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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Reference DEPARTMENT

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Dated	30-3-1977	197

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Famine Relief.

Read the following :—

No. 921. From C. BERNARD, Esq., C.S.I., Secretary to Sir Richard Temple, to J. H. GARSTIN, Esq., Additional Secretary to the Government of Madras, dated Sholapur, 18th March 1877, No. 149.

By direction of Sir Richard Temple I have the honor to forward a Minute recorded by him containing his remarks on the labor test and the wage test.

Minute by Sir Richard Temple, dated Sholapur, 18th March 1877.

I desired to offer certain remarks on—

the labor test and
the wage test,

which remarks were suggested by my experience of two months spent amidst the thick of the relief operations in the Madras Presidency.

2. At the outset of the affair, that is, in the last week of December and the first week of January, there was an extraordinarily large number of persons of both sexes on relief works in the districts of Bellary, Kurnool and Cuddapah : about * 950,000 persons out of a population of four millions or about one-fourth of the whole people. No doubt the failure in 1876 of the south-east or later monsoon following a failure of the south-west or earlier monsoon did cause distress to come on with unusual rapidity and, as it were precipitated the outbreak of famine, still in reference to the early period of the season, to the length of time which had to run before the next coming rains of 1877—the accession of such great numbers was calculated to excite surprise and alarm. If these districts, it was asked, shewed as many as 950,000 persons in the first or second week of January, what would they be shewing in March and, still worse, what might they shew in May ?

* Bellary	420,000
Kurnool	320,000
Cuddapah	210,000
	950,000

3. At the beginning of January 1874, the relief works in the worst districts of Bengal, Behar, shewed hardly more than a few hundreds, or at the most but a very few thousands. The numbers remained low till the middle of March. They reached their culminating point hardly before the end of April. If then Bellary, Kurnool and Cuddapah had nearly a million by the middle of January, what, it was anxiously enquired, would be the enormous muster roll of April and May ? No doubt there is a difference of at least one month of season between these districts and Bengal, which difference might bring on the outbreak of famine a month earlier in these districts than in Bengal. Still this would not fully account for the remarkable haste with which the famine seemed to be approaching in the Madras Presidency. There must have been something in the system, which had begun to be pursued, to encourage people to resort to the relief works.

4. As a matter of fact, the numbers on relief works in these three districts have fortunately not gone on rising and rising in the manner which was to have been feared : on the contrary, they have been falling and declining. The necessity of additional precautions was immediately represented to the Madras Government, who promptly took various measures accordingly. The execution of these measures has since been diligently watched. The total for the three districts is now under 500,000, thus :—

Bellary	240,000
Kurnool	195,000
Cuddapah	58,000

And it may now be said (though with various qualifications) that the relief works in these three districts are, on the whole, supervised tolerably well, and that the numbers are restricted in a manner in some degree (though far from exactly) proportionate to the dimensions of actual distress.

So far the Madras Government may be congratulated on the result. But the ideas in the minds of the people, which produced the original excess in numbers are still existing and would again burst into activity, if vigilance were to be relaxed, even for a moment. It is, therefore, practically useful to consider what those causes were, and how they have been, or are to be, remedied.

5. The causes were,—

Offering of work close to the homes of the people;

Rendering the work light and easy;

Making the wages worth having, irrespective of bare subsistence;

Admitting all comers without any question as to whether they were able to sustain themselves for a time;

Allowing all applications for employment without exception.

These several concessions are deemed by the rural country-people to be considerable advantages.

6. The remedy has been, withholding these advantages, making the scene of work more distant from home, causing the labor to be more hard and irksome, rendering the wage less advantageous, and besides rejecting all those who appeared able to support themselves for a time at least.

7. It was at the outset held in the Madras Presidency that the wage offered, though liberal enough in ordinary times, would be thought low in reference to the high prices of scarcity time, and that the rural and agricultural classes would not resort to the works, under such circumstances unless really pressed by want. It was doubtless hoped that the works would be so distributed as not to be too near and handy to the relief laborers, and that the task-work would by degrees be enforced. It was probably difficult, under the pressure of last December, to fulfil this hope. At all events, from one cause or other, it was not fulfilled: the works were easily accessible and the task-work was nominal.

