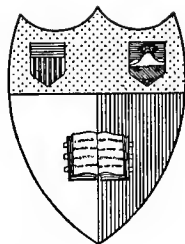


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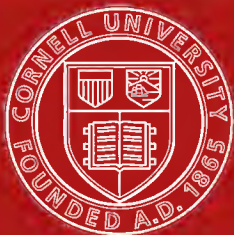
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The great famine :Report of the Committ



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Sam Youling

THE GREAT FAMINE.

Chas Mason
5/23, 14

In relation to the China Famine Relief Work it is gratifying to state that abundant rains have at length fallen in the region recently suffering from a protracted drought, and brought the promise of plenty to the survivors of the terrible famine, which has so long desolated the Northern Provinces of the Empire. The Committee is thus happily enabled to close its work, and to publish a final report of its labours.

The total amount of funds received by the Committee, as will be seen from the statement of the Honorary Treasurer, has been Taels 204,560.37, and the distribution of this large sum has been almost entirely effected by the Protestant and Catholic Missionaries who have volunteered for the purpose. The Committee desires here to express its warm appreciation of the self-sacrificing spirit which has induced them to penetrate portions of the Empire hitherto almost unknown to foreigners, enduring the great hardships and privations, and braving the many dangers to which they have been exposed. It is quite safe to say that without the aid of these noble men it would have been impossible to have brought foreign charity to bear upon the terrible calamity, and in the history of Mission labour in the East, this great work will stand without a parallel.

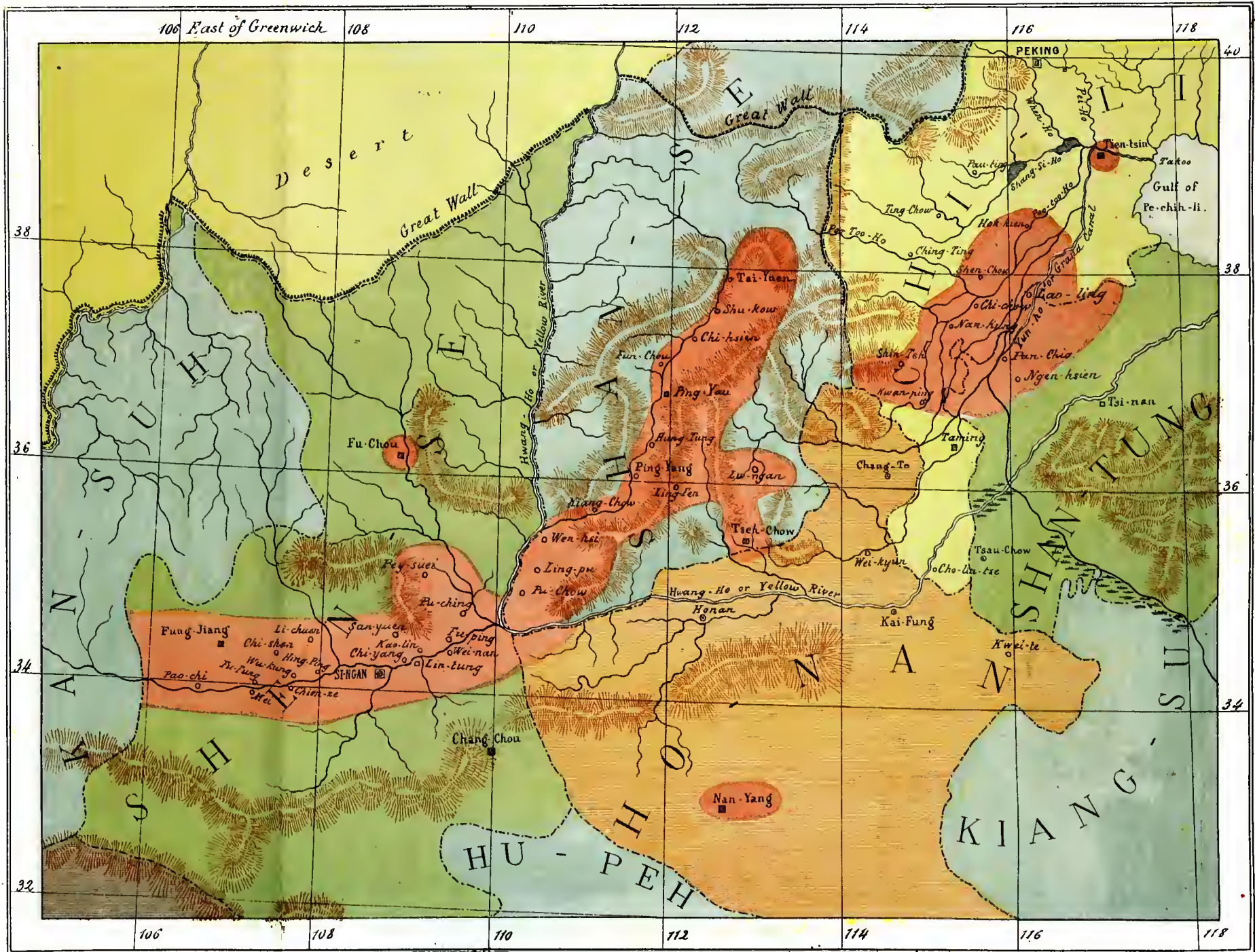
The accompanying report on the famine and the steps taken by the Shanghai Committee to assist in relieving it has been drawn up by the Honorary Secretary, the Rev. W. Muirhead, of the London Mission; but the record would be incomplete without mentioning the leading part which he has had in the work, and the Committee wishes to bear witness that to his great zeal and untiring efforts is largely due the success met with in raising funds and arranging for their satisfactory distribution.

Thanks are also due to F. W. Lemarchand, Esq., the Honorary Treasurer of the Committee, for his kind and efficient services in connection with the work.

W. S. WETMORE,
*Chairman of the China Famine
Relief Committee, Shanghai.*

Shanghai, 26th August, 1879.

MAP OF THE AREA OVER WHICH THE FAMINE RELIEF WAS DISTRIBUTED.



URELICH & CO LITH. SHANGHAI.

NOTE. The Area over which the Famine Relief has been distributed is shown by Red color.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

OF THE

China Famine Relief Fund.



I.—GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

It is now regarded as highly appropriate that some account should be furnished by the China Famine Relief Committee, of the work in which they have been engaged, the present appearance of things, and the prospect before them in the future. Issue of Famine Report.

There is a large amount of correspondence in hand on the subject, and such a variety of material to be digested and arranged, as to render it no easy task to place it in order, and determine the precise form it should take, or the limit that should be given to it. Materials on hand.

The length of time and the vast area over which the famine has extended, the dreadful sufferings that have been endured, the efforts made for their alleviation, and the noble minded liberality that has been displayed, all suggest a careful and minute consideration of the subject. Besides this, there are various circumstances accounting for the famine or intensifying its severity, the bearing of the Government in regard to it, the part it has taken in concert with the people at large, to mitigate the terrible calamity, and the probable effects of the whole on the social condition of the people, which may well come under review on an occasion like this, as elements included in the thorough investigation of the matter before us. Points to be considered.

It seems hardly sufficient to give only a few brief details of the rise and progress of the work carried on by the Committee, and those associated with them in the actual conduct of it. The thing itself is of such deep and thrilling interest, and so far reaching in Importance and bearing of the subject.

its relations and consequences, that the present opportunity calls for some adequate representation of the facts of the case, which shall be a fitting memorial of the "Great Famine" on the one hand, and a record of what has been done in the work of relief on the other. We have not simply to acknowledge the exceeding kindness of those who have contributed to the fund, and assure them of the vast amount of good it has been the means of effecting; but as this report will fall into the hands of many of the native authorities and others, it is desirable in this way to allay, if possible, any prejudices that may exist in their minds in relation to the work. It is to be regretted that such prejudices should exist in any degree, but it is only too well known that this is the case, and it has been the source of trouble and annoyance on the part of not a few. Happily there are some notable exceptions on the other side, as, for instance, in the case of H. E. Li, the Viceroy of Chihli, and Tsêng, the Governor of Shansi, whose name and influence have been of great advantage in carrying on the work. Had it not been for them, there is reason to fear the work would have been hindered, as it was in other places beyond their jurisdiction. Once and again have they written in high commendation of what was done, and thankfully acknowledged it in behalf of the recipients. We must also include H. E. Kwo, the late Chinese Ambassador to England, who in an official letter to the Marquis of Salisbury, expressed the warmest sentiments of gratitude to the contributors, and desired him to inform them to this effect.*

Difficulties at the
outset of the work

We have been led to take note of this, from the manner in which our distributors have sometimes been received at the outset of their labours. From the fact of their being foreigners, they incurred a degree of prejudice and suspicion, which utterly frustrated any attempt to prosecute the work. They were supposed to have sinister objects in view, and not only was their charity refused, but they were even in imminent danger of their lives. It required the utmost carefulness on their part to carry on their operations with any degree of success. They were urged to act in a way that contemplated only the speedy exhaustion of their funds and their evacuation of the place. So far as we can ascertain, however, the distributors conducted themselves in a most commendable manner, and after a time at least bore down the ill will and aspersions of all classes, changing their sentiments and feelings of doubt and distrust into those of the deepest gratitude and respect, so that they are now

* Appendix I.

regarded as the very saviours of the people. They may well contemplate this as no small reward of their noble and self-denying labours.

The manner in which their labours were carried on is deserving of special mention. The plan generally followed was (1) to procure from the authorities or elders of the place a list or register of the persons chiefly in need; and (2) afterwards to visit them at their own homes, so as to ascertain their actual condition; and then, to resolve on the amount of assistance to be given to each. This course was adopted mainly in the country towns and villages, where the greatest necessity existed. The cities were not in such abject destitution, as it was always possible to get supplies there. While the houses were being canvassed and minute inquiries made as to the circumstances and wants of the inmates, tickets were distributed corresponding in value to what was thought proper in each case. It was then announced that the tickets would be exchanged for cash at an appointed place, to which the recipients were invited, and so the work of distribution went on fairly and satisfactorily. It was found to be by far the best thing to give money rather than grain, as it could be utilized by the natives to greater advantage and in various ways.

But this mode of operation, though doubtless the best in the circumstances in order to avoid deception on the part of the recipients, was a laborious and perilous undertaking. The houses were in these times of famine and pestilence scenes of sad and sorrowful desolation. The dead and dying were to a large extent the occupants. Little or no vestige of life appeared in the surroundings. Barrenness and want were seen on every side, and apart from the danger, by coming in contact with such sights as were everywhere met with, and breathing the pestilential air of the neighbourhood, the whole was only fitted to shock every feeling of humanity, and excite the deepest sense, at once, of pity and disgust. The stories, too, of the solitary remnant perhaps of what was formerly a large household, which the general appearance of things amply confirmed, simply tended to aggravate the distress, and make these visits of mercy occasions of terrible trial. No wonder that the health of some of the distributors was put to a severe test, and well nigh broke down under it. No wonder, too, that some of them actually succumbed under the pressure of the work and exposure to the malaria round about. They died the martyr's death and are now held in sacred remembrance.

The miseries entailed by the famine over a vast area of country The miseries

entailed by the
famine.

and amongst millions of the people for years together, no pen can adequately describe. The story is a most affecting one. Every kind and form of suffering has been endured, personally and relatively, and in circumstances that intensified it in a manifold degree. At first, there was the hopeless sight of parching drought and blighted crops; then, the pinch of want and starvation among old and young; then, the selling of their clothes and furniture for a mere trifle; next, the relinquishment of their houses and lands and implements of husbandry on the same terms; then, parting with their wives and children, or leaving them utterly destitute, while alone or in company they removed to distant places in search of food, many of them never to return. Or it may be in the midst of the whole, one and another of the family were laid prostrate from starvation and disease, and in that state remained helpless and neglected till death gave them release. Suicide was no uncommon thing. All during this distressing scene, the sufferers, so long as they were able, were in the habit of gathering grass and weeds and other herbage they could find in the fields, which they ate either alone or along with the scanty supplies of better food they happened to get. Others betook themselves to a soft clayey slate, which for a time allayed the pangs of hunger, but had a very injurious effect upon them. Such was the course of events from day to day, and month to month, in the hamlets, villages and towns far and wide, and no prospect of relief appeared in view, while in numerous instances nearly all the inhabitants died out and desolation reigned supreme.

Emigration.

And this sad picture was not confined to the homes of the starving sufferers. On the way side hundreds were met with, from time to time, going on a weary pilgrimage to some less afflicted region. One of the distributors speaks of the road on which he was travelling as "black with fugitives," and well might he say so both from their number, and the blackened appearance of the fugitives, as an effect of the famine upon them, or of the food they had eaten. These crowds, weakened through long starvation, were in many instances unable to continue their journey, and often lay down to die, while the ravenous beasts around them either soon put an end to their lives or devoured them when life was extinct. And as if the natural severities of the famine were not enough, the very worst features of "man's inhumanity to man" prevailed in many quarters. Cannibalism was rampant. As depicted by one of the writers, bands were organized in pursuance of it, so that it was

dangerous for persons to be outside their own doors after dark, and even the remains of the dead were blocked up in their houses to prevent them being seized and eaten. The consumption of human flesh was a well known fact, and the flesh itself was openly exposed for sale. Though the practice was condemned, and in some cases punished by the authorities, the stress of the occasion seemed to render it an imperative necessity.)

The inquiry has been made as to the probable loss of life in consequence of the famine. Only an approximate idea can be formed on this point, yet there are many circumstances that will warrant a very high estimate from starvation, pestilence and other causes. The number of course differs greatly in different places, but alike the native calculation and that of the foreign distributors are agreed as to the immense depopulation that has taken place. Though many have removed to other parts and may possibly return, those statistics seem to be trustworthy which give from 6/10ths to 9/10ths of the population as having perished, and that over large areas. The destruction as a whole is stated to be from nine and a half to thirteen millions. The various documentary proofs in support of this statement will be found in the appendices at the close.

Loss of life.

It may be thought that this estimate is too high, but the concurring circumstances are only too strong to be called in question. The history of China contains many records of similar visitations, but it has been declared by the native authorities and scholars that no calamity of the kind has ever occurred to such an appalling extent. It is wholly unprecedented in magnitude and severity, and the more it is considered in all its details, the greater horror will it excite at the misery and devastation it has produced.

Unparalleled character of the present famine.

It is important to note here the extent over which the famine has prevailed. At first, large portions of the province of Shantung were affected by it, and following these, Chihli, Shansi, Shensi and Honan were subjected to its cruel ravages. Each of these provinces is as large as a European Kingdom, and contains a population variously computed at from fifteen to twenty-five millions. Not that every province was equally prostrated by the calamity, but sufficiently large sections of them all, so as to present an aspect of terrible and wide-spread distress. Besides, it was not the failure of the harvest for one or two seasons only, but for three or four years consecutively that aggravated the evil, and when no adequate provision was at hand in order to meet it.

Extent of it.

When looking over the past months, the questions are asked The action of

Government and
the people.

1. What have the Chinese Government and people done for the mitigation of the famine? 2. What means have they used to meet the wants of the sufferers? 3. Were these means at all adequate to the demand? In replying to these questions we may premise that the drought, though extending over several seasons with varied intensity, only reached its worst during the last two years. So far there had been timely warning given to the authorities, and they had an opportunity of making reasonable preparations and taking obvious precautions. It does not appear, however, that in the previous years such preparations were made, and when the calamity fell upon the land with overwhelming force, they were either paralysed by it, or were obliged to rely on extemporaneous and hastily devised efforts to meet the difficulty. The Viceroy of Chihli and the Governor of Shansi stand conspicuous in their endeavours to provide and forward supplies for the starving millions. The Imperial exchequer was opened to furnish means for the purchase of food, and private enterprise came into the field to carry it into the interior where it was most needed. In this way a vast amount of work was done to alleviate the universal misery. The roads were crowded with all sorts of conveyances bearing the precious grain, and to a casual observer it would seem as if there could be no want even in the most destitute region. While giving all credit for this outburst of energy on the part of the officials, and especially to those to whom it is chiefly due, there are serious drawbacks connected with it, which reflect in no small measure on the Government. Not only did it make no adequate provision before hand, but such was the state of the roads and such were the means of transport, that when the calamity reached its height, these were found wholly unsuited to meet the wants of the ca e. No care, no precaution had been taken in the one way or the other, and things were left greatly to right themselves, or fail utterly in accomplishing the end in view. It was to a very large extent through the assiduous and persevering energy of the two high officials above named, that things were brought in any degree to a successful issue, and while their representations to Government kept it alive to its duty, their spirit animated their subordinates in some measure to act accordingly. The Peking Gazette contains many memorials from them, which show their deep and earnest interest in the work of famine relief. Had all the officials high and low been men of like character, the results would have been far more satisfactory than they were. But they could not achieve impossibilities. The remedies they proposed

were not all acceptable at head quarters, and so they were compelled to do the best they could,—bad roads, wretched conveyances and insufficient supplies notwithstanding. On the other hand, the men in charge of the working departments were in instances not a few shamefully corrupt, appropriating for their own advantage no small amount of what was intended for the relief of the sufferers. Some of these met with condign punishment.

But though the Government was unequal to the emergency, it Native efforts. is not altogether to be blamed. The gravity of the distress was such as might well paralyse states far more advanced in civilization and resources; and we may here call to mind the late Indian famine, which in spite of all our appliances, not only proved a severe strain on the Imperial revenues, but was very inadequately met, and was the occasion of a terrible loss of life. China is differently situated, and must be judged from a different stand-point. Whether in relation to the Government or the people generally, very large sums were raised at their instance in behalf of the famine districts. The Government in addition to the ordinary means of supply, resorted to the sale of public offices and honorary rank, which were eagerly sought after, and so tens and hundreds of thousands of taels were furnished on account of the fund. Whole towns and cities were also canvassed in the various provinces, both by official order and private individuals. New taxes were imposed and voluntary benevolence from all classes was poured into the treasury, and in this way an immense amount was collected and distributed either by the authorities or by persons appointed for the purpose. The Chinese, it must be acknowledged, are ready and liberal contributors to charitable objects, and in the case before us they have not been backward. They had a keen appreciation of its urgency and importance, and though repeated calls were made on them, they still continued to give. Our efforts in the same direction were often highly commended by them, and a very considerable portion of our funds was raised amongst them, in expression of their approval of the scheme, and their confidence in the use we made of the money.

In relation to our funds, an ample statement of the means of Our funds and their distribution. collection, the amount raised, and the plan of distribution in the various famine fields, will appear in a subsequent part of this report. We only mention that the amount has far exceeded our most sanguine expectations both at home and abroad. At home, the liberality of friends in certain quarters has been most gratifying, owing in no small measure to the active steps taken by those who

felt a warm interest in China. Even in England, however, more would have been done had not other urgent claims pressed upon the public sympathy at the same time. Abroad, it was hardly to be expected that a repetition of the appeal made in the previous year would be equally successful. To our surprise however, it has far surpassed the mark then attained. Notwithstanding the great depression of trade, the generosity thus shown on the part of foreigners towards the starving millions of this country has been most striking, and may well excite the admiration and gratitude of all classes. It has come to us from the outports of China, Japan, Hongkong, the Straits Settlements, India and the Colonies, and it has been a pleasant duty to acknowledge such noble-minded benefactions. We are happy to say, too, that the means availed of for distribution have been in every way satisfactory. Catholic and Protestant Missionaries and others, have heartily entered into the work; and at many different points they have ministered to the necessities of the people, and saved the lives of tens of thousands. They deserve well at our hands, but they undertook the work without fee or reward, only with a view to allay the miseries of the perishing multitudes, and they did it in a most effectual way and on an extensive scale.

Questions proposed to the distributors for information.

In order to obtain the greatest possible information with regard to the famine, and the working out, as well as the results, of the relief, a series of questions was drawn up by Mr. Forrest, H.M. Consul at Tientsin, and Chairman of the Committee there, who has all along shown a deep interest in the matter, and has done good and valuable service in connection with it. These questions were sent to the various distributors, who were asked to reply to them, stating in detail their experience and observations in the course of the work. The answers thus given furnish a body of useful information, and in some instances of great importance, as showing particulars of the famine and of the relief that might not otherwise have come before the public eye. We shall insert some extracts from them at the close.

Appearance and prospects of the famine.

The present appearance and prospects of the famine may be briefly noticed. About the middle of last year, intimation was given that there was every likelihood of an abatement of the calamity by a timely fall of rain in some places, and a partial crop being raised. These hopes were to a certain extent realized, but it was found necessary to continue our relief efforts till autumn, when a more general harvest was expected. At that time it seemed that

a large portion of the famine field had been sown and yielded a good return. Other parts, however, were deluged with rain and injured by an excess of snow, forming a grievous disappointment to the people. Many districts also remained uncultivated from the death or absence of the owners, or their inability to attend to them. Thus the matter went on during the winter months, the distributors in the meanwhile continuing their efforts on as large a scale as possible, with a view to assist the farmers and others to sow their fields and prepare for the spring harvest. Progress was made in various districts, and the expectation was general that the famine was practically at an end, in spite of the severe suffering that would of necessity remain for a long time to come. As the spring advanced, rumours were current that while rain had fallen in a number of places, it was deficient or altogether withheld elsewhere, and the gravest fears were entertained that there would be a recurrence of the calamity. The latest intelligence seems to bear out this opinion, and large districts which were particularly well spoken of as yielding magnificent promise are now described as parched and hardened from the effects of drought. The crops were withering, and the people were full of apprehension that their distress was about to be repeated. There will, in that case, be a less aggravation of the evil, so far as the extent of it is concerned, but when the experience of the past four years, and the weakened and desolate condition of the remaining inhabitants, are considered, it can only be that a recurrence of the calamity will produce the direst results. It is to be hoped that the indications of rain by the last accounts will be verified, that the crops sown will be recovered, and that the people who have been so long scattered and peeled will not altogether perish from the face of the earth.

A few closing words here in regard to the whole circumstances of the famine, the intermediate causes of it, the means proposed or likely to be adopted for the prevention or mitigation of it in future, the duty of the Government on this ground, and the probable results of the foreign relief that has been so wisely and munificently administered. How may these points be best tested and ascertained? The history of China contains many details of preceding famines, but as has been already remarked, the one now under consideration will fall to be described in most appalling terms.* The primary cause of famine must doubtless be traced to the All-wise and Supreme

Various concluding considerations

* See *N-China Herald* Oct. 25 1877. Also Droughts in China by A. Hosie, M.A. in the *Journal of North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, for 1878.

Ruler of the Universe, whatever may be said of the ordinary laws of nature and the occurrence of drought, blight or other agencies. At the same time these agencies or their action may be entailed or intensified, and even modified by human instrumentality. The course and operation of aerial currents may be considered as elements that have to do in the production of drought and famine, and from their being in some degree foreseen may be taken as warnings for timely preparation. But unless regarded and used accordingly, as is to be feared will not be the case in China, all previous information will be of little avail. Again, the denudation of forests and the consequent desiccation of the soil are a well-known occasion of the calamity now before us. China as well as other countries is grievously at fault in this respect, and the authorities and people might well learn lessons on the point from the painful experience through which they have lately passed. The prevention of the course they have hitherto pursued, and the scientific development of their coal mines, as a substitute for the reckless destruction of their forests, would be fraught with the happiest results in the line we are now considering. The silting up of many of their rivers and streams through sheer neglect, and thereby arresting the process of irrigation, is another pregnant cause of the evil in question. Above all, however, there are the roads and means of communication with the interior, where the famine has most severely prevailed. These demand improvement at once, that in the case of another calamity of the kind, supplies from the sea-coast and the surrounding country may more readily be obtained. Such things have been pressed upon the High Authorities, but as yet without success. Still we are inclined to hope that in course of time and the progress of enlightenment, the matter will be forced upon them, and they will rise to the necessity and adoption of a new order of things. Certainly a change is required in the councils of the Empire and in the march of civilization. There may be cause for anxiety as to the physical condition of the North of China, as some people imagine from the prevalence of drought and the desiccation and barrenness of the soil, at all events every precaution should be used for the prevention and mitigation of the terrible calamity from which it has so long suffered.

As to the people, we understand they have been crushed in spirit and bowed to the very dust under the baleful influence of want and starvation. There seems to be no disposition on their part to rise and rebel, but on the contrary they are crying for rest.

They are still craving food, and however attached to their own homesteads, it may be that if the famine continues to press upon them, emigration on a large scale will be found necessary as an Imperial measure and for the very existence of the people.

The effect of our relief work has been beneficial in a high degree. Not only has it relieved the sufferings and prolonged the lives of multitudes, but we understand a very happy change has taken place in many quarters in the sentiments and feelings of the people towards the distributors. Instead of their being repelled as foreigners and enemies, or looked upon with doubt and suspicion, they are regarded as their best friends and welcomed accordingly. And this is the case not only on the part of the recipients of their charity, but of others who stood in no need of it, while they were the witnesses of the disinterested and magnanimous kindness shown their neighbours and friends in the time of distress. Opportunity is thus given to the distributors, as they continue their various labours among them, to exert a happy influence for the future. In this way they may not only initiate and augment a more kindly feeling than has hitherto existed between foreigners and natives, and establish better relations alike with the authorities and the common people, but may lay the foundation of far greater progress in the work to which they are devoted.

II.—HISTORY OF THE WORK.

In the autumn of 1876, letters were received from the Rev. Timothy Richard, Chefoo, stating that a famine was prevailing in the interior of the province of Shantung, and imploring help in behalf of the sufferers. The result was that a Committee was formed for the purpose of raising funds. The foreign settlements were canvassed and the outports were written to, by which means the sum of Tls. 30,361.65 was collected, and from time to time forwarded to a Committee in Chefoo, for distribution in the interior. Several Missionary gentlemen kindly undertook the work at various points, and continued their operations till the summer of 1877, when it was believed the famine was at an end. A report of the whole was published in the *North-China Herald*, and *Celestial Empire* of July 28th, 1877.

The Famine in
Shansi.

A few months after this, it was intimated that a still more severe famine was prevailing in the province of Shansi, and that there was the most urgent need for assistance. Appeals were sent by the Missionaries in Peking for pecuniary aid from America and Great Britain. The Rev. Mr. Richard, who had been so active and useful in Shantung, also wrote that he had made arrangements to proceed to Shansi, with a view to relieve the sufferers there, and hoping that he would be assisted by the Committee as he had been in the previous case. The rumours in circulation on the subject of the famine fully confirmed the impression as to the sad state of things, but action was postponed until letters were received from the scene of suffering. These came to hand in the first place from the Rev. A. Aymeri, *Procureur des Lazaristes*, reporting the news he had obtained from the Catholic Missionaries in the North, and from the Rev. T. Richard who had reached Tai-yuen fu, the Capital of Shansi, after a laborious overland journey from Ching-chow fu, in Shantung. These were published in the *North-China Herald* and *Celestial Empire* of date January 31st, 1878.*

Formation of the
China Famine Re-
lief Committee in
Shanghai.

On the receipt of these letters, a meeting was called on the 26th January, of the gentlemen chiefly composing the former Committee, with others that were added to their number, when the subject of the famine was taken into consideration, and it was then resolved to reorganize the Committee, which had ceased to act at the close of the previous famine. The members of the new Committee were G. B. Glover Esq., Chairman, J. W. Lamarchand Esq., Treasurer, The Very Rev. Dean Butcher, Rev. Dr. Nelson, Rev. E. R. Palmer, Messrs. Wood, Gubbay, Forbes, Hühbe, Wetmore, Hennequin and Dr. Johnston, Rev. W. Muirhead, Honorary Secretary. F. B. Johnson Esq., was subsequently added to the list. It was further resolved that the plan of canvassing the settlements and writing to the outports, Japan, &c., adopted on the previous occasion should be followed in this instance. The Rev. M. Aymeri was desired to co-operate with Mr. Hennequin in the French Concession, which he afterwards consented to do. It was also determined that telegraphic appeals should be sent to England and America, and the following was drafted for the purpose. "Appalling famine raging throughout four provinces North-China. Nine millions people reported destitute. Children daily sold in markets for food. Foreign relief Committee appeals to America and England

* Appendix 2.

for assistance. Request you form London (or American) Committee, collect funds and deposit Agra (or Hongkong) Bank." These appeals were appointed to be sent to Sir Rutherford Alcock, K.C.B. London, and A. A. Low, Esq., New York. Messrs. Glover and Forbes were also requested to call upon Mr. Davenport, H.M. Consul, and General Stahel, U.S. Vice-consul General, to obtain their official signatures to the telegrams, which were readily granted, and they were duly forwarded. Letters were likewise written to Sir R. Alcock and Mr. Low stating at full length the circumstances of the case.

In answer to these appeals, a Committee was formed in London under the Presidency of Sir R. Alcock, and with Rev. Arnold Foster B.A., as Honorary Secretary. This Committee acted most efficiently in behalf of the object during the year, and was successful in awakening an interest in the object and raising liberal contributions to the general fund. This was chiefly done through the untiring efforts of its esteemed Secretary, who had recently returned from China, after visiting a portion of the famine districts with a view to inform himself as to the state of matters. He exerted himself nobly in organizing Committees and holding public meetings in Manchester, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dublin and other places and we have much pleasure in confirming the high appreciation of his labours as expressed in the report of the London Committee.*

Formation of London Committee.

Much difficulty was found in doing anything for the object in the United States. Efforts were also made to obtain the balance of the so-called "Chinese indemnity" now in the hands of the Government in Washington. The intention was to make use of it under a Foreign Commission, in connection with the Chinese Authorities for use and distribution among the starving sufferers, in the way of alleviating their present distress, rebuilding their dismantled houses, redeeming their farming implements from pawn, or purchasing new ones. It was not possible, however, to move the United States Congress with respect to the Indemnity money, and little was done beyond the contributions of a few friends interested in the object. Among these Dr. S. Wells Williams for many years U.S. *charge d'affaires* at Peking, and now Professor of Chinese in New Haven may specially be mentioned. A Memorial on the subject of the Indemnity from the citizens of Newhaven was addressed to the House of Congress, which will be found in the Appendix.†

The United States

* Appendix 15.

† Appendix 3.

Formation of
Committee at
Tientsin.

Meanwhile the reports from the North continued to be of the most distressing kind. The Catholic Missionaries were engaged in various parts of the afflicted provinces, and Mr. Richard was alone in T'ai-yuen fu. On the 7th March, a meeting of the Committee was held to consider the progress and appropriation of the funds. It was then resolved to write Mr. Forrest, H.M. Consul and Mr. Detring Commissioner of Customs, at Tientsin, to request the formation of a Committee there, to consist of themselves as joint Chairmen, Mr. Denny U.S. Consul, with a merchant and a representative of each of the Protestant missions, who should receive monies from the Committee at this place, and forward them to Shansi in the best way possible. At this meeting three gentlemen were present, namely, the Rev. David Hill, of the English Wesleyan Mission at Hankow, the Rev. Albert Whiting, of the American Presbyterian Mission at Nanking, and Mr. Joshua Turner, of the China Inland Mission, who had already traversed a considerable portion of the famine field, and whose account of the journey was published in the *Celestial Empire*, of February 7th, 1878.* They expressed a desire to proceed to Shansi on the relief work, and the Committee assured them of their high satisfaction at their offer of help, and heartily wished them every success. It was mentioned as desirable that they should act in concert with Mr. Richard whom the Committee regarded as their chief representative in the matter, and in whom they placed every confidence. The above gentlemen stated it was their intention to do so, and they only wished to be of service in view of the necessities of the case. They would proceed North at their own expense and by the first steamer.

Offer of service
from Messrs Hill,
Whiting & Turner

In due time letters were received from Tientsin to the effect that the Committee had been formed there, and would be glad to co-operate in the work of relief. The same thing was done in Peking, but it was found that there was not the same necessity for a Committee at the Capital as at Tientsin.

Their departure
for T'ai yuen and
the death of Mr.
Whiting.

On the arrival of Messrs. Hill, Whiting and Turner at Tientsin, they were greatly helped in their arrangements by the Committee and by H. E., the Viceroy. They proceeded to T'ai-yuen fu, which they reached without trouble. Shortly after, Mr. Whiting was seized with typhus fever, then prevalent in the country, and he died. The Governor showed great kindness on the occasion, and offered to defray the expense of the removal of the remains to

* Do. 4.

America, but as Mr. Whiting's friends did not wish the step to be taken, a piece of ground was granted for a cemetery instead.

Hitherto Mr. Richard had many difficulties to contend with, Mr. Richard's difficulties. which greatly impeded his relief work. The Authorities desired him to confine his labours to a limited field. They feared an extension of them to a distance as likely to occasion trouble among the people, and proposed various schemes for the distribution of the money in his possession. He waited till the proper time came, when he saw his way to take action. Gradually the prejudice and fears of those round about him subsided, and he was at liberty to adopt his own course with the full concurrence of the authorities, and a gratuitous offer of help in addition. His prudence and tact had happily convinced them of the purity of his motives and the greater efficiency of his mode of working, arrived at as the result of his experience in Shantung. He had some time previously visited the prefectural city of Ping-yang, about 600 *li* to the South of T'ai-yuen, and his itinerary had been forwarded to us, revealing to us in what he had seen on the way the terrible reality of things.* It seemed desirable that that city should be occupied, and the surrounding country relieved by all possible means. The Southern part of the province had suffered most from the famine, and the opportunity was now given to enter on the relief work there. Messrs. Hill and Turner readily engaged to go, and an important branch of the Mission was thus commenced.

The funds of the Committee were happily increasing. They were pouring in liberally, and so the means were at hand for prosecuting the work on a large scale. Catholics and Protestants were alike assisted, and as the famine was found to extend over wide areas and far distant parts, the distributors located there were enabled to occupy a great portion of the field. At the outset, it was the province of Shansi that specially demanded attention, and it has borne this characteristic throughout, as the very centre and culmination of the famine. But it was soon reported that the S.E., of Chihli and N.W., of Shantung were also suffering severely, and as they were more accessible than the remote districts of Shansi, it was suggested that we should rather confine our efforts to these places, where the funds could be more easily and economically distributed. It was at the same time urged by the Committee that the area of distribution should be limited, in order to give real and permanent relief, instead of ranging over a wide field and with only temporary advantage.

The extension of the work to Chihli and Shantung.

* Ap pendix. 5.—

This plan was strongly pressed upon the distributors, and we have every satisfaction in knowing it was attended to as well and as wisely as possible. While aiming at this however, it was happily found not to be necessary to limit our efforts to the nearer districts of Chihli and Shantung, into which the missionaries and others had entered most heartily for the purposes of relief, but the more distant field and by far the most in need, and the one for which the work was primarily undertaken, was also well provided for, through the liberality of the contributors, and the excellent arrangements that were made for the purpose.

As illustrating the state of things in Chihli and Shantung, we refer to two letters on the subject from the Rev. Jonathan Lees and the Rev. John Innocent, of Tientsin.*

Memorial of the
Governor of Ho-
nan.

While these and like communications were coming to hand, all reporting a most distressing aspect of affairs, the Peking Gazette was no less loud in its lamentations. The Government was thus being roused from its apathy by the earnest remonstrances of its advisers, who were in the very midst of the suffering, and urged to exert itself in every possible way for the perishing multitudes. Harrowing details are contained in many of these memorials, from one of which we quote at length. It is from the Governor of Honan, under date March 15th, and so describes another portion of the field that has not yet been adverted to. It says,—“The drought with which the province has been visited for several years in succession has resulted in a famine, the like of which for intensity and extent has never yet been known. As autumn advanced into winter, the number of those in need of relief was daily on the increase, until they could at last be counted by millions. The lower classes were first affected and soon disappeared, or dispersed in search of subsistence elsewhere. Now, the famine has attacked the wealthy and well-to-do, who find themselves reduced to greater straits, as each day goes by, and they in their turn are dying off, or following those who have already disappeared. In the earlier part of the distress, the living fed upon the bodies of the dead; next, the strong devoured the weak; and now, the general distitution has arrived at such a climax that men devour those of their own flesh and blood. History contains no record of so terrible and distressing a state of things, and if prompt measures of relief be not instituted, the whole region must become depopulated. With so terrible a spectacle before their eyes, the memorialists are filled

* Appendix. 6.

with burning impatience and intense vexation of spirit. Local sources of supply are entirely exhausted; the granaries are empty; the treasury drained dry; taxation has ceased, and not a *cash* of revenue is coming in, while the few wealthy people the province contains have helped with contributions and loans till they are utterly impoverished." As if to confirm this melancholy report, a letter was received about the same time from Mgr. Louis Monagatta, Bishop of Shansi under date March 27th. It states that "up to the present time the people contented themselves with eating those who had died, but now they kill the living in order to have them for food. Husbands eat their wives. Parents eat their sons and daughters, and children eat their parents. These things we hear of almost every day." In connection with this letter there was a list of many cities and towns, the original number of their inhabitants, and the estimate of those who died from starvation. The estimate is a startling one, and the details cannot be read without feelings of horror at the terrible loss of life, the sufferings endured, and the atrocities committed on the occasion.

Letter from the
Bishop of Shansi

In reference to Honan depicted in such affecting terms by the Governor, the Committee was enabled in part to meet its wants through the Catholic Missionaries in Nan-yang fu, and also in the case of Shansi, both at the instance of Rev. A. Aymeri of Shanghai. At a later period Messrs. Clark and Taylor of the China Inland Mission went to K'ai-fung fu for relief work, but were summarily ordered out of the city, and not allowed to go to any other part of the province. Later still, the Rev. Canon Scott and Mr. Capel of the S.P.G. Mission at Chefoo went thither, but were not permitted to remain or do anything in the way of relief. The officials and populace of that city are notoriously opposed to foreigners, and offensive placards were circulated against the distributors, and threats made that if they did not leave, their lives would be in danger. In contrast to this, a very striking pamphlet was issued on the famine in Honan. It contained twelve illustrations, with appropriate letter press, and the purport of it was to show the dreadful sufferings of the people there. Starting from the tearing down of their houses to sell the materials for food, it describes their gathering the refuse of the fields, the parting with their lands and children, and the scattering of the families hither and thither in search of the means of subsistence. The cutting of human flesh from the dead body is illustrated as being done by figures already reduced to skeletons. The authorities are also represented as

Relief work in
Honan.

