawn up by the Local Government for discussion at the Conferences. The Famine Commissioner circulated to the officers invited to the Conferences a list of the subjects proposed as above for discussion; and these will now be dealt with in the order in which they are discussed by the Board of Revenue. A memorandum by the Chief Engineer, Public Works Department, on the recommendations made by Mr. Higham in his final report was also referred to the Famine Commissioner for consideration in connection with his report of the Conferences, but appears to have been received too late for full discussion. The memorandum will be found printed at pages 13 to 17 of the Board's report.

(1) *Reduction of standard tasks by subordinates.*
(2) *Revision of standard tasks.*
(3) *Relations of the Revenue and the Public Works Departments.*

3. *Classification of relief workers.*—The present classification is that given at section 96 of the Code which classifies relief workers according as they are accustomed to labour or not. Mr. Higham objects to it as being complicated and as presupposing a knowledge, on the part of the officer in charge, of the antecedents of each labourer, and he states that in most provinces the classification has in practice been abandoned and may therefore be said to have broken down. For securing uniformity and simplicity he proposes the following classification:—

(i) *Special class.*—To include workers of special qualifications required for the proper prosecution of the work, and to be strictly limited to these, as well as in number to a percentage of the total number of workers; with a wage of $2\frac{5}{8}$ lb., corresponding with the present class A male wage.

(ii) *Digger class.*—Ordinarily, to comprise all able-bodied persons required to perform tasks in quantity or kind beyond the capacity of class III; with a wage of $2\frac{3}{8}$ lb., corresponding with the present class B male wage.

(iii) *Carrier class.*—To include the majority of workers, the weaker men and those unable to dig, almost all the women, and children between 12 and 16; being employed as carriers or breakers and on dressing and tidying up; with a wage of $1\frac{5}{8}$ lb., corresponding with the present class D female wage.

(iv) *Children between 7 and* 12.—To be admitted to the works at the discretion of the officer in charge, and to be counted as half carrier units; with a wage of 1 lb.

Under this classification no distinction is to be made in any of the classes between men and women as regards tasks or wages. Classes (ii) and (iii) are to be allowed a higher wage wherever circumstances will permit. Class (iii) is to be given only half the task of class (ii) when employed on class (ii) work; and class (ii) 50 per cent. extra task when given class (iii) work.

4. The opinion of both the Conferences was in favour of retaining the existing Code classification. They held that the difficulties of meeting the complication which it involves had been overestimated, that men and women should be differentiated for wages, that children between 7 and 12 years of age applying for work should always be admitted, and that there should be no encouragement to earn wages higher than the prescribed wages as this would introduce the very complications which Mr. Higham is anxious to avoid. The Government has given the matter its most careful consideration and is of opinion that the Code classification should be maintained. The objections urged against Mr. Higham's proposals are weighty and it is not advisable to make a radical change of the kind proposed by him unless it be absolutely necessary. The main objection to his scheme is the low wage prescribed for class (iii) which would include the vast majority of labourers, and the proposal to make no difference in wage between men and women seems also specially objectionable. The Government entirely concurs in the conclusion of the Conferences that children between 7 and 12 years of age should be freely admitted to the works.

5. Another point for consideration in connection with the classification of workers is the modifications therein suggested by the Government of India and referred to in questions (*a*) and (*b*) stated at paragraph 4 of the Board's Proceedings. The first of these is the question of maintaining the gang as the unit of classification and whether the system should not be adopted of first classifying the individuals of the gangs and then fixing the task with reference to the number of A, B, C and D units it contains. This question was proposed with reference to the observations of the Government of India in its letter No. 2266—116-5-F., dated 14th June 1897. As stated above section 96 of the Code classifies labourers according as they are accustomed or not by previous occupation to labour of the kind required on the relief work. Thus only Public Works Department labourers, or persons of the professional "wudder" class fall into class A; the vast majority of the numbers resorting to relief works, general and agricultural labourers and the petty ryots come in class B; while persons of the artizan classes will be included in class C. In their ordinary occupations the families of men belonging to the labouring and weaving classes assist as a rule the male members; and if the adult male members of a family are placed in, say, class B, the women and children are also placed in the same class, provided these are able-bodied. Thus members of the same family belong to the same class, and under the operation of the first sentence of section 97 each gang consists of a number of families belonging to the same class. With regard to this system, the Government of India observed in its letter of the 14th June 1897 referred to above that the ordinary procedure elsewhere was first to classify the individual workers with reference to their varying capacities, then to form them into gangs, and then to fix the task with reference to the A, B, C and D workers which it contained, while in Madras the gang was the unit of classification and every person was an A, B, C or D worker according to the class of the gang. In the opinion of the Government of India the former system was more flexible and at the same time fairer to the individual worker than the Madras system while it respected the natural grouping by families as much as the latter. The Government of India also pointed out that the orders in G.O., No. 216, dated 30th March 1897, restricting fining had introduced a radical alteration in the Madras system which rendered it possible for a gang to be over-classed without incurring a penalty.

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(i) *Special class.*—To include workers of special qualifications required for the proper prosecution of the work, and to be strictly limited to these, as well as in number to a percentage of the total number of workers; with a wage of $2\frac{5}{8}$ lb., corresponding with the present class A male wage.

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(iv) *Children between 7 and 12.*—To be admitted to the works at the discretion of the officer in charge, and to be counted as half carrier units; with a wage of 1 lb.

Under this classification no distinction is to be made in any of the classes between men and women as regards tasks or wages. Classes (ii) and (iii) are to be allowed a higher wage wherever circumstances will permit. Class (iii) is to be given only half the task of class (ii) when employed on class (ii) work; and class (ii) 50 per cent. extra task when given class (iii) work.

4. The opinion of both the Conferences was in favour of retaining the existing Code classification. They held that the difficulties of meeting the complication which it involves had been overestimated, that men and women should be differentiated for wages, that children between 7 and 12 years of age applying for work should always be admitted, and that there should be no encouragement to earn wages higher than the prescribed wages as this would introduce the very complications which Mr. Higham is anxious to avoid. The Government has given the matter its most careful consideration and is of opinion that the Code classification should be maintained. The objections urged against Mr. Higham's proposals are weighty and it is not advisable to make a radical change of the kind proposed by him unless it be absolutely necessary. The main objection to his scheme is the low wage prescribed for class (iii) which would include the vast majority of labourers, and the proposal to make no difference in wage between men and women seems also specially objectionable. The Government entirely concurs in the conclusion of the Conferences that children between 7 and 12 years of age should be freely admitted to the works.