8. Then an important circumstance became observable, namely, this: that rural classes who are not yet pressed by want, who are able to sustain themselves and to live without Government aid, will largely resort to relief works so long as those works are close at home, as the labor is easy, and the wage worth having: and in the rural classes I include not only the menial servants in the villages, the beggars who subsist on village charity, the professional work-people, the field-laborer, the predial serfs; but also the "puttadar" ryots (technically so termed, that is the peasant proprietors, ryots having a beneficiary interest in the soil under the Ryotwaree settlement, and paying land revenue to Government. In some populous tracts it came to this, that relief road ran through the middle of the villages, and the peasantry living on either side of the line within sight of it sauntered leisurely, on to the works.

9. On or about the 1st of January there were some persons in all these classes who, even at that early date, really needed relief, and would have submitted to much trouble in order to obtain it. There were however many who would gladly take relief, if they could get it without trouble, but who would prefer to dispense with it rather than submit to such trouble. There were thousands and thousands of powerful men, representing what would be termed a fine peasantry, whose physical condition would be called splendid, who thus got State wages for some few weeks under the name of relief, though to them it really was gain. This has been indeed checked. But that this should be the view taken by so many of the peasant proprietary (as it was actually taken by tens of thousands of them) is a circumstance to arouse reflection.

10. It was natural enough indeed that such a view should be taken by the rural classes. A man and his family are not in actual want: they are not prepared to interrupt their domestic arrangements or to undergo severe toil; they are not willing to encamp out perhaps to bivouac, to be on the work all day in inclement weather; still the times are hard, and may become harder, their ordinary work is slack, they have nothing in particular to do, they would be glad to make a little money, which would come in usefully, would replace dead cattle, would help to pay for deepening the well for irrigation, would reduce the debt to the village banker, and so on. And at that time (January) a man might have three earning 3¾ Rupees, his wife 2¾ Rupees, and say, his two elder children 3¼ Rupees more, in all 14 Rupees in a month; in four months (probable

duration of distress) 40 Rupees would be obtained, which is really a consideration to a rustic family. If then the relief works suit this idea, they afford a temptation to tens even to hundreds of thousands. Thus it is that resorting to relief works is *not* necessarily a test of distress. Thus it is that State charity becomes indiscriminate and superinduces a certain sort of demoralization. That some demoralization was beginning to creep into the rural community in these districts, I greatly apprehend—though we may now trust that it has been checked. And the State, however much it may be bound to save life and to prevent extreme distress, is not bound to allow this, on the contrary is rather bound to set its face against every thing of the sort.

11. When, therefore, the numbers on the relief works became so much reduced during February, the main causes were the distribution of the works so as to render them more distant from the homes of the work-people, and the augmenting of the task. Instance after instance has occurred of gangs, some thousands strong, being told that the road on which they were engaged was sufficiently finished, and that they must march on to another road ten miles, even five miles off, and then melting away or never mustering again, or being told that they must do such and such a task and rejoining that they did not like this, as it would involve so many hours a day, and then ceasing to appear. This is not, of course, the demeanour of persons who are in real need. And yet it has been exactly the demeanour of a large part of the million of relief laborers in these three districts during January.

12. When, therefore, it is sometimes asked how such large numbers were turned off during February, the answer is, that for the most part they turned themselves off, and that they chose to be at rest on finding that they could not get relief on their own terms.

13. A certain number, no doubt, were picked out to be discharged under the rule that those were to be rejected who seemed able to sustain themselves for a time at least.

14. The reducing the wage also is calculated to keep people away from the works by diminishing the inducement, but it has not been long enough in operation to produce any marked effect.

15. As a remarkable example in a district adjoining these three districts, I may cite the case of the East Coast Canal, an excellent work under professional supervision. Labor is sorely needed for this work. The district all around it (Nellore) is much distressed, and might well send say 30,000 laborers to it (in addition to the few thousands already sent). But the rural poor of Nellore were at the outset comforted by convenient village works, and they refuse to leave these works to go to the Canal; if pressed to go, they strike work and decline relief altogether on such terms. Similar efforts were made under the stringent orders of the Madras Government in Bellary, Kurnool and Cuddapah, to induce relief laborers to go to the Canal, but with very little success.

