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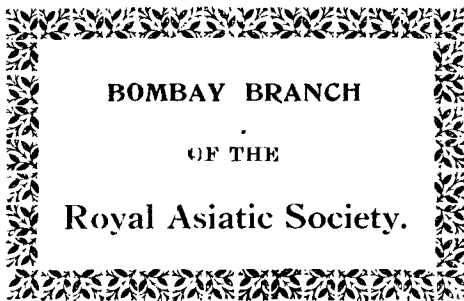
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MEMORANDUM

ON

THE MADRAS FAMINE OF 1866.

BY 108355 *m*

R. A. DALYELL, M.C.S.

HONORARY SECRETARY TO THE RELIEF COMMITTEE

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PRINTED FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE MADRAS
CENTRAL FAMINE RELIEF COMMITTEE.

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NOTICE.

IN preference to drawing up a draft report of the Famine Relief Committee's proceedings, the undersigned has deemed it advisable to throw such information on the subject of the recent scarcity, and of previous famines, as he could obtain either from the papers which reached the Committee, or from other sources, into the form of a Memorandum. It will be observed, that a complete account of the action of the Committee, throughout the late crisis, with the details of their expenditure, is given in Part III, and, perhaps, the Committee may consider it sufficient to submit a copy of the Memorandum to Government, with an expression of their concurrence in such portions of it as may meet with their approval. The attention of the Committee is, accordingly, specially requested to those paragraphs in Part IV of the proof copy now circulated, in which suggestions and recommendations are made. The undersigned much regrets the delay which has taken place in the printing of this paper, but it was quite unavoidable, as the accounts of the expenditure in the Bellary District were only received at the end of last month, and those of another District only on the 14th instant.

R. A. DALYELL,
Honorary Secretary.

MADRAS, }
30th August 1866. }

As the Committee have been pleased to adopt the suggestion made in the foregoing notice, and thus to relieve the undersigned of the trouble of preparing a detailed report, it only remains for him to express his sense of their consideration, and his sincere regret that he had neither the ability nor the leisure to write a

history of the 'famine year' which would have been more worthy of the subject. Though the Memorandum has not the slightest pretension to be a literary production, and though it was much too hastily drawn up for great accuracy, it may perhaps lead to the preparation of a really useful work, in which at least one of the four kindred topics on which it treats will be dealt with at length, and the undersigned will consider himself amply repaid for any labor it may have involved, should it succeed in attracting attention to records which contain very interesting information.

R. A. D.

MADRAS, }
15th September 1867. }

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PART I.

A BRIEF NOTICE OF SOME OF THE MOST DESTRUCTIVE FAMINES
OF MODERN TIMES, WITH A MORE PARTICULAR ACCOUNT
OF SUCH AS HAVE OCCURRED IN MADRAS.

1. It is proposed in the following paper, to give a short account of the severe scarcity with which a large portion of the Madras Presidency was afflicted in the year 1866, together with an account of the measures taken for its relief. As preliminary to this narrative, it will be desirable to notice briefly some of the most serious famines which have occurred in Europe, and elsewhere, in modern times, to give such particulars of the famines which have happened in the Madras Presidency, during the last hundred years, as can be obtained from a cursory inspection of the available records connected with the subject, and to consider, in a little detail, the condition of the people at the end of the year 1865, both in regard to their food supply, and their general wealth. It will be well, also, to conclude the narrative with such suggestions as have been received for the prevention of the recurrence of such disasters, and some general reflections on the duties of an Indian Government on such occasions.

2. About a century ago, Dr. Short published his observations on the Bills of Mortality, and in this work, he gives a table of all the plagues, pestilences, and famines, of which he could obtain accounts. In those countries of the world of which the history was then generally known, 239 great famines and dearths had occurred since the Christian era, or about fourteen of these scourges of humanity to each century. Hence, it would appear, that in the earlier periods of history, at any rate, a famine occurred in some part of the known world every seven years. In his interesting report upon the famine in the north western provinces of India, the late Colonel Baird Smith estimates that a famine, or at least a severe dearth, occurs in some part of India, on the average, every 15 years, and the natives of the Madras Presidency assert that there is a cycle of seasons, and a certain periodicity in the recurrence of droughts.

3. In most eastern countries, the average produce of the soil is barely sufficient to support the lives of the inhabitants, in consequence of a primitive system of agriculture, and there is no foreign supply of food. The population, by early marriages, &c., is in a manner forced beyond its natural bounds, and increases more rapidly than the means of subsistence. The people thus become accustomed to consume only the smallest quantity of food which will support life, and hence, any deficiency which may occur from a bad season, has a terrible effect on the country. This is

doubtless the explanation of the frequency of famines in the eastern world, and of their increased severity.

4. In the earlier periods of European history, however, famines and dearths were of frequent occurrence. Holingshed's *Chronicles* of the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries, abound with notices of famine in Great Britain, and there are several accounts of a terrible dearth, by which England and France were devastated about the middle of the 14th century. Voltaire gives a fearful picture of a famine in France at the end of the 17th century, and in the latter half of the eighteenth century, there were numerous dearths in several quarters of the world.

5. In 1769-70 occurred, what is termed, the great famine in India, though its ravages were principally confined to the northern portions of the continent. The rice crops of December 1768 and August 1769, were both scanty, that of December 1769, almost totally failed from the want of the periodical rains which usually fall in October, and the continued drought caused the destruction of the crops of inferior grain and pulse generally reaped between February and April. The pressure of the famine was felt in all the northern districts of Bengal, as early as November 1769, and was general by the end of the following April. During the most severe pressure, rice was ten times its usual price, and in some places, was not to be had at any price. Large numbers of people, after vainly endeavouring to obtain subsistence from leaves and the barks of trees, perished

miserably of starvation, and the fields and high-ways were strewed with their bodies. The number of persons who lost their lives during the twelve months while the dearth lasted, has been estimated at three millions, or a fifth of the whole population of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa. In many cases, the starving objects sustained themselves with the flesh of forbidden and abhorred animals, and there were instances in which the child fed upon its dead parent, and the mother on her child.

6. At an early period of the crisis, unsuccessful attempts were made to procure grain from abroad, and general instructions were published against the hoarding of grain, and against all sales or purchases of the article at any other place than the public markets. The utmost endeavours were used to bring to market all the produce which the country contained, and large subscriptions were raised for the relief of the distressed, to which Europeans and natives contributed with equal liberality. In Moorshedabad alone, 7000 persons were fed for several months, but the devastation was so widespread, that no general alleviation of the distress was possible. So far as is generally known, the only measure adopted in consequence of this terrible visitation, in view to mitigate similar calamities in future, was the simple preventive of Lord Cornwallis, viz., an establishment for storing the surplus produce of abundant years.*

* Abridged from Mr. Robert Grant's account of this famine.

7. In 1784-85, a dreadful famine raged in Egypt, owing to a deficiency in the inundation of the Nile. The French traveller Volney, who was an eye-witness of the misery suffered on this occasion, draws a fearful picture of it. He states that the streets of Cairo, which at first were full of beggars, were soon cleared of all these objects, who either perished or fled. A vast number of unfortunate wretches, in order to escape death, spread themselves over all the neighbouring countries, and the towns of Syria were inundated with Egyptians. The streets and public places were crowded by famished and dying skeletons. All the most revolting modes of satisfying the cravings of hunger were resorted to, and the most disgusting food was devoured with eagerness. The depopulation of the two years was estimated at one-sixth of all the inhabitants.

8. The empire of China, has always been specially subject to famines, and a very serious one occurred there in 1787, on which occasion it is stated, that it was no uncommon thing to see famished wretches breathing their last in the streets of Canton, while others thought it a duty to destroy their infant children, and the young to give the stroke of fate to the aged, to save them from the agonies of such a dilatory death.*

9. At the beginning of the present century, very severe pressure was felt in England from the high

* These notices of famine in Egypt and China are taken from Malthus' work on Population.

price of corn. For five years, the harvests had been unfavorable, with the exception of that of 1796, and before the harvest of 1801 was secured, wheat, in the London market, had risen to 180s. the quarter, and the quartern loaf was, for four weeks, as high as 1s.-10½*d.* It is said that, including the poor rates, no less than ten millions sterling were collected on behalf of the poor in 1801. So great was the dearth, that even the rich reduced their consumption of bread, as much as possible, in order that more might remain, at a less exorbitant price, for the poor.* In the earlier years of this scarcity, the Government had adopted the extraordinary measures of buying up wheat and depositing it in granaries, and also of forcibly seizing on the high seas, neutral vessels, laden with grain, and compelling the masters to sell to government agents. In 1800, a bounty was given on all grain imported, and restrictions were placed, by law, upon the bakers, as to the time and manner of their sales.