Honan pamphlet
on the famine.

deeply affected, while declaring it impossible for them or His Imperial Majesty to aid the prostrate suppliants, and the whole closes by an earnest appeal to the wealthy and well-to-do to help in the hour of distress, assuring them if they do so, the god will reward their benevolent actions. The pamphlet was largely circulated in various parts of this province, and the illustrations were hung up on boards in different places in Shanghai, in order to induce the natives to contribute to the fund. Copies of the book were sent to England, and a translation of the Chinese letter press was made by the Rev. Dr. Legge, while the figures were recut in a more handsome form.

Imperial Decree.

Allusion has been made to the action of Government, and it may be interesting to place on record here the sentiments of the Throne on the subject of the famine, as published in the *Gazette* of the 22nd March.* It is altogether a remarkable document, yet by no means singular in its character, as emanating from such a source. Similar papers are common in Chinese history, on the occasion of important events or at critical times. Still the document is a striking one in its application to Heaven as the Supreme Power, and to the views and feelings of the governing authority in the state. Judging simply from it, we might suppose the Chinese government is wonderfully good, reverential and beneficent, and certainly the theory is there in an almost perfect form, whatever be the bearing of it in practice. In the same line we meet with many recommendations from high officers and others as to what should be done in the circumstances, and always showing an urgent desire that His Majesty or the Empresses should maintain a waiting, reverential attitude towards Heaven, in order to secure the Divine favour and the removal of the terrible calamity which is regarded as a sign of the Supreme displeasure.

In the *North China Herald* of 11th May, there are two letters from the Roman Catholic Bishops, of Shensi and Honan, disclosing the horrible condition of things in their Vicariates, and one from a Catholic Priest, in Chefoo, in relation to some parts of Shantung. These may well be included in our review.†

Pestilence and
Death.

As a never-failing consequence of famine, pestilence in various forms comes in to aggravate the misery of the victims, and this was terribly the case in these distracted provinces. Typhus, or typhoid, and dysentery, prevailed to a frightful extent, carried off thousands who had already passed through the weakening stages

* Appendix. 7.

† Do. 8.

of starvation. The air was poisoned and infection was rife. One of the distributors, Mr. Whiting, has already been mentioned, died from fever, on the 25th April, just as he entered on his field of labour. News was also received of the death of the Rev. W. N. Hall, of the English Methodist Mission, at Tientsin. His wife was first taken ill of the disease, and while she was in a state of unconsciousness, her husband died of it. He was a man held in high esteem by the community, and had done good Missionary service during his 18 years residence in China. He took a deep interest in the working of the Famine Committee, and his death was lamented by all. It occurred on the 14th May. On the 25th of the same month, the Rev. John Barradale, of the London Mission, at Tientsin, also died of fever. He was in the country engaged in relief work, when he was seized with it, and was brought home by his servant in unconscious state, and expired in a few days. A short time previously, his wife was attacked in the same way and died. His eldest child had also deceased, yet notwithstanding these heavy trials he persevered in his generous labours, till he too was laid low in death. Several of the Roman Catholic Missionaries and Sisters died in a similar manner, and others of their number as well as of the Protestants suffered severely from the prevailing epidemic.

On the 28th May, a series of letters from various distributors was published in the *Celestial Empire*, detailing the vast amount of zeal and effective work that was being done in their respective fields, and showing the conscientious care and labour they took in the distribution of relief.*

A meeting of Committee was held on the 18th June, at which Mr. Forrest, Chairman of the Committee at Tientsin, was present, who gave many interesting accounts of the state of things in the North. The work of distribution was efficiently organized and diligently carried on. The Government too was sending thousands of tons of food into the interior, and otherwise actively endeavouring to meet the necessities of the case. If the crop of millet looked for in October was satisfactory, it would in a great measure bring the famine to an end. The soil round Tientsin for 120 *li* was desiccated to the depth of 7 feet, and below that there was nothing but salt earth abounding in nitrate of soda. It was said to be admitted by Government that only $\frac{2}{8}$ of the original population remain in Honan, Shansi and parts of Chihli. About one-half had emi-

Meeting of Com-
mittee.

* Appendix 9.

grated to Mongolia and the South, and the remainder had died. Altogether it was believed that about 100,000 families were relieved by the foreign distributors in different places. In view of the information thus obtained, it was resolved to forward a telegram to England to the following effect. "Distress must increase till October. Hundred thousand families receiving relief. Committee trying to support them till harvest. Available means exhausted. Appeal for prompt transfer of £5,000." It was also suggested by Mr. Forrest that a series of questions should be drawn up and forwarded to each of the distributors, in order to gain information about the work, which would be useful in compiling a report on the famine. He was requested to attend to this, and give the Committee the advantage of any details he might collect.

Letters continued to pour in from different parts of the afflicted provinces, at the hands alike of the Protestant and Catholic Missionaries. They all rehearsed the same disastrous story, varying only where there was a special intensity in the sufferings of the people. We shall pass over these at present, and give the testimony of Mr. G. James Morrison, C.E. who travelled over the famine region, and wrote Mr. Wetmore, the Chairman of the Committee, on the subject. There is also the translation of a Chinese letter addressed to the Committee by the Bishop of Shansi, which, as coming from a native stand-point may be interesting. We append a document from Rev. A. H. Smith, of Tientsin, as of a striking character in the matter of description.*

Report of Mr.
Morrison.

Telegram to the
London Com-
mittee to relax
collecting.

In the course of July 1878, it was generally reported there was an improvement in the condition of things, by the beneficent fall of rain over a large area of the famine field. In view of this at a meeting of the Committee on the 24th of the month, it was resolved to telegraph to the Secretary of the London Committee as follows. "Still great distress, but crop prospects good, can relax efforts collecting." Large remittances had just been received from London in answer to the previous appeal, which sustained the Committee in the belief that ample means were at command to meet current wants, and as England had already subscribed so liberally, while other and pressing calls were then being made on the public sympathy, it seemed warrantable that this step should be taken. More-over letters were at that time to hand from Tientsin, assuring the Committee of the certainty of a good harvest, and there would be no need of the prolongation of our help to any considerable extent.

The fields of distribution were for the most part determined by the distributors, as being in the vicinity of their Missionary work, or from their having been drawn thither by the reported necessity of the case. In other instances, however, they were entered on at the urgent request of the native authorities, as, for instance, in regard to Ho-chien fu, a district several hundred li to the South of Tientsin. The Viceroy applied to the Committee there for assistance in regard to it, promising all possible help in the matter of distribution. Messrs. Morse and Farago of the Customs at that port were deputed to go there, and they were followed by Mr. Budd, of the China Inland Mission. Their account of things fully justified the necessity of the work, and a considerable sum of money was spent in that region. Difficulties arose from the dishonesty of some of the underlings, which were at once represented to the Viceroy and the offenders were punished.

Interesting communications were received in August, from the Roman Catholic Bishops of Honan and Shensi, acknowledging with the greatest thankfulness the various sums sent through Rev. A. Aymeri, and testifying to the happy results of the distribution among thousands of the people. In spite of the prevailing misery, the reports from various places continued to be of a hopeful kind from the fall of rain, and the anticipation of the autumn crops. Some parts were still in a state of drought, so as to excite serious apprehensions. In the Southern districts of Shansi, it was even said "the prospects were increasingly gloomy, and there would be occasion a few months hence to renew the appeal for relief." These varied communications were duly published in the local papers, and need not be detailed here at length. Only we give an extract from the minutes of a meeting of Committee held on the 3rd September. "Letters were also read from Mr. Forrest, in which the work of distribution was mentioned, and the likelihood of the coming harvest being a good one. The reports from Shansi were also stated to be encouraging, and no further supplies were wanted in the meantime. Heavy demands, however, would be made in the course of next winter and spring."

Mr. Richard wrote from T'ai-yuen under date 28th August, "It is time that England should be relieved, as the 'great famine' is over, and what will happen this winter and spring instead of spreading over 13 provinces, as the natives report, will be confined to a corner of one, which can easily be managed by the Government itself. As the harvest is now being gathered in, we shall rest a

Letters from the R.C. Bishops and state of the famine districts.

Minutes of Committee.

Mr. Richard on state of famine fields.

while from this work, and attend to other duties. Mr. McIlvaine (of the American Presbyterian Mission, who had volunteered for relief work, and been engaged for several months at Tseh-chow, in the South of Shansi) has already gone back to Shantung. We intend to return and commence our labours probably in October or November."

Review of matters On receiving this letter, the Secretary wrote a brief review of the state of things as then existing, intimating a temporary cessation of the work, and that a report was being prepared based on the answers that had been sent to the questions in the hands of the distributors.*

Mr. Richard's observations on Shansi, Honan and Shantung. Letters were received from Mr. Richard under date 24th September, informing the Committee "that in some of the southern parts of Shansi, in Honan, the Western Prefectures of Shantung, and all along the way he had travelled from T'ai-yuen to Tientsin, the autumn harvest was said to be better than usual. In one place two elderly men acknowledged they did not remember the Sorghum ever so cheap in that region. Last year the anxiety was where to get grain, and now the anxiety is how to get rid of it. All seem to have plenty. So the poor people are now at rest."

Inquiries on the subject and reply. Still there was considerable uncertainty as to the actual state of things in the North, from the contradictory rumours that were in circulation on the subject, bearing as they did on the action of the Committee in stopping supplies from England, and otherwise limiting their operation. Letters were accordingly addressed to Mr. Richard, their chief representative in the famine work, desiring the full expression of his opinion on the whole matter. A most satisfactory reply was received from him at Chefoo, whither he had gone for a time, and which we have pleasure in appending as one of the many vindications we were then favoured with in regard to the course we had taken. It was published in the *North-China Herald* of October, 31st.†

Mr. Richard on the aspect of affairs. Having returned to T'ai-yuen, Mr. Richard wrote on the 2nd December, an account of matters as appearing at that time. The letter is important as showing what had occurred in the interval, both in reference to the harvest and the action of the Government. The expectation as to the former had not been fully realized owing to an excessive fall of snow, the outbreak of the Yellow River and floods of rain in some parts, while drought continued in others. The enormous expense to which the Government was put in the trans-

* Appendix 11.

† Do. 12.

port of grain from the badness of the roads and the lack of suitable conveyances is strikingly shown, as well as the increasing misery of the people in consequence of these defects.*

Glancing over the *Peking Gazette*, for January, 1878, we meet with a memorial from the Viceroy of Chihli in which he gives a list of the contributions raised for Ho-chien-foo above alluded to. After a minute statement of the whole, he says "these do not include what was collected locally, and what was subscribed by foreigners." This is the only reference we have seen in the *Gazette* to our relief work. Not that any reference of the kind is sought as an acknowledgment of what has been done, only it would be of service in abating the prejudice and distrust existing in certain quarters in relation to us. The High Authorities at Peking have it in their power to express their thankfulness in common with the people, who have received so much kindness at our hands, and it were simply an act of justice and politeness to take public notice of it in the official organ of Government. The Peking Gazette.

For some months past, we were informed that the Rev. Canon Scott and Mr. Capel of Chefoo, contemplated taking part in the relief work. As soon as they could make suitable arrangements they started, and on arriving at Shansi, the Canon wrote an interesting account of their journey to the very Rev. Dean Butcher. We wish to place this document on record, as giving important details of the state of matters in different parts of the country through which they passed.† Rev. Canon Scott and Mr. Capel.

Mr. Hill having returned to his station at Ping-yang from T'ai-yuen, whither he had gone to attend on Mr. Turner, who was suffering severely from dysentery, but who had happily recovered, communicated various particulars as to the aspect of the country and the condition of things generally.‡ Mr. Hill's letter.

About the end of January, we received the report of the London Committee, which as an important record of the work done by it, we reprint in our present review of the whole proceedings.|| London Committee's Report.

On the 6th February, a meeting of the Committee was held, when it was stated that Messrs. Scott and Capel had joined Messrs. Richard and Hill at Ping-yang, where the greatest destitution prevailed; and that Mr. Hillier of H. M. Consular service had also gone thither, along with Mr. Drake of the China Inland Mission, in order to spend a few weeks in relief work. Reference was also made to the letters lately published, showing that relief will be

* Appendix 13. † Do. 14. ‡ Do. 15. || Do. 16.

required till May next, and that the distributors had been greatly helped in their work by the high officials in Shansi and Chihli. The offer of Governor Tsêng to defray the expense of removing the remains of the late Mr. Whiting to the United States was adverted to with pleasure, as affording satisfaction to the Committee and the friends of the deceased. It was stated that very liberal contributions had recently come from Melbourne and Adelaide, as well as the balance in the hands of the London Committee &c. all these had been thankfully acknowledged with the reports accompanying them.

Mr. Forrest's letter, and Governor Tsêng's communication.

Letters were received from Mr. Forrest stating that "Shansi will be all right after May next, for the amount of snow that had fallen all over North China will give enormous fertility to the soil. The Chinese Famine Commissioner had got leave of absence, and there will be no need of further efforts as far as the relief of starvation is concerned." Governor Tsêng writes to Mr. Forrest "that the repeated droughts in Shansi had reduced the agricultural population to great straits, and the money collected by the efforts of your countrymen coming in like a stream, has afforded great relief and succour. For this I tender my unbounded thanks."

Bishop of Shansi's Letter.

Early in March a letter was received under date 26th December, from Bishop Luigi di Mazzogotta, Vicar Apostolic of Shansi, in which he says that "the deplorable state of the populations in his Vicariate still continues, and that their needs were not diminishing but everyday becoming more and more intolerable." We refer for particulars to his letter at the close.* A review of all the circumstances was published in the *North-China Herald*, of 7th March, repeating the information that we had received as to the state of matters, while admitting that much suffering remained and would do so for a long time to come. Large remittances had been sent forward to Shansi, which we were assured would suffice for the purposes of ordinary relief. In the same paper of the following week, a letter appeared from Mr. Richard under date 14th February from Ping-yang, which states—"the suffering is far less than last year. I did not see any dead the whole way down (from T'ai-yuen), and it is said very few die of actual starvation. Distribution this year is not so easy, as requiring more discrimination than last year, owing to less general suffering."

Meeting of Committee.

At a Meeting of the Committee on 2nd April, the present aspect of the famine districts was considered, and the various

* Appendix 17.

documents bearing upon it were fully referred to. It seemed there was still an immense amount of suffering, and grave apprehensions were entertained as to the future, pending the timely fall of rain during the present month. Mr. Hillier, who had just returned from Shansi, was at the meeting, and was asked to give an account of his journey and of the observations he had made, which he did in a very satisfactory manner. Full particulars would appear in his report then passing through the press. A cordial vote of thanks was tendered him for his kind and useful service, which he had voluntarily undertaken. The report of Mr. Forrest, H.M. Consul at Tientsin, as the Chairman of the Committee there, was next brought forward and spoken of in terms of high commendation. It was then resolved that the two reports should be printed in the daily papers, and also in pamphlet form for general circulation, and prefaced by a brief note, that they contained the latest and fullest accounts of the famine work, while the report of the Committee should be deferred, as the work of relief was still being carried on.

Reports of Messrs
Forrest & Hillier.

On the 9th June, a meeting of the Committee was held at which H.E. Sir Thomas Wade, as a member of the London Committee, was present. It was stated that the reports of Messrs. Forrest and Hillier had been printed and largely circulated, as agreed on at the previous meeting. The matter of the Committee's report was then discussed, and it was recommended by Sir Thomas, that it should be issued as soon as possible, embodying the particulars of the formation of the Committee, the progress of the work, the manifest effects of it upon the people, and the details furnished by the letters and communications of the various distributors. The whole should be done in a form that would afford suitable material for a review in the leading journals at home, and for the satisfaction of all interested in the subject. The Committee approved of the idea, and it was resolved that the papers and documents at command should be collected and arranged for the purpose.

Meeting of Com-
mittee. Decision
as to the report of
the Committee.

The latest intelligence we have received is contained in the following. 1. A letter from Canon Scott, under date Chefoo, 7th, June. He had returned from Shansi to his field of Missionary labour, after an absence of 8 months, during which he had both seen and done much in connection with the relief work. 2. A few details published in the *North-China Herald*, of 7th inst., from Messrs. Forrest and Richard.*

Latest intelli-
gence.

* Appendix 18.

Concluding observations.

It is time to close this lengthened report, which it has been a melancholy task to compile, from the sadness and suffering suggested by it at every step. We have not included in it all the details of correspondence, but we think a sufficient amount has been laid before our readers to convey a definite idea of the state of matters in connection with the "Great Famine." The materials contained in the appendix will supply a still more complete index to the whole. Would that we could say that the famine and all its horrors, were entirely at an end! Until very recently the news to hand informed us, not only of intense misery in the case of tens of thousands, but of continued drought over wide areas, and even of new fields devastated by the same calamity. The sound of lamentation and mourning and woe seemed to be again filling the land. Happily the last intelligence is of a more hopeful kind, and it is devoutly to be wished that the rains which have fallen more or less over the whole of the famine stricken regions will lead to their recovery, and inaugurate a reign of peace and plenty among the distressed sufferers.

Accounts.

The accounts of the Honorary Treasurer in the way of receipts and expenditure are appended and will no doubt be found satisfactory. The work has been conducted in the most economical manner, requiring only a very small outlay to meet current charges.

Thanks to the distributors.

It has been thought desirable to append a summary of the reports of the distributors, along with those of Messrs. Forrest and Hillier.* These are of the highest value in forming a right estimate of the severities of the famine, and the work of relief that has been carried on. There can be only one sentiment and feeling in relation to the distributors. They have acted a noble and self-denying part. It has been at great risk to themselves. But they do not seek commendation from us. They undertook the work from higher principle, and while they have the satisfaction of having approved themselves most fully to those whom they represented in it, they have the far greater satisfaction of having engaged in a most benevolent enterprise, and of having done it in the spirit of their Divine Master, whom it was their supreme desire to serve in seeking to allay the sufferings and save the lives of their fellow-men.

Thanks to the contributors.

It is a very great pleasure on the part of the Committee to acknowledge the generosity of the contributors to the fund. Such large hearted benefaction, as they received for the purpose has been a matter alike of surprise and admiration, and as the Committee

* Appendix 19.

was called from time to time to consider the latest news from the famine field and the demands made upon them for further assistance, it was a most gratifying thing to them to be able to meet these demands from the liberal contributions with which they were favoured. They are thankful for the sympathy and help thus afforded them in the course of their work, and that they were thereby placed in circumstances to carry it on and bring it to a satisfactory conclusion.

The Committee gladly close their labours on this second occasion of a similar kind, only hoping there will be no necessity for a renewal of them in the continued distress of these famine stricken multitudes.

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT.

CONTRIBUTIONS.

<i>Great Britain.</i>			
London Telegraphic Remittances.....	<i>Tls.</i>	113,320.00	
" Sundries	"	10,042.47	
Ireland	"	31.30	
Scotland	"	108.22	
Manchester	"	729.00	
Birmingham	"	200.00	124,430.99
<hr/>			
<i>America.</i>			
Sundries.....	"	2,511.36	
New York	"	2,430.28	4,941.64
<hr/>			
<i>Canada.</i>			
Toronto	"		608.73
<hr/>			
<i>Australia.</i>			
Melbourne	"	14,676.32	
Adelaide	"	6,310.98	20,987.30
<hr/>			
<i>New Zealand.</i>			
Hanover—Dunedin	"	67.67	
Otago	"	7.94	75.61
<hr/>			
<i>Tasmania.</i>			
Northern Tasmania	"		966.69
<i>Carried forward.</i>			<u>£. 152,010.96,</u>

		Brought forward,	Tls. 152,010.96
<i>India.</i>			
Dinagepore	Tls.	63.49	
Calcutta, Kotree Sindh.....	"	586.00	
Bombay.....	"	16.08	
Lahore.....	"	9.52	675.09
<hr/>			
<i>Singapore.</i>			
Sundries	"		3,766.78
<hr/>			
<i>Penang.</i>			
Sundries	"		2,142.50
<hr/>			
<i>Hongkong.</i>			
Sundries	"		14,553.82
<hr/>			
<i>China.</i>			
Shanghai.....	Tls.	17,066.74	
Canton.....	"	2,884.18	
Foochow	"	3,367.75	
Amoy	"	1,172.65	
Swatow	"	645.15	
Ningpo.....	"	185.54	
Shaou-hing	"	149.46	
Tam-sui	"	5.00	
Formosa	"	24.05	
Tai-wan-foo	"	70.00	
Chefoo.....	"	94.18	
Newchwang	"	313.90	
Hankow	"	567.45	
Kinkiang	"	263.80	
Chinkiang	"	104.28	
I-chang	"	15.88	
Wu-chang..	"	20.00	
Haug-chow	"	117.97	
Wen-chow.....	"	1.82	
Wu-hu	"	76.35	
Yang-chow	"	31.79	
Teng-chow	"	29.16	27,207.10
<hr/>			
<i>Japan.</i>			
Nagasaki.....	"	95.20	
Kobe.....	"	1,207.75	
Yokohama and Tokio	"	2,530.48	3,833.43
<hr/>			
Balance from H'kong & Shanghai Bank }			219.46
Transferred in January, 1876. }			
<hr/>			
<i>Interest.</i>			
Interest from			
4th Sept., to 9th Oct., on Tls. ... 29,000		83.42	
9th Oct., to 11th Nov., on ,, ... 25,000		67.81	151.23
<hr/>			
Shanghai Taels.....			<u>204,560.39</u>

DISTRIBUTIONS.

<i>Drafts and Sycee Shipments to Tientsin.</i>			
Draft	Tls.	23,606.97	
Sycee Shipments	"	127,659.32	151,266.29
<hr/>			
<i>Payments.</i>			
To Rev. Aymeri	"	50,000.00	
„ Rev. Dr. Nelson	"	182.17	
„ Rev. J. W. Farnham	"	230.00	
„ Rev. Mr. Jones for orphanage at } Ching-chow-foo	} "	500.00	
„ Rev. Mr. McIlvaine, Shansi.....	"	1,032.26	51,944.48
<hr/>			
<i>Travelling Expenses.</i>			
Messrs. Clark and Taylor, expenses to } and from Honan.....	} "	59.00	
Expenses of Mr. C. Budd, Ho-chien-foo ..	"	11.50	
„ of 2 Chinese from Shansi.....	"	39.12	
„ of Rev. McIlvaine's Native } assistant in Shansi	} "	3.64	
„ of Rev. Jonathan Lees from } Tientsin to Shanghai and back.....	} "	48.00	161.26
<hr/>			
<i>Charges.</i>			
Insurance.....	"	598.94	
Freight.....	"	5.23	
Postages	"	41.30	
Newspaper and printing reports.....	"	175.99	
Telegram.....	"	336.59	
Advertising.....	"	8.15	966.20
<hr/>			
<i>Sundries.</i>			
Rodewald & Co. for supplies sent North ..	"	13.00	
Watson, Cleave & Co. \$35. a 72.90.....	"	25.52	
Cost of Sycee Boxes	"	4.09	42.61
Balance in hands of the Treasurer	"	...	179.58
<hr/>			
Shanghai Taels,.....			204,560.37
<hr/> <hr/>			

E. & O. E.
Agra Bank Limited,
Shanghai, 24th July, 1879.

THO. D. SKELLY,
Acting Hon. Treasurer.

APPENDIX.

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NO. I.—PAGE 4.

Despatch from H. E. Tsêng, Governor of Shansi, to Mr. Forrest.

“From afar I have known of your distinguished fame, and each day my thoughts have rushed forward towards you.

I have just received your letter, and by it I perceive that you have been prosperous; each season has showered its blessings upon you abundantly, at which I am much rejoiced. The merchants of your honourable country, regarding the calamity which has overtaken Shansi, have practised the most self-sacrificing virtue by collecting and bestowing relief money, which they have distributed in every direction. All this evidences their compassioun and the sincerity of their good feelings, and the pity cherished for our misfortunes. Amongst officials and people there is but one voice of gratitude, and my own thankfulness for your estimable goodness is endless. I was about to write to you to thank you, but before I had done so I read your letter, which was so complimentary that I felt ashamed. I often meet Mr. Richard and to receive him, when necessary, is merely my duty. That I should have caused you the trouble of thanking me for so small a matter makes me still more ashamed. I now reply wishing you every prosperity.”

Tai-yuen-foo, 14th May.

Communication from H. E. Li, Viceroy of Chihli.

“The Viceroy received yesterday Mr. Forrest’s communication, of the contents of which he has informed himself.

The gentry and merchants of foreign countries have subscribed large sums of money for the relief of the sufferers in the two provinces of Chihli and Shansi, and it has been the means of saving not a few from starvation.

Mr. Forrest informs the Viceroy that there is still a balance of Taels, perhaps 40,000, in hand; and that he purposes, in view of the coming winter, to take measures for its distribution in those places which have been the scenes of the greatest suffering.

The Viceroy, when he considers the continual growth of these noble acts towards the poor and starving people, is at a loss for words to express his deep-felt gratitude. He would observe that

he has distributed grain and money in *Ho-Chien-fu*, and the villages and hamlets in the neighbourhood which suffered, on several occasions; and Mr. Budd and his colleagues have also distributed relief where his (the Viceroy's) resources were insufficient. Thus the poor people have everywhere been the recipients of your truly great benevolence.

The Autumn crops, however, have turned out rich in the extreme and the price of grain has materially decreased, the means of support being no longer wanted.

The Viceroy has it in contemplation to memorialize the Throne concerning the taxes payable this autumn, and he will suggest that His Majesty may be pleased to remit the taxes for the half-year, as a special account of benevolence and pity.

When the winter sets in, the people will all have more or less of a store of grain; and the Viceroy having taken these circumstances into consideration, it appears to him that there will be no need for further relief distribution, and he therefore deems it his duty to suggest (lit. pray) that the sum of Taels 40,000 be kept in hand until a plan be hit upon [for its ultimate distribution] elsewhere.

The gentry and merchants of your country have vied with each other in good works, and without reluctance have given their money in abundance and have thus made their good feeling (towards the country) apparent. The Viceroy and the people of Chibli and Shausi are equally touched by your kindness, and the Viceroy now begs Mr. Forrest to be the means of expressing their heartfelt gratitude."

Despatch from H. E. Kwo, Chinese ambassador to England, to the Marquis of Salisbury.

CHINESE LEGATION, 45, PORTLAND PLACE,
October 14th, 1878.

MY LORD,

"I have been instructed by the Tsung-li Yamèn and the Grand Secretary Li, to request that your Lordship will have the goodness to present to the subscribers of the China Famine Fund the grateful acknowledgment of the Chinese Government for the generous alacrity with which, on hearing of the fearful calamity which had befallen the northern provinces of China, they hastened to the assistance of the suffering population.

The noble philanthropy which heard, in a far distant country, the cry of suffering and hastened to its assistance, is too signal a

recognition of the common brotherhood of humanity ever to be forgotten, and is all the more worthy of being remembered, because it was not a mere passing response to a generous emotion, but a continued effort, persevered in, until, in sending the welcome rain, Heaven gave the assuring promise of returning plenty, and the sign that the brotherly succour was no longer required.

Coming from Englishmen residing in all parts of the world, this spontaneous act of generosity made a deep impression on the Government and people of China, which cannot but have the effect of more closely cementing the friendly relations which now so happily exist between China and the Government and the people of this country. But the hand that gave also assumed the arduous duty of administering the relief; and here I would not forget to offer my grateful thanks and condolence to the families of those, and they are not a few, who nobly fell in distributing the fund.

To Englishmen in all parts of the world I beg to offer, through your Lordship, the thanks of the Government and the people of China for the generous assistance afforded by them in a time of great calamity; but I more especially desire to thank his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, Sir Thomas Wade, Sir Rutherford Alcock, the Governor of Hongkong, and the various Missionary Societies who inaugurated the China Famine Fund, supported it with their influence, and advanced it by their strenuous exertions.

Trusting that your Lordship will convey to them this acknowledgment of the Chinese Government, I beg, &c."

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NO. II.—PAGE 14.

"I reached this place on the 22nd of last month, and my intention was to visit the most destitute districts first, and then write, but now I learn that these are so many that it would take several months to go through them carefully, and to what purpose need they be seen? The famine is a fact, and the suffering on all sides is beyond description, but most of all in the southern part of the province. This is the third year (and fourth to some districts), in which crops have failed, and to add to this, the three neighbouring provinces Shansi, Honan, and Chihli have not raised sufficient grain for their own consumption, so grain has to come from distant provinces. Then there is no water communication through the province, and there is a distance of 385 *li* on the main road from Chihli to Shansi, over which laden carts cannot pass, so the grain

(one thousand piculs daily) has to be packed on mules and camels. As we came here, every load of grain we saw from Ching-chow-fu in Shantung, across Chihli, on to T'ai-yuen-fu in Shansi, (a distance of 1,500 *li*) came westwards. The price of corn now though less than it has been, is three times what it is in a good year, and more than twice what it is in an ordinary year; so after successive years of high price the masses have used up all their savings. Again, a tael of silver while it fetched 1,239 cash in T'ai-yuen-fu, and 1,100 in Ping-yao-hien, is said to be only worth 900 in Kiangchow, some allowance is to be made for different weights. When so many cases combine, you will not wonder to hear that we see men dead on the roadsides. It is not merely repeating the story of suffering you heard so often last year. Those who have bean-cake, cotton-seeds, and grass-seeds swept from the roadsides, or bark and dried leaves are considered fortunate. It is said that some try the soft clay on the riverbeds to stay the pangs of hunger. When nothing can be got, I have seen little children writhing in agony on the ground. Fortunate is he also, it is said, who can sell his wife and daughters, lest they perish before his eyes. As for house timber and land, it is said there are none to buy them at any price. Nakedness with dreary days and nights of cold and hunger are before five or six millions of people in Shansi. The Governor, who seems to have exerted himself much to relieve the famine suffering, told me that the famine in Shantung was nothing to this. There it was only partial, here it is complete. Since putting forth the proclamation, that above 70 chow hien were needing relief, 10 more have sent in petitions for aid, making the famine to extend over eighty chow hien. One of the proclamations says that no such famine has been known here for the last two hundred years. And an official from the Governor's Yamen told me that it is not known that there ever was such extensive famine in the province before.

It is some comfort to think that the province is wealthy. The gentry contribute immense sums of money. Some hien have subscriptions varying from one hundred and forty to two hundred thousand Taels each. I have the names of two merchants who have subscribed twenty-four thousand Taels each. There may be other hien and other gentry who have contributed more. But rich people do not abound in every hien, and the starving people are so numerous that in spite of magnificent contributions, many thousands (according to the smallest reckoning given) are said to be perishing daily at present, and this is not mere rumour, but what is acknowl-

edged by all who have ample opportunities of knowing the truth. Who can imagine a tithe of the untold distress and agony, these must have suffered before they died? And how many myriads there are now, while I write, in the direst distress, and will as surely die unless aid comes! When suffering is so great who can be silent? If the readers of this were only to hear their mournful cry and see their ruined houses or tottering gait, however liberally they may have helped last year, they would do none the less this year again. It is dear life we are called to give them, and what joy even that hope gives the starving man! Do let me plead most earnestly with all who can spare or share some precious bread for life-help, and be assured the utmost shall be done to give to the most needy.

TIMOTHY RICHARD.

T'ai-yuen, Dec, 8th, 1877.

"Since writing to you last I have been to Ping-yao-hien, two days journey, south of T'ai-yuen. On the road we met daily about a hundred carts returning, after sending grain southwards, and about half of these had wretched-looking women in them, who were gladly availing themselves of the only means of saving their unhappy lives. When I reached Ping Yao (平遙), I saw men carrying little girls of 8 or 9 years old in baskets for sale. One man in the same inn with me had bought two sisters and a brother (ranging from 9 to 11 years old), for nine hundred cash, and another girl of eighteen years old for eight hundred cash! And the inn servant said that the difficulty was to get anybody willing to take them away at all. He said if I would take any, a hint was enough, and a score would come in a few seconds, glad to get away for nothing. To stay at home is certain death to so many of them. Some attempt to beg their way northwards, but, unless taken up by somebody, between hunger and cold they soon perish. I saw one woman who appeared to be about 40 years old just dead on the roadside. Terrible as the suffering there is, it sinks to nothing when compared with what exists still farther south. A banker at P'ing Yao told me the people were eating children there! On the following day I said, "when you told me that people were eating children, you did not mean that they did eat them actually, only that they are forced to sell them in order to live, and thus are said to eat their children." "No, no," he said, "they lay hold of children, boil them and eat them!" Since then I have heard the same news confirmed from a Yamên in T'ai-yuen. In view of this, and the knowledge that the worst is even yet to come, the cry that is heard

on all sides here, is "what is to be done?" Without suggesting any native measures that might be taken, one cannot help once more appealing to the sympathies of kind foreigners and their Chinese friends at the ports. This was found practicable last year. It saved the lives of many thousands, and relieved the sufferings of no less than seventy thousand people, and all was done with a willing heart, as if foreigners and natives vied with each other in doing good. At first, I felt considerable hesitation in appealing again in behalf of a Chinese Famine. It seems like expecting too much from willing hearts, but when this almost unprecedented famine has succeeded the former, causing even deeper distress, and that over a far wider area, I cannot refrain from laying the people's suffering before those who are willing to help, especially as this is one of the greatest famines the present dynasty has had to contend with.

Let the reader only try to imagine. What agony must men suffer before they can lay their hands on the innocent children in order to allay the pangs of hunger; and what of hundreds of thousands on their knees lifting up their hollow cheeks and pleading for very life? Would it not be sorry comfort for them, were I to tell them it is none of my business? What I regret is that I cannot picture to you the untold sufferings of these vast multitudes, for if you were to see what I have seen, or hear all I have heard, you would not only do as much, but more than last year even. Grain is three and four times its price during a good year, and in many places cannot be sold at any price, and there are about *nine millions suffering* in these four provinces*! Is there generosity in the human heart, or any means of help at hand? Now is the time to call for it. Last year we wrote of husbands parting with wives, and parents with children in the hope of life being preserved. This severance of home ties was too much for some. I saw a woman who could not endure it, and she became mad. Here we have all that, and a far more terrible madness, making one shudder at the sight of the evil eye and ferocious appearance of starving men. I can only entreat the pity and compassion of one and all for these wretched, dying multitudes. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

TIMOTHY RICHARD.

Dec. 28th, 1877.

* Two millions in Honan, one in Shensi and Chihli together, and six in Shansi.

“CAN you, as you did last year for the sufferers of Shantung, send through the Procure of the Lazaristes, who has authority over the Catholic Missionaries of the provinces afflicted by the famine, some portion of the amount which has been obtained for those suffering from the effects of the famine.

I do not think it necessary I should give you in detail a translation from the Italian, of the horrible accounts I have received from numerous letters which have been sent to me from Shansi, Shensi, and Honan, where the famine is most general and terrible, and from Shantung, where the famine is far from having disappeared, though it is less severe there than it was last year.

These letters are truly heartrending; the people are dying, one might say, like flies; the cold, added to the failure of nourishment and fuel, leaves them nothing but yellow earth mixed with leaves of various kinds of trees, to prolong their lives for a few days. The wild fruits, collected before they are ripe, and the stalks of the millet, are all that are left them; even water has failed, and it is often necessary for the sufferers to seek it at a distance of half-a-day's journey.

The future is very terrible, for, in many parts, the want of rain will prevent the ground from producing, and in many places the people will have consumed all the grain seed before sowing time.

The letters I have received are of a nature to make me believe that the details of the famine given in the *Peking Gazette News*, are correct.

Hoping the Committee will take my request into consideration.”

A. AYMERI,

Shanghai, 23rd Jan. 1878.

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NO. III.—PAGE 15.

“To the Honorable, Senate and House Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled:—

The undersigned, citizens of New Haven, respectfully ask the attention of Congress to the present distress in the North provinces of China, caused by the failure of the usual rains during the past summer. The region over which the dearth exists, comprises parts of the four large provinces of Chihli, Shansi, Honan and Shansi, contiguous to the Yellow River, and measuring altogether not less than a hundred thousand square miles. The province of Shansi, west of Peking, is an upland region, the mountains bare of trees, no means of irrigation, and dependent on the rainfall for its annual harvests; and now this is the third season in which little or no

rain has fallen in its southern districts. The harrowing details of the extremities to which the famishing inhabitants were reduced two months ago have been reported by eye-witnesses, Protestant and Catholic missionaries, so that there can be no doubt that it is one of the most serious and widespread calamities of modern times. The Governor of Shansi reports in his appeal to Peking for aid, that between three and four millions of people are dependent on official support. In the southern part of that province there remain neither bark of trees nor wild herbs to be eaten; and the ordinary food-stuffs, grain and meats, have quite disappeared. In some places the people have been eating earth to prolong life, while husbands were selling their wives, and parents their children, to preserve, if possible, all from death. As may be readily inferred, all who were able had left their homes to seek a precarious subsistence in other provinces, and the roads were thronged with hosts of beggars.