16. I distinctly apprehend that thousands and thousands of stalwart relief laborers in these several districts will leave the little village works and refuse relief altogether, sooner than go to the Canal or to any large public work under professional supervision at any, even a moderate distance from their homes. I should even fear that they will undergo some distress and privation before they will yield, if indeed they ever do yield. It is indeed manifest enough that people who thus behave cannot be in severe want. Nevertheless the test of going away from home ought to be persistently applied to able-bodied applicants for relief. This can be done by concentrating operations as much as possible on the larger works which have been, or may yet be, suggested. I have in my Minute of the 14th February was said all that then occurred to me regarding these larger public works in the Madras Presidency.

17. I have never been insensible to the objection that these larger public works might cause extra expense in one particular way, namely this,—that professional laborers might be engaged for them on account of their skill and efficiency, who might not be in absolute need, or who might have been able to obtain private employment,—for experience shows that, even in the distressed districts, the practised and efficient laborers can generally find work for themselves,—it is rather the inferior laborers, and they are legion, who suffer. But when a work of this description is

...ened, not primarily for the sake of material improvement, but for the purpose of relief, it is easy and necessary to order that no person shall be employed, who is believed to be in any way able to sustain himself, for a time at least, or who lives so near that his attendance only shows that he is making a convenience of the work in order to earn a little money. And when this is ordered, then the only objection which exists to these works being undertaken by relief, is removed.

18. On the other hand, the advantages of these professionally controlled public works for purpose of relief are absolute. These works being at some distance from the homes of the people, involving some hardship and exposure, requiring people to camp out or to live away, exacting labor under engineering supervision which cannot be cheated or evaded, restricting remuneration to work done according to "task" or "piece" ar... measured up" professionally—supply a labor test, which assays the character of the relief-seeking classes, just as money is assayed at a mint. Those who are really in need will, indeed must, submit to all this. Those who are not in such need, but who would be glad enough to avail themselves of relief, that is, of State charity, if easily and conveniently obtained, will not submit. In the Madras Presidency the process of examining gangs of relief laborers, ejecting those who are well to do, and returning those who are not, is described by an expressive phrase "shroffing," in allusion to the manner by which a "shroff" or money-changer tests the intrinsic value of the coins presented to him. The simple order to the able-bodied among the relief gangs to proceed to one of the larger public works at a distance, has immediately caused thousands and thousands to "shroff" themselves, that is, to take their discharge from the relief department altogether. And I apprehend that a similar order, if given, even now to many of the strongest gangs in Bellary, Kurnool, Cuddapah, would cause tens of thousands more to do the same. If indiscriminate charity by the State is to be avoided: if the charity is to be truly discriminating, relieving only those who are in want, and doing that effectually, then these larger public works afford a self-acting test.

19. The *primary* importance, therefore, of having large public works of this description ready before hand for all districts where scarcity or famine is to be expected becomes manifest. Even at this comparatively advanced season, the plan may be still further worked with much effect in the Kurnool and Bellary Districts especially.

20. It is to be remembered, of course, that there are many classes among the distressed poor who could not labor on these larger public works. For the employment of these, petty works must be provided close to their homes, and with but very light task. But such works should be begun sparingly and as slowly and cautiously as possible; they should not be scattered all over distressed tracts until the famine has pronounced itself, and the season of trouble has advanced; and none should be admitted who could be reasonably expected to resort to the larger public works. The excess which occurred in Bellary, Kurnool, Cuddapah, and which in the middle of January threatened, if not checked, to be overwhelming, arose because easy works close at home were opened all over these districts, at the very commencement of the scarcity, and because there were hardly any large public works ready, to which the able-bodied applicants for relief could be sent, under penalty of being discharged from relief, if they should refuse to go.

21. Besides the petty relief works in the villages, there is the charitable relief to be administered by searching out every distressed person (even those who may fail to complain) by a house-to-house visitation throughout the country. But this important topic need not be pursued here.

22. Most or all of the considerations set forth in this Minute are doubtless already known to the Government of India and to the Government of Madras. But the experience gained recently in the districts of Bellary, Kurnool, Cuddapah, affords such striking confirmation of this view, that I have deemed it my duty to record that experience while it is still fresh.

RICHARD TEMPLE.