10. In Ireland, the poverty of the people renders them peculiarly liable to the horrors of famine, and in 1816, 1822, and 1831, there was considerable pressure upon the poorer classes of that country, owing to the scarcity of provisions, and, in the last-named year, the government of Lord Grey deemed it necessary to supply the people with food. Proba-

* In one of the debates on the Irish famine of 1846-47, Lord Brougham observed in reference to this scarcity, "that he perfectly recollected when the loaf used to be brought to table, but no one was allowed to cut it, but the master of the house, who cut a very small portion for each individual."

bly, however, in no part of the world has any catastrophe of this description occurred, which was more terrible in its severity, than the great Irish famine of 1846-47, though its horrors were no doubt largely mitigated by the prompt measures which were adopted for its relief.

11. In the summer and autumn of 1845, the symptoms of disease in the potato crop, which formed the staple food of the people of Ireland, became general and alarming, and the heavy rains with which the country was swamped, seemed, to increase the failure. Within a few weeks, the position of the lower classes became critical, and, in the middle of October, Sir Robert Peel's Government thought it advisable to appoint a commission to inquire into and suggest measures to avert the extreme distress which was by that time prevalent. The prime minister, at a Cabinet Council on the 5th November, proposed the suspension of the import duties on grain, but the measure was not then agreed to, and a few days afterwards, Sir Robert Peel authorized large purchases of Indian corn on government account. The reasons which induced the adoption of the measure, are described by himself as follows :—

“ Some days after the separation of the Cabinet on the 6th of November, I resolved (acting in concert with Sir James Graham and Mr. Goulburn) to take the unusual step of authorising a very large purchase of Indian corn in the United States on account of the Government.

“ I should greatly have preferred the introduction of this additional supply of food through the ordinary

“ medium of private adventure, stimulated as it would have
 “ been by the suspension of the import duty. I considered
 “ it, however, of so much importance to provide, *by any*
 “ *means*, for an increased supply of food, and to habituate
 “ the Irish people to the consumption of a novel species of
 “ food, as a substitute for their ordinary subsistence, that I
 “ did not hesitate to unite with those of my colleagues, whom
 “ I have above named, in secretly giving a very large order
 “ for the purchase of Indian corn and meal, in the markets
 “ of the United States. The whole transaction was conduct-
 “ ed with great judgment and discretion by the house of
 “ Baring, acting on behalf of the Treasury, that department
 “ undertaking the whole pecuniary responsibility.”

12. This measure, combined with public works on a small scale set on foot by Government, alleviated the distress very considerably, and the country tided over the early part of 1846 without difficulty. The real horrors of the famine did not commence, until the failure of the potato crop in the autumn of this year. The Government promptly took measures to meet the crisis. Though, on the application of some of the principal mercantile houses interested in the grain trade, a guarantee was given that the Government would not interfere with the import trade, as had been done in the previous year, they took measures to lessen the pressure of want in districts which were remote from the ordinary sources of supply, by establishing government depôts for the retail sale of grain, at the market price, and they gave employment on public works to all who desired it, the numbers so employed reaching no less than half a million in January, 1847, and

nearly three quarters of a million in March. They also encouraged the establishment of Relief Committees, for the purpose of raising subscriptions for the relief of distress, and giving employment and relief in food to the sufferers. These Committees received grants from Government, equivalent to the sums raised by them. Notwithstanding these liberal measures of relief, a very large number of persons perished of starvation, before they could obtain the benefit of them, and in the barony of Skibereen, it was reported, that nearly the whole population, or eleven thousand persons, had so perished.

13. In addition to these alleviatory measures, Lord John Russell's Government, which had assumed office at the end of the previous session of Parliament, repealed all the remaining duties on grain of any sort, and suspended the Navigation Laws early in the session of 1847. The Government, at the same time, made provision for the support of all those unable to labour, by passing the Amended Poor Law Act, and the Temporary Relief Act. Under these enactments, when the work-houses could not afford accommodation to the applicants, relief was to be afforded, out of doors, in food, not in money, to all, whether able-bodied, thrown out of work, or not. In July 1847, the number of persons who received separate rations, were upwards of three millions. Fortunately the potato crop of this year was free from disease, and the harvest plentiful, and it became feasible to discontinue out-door relief under the special

Act, in September. It was necessary, however, to continue it for sometime longer from the regular Poor Law Unions, and even in March 1848, there were 700,000 persons supported by out-door relief. It is estimated, that in addition to the large funds raised in Ireland, no less than eight millions sterling were expended from funds raised by private subscription, in England, and public grants. Of this amount, £600,000 was raised by private subscription. Notwithstanding the large expenditure incurred upon relief, the deaths occasioned by the famine and its effects, between 1846 and 1850, are estimated at upwards of half a million. The recorded deaths in the census returns are a quarter of a million in 1847, against an average annual mortality of 78,000 in the three years 1843-44-45.

14. The Presidency of Madras has not been more fortunate than other eastern countries, in exemption from the horrors of famine. Indeed, a year rarely passes without distress being felt in some quarter, from severe loss of crops, occasioned by failure of the seasonable rains. The chief cause of these scarcities is described in a letter to the late Court of Directors, as far back as 1733, to have been the neglect of the irrigation works which had taken place, since the agents of the Mogul Emperor had obtained possession of the country. It was reported in the same letter, that rice had been unusually dear, for the previous ten years, from this cause, and that, whereas it was then (in 1733) sold at Rs. 250 per garce (about $\frac{3}{4}$ *l.* per lb) in consequence of a severe

scarcity, and Rs. 175 per garce (about $\frac{1}{2}d.$ per lb) was then considered to be a moderate price, twenty years previously it had been sold at half the latter rate. It also appears that, during the five years preceding 1733, considerable inconvenience had been occasioned in the settlement of Fort St. George, owing to the high price, of grain, so much so, that early in 1729, the Government deemed it proper to fix the price at which grain should be sold at the following rates—

Rice, 13 measures per Rupee (about $\frac{3}{4}d.$ per lb).

Raggy,* 16 measures per Rupee (about $\frac{1}{2}d.$ per lb), and to declare that any grain purchased at higher rates should be forfeited to the purchaser, his money being returned to him. It was further ordered, that any person who might have in stock, more grain than was required for his usual annual expenditure, should be obliged to sell the overplus, and that any concealment, should render it liable to confiscation for the use of the Government. It became necessary, however, before the harvest of the same year, to cancel these regulations, and to permit persons to sell at such rates as they thought proper, as it was feared that otherwise no imports of grain would be made by the merchants of the Settlement. Nevertheless, in the following year, a Committee was appointed to superintend the sale of grain. All persons were required to give them notice, if they possessed more

* Raggy is a small grain grown on un-irrigated land. It is generally used as food by the lower classes, who cannot afford a rice diet.

than 5 garce (about 21 tons) of rice, or paddy,* on penalty of a severe fine, and a reward of Rupees 35, in each case of proved concealment, was offered to informers. Subsequently, the sale of grain was prohibited, except between 6 A. M. and 6 P. M., and the price of rice was fixed at about 16 measures the rupee (about $\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb).

15. The first serious famine of which there are accounts, took place in 1781 and 1782. The Carnatic had been devastated by Hyder Ali's incursions in 1780-81, and the settlement of Madras was reduced to great straits for food, as the whole country in its vicinity was suffering from a general scarcity. Early in 1781, the Government of Madras remitted all import duties on grain, and called upon the officers in charge of the subordinate settlements, to forward all available grain to the Presidency. On the 20th May, they deemed it necessary to appoint a 'Grain Committee' to superintend the daily distribution of grain, in such manner, "that the stock on hand might not be expended before the month of September, when fresh supplies might be expected." This committee was authorized to fix the price at which grain should be sold, and to limit the quantity disposed of each day. The native merchants were also required to enter into penal bonds not to withhold any of the grain in their possession, and were required by proclamation to inform the committee of the extent of their stores.

* Paddy is rice in the husk.

16. Shortly after assuming office, and after having made a minute enquiry into the available food supply of the settlement, this committee reported, that there was not more grain available than would support the population up to the end of June, and in reply, they were directed still further to restrict the daily sales. This precaution caused the greatest distress among the poorer classes, but despite the committee's utmost endeavours, they were compelled to report, on the 6th July, that there was only two days consumption available. They, at the same time, expressed their belief, that a considerable quantity of grain was concealed by the merchants in different parts of the town. In reply to their communication, the Government authorized them to publish that, in future, all persons would be permitted to sell grain at such rates as they thought proper, independent of the regulations of the grain committee, but the Government, at the same time, resolved to supply the committee with 400 bags of rice daily (a sufficient quantity to support about 60,000 people) from the Company's stores, to be sold by retail under the committee's superintendence.