5. Another point for consideration in connection with the classification of workers is the modifications therein suggested by the Government of India and referred to in questions (*a*) and (*b*) stated at paragraph 4 of the Board's Proceedings. The first of these is the question of maintaining the gang as the unit of classification and whether the system should not be adopted of first classifying the individuals of the gangs and then fixing the task with reference to the number of A, B, C and D units it contains. This question was proposed with reference to the observations of the Government of India in its letter No. 2266—116-5-F., dated 14th June 1897. As stated above section 96 of the Code classifies labourers according as they are accustomed or not by previous occupation to labour of the kind required on the relief work. Thus only Public Works Department labourers, or persons of the professional "wudder" class fall into class A; the vast majority of the numbers resorting to relief works, general and agricultural labourers and the petty ryots come in class B; while persons of the artizan classes will be included in class C. In their ordinary occupations the families of men belonging to the labouring and weaving classes assist as a rule the male members; and if the adult male members of a family are placed in, say, class B, the women and children are also placed in the same class, provided these are able-bodied. Thus members of the same family belong to the same class, and under the operation of the first sentence of section 97 each gang consists of a number of families belonging to the same class. With regard to this system, the Government of India observed in its letter of the 14th June 1897 referred to above that the ordinary procedure elsewhere was first to classify the individual workers with reference to their varying capacities, then to form them into gangs, and then to fix the task with reference to the A, B, C and D workers which it contained, while in Madras the gang was the unit of classification and every person was an A, B, C or D worker according to the class of the gang. In the opinion of the Government of India the former system was more flexible and at the same time fairer to the individual worker than the Madras system while it respected the natural grouping by families as much as the latter. The Government of India also pointed out that the orders in G.O., No. 216, dated 30th March 1897, restricting fining had introduced a radical alteration in the Madras system which rendered it possible for a gang to be over-classed without incurring a penalty.

6. The gang is the unit of classification in Madras only in the sense that persons of the same class are put into the same gang, not in the sense that weakly persons are put in the same class with their able-bodied relatives. One obvious advantage of this procedure is that there is but little complication in the calculation of wages. The adoption of the practice stated by the Government of India to prevail elsewhere would involve some complication in the payment of wages, and in many cases cause the division and separation of members of the same family. After full consideration the Government is of opinion that it is not desirable to make any change in the present system.

7. The other question referred to in paragraph 5 *supra* relates to the classification of children between 12 and 16 years of age, belonging to the labouring classes. Under section 120 of the Famine Code persons of 12 years and upwards are to be treated as adults, and it follows from the system of classification explained above that all boys and girls of 12 years and upwards are tasked and paid as adults of the class to which their parents belong, the girls being treated as two child units for work and the boys as four child units. In Bombay all children of 12 to 16 are classed as C adults. With regard to the classification in Madras of children of these ages both the Conferences recommend that all children between 12 and 16 should be put in the classes to which they naturally fall under the Madras Code classification, but that they should get the woman's wage of that class, both boys and girls doing an adult female's work. The Government accepts this recommendation. His Excellency in Council regards it as of the greatest importance to the future of the country in times of widespread distress to maintain the growing children of both sexes in as good health as possible—almost more important, indeed, than to do so for the adult population.

8. *Tasks.*—Mr. Higham's recommendations as to the tasks to be prescribed for the various classes of labourers are summarized in paragraph 5 of the Board's Proceedings. His classification having been rejected, the question of tasks in the particular form put by him was not considered by the Conferences. The Conferences have, however, made proposals with reference to the standard tasks to be prescribed for the various classes of labourers under the Code. The Government accepts the conclusion of the Conferences that the Code schedule of tasks is too high and should be eliminated. But the question remains how proper tasks are to be fixed; and whether they should be fixed authoritatively for each description of soil and work, or whether the better plan is merely to fix standard averages which may be modified at the discretion of the local officers to suit local conditions. This point was raised in order to ascertain whether it would be possible to frame schedules for each district in such detail as to render it unnecessary to give power to local subordinates to modify the prescribed standards to suit local conditions. The result arrived at by the Conferences is not very clear; but their conclusions are thus expressed: (1) that it would be quite practicable to draw up a general schedule which would serve as a *starting point* for tasking all classes, sexes and ages, but that it will always be necessary to make some changes in any schedule so drawn up owing to the varying component elements of gangs and of the materials with which and the surroundings in which they have to work; and (2) that it would be quite possible to draw up a standard task for diggers and carriers, but that these tasks can only be regarded as standard *averages*.

9. But it is not averages or starting points that are wanted. These require to be modified to suit local conditions, and it is known from the experience of the past year that the fact that they require modifications is often lost sight of, that in the pressure and hurry of famine the standard average is applied to all soils and conditions alike, and that the mistake is apt not to be discovered till mischief has been done; moreover the correspondence involved by the preparation of revised tables causes considerable delay. It is therefore a question for consideration whether detailed schedules should not be prepared for each district and taluk, so as to leave as little room as possible for alterations, and so as to make deductions on account of excessive tasks as few as possible. The experience of the past year should render the preparation of such schedules comparatively easy. The Government considers that the

question should be dealt with and reported on by a committee of Engineers under the Presidency of the Chief Engineer, Public Works Department, and that this committee should also be entrusted with the preparation of tables of standard tasks. The standards will of course require modification for the great heat of the summer. The committee might probably decide this with sufficient accuracy by fixing standard tasks for each month, which would be applicable to all kinds of labour, "carrying" included, the local authorities being left again to vary the monthly tasks according to the earlier or later setting in and ending of the hot weather. Other considerations, such as variation of standard with reference to the hardness or softness of the soil will also, of course, be taken into account. The Chief Engineer, Public Works Department, will submit proposals as to the constitution of the committee.

10. Other questions in this connection relate to *deductions from the standard tasks with reference to the physical condition of the labourers.*—The Government has considered this matter carefully and is of opinion that the North-West Provinces system of full and low tasks is preferable to the practice followed last year in Madras of making fixed deductions in task on account of physical condition. It would seem from the correspondence printed in G.O., No. 14, dated 9th January 1897, that in the North-West Provinces for B class labourers there is a full and a low digger's task for each major description of soil, that the gang is first started on a low task which is gradually raised in a fortnight or so to a suitable task according to the soil and the strength of the workers. The Government is of opinion that this system which allows of the task rising with the capacity of the gang should be adopted in Madras and that in the preparation of task tables, low and full tasks should be prescribed for all descriptions of soil and of work. There should be a definite rule that the officer in charge of the work should not have the power of altering the task except to raise it gradually from the lower to the higher limit, and that the task once raised should not be lowered again without the orders of superior authority. The power to lower tasks once raised and to vary the standard tasks so as to suit the season of the year and the varying conditions of the soil should be exercised only by the Collector of the district acting on the advice of the Engineer officer, who might order such changes as he thought desirable to be carried out at once, subject to the confirmation of the Collector of the district. It should also be distinctly understood that the class of a gang should not be lowered where it appears that its inability to turn out the prescribed task is due to weakness or inexperience.