In the midst of this sudden and tremendous woe, the Imperial Government has been more than usually alert in doing what it can to relieve its subjects, nor has private philanthropy among the people been idle; but the urgent demands for help far overpass their means to relieve them. The population of the entire region suffering from want of the usual harvest last year, is estimated at not less than 75 millions; and of this vast number of our fellow men there can hardly be less than ten millions now in a condition of utter destitution. It is inevitable, therefore, that before the winter is over, and the crops can be gathered, in next May and June, hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of the sufferers must inevitably perish; and no rhetoric can add strength to the facts which describe the sufferings endured, or the dreadful means taken to allay them.

In view of this unexpected visitation, your Memorialists respectfully represent to your Honorable Body their belief that the present call for help is one which commends itself as a national affair. In the recent famine in India, the means, skill, and power of the British Government were taxed to the utmost to save life, while private benevolence was not lacking to supplement public aid. But the Chinese Government cannot command the means, the skill, or the power, to meet this call of its distressed subjects, and it is chiefly the necessities and distresses of a common humanity which give force to this appeal for aid. A little has been done by private charity, and between \$2,000 and \$3,000 have been sent to Shanghai. It is not necessary to send out food, for there is enough in China

itself to relieve the famishing ; the funds are needed to get it to them. They can be transmitted by telegraph so as to be immediately available.

Your Memorialists also feel that they can here properly refer to the memorial on this matter presented by the citizens of New York, in which reference was made to the deposit of money now in charge of the Honorable the Secretary of State, commonly known as the surplus of the Chinese Indemnity Fund. It is well known that after all just claims had been paid from the money received from the Chinese Government for the losses sustained by American citizens in China, up to November, 1857, there remained a surplus in 1867 of about \$240,000. This was received that year in this country, and has since been continually increasing by the accrued interest.

In view of the action taken by Congress from time to time as to the final disposal of this surplus, your Memorialists beg leave to refer only to the Report of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, dated June 14th, 1870, (No. 230) presented by Mr. Sumner. In this document, the acquisition and history of the Fund are clearly stated, and the remark made at the end in respect to its ownership, is that "whatever may be our technical title to it, in conscience the money is not ours." The subsequent refusal of the House of Representatives to appropriate it to national uses, and the hesitancy of Congress to return it to the Chinese Government, lead your Memorialists to infer that Mr. Sumner's conclusion is the view still taken of its ownership by Congress. They can add nothing to the justness and cogency of his statements.

They therefore indulge the hope that your Honorable Body will not turn a deaf ear to the cry of starving multitudes now in the extremity of their suffering, but will give back the money to which the American Government cannot bring an undisputed claim. The delay in disposing of it has been a means of keeping it to a time like the present, when its distribution will relieve the misery and prolong the lives of myriads, and its reception convince the Chinese rulers and people of our sympathy with their misfortunes. Their own proverb, "All under the Heavens are brethren," will thereby receive an unexpected and cheering application, and help them the better to understand the brotherhood of nations. The force of the clause in the 29th article of the present Treaty between our two nations, that the Christian religion teaches men to do to others as they would that others should do to them, will also have for the Chinese, a new and life-giving application."

“Mr. James and I spent the greater part of last year in the province of *Shan-si*. We left Tai-yuen fu, on the 28th of November, and travelled through the South of the province, across Honan, and down the Han River, arriving here on the 22nd of this month. I feel constrained to inform you that the published reports of the famine now raging in Shansi are not exaggerated. The suffering is beyond description. It is not that a sudden calamity has burst unexpectedly upon the people with the prospect of as sudden relief. The resources of the province have been gradually exhausted. For three years no heavy rain fell and the crops were bad. Each year the distress increased and last spring people were dying of starvation. Prayer was made for rain, everyone was crying for rain. I have heard them groan out their prayers to Heaven. But no rain came and last year's crops utterly failed. Famine fever raged in many parts of the province during the Summer. In the Autumn the distress became so great that whole families committed suicide rather than face the hardships of the approaching Winter. At the present time thousands are dying for lack of food.

As we left Tai-yuen fu, we saw two men; they were dreadfully thin, miserably clad, and unable to stand alone, but clinging to each other they managed to reach the city wall, and there sit down to die; doubtless the cold wind during the night put an end to their sufferings. The next afternoon we passed through Ki-hsien, in the middle of the street lay a man who had been starved, I cannot say whether he was quite dead, for I fancied I saw his body quiver slightly as we passed by. On the following morning we passed through Ping-yao hsien, one of the most affluent cities in the province. It was early and the shops were not opened. In front of one of the richest of them lay a corpse. About an hour's journey from the city we saw the remains of a young man. The eyes had been plucked out by the birds, and the soft parts of the body had been devoured by dogs. During that day we saw similar sights. And our hearts were sickened as we heard accounts of the fearful suffering among the villages in the neighbourhood, but we were destined to be appalled by the extent of the distress as we journeyed on. The sight of dead bodies became so common that we ceased to wonder at, or to count them. Between Tai-yuen Fu and the Yellow River (about 300 miles) we saw over two hundred. In several instances there were a number of corpses lying together,—sometimes

as many as 18 or 20—evidently the remains of a band of refugees. Hungry and weak, unable to travel, they were benighted, they huddled together for warmth, but the night was too bitter, and they never rose to proceed on the weary journey. It is needless to describe particular cases. Each one had its peculiar items of special misery. Among the victims were men, women and children. Some were only just dead and their scanty clothing remained upon them, others had been stripped by beggars. Some of the corpses were perfect, but most of them were half eaten by the dogs and birds, while in other instances, only a heap of dry bones and a few rags marked the spot where several persons had died. During that journey we saw some writhing in the very agonies of death. And many more, living it is true, but with nothing whatever to eat, and no hope of being alive for many hours. Oh! it is fearful. Trade has stopped. Families have been broken up. No one can part with money. The cities are crowded with the starving. A little enquiry reveals the fact that they are dying by thousands all around. In one village we found that 28 to 30 persons died each day. We did not see so many of course, but we saw enough to convince us of the truth of the statement. The bark has been stripped from the trees and eaten. No grain has been sown. There is no grass and few roots, in fact there is nothing within reach of the poor. Some relief is being administered it is true, but these facts prove that it is quite inadequate to meet the vast needs of people. We have seen much more than my words can describe but we have only travelled along the main road which runs through the richest part of the province; we have heard of more terrible suffering in the remote and poorer districts, but I feel that what I have written is enough to convince the most sceptical that the need is real, and I refrain from writing mere reports lest I should be guilty of exaggeration. I hope to see you soon, as I shall pass through Shanghai, on my way back to Shansi; meanwhile I pray God to prosper the "relief-funds" and enable us to save some of these perishing ones."

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NO. V.—PAGE 17.

"In former letters I gave a general account of the famine in this province, taken from official records, and also some particulars of the state of things in and around the provincial capital from personal observation. It is my intention now to give some

particulars concerning the central and southern part of the province. But the region is so extensive to travel over, and the time so brief for inquiry, that the account must necessarily be very incomplete; yet I have seen and heard enough. It is said that familiarity with suffering makes one less liable to be affected by it. Familiar as many kinds of famine suffering have been to me for the last two years, this last journey south-wards made me so sick at heart, that I wished I could return with my eyes closed and ears stopped. To see and hear was painful in the extreme. I cannot write all. Some things are too horrible to be described except in general terms. But to begin:—

Jan. 28th.—Stopped at an inn.—30 *li* south. A little before starting, I saw in a street of T'ai-yuen fu a man lying on the road, about to die of starvation. Carts were blocked up and had to go round by another way.

Jan. 29th.—140 *li* S. There was a fall of an inch of snow in the night. Saw four dead on the road, and one unable to walk moving about on his hands and knees. One of the dead was a boy of about ten years old, carried by his mother on her shoulder. She was the only bearer, priest, and mourner. She laid him on the snow outside the city wall, and the last sight I got of them was she standing at some distance off on the one side, and a dog watching at some distance on the other!

Jan. 30th.—279 *li* S. Saw two dead, one apparently only just dead, and dressed in good clothes. He could not be a poor man. A few *li* further on, saw one walking like a drunken man. After passing him, I stopped and told my servant to get some *cash* out to give him. It blew a little wind, and whilst we were getting the *cash*, a puff a little stronger than the rest made him fall. To give him money then was useless, and we could not stay!

Jan. 31st.—390 *li* S. To-day saw fourteen dead on the road-side. A stocking was all the clothes one had on, and so light was the corpse that a middle-sized dog dragged it about. Two of the dead were women. They had received a burial, but it consisted in nothing more than moving them from the road and placing them with their faces downwards—that was all. Want or cupidity of the passers-by had dealt kindlier with one than the other, for they had not taken her clothes! A third was a feast to a score of crows and magpies. One man had snow over him and was untouched, a proof that he had been there, three days at least, and that no dogs or wolves could be near. Whilst the road was thus strewn with

the dead, there were plenty of pheasants fat enough close by; and a fox and a rabbit on the hill opposite where the poor women had fallen, and wild ducks in the river, appeared none the worse for the famine. Another painful contrast forced itself on me that day. A lot of magpies were making an unusual din, and some were picking up feathers. When I came up to them one of their number was dead. But how many dead men and women have I seen on the road without any weeping, except the mother over her child. Yet what most affected me that day was what an old man said on our climbing Ling-shan together. We had just passed a young man dead on the road, and then he said in the most touching manner:—"Our mules and donkeys are all eaten up, and our labourers are all dead, how is it that God lets us poor people die like this!" Saw two wolves in the twilight looking out for the dead. In one village was a notice put up that those who rob and steal shall be put to death without mercy. In another village a notice was put up that it was agreed by the villagers that should any one be "unruly," he shall be put to death without mercy. People dare not travel singly through these hills.

Feb. 1st, 450 *li* S.—Travelled half-a-day. Saw six dead, of whom four were women. One in an open shed on the road side, with only a string about her waist. Another was in a river, but the water was not deep enough to cover and freeze her over, so what was exposed was at the cruel mercy of fowls of the air. Another was half clad in rags, in one of the cave houses which open into the road. Another, half clad and half eaten. Saw what appeared to be two brothers from 15 to 18 years old, moving at the rate of old men of 80 years, each leaning heavily on his staff. Saw a young man carrying his mother on his back. She was far gone, and about to breathe her last. On seeing me observing them closely, he begged for a few *cash*, the first who did so since I left T'ai-yuen-fu. The regular beggars are all dead long ago. A few *li* further on, a woman about 40 had fallen and was trying to rise, but could not from her second knee. Saw two heads stuck up in cages, to be a warning to those who rob and steal. Saw hats and shoes here and there along the road, but no dead bodies near—perhaps all that was left between men and wolves.

Feb. 2nd, 530 *li* S.—Saw twelve dead, all stripped of their clothes, and among them one woman and two boys. At Hung-tung-hien, a group of three were lying together. They appeared to be a boy, his father, and grandfather. My servant said he saw

several more, but I only state what I saw myself. On the snow, we saw marks of a struggle and blood, but no dead body near; yet it was some justification of the warning to men not to travel singly along these narrow defiles. Two more heads hung up in cages on the trees. For many *li*, a large number of trees on both sides the road, as far as the eye could see, and on a level country, were stripped of their bark to a height of 5, 10 and 20 feet, for food. Most were elm trees. There were also groups of several houses with doors and windows open, and jars and other trifling utensils inside. Their occupants were either gone away or dead; but nothing had been touched, for they could not be turned into *cash* or bread.

As a break to this long catalogue of misery, it was delightful to see (for the snow was all thawed here) wheat very extensively sown. Though there be drought elsewhere, they have abundance of water for irrigation at this place, and they seem to make the most of it. I could see in all the villages along the road considerable quantities of straw, indicating that they had had a good crop of grain; but on inquiry I was told the crop was very promising up to the time when the ears came out, then a sudden flood and mildew destroyed their hopes, leaving them nothing but straw. This abundance of water for irrigation extended only over 30 *li*.

Feb. 3rd, 620 *li* S.—Saw seven dead—not one woman; but there was an old man with grey hairs and an infant just born. Again the trees were barked, but there was no wheat in the ground. Met cartloads of men and occasionally foot travellers. These were armed, some with a shining bright sword, some with a rusty old knife, others with spears and clubs,—all with some weapon or other; even children in their teens carried them. Some were glad to keep close to us as we were riding, though we did not feel any safer of their company. At Siang-ling-hien, 30 *li* south of P'ing-yang fu, there were two men of straw (effigies) nailed up to a wall on one side of the street. On the other, opposite, was written in large characters, "The poor people." Here we turned our faces backwards for T'ai-yuen-fu.

Feb. 4th.—In the same inn with us at P'ing-yang-fu there were some forty carts that had come from P'u-chow-fu for grain. To keep order, volunteers are enrolled and paid by the Government in that Prefecture. This was told me by one of the volunteers who accompanied the grain carts; otherwise they would be robbed. A woman at Ping-yang-fu came up to me in the street and asked me

to go into a house. On asking what for, she said there are young girls here wanting to be taken away.

Feb. 5th.—Fresh ones dead on the road since we passed south two days ago—a mother and her son in the morning. In the afternoon, at Hung-tung-hien, the dead were actually in heaps on each other. It was here we saw a group of three together a few days ago. To-day three more are heaped together, two women and a boy. On the main street there was a man dead, with the edge of a big stone between his teeth. He had nothing better to eat, so he died biting the stone! Others had been thrown into the river. One of the innkeepers asked me if I had any medicine to cure the famine fever. It commenced about the beginning of January.

Feb. 6th.—Other fresh ones on the road dead. One a young woman, another a middle aged one. I will not describe. Suffice that they had not perished from want, but had been robbed and left to perish. The one I saw a few days ago on her knees was now dead about a hundred yards off. Saw two men grinding something very dark. I went up to them. It was millet husks mixed with old cotton from ragged garments. As coal rises in price, house timber is in demand, and people are now pulling down their houses and splitting the wood for fuel.

Feb. 7th.—This day was the worst of all. We saw abundant proofs of men eating clay or stone. I bought three stone-cakes. The stone is the same as our soft stone pencils. This is pounded to dust and mixed with millet husks, in greater or less proportions, according to the poverty of the people, and then baked. It does not look bad, but tastes like what it is—dust. The dead to-day number more than on any previous day. We did not reckon them in returning, but seeing so many fresh ones, we counted them again this afternoon. They were no less than twenty-nine in 55 *li*! from Ling-shi-hien northwards. And the circumstances were more frightful too. In one valley the road branched into two, and you may take either side of the stream. Without thinking of it, I took one and my servant another. We were within sight of each other, though not at talking distance, and it was only after 5 *li* that the roads united again. On his road, the servant saw a woman lying in a ditch after being robbed of all she had, like many others. Although not conscious of any one passing by, yet she moved! Further on we saw a man's head cut clean off his body—a cruel murderer's deed. We saw also among the dead some wounded heads, not in such a way as we usually saw done by wolves, dogs

and birds. Even the dogs were getting savage; they barked and howled at us when we were driving them away from the dead. Many of the corpses we had formerly seen had disappeared, but their places were more than supplied by fresh ones. I need not say that we were terribly sick of this horrible journey. If we could have given relief wherever we went, it would have been a high gratification; but as it was, such scenes as I have not half described, and such tales as I cannot venture to do more than hint at, repeated daily, and several times in the day, too, made me afraid almost to mention the subject. It was like re-opening a painful wound to me, and how much more to the poor people themselves. After being away fourteen days, I reached T'ai-yuen-fu in safety on the 10th.

The above is what I saw. Now I have to give a briefer account of what I heard. Not that I heard less indeed, but I am sure no one cares to read much more of such terrible suffering. I met men from the province of Sze-chuen, on route for Peking, and they said that the whole way from Fêng-hien in that province there were dead men on the road every now and then. He told me that snow had fallen in Honan about a foot deep. I met others later on, who had come from Si-ngan-fu, in Shansi. About a span of snow had fallen there. I met others from Ning-hia in North Kansuh. Grain was cheap and abundant in that province, but scarcer each step as they came across the northern half of Shansi. No snow worth mentioning had fallen on their route. The Yellow River at the pass where they crossed over to Shansi, on their way to Kiangchow, had not been passable by ice since the 25th year of Tao Kwang (32 years ago), but the poor people have had unusual cold as well as unusual famine to contend with this winter. The soft stone is sold at prices varying from two to five *cash* per catty, according to distance of carriage. Bark is sold at from five to seven *cash* per catty at the places where I inquired. The roots of rushes (蒲根) are dug and eaten. These cause the face to swell, and the stone when taken in large quantities has the same effect as chalk. People die of constipation. Grain is three and four times the usual price, and turnips, cabbages, five and six times! Flour costs seven, eight, or nine *cash* per ounce, according to the place bought at. In every city we passed through, they said 20, 30, or 40 people died there daily. At Ping-yang fu, they said that two Wan Jin Kêng (萬人坑) were filled, and that two carts, were daily employed in carting the dead. One innkeeper told us that somebody in three days had

counted no less than two hundred and seventy dead on the road. The main road goes most of the way alongside the river Fên, and a good deal of the soil can be irrigated on one side or other, but away a few *li* east or west are the hills. The dead there are far more numerous. Whole families, old and young, die in their houses, and there they remain unburied. At Kiei-hiu-hien, in Fên-chow-fu, the innkeeper said that half of the people were either dead or had gone away. Those from Lin-tsin-hien and I-sz-hien and Wan-tsun-hien in Pu-chou fu, 蒲州府臨晉縣猗氏縣萬泉縣, said that the number of the dead there was frightful. In one hien a third were dead already, in another six out of every ten. On cross-questioning they insisted that in most of the hien in Pu-chou-fu more than half were dead. Whoever I asked from P'ing-yang-fu, Pu-chou-fu, Kiang-chow, and Hiei-chow, for I met people from all these places at some inn or other, I did not meet a single man who would admit that five out of every ten were remaining, except that man who spoke of a third dead. The rest maintained that five or six or even seven out of every ten were dead. And they give instances of villages numbering three, four, and five hundred people last year, only numbering one hundred now. Here in Yang-k'ü, nevertheless, judging from inquiries made last year, these statements are exaggerations; true indeed of certain places, but not of whole prefectures. Still making a liberal allowance, and say that only five out of ten will remain at the end of the famine, which I fear is too much, what a terrible famine will it prove to have been! Consider the area. Grain is sent to every hien in Pu-chou fu overland viâ Hwai-lu, a distance of 2,000 and more *li*, not to speak of it coming from Manchuria. If it could be got nearer any other direction, of course it would be brought, so we have a radius and can calculate the square miles. The population of Shansi is mostly in the south.

Now let us see what is done for their relief. Passing rapidly through each place, I could not possibly get very accurate information, and it is only an approximate estimate as in other matters that I can hope to give. The lowest allowance I heard of was one hundred *cash* a month to each person, and the highest I heard of was three hundred *cash* a month, equal to 10 *cash* per day; the Wei-yuen told me that this place where 10 *cash* was given was the best he had heard of, on his way from T'ai-yuen-fu to Kiang-chow and back. In many places grain was distributed instead of *cash*, and that was between two and three ounces for each person per day.

There may be more given in some places, but I did not hear of full three ounces given anywhere. T'ai-yuen-fu city is an exception. In the suburbs there are three large soup kitchens, where altogether about twenty thousand go. Here food to the value of thirty to fifty *cash* is given to each adult daily, which is an abundant supply when the people are at home and can earn money besides. It is different with the great bulk of the province. I have not heard of any means devised to enable the people to provide for themselves. They are obliged to be satisfied with what is given them directly, and the former parts of this letter show with what result; and if what I have written is not enough, let me add that I have heard from different sources that in many districts men eat each other. When I said it was hard for me to believe this, they were displeased at my incredulity, and supported their statements with so many particulars that I now no longer doubt it. I refrain from repeating them. When I inquired what was the reason of coal rising in price, I was told that none venture to go singly to the coal pits to fetch it, for they will be stripped, and their beasts whether horses, cows, mules, or donkeys eaten up. So driven to desperation are the people in the mountains, that those of one village dare not visit another. Not only whole families die away, but some of the smaller villages perish altogether, and this is currently reported in Yang-k'u-hien, where the provincial capital is. Houses are turned to sepulchres filled with the dead. I have asked myself more than once, am I amongst the living or the dead? Snow has not fallen. Wheat is not snow. And I have just heard from the highest authority that in the southern part of the province some who have money in their hands are dying, because there is no grain to be bought. Grain has been bought in abundance at Tientsin and elsewhere by the Governor's agents, but all the beasts of burden in Shansi and the adjoining provinces are not sufficient to carry it. When matters have come to such a pass, it is a small thing to say that the roads are so narrow in the mountains that half of the carriers are obliged to travel by night, whilst the other half travel by day to prevent delay in waiting at the defiles.

The above will give you a brief and very imperfect view of the state of things in this famine-stricken field. My journey was over only a small portion of it, and the more extended and the more complete the investigation is, it will serve to confirm and deepen the impressions one has already formed.

It is well to acknowledge the fact that much is being done by

many of the native officials. I believe a number of them are truly in earnest on the subject, and thoroughly honest in the administration of affairs, but they are so tied down by prejudice, and so averse to change or improvement in the management of things, that the utmost they do is wholly inadequate, and not equal to what might be accomplished by a better system. I am on the best footing with the higher authorities here, and have met them frequently in consultation as to what had best be done. The result of all is that while commending the spirit and endeavours of not a few of them, it has been found necessary to prosecute my own system of relief and work independently of them altogether. My experience in Shantung, and my observations in the midst of this scene of suffering, enable me to judge and carry out a better course than what is pursued by the native authorities. They want me to act in concert with them, and I would gladly do so, did I see it possible; but I am satisfied that by administering relief on a well formed plan, and on the same widespread principle that was followed in Shantung, a much greater amount of good will really be effected.

I am most anxious to receive all the assistance in the way of men and means that may come to hand. It is gratifying to learn that money is flowing in freely, and I am deeply thankful that relief can thus be afforded to multitudes of this starving people. Hitherto I have been withheld from any very extensive measures, by reason of pecuniary inability and from a desire to wait until I knew the real state of the case, and what had best be done in the circumstances. My course now appears clear and positive. I am forming an extended list of sufferers, which I shall continue to enlarge and help, in proportion to the assistance that may be kindly granted me; and as others join me in the work, I shall seek to extend the matter as widely as may seem advisable. Meanwhile, I beg to thank the contributors to the Relief Fund most sincerely, and to assure them of the most careful administration of the means they have thus placed at my disposal. I shall be glad to notify the Committee from time to time of the course of things for public information, and wish to express my great obligations to them for the manner in which they have aided me in carrying on the work I have undertaken.

TIMOTHY RICHARD.

T'ai-yuen fu, Feb. 14th, 1878.

I have only time for a few lines to catch a special courier. Mr. Barradale and I have been away for three weeks, only returning upon the 25th. Our route was S. and S.E. of Tsang-chow, Yen-san and Ching-yun, thence W. through Lau-ling, Ning-ching, Ching-chon, to Tsau-ching, Heng-sui and Chi-chou, and thence through Wu-yih, Hien-hien, Ching-hien, &c., home again.

As to the famine—poverty certainly exists E. of the Canal, and in many places a large share of the population has migrated, but the district is fairly well off compared with last year, and we were grateful to be able to leave the newly opened districts without being obliged to give money.

In the market of Lau-ling city were many poor fellows with piles of firewood for sale—only too plainly the roof timbers of houses. In one little village of Ning-ching hsien where we happen to have an old convert, it turned out that out of some fifty families scarce half remained, and curiously enough that he was almost the only man who had reaped anything, his 10 mow having yielded more than the 50 or 60 owned by some of his neighbours. But it was after crossing the canal that most distress was seen. The fuel stocks had gradually been growing smaller as we advanced until they were but the size of hay-cocks. Within a few *li* of the canal they disappeared altogether. No millet stalk hedges (such as usually enclose the little homesteads), no pigs in the styes, no store of firing on the housetops. A few gaunt-looking dogs—here and there a melancholy hen—and at the doors of better class farmers, sometimes bullocks and horses. But any uninitiated stranger passing through would not perhaps note these signs. To me, one of the most remarkable was the extraordinary paucity of population. Where have the people gone to? I found myself saying again and again. Thousands upon thousands will probably never return. They have fled and not a few perished of cold and hunger at a distance.

My impression is that the distress this year is worse the further west one goes. But it is bad enough in all reason when we were in the triangle formed by the districts of Chi-chou, Heng-sui and Tsau-chiang. We have converts there in ten or a dozen villages and our present object was to try to save them, and some of their neighbours. We relieved partially, I think, six villages, going round in each case under the guidance of the constable and other residents. We had only Tls. 100 more or less, so could only spare

from 50 cents to a dollar for each family. The scenes witnessed were very sad. In nearly every case we found half the families gone. In more than one village from half to two-thirds of the houses have been pulled down, the roof timbers sold for next to nothing to get money for food and the straw of the roof reserved for fuel. It looked as though there had been a terrible bombardment. I can't spare time for details. I should add that in more than one case in these villages which must be types of thousands more—the constables told us that the death rate is very high. In one of 170 families many of whom had fled, one person a day had been the average for some time past. As yet, however, there is not as much famine fever as there was last spring.

As to official relief—the magistrates of Tsau-chiang and Chi-chou have both hit upon ingeniously efficient plans of “how *not* to do it.” It is an immensely difficult task in any case, but there is something both sad and ludicrous in the measures they have taken. Consider the circumstances—always and everywhere it is the ordinarily well-to-do who suffer most when want comes. The ordinary farmer has little money. He has his land—and if the yield fails him, he has neither home store nor bank, etc. The very rich are out of the question. But there are multitudes who own from five to fifty Chinese acres who have now nothing but their land. They can't eat this manifestly, and they can rarely sell it even if willing, for none of their neighbours have money to buy. They are trying to live on chaff, cotton seeds, store of willow and acacia leaves, elm-tree bark, etc., etc. What does the worthy magistrate of Tsan-chiang do? According to the report of the people he offers relief. But no one is eligible who has a single mow of land, and runners are sent through the villages to examine and select two or three cases in each village. These must be utterly helpless, and being so guaranteed they may go to the city and get five sheng of grain, on the understanding that it is repaid next season. As this tale was repeated over and over again in different places, we must suppose there is truth in it.

The Chi-chou magistrate seems to have made a most honest effort, and yet this is far from what is needed. In this city there have been three or four distributions to all comers, the grain being sold at half market price. Enormous crowds are said to have gathered—as many as sixty, seventy, and some said ninety thousand on one occasion. Many had to wait two days to get the single sheng allowed to each. Many never could get near the place of distribution.

Some got crushed to death in the crowd. Worse still, even this wretched supply has failed, and it seemed generally understood that the distribution on Sunday January 20th, was the last. In many homes I asked—Have you had no relief? No. But there has been grain given in the city? Aye, but how could we get it without money? From the above hurried notes you can draw your own influences. We did not hear of many cases of the sale of wives or children. This may be because no one can afford to buy. But we had children offered to us, and could doubtless have had as many as we liked. Many things are cheap yonder just now, because those who have must sell and there are few buyers.

Thanks for your letters and the Tls. 500, kindly sent by Mr. Lemarchand on account of the Famine Committee.

J. LEES.

Tientsin, 28th January, 1878.

You have wondered why our mission made no representation to you about the continued distress in Shantung. The reasons were that the needs of Shansi were so much greater, and the funds so limited that we felt unwilling to divert the smallest amount from the most needy region. Now, however, that you have more money in hand we are forced to put in a claim for a portion, if it can be spared. I regret to say that in the regions of Lao-Ling, Teu-Ping and Ling-Hsien, in Shantung, and Ning-Ching in Chihli, where we have mission stations, the distress is, if possible, worse than it was last year. My heart has been greatly pained by what I have seen, in the visits I have made to these regions in December and again this month. The continued drought for three years has brought the people to an absolute state of misery and destitution. Until the present winter, many of the wealthy landowners and farmers have been able to live on their store from former years, and meagre crops during the drought, and afford a little help to their poorer neighbours. But now, they too are without food, have had to sell their farm implements, cattle; pawn their land, (where they could,) and live on the horrid stuff that the poorest have had to eat so long. It cannot be called food, as it yields no nourishment, but it quenches the awful pain of hunger for a time, only, in too many cases, to produce greater pain, or wasting disease. The complaint is, that the young men are too feeble to work in their fields just now, when the season for labour is come. Many villages are half depopulated and I passed one village on the border line of Shantung and Chihli provinces, utterly deserted; every house stripped of roof, door and window;

the bare mud walls alone standing. Children are sold or given away, and sometimes young infants are buried alive by their parents. During absence from home for a few months of a young man recently married, and who is a member of one of our Churches—his family was reduced to such fearful straits, that in order to get food his father and mother sold his young wife. Some of the most unaccountable methods are resorted to, by these poor people in their extremity, for procuring food. Deaths from starvation are daily occurring in every village and pestilence is still abroad, in some instances carrying off whole families.

I need not enlarge on what is, alas! now too familiar to you. But I make this passing reference to the state of the people among whom we are labouring as an appeal for help if the Committee have it in their power to make us a grant. I am going out again in two or three weeks, and must take something with me to mitigate their distress. I shall lay the case before the local committee in Tientsin.

JOHN INNOCENT.

Tientsin, 24th March, 1878.

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NO. VII.—PAGE 19.

A Decree. The snows of winter have been scarce in the provinces that were last year visited by famine, and rains of spring have failed in their season. We have again and again erected altars and offered up earnest supplications, praying for the lives of Our people; but day after day has the sun risen bright and clear, to be followed by storms of wind. The season of spring has now arrived, and still not a drop of moisture has fallen. The land for a thousand *li* is bare, and agriculture cannot be carried on; while the dead exceed the living in number. How can these things be borne? We, whose duty it is to watch over the millions of Our people with fostering care, feel that the loss of one of Our subjects is the result of Our misdoing. How much more intense must this feeling be when a drought prevails so extensive as this, when the starving people are as many as this? Some consider that rain is withheld because of the prevalence of idleness, self-indulgence, inactivity, and sloth, resulting in degeneration and neglect of duty; or that the system of Government, though complet in form, is a name and not a reality; or, again, that punishments do not reach their object, and that the people are silently enduring wrongs they cannot complain of. Failure in one of these particulars would be

sufficient to provoke the wrath of Heaven. Their Majesties the Empresses have repeatedly admonished Us, saying what have the people done that they should suffer this calamitous want? If Heaven sends down punishments, why may they not be transferred to the Court and the people spared this misery? When Tso Tsung-t'ang recently reported his victories, We were again exhorted by their Majesties that, though military operations in the New Dominion were at an end, drought in Our immediate neighbourhood still prevailed, and the afflicted provinces had not regained their wonted condition. It was, therefore, still necessary to give heed to Our ways with reverence and fear, and not suffer the slightest appearance of complacency or content. We have this day again been commanded by their Majesties that with the distress prevailing in Shansi and Honan before them, those in high place should not suffer indulgence in the slightest extravagance. They accordingly direct the High Officer of the Imperial Household to instruct the Secretaries of departments to exercise retrenchment in the various branches of palace expenditure. He is to report to their Majesties without delay the amount of the economies that can be effected, for if one candareen only can be saved there is one candareen the more to be distributed in relief. In reverent obedience to their Majesties' exhortation, who so graciously have at heart the welfare of people, We can but repent of Our faults, and examine into Our shortcomings, administering a government which is more than nominal with full sincerity of purpose; and thus, perhaps, Heaven may be moved to send down refreshing rain, and rescue Our people from the "ditches and water channels" (quotation from Mencius.) It is furthermore the duty of all officials, high and low, in the capital or in the provinces, to identify themselves with the unceasing solicitude and unwearying exertions of the Court; they must examine themselves with fear and trembling, and all unite to relieve the distress that now prevails. The starving people are crying out for food, and relief is urgently needed. Let the Board of Revenue again issue Taels 200,000 from the Treasury, and forward it in detachments to Honan and Shansi. Let 16,000 piculs of the grain on its way to Peking be detained at Tientsin, and also sent to these provinces. Let a further grant of one picul of rice *per diem* be issued to the various relief agencies in Peking. Let officers charged with the investigation of crime speedily terminate the cases before them, that inoffensive people may not be allowed to languish in prison. We have lately heard that drought also prevails in the

prefecture of Ho-kien in Chihli. Let Li hung-chang promptly ascertain to what extent the taxes in the district can be remitted, and let him devise measures of relief, and report the same to Us.

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NO. VIII.—PAGE 20.

If . . . does not send us another sum of money, I do not know how we shall be able to go forward, since day by day there is an increase in the number of little children exposed in the roads and in the fields, whom we cannot do less than receive into our care. The famine is becoming more and more horrible. The Christians come to us from all sides to obtain help that they may not die of hunger. During the forty-four years that I have been in China, I have never seen or heard of a famine so dreadful in character. It is needful to add that up to the present, for want of rain, it has been impossible to sow the corn, and if it should not rain now it will be too late to sow, and so there will be no hope even for the year following. How will this end? It is very certain that a vast number of persons must perish of hunger.

5th November.—The famine in this province becomes more complete and terrible from day to day. We continue to take in little children who have been cast out, but our means are failing us, and to our great sorrow we shall not be able to receive them for the future.

30th November.—With a heart full of sorrow, I must speak to you afresh of the horrible calamity which has come upon this province by reason of the famine, the like to which nothing has been ever seen in time past. A great number of pagans are constantly dying of hunger and cold, and some Christians also have died of hunger. The number of Christians who come to us to ask help increases from day to day, besides which the cold weather is now quickly coming on. A few days ago an old Christian, who had come from a distance to get to us, arrived at the gate of this town. Not having enough to go to the inn, he went into a pagoda to pass the night, and having eaten nothing he died there of hunger and cold, as on the second day another poor Christian who had seen him there related to us. We immediately sent to bury him, but the pagans of the pagoda had already carried him away. If we are now already in extremity, how will it be in the depth of the winter.

26th December.—The horrible famine of which I spoken to

you in my letters of the past months, I must now tell you becomes from day to day more shocking throughout the province, and more especially in several of the towns, that is to say, in all the departments of Pu-leng-sien, Ui-nan, Fu-ping, Hau-leng, Pe-seui, Fucen-fú, Cao-ling-sien, Ling-fung, Yan-yuen, Cing-yung, Sin-ping, Fu-fung, Li-ciuen, Ci-fan, Fung-siang-foo, U-cung-sien; and also, although to a somewhat less degree, in several other departments and many other towns in the province.

On the most frequented roads, there are found every day those who have died of hunger. In this place, the capital of the province, in the course of ten days, more than ten thousand persons have died of hunger and cold, being buried in the snow. As great a number of deaths occur also on all sides. Women, men, and children come here to the four gates of the town to receive the bowl of soup which is distributed by the Government every day, and which consists of a little millet, together with a very small portion of corn flour. Our Christians are in the same condition of extreme misery on all sides. They come to us every day to receive some help. The heart is rent with sorrow simply at beholding them, half-dead with hunger, ill-clad, shivering with cold, especially now that we are in the depth of winter. Although we afford a little help to these poor Christians, nevertheless men and women also resort to the gate of the town to receive the bowl of soup.

On the great roads are to be found every day dead children, as well as the living who have been deserted by their heathen parents. A Christian of Tung-yuen-fang, of the department of Cao-ling-sien, who came to visit me, said that during his journey, which occupied a day, he had found dead men lying here and there, and had counted up to thirty. We receive in our dwellings and in Christian families, the deserted children. We have already taken more than 300, and who can tell how many more we shall have to take in during the ensuing months?

This state of famine and extreme misery will not even come to an end next year, because that nearly throughout the province it has not been possible to sow the corn, for want of rain at the proper time.

From this same cause a great number of persons die, through having made use of a kind of white earth brought from the mountains, which (although it is simply earth) has much the appearance of corn flour. Still many of the people for want of other sustenance, support themselves upon it. In many places, too, it is impossible to

see any trees with the bark upon them ; it has all been stripped off to be reduced to powder and so consumed as food.

The chief mandarin of this place, whose name is Sung-fu, bought two months ago a large field of about 20 mow, for the burial of the dead (among the poor), who from all sides come here to, receive the daily bowl of soup given by the Government. Deep pits have been dug, but now they are all nearly full of the dead bodies, so that there is no more room in the field to dig more, and it will become necessary to purchase another plot even larger than this one.

On the matter of Shensi, Mr. Monilleron, a Missionary from Honan, the neighbouring province, wrote, under date 13th January, 1878 :—"Two of our Christians, who arrived from Shensi, say that the misery is still greater in this part of the Celestial Empire. Corn is sold at taels 32 a picul, and sometimes at even a higher price. The living feed upon the dead. At Pou-sheng-hien the pagans have killed their Mandarin, because he did not distribute help to them or abundantly as they wanted it. Women and girls are sold for 2,000 *cash*, and even less, apiece. A mother, after having with her husband eaten their little boy of six years old, whom they had themselves killed, prepared also to cut the throat of their little daughter of eight years. This little girl began to weep at the sight of the fatal knife, and the neighbours who overheard arrived just in time to save her."

(Note by Père Aymèri, "Sometimes parents, so that they may not be themselves the horrible executioners of their own children, agree with other parents—I will kill his child for him and he shall kill mine.")

In this same province, at King-yang-hien, three priests, one European and two Chinese, were obliged to save themselves by leaping from the top of the wall surrounding the city. The good God protected them and they met with no hurt.

Si-ngan fu, Oct. 15th, 1878.