17. Matters appear to have remained at this stage for the next six months, but, in January 1782, the pressure of the distress had become much more severe, dying objects were stated to be constantly met with in the streets, and a public subscription was raised for the relief of the poor. The Europeans subscribed Rs. 2,800 per mensem, and some

small subscriptions were also received from the natives. The Government appear to have also contributed to the fund, which was the origin of the existing institution for the relief of the native poor, known as the Monegar Choultry. In the month of May, 4,000 people were being fed by the managers of this fund, and this number seems to have been very largely augmented later in the year. In August, a contribution of Rupees 30,000 was sent to the fund from the European inhabitants of Bengal, but notwithstanding the liberal support accorded to the fund, from all quarters, the Trustees in charge, found themselves quite unable to provide for the multitudes of starving poor who applied to them for assistance, in consequence of the increased pressure occasioned by the scarcity of provisions. They accordingly suggested to Government, that the paupers should be deported to the northern districts, which were then under the authority of the Madras Government, where provisions were comparatively plentiful. The Government agreed to this suggestion, and 9,000 persons were despatched, in parties of a thousand at a time, to the Northern Circars, as the northern Districts of Madras were then styled. They were fed by Government during their transit, and provided with food or employment on their arrival. It appears that 3,000 were sent to Ganjam, and 2,000 to Vizagapatam.

18. Notwithstanding these precautions to prevent the exhaustion of the town supply of food, the

Government deemed it necessary, early in October, to, as they described it, "take the supply of rice and food grain into their own hands," undertaking to

* Rice from Bengal, Pagodas 150 per garce ($1\frac{1}{4}d.$ per lb.),

Rice from Northern Districts, Pagodas 130 per garce ($1\frac{1}{2}d.$ per lb.)

Paddy—Pagodas 75 per garce ($\frac{3}{4}d.$ per lb.)

Jounah and Natcheny Pagodas 80 per garce ($\frac{3}{4}d.$ per lb.)

purchase, on government account, at the rates noted in the margin,* all good marketable grain which might be imported. These prices were to be paid by bills on the locality from whence the grain

was imported.

19. These proceedings on the part of the Government, appear to have been most distasteful to the merchants and people of the Settlement. A public meeting was held at the Town Hall on the 11th of October, at which it was resolved to address the Government, deprecating the measures which had been adopted, and observing that the proposed system of payment by bills, on the localities whence the grain was imported, was very objectionable and inconvenient to importers, and that the price offered was inadequate. In the same address, it was recommended that Pagodas 200 per garce (about $1\frac{3}{4}d.$ per lb.) should be offered for all rice imported up to 20th November, and Pagodas 300 (about $2\frac{5}{8}d.$ per lb.) between that date and the end of December, as it was known that this latter price was then paid in many parts of the country. It was also further proposed, that similar inducements should be held out to importers by land, and that a large proportion of the

population of the town, viz., all those whose services were not needed by the Settlement, should be deported to the northern districts. These recommendations do not seem to have met altogether with the approval of Government, though it appears, that the original arrangement regarding the price to be paid for imported grain was so far modified, that merchants were allowed to sell on their own account, at such rates as they thought proper, one-sixth of their cargoes, and two sixths were sold by the grain committee, on account of the consignees, at such rates as seemed desirable, the remainder, or one-half of the cargo, being disposed of to Government, at the fixed price, on the terms above mentioned. Shortly after this modification of the original arrangement, the Government increased the price to be paid for rice, to Pagodas 200 per garce, (about $1\frac{3}{4}d.$ per lb.) up to 20th December, after which date, half the cargoes were left to be disposed of by the owners, the other half being taken at the old rate, of Pagodas 150 per garce, (about $1\frac{1}{4}d.$ per lb.)

20. The scarcity appears to have come to an end in the early months of 1783, and the Government found themselves the owners of an enormous stock of rice, which had been purchased under the arrangements described above. They accordingly assumed the monopoly of all retail sales in July 1783, which they apparently retained until the surplus stock of rice was sold off, at Pagodas 133 per garce, (about $1\frac{1}{5}d.$ per lb), which seems to have been the

then market price. This rate would give about 7 Madras measures, or 21 lbs. of rice, per rupee, whereas Pagodas 150 per garce, which the Government paid during one period of the scarcity, would give 6 measures, (or 18 lb), per rupee, and Pagodas 200, would be about $4\frac{1}{2}$ measures (or $13\frac{1}{2}$ lbs) per rupee. The rate of Pagodas 300, said to be in force in many parts of the country, would give but 3 measures, or 9 lbs, per rupee.

21. Seven years had scarcely elapsed, when another serious dearth took place in the northern districts of the Presidency, and the pressure was apparently felt for about two years, viz., from November 1790 to November 1792. In April 1791, it was stated, that 1,200 persons had died of starvation in the neighbourhood of Vizagapatam, and early in 1792, the district of Ganjam was in great straits for food, and those of Ellore, Rajamundry, and Condapilly, in serious distress. From Masulipatam, it was reported, that there had been numerous deaths from starvation in all quarters of the neighbouring country, and the greatest difficulty was felt in supplying the inhabitants of the town with food, though the consumption had been at one time restricted to $\frac{1}{4}$ seer, or half a pound, per head, per diem. The price of rice in the town, had been at one time four Madras measures per rupee (or 2*d.* per lb.) Rice was also raised in price to 12 seers (8 Madras measures), the rupee, (1*d.* per lb) in Ganjam. At an early period, the Government suspended the import and transit duties

on all kinds of grain and provisions, and directed the local officers to afford every encouragement and assistance to the merchants in importing grain, but, at the same time, to prevent any improper attempts to raise the prices. They also requested the Bengal Government to encourage the export of grain to the northern districts of Madras, and they imported considerably from the same quarter on government account. In addition to these measures of relief, the Government found it necessary at the latter part of 1791, to prohibit the export of rice from Tanjore, until June 1792, except to the distressed districts, to permit 50 bags (about 7,500 lbs.) of rice, per mensem, to be distributed in charity, from the Government stores, at Vizagapatam, and to authorize the Collector of Ganjam to feed the poorest classes upon rice and natcheny* porridge, at a cost of Rs. 200 to Rs. 300, per mensem. The pressure became at last so severe in this district, that Mr. Snodgrass, the Resident at Ganjam, collected local subscriptions for the relief of the poor, and employed 2,000 of them on public works, paying them their wages in grain from the Government stores.

22. In the early part of 1799, there was considerable distress in the district of Dindigul, in the south, and the Collector was permitted to purchase grain, on the government account, for the purpose of retail sale to the people. In the event of the scarcity becoming more severe, he was authorized to dis-

* Natcheny is the name given to Raggy when cleaned.

pose of what grain he had in store, or could collect, *at a loss*, in order to lower the general price of grain. It is not clear, however, whether he found it necessary to adopt this extreme measure.

23. Five years later, or towards the close of 1804, the season was so unfavourable, as to cause severe pressure on the poorer classes in the Tanjore and South Arcot districts. The Collector of the former province took upon himself to purchase 70 garce of rice, at 85 Pagodas the garce,* (12½ Madras measures, or 37½ lbs. per rupee) for the purpose of retail sale to the people. A small profit was made on the transaction, which he devoted to the gratuitous support of the poorest among the sufferers. Early in 1805, the scarcity in these two districts had been so severe, that the Collector of Tanjore recommended an embargo on exportation, and the Collector of South Arcot suggested that the importation of rice, should be undertaken, on government account, from Bengal, and the northern districts, to be sold by retail, at depôts, on behalf of government, under European superintendence. The Government, on the submission of these proposals, expressed their objection to any interference with the grain market, unless it proved absolutely necessary. They, however, ordered supplies of grain from the northern districts, and from Bengal, and left the question of putting an embargo on exports to the discretion of the Collectors. They

* The garce is equal to about 4 tons.

also suggested the expediency of advances to merchants, to enable them to obtain supplies.