No. 2211. From C. BERNARD, Esq., C.S.I., Secretary to Sir Richard Temple, to J. H. GARSTIN, Esq., Additional Secretary to the Government of Madras, dated Sholápur, 20th March 1877, No. 151.

By direction of Sir Richard Temple I have the honor to forward copy of a Minute recorded by him respecting the present condition of relief operations in Kurnool.

Minute by Sir Richard Temple, dated Sholapur, 17th March 1877.

In my Minute, dated 20th January last, it was mentioned that Mr. R. Davidson, who had recently been appointed to the Kurnool District, was doing all he could to bring affairs into order; but that before his arrival, relief operations must have passed beyond control locally, and had been apparently conducted in a manner calculated to cause a heavy drain upon the treasury, and to render the people too dependent upon the State.

2. I have recently ascertained the condition of relief operations and the character of relief administration as they now exist in the Kurnool District. I find that matters have very greatly improved; and the present state of affairs is as follows:—Order and system have been introduced; a competent and energetic officer has been placed in full relief charge of every taluq; the gangs of relief laborers have been concentrated on a few works, and task-work is in many cases exacted; persons who could support themselves have gone to their homes; the revised wage rate, with the prescribed allowance for the infants of work-people, has been fully adopted; the total numbers on relief works have fallen from 330,000 to 195,000; from five to eight relief houses have been opened in each taluq; whence cooked food is distributed to about 4,500* destitute people; these relief houses are inspected by the taluk relief officer and abuses are prevented; the village officials are sending paupers into the relief houses, and the village relief organisation is being roused into activity by the constant supervision of European officers so far as the local officers can ascertain deaths from starvation are not occurring in the villages; the physical condition of the people on the relief works continues fairly good; private trade continues to be active; and the supply of imported grain is more plentiful than it was in January. System and economy were not enforced so early in the Cumbum Division as elsewhere, but even there also matters are now brought into conformity with the instructions of the Madras Government. The local officers expect that the numbers on relief works and on charitable relief may reach 250,000 and 25,000, respectively, as the season advances and pressure on the people increases.

* The 2,200 persons who received gratuitous relief in Kurnool city from private sources are outside this number.

3. Much of this result is due to the exertions of Mr. Davidson, the Collector, who, since the middle of January, has visited every part of the district, and has seen matters with his own eyes. Mr. Davidson is assisted by an efficient staff of Civil, Military and Native Assistants; he appears to be employing his Assistants to advantage; but he asks for additional engineering subordinates, and also for the services of selected officers and men of the Native Army. The officials of the engineering staff are now co-operating with the relief officers.

4. Although much improvement has thus been achieved, and though the Madras Government has been so far well served by Mr. Davidson and his officers, yet I am not able to report that that every economy which, under other circumstances, might be practicable, has been attained in Kurnool. It is noteworthy that the proportion of the population receiving relief is now much higher in Kurnool than in either Bellary or Cuddapah.

5. In my Minute of the 20th January I drew attention to the contrast between relief operations as conducted in Kurnool and as conducted in the similarly circumstanced Bombay District of Sholapur. A renewal of the comparison between these two districts makes me believe that the relief operations in Kurnool may still be beyond the actual necessities of the case. I

do not say that the scale of relief in Kurnool can, after all that has been done or permitted, come down to the Sholapur scale. But still I think that the contrast is both for [illegible] present information and future guidance, worth making, thus:—

—	Proportion of Crop saved in 1876 77 according to Collector's estimate.	Total population.	Number of persons on Relief Works on [illegible]	[illegible] March.	Number on charitable relief on 1st March.	Number [illegible] works open [illegible]
Kurnool ..	1½ annas out of 16.	917,000	[illegible]	194,000	3,661	About [illegible]
Sholapur ..	1 anna out of 16.	718,000	[illegible]	48,000	500	16 P. W. D. works, besides 45 works for the 4,000 Civil Agency work-people.