HONAN :—Mgr. Volonteri, Bishop. 14th December.—I am quite unable to express, in all its saddening reality, the state of great and general misery which exists in this province. Let it suffice to say that beginning from 100 *li* to the South of Nan-yang-fou and continuing towards the North to beyond the Yellow River, the beautiful country of Honan has been changed into a desert of dry sand. The people, after they had exhausted the scanty harvest

of spring, finding no supply in the crop of the autumn (the most necessary for the people and for the poor), which has been entirely destroyed, began by selling the animals necessary for agriculture, then the implements of culture and the most necessary utensils of the houses; and several, not being able to sell or to mortgage their lands at even a very low price, have destroyed, and are still destroying, their houses, exchanging the bricks, tiles and wood work, not for money, but for grain, which, many times, as we have seen it more than once from our own home, scarcely have they received it, but they devour a handful of it raw, so as to appease the hunger which is tormenting them.

The greatest number of those, where the drought has been most desolating, not being able to sell the earth and straw, the material of their poor houses, abandon them, having first closed up their doors and windows with plaster work. They migrate to other places to seek, I will not say that they may be able to live, but that they may not die quite so soon. On the roads these families are to be found in crowds, emaciated by hunger, frozen by the cold. At the first opportunity they sell the wife, and abandon their children; so sometimes in a few days large families are dispersed and extinguished, who in former days, very often, have been rich and at ease. In this manner in several districts the villages have been altogether deserted.

You will see from an extract of a letter from Père Gabriel Cicalero, who is situated a thousand *li* and more beyond the Yellow River, what he has written to me of their misery, and yet we are only at the beginning of a heavier desolation, because of not having been able to sow the wheat for the spring crop of 1878. That fact reduces the people to the last extremity not only of misery but of despair. From the number of little children that we find about, can be argued the miserable state of the population. We do not receive those who are more than ten years old, nor those who may find elsewhere any resources or means of subsistence.

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In reporting to the Committee the manner in which the funds entrusted to Mr. Barradale and myself for relief purposes have been expended, it will perhaps not be desirable to go into many details, however interesting, excepting so far as may be needful to justify the grant already made and to aid your decision as to future action.

The district visited lies about 500 *li* S.W. of Tientsin, and is mainly in 2 sections of the Chi-chow district—viz. Chi-chow itself and Tsau-chiang-hien, the present centre of the work lying in the latter. The state of the whole region for many miles round is most deplorable. Over large portions of it nothing can be seen which gives promise of harvest, probably the greater portion of the land has not even been broken up since Winter. Travelling from Chi-chow city to the Canal in a directly easterly line, I did not see 100 Chinese acres of growing wheat in 160 *li*, and the miserable patches seen will never ripen. As an illustration of what may be seen in the villages, one of 140 families may be noted, where I counted no less than 30 utterly ruined and deserted homes, while of the remainder it would be safe to say that three fourths were roofless. In many houses, only one or two persons remained, the rest having either died or fled. Individual cases could of course be given—e.g.

- (1) Family of eight, all dead but one boy of fourteen.
- (2) Family of nine, widow and three boys now living.
- (3) Widow with three children—one had lain unburied for three days from inability to bury it. The poor woman could hardly move.
- (4) Family of six, house pulled down—living in the village temple.
- (5) Had just sent the cooking pan to the market for sale to raise a little money.
- (6) Father dead—widow and five children—no food—not even weeds—in the house.

and so on. Most families had some members out begging. Some had all ill of fever. The most common food seen was leaves (mainly willow) weeds and elm bark. The trees have been so stripped of foliage as to look as bare as in early spring. The very weeds appear now to be fast getting used up.

At first we had frequent difficulties in the way of relief, arising from the prejudices and suspicions of the people. In some instances it was taken readily and gratefully enough, but in others, and sometimes in the case of an entire village, it would be refused. Gradually these difficulties have been overcome, and now for miles round the village elders and gentry are sending deputations earnestly imploring us to "go and save life." We were careful from the first to lay stress upon a few principles, which have now become generally understood, and which have saved us from much imposition and annoyance, and secured an absolute immunity from disorder. One was that want, and want only, could give any claim to help; another that in no case would we give at our station or away from the homes of the people; a third, that we must judge by personal visitation of each case. It is needless to say that even thus

there were a few attempts at imposition. But for the most part the elders and others who guided us did the work faithfully. The scale of relief adopted was (I learn from a recent letter of Mr. Richard's) pretty much what has been thought needful in Shansi, viz., from 400 to 500 cash for each adult. We calculated that such a sum (with other resources to which this might help them) would enable them to get through a month, and by its close we hoped to be over the ground again. In not a few cases, however, even this first gift may be enough, should a more fruitful season set in. There are families which seemed to need just the light thus given. We had many illustrations of the advantage of giving a lump sum in place of a smaller one at shorter intervals. In some a large part of it would go at once for seed, in others it would be invested in a small trade, or in cotton for spinning, while in all the Chi-chow villages the money could practically be doubled in amount by the official sale in the district of grain at half-price.

Up to the present, Mr. Barradale and myself have visited and relieved 40 villages and market towns, the actual number of families being 1,925 or say, about 9,000 people.

I must not omit to say that we have succeeded in securing something more than a mere tacit assent to our worth from the local officials. Visits were paid both to the magistrate at Tsau-ch'iang and to his superior at Chi-chow, and from both we received polite attention, while the former not only came some seven miles to return our visit, but first by proclamation and then by a public address to the people of the town upon a market day, praised highly alike the charity of foreigners and the religion which led to it. The effect of his demonstrative friendliness has been what might be expected. For the time, our work is regarded as directly favoured by him. The mouths of evil speakers are stopped. The people everywhere regard us as friends.

When I left some fortnight since, Mr. Barradale's funds were nearly exhausted. He will return at once, for fresh supplies, and hopes to be in Tsau-ch'iang again before June 1st. I fear the need for help will continue and increase until autumn. Our efforts need have—will have—but two limits, those of money and strength. We can reach but a few out of the many villages which are suffering. Tsau-ch'iang alone has 582.

J. LEES.

Tientsin, May 16th, 1878.

Since writing my last too hurried note, Mr. Richard has handed me letters from Mr. Muirhead, making enquiries as to the plans, period and effectiveness of our distribution of the Relief Funds. To this letter Mr. Richard will doubtless have sent a full reply. One or two points in it suggested the need of fuller information with regard to matters referred to in my last.

1. The amount distributed to each person averages only 500 cash each. This will doubtless appear to subscribers a very meagre pittance—and a word of explanation is necessary on the subject. You will notice that this 500 *cash* is not the literal amount given in each case. It is only the average of the whole, and represents in the case of the poorest 800 *cash* a head which amount, in a family say of four, would place in their hands 3,200 *cash*, by which means they would be able to pull on for two or three months longer, that is, this 3,200 *cash* would supplement with wholesome and nutritious food the roots of reeds, husks of grain and willow leaves on which they now subsist.

The question then comes to the other class of persons receiving relief, viz., those to whom only 200 or so is given. These include families much reduced no doubt, but not in actual starvation. In many cases the headmen of the village to whom has been entrusted the preparation of the registers have not had the courage to refuse the entry of these names, though they admit privately to us, that in these cases the distress is not urgent as yet. These headmen are doubtless placed in a difficult position in many instances, so much afraid are they of giving offence to their constituents. It is the same state of things as has led the Government to station Civil Mandarins in places away from their own province. But I think on the whole they are glad to see us cut down the amount allowed to those not in actual need and increase it to those almost dying of starvation.

2. The period over which the famine is likely to extend. This depends considerably on the rain fall. Since writing my last, news has reached me of plentiful rains throughout the South of the province and it is said in Shensi and Honan also. Two or three days ago a gentleman, whose information I should consider reliable, told me that the only two Prefectures in which rain had not fallen were T'ai-yuen-fu and Fun-chow fu, and I am truly thankful to add that since that information was given copious rains have fallen here, so

that there is now some definite hope of a speedier termination of the distress.

This rain has come just in time to enable the people to sow their Kao-leang for their autumn crops, until the reaping of which there will be no little suffering, but if the weather be favourable by that time, say the middle or end of October, the distress will be much mitigated although the melons and other vegetables which they are now planting out, will, on the one hand, give some slight measure of immediate relief, whilst on the other, the want of grain to sow, and of mules and oxen to plough the land, will protract the famine in numberless cases at least a year longer. So far we have confined our efforts to the two Hien of T'ai-yuen (Yang Chuh) and Shu-kow; and in the villages we have relieved have distributed with far more liberal hand than the native officials are doing; though they spread their relief over longer periods. Indeed it is generally with a look of some astonishment that the people first notice the amounts we give; but to be really effective a second visit will in many instances be necessary. This we may be able to arrange, though as yet our plans for the future are not fully settled. Mr. Richard writes me however that the Governor has appointed a Wei-yuen to accompany us to Ping-yang fu. It is therefore not at all unlikely if our health is spared that soon after this letter reaches Tientsin, some of us may be on our way South.

I need not add that the people are very grateful for the liberal supplies coming in and that there can be no doubt that hundreds and thousands of lives will be saved hereby. With many thanks for your interest and efforts on behalf of this work.

DAVID HILL.

Shu-kow hien, May 10th, 1878.

Your letter of April 20th is duly to hand, and I am delighted to hear of the continued prospect of further relief from several countries, in aid of the unutterable distress that is daily increasing around us. I do not know how to thank the Committee and all in general sufficiently for their unwearied efforts to contribute and gather funds from all quarters. May God abundantly reward you all for such golden deeds. I am sorry I did not give you further particulars about distribution by others as well as myself, so as to enable you at a glance to understand my position. I shall endeavour to do so briefly now.

There are in the suburbs of T'ai-yuen-fu three large soup kitchens where about 20,000 get relief daily. The quantity they

get each must cost about twenty-five real *cash* (I say this for 1,000 here means 830). Those who frequent these places are from the near villages, the city and distant hiens. Now those who go to these kitchens spend most of the day in waiting and travelling to and fro. They commence to congregate at 9 and 10, and we continue to distribute until 4 or 5 in the afternoon. So this distribution precludes people from attending to anything else unless they are close by. And most, if not all of those, who attempt to live on this alone *will certainly perish*. The sight of hundreds of men women and children lying about these places without strength to move in a few yards for their share, is most heartrending. Though the worst cases die every day, others are in the same process of starvation filling their places as soon as their unhappy companions are carried away.

Another means of relief is that of distributing grain to the people at their homes. A certain quantity was allotted to each village, and the constables (Ti-paos) were to attend to the distribution according to the Registers. Instead of distributing according to these, that is to the most needy, they made an equal distribution to rich and poor alike. For this they were not to blame, for the relief Committee gave them to understand that that would be passed by. When, however, the Constables used up much of the grain, the villagers resented it, and considerable litigation was the result. Some of it is not at an end yet, though the grain distribution took place in the last and first months of the year. The quantity which fell to each was about one shing (value about 400 cash) to adults and half the quantity to children. The distribution took place over about three-fourths of the hien district.

Another plan of distribution was adopted by Ting an expectant (Chefu) Prefect, son of the Szch'uan Governor. His plan was to distribute wherever he chose. He went however to most of the villages in the immediate neighbourhood of the city. He gave a thousand or two or three to a family according to its poverty. His distribution took place about a month before ours. Since our distribution the Committee men of this city speak of a general distribution of grain after us again.

I decided on 500 cash each (420 real cash) so as to be about the same quantity as what was given by the authorities, when there were six in the family—then 3,000 fell to their share. Thus it was by the *united* efforts of the Governor, Treasurer and Judge, who established the soup kitchens, of the Chehien who distributed

grain, of the Prefect Ting who distributed money, and of ourselves who have also distributed money that relief has been carried on hitherto in Yang-kü hien. When sums are small it is very easy to find plenty of out-of-the-way places which the officials have overlooked, but when large sums are distributed by us they will cease distributing where we do. They have done so in this hien at any rate, and Prefect Ting has gone away to other hiens. Until Messrs. Hill, Whiting and Turner arrived, I could not go to any other place except against the Governor's wishes, for there was a small rebellion in one part of the province, and it requires his utmost vigilance to keep order when there is so much suffering.

When I commenced distribution I agreed to do so according to the official registers, for the Governor himself said that in those villages I was to distribute in, all were really needing relief. Now that more funds have come to hand I have changed my plans or rather adopted those of last year. Indeed when I went out to distribute according to the official Registers and found some suffering much more than others, I modified my intention of giving to all alike on the *first day* out, and in very needy cases doubled the allowance. I still take the official Registers but strike a third off the list—sometimes more or less according to the poverty of the village, for it happens that those close to each other differ often just as rich and poor people who live as neighbours. Instead of giving the money to the constables according to the official suggestion or to the elders, according to our last year's plan, I have gone myself from door to door to distribute. It entails much more trouble but I believe it is more satisfactory. Our friends Hill and Turner have found it so in Shn-kow too. There are two important things in this relief, namely, to take down only the real poor and be certain that the money is given into the hands of the poor. If we can manage these two points well, all other matters are comparatively easy.

Then as one of our number has been taken away and one of our natives is very low, should any more of us be taken ill, the inconvenience of working 600 *li* apart would be, I fear, too great a strain upon us. It would be another thing if we had three more hands; whereas being near together in case of emergency we can help each other. By remaining here we can manage (God granting us health and strength) the distribution of more money, and that more efficiently, for we are now acquainted with the worst villages which takes personal inspection to know exactly, as every region

says that theirs is the worst. But we hope to meet again in a week or ten days to consult about what is best to be done. Our ambition is not to let any starve within our reach. *Hitherto we were not allowed to do as we wished to*, that is by the authorities. Now however there seems to be no difficulty. So we shall exert ourselves to the utmost.

As to the prospect at present, I am thankful to say that yesterday we had a splendid fall of rain, and it is in time for putting in the autumn crops. I do hope it has been general over the province, as I hear it has been in Shansi, Honan and Chihli, a fortnight or three weeks ago. So now the question is to relieve until October as you informed them at home.

The present distress is such that it is impossible to exaggerate. The roots of rushes are all eaten up. There are no more trees to bark (except the poisonous ones) and hunger makes the people often try these. But all this happened long ago. The eating of human flesh is a regular thing, and if the people were really dead before, there is little said about it, but if killed then litigations arise. Yesterday the Chehien here told me he had a case of this kind to try. About one fifth only of the children in some places are said to be left, the rest have perished by hunger, disease or—what shall I call it? The butcher's hand! Whole villages are said to have disappeared. How can it be otherwise when two hundred and eighty catties of grain costs forty-four taels, and prices are still on the increase! Even in this hien a small village was pointed out to me a few days ago as having none left. I had no time to visit it. I did visit one which had seventy-nine persons last autumn, now there were only twenty-nine left! I distributed some relief to them. It was among the mountains and my visit was entirely unexpected. One young man was almost beyond himself for joy. He cried out *O mi to fu, O mi to fu*, some shed tears and all knelt down to thank me. I told them to thank God, and went away.

Such then is the aspect and prospect of things as they appear to me now. If there be anything yet not sufficiently clear, I hope the Committee will kindly consider it is written very hastily and amid constant interruptions, and that they will therefore excuse the very imperfect manner in which things are laid before them.

TIMOTHY RICHARD.

T'ai-yuen-fu, May 10th, 1878.

I travelled up the Grand Canal through Kiangsu, but on reaching Shantung had to take to land travelling. I went on foot to Tsi-ning, and, after staying there a day, started by cart to Kaifung: In that part of Shantung I saw no distress to speak of, but I saw clear indications of existing famine in the neighbourhood, in the immense quantity of grain being carried along the so-called roads. The wheat crops in the south-west of Shantung and the north-east of Honan are very poor. Large tracts of country are absolutely bare, but the millet is coming up and the small millet has been sown, and with the rain which has fallen within the last week or two, there is still a chance of a fair harvest.

The boundaries of the famine stricken districts appear to be most distinctly marked. South of the old bed of the Yellow River I saw no distress, but immediately I crossed I came upon a village where the people were actually dying in the streets. I saw people dead, I saw people dying, I saw crowds consisting partly of dead and partly of living people, and the living people had not the energy to move away. I saw lots of people who could not possibly be saved by anything but careful nursing of each individual—in other words, who were bound to die within a short time; and indeed, I have seen such sights that I have come to look upon a dead body being devoured by dogs as not worth a moment's notice. In fact, I feel a sort of relief in knowing that for them, at all events, the misery is past.

You have, however, heard enough of that sort of thing. I shall therefore confine my remarks, as far as possible to the practical question of relief.

Round Kaifung there may be 30,000 or 40,000 people collected. They are divided into camps and housed in mat sheds. They receive a certain allowance of food—generally millet—per day. Large numbers die, but large numbers seem to get along tolerably well. I saw lots of provisions exposed for sale in the streets and outside the relief camps, and the famine refugees who were standing about, though looking very bad, had energy enough to laugh and joke about my appearance. The worst cases naturally are to be found inside the camps. A mandarin who saw me walking towards one of the camps, immediately sent a servant to the mandarin in charge of the camp, and servants were immediately sent to call the people inside. They came to a sort of muster, and I was

asked to go into the mandarin's house. I was told this was because they feared a disturbance. The camp was only surrounded by a mud wall some 4 feet high, so I could judge of the appearance of the people from the outside. I likewise visited other camps.

The conclusion I arrived at with regard to Kaifung was that the Government were really doing their best, and had the famine tolerably well in hand. They give food to every one, and though I am told, and, indeed, believe, that the amount is too small, I cannot forget that the same mistake appears to have been committed by our own Government in one district at least in India in the present famine, and I dare say there may be honest differences of opinion as to what is sufficient. I don't think the Government can be spending less than Tls. 1,000 per day at Kaifung. I believe it had been definitely settled before I left the city, that the local Government would not allow the missionaries to organise any system of relief or to assist the Government in any way, and had refused to allow them to travel through north-west Honan, and that in fact the missionaries would have to leave Kaifung the day after I left and proceed straight to Tientsin. As they intended to travel by a shorter route than I took, they should have arrived before me, so perhaps some change occurred after I left. Still from what they told me I think this improbable, and it is more likely that they have been delayed *en route*. I was most fortunate in having fair winds and finding boats easily, &c.

I am bound to admit that with regard to relief at Kaifung, I think the Chinese authorities are right. Of course, I am of opinion that they are neglecting their duty to a disgraceful extent in not organising relief works and dealing in a statesmanlike manner with the famine; but it is no use talking to subordinate officials on such matters, and admitting that the proper plan is to relieve the people by supplying them with food in camps, I do not see how the authorities could well allow outsiders to come in when they have the difficulty fairly under control. The Chinese authorities cannot say "we are giving too little and are slowly starving the people, and we will allow you to give a little extra to some or all," nor can they well say we will withdraw our relief from ten per cent. of the people and allow you to feed them,—in other words, ask for charity to the Government instead of to the people. If they paid people for working, and private charity helped those who could not work, all could be easily arranged; but when the Government and private individuals wish to relieve the same people, on the same principles,

and when the Government, whose duty it is to give relief, maintain with some show of reason that they are giving sufficient, I do not see where private charity can come in.

In the villages which lie on the route of the famine stricken refugees, it would be impossible for the authorities to pretend that the relief is sufficient. The distress is something awful, but I admit that I shrink from advising any relief there. I know nothing on earth would induce me to be concerned in the distribution of such relief, so I don't see how I could expect any one else to do it. The relief would attract people from other routes, and would induce them to remain in the village; the result would be a complete break down, and the distributors would have to run away knowing that they were leaving behind them a crowd of people to starve.

On the other hand, where relief can be carried to the native villages of the people, an immense amount of good can certainly be done. Thousands of the people can be saved by gifts of money given before they have left their homes. In many of the country districts in Honan, Shansi and Chihli, it is certain that the Government are unable to feed all the people. Moreover, numbers of people may be saved by the relief coming a little sooner than if they had only the Government to look to. It is to my mind of the first importance that the relief should be granted while the people still have energy to make use of it. Though I should hesitate to say it in the case of any individual, I do not hesitate to say it in the case of the whole class, that I see no good in prolonging a miserable existence for a few days or a few weeks. From all accounts the authorities in Chihli and Shansi are most thankful for the relief afforded in the villages. Consequently all the money that goes there is being made to flow in a proper channel. What has made the Honan authorities so unfriendly I don't know, for though I think them right about Kaifung, I think them utterly wrong about the outlying villages. After leaving Kaifung I visited the capital of Shantung, viz., Tsi-nan Fu. I saw the Roman Catholic priests there, and was most hospitably received by them. There is distress in Shantung in that neighbourhood, but one has to look for it. Consequently, as compared with the Kaifung district, it is very slight. The priests, however, are doing a great deal of good. They are giving assistance where required, and they have taken charge of a large number of orphan children—at least, they now, as far as possible, stick to the rule of taking only those who are without parents. In one place they have 20 boys, in another 30

girls, and in another 70 girls. Some are mere babies. One poor girl who was abandoned last winter, had her feet taken off by frost bite. I was told the children were all children of heathen parents. I must say, I think a little money could be well bestowed here. The priests, though not on as good terms with the present Viceroy as they were with the last, are still pretty friendly with the authorities, and they are in every way able to afford relief in a manner that is likely to do some permanent good. The famine stricken people are all refugees, but the numbers are not so large as to be beyond the powers of the people who attempt to relieve them.

After leaving Tsi-nan Fu the route which I followed led across country to Te-chow. Here the distress is very great. The city is in Shantung, but the refugees are all from Chihli. The people of the city, however, are very badly off. For about 30 miles north of this place, the country people look awful, and here I saw what I did not see anywhere else, numbers of people, apparently not regular beggars, crying and begging for food. At all other places, the people, though dying, never asked for anything. I fancy the fact is, they find that occasionally something is thrown to them from a boat where the people know that after giving they can get away; while no one dares to give on shore, except when one meets a solitary refugee on the road. The canal going north from Te-chow is seldom more than 50 yards wide, and the people stand on the side and beg, and sometimes, indeed, not unfrequently, lie down and die. The boundary of this district is most distinct. On Monday night we were in the famine district. On Tuesday we started early, and by eight o'clock were out of it. I don't quite understand how the boundaries can be so clearly defined.

Tientsin, June 5th, 1878.

G. JAMES MORRISON.

“The efforts of your Committee to mitigate the sufferings of the famine stricken people in these parts are well known and deserve grateful acknowledgment. My purpose at present is to lay before you the condition of the province, in the hope that it may induce a higher degree of charitable assistance for the benefit of the numerous sufferers. For several years the harvests have been insufficient, and the defect has been aggravated by the growth of opium over a wide extent of country. Even where the supply has been enough to feed the hungry, there has been a great amount of emigration, so as to increase difficulties of the population. Last year the severities of the famine were very great, and the wants of the people were dreadful. In several tens of the hien districts in

the south the famine was terrible, which became worse the farther one went in that direction; many of the autumn crops did not ripen, and of those that were harvested, there were only one or two fields out of ten. In the north the drought was less, but throughout the whole province the corn was light, and indeed hardly was a half sown, while a very large proportion of it perished. The price was enhanced, as in Fung-chow a bushel of millet cost 3,200 *cash*. White flour was 120 *cash* a catty. To the north the price was not so high, but in the south the price gradually advanced, and the poor people had no money to buy, while the rich also had their money-boxes empty. Altogether at the present time when the prices are about equalized, the cost of things everywhere is as much as fourfold what it used to be, and the people find it difficult indeed to purchase the necessaries of daily life. In all directions they seek these in vain, and try to get the grass covering the ground, in order to allay hunger. So they strip the bark off trees, and pluck up roots and grind the chaff to enable them to live. In ordinary times what the pigs and dogs would not eat, now the people eat, and may they not still be called men, not beasts?

The relief work here was begun early in February, by Mr. Stanley, and continued by him for five weeks, until relieved by Mr. Porter and myself. Since that time the work has been constantly superintended by relays of workers, down to the present time, with the exception of an interval of about twelve days. The development of our operations has resembled an inverted pyramid. Beginning, as we did, with a trifling sum, the number relieved at the end of about a month was 338, but the relief was regular, fifteen *cash* a day for each adult, and eight *cash* each day for children under fifteen. A complete list is made out in each village of all those supposed to be worthy of assistance, intended to include only those who cannot live without help. In each village there are certain managers who draw out the list, and who receive and divide the money, and these are the responsible persons through whom the work is done. The plan of inspecting each village has been adopted from the first, but since the numbers began to reach into thousands, it has been found wise in each case to inspect the villages with the lists as a guide, previously to the payment of any money. *Cash* has been generally given for ten days only at one time, and this has rendered it comparatively easy to correct the lists, to reform abuses, and to put a stop to any extortion, of which there are certain to be instances. By the middle of April, owing to the reception of more

funds, we were enabled to enlarge our work, so that instead of embracing 338 individuals in seven villages, it included thirty villages, and more than three thousand people. A month later, more funds having come to hand, ten more villages and about two thousand more names had been added. Immediately on our arrival with the Tls. 6,000, as above, Mr. Sheffield and myself began to enlarge our operations on a great scale, and we have now reached a limit which is fixed on the one hand by the funds at our disposal, and on the other by the time to which we have thought it best to continue the relief. This date was originally set at about the close of the fifth moon, or the end of June, by which time the wheat is generally harvested. But the lack of rain and the violent dust-storms in the spring, have rendered the wheat crop nearly a total failure. I enclose an average specimen, from which you can judge how little this crop is likely to assist the poor. The grain varies from four inches to a foot in height, and the amount of yield will not exceed a catty or two per Chinese acre (or *mow*), and will not at all repay the seed. Nothing else will be ripe for two months, and it is difficult to see what the people are to live on. At present, weeds and the leaves of trees are the principal diet of the very poor; of the former, the leaves of the locust are the worst, and cause a frightful bloating of the face and body, ending in many cases in death. Our present number on the list is somewhat over fifteen thousand, and will be increased so as to reach about sixteen thousand before our last payment, which will be June 24th. The price of silver has been much better than in Tientsin, owing to the great demand occasioned by the purchase of grain; but the price of sycee, paid in grain, is so much above the market price of silver, that we are thinking of making the final payment for the concluding twenty-days in *kao-liang*, or coarse millet.

The number of our villages is now one hundred, and the labour of inspecting so many thousand houses, and adding ten thousand names in two weeks, has occupied all our time, as well as that of half a dozen natives, who have performed their labour with a thoroughness and fidelity in the highest degree gratifying. I think the donors of the funds, placed at our disposal, whoever they were, may be assured that their contributions have saved thousands of lives, and prolonged hundreds of others, whom it was too late to save entirely. The death rate in the village where there is no relief, is appalling, and has been constantly rising since we came in the winter. Where the relief was first begun, there were few deaths

afterwards. In the villages added later, the deaths have greatly decreased, but not stopped. With a few exceptions, the villages relieved are situated within a radius of about 20 *li*, or six miles, of the village in which we have our head-quarters. The gratitude of the people is very deep, and there is reason to believe that the effect of this work of benevolence will be far reaching. One of our assistants is just recovering from an attack of typhus fever, which is carrying off its victims by the thousand.

Shantung, June 13th, 1878.

ARTHUR H. SMITH.

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NO. XI.—PAGE 24.

Numerous advices have come to hand to-day of the Famine Relief Work in the North. The Committee at Tientsin and the distributors generally have so far finished their labours for the present, and reports and statistics have been furnished, which present a very gratifying aspect indeed. Whether the work itself is contemplated, or the results effected by it, there is reason for profound thankfulness. When the details are fully presented, it will be seen that a vast amount of labour has been achieved, of a fatiguing and perilous kind in many respects, and in a way which reflects the highest credit on those who have been engaged in it. At a distance we can form little idea of the arduous character of the work, though accustomed to speak of it as trying and difficult. It is only as we review these lengthened and varied reports, that we arrive at any proper estimate of what they simply and truthfully narrate. Not that the writers in any wise magnify their efforts. On the contrary, their statements are limited to an account of the work done, consisting often of a series of dry details, and in answer to direct and categorical questions, but there is an amount of information given which will satisfy every reader of the magnitude and value of the labours that have been carried on.

In the meanwhile the entire report is in course of construction, and will appear in due time. We are now at liberty to express simply an admiration of the whole, and of the satisfactory review which we have been able to make of the relief work. Even allowing for imperfections and mistakes that have occurred in various departments, as is readily admitted, and which are by no means

surprising in view of the peculiar circumstances of the case, we are persuaded it will be the conviction of one and all, when the reports are presented, that the work has been well and faithfully done, and the money and labour expended on it have been amply repaid.

The subject is one of such large extent, and has so many bearings connected with it, that it will not be easy to present an adequate account of it. Looked at in the light of the famine field, the widespread interest excited in regard to it, the munificent contributions raised in its behalf, and the self-denying labours of the distributors, much requires to be said on the matter. Beyond this, however, there are views to be taken of the calamity in its varied political and social aspects which may help to inaugurate a new era in the history and administration of this land.

September 17th, 1878.

WM. MUIRHEAD.

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NO. XII.—PAGE 24.

Yours of the 26th August, 11th September, and 1st October, were awaiting me at Chefoo on my arrival two or three days ago.

1.—You say the account of things in Shansi is somewhat contradictory. That may be because we look at them from a different standpoint. That there is an immense amount of suffering there now, which will last not only over the winter, but for years to come, as a result of the famine, is perfectly true. Yet it is equally true, that much of this suffering cannot be relieved by any means official or private. Many have sold their land for next to nothing. I know of one who sold nine *mow* of land for nine cattles of flour. To relieve the tens of thousands of families who have been thus reduced to beggary, the Government on one occasion in this dynasty made null and void all such sales, but as many of the original sellers had died, and the land would pass into the hands of the nearest relatives, who might happen to be richer than the buyers, litigations arose, and the country was in a critical state for a time. However, with a firm hand and careful regulation, such as the present Governor of Shansi could bring to bear, I believe something could be done, but it is not easy. My remarks had chiefly in view what suffering we, as private individuals, and what is still more difficult as foreigners, could alleviate, for it is with this the Committee is immediately concerned. I am very glad, however, you have had fuller information from my colleagues, so that the Com-

mittee may judge of the whole, and offer us any suggestions in regard to the work they may think best.

2.—As I wrote to you from Tsi-nan-fu, all along the way from Tai-yuen-fu, through Chihli and Shantung, there was a good harvest, and Mr. McIlvaine said the same of Honan and other parts he had come through on his return. In view of this, if relief were distributed on any large scale in these regions this winter, I fear grave complications would arise, if the Government is not going to do something which is not likely. This is my impression in regard to the work *in general*, though I might perhaps express myself differently in regard to some exceptional places, but I have no information about such places yet. So I think the best thing is to distribute aid only where Government relief is also given, for if several Chow-hiens be suffering grievously, as reported in Shansi before I left, then our balance would not be too much to distribute in one or two of these hien. Before leaving Shansi I said that it was owing to the *unparalleled* extent of this famine that we foreigners helped. Ordinarily we would not think of it, and as the famine this year was confined within such narrow limits. I thought the Committee would not make a further appeal, but only use up what balance they had in hand. And the officials to whom I spoke thought this very reasonable. As I said in my letter from Hwai-loo, it would be easier to give you more satisfactory information after all the harvest is gathered in. I hope you will soon, if you have not already had, later information from Hill and Turner in Shansi, as well as from others residing in Chihli and Shantung, where there was so much suffering last winter. I intent to start in a week or ten days, back again, and of course will hasten to give you what I can gather about the state of the country at this late season.

3.—When I spoke of relieving only the widows or orphans, I was not aware there would be such a balance on hand. Now, at this distance, not possessing any very late news from Shansi, and unable to ascertain directly from the people themselves what would be the best relief for them, I cannot lay any definite plan before the Committee. New circumstances would make some excellent plans impracticable. I must go and see before I can say what would be best for the coming winter. Many good plans we cannot possibly carry out, because we are foreigners. It will not do to force anything. We must, as far as possible, carry out the plan which recommends itself as best to all parties, and not to a few only. We had not taken the orphans under our care at all. We only gave to

them a ten-day's allowance at first, and now they get a monthly allowance. These were partly in the city of Tai-yuen-fu, but chiefly connected with several scores of villages round about, as we did not allow any but the names of the veriest poor to be taken down. Whether foreigners can open an orphanage there or not, I cannot certainly say. I am only sure of this, that nothing will succeed if it be done with violence to the feelings of the people amongst whom we reside. The people cannot get familiar with us in a day.

I wish I could write to you a far more satisfactory letter, but as it is now some time since I left, and you have access to information that I had not, I may learn of you, instead of your getting anything from me, about the present prospects. As I have said, I hope to go back soon, and then I hope I shall have something more satisfactory to write to you.

I believe now that whatever money we have to distribute had better be distributed in December, January and February, for from next April the poor will find employment that will save their lives at least, and foreign funds cannot well be used for other ends.

TIMOTHY RICHARD.

Chefoo, October 21st.

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NO. XIII.—PAGE 25.

I left Tientsin, where I wrote to you last, on the 8th Nov., reached Tai-yuen-fu, on the 24th, saw the Governor on the 29th, and I now give you what information I have gathered concerning this year's famine in Shansi.

But first of all, you will be glad to hear that Mr. Turner is better and has even resumed his work of distribution in Tai-yuen-fu. Mr. Hill had left for the South of the province a week before I arrived.

When I left Shansi three months ago, it was reported that the crops had failed owing to the lateness of the rain in several tens of the counties (Chow-hiens) in the South, but in the Northern part of the province, where the crops are later, there was every prospect of a good harvest. Shortly after I left, however, a fall of a foot of snow made a harvest of ten parts into one of six parts, or in other words injured it 40 per cent. The extreme North of the province is said to be well off; the central part where T'ai-yuen-fu is, though better than last year, is still suffering very severely.

The price of wheat is even higher than last year. To meet the general distress, the three kitchens opened by the authorities in the suburbs last year have not been stopped at all, and will have to be continued until next spring at least. Local relief will be given in other hiens of this central district during the winter months. But the greatest distress in the South-west of the province, Ping-yang-fu, Pu-chow-fu, Kiang-chow and Kwei-chow. Last year there were 87 hiens to be relieved, and the Governor, who received us kindly, says that no less than 56 have to be relieved this year again. For this purpose the Emperor has granted 1,200,000 tow (shih êr wan tan) of grain from Shantung, and Tls. 200,000 of silver for the expense of transportation. The Governor says that one million Taels more is required before all of it can be brought over! To raise this million Taels two plans are on foot; one is to obtain further subscriptions from the other provinces, and the other to borrow money from native merchants so as to slide over the present difficulty.

The expense of transport sounds enormous, but the inquiries I made and the proclamations I saw on the way bear it out, as follows:—The grain is transported through Chihli *via* Hwai-lu, a city on the West border of Chihli, and thence by the usual means of donkeys, mules, camels or carts to the South of Shansi. The cost of carriage per catty from Hwai-lu to Ping-yang-fu, a distance of about 1,000 *li*, is 40 *cash*, not to speak of the many Wei-yuens who must be looking after its safe transport. Proclamations of the rate of carriage from place to place are put up for the information of the people and to prevent corruption. At the above rate the transfer of 1,200,000 tow (reckoning each tow 14 catties) is 806,400,000 *cash*, and as the rate of silver ranges from 1,000 to 1,400 per Tael, according to the places exchanged at, it would amount to Taels 672,000. But this is only the expense of carriage on the middle portion of the journey; there is besides the transfer at both ends, one from Shantung across Chihli, and the other from Ping-yang-fu to the different distressed districts, making altogether 1,000 *li* more. If we double the 672,000 Taels, which is not quite necessary, as transfer through Chihli is much cheaper, we find the Governor's estimate to be but too accurate after all. And the Government cannot be more economical with present means and plans. I have known merchants being compelled to pay twice the Government rate of carriage more than once, in order to have their goods carried across some parts of the journey. Government grain is carried when no better business can be got. But there is a cus-

tom of seizing the beasts of burden for Government service, or of compelling them to pay so heavily for exemption as to frighten people from taken their beasts near the borders of Shansi. How far this produces the higher rate of carriage I am not able to say.

Besides what is provided by the Government, grain is bought in all directions by the grain merchants. Much passes down from the North of the province through Tai-yuen-fu by carts and camels chiefly, also by mules and donkeys to some extent, and occasionally by a few barrows through some parts of the journey. This and what was raised by great landowners supply the markets tolerably well. Some of the richer people have clubbed together to fetch grain themselves from a distance, so these require no relief. But there are others who depend entirely on charity for their very lives. In the south the majority of poor perished altogether last winter. In one hien out of 85,000 getting relief only 20,000 remain, and other hien are even worse. Many who had land either sold it or mortgaged it. It was mortgaged at the rate of 20 *cash* per mow, and neither of these classes were able to raise crops for themselves. So now these are driven to take the place of the poorest of last year, and with grain at five times its usual rate their case is indeed most desperate.

As to foreign distributors, two will probably remain in Tai-yuen-fu, and one or two more will go to the South as soon as the money arrives from Tientsin. I had the impression when I wrote to you last that relief would only be needed in December, January and February, but in the South, were we shall distribute the bulk of our relief, it will be needed more or less to the end of May, for the wheat crops cannot be ripe earlier, and to help for two or three months only when the price of grain is so high is altogether inadequate.

TIMOTHY RICHARD.

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NO. XIV.—PAGE 25.

Mr. Capel and I after long travelling, have at length reached this Province. We came through Honan, taking the Southern road from K'ui-fung-fu. We have been hindered a good deal on our road by various untoward circumstances, and even now have not arrived at any centre from which we can commence our work. I thought, however, that a few details concerning the state of things which we have met with along the road might interest you. On

passing through K'ai-fung-fu we learned that many of the refugees who had fled from the Province of Honan to Pö-shü-chin and Nan-shü-chin, had returned this autumn. Distribution of rice was being carried on in K'ai-fung-fu, but these returned refugees could not participate in it but were being drafted off to their old homes under escort, so much per head being allowed them on the road. I fear that on reaching their former home there would be nothing but starvation before most of them. Here and there human remains reminded us of the sad scenes of the last two years. Many small villages were wholly uninhabited, and others with only three or four families remaining. The greater part of the land was wholly uncultivated, but here and there were crops of millet and sorghum which had been planted in the Spring, but which, through the death or the absence of the planters, had been suffered to run to waste all untended. From K'ai-fung-fu westward the prices of grain were somewhat as under:—

Wheat—2,100 *cash* per *tau*, (usual price about 600 *cash*.)