Before leaving the subject of tasks the Government desires to draw attention to a suggestion of the Sanitary Commissioner that gangs should be divided into definite parties for excavation and carrying, and that in metal-breaking the task of collection should be separated from breaking. The Chief Engineer will report how far this is feasible in practice.

11. The final question in this connection relates to the subject of *deductions for the distance that the labourer has to walk to and from the work.* The Government of India is of opinion that the concession is likely to be laxly, if not fradulently, worked by subordinates; that although it may not be possible owing to the absence of large projects, to concentrate labour, yet this is the correct policy, and that instead of giving them a distance allowance the people should be indirectly encouraged to reside on the works when their houses are at a distance. The Madras conference held that as a rule hutting, when practicable, was preferable to distance allowance, but that such allowance was desirable and should be made permissible, as it is not possible to foresee the extent and duration of a famine in the beginning, while as in the Deccan hutting is very expensive. The Government accepts this conclusion and is of opinion that where it is necessary to grant distance allowances owing to the non-provision of resident accommodation on the works, the allowance should be one hour for every 3 miles for going to the work over and above the first 3 miles, no allowance however being given for returning. The Government is also of opinion that when hutting is provided separate huts should be provided for average families and that rules should be drawn up similar to those in Appendix IV of the Bombay Code. The Chief Engineer will report with what modifications these rules may be adopted.

12. It may be admitted that the best way of administering relief is to have one or two large works in each taluk or other distressed tract; but such works are not always available, and even where such works do exist the people will not always go to them till too late, if the works are distant more than about 10 miles from their homes. The Government apprehends that in order to deal with serious distress, it will be necessary to open works in such numbers and so situated that no one in need of relief will have to go more than 10 miles to earn a bare living. If it becomes necessary to concentrate labour further for the purpose of carrying out a considerable work, the Government may have not only to provide hutting but even to add the payment of a small extra wage to every one whose home is distant more than 10 miles and who stays in the huts for the whole week. With proper supervision this plan need involve no serious risk of fraud. In minimising any such risk the village organization in this Presidency is so constituted as to afford the most valuable and efficient aid.

13. With regard to *task equivalents* the Government accepts in substitution of those at present adopted the equivalents of 1 man = 2 women = 3 children.

14. *Wages and Allowances.*—The next question for consideration is that of wages for workers and of allowances for dependants. The proposals of Mr. Higham under this head are summarized in paragraph 7 of the Board's Proceedings and are briefly as follows:—

	Wages, cash equivalent of— oz.	
(i) *Workers*—		
Class I	42	The present A male wage.
Class II	38	The present B male wage.
Class III	26	The present D female wage.
Class IV	16	

Note.—Men and women to receive the same wage. Higher wages to be earnable under certain circumstances and if so Sunday wage to be abolished.

Nursing mothers to be placed in class III but to get class I wage, until the child has 4 teeth	42
(ii) *Dependants*—	
(1) Adults	22 Against present 28 oz. for males and 26 oz. for females.
(2) Children	10 Against present 6½ oz. to 14 oz.

On the above proposals the Government would make the following remarks:—

(*a*) One of the complaints of District officers during the famine was in respect of the small difference between the Code wages for men and women, the works being made thereby unduly attractive to women. Mr. Higham proposes to abolish this difference.

(*b*) The present D wage is prescribed for weakly persons doing little or no work, and its sufficiency for supporting mere existence has been called in question. Mr. Higham proposes to give the D female wage to the vast majority of tasked workers (including males), and 4 oz. less to all adult non-working dependants, male and female.

(*c*) Finally, as the Board of Revenue points out, Mr. Higham's proposal to grant extra wages for extra work in certain circumstances strikes at the fundamental principle embodied in section 58 of the Code.

15. The rate of wages proposed for classes I and II was not discussed at the Conferences as Mr. Higham's classification had previously been negatived; but both Conferences disapproved the proposal to give men and women the same wage, and to give the D female wage to workers in class III. The Government has carefully considered the question and (except in the case of women as will be explained below) is opposed to any reduction of the present wages and allowances prescribed in the Code which barely suffice for subsistence. The proposal to cut down the children's allowances to 10 oz. is in the opinion of the Government altogether inadmissible.

16. As regards *nursing mothers and children* the Bombay Code treats them with greater consideration than the Madras Code. In *Bombay* when women on relief works are "not required to work" they are to receive the A wage for adults (section 74) and apparently they are not required to work when they have emaciated children, or for six weeks after child-birth. There are stated rations for children from 0—7 and from 7—12 years (sections 106 and 107), and, till they have "teeth in both jaws," the value of the 0—7 ration is paid to the mother in money. From 7 to 12 if they are in receipt of gratuitous relief, they get as much of the other items (salt, dal, ghee, condiments and vegetables) as adults. When they go to work they never receive less of these "other items." In *Madras* the only concession in favour of women is that nursing mothers on works get a minimum wage, which is a little higher than the C wage and a little lower than the B wage (section 120). If infants are not suckled, wet nurses are provided till the child is four months old. From the age of four months till the age of twelve months the child receives a pint of milk a day. Emaciated children between one and three years of age may get half a pint of milk a day if the officer in charge orders it in writing. Children above three years in kitchens may be allowed a little gingelly-oil if the medical officer, or, in his absence, the officer in charge, orders it in writing (section 125). Besides this, all children get in the kitchen or on works from one-fourth to three-fourths of the ration allowed to adults (sections 120 and 124), so that their allowance of the "other items" is less than in Bombay.

17. The Madras Conference held that a nursing mother should have the A wage without work till the child was six months old; and afterwards the wage of her class *plus* the Bombay allowance for the non-working children shown in Appendix 5 of the Bombay Code. The Waltair Conference thought that if all nursing mothers were treated with this leniency there would be a rush of nursing mothers to the works, and that if the mother was fit for work she ought to be tasked according to her class.

The Board of Revenue seems to be of opinion that nursing mothers should not be required to work on the relief works at all, but should be relieved gratuitously. It rejects kitchen relief as unsuitable, and recommends that the proposal of the Madras Conference should be acted on until gratuitous relief is started and that the nursing mothers should then be placed on gratuitous relief in their villages with the Bombay allowance for the child. The Government is however of opinion that this is going too far, and that the Bombay rule is enough. This supposes that a woman is unfit for work for six weeks after delivery; if this is considered too short a period an addition may be made to the rule to the effect that if the mother is not fit for work by the end of six weeks after confinement the special treatment may be continued till she becomes fit for work. This is in effect section 74 of the Bombay Code.

The Government is further of opinion that sections 132 and 133 of the Bombay Code regarding the treatment of "reduced children" and sickly infants, and also the scale of children's rations prescribed in sections 106 and 107 of the same Code may also be adopted in Madras.