24. In the latter part of the following year, (1805), a general failure of crops seems to have occurred in all parts of the Presidency, and, in reporting the same to Government, the Board of Revenue laid down the principles which, in their opinion, should guide the Government on such occasions. They deprecated in the strongest terms, any interference with the grain markets, either by fixing the price at which grain should be sold, or by importing grain and selling it on government account, and they also expressed their opinion that to prohibit exportation, which had been suggested, was unnecessary and mischievous. The Government approved of these principles, and the local officers were accordingly directed to be guided by them. The Board advocated the employment of the able-bodied poor on public works, as the only proper means by which the State could alleviate the distress. They, however, objected to the payment of these persons, in grain, as tending to disturb the market. The Government approved of the Board's suggestions, as to the employment of the people, but, as in some places, there were already considerable stores of grain in the government store-houses, they authorized grain payments, though they concurred with the Board in considering the plan to be opposed to correct principles.

25. Early in 1807, the Government were fully alive to the dangers of the situation, and, in view to

increasing the supply of grain, they offered a high fixed price, 110 Pagodas per garce, (under 1*l.* per *lb.*) for all rice imported into the Madras Presidency up to August, the importer having the option of sale to government, at the fixed price, or sale to the public, at the market price. Lord W. Bentinck, the Governor of Madras, had advocated the payment of a bounty on all grain imported, as not involving so great a risk to government as the offer of a fixed price. He was, however, over-ruled by his Council, and, in recording his concession to the views of the majority, he observes, that he concedes the point, because the offer of a fixed price may perhaps insure a more certain supply than a bounty, and “in a
 “case of such vast importance, affecting the very
 “existence of a great and numerous population,
 “every other consideration must be secondary to
 “the best means of averting the calamities of a
 “famine.”

26. In February, a Committee was appointed to enquire into certain disturbances which had taken place between the grain dealers and the public, regarding sales of grain by weight or measurement. The Committee recommended that the merchants should be protected in selling by measure. This Committee managed the imports on government account, but did not apparently interfere with the rates in the local market, in any way, at first. At the Committee's recommendation, the Government extended the period during which the fixed price was to be paid, up to October 1807. They

also authorized the employment of the able-bodied poor in the neighbourhood of Madras, and in March, 2,000 persons were so employed. The northern and central districts of the Presidency did not suffer on this occasion, beyond a slight enhancement of prices. The dearth was, apparently, most severe in the districts of North Arcot, Nellore, and Chingleput, (Madras), though it was partially felt in the Ceded Districts, South Arcot, Tanjore, and Trichinopoly, where it was deemed advisable to give employment to the poorest classes on public works. Colonel, afterwards Sir Thomas, Munro, was, at this period, Collector of the Ceded Districts, and, when addressing the Board of Revenue on the subject of the impending scarcity, he strongly deprecated any Government interference, either by importing on government account, or by prohibiting exports, though he considered that the latter measure might be adopted in an extremity. He urged the employment of the people near their homes, to guard against pestilence, which would probably be the result of congregating them in large bodies.

27. A very considerable outlay upon public works, and some advances to the people, for the purpose of sinking wells, were sanctioned in the three districts of Nellore, North Arcot, and Madras. Some supplies of grain were also forwarded from the Presidency town, by the Grain Committee, to certain districts, on the requisition of the Board of Revenue, but, notwithstanding these measures of relief, a considerable number of the inhabitants are stated to

have perished from famine in the Provinces. It appeared that Government had contemplated establishing grain Depôts, in those districts where the distress was greatest, but the accounts received from the district officers were somewhat contradictory, and when it was ultimately proposed to forward large supplies of grain from Madras, the mortality which had taken place among the carriage cattle, rendered it impossible to do so. As an instance of the imperfect information received from the provinces, it may be mentioned, that though in April it was reported that no pressure was likely to be felt in Trichinopoly, in September, the accounts of the district were so alarming, that a large supply of government rice was at once despatched thither, with instructions to dispose of it to the people, on government account, at Pagodas 100 per garce, (about $\frac{7}{8}d.$ per lb.)

28. In the absence of any measures for the relief of the sufferers, in the distressed districts, by the distribution of food, or the sale of grain at low rates, large numbers of the people emigrated to Madras, and besieged the gates of the Monegar Choultry. This institution did much towards the relief of the starving applicants, and all the able-bodied were given employment, on the public works, in the neighbourhood of the Presidency town. For seven months, an average of 2,500 of those, who, from the debility of infancy or extreme age, from infirmity, sickness, or any other cause, were

unable to minister to their own wants, were fed gratuitously, at the principal institution. Four branch Relief Depôts were also opened, for the accommodation of the large number of immigrants from the provinces, and, in the month of August, 15,000 persons were thus relieved. There was considerable mortality among the numbers relieved, partly from disease, and partly from actual starvation, many having died almost immediately after their arrival. An expenditure of considerably upwards of a lac of Rupees, (£10,000), was incurred in these operations, up to the month of August; large subscriptions having been received from the public of Madras, Calcutta, and Bombay. The Government, also, made liberal contributions to the Institution, in grain, but, notwithstanding these and other demands upon them, it was found, that the offer to purchase grain at a fixed liberal price, had filled the government store-houses to overflowing. The measure had had, however, the most satisfactory effect in keeping down the price of food, as the knowledge that the Government had so large a quantity, in reserve, prevented the retailers from asking exorbitant prices, but it became eventually necessary to retail on account of government, in order to reduce the stock. Hence, in September, it was resolved to sell to all comers, at Pagodas 100 per garce, ($\frac{7}{8}d.$ per lb), or at a loss of ten per cent.

29. The scarcity seems to have passed over by October, 1807, and those of the poor who had survived, were returned to their homes. No complete

record of the number of deaths which took place, either in Madras, or in the Provinces, in consequence of this famine, is obtainable, but from the recorded deaths, in Madras, during the years 1805-6 and 7*, it would appear that the mortality in 1807 was very serious.

Years.	Deaths.
* 1805—	3,225
1806—	4,902
1807—	17,207

30. It will be observed that though on the first appearance of the distress, the Government professed to agree with the Board of Revenue, as to the propriety of non-interference with the grain market, yet, as the danger of the crisis advanced, they abandoned these views, and their proceedings were more in accordance with the opinion of the Court of Directors, as expressed in the following extract from a despatch on the subject, written two years after the event.

“ Adverting to the recommendation of the Board of Revenue, as stated in the 4th para, to abstain from all interference in the grain market, by imposing any regulation for the sale of grain, we remark that, as a general principle, its expediency and justice may be acceded to, but that it is a practice which ought under no circumstances to be resorted to, we by no means admit, indeed, experience has shown that in India, from some peculiar traits in the native character, it has been necessary for Government to have recourse to such an expedient. Thus, in Bengal, we find that in the year 1783, a committee was appointed to superintend the sale of grain throughout the country, during the famine which existed at that period. This committee had not only the power to fix the maximum price of the grain, but was also authorized to compel persons possessed of large stocks of grain, to dispose of the same, which measures were attended with the most beneficial consequences, and

“ the fatal effects which were at first apprehended, were in a great measure averted.”

31. The season of the year 1811, was unfavorable in some of the southern districts, and, early in 1812, the Board of Revenue addressed Government on the impending distress, and again laid down, what appeared to them to be the true principles which should guide State interference on such occasions, strongly deprecating any importation of grain on government account. The Government, on the Board's recommendation, exempted from duty all grain imported from abroad, or transferred from one district to another. No serious distress appears to have been generally experienced throughout the Presidency, on this occasion, but the district of Madura suffered considerably in the years 1812-13-14, and, in the early part of the last-named year, it was found necessary to employ no less than 42,000 people in that district, and to advance a sum of Pagodas 2,000 (£700) to the merchants, in order to assist them in procuring grain from elsewhere. The expenditure in giving employment to the people, from the beginning of the year to 31st of May, or for five months, had been Pagodas 93,000, (£ 32,550). The distress appears also to have extended to the Canara district in 1812, as the Collector sent in proposals to store grain on account of government, in order to provide against scarcities in future. His proposal did not, however, meet with the approval of Government.

32. The next general scarcity of which there are any reliable accounts, took place in 1824. The first

officer to sound the alarm was the Commercial Resident at Injeram, near Masulipatam, who viewed the rise in prices which had occurred in the autumn of 1823, consequent on the failure of the rains, so seriously, that on his own responsibility, he compelled certain merchants to sell rice at fixed prices, and wrote to the Bengal Government requesting that a cargo of rice might be sent to him, on government account. When his proceedings were reported to the Madras Government, they gravely censured the course of action adopted by him, pointing out that such proceedings were more likely to create a famine, than to relieve the existing distress. They also reported to the Government of Bengal, that they had then no reason to apprehend a scarcity. Two months later, however, or in December of the same year, the Madras Government fully realized the danger which the Commercial Resident had foreseen, for the scarcity of grain was by that time severely felt in the town of Madras. There was only one bankshall (warehouse) open for the sale of grain, several deaths from starvation had been reported, many children had been abandoned by their parents in despair, and, at the end of the month, a serious grain riot took place in the town, rendering it necessary to call out the military. The crowd, on this occasion, persistently refused to disperse, until a round of *ball* cartridge had been fired over the heads of the rabble.