Millet—1,100 *cash* per *tau*, (usual price about 500 or 600 *cash*.)

Sorghum—700 *cash* per *tau*, (usual price about 400 *cash*.)

Westward of Honan-fu (about 400 *li* from K'ai-fung), no vegetables were to be found—carrots, cabbages, &c. It was estimated that perhaps $\frac{1}{10}$ of the wheat crop was planted, but this would, it is to be feared, be insufficient for the wants even of the scanty population which remains. It was thought that $\frac{1}{10}$ of the people had perished in that part of Honan through which we travelled. In this province it is said that eight or nine tenths even have disappeared. We have not so far arrived at any of the places which are expecting actual famine this winter.

The prices here rise gradually, but are not materially different from those quoted above. Soldiers are stationed all along the road from K'ai-fung, in Honan, to T'ai-yuen, in Shansi. The people relate that more well-to-do families than very poor ones have perished in the famine. The poor felt the pinch very soon, sold houses, lands, &c., at a loss to the rich, and fled while they had time and strength; the wealthy bought up all the land, houses, and furniture of the poor, waited on, hoping matters would improve; exhausted their supplies, and, finally, when too ill or too impoverished (as regards money) to move, died in the midst of their possessions. A great part of the country through which we have been travelling for the last three weeks is of the peculiar formation called 'loess.' It is full of caves, chiefly artificial, in which a large

proportion of the population live; these are now mostly deserted like the other dwellings, but not before they have been, in some cases, the scenes of terrible tragedies, if we may trust the accounts of survivors, and there seems to be no reason to doubt their accuracy. I will add more before sending this off.

Kiang-Chin.—Shansi province, 150 li S.E. of P'ing Yang. We have arrived at this point of our journey, and do not like to go further west without rendering some account of ourselves, so we purpose sending letters from here. The last few days we have noticed fewer human remains, but more land unsown than we have previously seen. Here, however, there is not likely to be famine this winter, the autumn crops being sufficient for the few left to consume them. We heard that Hai-chin and P'u-chin are the two districts which will suffer most during the winter. Wheat here is at 2,200 *cash* per *tou*, against 600 or 700 *cash* in good years. We have not as yet heard anything of Mr. Richard's return, nor of the others who were working here in the winter. We are intending to go forward to Hai-chin and P'u-chin, and to endeavour to carry out our work there. With kindest regards,

CHARLES P. SCOTT.

SHANSI, December 2nd, 1878.

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NO. XV.—PAGE 25.

I have delayed answering yours of 13th Oct., which overtook me on my way down to this place, in order that I might be the better able to give a more correct idea of the state of things here than I would have done, without having personally visited some of the villages in this neighbourhood.

One thing struck me much on the way down from T'ai-yuen-fu,—that was the fewness of the beggars to be met with in the streets of the various towns passed through on the journey. The people all the way along complained of a poor harvest, but yet there were hardly any persons begging for bread in the streets. On arriving here I was still more surprised, for it was not till my second or third walk through the town that I saw a single one.

“They are all dead,” said some. “They have returned to the country villages,” others said. And probably there is some truth in both remarks. But what the villagers themselves say is very likely as near the truth. They say, that “In Ping-yang-fu a man may beg the whole day, and he will not get more than 7 or 8 *cash*; and consequently those who are driven to begging their bread, have

gone to the well-watered villages on the West of the River, where the crops have been good, and the farmers prospering through the high rates which grain brings (especially wheat and rice) in these Famine times.

This state of things made me think in the first instance, that perhaps there was not, after all, very much need for the continuance of the Relief Work through the winter; but it did not require a second visit into the country to set me right on this matter.

In the first village I visited, every family was living on the seeds of thorn bushes 蒺藜, or wild herbs 灰條子, which they grind up and mix with a little corn flour, and this will be their chief, almost only, means of support until the spring crops are reaped in April or May of next year. One family in better circumstances had removed into the city for fear of being plundered. The heads of the village said, "We stay on, because we have nothing to be robbed of, and therefore nothing to fear." Another family was mourning the loss of a little boy, who had been torn to pieces and devoured by two wolves, whilst out with some other children a few days before. A bone or two and some torn pieces of clothing were all that was found on after search. Of the ravages of wolves I heard on my journey from Tai-yuen, but treated it lightly, discounting largely for exaggeration, though there they told me that it was only in the hill country that they were seen. I find, however, that there are not a few in this Ping-yang plain. The village spoken of above is not a *li* from the North Gate of the city, and yesterday in another village, five *li* to the east, I called at one house, where a poor woman told me, with tears in her eyes, that only the day before, her little boy of 10 years had met with a similar fate,—the other members of the family were at that very time burying what remains they had been able to gather together of the poor little fellow. But from all accounts this state of things is not confined to years of famine, for only some 5 or 6 years ago, wolves were so numerous and rampant, that the District Magistrate offered 2,000 or 3,000 *cash* for every dead one, and 5,000 for every live one brought to his Yamèn. And the teacher employed as my writer informs me that 13 persons were killed by them in his village alone. Now, however, in addition to the attraction which numerous flocks of sheep offer these wild beasts, the skeletons of the dead still unburied in so many places, with the vast decrease in the population, and the wide extent of uncultivated land, render this part of the country a still more inviting field.

DAVID HILL.

NO. XVI.—PAGE 25.

London Committee :—Sir Rutherford Alcock, K.C.B., (Chairman). The Right Rev. Bishop Alford, D.D., Sir William Herschel, Bart., Sir Thomas Wade, K.C.B., Sir George Balfour, K.C.B., M.P., Sir T. Douglas Forsyth, K.C.S.I., Sir Albert Sassoon, K.C.S.I., Sir Walter Medhurst, Sir R. Macdonald Stephenson, the Rev. Jas. Legge, D.D., LL.D., the Rev. J. Baldwin Brown, B.A., the Rev. Alexander Maclaren, D.D., George Arbutnot, Esq., John Bourne, Esq., C.E., Thomas Brassey, Esq., M.P., George Dent, Esq., R. K. Douglas, Esq., R. N. Fowler, Esq., Robert Jardine, Esq., Thomas Hanbury, Esq., Wm. Lockhart, Esq., F.R.C.S., George Lyall, Esq., Donald Matheson, Esq., J. E. Mathieson, Esq., John Peuder, Esq., M.P., David Reid, Esq., Arthur Smith, Esq., W. J. Thompson, Esq., Richard B. Wade, Esq., Jas. Thomson, Esq., Agra Bank, *Treasurer*, the Rev. Arnold Foster, B.A., *Hon. Secretary*.

REPORT.

The China famine relief fund was opened in England last February, as the result of a Meeting held at Lambeth Palace, under the presidency of his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury.

At that meeting, Sir Thomas F. Wade, K.C.B., the British Minister in China, Sir Rutherford Alcock, K.C.B., the Right Rev. Bishop Alford, late of Hongkong, the Rev. James Legge, LL.D., Professor of Chinese at Oxford, and other gentlemen, spoke of the terrible famine which had for several months been prevailing in North China, and urged that a Committee should at once be formed for the purpose of collecting contributions in the United Kingdom for the relief of the sufferers. This was done, and the present report will show the measure of success with which the Committee have appealed to the public for support.

It was hoped at first that the famine would cease in June, but unhappily the severe and protracted drought, which was the original cause of the famine, continued until it was too late to save the early crops, and consequently the Committee were unable to relax their efforts in collecting money until the second or late harvest was gathered in. Information having now been received from China that in the greater part of the distressed region the autumn crops are good, the Committee have decided to close the Fund. In doing so, however, they wish to call attention to the fact that many of the survivors from the recent famine have been so much exhausted by their sufferings, and so much impoverished by the crisis through which they have passed, that there must necessarily be a very large amount of distress during the coming winter, and the Committee therefore take this opportunity of stating that contributions for the relief of the sufferers can still be forwarded to China

through any of the Missionary Societies that have agents there. Such contributions will be thankfully received and wisely distributed by the same persons who have been the almoners of this Relief Fund.

At present it is not possible to give a detailed account of the work which has been accomplished by means of the money entrusted to this Committee by the liberality of the British public. The reports of the distributors will be presented in due course to the Committee in Shanghai, but some time must necessarily elapse before they can reach England. Letters, however, have been received from time to time from the Honorary Secretary to the Shanghai Committee, showing that the efforts put forth by our countrymen for the relief of the distress have been heartily appreciated by the Chinese generally, and have been the means of saving many thousands of lives. In some cases, indeed, the provincial authorities have allowed their antipathy to foreigners to stand in the way of the distribution of foreign alms to the sufferers. In the provinces of Honan and Shansi the distributors were informed by the officials that their assistance was not needed, and they were requested to depart. But in Shansi, where the famine has been most severe, and in Chihli, the utmost courtesy has been shown to the distributors by the officials, and the Viceroys of both these provinces have gratefully acknowledged their appreciation of the kindness which has been shown to their unfortunate people. More recently a letter has been addressed to the Marquis of Salisbury, of which a copy is annexed, by Kuo-ta-jên, the Chinese Minister at this Court, conveying the grateful acknowledgment of the Chinese Government for the exertions made to aid the suffering population. Mr. R. J. Forrest, the British Acting-Consul at Tientsin, also speaks confidently of the favourable impression made on the Chinese by the sympathy which England has shown them in their hour of need. The money raised here has been remitted by telegraph to the Committee in Shanghai, and distributed under their direction through the agency of both Protestant and Roman Catholic Missionaries. The work of saving life has been carried on at great personal risk to those engaged in it, and the Committee have learnt with deep sorrow that several of the distributors have died in the midst of their work from fever caught in the discharge of their self-imposed duties.

The accompanying Balance Sheet will show that the total amount raised in connexion with this Fund has been £32,303 8s. 9d. Of this sum a considerable portion has been forwarded to the

Treasurer in London by Local Committees acting in various parts of the United Kingdom. During the past months public meetings in aid of the Fund have been held at Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dublin, Manchester and elsewhere. At several of these meetings Sir Thomas Wade kindly undertook to be present, and gave information as to the history and progress of the Famine. The Committee are greatly indebted to him for the part he has taken in calling public attention to the Fund.

In addition to the above-named sum of money, a further sum of about £16,000 has been contributed through various Missionary Societies in England, and has been sent by the Treasurers of those Societies direct to China.

The Committee cannot close their labours without expressing their sense of the invaluable services rendered by the Rev. Arnold Foster, whose exertions have been earnest and continuous, and to him mainly they attribute the successful result. Their thanks are also due to James Thomson, Esq., the Chairman of the Agra Bank, for the services he has rendered as Treasurer to the Fund, and for placing at the disposal of the Committee, a room in which they have held all their meetings.

RUTHERFORD ALCOCK.

23rd Nov., 1878.

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NO. XVII.—PAGE 26.

I have delayed answering yours of 13th Oct., which overtook me on my way down to this place, in order that I might be the better able to give a more correct idea of the state of things here than I would have done, without having personally visited some of the villages in this neighbourhood.

One thing struck me much on the way down from T'ai-yuen-fu,—that was the fewness of the beggars to be met with in the streets of the various towns passed through on the journey. The people all the way along complained of a poor harvest, but yet there were hardly any persons begging for bread in the streets. On arriving here I was still more surprised, for it was not till my second or third walk through the town that I saw a single one.

“They are all dead,” said some. “They have returned to the country villages,” others said. And probably there is some truth in both remarks. But what the villagers themselves say is very likely as near the truth. They say, that “In Ping-yang-fu a man may beg the whole day, and he will not get more than 7 or 8 *cash*; and consequently those who are driven to begging their bread, have gone to the

well-watered villages on the West of the River, where the crops have been good, and the farmers prospering through the high rates which grain brings (especially wheat and rice), in these Famine times.

This state of things made me think in the first instance, that perhaps there was not, after all, very much need for the continuance of the Relief Work through the winter; but it did not require a second visit into the country to set me right on this matter.

In the first village I visited, every family was living on the seeds of thorn bushes 蒺藜, or wild herbs 灰條子, which they grind up and mix with a little corn flour, and this will be their chief, almost only, means of support until the spring crops are reaped in April or May of next year. One family in better circumstances had removed into the city for fear of being plundered. The heads of the village said, "We stay on, because we have nothing to be robbed of, and therefore nothing to fear." Another family was mourning the loss of a little boy, who had been torn to pieces and devoured by two wolves, whilst out with some other children a few days before. A bone or two and some torn pieces of clothing were all that was found on after search. Of the ravages of wolves I heard on my journey from T'ai-yuen, but treated it lightly, discounting largely for exaggeration, though there they told me that it was only in the hill country that they were seen. I find, however, that there are not a few in this Ping-yang plain. The village spoken of above is not a *li* from the North Gate of the city, and yesterday in another village, five *li* to the last, I called at one house, where a poor woman told, with tears in her eyes, that only the day before, her little boy of 10 years had met with a similar fate,—the other members of the family were at that very time burying what remains they had been able to gather together of the poor little fellow. But from all accounts this state of things is not confined to years of famine, for only some 5 or 6 years ago, wolves were so numerous and rampant that the District Magistrate offered 2,000 or 3,000 *cash* for every dead one, and 5,000 for every live one brought to his Yamên. And the teacher employed as my writer, informs me that 13 persons were killed by them in his village alone. Now, however, in addition to the attraction which numerous flocks of sheep offer these wild beasts, the skeletons of the dead still unburied in so many places, and the vast decrease in the population, and the wide extent of uncultivated land, render this part of the country a still more inviting field.

DAVID HILL.

No. XVIII.—Page 27.

1. A previous letter dated 14th March, describing a visit to P'u-chow in the South of Shansi may be regarded with interest. Mr. Scott says, "there are in all six districts in the Prefecture, including that in which P'u-chow is situated. We visited them all, and from such enquiries as we were able to make, together with the facts which came under our own observation, we arrived at the conclusion that the state of that part of the country on the whole was decidedly hopeful, and that there was no sufficient reason for urging the authorities to permit us to open a new centre of distribution down there.

As regards the past, the testimony of the people was almost unanimous in fixing seven-tenths as the proportion of the population which had died during the famine; occasionally the proportion was still greater, and sometimes, though very seldom, less. The eating of human flesh had continued up to the seventh moon of last year and then ceased. On this point the same was told me in Kiang-chow 州絳, a large city, 150 *li* to the south of this place, when we passed through in December. At one time seven cattles of wood might be bought for a cash, a house would sell for the price of a good meal, and a whole yard for one thousand cash. In all districts many human remains might be seen by the road-side, but always bones, bleached and bare; we saw no one dying, and no remains of any recently dead. This is entirely in keeping with the account which we received from the people, which was to the effect that none, or at the most *very* few, had died from famine during the present year. H. E. Commissioner Yen is still superintending the work of distribution in Yüin-ch'eng 運城, a city which is rendered important by the large salt trade of which it is the centre; it is situated about 100 *li* to the east of P'u-chow, but is not included in the Prefecture. We heard of more than one magistrate who had been degraded for fraudulently keeping back the grain provided for distribution, but, as a rule, the people speak gratefully of the genuine efforts made by the Governor and the officials to meet the great calamity which had come upon them. In each of the districts, distribution of grain, either millet or sorghum was still going on, the amount varying from two to six cattles a head per month. In one case, we heard, that oxen and mules had been given away. Fowls, pigs, dogs, and beasts of burden were all, of course very scarce.

The land in most parts was largely cultivated, and looked very promising. In the places where this was not the case there were usually very few villages within sight. The place which seemed to us the worst, turned out to be the dry bed of a lake from which all water had long ago vanished. In one district there were unusually fine Persimmon orchards; apparently the trees were not seriously injured, and I suppose the bark cannot be eatable for none of them had been stripped, whereas every tree whose bark is not actually poisonous is stripped bare, and the dead trunks are now being cut down for firewood. Throughout the Prefecture there was a fall of snow of 8 to 10 inches in depth during the first month; and this doubtless accounts in great measure for the improved appearance of things. Wolves are said to be numerous, and in one case we were told hunted in packs of 8 or more. We heard of no fever or illness at all; the weather hitherto, has been most favourable in this respect, very cool and windy; still the entire absence of fever in the latter part of the second month would seem to confirm the report that there is little or no severe suffering from want at the present time. All that is now wanted to bring the survivors to prosperity again is a good rain, but that will not be too late, I believe, if it comes within a month of this time."

CHARLES P. SCOTT.

PING-YANG-FU, SHANSI, *March 14th, 1879.*

2. In his letter from Chefoo, dated June 7th, 1879, Mr. Scott depicts the state of things in Fên-Shi-Hsien, which he visited for the purposes of relief. He says:

Fên-shi-hsien is commonly said to have been the place which suffered most of all in the famine. The Hsien magistrate last year hanged himself in despair, and his wife starved herself to death. The universal testimony was that about three-fourths of the people had perished. Before the famine there were 120,000 inhabitants; when we were there they only numbered about 30,000. The Hsien is divided into ten districts. The five to the N. W. had suffered much less than the others, so it was thought best not to distribute in those at all. In the districts where we did distribute, a very small proportion of the land was sown, but if there was a good rainfall, there would not be any more actual want. Our chief object in relieving the people was to enable them to sow their lands, and to recover more speedily from the effects of the famine. With this end in view a considerable sum (from Tls. 2.2.0 to Tls. 2.5.0) was

given to each family. If the family exceeded five persons in number, two shares were given.

As regards the practice of cannibalism, wherever we travelled in the Province of Shansi, and in parts of Honan, the universal testimony was that it ceased in the 7th moon of last year when the autumn crops were gathered. The people spoke quite freely about it, and as much information was forthcoming on the subject as one was willing to hear. I see no reason to doubt that it was fearfully prevalent in the province during the earlier months of last year. On crossing the borders into the southern part of the Province of Chihli the accounts changed, the people denying that there had been any eating of human flesh amongst them, though they had felt the famine severely.

CHARLES P. SCOTT.

CHIEFOO, *June 9th*, 1879.

3. Letters have been received from Ping-yang-fu, in Shansi, under date 20th May, to the effect that the relief distributors there were in their last week of distribution, and they were heartily glad it was drawing to an end at last. The great anxiety was for rain. Officials and people were at their wit's end about it. In the higher and dryer parts of the country, the wheat had already suffered considerably from drought. The people had petitioned to be relieved from taxes this season again. For several days the sky had been cloudy, and while the letters were being written fine rain was falling. This is from a part of Shansi where the drought was felt most severely, and while other parts of the country were favoured with rain, none had fallen there.

Further news is also to hand from Tientsin, where the heat was felt to be excessive, and where the drought was parching the country far and near. There was every apprehension of a famine again, and an appeal was made for all the relief money to be sent on to Tientsin for use in that neighbourhood, where it was most urgently needed.

It is gratifying to find that the appeals made in Europe and other places by the Roman Catholic authorities had been so successful. From a paper communicated by Rev. Père Aymeri, we learn that Taels 185,479 had been raised in all for relief work, which included Taels 50,000 received by him from the China Famine Relief Fund in Shanghai.



FAMINE RELIEF FUND.

The following is a copy of the list of questions issued to the Honorary Distributors with a summary of the reports forwarded by them in reply.

As trustworthy statistics regarding the amount of relief afforded by the contributions of foreign countries will possess a peculiar value, the Honorary Distributors will greatly oblige the Committee by answering the following questions as accurately and fully as possible.

SHANGHAI, 6th June, 1878.

1. *What is the amount you have distributed ?*
2. *What is the number you have relieved ?*
 - a, *Families ;*
 - b, *Individuals.*
3. *Has the relief been continuous or sporadic ?*
4. *Record in Chinese and English the names of the localities where relief has been administered by you, and if possible draw out a rough sketch map of district.*
5. *Has any native assistance been afforded to the sufferers in the districts you have visited ? If so, of what kind and amount ? Full particulars on this head will be gratefully received.*
6. *What are the present prospects of the localities you are acquainted with? Under this head particulars are requested with regard to—*
 - 1°. *Rainfall.*
 - 2°. *Quantities of grain available for sowing, and facilities for purchasing the same by the distressed inhabitants.*
 - 3°. *Present price of grain and articles of food.*
 - 4°. *Probable loss of population by—*
 - a, *Emigration ;*
 - b, *Starvation ;*
 - c, *Disease, as typhus, etc.*
7. *Has any case come under your personal notice where human flesh has been eaten by the starving people ?*
8. *What amount of money relief do you think will be required to keep the families on your present relief register until the Autumn harvest ?*
9. *Are your efforts at relief appreciated by the non-recipient residents in your districts ?*
10. *To what provinces have emigrants from your districts chiefly gone ?*
11. *What is your plan of relief, and can you make suggestions for extending the usefulness of the Relief Funds ?*

Report of REV. TIMOTHY RICHARD, Shansi.

(Answers to Questions).

1. Distributed in Shansi generally. Sh. Tls. 86,810,850.
2. 40,201 individuals relieved. The average in the families was about 3.9.
3. Relief was not given continuously, but alternately with the official relief—to some only once, to others twice, and to some of the most helpless nine times, each receiving 410 cash at once.
4. My distribution was in Yang-kü-hien 陽曲縣, in T'ai-yuen fu, and about 120 li from North to South.
5. Official distribution took place in January throughout the hien, about 500 cash worth of grain for each individual where the greatest suffering was.
6. In February, the son of the Sz-chuen Governor distributed to about half the villages in the eastern portion of the district. Some received a few hundred cash while others obtained as many thousands. A second official distribution took place in July, at the rate of One tow of grain for 50 mow of land. Three soup kitchens in the suburbs have been daily relieving from 8 to 20,000 people. Good prospect. Crops better than usual.

Rain very abundant of late. In Tseh-chow-fu and Lu-ngan-fu, none of the oldest people remember so much rain. In the valleys much damage was caused—whole crops being carried away, happily it was confined to a limited area.

Wheat is the only thing to be sown now, and, it continues to be very dear. It is said to be Tls. 2.00 per tow in the south, while here it is only 1148 Cash. On account of the promising appearance of things the survivors find less difficulty in getting money.

Wheat cost 2400 Tai-yuen cash per tow in the spring, now it has just fallen to 1400. Millet formerly cost 2800 per tow, now only 1800. Other grains are falling in proportion.

In my district the probable loss of population is 30 per cent. By Emigration hardly 1 per cent; temporary removal about 5 per cent; by Starvation 19 per cent; by Disease, mostly typhus, 6 per cent. Although I write this of the whole district, some small villages have lost all their inhabitants, yet close by, owing to a few mows of wet land, another village would have but few dead. I should say five millions at least have disappeared from Shansi.

7. I am not aware of having seen any eating human flesh. Few if any would confess that they sold it, but I have sent you various dreadful accounts on the subject, on which I need not enlarge.

8. The harvest is being reaped.

9. On the whole I believe all speak well of us now.

10. Scarcely any gone. Do not know. A few to the north of the province.

11. A notice is stuck up in a village to choose good and honest men to take down the names of the poor, with the promise that if faithfully done, relief will be given. When the registers are sent in, inquiries are made, and we appoint a day in which we either visit the village, or have several villages meet at some central one, when we distribute supplies.

I can only suggest that we continue relief to the old people and helpless orphans, at least until they recruit their strength.

Report by REV. DAVID HILL, Shansi.

1. What is the amount you have distributed ?

In Shu-kow-hien.....	Tls. 8,900.00
In Lin-fun-hien and Ping- yang-fu	} 28,500.00
<u>Tls. 36,500.00</u>	

2. What is the number you have relieved ?

	FAMILIES.	INDIVIDUALS.
In 37 Villages in Shu-kow-hien	4,668	16,200
In 458 „ in Ping-yang-fu	13,537	29,240
<u>In 495 Villages.....</u>	<u>18,205</u>	<u>45,440</u>

The average number of persons in each family in Shu-kow-hien requiring relief is 3.74. The percentage of the whole population needing relief estimated from the number of families is just a fraction below 9.75. The number of applicants is much higher in the small villages than in the large ones.

The average number of individuals in each family in Ping-yang-fu requiring relief is 2.16.

The Percentage of the whole population receiving relief estimated at 66.

3. Has the relief been continuous or sporadic?

Relief has in no instance been continuous, unless the giving a sufficient amount at one time to sustain life to a given period, be called continuous, which has been the plan adopted generally.

The allowance was from to 300 to 1,000 cash in each instance, according to circumstances. This with the Government Relief and economization of wild herbs, fruits, &c., was considered sufficient to keep the people going until the Autumn Harvest. I append a list of edibles which the poor people have had to turn to, to eke out the little flour (wheaten or other) which they were able to obtain.

Root of the Flag Rush 蒲根; Stems of Wheat, Kao-liang, Millet, Maize, &c., 麥稭, 高瓦, 穰, 琅穰. Elm Tree Bark 榆皮樹; Stems of several varieties of bushes, spinous and others 蒺藜; 胡藜, 蒿子, 龍伯芽, 段葉; Leaves of the Willow, Peach, Plum, Apricot, Mulberry, Persimmon, 楊, 桃, 梨, 杏, 桑, 柿, 樹葉; Wild herbs and grasses too numerous to name 馬茨, 茨代, 苦曲, 甜曲; Oily Earth 乾泥 and many others which not being so generally consumed I omit.

Most of the above were dried in the sun, and ground along with wheaten flour; these made into coarse cake very unpalatable, as I can testify, and deleterious in many instances, producing swelling of the feet and head, and in fact of the whole body. I remember one man with a bloated dropsical, leonine look, his head and face swollen to a most painful degree.

4. Record the names of the localities &c.

a. 37 Villages in Shu-kow-hien in the T'ai-yuen Prefecture.

This Hien is 31 li E. to W., and the same N. to S., thus covering an area of 960 sq. li; the whole of which was benefited by the Famine Relief funds.

b. In the city of Ping-yang-fu, and 458 Villages in the surrounding District of Ling-fun-hien, we had 7 Centres of distribution, where and from which we worked into the country, personally visiting the different places, and giving the money to the people on the spot.

5. Has any native assistance been afforded to the sufferers?

Yes, in both places. The Native Relief Work is wholly in the hands of the Officials. Private benevolent enterprise, acting independently of Officialdom, is a thing all but unknown. One large Village, in the neighbourhood of Ping-yang did at the commencement of the Famine engage to support its own poor, but their means were soon exhausted, and though they had subscribed nothing

towards the public funds, necessity drove them to apply for official relief. It was their opinion at first that it would cost them less to undertake the support of their own poor, than subscribe as they would have to do to the official fund.*

As to the Government Relief in Shu-kow-hien, we learned that it had been administered for several months, and that 60 Villages were receiving relief, containing 40,000 applicants—that the allowance is 2 ko of Grain per *diem* or 6 sheng (pints) per month to each man, and half that amount to each child,—(but the Sheng is only $\frac{7}{10}$ ths of the market measure). In addition to this, we were told that last year 6 cash a day or 180 a month was distributed,—that about Tls. 30,000 had been disbursed, including local subscriptions and Government supplies—that the allotment to each village is handed over, on arrival, to the head men of each village who, month by month, come to the Yamen with mules and carts for the Grain or Money, as the case may be, and are responsible for its distribution to the poor of their respective villages.

a. The accounts varied considerably as to the amount actually received. All agreed, however, that the grain did not arrive till a month or six weeks after it was due, and that it was utterly inadequate for the maintenance of life.

b. In Ping-yang-fu, a Committee of 12 gentlemen appointed by the District Magistrate has sole charge of Relief Administration. These at various central stations receive Government supplies, and distribute it among the people of the surrounding villages who repaired thither for the purpose. The system is cumbrous and costly, while the amount given is very small and insufficient.

In the winter months, hundreds of the poor were totally dependent on this pittance for what nutritive diet they had, and it is no wonder that the roads were strewn with the corpses of those who had not strength to crawl to and from the relief station; indeed the natives themselves say, the extra expenditure of strength and effort, which the journey cost them, especially those residing in the more distant villages, rendered it hardly worth their while to make the attempt. However, they make little or no complaint on this ground, but when we come to the question of moral integrity as to the working of this machinery, complaints are loud and long, and we fear not without foundation,—but I am glad to report that

* Since writing the above I remember two subscriptions of, I think, Tls. 4,000 each by 2 official Gentlemen in T'ai-yuen-fu. In one case it was said the subscriber took charge of the distribution himself. In the other it was dispensed through the Yamen of the District Magistrate.

with all the "squeezing" that is going on, I have not heard one word said against either the present District Magistrate, or Prefect, both of whom have shown us no little courtesy and rendered us very much aid. The former of these gentlemen has supplied me with the following data bearing on Native Relief work.

NO. OF PERSONS RECEIVING MONTHLY RELIEF		MONTHLY ALLOWANCE OF	
Adults.	Children.	Money.	Rice.
33,134	5,263	3 or 4 mace of Silver.	1½ Sheng or pints.

6. What are the present prospects &c ?

a. Shu-kow-hien. Report says, Rainfall abundant. Crops a fair average. As to Loss of Population, I find that out of 9 Villages containing a total of 2,540 families, 1,770 persons were reported in the 3rd month of the year as already dead; thus, if we reckon that (rich and poor taken together) the average in each family would be 3.60 individuals, we find that 19 per cent of the whole population have perished.

This I should say was quite within the mark; I find that the population in another village—one of the most distressed—must have been reduced at least $\frac{2}{3}$ ths, and we were told that the last of the 3 Grave Pits (萬人坑) received in the course of a week in the 3rd month some 200 or 300 corpses. These would be chiefly from the town of Shu-kow itself and its immediate vicinity. The bodies are just swung in without mat, wrapper, or shroud—and there they lie a layer of corpses, and then a layer of earth until the pit is filled up. All the cities in southern Shansi seem to have been compelled to adopt this plan.

b. Ping-yang-fu. As to the present prospects of this Prefecture I have been unable to gather definite information and confine my remarks to Lin-fun-hien the District in which Ping-yang-fu is situated.

As to the past distress the following list giving the number of Petitioners last year for Relief from the various Chow Hien, in this Prefecture, may help towards an accurate estimate of the extent of the suffering.

Lin-fun-Hien	67,761
Siang-ling-Hien	24,410
Hung-tung-Hien	25,978
Fu-shan-Hien	31,953
T'ai-p'ing-Hien	31,345
Yoh-yang-Hien	33,150
K'ih-yao-Hien	32,555
Yih-eh'eng-Hien	46,734
Fun-shi-Hien	13,290
Hiang-ning-Hien	53,000
Kih-chow	22,569
	<u>392,745</u>

Lin-fun-Hien is allowed to be one of the most distressed Districts in this Prefecture,—although the vast extent of country it covers, accounts in great measure for the larger number of petitioners, and the prospect, for the coming winter is perhaps as gloomy here as in any of the other Districts. The insufficiency of the Rainfall,—the failure of the Autumn harvest, (the average, taking the District all round, being only $\frac{1}{10}$ ths of a good year) the cessation of official relief after the 8th moon, the present high price of wheat, and the continued stagnation of trade, forebode a trying winter, though nothing like the terrible distress of the last five Winter months.

As to the probable loss of Population, from a minute investigation, I find that the loss here has been 73 per cent: 67.61 by Starvation, 3.49 by Disease and 1.90 by Emigration. The destruction of property caused by the Famine in this one District of Lin-fun-hien, I estimate at a million taels at least.

TEN VILLAGES IN LIN-FUN-HIEN, PING-YANG-FU.						
Name of Village.	Population.		Total Loss.	By Starvation.	By Disease.	By Emigration.
	Last year.	Pre-sent.				
Yao-chwang-sang,	64	35	29	18	4	7
Tsou-chia-chisang,	82	42	40	36	4	...
Sai-t'ow,	135	53	82	64	6	12
Kia-hwa,	200	60	140	136	...	4
Wo-k'ow,	273	78	195	156	17	22
Yuen-sang,	500	120	380	320	25	35
Ts'ai-li,	760	340	420	390	40	...
Chiao-li,	1,660	420	1,240	1,100	120	20
How-Ts'un,	900	450	450	405	45	...
Tu-mun,	3,600	600	3,000	2,910	30	60
	8,174	2,198	5,976	5,525	291	160

The most fatal diseases have been typhus or typhoid fever and diarrhœa. The former was very prevalent in the 2nd and 3rd months. It is known by the natives as the Sang Han Ping 傷寒病, and unless after running its course for 7, 10, or more days, a profuse perspiration ensues, is considered fatal. When in the 2nd and 3rd month the poor were reduced to the dry roots of the flag rush—those who had not stamina sufficient to stand such diet, gradually, and with comparatively little pain, sank away through mere debility.

7. Has any case come under your notice where human flesh has been eaten by the people?

In Shu-kow-hien, on the 4th of the 4th month, two men, from a village in the neighbourhood, were apprehended and punished by the Magistrate for eating the dead bodies of some 20 persons whose corpses they had taken out of their coffins, sold their clothes, and cooked and eaten the flesh.

If similar measures had been adopted in Lin-fun-hien, scores or rather hundreds would have been brought to justice; for in almost every village of any size that I have visited, I have been told, that the bodies of the dead have been devoured by the living. The village in which human flesh has *not* been eaten is without doubt the exception, but in by far the majority of cases it has been the flesh of those already dead, although instances of men killing and eating their fellow men, are not altogether wanting. In one village a man was pointed out as having committed this crime. Travellers dared not to go past his house in those days, it was said, lest they should fall victims to his knife. In another village a youth 18 or 20 was charged by the head man of the village, in my presence, with having killed and eaten his own mother, a charge, awful as it was, he seemed unable to deny. The following was told me by an eyewitness of the trial and execution.

In the 3rd moon of this year, five women were brought to trial by the Magistrate, for kidnapping, killing and eating children, in Ping-yang-fu. They confessed the crime, but pleaded that they were driven to it by hunger. The Magistrate sentenced them to be buried alive—and after giving sentence asked them if they would resent such punishment,—to which they replied, “No, we have committed the crime, and deserve the punishment.” They first received 300 lashes each till the blood flowed and were then bound hands and feet, conveyed outside the South Gate of the City, where 5 separate graves were dug, some 4 or 5 feet deep, and without coffin, shroud, or even mat, were thrown into the pit which was immediately filled in with earth, and over the place a flag-staff was planted with paper streamers stating the crime committed, and punishment inflicted.

8. What amount will be required &c.

Report sent in too late to answer this question, seeing that the Autumn Harvest is now being reaped.

9. Are your efforts at relief appreciated, &c?

I should think so—especially in Ping-yang-fu—indeed we have

found as a rule that where distress was the deepest, gratitude was the greatest, and in this respect there is no comparison between the official acknowledgment of the relief in Shu-kow, when compared with Ping-yang-fu. The officials, with whom we have had to do here have repeatedly expressed their sense of the kindness shown by the free will offerings of foreigners to this Relief Work. The head men of the villages and the gentry too, when meeting us in their official capacity have done the same; but I must confess that I have been rather surprised, that so few of the well-to-do natives, not officially connected with the administration of relief, private gentlemen, retired officials and merchants, gentlemen farmers, &c., have favoured us with their presence, when distributing in their village or neighbourhood.

10. To what provinces have the Emigrants from your districts chiefly gone?

Chiefly to Peking—probably $\frac{2}{3}$ ths of those who have emigrated. Others have gone to Shansi, and some few to Shantung and Honan. Many of the Peking emigrants have, returned to Shansi already.

11. What is your plan of relief &c.?

Our plan throughout has been to distribute money, sometimes Copper Cash, sometimes Native Bank Notes and in every case to require a Register of Names, &c. The Methods of distribution resolve themselves into two—which we may term the *wholesale*, and the *retail*—by the wholesale, I mean the assembling together the poor of several villages at one central station, and then paying out the money to the representative of each family, whose names have been inserted in the list supplied by the head men of the village—in the presence of the whole village thus assembled. This is the most speedy plan, several villages being relieved in one day, and at times when speed is essential, such as the period immediately preceding the Spring and Autumn sowing, or when the poor are dying off in great numbers daily. This is undoubtedly the better plan,—but it is open to one great objection, viz:—that it places us too much in the hands of these head men who may, if so disposed, sweep off a heavy sum by introducing their own creatures into the lists. The retail plan is going from house to house seeing for ourselves the depth of poverty of each family, and there—upon fixing the amount of relief to be given, and then from the Village Temple, or some other public building, giving the money into the hands of the head of each family just visited. This of courses

occupies a considerably longer time, but it is the safer plan of the two.

It has also the advantage of bringing us into friendly contact with the poor themselves, and offers the opportunity of saying a few words to them collectively when the money is distributed.

If any form of public works could be instituted alike for the men and women, such as road making, cotton spinning, &c., it would be a great benefit, but such is beyond our power. Orphanages might also be established. As it is, the Famine has thrown education back for at least 20 years. Few comparatively of the villages have now public schools, even for the better class of children.

April--September, 1878.

Report by REV. JASPER MCILVAINE, Shansi.