18. The *Sunday wage* is a corollary of the subsistence wage theory and should continue to be given. This weekly holiday and rest is of the greatest value in restoring and maintaining the physique of the workers. With regard to the proposal to allow an *extra wage* for doing 25 per cent. more than the full task, the Government accepts the recommendation that no extra wage should be given or earnable except in the case of remunerative works which it is desirable to finish on their own merits or on grounds of public utility.

19. As regards the *woman's wage*, an average man consumes more food than an average woman, and the Government considers that the Code wage prescribed for women, which differs but little from that for men, may be reduced as shown below:—

	Code scale.		Proposed scale.
	Male.	Female.	Female.
	oz.	oz.	oz.
A	42	38	34
B	38	36	32
C	32	30	28
D	28	26	24

20. *Fining.*—The alterations as suggested by the Conferences in section 106 of the Code as last revised are accepted. The section confers very large powers on subordinates and a careful watch should be kept that fining is not carried too far. As there may not be a poor-house for the reception of contumacious persons, it is necessary to lay down in clause (*b*) of the section that such characters will be liable to be dismissed from the work. The clause will then run as follows:—

"Ordinarily the gang shall not be fined so as to reduce the wage below the minimum fixed by section 120; if, however, in the hope of forcing the authorities to relax discipline, there is continued and deliberate refusal to do the allotted task, the fining of the gang or any member thereof may be carried more severely down to the proportionate payment of work actually done; or the contumacious characters may be dismissed from the work or be sent to the poor-house."

21. The system of daily payments in pice advocated by Mr. Higham in paragraphs 17, 18 and 41 (*n*) of his final note was negatived by both the Conferences. They thought that daily payments were necessary only when the work was first started, that bi-weekly payments were sufficient afterwards, and that payments should be made to the nearest pie. The Government accepts the recommendation of the Conferences and is of opinion that section 102 of the Code should be maintained.

22. *Piece-work.*—The questions which have been considered relate to the classification, the wages and the tasks of workers on the task work system, and the mode of enforcing these tasks. The next subject discussed by the Board relates to the proposals made by Mr. Higham for replacing task work by piece-work in at least the earlier stages of distress. The proposals are summarized in paragraph 11 of the Board's Proceedings. In forwarding them to this Government, the Government of India remarked as follows:—

"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 of 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."

23. His Excellency the Governor in Council has no hesitation in accepting the recommendation in the above passage to alter the letter of the Code so as to permit of piece-work being substituted, if desirable, for task work, but is of opinion that it is undesirable to lay down schemes of works in such detail as that proposed by Mr. Higham. Piece-work has been recently tried in Nellore and not without success, but distress there has never been either intense or extensive. The system undoubtedly saves much trouble to the administration and much annoyance and worry to the workers, but when distress becomes really severe and widespread, provision will have to be made for dependants by task work or by gratuitous relief. Both Conferences appear to misunderstand Mr. Higham's proposal regarding the expansion of ordinary public works in the early stages of distress. It will be seen from paragraph 39 of his final report that all that he urges is the recognition of the principle that, when for the purpose of affording employment to larger numbers than usual, an expansion of ordinary works takes place without any change of system, the extra grant required for

the additional works may be debited to Famine Relief without reference to the condition that the works should be carried out on Famine Code principles. Such an expansion is contemplated by section 16 of the Madras Code and the Government is of opinion that Mr. Higham's suggestion should be accepted.

24. Mr. Higham's proposals on the subject of improving *programmes of relief works* are summarized in paragraph 13 of the Board's Proceedings and are briefly (*a*) that programmes should include a greater number than now of large public works, (*b*) that on the first occurrence of distress it will not be obligatory to provide employment for the people in the immediate neighbourhood of their homes, but that they may on the contrary be drafted to works which may be 40 or 50 miles distant, (*c*) that relief should, in the first instance, be given on large works chosen with reference rather to their utility than to their proximity to the affected villages, and (*d*) that petty works in the neighbourhood of affected villages should not be opened in the earlier stages of distress but should be held in reserve in the event of its becoming necessary to disperse the labour collected on large works or until the large works are approaching completion or for the latest stage of distress. The Government of India makes the following remarks on these proposals:—

"Paragraphs 27 to 31 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 remarks in paragraph 31 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."

25. It is to be regretted that the Board has furnished no information or opinion with reference to the enquiry of the Government of India as to the practicability of improving programmes of works in the manner suggested by Mr. Higham, so as to obviate the necessity for opening small works in the early stages of distress. The preparation of estimates for large projects which may or which may not promise a sufficient return in interest to warrant their execution in ordinary times, but which would prove of great advantage to the country and could be taken up as famine works, is a matter of very great importance, and should receive early attention in the Public Works Department. The joint reports of Mr. Winterbotham and Colonel Campbell of their inspections of the marginally-noted districts threatened with scarcity in 1897, contain notices or lists of large works available in these districts on which famine labour might be concentrated. Similar lists should be prepared by the Public Works Department for other districts liable to scarcity, and estimates should be prepared for such as on examination are found feasible and be kept ready for immediate issue at the proper time. Endeavours should also be made to include in famine programmes a larger number of irrigation projects than is now the case, special arrangements being made with special establishments, if necessary, for investigating fresh projects and for preparing estimates for projects already known to be feasible. In connection with such works, it is not necessary to prove that the expenditure will yield a definite percentage on the outlay. It is sufficient to know that water can be stored to a considerable amount, that there is land available for irrigation and that the project will provide work for a famine-stricken population. The subject will be further dealt with in the Public Works Department.

Kistna, Nellore, Chingleput, South Arcot, North Arcot, Salem, Coimbatore and Trichinopoly.

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26. Of the proposals mentioned in paragraph 24 above regarding programmes of relief works, both Conferences endorsed proposal (*a*) regarding large public works, and both disapproved of the distance test as a test, though not disapproving of concentration of works, *provided* village works were opened for those unable to travel or leave their homes. This proviso negatived proposal (*d*) regarding petty village works. In any case hutting arrangements should, they considered, be complete before large works were opened. The Board points out that, if the two kinds of works are open at the same time, no one will go to the more distant work unless it be a professional labourer attracted by high piecework rates, and that if the workers are to be divided, so that those only who should properly be admitted should go to the village works, village inspection, and relief should be started in the early stage of the famine. Elsewhere it declares that the two sets of works cannot be worked together without an army of relief officers whose cost would be out of all proportion to the economy which concentrated works are supposed to effect, and that the cost of hutting at the central works in the famine zone will be prohibitive. The Government endorses these views generally. His Excellency the Governor in Council is of opinion that it is demoralizing to take away the people from their homes and surroundings and to concentrate them in large camps. It may be unavoidable sometimes, but the practice should be followed only when it is impossible to find work for the people within reach of their homes. It is therefore desirable to begin with works near, say, not more than 10 miles from the people's homes. If these works are exhausted while the famine still continues, the able-bodied must be drafted to greater distances, the feeble being put on gratuitous relief in the villages. To begin by requiring whole populations to resort to distant works must end in failure and disaster, so far at least as this Presidency is concerned.