33. Matters had now become so serious throughout many parts of the country, especially in the cen

tral districts, that the Governor, Sir Thomas Munro, recorded the following minute on the subject—

“ The failure of the periodical rains in most of the provinces under this Government, and more particularly in the Carnatic and the western districts, having already raised the price of grain in many places to double its usual rates; and there being reason to suppose that if the present month should pass, without rain, it will still rise much higher—it appears advisable that Government should adopt such measures, without delay, as may be calculated to alleviate the evils of the scarcity which has already begun to be felt.”

“ The interference of Government on such occasions, as the present, is often very prejudicial, and I know of no way in which it can be safe or useful, unless in suspending all duties on grain—giving perfect freedom to its transit by sea and land, and securing the grain dealers from the violence of the people.”

“ I therefore recommend, that all duties be taken off for one year, from this date, on all grains imported from Bengal to any place under the Presidency, and on all grain imported by land to any place under this Government. The adoption of this measure will be attended with some loss of Revenue, but it ought not to be put in competition with the great object of relieving the people, as far as may be practicable, from the distress inseparable from a scarcity of food.”

34. The Government, accordingly, published a notice admitting all grain free of import duty, and permitting its free transit throughout the country. They also offered a bounty of Rs. 30, per garce, (3s. 8d. per quarter) on all grain imported from Bengal, Malabar, or Canara, until the 7th June, and all

ships bringing grain to the coast, were offered a cargo of salt at Rs. 18, per garce, instead of Rs. 24, the regular price. The Government also directed the Board of Revenue to instruct Collectors to provide labour, on useful Public works, for those of the people who could not obtain employment elsewhere. The distress seems to have been very serious, at an early period, in the North Arcot district, and the Collector inquired whether the merchants were to be allowed to sell at their own rates, or whether Government would interfere and fix the prices. The Government, in reply, directed him to be guided by the true principles of political economy, and to leave the market entirely free, but they sanctioned a subsequent proposal received from him to advance to the cultivators of land, a sum of Rs. 2,500, to be expended in sinking wells, and to be recoverable within three years.

35. The Board of Revenue had, in the meantime, addressed all the Collectors of districts, requiring them to submit a full report on the crops in their districts, with the proportion they bore to an average crop, and the extent to which they might be calculated upon to provide for the wants of the people, during the coming season, including both seed grain and food ; to ascertain what proportion of the people subsisted on rice and other kinds of grain, and how much grain of the previous year's harvest was in store; to state whether their districts were at all dependent on foreign supplies, and if so, to give the extent of

such supplies in ordinary years; and to give the usual quantity of the exports of grain by sea, if any. The Collectors were also required to forward weekly returns of the state of the season and crops, and likewise of the ruling prices, as compared with the prices ruling at the same period of the year, during the previous three years.

36. From the information received by the Board, in reply to their requisition, it was found to be necessary, early in 1824, to give State employment to a considerable number of people in the Ceded Districts, and in Guntoor, Salem, Vizagapatam, North and South Arcot, Madras, and Nellore. The laborers were paid in money, and the Collector of Nellore's proposal to pay them in grain, was negatived by the Board, and when the same officer proposed, in February, to import grain, on government account, he was informed that such a course was open to very serious objections.

37. About the middle of the year, the distress among the poorest classes had increased to such an alarming extent, that it became necessary to feed considerable numbers of those unable to labour, both in the town of Madras, and in the districts of Madras, and North Arcot. In the latter district, rice was

selling in July, at $4\frac{1}{2}$ seers, the rupee, in some places* In September, the Collector of Nellore reported that prices were still rising, and that deaths from starvation, were of frequent occurrence, and that a Relief Depôt was

* 3 Madras measures, per rupee, or about $2\frac{3}{4}$ per lb.

also opened in that district. The accounts from Vizagapatam, in the same month, were so bad, rice sell-

ing at 9 seers the rupee,* and people reported to be selling their in-

* 6 Madras measures per rupee, or about 1½d. per lb.

fant children, that a similar establishment was sanctioned for that district, though the favorable change which took place in the season, in October, rendered it unnecessary to open it. In Madras, the Relief Depôts were managed by the committee of the Monegar Choultry, to whom Government gave grants-in-aid, and the Government officers managed them in the provinces. The expenditure on relief at each Depôt, was about one rupee (2 shillings,) per head, per mensem. The recipients of relief were divided into two classes, those able to work, and those unable to do so, and each was supplied with a ticket, entitling him to a sufficient dole of cooked food to preserve life; the rations, however, were so arranged, that the recipients were never tempted to continue a burden on charity, when a better provision could be obtained by ordinary labour. The work required of these paupers was of such a nature as might appear most useful, but it was to be determined upon, not so much in regard to the value of the work performed, as to the object of allowing none to eat the bread of idleness who were capable of earning a livelihood. In the town of Madras, several thousand persons were fed at four separate Depôts for several months. In the Chingleput, or Madras District, about seven thousand persons were also fed, on the same principles, for three months, and in Nel-

lore, two thousand. The funds were provided chiefly by the Government, though some subscriptions were raised in Madras. Though, as late as September, the local journals reported that rice was becoming dearer every day, and that there was no diminution in the number of famished wretches, in and about Madras, the season in October and November was fortunately propitious, and the Relief Depôts appear to have been all closed by the end of the year.

38. As noted above, the retail price of rice had risen during one period of this scarcity, to three Madras measures the rupee, ($2\frac{2}{3}d.$ per lb.) in North Arcot, and to six measures the rupee, ($1\frac{1}{3}d.$ per lb.) in Vizagapatam. The average wholesale price, throughout the Presidency, was Rs. 260, the garce, (27s. per quarter) during the year 1824, but in the North Arcot district, the average price was Rs. 450, the garce, during the year, in Nellore, Rs. 300, in Madras district, Rs. 400, in South Arcot, Rs. 300, and in Cuddapah, Rs. 370.*

* *i. e.* from 46s. per quarter, in North Arcot, to 31s. per quarter, in South Arcot.

39. After an interval of nine years, or in 1833, the most serious famine with which the Madras Presidency has been afflicted since the British accession, occurred. Fortunately, it was principally confined to some of the northern districts, and to the immediate neighbourhood of the Presidency town. In consequence of the fearful loss of life which took place in the Guntoor district, on this occasion, the scarcity is generally known as "the Guntoor Famine," though

the districts of Nellore, and Masulipatam also suffered very severely. The accounts of the season received by the Board of Revenue in November 1832, from the districts of Guntoor, Masulipatam, Rajamundry, Nellore, Bellary, and Cuddapah, were so alarming, that the Board addressed Government on the subject, and recommended that the import duty on grain, from foreign ports, as well as the port to port duty, should be remitted. The Government, accordingly, published a notice to this effect, and directed its republication in the districts of Tanjore, Canara, and Ganjam, where the season had been comparatively favorable, and they called upon the Collectors of these districts to state, what quantity of grain was likely to be available for export. The Government also directed all Collectors of districts, to confer with the grain merchants of the principal towns, and to exercise their influence to reduce prices, whenever they had reason to believe that the merchants were withholding grain from the market, in hopes of exorbitant profits. They were not, however, to exercise any authority in the matter, but merely to endeavour to effect the objects of Government by personal influence. The district officers were also directed to communicate freely with each other, as to the supplies of grain in each district, and the Commissioner of Mysore was requested to suspend the transit duties on grain.

40. In the following month (November), the distress had become so severe in Bellary, and in the northern districts of Guntoor, and Nellore, that the

Board recommended that a special inducement should be held out to traders to import grain, by the offer of a cargo of salt on favorable terms, and the price of salt to importers of grain, was accordingly reduced from Rs. 25, to Rs. 22, per 100 Indian maunds.* The Government also

* About $3\frac{1}{2}$ tons.

authorized an increase to the police forces of the Guntoor, and Masulipatam districts, as the country was reported to be in a disorganized state, and to be infested by bands of marauders which daily increased in numbers, owing to the alarming rise which had taken place in the price of food. They also expressed their willingness to give relief, by the issue of cooked food, when absolutely necessary, under the same restrictions and arrangements, as had been sanctioned in 1824. They further directed the employment of the able-bodied poor, on roads, and other useful public works, in the distressed districts. The proposals of the Collectors of Masulipatam and North Arcot to import rice, on government account, from Bengal, were however steadily opposed by Government, who explained that there was abundance of rice in Tanjore, and Ganjam, which would, in the natural course of trade, be imported to those districts, in order to obtain the advantage of the high prices ruling. In sanctioning a small expenditure by the Collector of Nellore on the relief of the poor, in the following January, the Government, after remarking that it was questionable whether the scarcity was as severe as it had been in 1824, observed, that it was objectionable to distribute

food to the poor, gratuitously, except under very exceptional circumstances, as such a course could not fail to attract large multitudes of people, who should subsist by labour, and further, was likely to create alarm, as leading people to suppose that the scarcity of food must be excessive.