1. The amount I distributed was about Taels 3,800.
2. The number who received aid was probably 15,000.
3. I reached the field when the autumn crops were already in head, and a single allowance of money seemed all that was necessary to carry the people over to the harvest time.
4. In two villages in Northern Honan I distributed a little, but the rest of the work was in the vicinity of Tseh-chow in Southern Shansi. The country to the west of the city received most of our attention as being in the greatest distress, though other districts were also visited and relieved.
5. Native assistance private and official was largely granted, the former through the munificence of an ex-official, who on being asked to contribute to the government fund for relief, preferred to do the work himself in association with others. He undertook the charge of three hsien districts, and sent in vast quantities of grain for the purpose.
6. About Tseh-chow the population is reduced more than one half; I think there is no exaggeration in saying that $\frac{3}{4}$ of the people have been cut off mostly by sheer starvation. The highest death-rate was in the winter and spring. From the 5th month a few vegetables could be added to the bark of trees, leaves and grass seeds, which had become the staff of life. Money is very scarce. Land could not find purchasers. Fine brick houses ditto. People starved to death with plenty of excellent furniture. The emigration from this country was Southward into Honan. Those who went to K'ai-fung-fu were largely cared for by the authorities and the charities

of the Southern Merchants. I have met many returning from that city. Those who went elsewhere have probably for the most part perished.

At present the crops about Tseh-chow-fu are very fine, and I judge there will be an ample supply of food for the remnant that is left. So plentiful is the prospect, that the people who have endured such awful suffering will be talking of the famine as a thing of the past; yet there are many things in the condition of things around them, which will long remind them of the terrible calamity that has befallen them. Houses dismantled, brick dwellings unoccupied, families cut off, or surviving in one or two members, the stock of animals diminished; I did not see a chicken or a pig in Shansi. Dogs very scarce. Few healthy people are seen. The black famine look still prevails. One sees starving people every day.

In the roughest part of the hill country, many fields lie uncultivated, but in the more open plains most of the land has been planted. I am told that seed was supplied by the government on the occasion of a heavy rain.

7. I have seen no case of eating human flesh, but I have no doubt about it. I have several times seen dogs eating corpses in the roadside.

8. Though the harvest has come, yet many who have no land, or have not been able to plant are still left starving.

9. Many spoke of our work as a benefaction, but the smallness of our supplies was a disappointment to many and caused vexation and annoyance, so that a very abusive placard was issued against us, but it came to nothing. The Chehien wanted us to leave, but the Che-fu put things right. The city people were displeased at our distributing our money in the country, but the more intelligent understood the reason of it.

10. We have used pencilled checks in visiting the homes of the sufferers, which were duly cashed. Yet courage and even official protection are necessary to keep in check a class of hungry and covetous people to whom we do not think it proper to give.

Report by MGR. LUIGI DI MASSAGOTTA, Bishop of Shansi.

1. Taels 14,416 were distributed by us in this province.
2. 2,800 Christian families were succoured. To these, however, must be added many other heathen families, who living in the same

places with the Christians shared with them in great part, making the number of individuals assisted about 15,000.

3. In the North, where the harvest was better, and also in a few Christian parishes near streams, the aid given was temporary, but for the most part it was continued for four months. As the number of the places where the distributions took place they too would almost amount to 460. The total amount of the christian parishes assisted is 427.

5. The small number of Christians, who were able, have given alms until now to all that knocked at their doors, and lent money. They buried many of the dead, who did not even have a pitying hand to cover their corpses with a little turf. Some of the heathen followed the example of the Christians and gave a monthly supply of 15 or 20 soldi, but those who were best off generally kept their doors shut to the lamentable voices of the famishing.

6. This year towards the North, and in two-thirds of the East, there is hope of a moderate harvest on account of the rain. In the rest, beginning at this city, on all the line of the South-west the harvest will be very scarce, for the intense heat of July dried up everything. A missionary of the district of Pin-yang-fu wrote that of ten parts of ground only two were sown, and that the drought had almost destroyed the crops. Now the price of grain although not a little diminished (and we are already in the season of the autumn harvest) is still high; since for one tow of millet they ask 1500, and in other places 1700 cash and for a pound of wheat flour 80 to 90.

Now it is no longer as it was at first, when many abandoned their houses and lands, and sold their wives and children, that they took some to one and some to another province.

The women of every class were sold in troops at the vilest price on the public streets, so that whoever had 3, 4, 7 or 10 francs could pick out a young wife to suit his own taste. I myself have seen many of these unhappy creatures, their eyes bathed in tears, seeking in vain for some pitying person, who might accept them as their slaves; but no: they died of hunger and cold along the streets of this city. Here there was a vast number of beggars assembled from different parts of the province, attracted by a little bowl of millet cooked in water that the governor distributed daily. But who can estimate the people that from September 1877 till now have died of hunger and the typhus fever?

I can only say that we mourn over 4000 Christians lost in these times.

7. They sell human flesh almost publicly, not only in buns, fritters, but also without being mixed with herbs or anything. Every one knows of it, even the public authorities, and very often the culprits have been condemned to be beaten to death in the area of the court of justice for trading in this way. I myself have twice seen corpses mutilated in the most fleshy parts; and know for certain that a family living near us satisfied their hunger for two whole months with nothing but human flesh, and that a member of the family confessed it without a blush. Some women have said to the mandarins who were sitting in the court of justice, "if it is lawful for dogs to eat human flesh why is it not lawful for us who have nothing to eat?" One day I saw some poor people moving some wasted bones, and one of them was picking the fingers of a corpse. The sight forced me to tears. Now, however, there is no longer such cruelty; but before the seventh month even the public streets were extremely perilous; and the missionaries wrote me of horrible cases that happened every day. They begged me in sending relief never to let any one go alone, but well accompanied and armed for fear of being not only robbed, but killed and eaten at the inns, where so many cases have happened, which if written to a person at a distance would hardly be credited.

8. The Autumn harvest has already come, and the sufferers are still many. Considering therefore that the dearth is not yet over, the famine will yet be great in the Winter, and multitudes of the sufferers will perish, who in order to live until now have sold all they had. These cannot look for help from the Governor and must be relieved. Besides we have gathered many little boys and girls, Christian, as well as heathen, bereaved of their parents, also many Christian widows without support whatever, who likewise merit our compassion. To relieve and nourish them, however, until the coming year would require a sum of 80,000 to 100,000 francs.

9. Our efforts are appreciated in general by the Christians, and oh! with what thanks, their eyes bathed in tears, have they received alms, as a gift from heaven, invoking on the heads of the benefactors every blessing spiritual as well as temporal! The Christian parishes, not content with having thanked their own missionary priest, have written to me to express their obligations and thanks. Those nearer have come in person to do so. The heathen, incapable of under-

standing impartial christian love, see in our charity nothing but secondary and imaginary ends, as, for example, that of buying the hearts of the people to subject it to European rule, etc. For this reason there are a few that do not appreciate our efforts. I see, however, that even some of these weep and say good words when asking for relief, but scarcely have they received them than they curse with all their might.

10. Speaking of the Christians, very few of them emigrated. Some went to Honan, others to Shantung, the most however to Tartary. It is not known that they returned. The heathen have gone in great numbers to these various places and Peking. At present emigration is very rare.

11. Our system for relieving so many sufferers has been to distribute grain monthly, as the most advisable. In some cases, owing to their extreme distance from the priests and on account of their infirmities, money was distributed; alas! How many Christian families there are, who not having anything to live on, have sold their houses, huts and lands before the last year! Now with absolutely nothing they must still nourish their wives and children. Their children are so thin that they look more like walking skeletons than living beings. Their bodies are covered with rags, but when the Winter comes, I don't know what will become of them.

A Report was also received from the Bishop of Shensi in much the same terms as the above. The sum of Taels 12,767 was sent to Si-ngan-fu by the hands of Rev. A. Aymeri and the field of distribution will appear in the accompanying map under the province of Shensi.

Similar remarks apply to the province of Honan, the sum of Taels 10,967 has been forwarded to Mgr. Volonteri, the R.C. Bishop there, from whom a number of interesting letters were received from time to time, and have appeared in the public records.

In answer to an application from the R. C. Bishop of Mongolia by means of the Belgian Consul in Shanghai, we handed Taels 1000 to Rev. A. Aymeri, who kindly transmitted the amount to that region for use among the Ordus who were suffering from famine likewise.

Report of REV. JONATHAN LEES, Tientsin.

1. Amount received - - Tientsin Taels	4630.74.3
Distributed in Tientsin mostly to refugees }	176.20
" Yensan district, }	296.06
" Tsan-chiang; Chi-chou, }	3860.87
" Heng-sui, &c., &c., }	4333.13
Loss in Exchange	106.12.3
Travelling &c., and agents	184.07
Medicines &c.,	7.42
	<u>4630.74.3</u>

2. In <i>Yensan</i> , 519 families. 2,557 individuals.	
In <i>Tsau-chiang</i> , 4098 " 12,134 "	
Total 4617 " 14,691 "	

3. Sporadic of necessity in many cases, as in the *Yensan* district, where there has been only one distribution. But in the locality where most of the funds have been used, continuity of relief has been desired and aimed at.

4. Relief District proper in 3 Hsiens, viz., Heng-sui, Tsau-chiang and Chi-chow with 73 villages in all. Also Tsang-chow, Yen-san, Ching-yün hsien with 45 villages were occasionally visited.

5. The people have had official relief four times, speaking generally, it has taken three forms; (1) the selection of families in the villages for gratuitous help; (2) the giving of a small amount of grain upon security of land, the value to be made good (in some cases, with profit) in harvest, on penalty of loss of land; and (3) the sale of grain at a large reduction from current prices, the proceeds of such sales being used in purchasing the cloth woven by the people, which was then taken to Tientsin or elsewhere for sale, and the money reinvested in grain for them. The third plan was that adopted by the Chi-chow magistrate, and appears to be the most intelligent and persistent of the official efforts. Its main defect perhaps lay in the fact that the classes most in need of help had absolutely no money to purchase food with. Besides, as only a given small amount of grain was allowed in any case, the thousands who gathered in the district city upon the days of distribution only got enough to serve them for a day or two as the result of a day's waiting and struggling and a walk of many miles.

Not much I fancy has been done by private benevolence. For one thing, all but the very wealthiest have been themselves helpless sufferers, and households owning large farms have been reduced to absolute starvation. I have, however, heard of a few cases in which men have assisted their poorer neighbors.

6. There was the promise of a good yield this harvest, if more rain came, the crops being then suffering from drought. But large portions of the soil were unsown, owing either to the absence of owners or to their inability to purchase seed. In many cases, the help given was at once taken advantage of to sow. Grain is now cheap enough, at any rate as cheap as in Tientsin, from whence large supplies have been sent by water, but the poverty of the people, most of whom have already parted with nearly all that could be sold, makes the comparative price of food of little moment. Typhus was raging still everywhere and carrying off numbers.

The question of the probable loss of population is peculiarly difficult to answer in the absence of any reliable returns. The replies given by the headmen of the villages to such enquiries are so vague and general, as to be worthless. The data for an opinion most useful to a casual observer are the apparent relative populousness of familiar villages and the number of houses vacant or dismantled. The disappearance of population, the fewness of people seen in villages where the sight of a foreigner would once have ensured a crowded street is a most painful and suggestive fact. In many places, from a fourth to a third of the houses have been pulled down. In one now of about 100 families, I counted over 40 utterly deserted homes. After careful enquiry, I am inclined to think that about one fifth of the population had disappeared when I was last there. It may be hoped that many have but emigrated and will return.

7. No.

8. I should like, if possible, another grant of Taels 2,000.

9. Yes, though I cannot point to any special proof thereof, unless it be the very friendly and helpful proclamation respecting our work issued by the magistrate in May last.

10. Can't say, mainly I think to Tientsin, Peking, and the North, *i.e.*, beyond the wall.

11. To take up villages round a chosen centre, and visit them periodically, as funds and strength permit, only widening effective relief, and to proportion relief to what seem to be in present need.

Not to attempt any thing like support, but simply so to supplement the resources of the people as to make existence possible.

Report by MR. CHARLES BUDD.

I have distributed Taels 10,000 in the Ho-chien-fu district, 8,000 of which were given to the sufferers in Ling-tsing-hsien about 90 miles from the city.

Villages relieved 458; City 1; Families 28,332.

Native Assistance has been largely granted among the poorest villages, and until I left nearly 2,000 children were being fed in the city, yet all was insufficient to meet the extreme need.

As to the present prospect, rain has fallen in several localities in over abundance, so that fears were entertained lest the harvest should suffer in consequence. In Ling-tsin the appearance of things is most promising. In the S.W. large tracts of land are covered only with weeds and grass, and what is cultivated is nearly destroyed by blight.

The price of provisions here seems fully 100 p. cent dearer than other places.

As to the loss of population from one cause and another, it is hard to tell. Generally speaking, it was the husband or elder sons who emigrated, and they were likely to return unless starved on the road. Death by starvation and disease was most common, and in this city the rate was very high. Every day I met individuals, often only a little child, the sole remaining member of what was formerly a large family. In some houses I entered, the whole family, the dead and dying were lying side by side, and the impure atmosphere was intolerable.

No case of eating human flesh came under my notice, though I heard of it.

Believe foreign sympathy and aid was appreciated by non-recipients but more largely where relief work was carried on aided by native officials.

Our plan of relief was the same as in other districts. We got a list of needy cases, which we carefully examined and administered help accordingly. About 6,000 Taels were given by me personally, and I did my best to prevent deception and squeezing on the part of those connected with the work. Proclamations were issued by the authorities stating where the funds came from, and enjoining all to act honestly in the reception and distribution of them.

Report by REV. MESSRS. PORTER, SMITH and STANLEY,
of Tientsin, and SHEFFIELD, of Tung-chow.

1. We have distributed as follows :—

Taels 244,83 from collections in Tientsin.
 „ 1309,45 from private sources.
 „ 7001,06 from Tientsin Committee.

2. We have relieved families about 4700, and of individuals 22,000.

3. Our work was continued from February 12th, to June 23rd, when it was thought the last payment would suffice to cover the intermediate time till harvest.

4. Our work extended to 115 villages and market towns, in Teh-chow, Ngen-hsien, and Ping-yuen hsien, more than half of those villages belong to Ngen-hsien which has 800 villages under its control, and contains a population of about 50,000. Our centre of work was the walled village of P'ang Chia (龐家).

5. Native assistance afforded the sufferers. In February, two kitchens in Teh-chow were giving gruel to about 10,000 persons. These were closed on the 18th and 20th of the same month, in consequence, it was said, of instructions from Peking to send away the tribute grain in store; viz., 80,000 tan to Shansi, and 70,000 tan (the balance) to Peking.

At Sz-nü Sz (寺女四), irregular relief was given for a short time which was said to be by private contributions.

In P'ang Chia, gruel was given *one day*—March 12th, to 900 persons. It had been the habit of the few wealthy persons in the villages to give gruel to the poor from outside villages at the New Year time. The practice was omitted last winter, on the alleged ground that they could not do so much as in former years. Shortly after our arrival, a “medium” in the Fu-lan hwei (挨乱會), uttered this sentiment, “that the persons from the West had taken up their good practice, and seized their honors.” This stimulated them to action. One individual wished to adopt our plan, and aid only as many as could be carried through the distress; especially a few families in this own village not yet in absolute want, and hence not on my list. To this they objected, and he withdrew from the work. Only those from outside villages were aided.

6. Future prospects, (a) Rainfall. There were good showers in April—too late for the wheat, but in good time for planting other crops. A sufficiency of rain has fallen since, and by last accounts, the crops promised well. (b) Seed for sowing. Scarcely a mow of land is not planted where we were aiding. We gave no grants for seed-grain, yet our aid was of great benefit to the poor. As soon as the rains came, such that had grain were ready to share it with, and the dealers also to lend to those who had none. (c) Prices of grain. Millet, both large and small, was double the price of ordinary years. Some things ranged even higher than this. (d) Loss of population. (1) By emigration, none, or but very few are permanently lost. (2), (3) Figures are difficult to get approximately accurate. As near as we can estimate, however, about *one-third* of the population has been carried off by starvation and disease. Both small-pox and typhus prevailed.

7. Eating of human flesh. Of this we have seen and heard nothing in our section. It was said, however, that in some places, mothers, in a frenzy of distress had buried their children rather than hear their piercing cries, and see them die in agony.

8. Our last payment, made near the end of June, was considered sufficient to carry our people beyond the point of suffering for want of food, when our supplies ceased.

9. Relief work appreciated or not? We believe that throughout the villages our work has been appreciated by all classes. Not only has an apparently hearty welcome been accorded wherever we have gone by many of the non-recipients, but we have been invited to not a few of their houses, and been warmly urged to visit them. Altogether we were made to feel that the mass of the people were in sympathy with our work, and were grateful for what we did.

10. Emigration, whither? The few who left temporarily in search of food, were governed entirely by reported or prospective supplies. Some directed their steps towards southern Shantung, others towards Tientsin.

11. Plan of relief. After examination of various methods, and consultation with intelligent natives, it seemed best to give cash instead of grain, as involving less care and labor to those in charge, less opportunity for squeezing on the part of evil-disposed headmen, and especially because the poor could make more out of the cash, than its equivalent in grain. Lists were carefully made out of needy cases and acted on in the most judicious way possible. Cases of deception did occur but they were strictly investigated and

redress sought. The last payment was made in grain for various reasons, and as an instance of the good feeling towards us, the wealthy men in many villages sent their carts free of charge or asking only for the feed and answer of the dinner and men in charge, to draw the grain home for their poor neighbours, and expressed their appreciation of our efforts.

As to the condition and prospects of the country, it may be remarked that two main principles guided us in the work. (a) to aid only as many as our means would enable us to carry through (b) to save life, hence they were only to be assisted, not supported. The aspect of the country is greatly changed in its general character; and appearance, and it will take years to regain its population and recover its lost ground. Happily there seems to be a complete change in the feelings of the people towards foreigners who assisted them in their distress, and whom they regard as "Life-saving Buddhas." We were desired to express their warmest thanks for the beneficence bestowed upon them, which they could never repay or return in any form.

Two cases out of many we might allude to as having come across our path. We found a woman chained in a small room, on account of her pilfering from passing traders simply to appease hunger and sustain life. She received a small bowl of rice from her mother-in-law once a day, and she had become deranged through her sufferings. Her husband who had thus chained her, had gone away, and no one would release her. It was done however, and the woman returned to her right mind and remained quietly at home. Another was that of a woman who had thrown away her new born son. The babe was picked up among the broken bricks, almost lifeless and assistance was given to the poor woman, who was charged to take care of her child. A few days after, she came and thanked the distributor for saving its life.

We are satisfied that the work was highly appreciated by all classes, and are not aware of a single dissentient voice. We have only to express our indebtedness to the native assistants for their invaluable service, in carrying on the work.

Report from the BISHOP TAGLIABUE, VICARIAT, Chihli, S.W.

1. Amount received? Shanghai Taels 4,800.
2. Numbers relieved? 2,200 persons or 820 families and 80 children for 5 months.
3. Continuous or sporadic? According to circumstances.

4. Places of distribution? In the prefectures of Ching-ting-fu, Shun-teh-fu, Ting-chow, &c.

5. Chinese assistance? The Mandarins gave help for a short time in Sin-loh, Shin-tseh, Hsin-t'ang, Ching-ting hsien. In this last place they gave about one third of the food sufficient for a day to each man. In a pagoda they maintained in some measure 200 sick, and altogether each officer distributed Taels 1,500 to 2,000.

6. The actual state of the country? There are very few who do not need assistance. Numbers have no land and are in great distress, travelling to and fro, while the price of grain is high and they have no means for buying it. It is impossible to estimate the diminution of the population from sickness or starvation. In the country districts, there are few places, where many have not died from these causes. Perhaps we may say 10% have died from famine and 20% from typhus fever. The latter has not yet ceased.

7. The consumption of human flesh? In a village of P'ing-shan called Ku-taou, a mother killed her own daughter of 8 years under pressure of the famine. In another called Nan-yeh-li a famishing family sustained themselves by the flesh of the dead that had been cast out of the village. [Other instances are given, and it is said it is impossible to tell all].

8. What is the sum required till the autumn? I think Taels 1,000 would relieve a large amount of misery.

9. Is the relief appreciated by those who have not required it? Most certainly, by one and all, but this will more fully appear afterwards.

10. Where have the emigrants chiefly gone to? I cannot say where, or how many.

11. Our distribution has been varied according to the times, places and persons, whether in money or grain. It would be well to establish places of relief in each village if it could be done to advantage, but it would be found very difficult.

Report of Rev. H. LOWREY, PILCHER, PYKE and DAVIS.

1. We have distributed the following amounts;

Taels	140	from private contributions,
„	1,600	„ Shanghai Committee.
	900	„ Peking „

Taels 2,640 less Taels 200 Balance on hand.

2. We have given relief to 44 villages, 1508 families, 5377 persons. A majority of the above received assistance several times from February to first part of July; some of them were only entered on our lists at our last visit.

3. We have aimed at continuous relief.

4. Our work has been Yeu-shan-hsien, 300 li south of Tientsin, and in Nankung and Ch'ing-ho-hsien 700 li south of Tientsin.

5. Native assistance has been given but once, nearly a year ago in the part of Nankung where we labored. Several wealthy citizens made a contribution of grain to the most destitute.

6. The rainfall since the first of June has been abundant. Prospect for fall harvest good. Grain could be obtained at marts on the Grand Canal and the Province of Shantung. The price was about double that ordinarily paid.

As to the probable loss of population we have information from only 18 villages in the Nankung hsien, where from out of 1,958 families, 685 died from starvation, 358 from disease, and 740 have emigrated. The loss from the above causes is equal to about 20 per cent, of the population—that is for this year alone.

7. We learned of no instance where human flesh had been eaten.

8. Our last distribution, made in July, was expected to carry the people through to the fall harvest.

9. The non-recipient residents freely express favorable opinions of this work, but seem to suspect some ulterior design. As these suspicions are allayed we expect their appreciation of these efforts to relieve the perishing will increase.

10. Of those who have emigrated the majority have gone to Shantung.

11. Our plan has been to prepare by our own assistants lists of the most distressed cases in each village, and when by personal inspection, we have been satisfied with these lists, we have given at the rate of 500 cash for an adult and 300 for each child, at intervals of once in about six weeks. The cash was paid under our personal observation to some responsible representative of the family.

The balance on hand, to which we have to add the proceeds of £298 Stg. just received from our Mission Rooms, in New York, we shall need in assisting the most necessitous cases next winter, for there is sure to be much suffering.

Report by REV. JOHN INNOCENT, Tientsin.

1. I have distributed Tls. 1,100 in district of Lao-ling in the N.W. of Shantung.

2. The number relieved is 2,177 families and 4,449 persons.

3. In several places there has been continuous relief to a certain extent. In two or three centres, periodical visitation has been made and relief given. In other parts the aid has been only occasional, and the amount given to each small.

4. In addition to the centres of work, the surrounding villages were visited, and many fugitive poor helped besides.

5. I am not aware of any official relief in the districts we have visited beyond a slight remission of taxes.

6. The prospect in the country at large is cheering.

a. The rainfall has been abundant and the crops promise a full yield of corn. *b.* The only difficulty in the way is the lack of money on the part of the people to buy grain. In addition to the crops, ample supplies are brought from Manchuria by junks to Cheng-szi, about 150 *li* distant, and contiguous to large trading towns on the Grand Canal. *c.* The present price of grain is about double the ordinary rate, but it is certain to fall soon. *d.* I have no reliable date to warrant an answer to this question.

7. No case of the consumption of human flesh has come under my notice.

8. I am specially anxious to relieve a number of families who are now wishing to return home. Before emigrating they pulled down their houses, and the prospect before them in the winter is a bitter one. Five Hundred Taels for their relief or others in special distress, would be a well-spent boon.

9. Our efforts to relieve the famine sufferers have elicited the warm approval and acknowledgment of the local magistrates, and the grateful appreciation of those who were independent of such aid.

10. Many have gone in various directions, some with a view to permanent settlement, and others intending to return to their several villages and homesteads.

11. I prefer systematic and periodical help to ascertained cases of distress in a given district, as long as the famine lasts.

The class of village schoolmasters seems to claim our special pity and help. They have suffered from the famine and fever very greatly, and are among the last who will benefit by the improvement in the state of things. Their character and circumstances call for particular sympathy in the matter of relief.

Report by the REV. S. GABRIELLI, R. C. Missionary,
in 武城縣 Wu-cheng, Shantung.

1. Since last February we have distributed upwards of 50,000 cash.

2. 900 families have been relieved.

3. In many cases we have given continuous assistance. In others, three and four times.

4. The following are the hsien where we have distributed. Wu-cheng 武城, Hsia-chiu 夏津, Chin-ping 清平, Ngai-hsien 恩縣, Kuan-tao 館陶, Kuang-hsien 冠縣, Tang-yi 唐義, Ling-chin 臨清州. Those places are to the east and west of the Grand Canal. The country is a plain extending into Chih-li. A good deal of land is sandy especially in Hsia-chiu, and nitrous.

5. Yes, in several villages with alms collected among those who were not suffering from hunger. It has saved many from death.

6. There is hope of the end of the famine. 1. From the plentiful rain which has lately fallen. 2. From the great quantity of grain now coming by the Grand Canal. 3. Wheat is now 1000 cash the bushel. Kao-liang is 1200 and millet 900 cash. Before, every thing was much dearer; but since the rain, prices have fallen. 4. The number of emigrants is not considerable. 5. Not many died of starvation, but many died of typhus, and the mortality still continues.

7. I don't know of any case in these districts.

8. It is hard to answer this question. Notwithstanding the hope of a crop of some kind in Autumn, it is certain that distress will still exist amongst many. And I believe it is the great distress that is the cause of the raging and fatal typhus.

9. Very much so, and they openly commend the foreigners for sending relief.

10. Emigrants go generally to the North of the great wall, and also to Liao-tung.

11. We have distributed personally in many cases. We have also sent relief to several places through trusty persons who had to bring us from the people a certificate that they had received as much as we had sent.

We have had to receive many children of both sexes, especially orphans, whose parents died of typhus after having been emaciated by hunger.

Report by the REV. P. P. DEMARCHI, R. C. Missionary,
in 新城 Hsin-cheng, Shantung.

1. I have distributed Taels 1,800.
2. I have assisted upwards of families 650, Individuals 2,860.
3. In some places we have had to give continuous relief; in other localities we have distributed two, three, or four times; and have given also in order to buy grain seed.

4. The localities where we have distributed relief this year are given in Chinese herewith. We have had to succour some families in 臨朐 Lin-kiü, who on account of the famine of last year are still in great distress, and especially widows with several children.

With the exception of this district which is mountainous, and where the crops have been plentiful this year, the other districts of 益都, 博興, 高苑, 新城, 樂安, 蒲台, are immense plains reaching North to the gulf of Pai-chih-le, and North West to the Yellow River. The land is not very fertile, it is sandy and nitrous. There are tracts that are waste or abandoned on account of their nitrous character. There are no trees, except in the villages. In some places also no wells, and in many parts the water is very brackish and bitter.

5. As far as I know there has not been any local relief.

6. (a.) Rain in several places has been sufficient for millet, Sorghum, beans, etc; in other places it was sufficient for sowing, but afterwards the drought destroyed the seed; now they have had rain to sow late millet and beans. (b.) There was enough grain in the market for seed; but many had not the means of buying it, except with the relief we gave them. (c.) At present Sorghum is 70 cash per catty, and Wheat flour 108. Many are still living on millet bran, wild herbs, bark of trees mixed with some Sorghum or millet flour. And there are people who grind straw and boil it with some flour. (d.) The emigrants this year are not many, perhaps two thousand. Died of typhus, as far as I know, four thousand at least. Only a few died of hunger.

7. I don't know of any one in these districts who has eaten human flesh.

8. I think there is no need of further relief in these districts; at the beginning of August there was abundant rain, and there is now good hope of a fair autumn crop.

9. Certainly, and the people wonder how strangers have shown such a large measure of generosity in sending relief to them when dying of hunger. Even those who were not in want admire greatly the benevolence and charity that came to succour their dying fellow citizens.

10. The greater part go to Manchuria.

11. Our plan has been to seek the head men of each village, and get from them a list of families or individuals in distress. We then called the head of each of those families, and gave him relief to last for two months; at the end of that time we repeated the relief according to the need. But our system has been to exclude opium smokers; we don't want that alms collected by your committee with such perseverance and compassion should go to satisfy the cravings of vice. But in several cases we have had to give some relief to the Wives and Children of smokers, because they were really in fearful distress.

P.S.—The sum of Tls. 6,050 in all have been forwarded to Shantung by Rev. M. Aymeri for distribution at the hands of the R. C. Missionaries in that Province.

CHINA FAMINE RELIEF FUND.

REPORT

Of the Chairman of the Famine Relief Committee at Tientsin.

The Province of Shansi extends from North to South about 400 and from East to West about 200 miles; and consists of two elevated valleys formed by the Yellow and Fên Rivers, which are separated from each other and from Chihli by desolate and formidable mountain ranges. The Great Wall intersects the Province between the 39th and 40th degrees of N. Latitude, and the industry of the people North of that barrier is chiefly confined to the pasturage of animals, or the manufacture of ornaments from the agates and crystals found in abundance in the surrounding hills. Coal and iron are most plentiful all over the province, but more especially in the valleys which stretch to the south; and the facility with which these minerals can be excavated has provoked the erection of extensive smelting works, now all cold, near the capital T'ai-yuen-fu, and thence along the entire valley of the Fên. The iron utensils, chiefly cooking pans, once commanded the markets of

China as far South as Fuhkien, when they came into competition with the cheaper, if not better, castings of the Southern provinces, particularly Canton.

The exaggeration with which everything Chinese has hitherto been surrounded has estimated the population of Shansi, as amounting to between fifteen and fifty millions, but aided by the light which has of late been shed over the unhappy province, a sober and careful computation would not exceed fifteen millions as its entire population in 1874. During the Ming Dynasty its prosperity was at its highest. Princes of the reigning house and their associates had their favorite abodes near T'ai-yuen; but four centuries of neglect, famine, or insurrection have sadly interfered with the population, wealth, and fertility of Shansi.

In 1853, the Taiping rebels entered from Honan and endeavoured to establish the dynasty of Great Peace, by desolating the Southern Prefectures and exterminating the inhabitants. The cities along the valley of the Fên, particularly Ping Yang, show in the ruins of their principal buildings, and the patchwork appearance of their walls, the fury of their onslaught.

The mountains which intersect the entire province would suggest the existence of extensive forests, and as a consequence a regular rainfall, and unfailing springs from which agriculturists could always obtain the water necessary for their operations; but the ignorance of the people, or the apathy of their rulers, has permitted the hills to be shorn for centuries, not only of trees but of that luxuriant herbage which yearly quickening, yearly dying, should form, as it does in other provinces and countries, a sponge to retain the moisture necessary for the constant fertilization of the country. A century and a half ago those patient and accurate observers, the Jesuits, remarked the fact of disafforestation, and Du Halde states of Shansi generally that "coal in either lumps or cakes is used instead of wood, whereof there is not enough in the province for fuel."

The "patches of earth" in the hills, mentioned by the same authority, "four or five feet in depth without the least stone," may continue in some places, but the greater portion of them has long since been carried down by the summer floods to form shallows in the Yellow River, or dangerous banks at its mouth.

The Fên River, which flows by the capital and principal towns of the south of the province carries the rainfall in its uncertain and shallow channel to the Yellow River, but its torrent-like propensities

prevent any but a very inconsiderable traffic being carried on it. Its banks are lined with mining villages, and the singular abundance of coal and iron may in future years render Shansi one of the richest provinces, not only of the Empire, but of the world.

The natural inlet to Shansi is from the Yellow River, where the Fên joins that stream at Tung Kuan, and the magnitude and frequency of the cities thence north to T'ai-yuen is sufficient indication that this was the great commercial route in former times. The want, however, of engineering art, the powerlessness of the natives to deal with the caprices of the Yellow River, or the existence of such a trivial obstacle as a broken bridge, which was observed by a scientific foreign traveller,* has thrown Shansi into compulsory commercial relations with Chihli, notwithstanding the enormous difficulties of access over the mountains to that province. The opening of Tientsin to foreign trade has now compelled the permanent adoption of the mountain route for commerce, and a rugged pass which should only have been used by smugglers, brigands, or desperate traders, had the Yellow River been kept navigable from the sea, has now become virtually the only road to which Shansi can trust for ordinary commerce, or extraordinary supplies in times of distress or famine.

The Ku-Kuan mountain pass, commencing at the town of Huai-lu-hsien in Chihli, about 117 miles from Pao-ting-fu, extends about 130 miles to Szu-tieh-hsien, some 29 miles from T'ai-yuen-fu, and is thus graphically described by an observant traveller. †

“Much of the road is along the dry bed of torrents, whose violence has impelled benevolent individuals to inscribe on the roads the timely warning against taking refuge from storms under ledges liable to be swept by sudden torrents:—‘Beware of the mountain water.’—A route started ages ago has been in incessant use ever since, and a track has thus been worn by mere attrition. There is not the slightest approach to a grade. The traveller is often confronted by precipices hundreds of feet in height, and is seldom out of sight of apparently bottomless gullies. In the autumn and winter the valley roads generally follow the beds of streams, but what becomes of the roads when the streams are full is a standing puzzle to the traveller.” The condition of this pass during the famine winters, when torrents were prayed for but did not come, will be described below.

* Mr. J. Morrison, C.E.

† Rev. Jonathan Lees.

The Southern portion of the province of Chihli, where the famine was principally felt, consists of an almost uniform plain extending from the Peiho River in the North to the borders of Shantung, Honan, and Shansi, in the South and West. It is traversed in a South-westerly direction by the Grand Canal, or rather by the Wei River, which assumes that name after its junction with the Canal proper near Chang Chia K'ou and by the Pu-tou River (and its affluents) which, rising in the Shansi mountains near Wu-t'ai Shan, flows in a South-westerly direction to Chên-ting, and thence to Tientsin, when it empties itself into the Peiho. This enormous plain was once famous for its fertility, but since the floods of 1871-75, when it was nearly covered with water, owing to the bursting of the Canal and Peiho, its character has been changed. The floods destroyed nearly all trees which had been left standing, the usual ditches for irrigation were obliterated, the river courses altered, and when the inundation was succeeded by the rainless years of 1876-77, the plain became parched up and incapable of bearing even a moderate crop. Dr. Frazer, a gentleman of many years' experience at Tientsin, asserts that the appearance and character of the country, as far as his observations extended, has undergone a complete transformation since the floods. The herbage and crops are now poor and coarse, and the farms very much less productive. The inhabitants, once well-to-do and contented, are poverty stricken and improvident. The hares and foxes have greatly diminished in number, and the little ground squirrels, which once swarmed on the plains as they do in Mongolia, have entirely disappeared. The winter winds playing on the parched surface of the ground, which is annually most carefully denuded of the dried rushes and grass, gather up vast dust storms, which in the spring cover and kill the young vegetation; and the ground becomes covered with a white saline exudation fatal to all fertility. At Chulu-hsien is a considerable tract of land so thoroughly impregnated with salt, that if the soil is mixed with water and left to dry in the sun, a considerable crust of salt results, and the soil can be used again for the same purpose if undisturbed for a year or so. It would be interesting if a scientific survey could be made, and the remarkable changes noted, which have taken place during the last century in the various water-courses of this province. Some streams have disappeared, to develop in other directions, and the large lake named Pei-hu, noted in the Jesuits' maps, no longer exists.

In November, 1877,* the aspect of affairs was simply terrible. The autumn crops over the whole of Shansi, and the greater portion of Chihli, Honan, and Shansi had failed. No rain had fallen and the heavens were pitilessly blue. Tientsin was inundated with supplies from every available port. The Bund was piled mountain high with grain, the government storehouses were full, all the boats were impressed for the conveyance of supplies towards Shansi and the He-chien districts of Chihli, carts and waggons were all taken up, and the cumbersome machinery of the Chinese government was strained to the utmost to meet the enormous peril which stared it in the face. The water-courses were crowded with boats, the roads were blocked with carts. Refugees to the amount of some 100,000 poured into Tientsin, and were housed in hovels made of mud and millet stalks in the various suburbs.

Typhus fever was rampant, and in the villages of Ta-chih-ku, set apart for the reception of the destitute, it was not an uncommon event for from four to six hundred wretches to die in a single night after the setting in of the cold weather.

On the 6th January a fire broke out at Ta-pei-an,—in a refuge provided exclusively for women. The officer in charge on discovering the flames locked the only door and ran away. Two thousand and seven hundred women were consequently burned to death in three hours. A foreigner passing at the time of the conflagration luckily made an aperture through the wall, or the tale of victims would have been nearly five thousand. Corpses were scattered all over the plain, the foreign settlement swarmed with starving beggars who, while they excited the commiseration of observers by sweeping out of the dust the grain which leaked from the cargo, did not fail to improve the occasion, when apparently unobserved, by digging knives into the grain sacks, and having filled their capacious sleeves from the resulting stream, running away to feast on their booty. The loss on the various grain stuffs during their conveyance from Tientsin to Huai-lu-hsien was very great, but not so large as that sustained during its transit over the Ku-kuan Pass. That mountain trail, for road it can hardly be called, is divided into the following sections and distances by ruined guard houses :—

* My connection with famine matters commenced in November, 1876. The previous history of the disasters has been recorded by a far abler—now alas, vanished hand! I allude to the reports of the late W. F. Mayers, Chinese Secretary to the Legation, who died on the 24th March, 1878.—R.J.F.