A much wider and more general private charity is practised by the people of Sholapur and its towns than has been shown by the people of Kurnool and its town. But with this exception, I am unable to point to any sufficient explanation of the very great difference between the extent of relief operations in the two districts. Probably there may be some undetected differences in the circumstances of the two districts; still I cannot think such difference could be sufficient to account for the great excess of Kurnool relief expenditure over Sholapur. In the Sholapur District the staff of relief officials is very ample: each village has its Patil (headman) and its Kulkarnee (accountant); over each circle of ten villages has been placed a special relief inspector; and in every taluq is stationed a European or Native Assistant and a Mamlutdar (Tahsildar), whose whole time is given to relief work and to village inspection. On the information furnished by this chain of relief officials, the Collector is able to say that the condition of the village people is (17th March) fair everywhere, and that the people are not now starving at their homes. It is, therefore, reasonable to conclude that the Sholapur relief operations suffice for the necessities of the case.

6. I believe one great cause of the difference in the numbers on relief works in the two districts is, that for several weeks work has not been offered to Sholapur villagers close to their homes, while in Kurnool everybody could at first, and very many can even now, find easy relief work at fair wages close to their homes. The attention of the Collector might still be given to this point. It is probable that, when the Kurnool relief officers pick out gangs of 20,000 stalwart relief laborers for transfer to Nellore, many may decline to go, and in this way the numbers will decrease by the act of the people themselves.

7. It may be well to draw attention to the necessity for keeping one point in view. The Government grain reserve in Kurnool amounts, so far as I could ascertain, to from 10,000 to 12,000 tons. This grain is being housed and protected, and it is not now being used at all.

Grain for relief-house expenditure is bought in the local markets. But it will have to be considered at what season and in what manner this grain ought to be disposed, so that large quantities may not be kept on the hands of Government when the next season's crop ripens.

RICHARD TEMPLE.

(True Copies.)

(Signed) J. H. GARSTIN,
Additional Secretary to Government.

Exd. G. Freeman.

12-77

REVENUE DEPARTMENT,
FORT ST. GEORGE,
30th March 1877.

No.

Famine Relief.

No. 922.

From

J. H. GARSTIN, Esq.,
Additional Secretary to Government,

To

C. E. BERNARD, Esq., C.S.I.,
Secretary to Sir Richard Temple.

Miscellaneous.

SIR,—I am directed to acknowledge receipt of Sir Richard Temple's two Minutes, forwarded with your letters, Nos. 149 and 151, and to state that the Madras Government are well aware of the necessity of not having, and do not intend to have, large quantities of the grain reserve on hand when the next season's crop ripens.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
(Signed) J. H. GARSTIN,
Additional Secretary to Government.

No. 149.

From

C. BERNARD, Esq., C.S.I.,
Secretary to Sir Richard Temple,

To

J. H. GARSTIN, Esq.,
Additional Secretary to the
Government of Madras,

Dated SHOLAPUR, 18*th March*, 1877.

SIR,

By direction of Sir Richard Temple I have the honor to forward a Minute recorded by him containing his remarks on the labour test and the wage test.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,
C. BERNARD,
Secretary to Sir Richard Temple.

Minute by Sir Richard Temple, dated Shelapur, 18th March, 1877.

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3. At the beginning of January 1874, the relief works in the worst districts of Bengal, Behar, shewed hardly more than a few hundreds, or at the most but a very few thousands. The numbers remained low till the middle of March. They reached their culminating point hardly before the end of April. If then Bellary, Kurnool and Cuddapah had nearly a million by the middle of January, what, it was anxiously enquired, would be the enormous muster roll of April and May? No doubt there is a difference of at least one month of season

between these districts and Bengal, which difference might bring on the outbreak of famine a month earlier in these districts than in Bengal. Still this would not fully account for the remarkable haste with which the famine seemed to be approaching in the Madras Presidency. There must have been something in the system, which had begun to be pursued, to encourage people to resort to the relief works.

4. As a matter of fact, the numbers on relief works in these three districts have fortunately not gone on rising and rising in the manner which was to have been feared: on the contrary, they have been falling and falling. The necessity of additional precautions was immediately represented to the Madras Government, who promptly took various measures accordingly. The execution of these measures has since been diligently watched. The total for the three districts is now under 500,000, thus,—

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State charity becomes indiscriminate and superinduces a certain sort of demoralization. That some demoralization was beginning to creep into the rural community in these districts, I distinctly apprehend—though we may now trust that it has been checked. And the State, however, much it may be bound to save life and to prevent extreme distress, is not bound to allow this, on the contrary is rather bound to set its face against every thing of the sort.