41. Early in 1833, strict injunctions were issued to all the district officers, against any interference with grain in transit from one place to another, and peremptory orders against any attempt to force the markets, by the employment of threats or persuasions, in order to throw in a larger supply of grain into any particular place, than would reach it in the natural current of mercantile speculations, were issued to all subordinate officers. It was, however, found necessary to sanction a large expenditure on public works, in the districts of Salem, Trichinopoly, Coimbatore, Cuddapah, South Arcot, Bellary, Nellore, Masulipatam, and Guntoor, in order to provide labour for the poorer classes, and in the districts of Guntoor, Masulipatam, Nellore, and North Arcot, those who were unable to labour, would have perished, had not some Government Relief Depôts been opened, where they obtained cooked food. In February, 1,500 people were being fed at the Monegar Choultry, in Madras, and large numbers of paupers flocked to this institution, from the northern districts, and North Arcot, in this, and the following months, so much so, that at the beginning of May, there were about 12,000 natives of these districts being fed there.

42. A lamentable picture of the distress in the Presidency town, is given in the local journals of the day. Rice was selling at seven measures, the rupee.* Groups of people were seen dying of starvation in the streets, every day, and the number of applicants for relief at the Monegar Choultry, were quite beyond the means of the institution. Such large crowds of starving paupers had reached Madras, that the outbreak of some serious epidemic was apprehended by the medical officers, and, in April, the Government issued orders, strictly requiring all Collectors not to permit the poorer people of their districts to emigrate to Madras, but to provide them with employment, and food, if necessary, near their own homes. As to the latter system of relief, they however explained, that it was a dangerous expedient, likely to attract large numbers of poor from all parts of the province, and too apt, if not well regulated, to aggravate the distress it was intended to alleviate. It seems, also, that large numbers had emigrated from Guntoor, and Masulipatam, where the distress was most severe, to Nellore, and the Collector was ordered to require all such persons to return to their own villages. In the same month, it became necessary, in South Arcot, to grant advances, re-payable in two years, for sinking wells.

43. In the first fortnight of April, no less than 166 deaths from starvation had taken place in one half of the Guntoor district, and it was feared that the remainder of the district had not been more fortunate. From Masulipatam it was reported, in

* 1½d. per lb.

May, that large numbers of persons had perished from actual starvation. They were being relieved at the Depôts, by the issue of a quarter of a measure of grain ($\frac{3}{4}$ lb.) to each person, but those who laboured, were allowed half a measure. At the end of the month, matters had become so bad in Guntoor, that application was made for the importation, on government account, of 19 garce of Tanjore rice, at Rs. 319, the garce, the selling price in Guntoor, but Government objected, on general principles. In June, 33,000 people were being fed, and 7,000 employed under the management of the Committee of the Monegar Choultry, and those paupers receiving relief in Madras, who were natives of northern districts, were deported thither in large numbers. The distress increased terribly in Guntoor in this month.

Rice had reached Rs. 421, per garce, in price,* and the Collector reported, that out of a population of 500,000, about 100,000 persons would need to be fed, or employed.

44. By August, matters were much worse, everywhere. Serious grain riots occurred in Madras, but were fortunately quelled by the aid of the troops, without any loss of life. In Vellore, rice was selling

at $4\frac{1}{2}$ measures, the rupee,* the distress was reported to be dreadful, and the horrible spectacle of a mother devouring her dead infant, was seen in the streets of the town. The Collector of Masulipatam begged for rice, on government account, but was refused, as

* 43s. per quarter.

* About 1½d. per lb.

the Madras merchants were known to be throwing in grain. From Nellore, most harrowing accounts were received. Though 10,000 people were being fed in the town, the roads were strewn with dead bodies. The Rajamundry district was in distress. The district officers, by the aid of funds subscribed by private persons, had been feeding 5,000 people since March, but the expenses had become so heavy, that this could no longer be done. The assistance of Government was accordingly requested, which was granted, with the same restrictions which had been prescribed in other Districts. At the end of this month, the price of salt to grain importers was reduced to Rs. 15, per 100 Indian Maunds, as a further inducement to importation, and at the same time, a bounty of Rs. 20, per garce, was offered on all grain imported from Bengal, Malabar, or Canara, to any port on the east coast of the Madras Presidency, before 15th November. This appears to have caused imports to the extent of 1,402 garce, at Madras, 551 at ports of Rajamundry, and 905 at ports of Masulipatam and at ports of Guntoor, 5 at ports of the Madras District, and 9 at ports of Tinnevely. In all, 2,872 garce, (about 12,700 tons), for which Rs. 57,440 were paid, as bounty.

45. Notwithstanding all these efforts to relieve the distress, and the large expenditure in feeding and employing the people in the districts of Guntoor, Masulipatam, and Nellore, and in spite of the reiterated orders to employ and feed those who required assistance in their own districts, it was found that

people were still flocking towards Madras. In September, upwards of 70,000 were fed at the Monegar Choultry and the subordinate Depôts, and 10,000 were employed in the neighbourhood, and in view to removing some of this crowd of paupers from the Presidency town, it was then deemed advisable to employ them in gangs of 3,000, or 4,000, on the northern trunk road. They were subsisted and paid by Government.

46. In addition to the enormous expenditure incurred at Madras in the relief of distress, about three lacs of rupees (£30,000) were expended at the provincial Depôts, during the scarcity. A lac of rupees, were spent in each of the Districts of Guntoor, and Nellore, Rs. 20,000 in Masulipatam, and South Arcot, Rs. 32,000 in the Madras district, and, during the latter half of the year, smaller sums in North Arcot, Madura, Salem and Cuddapah. The scarcity was generally at an end, after the harvest of 1834, and it was not considered necessary to suspend the import duties after 31st January in that year. The Guntoor district, however, continued to suffer very severely, and even in the middle of June 1834, upwards of 10,000 people were employed there, on public works, at a monthly cost of Rs. 22,000, and upwards of Rs. 500 per mensem was spent in feeding the poor. In July and August, it was found feasible to reduce operations, and by the end of the year, all extraordinary measures ceased. At certain periods of this terrible famine, the retail price of rice had risen, as already stated, to seven mea-

asures, and on one occasion, at Vellore, to three and a half measures the rupee, and the average wholesale price of the grain during the year 1833, was Rs. 354, the garce, in Guntoor, Rs. 287 in Masulipatam, Rs. 285 in Nellore, and Rs. 260, in the Madras and North Arcot districts.*

* *i. e.* from 36s per quarter, in Guntoor, to 27s per quarter, in Madras.

47. There are, unfortunately, no accessible returns from which to estimate the number who died of famine in the year 1833, but it was estimated by an officer of the Engineers, that in Guntoor alone, 150,000 persons, out of a population of 500,000, perished from this cause. In alluding to these terrible figures, he observes.—

“ This is not an ordinary statistical fact—this is no record of so many millions of yards of cloth exported, and so much sugar imported, no detail of so many people clothed and so many palates indulged. Here we read of a body of human beings, much larger in number than the whole armies of India, not marching with the prospect of glory, promotion and prize money, but leaving their homes, wandering into strange lands, with no excitement, but the cravings of hunger and the agonies of thirst. Of these miserable pilgrims, a mass equal to all the Bengal and Madras Armies put together; a number of whose corpses laid side by side, would closely line both sides of a road 20 miles in length; three times as many as all the British soldiers killed in the Peninsula war; men, women, and children, ten times more than the victims of Cabul, died not among shouts and cheering, by the quick blow of bullet or bayonet, not in the course of a few nights, frozen to the sleep that ends in death, but by lingering illness and gnawing pangs prolonged for days and weeks.”