27. The Board next considers a series of questions relating to the *distribution of gratuitous relief* to the dependants of test and relief workers and to the general population. The first question considered is whether such relief should be given to the dependants of test workers, and both Conferences were of opinion that it would be sufficient if the children of these workers were fed in a kitchen. The Government while not dissenting from this conclusion, would point out that it is not necessary in all cases that test works should be accompanied by kitchens. The object of a test work is to ascertain whether famine conditions do or do not exist. Some discretion, however, must be left to the Collector to decide whether or not to open kitchens in connection with test works.

28. As regards the dependants of workers on regular relief works, the Madras Conference held that when such dependants came on the works, relief to them should be limited to food in kitchens on the works, and that if they remained in their villages they should be put on gratuitous relief. This appears to assume that the opening of relief works should include the grant of gratuitous relief to dependants. This goes too far for the early stages of distress, though when distress has deepened, it will generally be necessary to grant such relief in connection with every relief work. As to the form the relief of dependants should take, it is not advisable to lay down hard and fast rules. The rules should be sufficiently elastic to enable Government to modify the cooked food system when necessary. The Government is inclined to accept the position laid down in paragraph 41 (*l*) of Mr. Higham's final note that the relief of dependants should depend on the degree of distress, and should be given only on the recommendation of the Collector, and that when relief is necessary it should, whenever possible, be given by means of kitchens, the children receiving a cooked ration, and adults either a cooked or dry grain ration.

29. *General gratuitous relief.*—Both Conferences thought that where test works establish the necessity for relief works, and relief works are opened in consequence, gratuitous relief in villages should simultaneously be introduced. The Government is not prepared to lay down any general rule of the kind. Gratuitous relief when once started spreads rapidly and is expensive and difficult to control, and it should not be authorized lightly. The Code, as it stands, does not prevent Government from introducing such relief simultaneously with the opening of works, or even earlier. The time of its introduction must depend upon the circumstances of each case and upon

the view which those at the head of the administration take of the situation. When village relief is organized, a full establishment of taluk relief officers should at once be entertained for its control.

30. *Kitchen relief.*—In paragraph 3 of its letter, No. 32–237—3-F., dated 25th October 1897, the Government of India desired that the regulations bearing on kitchens in each provincial code should 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.

The only departures that were made from the prescriptions of the Code were—

(1) the substitution of the D wage for the ration in section 122 of the Madras Code;

(2) permission to vary the quantities of salt, chillies and tamarind, without exceeding the total cost of the ration.

The first change was made under the orders of the Government of India. The Conferences, the Board of Revenue and the Sanitary Commissioner are all of opinion that the old ration, which costs only a little more than the D wage, should be restored. The Waltair Conference held that if the D ration is to be retained, the "male" wage should be given to both sexes. The Government does not think that a case has been made out in support of any of the above suggestions, and adheres to the decision of the Government of India on the point. The other departure from the Code is trifling and may be provided for by a foot-note to section 122.

31. As regards the relief of respectable families referred to by the Government of India in paragraph 4 of the above letter, the Government is of opinion that this form of relief should not be specifically provided for in the Code. If special provision is to be made for respectable families who will not work from pride or otherwise, a new set of difficulties will arise as to what is a respectable family, whether such relief is to be confined to particular castes, and as to other similar matters.

32. *Grain doles and money doles.*—In paragraph 5 of the same letter, the Government of India enquires whether gratuitous relief to the incapable poor in their homes should be given in the form of uncooked grain or of money and in what circumstances the gift of money is preferable to that of grain. This question was fully discussed in connection with the Ganjám famine of 1888–89, and the decision then arrived at by Government that grain doles should be the rule and the reasons for this decision will be found stated in paragraph 13 of G.O., No. 1026, dated 19th December 1890 (*vide* also paragraphs 76 to 85 of Mr. Horsfall's reports and paragraphs 23 to 28 of the Board's Proceedings printed with the Government Order). The Government is of opinion that this decision should be maintained; it is of course open to it to modify the grain dole system in exceptional cases and permit money doles.

33. *Poor-houses and orphans.*—In paragraph 6 of the same letter, the Government of India suggests that provision should be made in the Code for the systematic weeding of the inmates of poor-houses and for their transfer to the poor-house of their own district or sub-division; and in paragraph 7 it enquires what additions, if any, are necessary to the existing provisions with respect to the care and disposal of orphans. Sections 68 to 74 of the Code contain the existing regulations as to poor-houses and section 90 provides for the care and disposal of orphans. The Government does not think that anything more is needed, nor does it consider that any legislation should be undertaken with a view of empowering Government officers to remove children to kitchens or poor-houses in those rare cases in which parents misappropriate the doles and starve the children.

34. *The relations of the Public Works Department with the Civil Officers of the district.*—The next question dealt with by the Conferences is the position of Public Works officers in regard to relief works. This question underwent discussion in this Presidency in March and July 1897. In paragraph 9 of G.O., No. 216, dated 30th March 1897, the Government ruled that the Public Works Department staff engaged in connection with relief works should be regarded as under the control of the district Collector in all but technical matters, but as the other provisions of the Code were

not modified to suit this ruling there was considerable confusion and misunderstanding till the question of the relations between the Public Works Department and the district Civil officers was definitely settled in G.O., No. 593, dated 19th July 1897. The principles recognized in this Government Order were—

(1) that the Collector of the district should have the control of relief works, large and small; and

(2) that the Public Works staff engaged on relief works should be subordinate to him.

To give effect to these principles sections 38 and 39 of the Bombay Code were adopted, the Collector of the district was invested with the penal powers of a Superintending Engineer over the Public Works Executive staff, and the superior officers of the Public Works Department were directed to see that the orders of the Collector were promptly carried out, their own control being restricted to technical matters.