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13. A certain number, no doubt, were picked out to be discharged under the rule that those were to be rejected who seemed able to sustain themselves for a time at least.

14. The reducing the wage also is calculated to keep people away from the works by diminishing the inducement, but it has not been long enough in operation to produce any marked effect.

15. As a remarkable example in a district adjoining these three districts, I may cite the case of the East Coast Canal, an excellent work under professional supervision. Labour is sorely needed for this work. The district all around it (Nellore) is much distressed and might well send say 30,000 labourers to it (in addition to the few thousands already sent). But the rural poor of Nellore were at the outset comforted by convenient village works, and they refuse to leave these works to go to the Canal; if pressed to go, they strike work and decline relief altogether on such terms. Similar efforts were made under the stringent orders of the Madras Government, in Bellary, Kurnool and Cuddapah to induce relief labourers to go to the Canal, but with very little success.

16. I distinctly apprehend that thousands and thousands of stalwart relief labourers in these several districts will leave the little village works and refuse relief altogether, sooner than go to the Canal or to any large public work under professional supervision at any, even a moderate distance from their homes. I should even fear that they will undergo some distress and privation before they will yield, if indeed they ever do yield. It is indeed manifest enough that people who thus behave cannot be in severe want. Nevertheless the test of going away from home ought to be persistently applied to able-bodied applicants for relief. This can be done by concentrating operations as much as possible on the larger works which have been or may yet be suggested. In my Minute of the 14th February was said all that then occurred to me regarding these larger public works in the Madras Presidency.

17. I have never been insensible to the objection that these larger public works might cause extra expense in one particular way, namely, this,—that professional labourers might be engaged for them on account of their skill and efficiency, who might not be in absolute need, or who might have been able to obtain private employment,—for experience shows that, even in the distressed districts, the practised and efficient labourers can generally find

work for themselves,—it is rather the inferior labourers, and they are legion, who suffer. But when a work of this description is opened, not primarily for the sake of material improvement, but for the purpose of relief, it is easy and necessary to order that, no person shall be employed, who is believed to be in any way able to sustain himself, for a time at least, or who lives so near that his attendance only shows that he is making a convenience of the work in order to earn a little money. And when this is ordered, then the only objection, which exists to these works being undertaken by relief, is removed.

18. On the other hand, the advantages of these professionally controlled public works for purpose of relief, are absolute. These works being at some distance from the homes of the people, involving some hardship and exposure, requiring people to camp out or to bivouac, exacting labour under engineering supervision which cannot be cheated or evaded, restricting remuneration to work done according to "task" or "piece" and "measured up" professionally—supply a labour test, which assays the character of the relief-seeking classes, just as money is assayed at a mint. Those who are really in need will, indeed, must, submit to all this. Those who are not in such need, but who would be glad enough to avail themselves of relief, that is, of State charity, if easily and conveniently obtained, will not submit. In the Madras Presidency the process of examining gangs of relief labourers, rejecting those who are well-to-do and returning those who are not, is described by an expressive phrase "shroffing," in allusion to the manner by which a "shroff" or money-changer tests the intrinsic value of the coins presented to him. The simple order to the able-bodied among the relief gangs to proceed to one of the larger public works at a distance, has immediately caused thousands and thousands to "shroff" themselves, that is, to take their discharge from the relief department altogether. And I apprehend, that a similar order if given even now to many of the strongest gangs in Bellary, Kurnool, Cuddapah, would cause tens of thousands more to do the same.

If indiscriminate charity by the State is to be avoided: if the charity is to be truly discriminating, relieving only those who are in want, and doing that effectually, then these larger public works afford a self-acting test.

19. The *primary* importance, therefore, of having large public works of this description ready before-hand for all districts where scarcity or famine is to be expected becomes manifest. Even at this comparatively advanced season, the plan may be still further worked with much effect in the Kurnool and Bellary districts especially.