“It is distressing, but it may be useful, to dwell upon the horrors of these calamitous seasons. We are apt not sufficiently to consider, in reading of 150,000 people killed by famine, how much individual wretchedness is indicated by those six digits. We shrink from the six hundred tales of broken up village communities, the uncultivated lands, the uncelebrated feast, the fierce contest at the well, the thronged burning ground, the unburied dead. We like not to contemplate the spectacle presented in thousands and tens of thousands of families, the herdsman with his uncomplaining cattle dying around him, stripping the coarse thatch from his roof, in the vain hope of sustaining the lives which for years have been the grateful objects of his care, the sheep burnt to death with the withered grass, the hungry children and their starving parents, the famished mother, unable to moisten the parched throat of her dying infant, or the hard struggle between the strong ties of kindred and the stronger instinct of self-preservation.”

“Let it be remembered, that the famine of 1833 was by no means confined to the Guntoor district. Many must have a lively recollection of its disastrous effects in other parts of the Presidency, as well as of the multitudes that came in search of food to Madras itself, where some measure of relief was afforded them.”*

48. It is also difficult to make any estimate of the loss of property occasioned by this famine throughout the whole Presidency, but, as regards the Guntoor district, the following remarks are made on this subject, in the report submitted to Government by the Public Works Commissioners in 1852.

“The loss of revenue and the destruction of property were immense. First, to take the land revenue; the ave-

* From an article on the effects of the Famine of 1833, in the Madras Journal of Literature, for 1844-45, by Captain Becl, Madras Engineers.

rage collections in the six years preceding Fusly 1242, (1832-33) were 13,94,168 Rupees; in that year they fell to 6,58,500 Rupees, and in the following two years they were 6,71,654 Rupees, and 5,11,593 Rupees, respectively. Since that time, they have gradually increased, but the average annual amount up to Fusly 1260, (1850-51) is only 9,86,284 Rupees, being a loss of 4,07,884 Rupees yearly, or of 77,49,796 Rupees on the whole. Even this statement does not fairly present the whole case; for, all the Zemindaries (Proprietors Estates) having fallen hopelessly into arrears, (of land tax) the whole of them were taken under management in Fusly 1245, (1835-36) and since that time, the Government collections include all that part of the total or gross collections, which formerly went as income to the zemindar, and in payment of his establishments."

"It is singular to observe, how uniform the falling off was in all branches of the revenue. In the Sayer, (inland customs) it was very marked, as was to be expected; the average of the six years preceding Fusly 1242 was 1,01,438 Rupees: in that year, it fell to 64,554, and in the following year to 45,707; in salt, the falling off was from 3,85,000 in Fusly 1241 to 1,60,000 in Fusly 1242: in Moturpha, (professional tax) from 63,000 in 1241 to 23,200 in 1242, and 26,000 in 1243: in Abkary, (excise on liquor) from 13,232 in Fusly 1241, to 12,341 in Fusly 1242, and 4,808 in 1243: in sundry small Farms, from 13,779 in Fusly 1241, to 9,556 and 4,484 respectively, in the following two years. In some branches, the revenue has never recovered itself, but is still below its former standard; salt regained its normal amount the soonest, that is, in about ten years; being less dependent than the others on the local consumption. It has indeed increased materially above what it was before the famine: this probably is owing to a more rigorous management. The average yearly loss on all these sources of revenue, as compared with the six years preceding the famine, is 1,02,784; and the

aggregate loss in the eighteen years, (after deducting 3,18,000 Rupees as the probable amount of the deficit through the abolition of the Sayer duties in 1844) amounts to 15,32,112 Rupees."

" It is difficult to estimate the actual loss to the Zemindars and the cultivating classes ; but an approximate judgment may be formed. According to the theory of the settlement, the Zemindars were to have 30 per cent. of the gross collections from the Ryots ; and thus supposing them to have taken from the Ryot half the gross produce of the soil, (an out-side estimate) the Government revenue would be 35 per cent. of the gross produce. Considering that during the period of distress the Ryots certainly paid to the Zemindars, and they to Government, a larger proportion than usual, of their actual income, respectively, it might be safely assumed that the loss was in the proportion above given ; but we will take the loss of the Zemindars and the Ryots, at only 60 per cent. of the whole, instead of 65 ; and then the total loss to Government, Zemindar, and Ryot, from diminished cultivation and failure of crop, will amount to 1,93,75,000 Rupees."

" Add to this, eighteen lacs, the value of cattle and sheep that perished in the famine, and 15,32,112 Rupees, the amount lost to Government, as above stated, in the miscellaneous items of revenue, (without attempting to compute the loss to individuals in the various branches of trade and manufacture concerned), and the total loss by the famine, up to the present time, is found to amount to the enormous sum of 2,27,07,000 Rs. ; or above two and a quarter millions sterling."

49. Though occasional partial scarcities occurred in some localities, between 1834 and 1854, it was not until the latter year, that any district of the

Madras Presidency was again visited by famine, and then it was fortunately almost entirely local in its effects, being principally restricted to the Bellary district. * The rains which usually fall in the months of October and November, ceased at an unusually early period in the year 1853, and the showers which usually fall in June and July, had been scanty. The grain harvests were consequently almost universally deficient, and prices rose to such a height, that considerable distress occurred in several parts of the Presidency, and necessitated the undertaking of public works for the employment of the poor, in several districts. In the Bellary district, however, the season had been exceptionally unfavorable, an average fall of only $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches of rain having fallen during the year, against an average of about double that quantity in previous years. The harvest in the entire district, did not yield more than half a crop, and, at the beginning of 1854, prices were double the usual rates. The drought continued through the earlier months of this year, and fodder for cattle generally failed, so that about one-third of the cattle in the district perished. The stock of the previous year's grain was small, for serious damage had been occasioned by the storm in 1851 to several of the irrigation works of the district, and in 1852, the falls of rain had been unseasonable, and the crops short. Prices consequently continued to rise, until, in June, July, August, and September, they were three times the ordinary rates. The following extract from a report submitted by Mr.

Maltby, then a member of the Board of Revenue, gives a concise account of the state of the district during those months of 1854, when the pressure was greatest, and of the measures of relief adopted—

“Such was the emergency under which it was found necessary to give employment to the poorer classes of this district to save them from starvation, and some contingent circumstances tended to augment the local distress. The failure of the monsoon, extended to the territory ceded by the Nizam, north of the Toombudra, and led to an influx of persons seeking food and work, until the sanction of the Supreme Government was obtained for employing them, on a continuation of the road from Bellary towards Hyderabad, through the Raichore Dooab. The people had also a greater difficulty than usual, in finding employment. The ordinary harvest work was much diminished, and the failure of the cotton crop in particular, took away employment, to which the poor were accustomed to look. The same cause, injured also the small weavers, and thread spinners, and all mercantile operations were contracted, by the difficulty of obtaining carriage, which rose to triple and quadruple its ordinary rate. To increase the difficulties of the year, the failure of rain in June and July destroyed the hope that a large portion of the distressed community would then be able to find employment in the fields.”

“The state of the district was accordingly brought to the notice of the authorities, by the Collector, as soon as the failure of the monsoon was decisive, and a calculation could be made of the extent to which the crops would perish, and the cultivation prove deficient. In his Report, Mr. Pelly pointed out that the high price of grain already caused distress, and that much alarm had spread through

the district, in consequence of the poorer orders having commenced robberies. He therefore requested authority to entertain extra peons to strengthen the Police, and guard the Talook Treasuries; as also to give immediate employment to from 1 to 2,000 persons on road work, in the northern talooks, besides commencing a line through the Sub-Collector's Division, and to distribute Tuccavy to such ryots as were willing to clear out old wells, and cultivate under them. These measures were approved, and directed to be carried into execution without delay, and on the recommendation of the Board of Revenue, three European Officers and eight Overseers were assigned to aid the Collector's Department, in superintending the lines of road to be undertaken."

"But, as the distress increased, measures of relief were required on a larger scale, and the Collector accordingly requested authority for furnishing the people with more extended employment. He calculated that from the then existing appearances, 1,18,000 persons might require assistance for five months, at a monthly expenditure of 4 lacs; and though he hoped that a smaller outlay would prove sufficient, he pointed out that any delay or failure in the May and June rains, would seriously increase and prolong the distress. As it was not practicable to undertake masonry works in consequence of a want of materials, carriage, and skilled labor, he proposed to employ the people in making roads, and suggested nine lines, including the trunk-line from Bellary, *via* Anantpore, to Madras, which belongs to the Department of the Superintendent of Roads. The Collector detailed the Native Establishment which he proposed to entertain for superintending the coolies, and requested the services of some Officers and European Overseers, besides some subordinates of the Medical Department, and a supply of Commissariat tools and tents. The Collector's suggestions were approved, and authority given to him, in the most liberal spirit, for

carrying out his plans of furnishing employment to the people, as far as should be found actually necessary, though a hope was expressed, that the expenditure which was thus to fall on the State, would prove less heavy than was anticipated. In their remarks on this occasion, the Board of Revenue expressed their approval of the arrangements which the Collector, with no assistance, but that of his ordinary establishment, had hitherto made for employing the distressed labouring population."