35. In July 1897 Mr. Higham inspected the relief works of the Presidency, and in paragraphs 25 to 31 of his inspection notes he discussed the position of the Madras Public Works officers in relation to the Collector, and came to the conclusion that a great and needless loss of power was involved in the practical exclusion of the Superintending Engineer from control in all but technical matters, and in the limited interpretation given to the term technical. Mr. Higham also objected in paragraph 20 of his note to the paymaster on relief works being made independent of the Public Works Department. In forwarding these notes to this Government the Government of India remarked that though they recognized that in the control of relief works the Public Works Department should be required to conform to the special requirements of the Famine Code, they still felt assured from the experience of other provinces that larger powers could be given to the officers of the Public Works Department than appeared to be the case in Madras. The questions enumerated by the Board in paragraph 21 of its Proceedings were framed by Government with reference to these criticisms. Shortly after, the Government of India forwarded Mr. Higham's final notes which embody his views as to the relative positions which the Public Works Department and the Civil officers of the district should occupy in regard to relief works. These views are summarized by the Board in paragraph 20 of its Proceedings and are briefly:—
(i) That the Public Works Department should be declared solely responsible for all relief works under its control, for the payment of coolies employed thereon and for the management of the kitchens attached thereto, the Civil Department being responsible only for sending to such works or the kitchens attached thereto those who are in need of employment or who are entitled to gratuitous relief and for famine administration outside such works: the Civil Department would have direct charge of only small works which cannot conveniently be controlled by the Public Works Department and of petty agricultural works carried out with the aid of advances from Government. (ii) That the Revenue subordinates of the district Collector may visit and inspect and report on works in charge of the Public Works Department, but that only the Collector himself should issue orders to officers in charge of works. (iii) That for each large work the Civil Department should appoint a special Civil officer who should however act under the orders of the Public Works Department.

In forwarding these notes the Government of India observed that, while it was anxious to define more clearly the respective duties of the Civil and Departmental officers and to give the latter the powers which they had been practically exercising, it considered that no case existed for departing from the principle laid down by the Famine Commission that the district Collector should be made supreme in all matters connected with famine relief in his district.

36. In regard to the proposals of Mr. Higham, the Conferences, while accepting the position that the Civil Department should have direct charge of only small and petty works, held by a majority that the Collector should be solely responsible for the management of relief works and should be invested with the necessary authority, that section 24 of the Madras Code declaring him to be head of the relief administration should be maintained, that the Executive or Assistant Engineer should be the Collector's Assistant in famine matters, and that the special Civil officer appointed for large

works should be nominated by the Civil Department but should be under the orders of the Executive Engineer as Assistant to the Collector, and also of the departmental officer in charge of the work, if not of lower rank than that of Supervisor. As regards the duties of the special civil officer, the Conferences preferred section 55 of the Code to Mr. Higham's definition of these duties.

37. As regards the four questions of the Local Government enumerated at paragraph 21 of the Board's Proceedings, the Conferences by a majority resolved, in reply to question (*a*), that the instructions in G.O., No. 593, dated 19th July 1897, touching the relative position of the civil and departmental officers, should be adhered to, but that the Collector's Divisional officers should not have power to pass orders on works, and that section 38 (*b*) of the Bombay Code which makes officers of the Public Works Department below the rank of Assistant Engineer subordinate to the Divisional officer should not be adopted. In regard to question (*b*) regarding the duties which should be deemed strictly professional and assigned to the Public Works Department, it was resolved that if the Collector was to be held responsible for relief administration in his district, he must have a general power of supervision in all matters. In regard to question (*c*), as to the direction in which the powers of the Public Works Department might be enlarged, the conferences were of opinion that there would be no objection to defining the duties of the Public Works Department as in section 37 of the Bombay Code, provided the powers of the district Collector and of the Famine Commissioner are maintained but that the Superintending Engineer should be the adviser of the Famine Commissioner and should not, as in Bombay, correspond direct with Government. In regard to question (*d*) relating to the payment of wages, both conferences accepted the principle that the paymaster should be subordinate to the Public Works Department in view of their previous recommendation that the Executive Engineer should be the Collector's Assistant; but the Madras Conference thought that he should not be subordinate to the officer in charge of the work unless the latter was a gazetted officer or the work formed a sub-divisional charge.

38. After careful consideration of the views of the late Chief Engineer to Government and of other officers of the Public Works Department, which are more favourable to the proposals of Mr. Higham than are the final conclusions of the conferences, His Excellency the Governor in Council accepts the recommendations which are summarized above. Famine administration would, in its opinion, inevitably break down and result in confusion and disaster unless the District Collector were recognized as the officer directly responsible for all famine works and measures throughout his district. The more completely the Collector is recognized as the head of the district and of all famine operations within it, the more likely is success to be achieved. In such matters it is essential that unity of authority should be maintained. As soon, therefore, as famine is declared to exist in any district the entire Public Works Department staff therein from the Executive Engineer downwards should be placed under the orders of the Collector as head of the district, the Executive Engineer and Assistant Engineers occupying the status of his Special Assistants for famine duty. The entire Public Works Department staff would then be at the Collector's disposal for famine administration, and there would be no need to draw up specific instructions limiting his authority to non-professional matters any more than in the case of the medical or forest staff who are also at the Collector's disposal. The Collector would have full powers as to the distribution of work devolution of authority and of superintendence and control, while the Superintending Engineer would be the adviser of the Famine Commissioner and correspond with him and not with Government on famine matters.

39. *Weavers' relief.*—The next question dealt with in the Board's report is the relief of weavers at their own trade. As pointed out by the Board, initial advances are contemplated by section 131 of the Code, but this is a minor matter and the system to be followed is that described in Appendix VII. The departures from this system introduced during the recent famine will appear from the following reference to the Board by the Local Government:—

"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 description 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 restricting relief to the 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?"

40. These deviations from the prescribed system were meant as devices to keep out improper applicants. The report of the Special Deputy Collector for weavers relief clearly shows that the tasks originally fixed were too light, and the necessity for the above-noted devices would never have arisen had proper task tables been adopted in the first instance. The Government is of opinion that with suitable task tables cloths may safely be taken from any one who wishes to sell and advances need not be restricted in the manner found necessary during the recent famine or now recommended by the conferences.

41. In regard to the relief of the non-working dependants of weavers, the conferences were of opinion that generally when a kitchen was provided in the neighbourhood of the weavers' home, this should be sufficient, but that the case of scattered weaver families living in remote villages out of reach of kitchen relief should be met by the ordinary rules as to gratuitous relief. The Government accepts these recommendations, but it will of course be open to it to replace kitchen relief by grain doles wherever necessary.

42. The revised task tables prepared on the basis of experiments conducted by the Special Deputy Collector for weavers' relief are given in the statement F appended to this officer's report printed as Appendix VIII to Volume II of the report of the famine of 1896–97. The tables have been prepared on the basis of an eight hours day, and allows wages for the woman only during the time she is actually engaged in subsidiary operations. The Special Deputy Collector is of opinion that the C wage now allowed by the Code is enough and that no holidays need be allowed. He appears to have gone into the matter carefully and his conclusions are accepted. There is no information in the report as to the tasks in Ganjám and Vizagapatam and whether any steps have been taken to revise them. The Board should report on this point.

43. *Artizans.*—The Government accepts the conclusion of the conferences that the provisions of the Code regarding the relief of artizans other than weavers do not require modification.