20. It is to be remembered of course, that there are many classes among the distressed poor, who could not labour on these larger public works. For the employment of these, petty works must be provided close to their homes, and with but very light task. But such works should be begun sparingly and as slowly and cautiously as possible;—they should not be scattered all over distressed treats until the famine has pronounced itself, and the season of trouble has advanced; and none should be admitted who could be reasonably expected to resort to the larger public works. The excess which occurred in Bellary, Kurnool, Cuddapah, and which in the middle of January threatened, if not checked, to be overwhelming, arose because easy works close at home were opened all over these districts, at the very commencement of the scarcity, and because, there were hardly any large public works ready, to which the able-bodied applicants for relief could be sent, under penalty of being discharged from relief, if they should refuse to go.

21. Besides the petty relief works in the villages, there is the charitable relief to be administered by searching out every distressed person (even those who may fail to complain) by a house-to-house visitation throughout the country. But this important topic need not be pursued here.

22. Most or all of the considerations set forth in this Minute are doubtless already known to the Government of India and to the Government of Madras. But the experience gained recently in the districts of Bellary, Kurnool, Cuddapah, affords such striking confirmation of this view, that I have deemed it my duty to record that experience while it is still fresh.

RICHARD TEMPLE.

No. 151.

From

C. BERNARD, Esq., C.S.I.,

Secretary to Sir Richard Temple,

To

J. H. GARSTIN, Esq.,

Additional Secretary to the Government of Madras,

Dated SHOLAPUR, *20th March*, 1877.

Sir,

By direction of Sir Richard Temple I have the honor to forward copy of a Minute recorded by him respecting the present condition of relief operations in Kurnool.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,
C. BERNARD,
Secy. to Sir Richard Temple.

Minute by Sir Richard Temple, dated Sholapur, 17th March, 1877.

In my Minute dated 20th January last, it was mentioned that Mr. R. Davidson, who had recently been appointed to the Kurnool district, was doing all he could to bring affairs into order; but that before his arrival, relief operations must have passed beyond control locally, and had been apparently conducted in a manner calculated to cause a heavy drain upon the treasury, and to render the people too dependent upon the State.

2. I have recently ascertained the condition of relief operations and the character of relief administration, as they now exist in the Kurnool district. I find that matters have very greatly improved; and the present state of affairs is, as follows;—Order and system have been introduced; a competent and energetic officer has been placed in full relief charge of every taluq; the gangs of relief labourers have been concentrated on a few works, and task-work is in many cases exacted; persons who could support themselves have gone to their homes; the revised wage rate, with the prescribed allowance for the infants of work-people has been fully adopted; the total numbers on relief works have fallen from 330,000 to 195,000; from five to eight relief houses have been opened in each taluq; whence cooked food is distributed to about 4,500* destitute people; these relief houses are inspected by the taluk relief officer and abuses are prevented; the village officials are sending paupers into the relief houses, and the village relief organisation is being roused into activity by the constant supervision of European officers; so far as the local officers can ascertain deaths from starvation are

* The 2,200 persons who received gratuitous relief in Kurnool city from private sources are outside this number.

not occurring in the villages; the physical condition of the people on the relief works continues fairly good; private trade continues to be active and the supply of imported grain is more plentiful than it was in January. System and economy were not enforced so early in the Cumbum division as elsewhere, but even there also matters are now brought into conformity with the instructions of the Madras Government. The local officers expect that the numbers on relief works and on charitable relief may reach 250,000 and 25,000 respectively as the season advances and pressure on the people increases.

3. Much of this result is due to the exertions of Mr. Davidson the Collector, who since the middle of January, has visited every part of the district and has seen matters with his own eyes. Mr. Davidson is assisted by an efficient staff of Civil, Military and Native Assistants; he appears to be employing his assistants to advantage; but he asks for additional engineering subordinates, and also for the services of selected officers and men of the Native Army. The officials of the engineering staff are now co-operating with the relief officers.

4. Although much improvement has thus been achieved, and though the Madras Government has been so far well served by Mr. Davidson and his officers: yet I am not able to report that every economy which under other circumstances might be practicable has been attained in Kurnool. It is noteworthy that the proportion of the population receiving relief is now much higher in Kurnool than in either Bellary or Cuddapah.