Huai-lu-hsien to E. gate.....	32 <i>li</i>
E. gate to N. gate	65 <i>li</i>
N. gate to Wall (Ku-kuan)	8 <i>li</i>
Ku-kuan to W. gate	40 <i>li</i>
W. gate to Ping-fing-chow	55 <i>li</i>
Ping-fing to S. gate	5 <i>li</i>
S. gate to Szu-tieh.....	185 <i>li</i>

in all, reckoning 3 *li* to the mile, 130 English miles in length.* During the winter and spring of 1877-78, the most frightful disorder reigned supreme along this route. Huai-lu-hsien, the starting point, was filled with officials and traders all intent on getting their convoys over the pass. Fugitives, beggars and thieves, absolutely swarmed. The officials were powerless to create any sort of order among the mountains. The track was frequently worn out and until a new one was made a dead block ensued. Camels, oxen, mules, and donkeys were hurried along in the wildest confusion, and so many perished or were killed by the desperate people in the hills for the sake of their flesh, that the transit could only be carried on by the banded vigilance of the interested owners of grain, assisted by the train-bands or militia, which had been hastily got together, but some of whom were armed with breech-loaders. The carriage of salt to Shansi was prohibited by the governor owing to the scarcity of pack animals. Night travelling was out of the question. The way was marked by the carcasses or skeletons of men and beasts, and the wolves, dogs, and foxes, soon put an end to the sufferings of any wretch who lay down to recover from, or die of, his sickness in those terrible defiles. Murder was very common, and if the officials could not prevent it, they could warn the wayfarers that the Imperial authority was still potent enough to exert itself on such culprits as came within its grasp, for human heads formed a constant decoration in conspicuous places along the route. Broken carts, scattered grain bags, dying men and animals, so frequently stopped the way, that it was often necessary to prevent for days together the entry of convoys on the one side, in order to let the trains from the other come over. No idea of employing the starving people in making a new, or improving the old road ever presented itself to the authorities, and passengers, thankful for their escape from the dangers of the journey, were lost in wonder that the enormous traffic was possible.

* Journeys in North-China by the Rev. A. Williamson.

At Szu-tieh the path ceases, and the traveller towards Tai-yuen-fu, already impressed with the magnitude of the famine, would begin to realize in their fulness the horrors of the disaster. Industry had stopped, no sound of welcome or reprobation reached him from the villages as he passed along,—only everywhere the silence of stupefied misery to which no alleviation could come. Starved men, crawling along and seeking for assistance which they did not expect, died on the road-side in the bitter cold. Women barely able to support the burden, were seen carrying their dead children for burial where the dust or snow was thick enough to conceal them. Magpies, crows, hawks, and dogs were feasting undisturbed on corpses which no one cared to bury, and gangs of desperadoes, living in the security of the hills, rendered the passage of the roads a terror to those who tried them unarmed, or in no considerable numbers. A famine village could be detected at once by the absence of bark on the few trees which generally surrounded them, or of woodwork in most of the houses. Children lying about in sheltered corners, conspicuous for their enormously distended stomachs, the result of existing on the roots of rushes, on poisonous barks or leaves, and fat clay, were awaiting the inevitable end. While in the ruined houses the dead, the dying and the living, were found huddled together on the same stone bed. During the four bad years everything saleable had been disposed of, the beasts of burden had been killed and eaten, and the domestic dogs, driven by hunger to feast on the corpses everywhere to be found, were eagerly caught and devoured, when the chance occurred, by the starving people. Women and girls were sold in troops to traffickers, who took the opportunity of making money in this abominable manner, and suicide was so common as hardly to excite attention. The mass of correspondence sent by foreigners and natives who became engaged in the work of relief, contains descriptions so revolting to every feeling of human nature, that they had better remain buried where they are. One feature, however, that of cannibalism, deserves a passing notice. Residents in China, from their knowledge of the sublime contempt which the Chinese usually show for death, are loth to believe that any extremity would induce them to partake of human flesh, but with every desire to disbelieve in the hideous statements of late so common, the impartial enquirer must confess to their truth. During the Taiping rebellion, cannibalism was pretty common, especially at the final siege of Nanking, and foreign residents at Shanghai may recall the account which

appeared in the papers there of the capture and subsequent roasting of a rebel leader, and of the consumption, to make them brave, by the Imperial soldiery of the heart and other organs of the murdered man. But the real Taiping rebels, and most of the Imperial braves in the war of the rebellion, were little better than savages, and the stigma of their misdeeds could hardly be applied to the general inhabitants of China.

Reference to the horrible particulars contained in Bishop Tagliabue's and the Rev. Mr. Hill's reports must satisfy the enquirer on this revolting subject. A Chinese statement forwarded by Mr. Richard gives the names of eleven villages in which two-fifths of the dead were eaten, in one of them, Anchang, as many as nine-tenths; but no period is mentioned and the report is doubtless exaggerated. The vengeance of both the authorities and people seems to have been exercised on the wretched offenders, who were only obeying the supreme law of self-preservation, and the fact is patent, from the severity of the punishments recorded, that cannibalism is received with as much detestation in China as it would be in Western countries.

The mortality continued so frightful during last winter and spring, that pits were dug outside the towns into which the uncoffined dead were flung. Professional beggars all died, not a play-actor remained in the province, and one Protestant distributor states, with no little satisfaction, that the heathen priests had disappeared in consequence of the famine.

The Chinese officials were not idle in the meanwhile in their efforts for relief. Tseng Kuo-chüan, the Governor, an able and benevolent man, brother of the famous Viceroy Tseng Kuo-fan, and uncle of the Minister to England and France, continually memorialized the Throne concerning relief, suggesting the sale of offices, and even a foreign loan as a means for raising the necessary funds. On the 11th November, 1877, the *Gazette* contained a memorial in which he states:—"All the hopes that had been entertained of an autumn harvest have been extinguished by the continual drought, and it has not even been possible to get the seed into the ground for the autumn sowing. The great extent of the country and the long duration of the drought have combined to strip the Southern section of the province absolutely bare. There remains neither the bark of trees, nor the roots of wild herbs, to be eaten. The land is filled with the sound of lamentation, and the corpses of those who have perished by starvation are to be seen on

every wayside." He further states "that 76 sub-prefectures, departments and districts were under the dreadful visitation. No less than 3 or 4 millions of people were reduced to absolute want." In December ten more districts were added to the lists, and the price of grain stuffs still advancing, Tseng again implores the Throne, that the money, Tls. 200,000, allotted him by decree, might be sent, and that Kiangsi and Hupeh should contribute 60,000 piculs of rice. In January 1878, Tseng informs the Emperor that 1,000 people are dying daily, and that six millions must be at once relieved. The special Famine Commissioner sent to co-operate with Tseng memorialises on the 16th February, reporting "that the soil of Shansi was baked to the consistency of a brick, and that in two districts alone, Tseng-tai and Sang-cheng there were 480,000 applicants for relief. That all the furnaces in the iron districts were suspended." "The roads," he says, "are lined with corpses in such numbers as to distance all efforts for their interment, whilst women and children starving and in rags know not where to look for the means of keeping body and soul together. The distinctions drawn a short time ago in respect of the degree of impoverishment in individual cases have now disappeared. All are equally reduced to utter starvation." Mr. Timothy Richard writing from Tai-yuen on 1st January, 1878, but whose letter was not received until February, says:—"The names of eight or nine millions of people are down for relief, viz., Honan 2, Shansi and Chihli about 1, and Shansi 5 or 6 millions. The people sell their lands, pull down their houses, sell their wives and daughters, eat roots and carrion, and even the use of clay and refuse is nothing strange, but a constant occurrence. The news has reached us from more than one source that children are being boiled and eaten." The Viceroy of Chihli made vigorous efforts to co-operate with Tseng, and at the same time to relieve the starving thousands of his own province. His urgent and very practical memorials to the Throne were at once assented to, and a sum of about half a million sterling, and a large quantity of grain were collected for distribution in Chihli. The means employed in giving the relief seem to have given general satisfaction, although, as might be expected, instances of fraud, to which it is useless to make further reference, were not infrequent. The nearness of Tientsin and the enormous quantity of grain stuffs to be obtained there rendered the relief of Chihli comparatively easy. The case was widely different in Shansi, whither a total of four millions of taels was sent from Peking and the Provinces, besides

huge quantities of grain. To shew the difficulties which had to be overcome an example may be given. To meet the distress still existing at the beginning of 1879 at Ping-yang and fifty-six neighbouring districts (hsiens), a final grant was ordered from Shantung of 1,200,000 tow of grain and Taels 200,000 for the expense of transportation via Huai-lu and the Ku-kwan Pass. The Governor however requires Taels 1,000,000, the cost of carriage from Huai-lu to Ping-yang being 48 *cash* per catty plus fee to the guard. The transport of 1,200,000 tow of 14 catties will therefore amount to 806,400,000, *cash*, or Taels 672,000, at the rate of 1,400 *cash* per Tael for one portion of the journey only. The cost of conveyance from Shantung through Chihli to Huai-lu and from Ping-yang to the outlying districts, probably an equal amount, must be added to this, and the authorities will require to borrow the sum required before the grain can be brought to them. Owners of carts and pack animals carefully abstain from visiting the Shantung frontier where they are sure of impressment by the authorities, and every obstacle imaginable seems to have stood, and still stands, in the way of getting at the relief so plentifully provided.

On 14th March, 1878, a meeting was held at Her Majesty's Consulate to consider the request made by the Shanghai Committee, that a committee should be formed at Tientsin to co-operate with Shaughai; receive and forward to their distribution funds sent for famine relief, and generally to aid in the scheme. The following gentlemen consented to act:

R. J. Forrest, H.M.'s Consul,	} Chairmen.
G. Detring, Commissioner of Customs,	
O. N. Denny, U. S. Consul,	
W. Forbes, British Merchant,	

and a representative of each of the Protestant Missions.

It was at the same time resolved that the distribution should be entirely unsectarian in its character, and that distress should be the only claim to the funds, and to distress only would they be given. While it was admitted that the province of Shansi from its greater extremity of distress, and distance from any relief base, merited the earliest attention, it was resolved if funds permitted and opportunity served to attempt some distribution of relief in the province of Chihli.

The chief difficulty was to find a sufficient number of distributors, and it was necessary to trust entirely to the various Missionary bodies for agents in the work. Many came forward

with great alacrity, and as funds began to flow in fast, the work was begun by forwarding Taels 15,000 in charge of the Rev. David Hill to Tai-yuen-fu, where the Rev. Timothy Richard had already commenced relief with funds supplied from other sources. From the departure of Mr. Hill the work went on steadily and well, until the partial success of the autumn crops practically ended the famine. A total sum of Tls. 125,487.85 has to date passed through the hands of the Tientsin Committee, of which a small balance still remains for distribution.

It must be borne in mind that there was neither organization nor plan, and but little experience to assist either the Committee or distributors. When called upon to deal with the magnificent charity confided to them, the need was so urgent that the promptest action was necessary, and it should be a satisfaction to the contributors to know that at the conclusion of the work, but few mishaps have occurred, fewer mistakes, and that the money has, with the exception of a small percentage, reached and relieved the people for whom it was intended. A question of no little difficulty presented itself at first starting, whether the distribution should be in grain or money. Enquiry proved that the various food staples were still to be purchased in all the great trading centres, although of course the price was enormous. The discount on Bills of Exchange for Shansi and other afflicted districts was great, and much uncertainty prevailed whether the inland banks would be able to meet the drafts on them, at all events in the time named, when presented. The Tientsin Committee, however, after mature enquiry came to the conclusion that it would be impossible to send grain convoys to Shansi except at enormous risk and expense, and it was agreed to send money. The Chinese authorities said they would find bills, and at a better rate than Mr. Forbes offered to get them for, but after some delay it was discovered they could not do so; the hard silver was therefore sent in carts under the protection of an officer and some troops provided by the Taotai. The Committee paid all expenses, which, with a present to the guards on their return journey, did not amount to a quarter of one per cent on the sum sent, as against 7 or 8 per cent which would have been lost on doubtful bills. The money, including all subsequent supplies, arrived in perfect safety, and it is a matter for congratulation that the plan of distributing hard coin has proved a great success. The recipients, by a practice of small economies and contrivances unknown to outsiders, were able to make their donations assist them

in a hundred different forms, and those who were living on straw and reeds ground up with a little mud or chaff, or boiled bark, were able by the addition of more substantial food which the relief money put within their reach, to tide over the time pretty well until the autumn harvest was cut.

Messrs. Timothy Richard, David Hill, A. Whiting, and Joshua Turner undertook the work in Shansi, and men better fitted for it would be hard to find. It would be invidious to make any distinction in recording the services of this devoted band, but Mr. Richard, whose Chinese name Li Ti-mo-t'ai; is known far and wide among all classes of natives, stands out so prominent that he must be regarded as chief of the distributors. He had experience in 1877 in similar work in Shantung, and by his great tact and power of organization has been a powerful agent in bringing the relief through to a successful termination. He and his friends were well and honourably received by the Governor Tsêng, and the Famine Commissioner Yuan Pao-heng; districts were allotted to them; and every sort of assistance afforded which lay in the power of the local officials. If they came across the misdeeds of the Wei-yuans, they endeavoured to rectify the harm done, and by their tact and judgment appear to have turned the petty, but inevitable annoyances to which they were sometimes exposed, into real advantage to the cause. The magnificent sobriety of the Chinese, or their acclimatization through many generations render them little liable to the diseases which kill so many Europeans, but typhus fever, a direct result of the famine, which broke out in the winter of 1877, slew thousands and thousands that the famine had spared. The distributors were of course fully exposed to the contagion. Mr. Whiting of the American Presbyterian Mission died early in the year.* Yuan Pao-hêng, the Famine Commissioner, followed next, and a large number of the assistants employed in distributing died, or were disabled, by typhus. In Chihli, Mr. Barradale of the London Mission followed his wife into the tomb on the 23rd May. The wife of the Rev. Mr. Hall of the Methodist Mission

* Since the above was written the Governor Tsêng placed at the disposal of Mr. Richard the sum of Taels 400 to send Mr. Whiting's remains to America. The deceased gentleman's friends, however, not approving of the plan, the money was not accepted, but the Governor gave a Cemetery instead, where the remains now repose.

The Chinese sometime call typhus the goat's hair disease, asserting that a quantity of coarse hair is found under the fever spots, which if cut out brings the disease with it. Pere Wynhoyon tells me he has seen the operation performed several times, and although exceedingly painful it was always successful. He challenged me to make his statement known.

was taken with typhus, and awoke from a long delirium to find that her husband had during her unconsciousness contracted the disease and died. Three French sisters of charity perished at Tientsin. Mr. Turner of the Inland Mission, and Mr. Smith of the American Board survived fearful attacks, and not one of the little band has escaped without severe shock to his health. The list of the gentlemen who gave their services will be found in the annex, and a braver or more unselfish band it would be difficult to find.

As far as the native authorities were concerned, it must be admitted that at first the great bulk of them would rather have had no foreign relief, as they could not divest themselves of a dread of some concealed and ulterior design, a feeling which is in no wise difficult to understand. When, however, the fact was patent to them in the spring of 1878, that the fund had been collected and would be properly distributed, two men came to the front, who from their official elevation and influence compelled the submission of the subordinate officials. Li Hung-chang, Grand Secretary and Viceroy of Chihli, and Tsêng Kuò-chüan, Governor of Shansi, threw themselves heartily into the work when they saw it was a reality. The reports from Shansi appended and other advices recently received show what assistance was rendered officially there to the foreign distributors, and the writer must accord his appreciation and gratitude for the constant co-operation and assistance of H.E. Li Hung-chang in the work. In Shansi the distributors came early face to face with very grave danger. With every desire to free themselves from all native official control, they soon learned that any distribution made in the districts where the Chinese had started on relief would inevitably lead to an insurrection among the desperate inhabitants, who have hitherto been accustomed in times of distress to join their disaffected neighbours in Honan and Shantung, and carry fire and sword from the Yellow River to the valley of the Han and Yangtsze. A few foreigners giving help where the Mandarins were doing nothing would have excited the people at once, and the pillage of one or two Yamêns, and the murder of a few Wei-yüans, would have been the signal for a general conflagration. Mr. Richard and his coadjutors were compelled by this grave danger to confine their operations to such localities as were pointed out by the authorities; but the Mandarins were at the same time compelled to exertions which they, otherwise, would hardly have attempted. It may be fairly stated that while the

foreign relief at one time, but for the extreme good sense of the distributors, gave cause for much political uneasiness, it eventually, by the cumulation which it excited, prevented an insurrection with which the Chinese Government might have found it hard to deal.

The appendices, being answers to a series of questions put with the consent of the Shanghai Committee, will fully explain the methods adopted by the distributors of the Foreign relief. In Shansi, at the end of September 1877, Messrs. Richard, Hill, Turner, and McIlvaine assisted 100,641 people at a cost of Taels 52,745, of which sum Taels 51,890 were forwarded by the Tientsin Committee, the balance having been sent prior to its formation, or taken thither by Mr. McIlvaine. The actual cost of the relief of each individual would appear therefore to amount to 55 Tael cents.

Of the number relieved, Mr. Richard superintended 40,201, and Mr. Hill 45,440. Both these gentlemen kept very accurate records, but Mr. McIlvaine's estimate, he himself admits to be rather doubtful. The plans chiefly adopted were :

1st.—To give at different times to the worst cases enough money to enable the recipients to live on until the autumn harvest, and, 2ndly—to make grants alternately with the official relief given.

Sir Thomas Wade's statement that a guinea would save a life was perfectly correct when he made it, but by the time the money was ready to be handed to the sufferers late in the spring, a much smaller sum sufficed for the same purpose. The Chinese Authorities then estimated that six *cash* per diem was ample relief for one man, and if this calculation was correct, a Tael, or six shillings, and equal to 1,400 *cash*, would support a sufferer for some 333 days or quite down to the autumn harvest.

In June, Mr. Richard had begun to interest himself on behalf of some of the poorest orphans of T'ai-yuen, and had fixed on a temple in which to locate them, when the Governor Tseng informed him that he would undertake such an institution in the City, and forwarded the rules under which he proposed to conduct it. Mr. Richard thereupon with the Governor's approval commenced a systematic relief to the orphans, widows and aged, in some scores of the surrounding villages. In September 1878, seven hundred and forty-four names were enrolled under the superintendency of Mr. Turner, and on the 19th, the numbers were :—

Orphans	...	...	...	...	...	822
Aged and Widows	...	...	...	...	...	334
						Total, 1,156

Mr. Hill at Ping-yang-fu has adopted a similar plan with the approval of the officials, but no returns have as yet reached Tientsin. With the balance of Taels 3,472 remaining in September last, and a further sum of Taels 26,702 which has just been received at T'ai-yuen from Tientsin, the distributors in Shansi will be well provided with money to support orphanages and relieve widows and aged people for some time to come.

In Chihli and North Shantung,

Mr. Lees relieved	...	...	...	...	14,691
„ Stanley and friends	...	...	...	...	18,405
„ Lowry	...	...	...	...	5,377
„ Innocent	...	...	...	...	6,537
Messrs. Budd, Morse and Farrago	...	...	...	...	84,696
Père Wynhoven...	...	...	...	...	6,000?

Total, 135,616

at a cost to the Tientsin Committee of Taels 42,199, or 31 Tael cents per head. The returns for Chihli however are admitted to be not reliable, and Père Wynhoven has sent none. That a much smaller sum would be required to give substantial relief to an individual in Chihli than in Shansi, can be accounted for by the proximity of Tientsin with its vast stores of food, and the facilities which exist in the way of canals and roads to convey grain to the afflicted districts. Besides the above amounts, considerable sums were expended by the various Societies through special agents, but as the purpose of this report is only to show what was effected through the Tientsin Committee, detailed notice of their action cannot be attempted here.

The Roman Catholic Missionaries, it should however be mentioned, played a very important part in the work of relief, their permanent and very extensive establishments in the stricken districts giving them greater facilities for going among the people than were enjoyed by Missionaries of other denominations. All the money distributed by them from the Famine Fund excepting the small sum handed to Père Wynhoven, was given by the Shanghai Committee, and whatever statistics were returned will properly be included in the Shanghai Report.

If it is impossible to arrive at accuracy with regard to the numbers actually relieved by the foreign Fund, it may be imagined that it is equally difficult to determine the number of those who perished of famine and the subsequent pestilence. Mr. Richard says

of his district, 30 per cent., and Mr. McIlvaine, three-fourths of the population actually died. In Chihli Mr. Lees computes the loss at one-fifth, Mr. Stanley at one-third, and Mr. Lowry at 20 per cent. The authorities are assured that in Shansi five millions and a half, in Honan one million, in Shantung half a million, and in Chihli two millions and a half have perished, and there is unfortunately too much reason to believe that the enormous total of nine millions and a half is substantially correct.

At present matters are slowly improving. Chihli has gathered a half crop of grain, Shansi about a third, and the prospects of the spring harvests in 1879, are very favourable in both provinces. But in some districts there remains barely half the population, and many a tract of fertile country is covered with rotting millet because the owners have all died. A considerable portion of land is uncultivated for a like reason. A pestilence of dysentery beat out typhus as soon as the harvest was gathered, and the stomachs of the people were inflamed by too great indulgence in the unaccustomed food. But a province in China recovers its population and prosperity sooner than any other place in the world; and the vast districts along the Yangtze which some fifteen years ago were converted into deserts by the rebellion now show but few indications of that fearful scourge. What the future will produce, who can tell? In Shansi the causes which promoted the famine will still exist. No measures will be taken either to plant forests on the hills or to prevent the destruction of whatever trees remain. The Yellow River will continue unmanageable and unnavigable, and the Kukoan pass, unaltered and unended, will remain the great, if not the only, commercial route by which supplies can be conveyed from Chihli and the Treaty Port—Tientsin. The existence of a drought in Chihli can be shorn of its bad effects, could a little energy be developed among the officials. It is simply monstrous that a large and generally fertile plain should be allowed to dry up into a saline desert, when the accidental bursting of the banks of one of the rivers traversing it can flood it in a week with fresh water. A few canals and the necessary flood gates, weirs and pumping machinery would place the inhabitants of the South of Chihli beyond the reach of the misery they have endured since 1871. The Viceroy is alive to the fact, and has sent for plans, specifications and prices, to an eminent firm of hydraulic engineers; but whether anything will result from his enquiries it is hard to predict. His progressive ideas,—and he is essentially progressive,—are generally strangled

by the system which surrounds him, and a useful work of imperative necessity would be vetoed from Peking where the anti-foreign party is supreme, not because the scheme is doubtful, but because foreign machinery and foreigners would have to be employed.

That the distribution of the Relief Fund has produced, and will still produce, good results as far as our intercourse with the Chinese people is concerned, cannot be doubted. The distributors have got through the wall of native exclusiveness, and have really been brought face to face with Chinese domestic life. In Shansi, moreover, they have been acting in cordial co-operation with the highest officials, who have not been reluctant to acknowledge their devotion and services.

The latest advices from both Shansi and Chihli will form a satisfactory termination to this Report. Mr. Richard, under date of 14th February, 1879, says, "The distress here (Ping-yang-fu) is far less than last year, and if good rain fall in spring, there will be no need of our distributing relief after the beginning of June. Even now very few indeed die of starvation, and the price of grain is reduced from five or six times to only double the price." Mr. Lees, who has just returned from the districts in the South of Chihli, has handed back the sum given him for relief there, as there were hardly any *bonâ fide* applications for it. The autumn crops were sufficient for the decreased population, and the prospects of the spring harvests are so promising, that the people are once more contented and busy. That this promise of peace and plenty may be fully realized is the ardent prayer of all who have known the unutterable misery through which the inhabitants of Northern China have recently passed.

R. J. FORREST,
H. M. Consul,
Chairman and Hon. Treasurer,
Tientsin Committee.

TIENTSIN, 1st March, 1879.

RECEIPTS.

		Sh.	Tls.	cts.
1878				
March	15	Cash received from Shanghai...	15,017.	735
"	29	"	10,074.	270
April	11	"	5,935.	670
"	15	"	5,363.	780
May	8	"	3,216.	143
"	10	"	6,433.	714
"	19	"	5,374.	571
"	31	"	5,085.	500
June	15	"	8,042.	448
"	20	"	4,068.	936
July	2	"	5,520.	194

July	3	Cash received from Shanghai	5,359.765
"	21	" "	7,685.011
Aug.	5	" "	5,140.378
"	26	" "	4,290.796
Sept.	2	" "	2,147.928
Nov.	15	" "	10,186.437
"	20	" "	8,577.092
"	22	" "	7,277.960
Received at various times from Mr. Hill			400.000
Sh. Tls....			<u>125,487.858</u>

EXPENDITURE.

		Sh. Tls. cts.
1878		
March 18—		
	Forwarded to Shansi per Mr. Hill and others.....	15,017.735
	Forwarded to Shansi per Mr. Wei Yüan (to Mr. Richard)	14,952.720
	Handed for distribution to Messrs. Innocent, Pyke, Stanley and Pere Wynhoven	6,421.000
May—		
	Handed for distribution to Messrs. Smith, Sheffield, Stanley and Pere Wynhoven	6,433.714
	Handed to Messrs. Lees and Lowry	1,207.072
June 13—		
	Forwarded to Shansi (to Mr. Richard)	8,550.326
	Forwarded through Mr. Detring to Ho Chien-foo	1,050.000
	Forwarded to Messrs. Morse and Farago to Ho Chien-foo	4,289.254
	Forwarded to Mr. Budd to Ho Chien-foo	5,359.275
	Handed to Mr. Lees	2,145.224
July 3—		
	Forwarded to Shansi (to Mr. Richard)	13,343.651
July 22—		
	Forwarded to Ho Chien-foo (to Mr. Budd)	7,985.011
	Handed to Mr. Hodge for (special distribution)	28.500
	Paid Wei Yüan for escorting money to Tai-yuan-foo	26.500
Aug. 6—		
	Handed to Mr. Budd for Ho Chien-foo	5,140.378
Aug. 28—		
	Handed to Mr. Lees	2,141.429
	Forwarded to Shansi (to Mr. Richard)	26,702.895
	Handed to Mr. Stanley	106.000
1879		
March 3—		
	Balance to be forwarded to Shansi to Mr. Richard per Bill of Exchange	4,587.174
	Sh. Tls....	<u>125,487.858</u>
Sh. Tls. cts.		
	Distribution in Shansi	78,567.327
	" Ho Chien-foo	23,823.918
	Handed to various Missionaries for distribution in Chihli and Shantung	18,482.939
	Gratuity to Wei Yüan (transport of Silver to Tai-yuan-foo)	26.500
	Balance to be forwarded to Shansi per Bill of Exchange	4,587.184
	Sh. Tls....	<u>125,485.858</u>

R. J. FORREST,
Hon. Treasurer.

TIENTSIN, 3rd March, 1879.

H. M.'s Consulate, Shanghai,

March 26th, 1879.

To the Chairman of the

CHINA FAMINE RELIEF COMMITTEE.

SIR—When I announced to several members of your Committee, in January last, my intention of visiting the province of Shansi with a view to obtain by personal contact and inspection some idea of the nature and extent of the suffering and distress occasioned by the famine, the sum of Taels 2,000 was kindly placed at my disposal from your relief fund, for distribution in any way that I might consider best calculated to meet the exigencies of the distress I might encounter. I feel therefore, that I owe you and the Committee some explanation of the manner in which this money was disposed of, as well as a description of the scenes I witnessed and the impression that these made upon my mind.

I do not propose to inflict upon you a detailed account of my journey. Expeditions into the interior have now become matters of such frequent occurrence, and the discomforts and inconveniences of inland travel have been so often and so graphically described, that it would be rash of me to attempt any further elaboration of earlier narratives. The route taken by my companion and myself was to a certain extent a new one, but the geographical and commercial features so closely resembled those of more frequently traversed and better known highways in the same direction, that I have nothing to add to what has been already said on the subject. As regards Shansi in particular, I find every observation that I made on the peculiar features of this province noticed and explained with such fullness of detail by the Rev. Dr. Williamson in his "Journeys in North-China," that there is no hope for me of being able to say anything fresh in this direction. I will content myself, therefore, with indicating the general line of our route, as this much will be necessary to a proper appreciation of the comparative effects of the famine upon different districts.

I left Shanghai for Hankow on the 10th of January, and was there joined by Mr. S. Drake, of the China Inland Mission, who was kind enough to consent to be my companion as far as Ping-yang-fu, where he contemplated taking up his residence. It was our original intention to carry the money for distribution with which we had been respectively charged, in sycee, but the dangers and inconveniences that this would involve were urged upon us with

such persistency by all who had experience in these matters, that we set to work to try and convert our silver into bills at some place near the centre of our proposed operations. We were fortunate enough, after some difficulty, to meet with a Shansi banker, who, most disinterestedly, consented to forego the usual pecuniary advantages that he might otherwise have claimed, and to provide us with bills to the amount of our funds on a town in Shansi close to P'ing-yang-fu, where Messrs. Hill and Richard were working. He charged us 3 per cent., plus a further 2 per cent., to cover the difference between the touch of Hankow and Shansi taels, a discount, as I afterwards learnt, that was moderate in the extreme.

We were thus enabled to dispense with the inconveniences of a Chinese escort, and secured much more independence of movement.

We left Hankow on the 18th January on wheelbarrows, the only vehicles for land travel procurable in Hupeh. The Hupeh wheelbarrow, I should explain, is a more elaborate construction than that which is employed in Shanghai and its neighbourhood, being provided with two horns or shafts in front, to which a second man is attached, and having a mat cover or tent placed over the top, which serves as a partial protection against the weather. Of the barrowmen I am afraid I cannot speak very highly. They are fully versed in the art of extortion, and seemed to have learned very thoroughly how to combine a minimum of work with a maximum of pay.

Our object being to get northwards as fast as possible, we took the most direct road through Hupeh, which avoided the larger towns and lay for the most part through a wild and deserted country. On the second day we left the alluvial plain of Hankow and rose by a gradual ascent to higher ground, so broken and scored in every direction, and so scantily populated, that evidently it scarcely repaid the cost of cultivation. The desolation we were told was partially attributable to deficient harvests a year ago, which had caused much distress and rendered travelling somewhat dangerous. As we advanced, however, this desolation was less marked. Houses and villages became more frequent, and the terraced fields and innumerable reservoirs of water showed that here at least famine had not been a recent guest. On the 25th January we entered Honan by a rocky pass, some 500 feet high, and two days afterwards reached Sin-yang, the southernmost prefecture of the province. Though a large and important city, carts were apparently at a premium, for the united efforts of

the Taotai and ourselves could only succeed in unearthing one, so we carried some of our barrows on for three days more to the town of Chio-shan hsien. We were now on the high road through the province, and once more on level ground, which continued with almost unvarying monotony as far as the Yellow River. We might here be said to have reached the confines of the famine region proper, and though to a traveller ignorant of the sufferings that had earlier been undergone it would be difficult to realise their intensity from outward indication, there was one significant evidence of distress that was presented to us throughout the remainder of the journey. From this time forward ruined and deserted houses were constantly to be seen, showing that migration or death had thinned the population; though, on the other hand, there was no trace of suffering amongst the people, all of whom appeared to be gifted with fine animal spirits, their boisterous and somewhat contemptuous treatment of the "foreign devil" contrasting strongly with the listless apathy that we encountered farther on. The whole country was under cultivation as far as the eye could reach, and if, as we were informed, the average yield of last year's harvest was only 25 per cent., I feel convinced that the capabilities of the province as a grain producing centre in years of plenty must be very great. From Chio-shan hsien to Hsü-chow, in the centre of the province, the same condition of things prevailed, and we heard no complaints of poverty or distress. Refugees were congregated at all the towns *en route*, but their wants were provided for by the local authorities, showing that the claims of their own poor were not imperative. We never came across these refugees, and no beggars were to be seen; in fact, I may say here that we only met with two between Hankow and P'ing-yang-fu, a distance of over 600 miles. Beggars were at a discount where no one had anything to spare. After leaving Hsü-chow a change for the worse was to be noticed. Ruined houses became more frequent, and the country looked miserably poor. The absence of timber was very marked, and a general air of poverty and desolation prevailed that had a most depressing effect upon the mind. At the same time the nature of the country was hardly such as to denote the existence of prosperity at the very best of times, and in some places we could hardly judge of its condition, for the road lay for many miles through deep cuttings of *Loess*, just wide enough for the cart to pass, perpendicular walls of this strange formation towering for hundreds of feet above our heads. On emerging from the belt of *Loess*, we found ourselves on a sandy

plain, the soil of which was so poor that the crops it could yield must have been scant under the most favourable conditions of weather.

This state of things continued as far as the Yellow River, which we crossed on the 8th February, commencing to travel in a westerly direction immediatly after doing so. A day's journey brought us to the town of Wu-chih, in which district such disastrous floods occurred last year from the bursting of the embankments of the river Ch'in. It seems almost an anomaly that the same region should be devastated by flood and by drought simultaneously, but a glance at the bed of this river explained the phenomenon at once. Now, a harmless looking stream hardly worthy of the name of a river, it appears peaceful and quiet enough, but the expanse of unenlivated land on either side, showing the width it is able at times to assume, and the enormous banks that have been erected at some points to check its course, give evidence of its volume and intensity at certain periods of the year. A few hours' heavy rain brings a torrent of water from the mountain sides into its bed, that comes rushing down into the plain with a force that would test the strength of the most substantial works. In spite of the millions of taels that have at one time and another doubtless been spent, nominally or actually, in the strengthening and repair of the river banks, the nature of the soil of which they are composed, and the primitiveness of the means employed, render them constantly liable to give way, and a breach once effected, the natives are utterly powerless to stop it, the waters pouring over the plains in all directions and carrying everything bodily before them. The lamentably improvident nature of Chinese administration becomes here painfully manifest. Large sums of money are annually spent in patching up wretched works that can never stand the wear of time, and with abundance of stone at their feet almost, the only materials used are miserable fascines of millet stalks and straw. Permanent embankments of stone would doubtless entail a heavy outlay at the first commencement, but when once erected they would require little or no attention, and in this apparently lies the secret of their not being adopted. The host of officials, high and low, that make their living out of the squeezes effected on so-called river works, would find their permanent source of income gone, and so it is that the wretched inhabitants go on paying taxes year by year for the maintenance of embankments that are sure to fail if subjected to anything more than an ordinary test. Miles

of country were under water last summer and autumn, causing ruin and starvation to thousands of people who, after struggling through the miseries of the famine, were just looking forward to a good harvest and a time of comparative plenty and comfort, and this suffering is attributable to distinctly preventable causes. On the following day we reached Hwai-ch'ing-fu, the frontier city of South-western Honan, where we met with a most demonstrative welcome from the inhabitants, who tried to pull down the door of the inn in which we lodged, and were only quieted by my appearance at the entrance (Mr. Drake being in Chinese dress passed unnoticed), where I displayed myself for their benefit for at least two hours. The temper of these people was curious, and would have been interesting had it not been the cause of so much personal inconvenience. They did not attempt to molest me in any way, and simply gazed on me with gaping curiosity, but as soon as I attempted to retire to my room they burst headlong into the place, overturning innkeepers, soldiers and police, till they had me once more in view, so that, tired as I was, I had again to make a show of myself until dusk put an end to the exhibition. Nothing but a small regiment of soldiers would have kept back the mob, even the Magistrate himself, who called to see me, being utterly powerless to eject them.

At Hwai-ch'ing-fu we engaged pack mules, and a ride of some nine miles brought us to the foot of the mountains that divide Honan and Shansi. After a steady ascent of twelve or thirteen miles we came to a little mountain village some 2,500 feet above the level of the plain at which we passed the night. The traffic along the mountain road was something stupendous. I am within the mark when I say that we must have met 2,000 people in the course of a single afternoon. Strings of mules, camels, men and boys came trooping down laden with coal, iron pots, pans and bars, limestone, etc., etc., while hundreds of coolies were toiling up the pass staggering under packages of brick tea. The houses we passed were nearly all deserted, but the living stream of traffic almost diverted our attention from the desolation that this indicated. Amidst such bustling activity it was difficult to realise the awful misery of which this region had been the scene. It was only on the following day, when we got further into the mountains, that we began to have an appreciation of the magnitude of the suffering that had been undergone. In the small town at which we stopped for lunch, we were surrounded by a crowd of wretched people whose

gaunt and hungry faces, pinched and distorted by suffering and sorrow, showed too plainly the terrible ordeal through which they must have passed. I got into conversation with several of them, who told me almost with broken voices and in sad and subdued tones, that ninety per cent. of their number had gone. There was not a single one of them who had not some tale of misery to tell, so painful and literal in its details, simple though the outline was, that I felt I had heard enough, and was inclined to run away and stop my ears to the sound of such terrible misery and woe. They asked me whether I could give them help, but when I told them that I was going Westward where I heard there was a still greater need for the money that I had with me, they at once admitted that I should find more urgent need as I advanced, and quietly abandoned their request. There were many questions I had it in my mind to ask these unhappy people, but I had not the heart to do it, fearing that I should only revive memories which they would fain try to stifle. One old man, who appeared more communicative than the rest, told me that the very poor had all gone, and that those that remained were once people of comparative substance and means; that the young and aged had been the first to succumb, their constitutions being less able to stand the terrible strain that was put upon them. It was pleasing in the midst of the recital of all their miseries to find, however, that the women and children seemed in better condition than the men, though even in little faces I saw around me, there were lines and wrinkles that had no business there, and belong properly to those only who had battled for years with the cares and anxieties of life. One question that I had been tempted for a long time to ask I did put to one of them before I left. "How is it," I said, "that you are here to tell me of all these things? Surely the sufferings and death of so many of your own belongings must almost have broken you down. Why is it that you are alive, then, when so many others have died?" It was perhaps hardly a fair question to ask, implying as it did that the survivors had benefited at the expense of those that had gone, but I apologised for the question, and no offence was taken. They explained that all had shared alike; that the fact of their survival was due only to the possession of a stronger physique at the outset, which enabled them to stand a strain to which the weaker members had to succumb. As the numbers decreased in each family, there were less mouths to feed, so that when the worst of it was over, the scanty crops that were gathered enabled them to

pull through, though even now there were few that could manage to secure a meal of unadulterated food, the great majority being obliged to eke out their scanty stock of grain with a large admixture of dust. It is difficult to understand why they should have taken the trouble to mix the grain with dust, which could have contained no possible nourishment, except by the supposition that they tried to delude themselves into the belief that they had had a full meal when they had loaded themselves with as much as they could swallow.