44. *Forms of account.*—The conferences have not dealt with the changes proposed by Mr. Higham in the forms of famine accounts and returns; this question and that of the proper regulation of famine expenditure should be fully discussed by a committee of experts, and the Board of Revenue is requested to submit proposals as to the constitution of the committee.

45. The only other points requiring special notice in the Board's report are those mentioned in paragraph 33 relating to (1) *famine batta*, (2) *wage grain*, and (3) *the relief of special communities and jungle tribes*. The two questions mentioned by the Board affecting the grant of famine batta have formed the subject of correspondence between this Government and the Government of India, and the matter will be dealt with separately in connection with a further reference which has been made by that Government.

In regard to the determination of the *wage grain*, section 121 of the Code lays down the principle on which the grain is to be determined, but says nothing as to the authority which should fix it. In practice Collectors have been fixing it for each locality or relief work subject to the orders of the Board or the Famine Commissioner and to the general control of Government. The Government does not consider that any change is necessary in the existing practice.

46. *Special Communities and Jungle Tribes.*—The communities whose circumstances received special consideration in the administration of relief during the late distress were—

(1) the Uriyas of Ganjám;
(2) the Khonds and Savaras of the hill or agency tracts of Ganjám and Vizagapatam;
(3) the Kois, Reddis and Naiks of the agency tracts in Gódávari; and
(4) the Chenchus inhabiting the Nallamalai hills in Kurnool.

47. With regard to the *Uriyas* who form the bulk of the agricultural and artizan population in the northern and central portions of the low country in the Ganjám district, Mr. H. D. Taylor, the Collector of Ganjám, reports that they are utterly devoid of any principles of self-help and obstinately cling to their ancient prejudices, while they have in part imbued those Telugus who live by their side with similar prejudices. Many classes of Uriyas, both men and women, declined to perform any work and refused to attend kitchens, and would have died were it not for the grant of grain doles; and, generally, all except the lower classes refused to allow their women to attend Government relief works, although the women ordinarily engage in agricultural operations within the limits of their village. Their labouring classes generally find the discipline enforced on relief works intolerable, and prefer piece-work to task-work. These prejudices rendered the administration of relief in the Ganjám district very difficult and relief was given by grain doles on a very extended scale. Mr. Taylor is, however, disposed to ascribe the aversion of the Uriyas to accept any form of relief other than grain doles largely "to their liberal treatment and the concessions made in former famines to their prejudices, which have now become still more deep-rooted and difficult to eradicate. They decline to help themselves and expect Government to bring relief to their doors. Failing this they prepare themselves resignedly for death without making any effort to avert it." It is, however, undesirable that the Uriyas should continue to be treated differently from other people, and it will be necessary in future famines to insist that those of them who are able to work shall do work as a condition of receiving relief.

48. The other communities mentioned in paragraph 46 are *aboriginal* or backward *jungle* tribes. The forms of relief found practicable in their case in the late distress were—

(1) light work in jungles or the rough fashioning of timber;
(2) relief by subsistence advances to village headmen;
(3) gratuitous relief to all (including the able-bodied);
(4) sale of grain at reduced prices.

Gratuitous relief to the able-bodied is opposed to the principles of the present Famine Code as is also the sale of grain at reduced prices, and these two forms of relief were undertaken and paid for to a considerable extent from charitable and private funds. While forms of labour best suited to the habits of these communities should be arranged and tasks exacted from the able-bodied wherever possible, His Excellency the Governor in Council is constrained to admit that these two forms of relief must be recognized and formally provided for as modes of relief that may be required in the special circumstances of these people. In regard to the sale of grain at reduced prices it should of course be carefully safeguarded, the quantity sold at a time being limited and sales restricted to families or classes in undoubted distress.

The relief of Kois should be worked through the Forest Department.

49. The Government has next to consider certain subjects not dealt with in the Board's report. The first of these relates to *testing the existence of distress*. Section

2 of the Code says that "as a rule it is to be understood that a rise to the scarcity rate from time to time fixed by Government in the staple food-grains of the district is a sure indication of the existence of severe scarcity calling for the immediate introduction of relief measures," and section 17 of the Code lays down that the proper course for the Collector is, with the first indications of distress, to open, under strict test conditions, one or more works according to the extent of the affected area, and if these test-works attract labourers in large numbers, then it may be considered proved that distress exists. Reference must also be made in this connection to a suggestion made by the Government of India last February that the readiness to accept cooked food should be relied upon more than it is now as a test of distress. It has however been decided, after full consideration and discussion, that the refusal of cooked food cannot safely be relied upon in this Presidency as indicating the absence of distress (G.O., Nos. 309, 310, dated 25th May 1898).

50. In November last when discussing the question of the desirability of granting gratuitous relief to dependants in connection with test-works the Famine Commissioner expressed the opinion that test-works were not always strictly necessary, and that the rule in section 2 of the Famine Code, with such modifications as experience may suggest, might be followed in most cases. The rule in section 2 proceeds on the assumption that the true normal rates and the true scarcity rates of every district can be determined with reasonable certainty. But this is not always the case; moreover for the purpose of determining whether there exists distress calling for relief measures it is not safe to rely upon the course of prices alone. Prices are no doubt the most accessible test, but crime, mortality, migration and the immediately preceding history of a tract are all factors entitled to weight. The only practical and trustworthy guide however in the diagnosing of distress is a test-work properly put in operation. The Government is of opinion that test-works cannot be dispensed with unless in very exceptional circumstances and not in any case without the sanction of Government.

51. It is for consideration whether the rule in section 2 is not worded in too positive terms. The scarcity rates indicating the existence of severe distress are taken 100 per cent. above normal rates in the case of dry grains and 66·6 per cent. above normal in the case of rice, but the degree of pressure caused by a given rise in prices depends upon the standard of living among the labouring classes and as this standard varies in different districts it is incorrect to assume that a given percentage rise over the normal proves the same degree of pressure in every district. This is the first element of error in the present determination of scarcity rates. Another and a more serious source of error is in the determination of the normal rates themselves. One obvious mode of determining them is by taking the average price of a series of years exclusive of famine years; the results of this method are however rendered untrustworthy by the influences to which the currency of the country has been subjected. Thirdly, the vast majority of rural labourers are still paid in kind and are unaffected by any rise in prices so long as they are not thrown out of employ. Prices may rise from causes which do not produce a contraction of agricultural operations and in such cases a rise in prices does not mean scarcity or pressure affecting rural labourers. The question of scarcity rates should receive the special attention of the Board from year to year, so that the Government may make such changes in the standard rates as the course of prices shows to be required.