5. In my Minute of the 20th January I drew attention to the contrast between relief operations as conducted in Kurnool and as conducted in the similarly circumstanced Bombay district of Sholapur. A renewal of the comparison between these two districts makes me believe that the relief operations in Kurnool may still be beyond the actual necessities of the case. I do not say that the scale of relief in Kurnool can, after all that has been done or permitted, come down to the Sholapur scale. But still I think

that the contrast is, both for our present information and future guidance, worth making, thus;—

	Proportion of Crop saved in 1876-77 according to Collector's estimate.	Total population.	Number of persons on relief works on		Number on charitable relief on 1st March	Number of relief works open on 1st March.
			10th Jan.	1st March		
Kurnool	1½ annas out of 16	917,000	330,000	194,000	3,651	about 24 works.
Sholapur	1 anna out of 16	718,000	93,000	43,000	500	16 P W.D works besides 4 works for the 4,000 Civil Agency work people

A much wider and more general private charity is practised by the people of Sholapur and its towns than has been shown by the people of Kurnool and its towns. But with this exception, I am unable to point to any sufficient explanation of the very great difference between the extent of relief operations in the two districts. Probably there may be some undetected differences in the circumstances of the two districts; still I cannot think such difference could be sufficient to account for the great excess of Kurnool relief expenditure over Sholapur. In the Sholapur district the staff of relief officials is very ample; each village has its Patil (headman) and its Kulkarnee (accountant); over each circle of ten villages has been placed a special relief inspector; and in every taluk is stationed a European or Native Assistant and a Mamlutdar (Tahsildar) whose whole time is given to relief work and to village inspection. On the information furnished by this chain of relief officials, the Collector is able to say that the condition of the village people is (17th March) fair everywhere, and that the people are not now starving at their homes. It is, therefore, reasonable to conclude that the Sholapur relief operations suffice for the necessities of the case.

6. I believe one great cause of the difference in the numbers on relief works in the two districts is, that for several weeks work has not been offered to Sholapur villagers close to their homes, while in Kurnool everybody could at first, and very many can even now, find easy relief work at fair wages close to their homes. The attention of the Collector might still be given to this point. It is probable that, when the Kurnool relief officers pick out gangs of 20,000 stalwart relief labourers for transfer to Nellore, many may decline to go, and in this way the numbers will decrease by the act of the people themselves.

7. It may be well to draw attention to the necessity for keeping one point in view. The Government grain reserve in Kurnool amounts, so far as I could ascertain, to from 10,000 to 12,000 tons. This grain is being housed and protected; and it is not now being used at all.

Grain for relief house expenditure is bought in the local markets. But it will have to be considered at what season and in what manner this grain ought to be disposed, so that large quantities may not be kept on the hands of Government when the next season's crop ripens.

RICHARD TEMPLE.

Memo: 1279/13

Circulate 2 Minutes by Sir R. Temple with letters No. 149 & 151 from Mr. Brinard — In one Minute dated March 15th Sir Richard professes to discuss the Labour Test of the wage test. but really one to say anything regarding the latter. He discusses the former at length & these are his conclusions put briefly:

1. Resorting to relief works is not necessarily a test of distress.

2. The main cause of the reduction of men has during Febr. been the distribution of works so as to make them more distant from the homes of the labourers, & augmenting the task. Then are his words: "Instance after instance has occurred of gangs some thousands

C 24-3-77 R 31-3-77

"Having long told that
"he could on which they were
"employed was sufficiently
"finished & that they must
"look out for another road
"to make, from 5 to 6 miles off
"& after walking away &
"seem looking again.
This language sounds
little exaggerated.

3. The people cannot subsist
on the roots for the most
part. (Para 12)

4. A certain number are
picked out & discharged
(Para 13)

5. The testimony goes to
show that the
hands lately employed &
able bodied applicants
for relief. But can
be done by carefully
questioning each
applicant separately. (Para 16)

6. Instances are stated
of persons who employed
a cart who lives on
hire & who has been
obliged to sell
a cow since he
could earn (Para 17)

in order given
Farmers, Relieving Officers 12
Landowners & able bodied 14
Colonies & to assistant
Commissioners
Local public opinion as regards
Test of Poor and 6 Medical
Evidence from various Boards
& Unions for public works
Labourers Dockyards &c
Allotments &c
(Para 18)

9. Numerous instances
of Relieving Farmers & Landowners
& more became employed
on private works
& more & more
& more & more
& more & more