From this time forward our progress became more painful. Nothing but desolation was to be seen. Many towns and villages were almost empty, in some instances entirely so, and as we passed through places in which the streets and buildings gave evidence of recent prosperity, there was something weird and ghastly in finding absolute solitude, and hearing nothing but the echo of our own footsteps as we hurried through the deserted streets. They were literally cities of the dead. We had the curiosity to enter into one of these houses, but the sight that awaited us there gave us both so terrible a shock that we went into no more, passing them thence forward with the conviction that there were few that were not occupied by the dead. Outside the villages things were worse. Fields with the straw of withered crops were to be seen on every side, the few isolated patches of ground in which some recent attempt had been made to raise a crop rendering the desolation only the more intense. Whenever we left the road the whitened bones of corpses were to be seen, even a few yards away, showing where some wretched wanderer had laid down to die; the wolves, which swarm in these mountains, had soon demolished him, leaving only a mouldering heap of tattered clothes and a few bones to mark his resting place. Had we gone into the villages and hamlets off the main road, of which there are many in the mountains, I feel convinced that we should not have found a single soul.

I fear I may be accused of sensational writing if I continue in this strain, and will, therefore, spare you the recital of further details. I have said enough, I think, to show you to some extent the awful nature of this visitation; but I feel that it is quite impossible to convey to you an exact impression of its extent. As our journey came to an end each day we gave up talking much about the things we had seen. The misery was too deep to be discussed, and we felt almost as if we were in a land over which a curse had fallen. Six days of mountain travelling brought us once more into the plain, and

it was a relief to find ourselves in the valley of the Fên River, where the distress was not quite so bad. It was still bad enough, however, even the larger towns being half deserted, and trade almost at a standstill.

We reached P'ing-yang-fu on the 18th February, where we found the Rev. Messrs. Richard, Hill, Scott, and Turner actively engaged in the work of distribution. Mr. Scott, and Mr. Capel who was with him, were living in a temple assigned to them by the authorities, and Messrs. Hill, Richard and Turner occupied a house that the former had rented from Chinese. Having reported the object of my journey, and handed over my bills of exchange to Mr. Hill, he was kind enough to allow me to commence at once to aid him and his colleagues in distribution work. These gentlemen have doubtless explained fully to you the nature of their work, and I do not propose to trouble you with statistics and details that I conclude you already possess, but it may help you to an appreciation of the value of this work if I attempt to describe the system on which it is carried out. I should first explain that, with the aid of the authorities, a list of all the towns and villages in the Lin-fên hsien, or principal district of the P'ing-yang prefecture, has been obtained, and the *Hsiang Yo*, *Pao Cheng*, and *Kung Pao Cheng*, who may be termed the Municipal authorities of each place, have been called upon to furnish the distributors with copies of the *ts'ê tzü*, or tax registers, containing the names and numbers of the families residing in the villages of which they are respectively the elected heads. These villages are then visited by one of the contributors promiscuously, care being taken not to give formal notice of the intended time of the visit, in order to guard against imposition or fraud. On arrival at a village, the *Hsiang Yo* and his two colleagues are summoned and requested to go round with the distributor to each house, that the list furnished by them may be verified, and some idea formed by personal inspection of the condition and wants of each family.

The list of members being verified and a general idea of their condition being gathered, a sum is marked down against their names, the amount not yet being told them, and so each family is passed under inspection. It is impossible of course to secure by this means absolute justice in the settlement of the amount of the respective donations, but I confess I see no better method. A little experience soon enables one to judge pretty fairly of the condition of each family from an inspection of the faces alone of its members.

A dark, almost black, complexion, to which I shall refer later on, even though unattended with emaciation, was a sure indication of distress, while a clearness of the skin almost amounting to transparency, which was more frequently to be observed amongst those who had once been in better circumstances, was equally a sign of suffering. To these people more was given, sums varying from two to five thousand *cash* being the average amount. Widows were treated more liberally than able-bodied men with large families, or those who were from various causes unable to support themselves. The sums to be given having been noted down, the people were invited to assemble at some central place, generally the village temple, to receive their respective allotments, and the opportunity was then taken of saying a few words to them. They were told that they must not consider the distributors to be the actual donors of the money, which had been subscribed by English people and others many thousands of miles away, as well as by foreign residents in China, who had heard of their distress and were anxious to render them aid, mindful of the well-known axiom that "all within the seas were of one brotherhood." They were warned that this would be the last aid it would be possible to render them, and that they must therefore husband their resources and make them go as far as they could, a hope being expressed that a summer harvest would put an end to their anxieties and distress. They were finally invited to return to their homes and render thanks to the Supreme Being rather than to us who were merely the agents of His Will. In order to prevent the possibility of a claim being made against them for percentage on the part of the *Hsiang Yo* and his fraternity, these were presented with a few thousand *cash* in the presence of the villagers, as a gratuity for their trouble in drawing up the registers and aiding in the inspection, and it was explained to them that this was to take the place of all fees, so that the people might be left in full possession of their allotments. It is to be feared that many cases of squeezing did occur, but they were always represented to the authorities whenever they were brought to the notice of the distributors, and application made for the punishment of the offenders.

I think it will give you a better appreciation of the actual state of the people relieved and of the good that is being done, if I quote a few instances of the condition of the families I inspected. In one enclosure, a large farm-yard, at one time full of substantial buildings, now almost all in ruins, which had been pulled down for the sake of the timber and sold for a few *cash*, I found a solitary man sitting

dejectedly in the midst of his deserted enclosure. His face was almost black, and he had such a wild and haggard look that I thought he was out of his mind. He looked up when I spoke to him, however, and in answer to my question of how many members his family consisted, he told me with sobs it was painful to hear that he alone was left out of sixteen; all had died one after the other, and left him utterly alone. I never saw such a picture of utter misery and despair, and the man's face haunts me now. It was satisfactory to notice a few days afterwards as I passed through the same village, that the food he was enabled to buy with the money that he got had softened down the look of despair and given him a more resigned and patient air. In another house was a little boy some thirteen years of age, who was the sole survivor of a large family. Father, mother, brothers and sisters, had all gone one by one, and left this little lad to fight it out alone. He had no food in the corner of the deserted yard in which he lived and had to go out every day and gather the seeds of the weeds and bushes that now cover once productive fields. I provided myself with specimens of these seeds, and of the bread, if it may be called such, into which it is made. This, and warm water which they drink in the hope perhaps of trying to persuade themselves it is as good as the tea they used to get, forms the only meal of a large proportion of the people, and it remains a mystery to me how they can support life upon such a diet. It is this black bread, I imagine, that gives the colour to their faces. I send you specimens of the bread and its ingredients herewith.

In a third house I found a young widow with a baby, whose husband had died and left her in a strange village without a soul upon whom to depend. How she managed to exist I cannot say.

Perhaps, however, the most distressing instances were those of the occupants of what once had been large and substantial houses. One enclosure I entered contained the ruins of a house composed of several court-yards, each of which had been pulled down as the distress of the family grew more keen, until at last they were driven to take refuge in the furthest and smallest yard. There I found a woman and two boys, all cleanly and neatly dressed, but so wan and white that it was piteous to see them. When I asked how many there were in the house, the mother persisted in including the bodies of her husband and several children that were lying in coffins in an inner room, omitting one child that she said had been carried off by wolves.

I will only trouble you with one more instance. I found the door of one house I came to blocked up, and was just about to turn away when I was accosted by a frantic looking woman who begged me not to pass her by. That, she said, was her house but she dare not go in, for her husband had been lying dead there for weeks, and she had no money to buy food much less to bury him.

Coffins were to be seen in almost every house. Sometimes three or four in the very room in which the survivors lived. This was due, I was told, in many instances to the fact that had the bodies been put in the ground at the time, they would at once have been exhumed, and the bodies devoured by the starving neighbours. In the midst of all this fearful misery it was refreshing to see some instances where a homeless orphan had been taken in by neighbours, who had already many mouths to feed, and in no one case did I see a difference in the condition of the stranger and their own little ones. Some thought it necessary almost to apologise for indulging in the luxury of adopting a homeless child when they had starving children of their own. In all these houses that I visited relief had been distributed once or twice before, and I feel convinced that if they had not received this foreign aid, the mortality, bad as it already was, would have been increased to a painful degree.

The general agricultural condition of the country appeared to me hopelessly bad. I have already described the state of the land in the hills, and this in a modified degree is true of the whole of the neighbourhood of Ping-yang. The fortunate possessors of land in the vicinity of the river, which it is possible to irrigate, are I imagine in thriving circumstances, but the acreage of irrigable land forms an infinitesimal proportion of the whole, and the greater part is absolutely waste. The whole country appeared to me to be overrun by weeds, the most persistent of which was a high growing plant to which the Chinese give the name of *Sa-p'eng-zü*. This has dried to a chip, and is so brittle that a high wind breaks it off at the bottom of the stalk, and it is blown about all over the plain, choking up the roads where any depression occurs, so completely as to stop the passage of carts. One bye-road upon which I was travelling with Mr. Scott was so effectually blocked that we had to burn a way for our carts to get through. It is so difficult to form an estimate from native reports that I am rather afraid to calculate the percentage of land under cultivation at this present moment, but I do not think I should be beyond the mark were I to assert that, taking irrigable land into account, only a quarter of the available

country was sown or prepared for the receipt of crops. In many places the average was certainly considerably less, more particularly among the mountains; where I can safely say that less than a tenth was sown or ploughed ready for sowing. Considering the enormous reduction in the number of mouths that have to be fed, with only a fifth of the land under cultivation I believe that a good harvest would yield sufficient for their maintenance, but the question arises—Will a good harvest be secured? and I am sadly afraid that the answer is a doubtful one. I can only say that when I left no rain had fallen, and so little snow as to be perfectly valueless, and it was asserted by numbers of people that unless there was a fall within two months, an utter failure of the scanty harvest that could at the best of times have been reaped must inevitably ensue. In this case I see little hope for the unfortunate survivors. Human nature cannot stand the strain they are enduring for ever, and I fear that the majority of those that are left must inevitably die.

It was originally my intention to spend a month at P'ing-yang-fu, or elsewhere in the province, to aid in the work of distribution, but my journey there had occupied so much longer than I had anticipated, and the distance from thence to Tientsin was so much greater than I had calculated, that I found the time at my disposal considerably curtailed. I joined the distributors just as they were completing the last of the work in the Lin-fên district, and this was finished a week after my arrival. They then had to await the return of the Prefect from Tai-yuan-fu, where he had gone to pay his respects to the Governor, and had promised to bring back with him specific instructions as to the fresh field that was to be opened for the distribution of the remainder of the money. It was hoped that a move to the South and West would be effected, but much depended on the facilities that the Prefect would be prepared to afford.

As there would have been no advantage from a public point of view in my remaining at P'ing-yang during this period of inaction, I determined to start Northwards, and accordingly left that city on the 25th February. As I proceeded things gradually improved, until on my arrival at Hwai-lu, the frontier town of Chihli at the foot of the terrible Ku-kwan Pass, I came to the conclusion that I had left the famine district behind. I would refer any one who is anxious to peruse a graphic description of the route from P'ing-yang to Tientsin to the Rev. Dr. Williamson's admirable account.

I have so far endeavoured to lay before you an account of my personal experience and a statement of facts to which I can bear

personal testimony, and on re-perusal of what I have written, I conscientiously say that I have not been guilty of a single exaggeration, and have spared you the recital of numerous instances that would materially strengthen my tale. There are many points, however, which I should like to bring before your notice, but I must first explain that I am now travelling beyond the region of positive assertion and can only base some of my statements on the testimony of others, or claim for my theories the attention that might be attached to careful observation and research.

Amongst the questions on the list with which you provided me before my departure, there are many which I cannot attempt to answer, and my connection with the actual work of distribution was so brief as to give no opportunity of doing so. The majority of them must be left to those who have had greater experience of the subject than myself. There are, however, one or two to which I may venture to reply, though, I cannot vouch for the complete accuracy of my theories or assertions.

You wish to be informed whether native assistance has been afforded in the districts visited by me. I think that in nearly all some aid has been given, but in most places it has been insufficient to do more than support life for a few days. It is difficult to obtain correct answers from natives to questions on this subject, as it is manifestly to their interest to make the least of any aid they may have received to anyone from whom there is a prospect of help. In no instance, however, did I hear an expression of gratitude for what had been done by the Government, and in the majority of cases the murmurs were very loud. Relief in the shape of grain appeared to be the most universal form of aid, and a *shéng* or Chinese pint *per mensem* the average quantity given, which it was asserted was only sufficient for a single day's consumption. It should be remembered, though, that this would last much longer if eked out with other stuffs, and the harvest gathered last autumn, small as it doubtless was, must have left a slender stock in hand. That large supplies were being imported into the province I can testify, for I saw thousands of mules, donkeys, camels and men streaming through the Ku-kwan Pass, and met hundreds of carts on the road from P'ing-yang to the North, all laden with grain. This import is going on day and night, and as the whole of it is the property of the government there is no doubt whatever that it is intended for distribution, and even if, as was everywhere alleged, dishonesty was rife amongst

the host of underlings attached to each Yamen, a large balance must still have been left. I found enquiry on this point almost useless as no one would tell me the truth; the dispensers of charity had one story, and the recipients of it another, but I can safely say that wherever it may ultimately go, grain is being poured into the provinces as fast as it possibly can be. Every animal that has four legs is availed of, and it was quite painful to see many half-starved beasts limping along or staggering under a load they had not the strength to bear. Those who have no animals to drive carry sacks of corn upon their backs, even little boys of nine or ten years old being pressed into the work. This grain carrying trade affords employment to many thousands of people, who are thus enabled to earn enough to support themselves. The Government rate for portage, or carriage, is now the same as the market charge, so that they are enabled to monopolise every available means of transport, and a system of Government relief work has virtually established itself. The rate paid for a catty of grain from Hwai-lu hsien at the foot of the Ku-kwan Pass to Shih-t'ieh, the town at which it may be said to commence, a distance of 385 *li*, is thirty *cash*. An able bodied man will carry from 150 to 200 catties 60 *li* a day, so that he can earn, say in six days, from four to five thousand *cash*, or something over three taels. Of course such hard work as this requires more substantial food, but if 200 *cash* be allowed *per diem* for his support, a coolie can still have a balance of about 3,000 *cash* at the end of his week. Allow him four days for his return journey, and he still makes a clear gain of 2,000 *cash*, or say, a tael and a half, on the round trip. Owners of animals of course make more, but their profits are materially reduced by the enormous price of fodder, an animal in hard work consuming the value of at least 500 *cash* a day. These rates are modified where the roads are better.

The next question on your list is "What are the prospects of the localities you are acquainted with?" To this I am afraid I must answer, "Lamentably bad." As you are already aware, the scanty harvest that was anticipated last autumn (I speak now particularly of Shansi) was almost destroyed by an untimely fall of snow, and since then no rain has fallen, and so little snow as to be quite inappreciable. The ground, except in the neighbourhood of the River Fên and its affluents, is perfectly dry. Although the weather in the Ping-yang valley was almost hot when I left, there were none of those damp patches in the soil that are to be seen elsewhere, when the frost releases the moisture it has held in solidity. I was told

by many people that unless rain falls before the end of the 3rd Chinese moon, the one we had just entered, the harvest must be an utter failure, and allowing a certain margin for exaggeration, I think it might safely be predicted that if it does not come before the end of May there is every prospect of a return of the old state of things if not of worse suffering. The numbers to be provided for are greatly diminished, it is true, but, on the other hand, the strength of the survivors is not so great, and it almost seems possible that the whole province will become depopulated. The cold weather appears to have held any epidemic in check, and there has been almost entire freedom from typhus and other diseases of this nature, but with a return of warm weather there is every reason to fear that there will be much sickness.

Another enemy with which these unfortunate people have to contend is wolves, which, although their ravages are not numerically extensive as compared with those that the famine have caused, account in the aggregate for a considerable number of lives. There was hardly a man I met but had some story to tell of the daring nature of these beasts, and the mischief they had caused. Children are generally their victims, but in some instances they have ventured to attack grown persons, not only in broad daylight, but even in the village streets. Mr. Hill told me he had recently passed through a village in which a girl of eighteen had been seized by a wolf when walking with another woman, and devoured almost in the presence of the latter. He was shown the traces of the blood as the brute had dragged his victim along the road. Dozens of instances of similar attacks were told me by different men that I met, and I hardly saw a single traveller on foot throughout Shansi that was not armed with a sword or knife. I asked many of them why they carried it, and they all said as a protection against wolves as well as robbers. The most dangerous time was at dusk or early dawn, though the only two wolves that I encountered I came across in the middle of the day. One of them was walking leisurely along a few yards from the highway, and within easy shot of a pistol or a gun. Mine was unfortunately not ready at hand, and the beast showed such little inclination to run away at my approach that I thought it prudent to let him alone, as a stick was hardly a formidable enough weapon with which to assail him. I was told by the natives that their usual method of attack is to spring at the throat, and when once they have got hold there is no hope. They will sometimes jump on a man from behind, and his first impulse is of course to

turn round. This is fatal, as he is seized at once by the throat and speedily choked.

I might perhaps be excused from replying to your enquiry as to the consumption of human flesh, as no such case has come under my "personal" notice, which is the form in which the question is put, but as I presume your object is to obtain corroboration or refutation of the statement that cannibalism has been practised, I may say that I have no doubt whatever that it existed at one time to a frightful degree. The question is one that I hardly liked to put to any one, but the necessity for doing so never arose, as information on the subject was volunteered on every side. I was told again and again that human flesh was actually sold on the market in the most undisguised and unmistakeable form; persons were pointed out to me who were known to have devoured it, and numbers of people who could have had no reason whatever for deceiving me on the subject, as I never asked them for information, told me that the practice was terribly common. One man said that he had seen two women buried alive by the authorities as a penalty for killing and eating their own children, and that this was only one instance out of many that passed unnoticed. Others said that so terrible was the condition of things at one time that men dared not go beyond their own village unless in large parties, as they would have been killed and eaten to a certainty had they done so. Many were mentioned by name who were known to have gone out at night in gangs simply to hunt down human game for food, and Mr. Richard himself told me that he had seen the bodies of dead people bricked up in the rooms in which the survivors of their families were living, as they wished to preserve them from being devoured. The state of the country at this time must have been simply indescribable. Each village or town was almost in a state of siege, for no one hardly dare go beyond the place in which he was known for fear of what might befall him. There seems to be a sort of impression that the majority of those who gave way to this fearful temptation did not long survive; whether from the effect that this food had upon the system, or from mental causes, no one could say, but the practice was universally condemned, and the fact of its causing speedy death was looked upon as a proof of its being wrong, though it was very justly argued by some that when only this step lay between a man and death it was hardly fair to pass judgment upon him.

I have been asked by some, "If the state of things was as

horrible as you say, why did the people stay?" I really do not think they could have got away. When things were at their very worst, not only the whole of Shansi, but large portions of Chihli, Shensi, Shantung and Honan were suffering from the same scourge, so that these unfortunate people were hemmed in by a belt of famine that it would have taken weeks to penetrate. It was hardly to be wondered at that they should have clung to their homes until their last *cash* almost was spent, hoping on each day for rain that never came; until at last, weakened by hunger and utterly penniless, they started from their homes, perhaps with wives and children, for a weary tramp of many weeks through districts as suffering as their own. Thousands must have tried it, and almost all I fear, but those on the confines of the famine region have failed. The whitened bones on the roadside which are the remains of a very small proportion of those that died, tell too plainly the sequel of their efforts. The mind almost fails to grasp the intensity of the suffering that must at one time have been undergone in this ill-fated region, and perhaps it is as well for most of us that it should be so, for I know at times as we travelled along the road and pictured to ourselves the weary gangs of fainting wanderers and the feeling that must have been experienced by a husband or a father, as he saw his wife or little ones lay down by the roadside to die, the place seemed to be invested with such terrible associations that we were strongly tempted to turn back. I think, however, thorough realisation is hardly necessary to call forth the active sympathy of all charitable persons should it be found necessary, as is only too painfully probable, to appeal for aid to prevent a repetition of these awful scenes.

Before bringing this report to a close, there are still two matters upon which I should like to say a few words.

The Chinese Government has been the object of much abuse for its apathy and incapacity, which I think is hardly thoroughly deserved. It has been said by some that the famine is due to the effects of disafforestation and by others that had better means of communication existed the famine might have been prevented. Without venturing to pass a positive opinion on either point, I cannot help thinking that the disafforestation theory will hardly account for the famine. Want of timber may have been one of many causes that contributed towards it, but not the only one, and in some places, especially in Honan, there was much more timber than I ever expected to see. The villages and smaller towns were well stocked with trees, and in many places they were so thickly

planted as to form even at this season of the year a prominent feature in the landscape. In Shansi they were not so numerous, but I noticed the existence of a superstition that would tend greatly to assist in the preservation of timber wherever it existed. Numbers of old trees were covered with inscriptions, either cut on wooden boards or written on slips of paper, containing the well-known Chinese motto, *Yu-ch'iu-pi-ying*, "Ask and you shall surely receive." Trees are apparently here supposed to possess divine powers, and there was hardly a village through which we passed that did not contain at least one of these sacred trees covered with the offerings of grateful devotees. The mountains, it is true, are almost devoid of timber, but it is possible that this may be due to the peculiarity of the soil of which they are composed, or other natural causes, rather than to the "destructive hand of man." The Mongolian plateau, for instance, is singularly devoid of timber, but the rainfall in that region is by no means deficient. Being utterly ignorant upon this question, however, from a scientific point of view, I cannot venture to give any positive opinion. I can only say that the absence of timber did not strike me as due to any other than natural causes, and not in any way more marked than in places where the rainfall is abundant.

As regards means of communication, there can be no two opinions upon the condition of the roads, especially in the mountains, which are as bad as they possibly can be. The only entrance into Shansi from the North is the Ku-kwan Pass, and I have seen nothing anywhere to equal it for roughness. The ordinary time that is allowed for the passage by mules is five days, and for carts seven, though if I had not actually seen carts passing through I should have said it was impossible for them to go. In some places six, seven, or eight mules are harnessed to a two muled cart, and even then it takes the united efforts of the whole team, stimulated by the shouts and yells of a dozen men who are pushing from behind or pulling round the wheels, to get it over some of the difficult parts. There are two roads into Shansi from the South, one, the Pass by which we travelled, which is evidently considered too bad for use as no grain enters by it, and the other by way of Honan-fu on the south bank of the Yellow River. Of this road I can say nothing, but Messrs. Scott and Capel who came that way say that the grain traffic upon it was so large that a block often occurred for hours at a time, as in some of the deep cuttings in the *Loess* there was not room for two carts to pass. The carters, actuated possibly by the

same spirit which causes a junk captain to try whenever he can to cross a steamer's bows, invariably try to get the better of each other in these narrow parts, and the result is a block which is followed by a considerable amount of vituperation on both sides before either party will yield. To us who are accustomed to rapid communication, such a state of things would be intolerable, but looked at from a Chinese point of view it is not so very disgraceful. They know of nothing better, and are fairly satisfied therefore with what they have got. We can hardly charge the Chinese Government with criminal neglect because they have not yet made a railroad into Shansi, one of the last provinces into which a railway system would be introduced even if it had been adopted elsewhere; we are therefore almost compelled in common fairness to drop this argument and confine ourselves to the question of roads alone. The average rate of travel along an ordinary Chinese road is 100 *li* a day, or say 36 to 40 miles, and this rate will be kept up by the same animals for weeks in succession. Foreign cart horses would certainly do no more, and in the mountain passes where only half this average can be maintained it would require an expenditure of several million of taels to construct a decent road. It can hardly be wondered at then that little or nothing should be done in a matter that would tax the highest European engineering skill. That there was a complete failure of communication at the outset I admit, but this was I think in great measure due to the interference of the Government and not to its apathy. As long as there was money to buy grain, the supply was always equal to the demand, and, indeed, at no time during the whole history of the famine was there a failure of supplies for those who had means to purchase them. This will explain what at first appears an anomaly, viz., that when people were suffering from starvation, relief was generally given in money rather than in grain. When money began to fail and general starvation commenced, the Government stepped in and began to import as fast as it could, impressing into the service all the carts and animals that could be secured, and as the Government rate paid for transport is considerably below the ordinary charge, it followed that owners of animals avoided all places where "requisition" was in force, and the authorities soon found themselves at a standstill for want of the means of transport. The rates were then raised to the market standard, but much time was lost before this took effect, and in the meantime of course thousands died of want. This, as far as I could gather, was the history of the failure that undoubtedly did occur. Now this

block would seem to have been cleared, and the machinery at the disposition of the Government, cumbrous though it is, once set in motion appears to be working with fair success. The venality and utter corruption of large numbers of the agents employed, was and is, perhaps the chief cause of failure, but until the whole moral tone of the Chinese as a nation and a Government can be changed, this is an evil that can never be successfully overcome. There can be little doubt that the higher officials did the utmost in their power, and with a few notable exceptions were unsparing in their denunciations of dishonesty whenever it came prominently before their notice.

You have asked me whether there appeared to be any appreciation of the aid that foreigners have afforded. I hardly like to attempt to answer the question, for it opens up such an enormous field of speculation.

To anyone who has had a long and varied experience of the character of the Chinese it is hardly necessary to say that gratitude is not one of their strongest features, and that thanks from them are so rare that if an opinion had to be formed upon verbal expressions of appreciation, I am afraid I should have to say that all that was done was accepted as a matter of course. I only heard two men say "thank you" among the hundreds that I relieved, and both of these were men to whom I gave a very small amount, and who had no knowledge of my connection with the distributors. One of them certainly was in a desperate condition, and when I met him on the road would not have had many hours to live had he not come across me, and the other had no expectation of a present; but many that I relieved from the famine fund in a regular way were in just as bad a plight. We must look to other indications of gratitude where Chinese are concerned. If we start with the supposition that in the eyes of every ignorant Chinaman a foreigner is a barbarian to be grinned at, hooted at, and yelled at, and this was the treatment I invariably received in Honan, and in Hupeh in a more genial degree, a marked difference is to be observed in the attitude of the people of Shansi who have been the recipients of foreign relief, showing that they have reached a higher appreciation of the foreigner. Even to myself, a "barbarian" pure and simple, in the genuine barbarian dress, perfect civility was shown in and around P'ing-yang-fu, while to Messrs. Richard, Hill and Scott, it appeared to me the respect was very marked. The Chinaman, I venture to believe, is a sceptic in the matter of disinterested charity. He cannot grasp the idea that it is possible for a man to do a purely

charitable act, and when the handling of much money is concerned the acceptation of the theory becomes still more difficult to him. That a number of persons whom he has never seen or heard of should spontaneously send him aid with no ulterior object or design is utterly beyond his comprehension, and when he has at last brought his mind to accept the fact that it is so, he has yet to swallow the still more difficult theory that the agents they employ for its distribution are men of absolute integrity who are actuated by the noblest motives, and are perfectly cleanhanded. "Squeezing" as it is popularly called, in some shape or form is so essentially bound up with Chinese life, public or private, that perfect honesty is a virtue which a Chinaman reads about but does not understand. If my assumptions be correct, and I firmly believe that they are, it will be seen that the distributors of the fund have had an enormous difficulty to contend with. They have had first to convince the authorities as well as the people that the contributors of the money are actuated by the best of motives, and next that they themselves act up to the standard of morality they profess. Starting with the belief, as I assume they do, that the motives are interested and the morality exaggerated, it is easy to imagine that everything suspicious will be misconstrued, and that even the dishonesty of native subordinates is countenanced and understood by their foreign employers who are only doing the same on a much larger scale. I have said enough I think to show that the foreign distributors have a terribly up-hill battle to fight, and one that requires a patient and unwearying struggle to win.

You have learnt, I do not doubt, from Mr. Richard of the difficulties and obstructions he had to encounter at the very outset of his labours, and how he has gradually by his personal influence and patient persistency overcome the prejudices, first of the Grand Secretary Li Hung-chang, and of the Governor of Shansi, and, finally, with the aid of Messrs. Hill and Turner, has succeeded in convincing the local authorities of Ping-yang of the sincerity of their motives. One has only to go through the villages and towns where they are known to discover at once the place they hold in popular estimation. Do you know Li T'i-mo-fai (Mr. Richard's name) or Li Hsien-sheng (Mr. Hill's), was a question I was everywhere asked, and during an experience of natives, lasting now eleven years, I may say that I have never heard foreigners individually spoken of with such respect and esteem as these gentlemen, a reputation that they have earned by their own influence and

exertions. It would be almost too much to say the prejudice and suspicion have been entirely overcome, as the native agents they are obliged to employ have on more than one occasion been guilty of acts of extortion and petty dishonesty that must reflect to a certain extent on their employers, but I feel certain that time only is required to secure a just appreciation of the motives of the contributors, and unbounded admiration of the noble devotion that has been displayed by their agents. Lives which bear every mark of transparent simplicity and truthfulness, that will stand the test of the severest scrutiny must in the end have their due effect. It seems presumptuous to offer a tribute of praise to men whose literal interpretation of the calls of duty have placed them almost beyond the reach of popular commendation, but perhaps I may be allowed to say that anyone who has seen the lives that these men are leading cannot fail to feel proud of being able to claim them as countrymen of his own.

There are many other considerations in connection with this subject that are of absorbing interest to myself, but I am reminded when I see the formidable length that this letter has already reached that I have tried your patience enough. My object has been to endeavour to place before you as far as lay in my power a picture of the state of this afflicted region, that will enable you to assure those who have charitably come forward with pecuniary aid that their donations have been devoted to a good object, and have been well and judiciously bestowed. Should I have succeeded in doing so in any degree, I shall not feel that my journey has been taken in vain.

WALTER C. HILLIER.

The following was accidentally omitted on page 71, in continuation of the R. C. priest's letter.

Worse than this, however, black, earthy, sweet soft-stone is reduced to flour and used for food. From the closing month of last year, human flesh in several tens of places was constantly eaten. Before, when men had died they were eaten. At present parties will go out at night, in order to seize strange orphan children. Although the mandarins are largely engaged in the work of relief, the whole is like a drop to assuage thirst; how can it suffice? On this account the starving multitudes are all over the country covering the ground. At first the dead bodies were buried, but

afterward they were so numerous, only two or three out of ten could be laid aside. Last winter those who died from cold were very many. They were stripped of their clothes, in order to cover the living, who were shivering from cold, and so their naked bodies were devoured by the dogs and wolves, and their bones spread all around. It was a painful spectacle. From last winter till now, in P'u-chow, Tung-chow, P'ing-yang, there have died of starvation, six or seven or eight out of every ten. In Tseh-chow, Tung-tai, Sin-shuy, Yang-ching, from seven to nine have died, out of every ten, of starvation. In Lu-an and the dependencies of Fun-chow, in every district, there have died from this cause, three, four and five in every ten. In many other places a similar record may be given. Towards the North the estimate is more favourable. But from disease rich and poor have alike suffered. Whole families have perished in consequence and to an extent that is beyond calculation. Many places have been rendered a perfect desert. Not a soul is to be met with. By death and emigration the whole country is desolate. Or may it be robbers have spread disorder and destruction far and wide, and so these places have been depopulated and ruined.

From P'ing-yaou to the South, for several hundred *li*, alike in breadth and length, there are a great many villages, where the bricks and tiles are piled together in heaps, the doors and windows of the houses having been altogether destroyed. The woodwork has been broken up for firewood, or sold for food. I have heard of persons who after eating one meal have taken their whole house and given it to others. From of old Shansi has had large good-looking buildings with abundance of everything, but now all has gone to wreck, and the occupants are wandering hither and thither, much to be pitied indeed. Although there has been an ample rainfall, the number of those who have been able to sow their fields is a mere handful, and from P'ing-yaou Southwards they gradually diminish. There are some who have had no seed to sow with. Others find their bullocks and horses unequal to the task since last year, these have been killed in great numbers, as men required to eat. Besides from long starvation, the labourers have no strength to cultivate the fields. Hence it is that sowing of the seed has been only partially carried on, say in about five or six places out of ten. From P'ing-tsilh to the North, the cultivation has been more extensive, and the autumn crop is beginning to spring up. The fields are now covered with the growing grain, which in the course of three or four months will yield sufficient to fill the mouths of

the people. But at this very necessitous and trying time, those who are able to escape with their lives are few, indeed ordinarily, these poor people in the cold season, find it hard to relieve the pangs of hunger, even by means of the utmost industry. I hear that expectant magistrates have had to beg their food on the street, and I have seen one of that class leading a little girl, clad in a wretched manner begging in this way. Formerly he had two sons, but they died of hunger. In Ta-tung and Wing-foo, there was only a very small harvest last year, so that the people from the South have gone nearly all away as refugees to the North and East. Alas! it is commonly said that Shansi has from ancient times seldom suffered such calamities as the present. Everywhere wives and children are sold in order to alleviate hunger. The people wander from one place to another. Fathers, mothers, wives and children scatter abroad. Brothers and friends are not able to look after each other. The distress is as if the end of the world had come. Oh! how much is the state of things to be lamented. These statements are presented to the Famine Committee for circulation among the charitable in all countries, that they may kindly and largely assist in saving the people which will be an occasion for undying gratitude.

From T'ien-wán, a native Roman Catholic priest in Shansi.

May 30th, 1878.

The latest letter that has been received from the faminc districts is as follows:—"The public are already aware, perhaps, that the subscriptions in aid of famine relief in the North have been closed throughout the Empire. For the last two months the provincial Gazette contains frequent mention of Wei Yuens returning from the different official grain depots established on the borders of Chihli and Honan, as their services are no longer necessary in that kind of work. And not only on the borders, but those engaged in superintending the different grain depots in the southern prefectures are also returning, as relief is at an end. The only place I know of where any relief is given now is in T'ai-yuen-fu itself. Here from the beginning a handsome relief has been given summer and winter without intermission for about two years. But the number this summer is not large, only about 2,000 altogether, mostly of the aged, the helpless, and the veriest poor and weak. The able-bodied find plenty of employment and good wages since the fall of rain. The

price of grain is very moderate, *i.e.* only about a fourth or less, more than it is in usual years, but wages are higher, as labourers are few; still silver has risen but little since June. It has not regained its normal price. For about six weeks we have had splendid rains, and there is a prospect of a fine autumn harvest. With this, everything seems to revive—theatres are encouraged, temples repaired, examinations are attended, the classics are being reprinted, priests are ordained. One would expect the speedy revival and prosperity of everything, were it not for one thing which robs the people of their money, degenerates their character, and embitters their existence, and that is opium. Although the governors Tsêng and Yien have succeeded in preventing its growth, its sale continues and its misery prevails, for here, women as well as men smoke it, and some young girls are trained to use it from the early age of ten! It is only when this curse shall be removed, that we can say that gladness has returned to the homes of Shansi.”

TIMOTHY RICHARD.

T'AI-YUEN-FU, August 4th, 1879.



LIST OF CHINA FAMINE RELIEF DISTRIBUTORS.

SHANSI.

1877-9, Rev. Timothy Richard, English Baptist Mission.	1878, Rev. Jasper McIlvaine, Am. Presbyterian Mission.
1878, Rev. A. Whiting (dead) Am. Presbyterian Mission.	1878-9, Rev. Canon Scott, S.P.G. A. Capel, Esq., S.P.G.
1878-9, Rev. David Hill, Wesleyan Mission.	1879, Mr. George Clarke, C. I. Mission.
Mr. Joshua Turner, China Inland Mission.	Mr. Henry Taylor, Do. Mr. James, Do. W.C. Hillier, Esq., H.M. Legation.

NORTH SHANTUNG.

1878, Rev. C. A. Stanley, Am. Board Mission.	1878, Rev. W. N. Hall (dead), English Methodist Mission.
Rev. A. C. Smith, Do.	Rev. J. Innocent, English Methodist Mission.
Rev. H. D. Porter, Do.	Rev. W. B. Hodge (dead), Do.
Rev. D. Z. Sheffield, Do.	Rev. J. Robinson, Do.
Rev. C. Goodrich, Do.	

CHIHLI.

1878, Rev. Jonathan Lees, London Mission.	1878, Mr. C. Budd, China Inland Mission.
Rev. J. H. Barradale (dead) Do.	Mr. E. Farrago, Chinese Customs Service.
Rev. H. H. Lowry, Am. Methodist Episcopal Mission.	Mr. B. Morse, Do.
Rev. J. H. Pyke, Do.	The Rev. Messrs. Collins and Brereton of the Church Missionary Society were distributors in Chihli of a special fund.
Rev. J. Pearson, Am. Board.	
Rev. W. S. Ament, Do.	

The Rev. Arnold Foster travelled through the province of Chihli, in the direction of Shansi, to convince himself of the actual state of things, and published a full report of what he saw and heard in regard to the famine. He subsequently went to London, and became Honorary Secretary of the Committee there, and in that capacity rendered very great service to the work.

The Roman Catholic Missionaries at their different establishments in the famine districts largely engaged in the work of relief upwards of 40 names are represented as on the list of distributors.