52. Another point requiring notice is the low scale of pay allowed to some of the special relief establishments enumerated in section 40 of the Code. The duties of paymasters are arduous, but the maximum pay allowed is only Rs. 30, which is insufficient. The irregularities and the delays in the accounting of Public Works expenditure were mainly due to the inefficiency of paymasters as a class. It was also found difficult to get good men for the post of circle inspector on a pay, the maximum of which is Rs. 70, and the Government was obliged to disregard this limit in the case of men already in the service of Government. The wording of section 40 which is obscure should be altered so as to make it clear that higher pay may be given with the sanction of Government.

53. Another matter which has been prominently brought to the notice of Government during the distress is the weakness of the district organization in all departments and its inability to meet any sudden strain. In paragraph 3 of his note, dated 3rd July 1897, recorded last year after inspection of the districts threatened with famine, Mr. Winterbotham remarked: "The weakness, chiefly numerical, of our district organization in all departments, its inability to meet any sudden extraordinary strain and the difficulty of rapidly strengthening it are the most discomforting features of the situation. As soon as the village officers are set to work to prepare against future contingencies under chapter VI of the Famine Code their other duties are perforce let slide, and it is useless to ask concerning the crops and cultivation. There is a similar dislocation of ordinary work in every grade, up to the sorely-pressed Collector, who is too often the solitary European Revenue official in the district, on whose narrow shoulders rests the weight of the whole machine. I have no remedy to suggest. Financial exigencies compel us to keep our establishments down at a strength which is just sufficient in times of prosperity, and in times of adversity we cannot escape the penalty." This subject is of the greatest importance and will be dealt with separately.

54. The following letter will be despatched to the Government of India.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. S. FORBES,
Secretary to Government.

Order—No. 845 W., dated 18th March 1899.

Communicated to officers of the Public Works Department for information and guidance.

2. The Chief Engineer will take early action in regard to paragraphs 9, 10 and 11 of the order.

3. In paragraph 25 the preparation of estimates for large projects which, though not promising a sufficient return in interest to warrant their execution in ordinary times, would yet prove of advantage to the country, is remitted to the Public Works Department as a matter of great importance, requiring early attention. Lists of such works in the marginally-noted districts are given in the joint reports of Mr. Winterbotham and Colonel Campbell, and are printed as an appendix to these Proceedings.

Kistna, Nellore, Chingleput, South Arcot, North Arcot, Salem, Coimbatore and Trichinopoly.

4. Similar lists will now be prepared for other districts liable to scarcity, and be submitted for approval. Estimates will, as soon after as possible, be prepared, so that the works may be ready for execution at the proper time. Special establishments will probably be necessary for the investigation of many of these projects and for the preparation of estimates. Applications for such establishments will be met as far as practicable if properly supported by adequate explanation. The famine programmes should include as many irrigation projects as possible. Officers will be guided by the concluding observations of this paragraph of the order in the Revenue Department in regard to the selection of these projects. Lists of proposed irrigation works should be submitted through the Chief Engineer for Irrigation, and all works should be selected in communication with the Collector of the district.

5. It is observed that the widening of railway banks, to fit them for use as a double line, would afford valuable employment for famine labour. Where, as in the case of the East Coast and South Indian Railways, the railways are State property, there ought to be little difficulty in arranging for the preparation of estimates, and hereafter, if found necessary, for carrying out the work. But when, as in the case of the Madras Railway, the line is owned by a Company, special terms will probably have to be arranged with the Agent, first for the preparation of an estimate, and afterwards, if necessary, for the execution of the earthwork at the cost of the famine grant. Work

of this sort may possibly be needed in North Arcot, Salem, Coimbatore, Cuddapah, Anantapur, Bellary, Nellore, Kistna, Gódávari, Vizagapatam, Ganjám, Chingleput, South Arcot, Trichinopoly, Madura and Tinnevelly. Orders in regard to work of this character will issue in the Railway Branch of the Public Works Department, where the estimates on completion should be kept on record.

6. Of greater importance than these works are the irrigation projects which should be prepared for every district and be kept ready for execution when famine relief becomes a necessity. Estimates for such works will be filed in the office of the Chief Engineer for Irrigation.

7. Estimates for famine relief will be specially sanctioned as such, and all orders conveying sanction will be communicated to Collectors in view to the projects being entered in their lists of famine works.

8. A famine portfolio will be maintained in each of the Chief Engineer's offices, and in that of the Consulting Engineer for Railways, in which all famine work estimates will be lodged ready for immediate issue at the proper time. The portfolio will have an index register as an adjunct.

9. The question of an adequate supply of tools stored in convenient localities is also one that should be finally dealt with as soon as possible. The late Chief Engineer, Colonel Campbell, submitted detailed proposals on this subject, and his estimates were referred to the Revenue Department for review in paragraph 3 of G.O., No. 2533 W., dated 13th September 1897. The reply to these Proceedings has since been received.

(True Extract.)

A Kinnell.

Under Secretary to Government.

To the Chief Engineer, Public Works Department.
„ the Chief Engineer for Irrigation.
„ Superintending Engineers.
„ the Examiner, Public Works Accounts.
„ the Revenue Department.
„ the Railway Branch, Public Works Department.

Exd. T. K Narayana Aiyangar.

Appendix to G.O., No. 845 W., dated 18th March 1899.

LARGE works mentioned in the Joint Reports of Mr. Winterbotham and Colonel Campbell.

Doubling the Madras line from Arkonam to Mettupalaiyam.—This will serve the three districts of Salem, Coimbatore and North Arcot :

			ESTIMATE. LAKHS.
North Arcot	...	(1) Clearing silt from the Kaveripak tank bed	2
		(2) Clearing the supply channel of above.	
Coimbatore	...	(1) Bhaváni Reservoir project	44
		(2) Kalingarayan channel extension ...	6·4
Kistna ...	...	Kistna river embankment	4·5
Nellore ...	...	(1) Supply channel to Nellore tank ...	1·26
		(2) The Maldivi drain	0·7
		(3) Clearing silt from the Nellore tank.	
Chingleput	...	(1) Widening Bangaru channel	0·4
		(2) Doubling South Indian Railway from Madras to Chingleput.	
			RS.
South Arcot	...	(1) Improving Chidambaram drainage ...	90,000
		(2) Extension of the Buckingham canal from Thambakam to Kottakuppam ...	4,16,022
		(3) Raising the Coleroon left flood bank ...	1,50,000
		(4) Repairs to Vadanar channel	63,137
		(5) Repairs to Veeranam tank	37,700
		(6) Flood bank of the Gudilam river ...	20,000
		(7) Flood bank of the Penner	30,000
Trichinopoly	...	(1) Breaking metal at central quarry.	

In addition to the above, it is mentioned that some of the largest roads in all the districts may be put in hand.

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(True Extract.)

A. Kennell.

Under Secretary to Government.

To the Chief Engineer, Public Works Department.
„ the Chief Engineer for Irrigation.
„ Superintending Engineers.
„ the Examiner, Public Works Accounts.
„ the Revenue Department.
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