"Unfortunately, as the season advanced, no improvement took place. The rains which ordinarily fall in June and July, and enable early cultivation to be carried on, failed; and the Collector had to continue his reports that food was increasing in price, and that additional numbers of distressed people flocked to the roads for employment. To exemplify the distress, he mentioned, in his letter of the 1st July, that cholam, the common food of the people, was sold at 14 seers,* a rupee, instead of 50, in the northern talooks, and that 81,000 persons were then employed on charity roads. At the end of July, the expenditure had amounted to Rupees 10,19,832, and the largeness of outlay and the prospective continuance of the distress, made the Collector anxious to receive renewed instructions for his guidance. He was consequently informed, that he was empowered to to continue giving employment to the needy population, under his arrangements, then in force, which appeared to Government "judicious, and to have answered the object in view." But, as a subsequent letter from the Collector still reported the absence of rain, and expressed his fears that an additional outlay of 16 lacs, at the rate of 4 lacs per mensem, would be required until the end of the year, Government deemed it proper that a Member of the Board should be sent to the district, to relieve the Collector of a

* This seer is equal to two-thirds of the Madras measure, or about 2 lbs.

part of his responsibility in so unexpected and pressing an emergency, by giving his opinion on the state and prospects of the district, and consulting with the Collector and Civil Engineer about the most advantageous method of employing the people, until the distress ceased, and the best means to be taken to guard against a future similar calamity."

50. It appears that it was not deemed advisable, on this occasion, to afford relief in any shape, except by offering employment on public works, at a fair rate of wages, in money. About 16 lacs of Rupees were expended on this account, during the year, and the numbers employed, varied from about 9,000 in January, to 97,000 in July, from which date they steadily decreased. At one period, however, about 8 per cent of the population were receiving charitable assistance, in this form. It was estimated, that the whole of the work performed on this occasion, cost about three times what it could have been executed, for in the ordinary manner, so that about two-thirds of the outlay incurred, should be debited to charity.

51 It will be perceived from the foregoing paragraphs, that previous to the famine of 1866, the Madras Presidency had been visited with no less than five serious dearths, within the preceding hundred years. In 1782, rice was sold at from three to about six Madras measures, per rupee ($2\frac{2}{3}d.$ to $1\frac{1}{3}d.$ per lb.); in 1807, from seven to eight measures, the rupee ($1\frac{1}{8}d.$ to $1d.$ per lb.); in 1824, from three to six measures, ($2\frac{1}{3}d.$ to $1\frac{1}{3}d.$ per lb.) at certain periods, though the average price during the year, was from seven to nine

measures, per rupee, ($1\frac{1}{3}d.$ to $\frac{1}{3}d.$) per lb in the distressed districts. In 1833, prices ranged at the periods of the greatest distress, from $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 7 measures, per rupee, ($2\frac{1}{4}d.$ to $1\frac{1}{8}d.$ per lb) though the average price, during the year, in the most distressed part of the country, was from nine to twelve measures, the rupee, and in 1854, cholam, the common food of the people of Bellary, was sold at four times the usual price. It will also be observed, that while in the case of the first two famines, the government disregarded the received rules of political economy, fixing the price of food in the one case, and importing largely, on government account, in the other, they adhered to these rules, as far as possible, on the other three occasions on which the Madras Presidency was visited with famine. In a future part of this paper, the expediency of the several modes of relief which were adopted on each occasion, will be considered in detail, in view to arriving, if possible, at the correct course of procedure in such emergencies.

PART II.

THE CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE IN 1865.

52. The Madras Presidency is situated between Longitude 74° , and Longitude 84° , and the greater part of it lies between the 8th and 16th degrees of north latitude, though a portion extends to the 20th degree. It is divided into nineteen districts, each under the administrative charge of a Government Officer, termed Collector and Magistrate, and each ranging from 4,000 to 12,000 square miles, in extent. The districts of Ganjam, Vizagapatam, Godavery, and Kistna, are on the north-east coast, to the east of the Nagpore Provinces, and Hyderabad. The other east coast districts, are Nellore, Madras, South Arcot, Tanjore, Madura, and Tinnevely, the last named being situated in the extreme south of the peninsula. To the west of Madura and Tinnevely, and on the west coast of the peninsula, are the Travancore and Cochin Territories, governed by independent Rajahs, and north of these states, on the same coast, are the Madras districts of Malabar and South Canara. The central districts of the Presidency, are those of Coimbatore

Trichinopoly, and Salem, between Malabar and Madras, and those of Bellary,

DISTRICTS.	Average rain-fall dur- ing five years from 1862-63 to 1866-67.
	Inches.
Ganjam - - - - -	54·92
Vizagapatam - - - - -	39·01
Godavery - - - - -	32·76
Kistna - - - - -	34·33
Nellore - - - - -	31·19
Cuddapah - - - - -	19·68
Bellary - - - - -	17·57
Kurnool - - - - -	27·01
Madras - - - - -	31·86
North Arcot - - - - -	28·43
South Arcot - - - - -	40·47
Tanjore - - - - -	40·03
Trichinopoly - - - - -	52·65
Madura - - - - -	27·04
Tinnevely - - - - -	29·23
Coimbatore - - - - -	33·08
Salem - - - - -	40·64
South Canara - - - - -	146·31
Malabar - - - - -	143·09

Kurnool, Cuddapah, and North Arcot between the Mysore country, which intervenes between Canara and Bellary, and Nellore.

53. The water supply of the several districts is somewhat varied, the average annual rain-fall during the past five years, having ranged from 17·57 inches in the Bellary district, to 146·31 inches in the South Canara district, as shown in the marginal table.

54. The western districts, it will be perceived, are in this respect in an exceptionally favored situation, and the water supply is so plentiful, that there is no need to store it for the purpose of cultivation &c., as in other parts of the country. The two monsoons, as they are called, are the periods when the high winds prevail on each coast, and they are usually ushered in by heavy rains. The south-west monsoon usually extends from May to August, and the north-east, from October to December. The districts on the eastern coast, are principally dependent on the north-east monsoon for rain, though some of them, Tanjore, for example, benefit largely by the rains of the south-

west monsoon which are brought down by the rivers which have their sources to the westward. The rainfall of the two western districts, is derived entirely from the south-west monsoon, and the central districts receive their supplies from both monsoons, but are more liable to drought than the other districts, as they do not obtain the full benefit of either.

55. The whole Presidency is essentially 'agricultural,' and the cultivation takes place on two distinct systems, termed 'wet' and 'dry,' the so called 'wet' land being usually artificially irrigated, and the 'dry' land being dependent upon the rains alone for its water supply. The produce of the irrigated land is almost invariably rice, while the unirrigated land produces various cereals and pulses used as food, cotton, indigo, oil-seeds, &c. In the western districts of Malabar and Canara, however, the rains during the south-west monsoon are so plentiful, that rice is raised by means of rain alone, and without the aid of any artificial irrigation, as already observed. In the other portions of the Presidency, when this crop is cultivated, the land is watered from tanks filled by the rains, or by the overflow of rivers or torrents, from canals created by the embankment of large rivers, and occasionally from wells.

56. In order to arrive at any sort of approximation of the food supply of the Presidency, it is of course necessary to consult the statistics of area and population, &c., and, most unfortunately, although pro-

bably there are better means of obtaining accurate information on such subjects, than in most other countries, little or nothing has been done in this direction during the last sixty years: A few attempts at obtaining the population have been made, and excellent instructions have been issued, but it is much to be feared that they have been usually very imperfectly carried out, and only very rough calculations of area, are obtainable. Again, though the cultivation of every ryotwary village is inspected once a month, at least, by a government officer, there are no reliable condensed returns giving the extent of land under each crop, and little or nothing is known, with accuracy, of the zemindary estates, whether as to area, cultivation, or population. The broad facts however remain, that the population in ordinary years has subsisted without difficulty on the produce raised, and that the extent of land under cultivation in those portions of the Presidency held on ryotwary tenure, has risen from about ten million acres in 1855, to sixteen million acres in 1865.

57. It will, at any rate, be interesting to attempt to make a few deductions from such statistics as are available, in view to obtaining some sort of rough estimate of the general condition of the people of the whole Presidency. The total area of the Presidency may be estimated as 130,000 square miles, being thus more extensive than Great Britain and Ireland, and about the same size as the present kingdom of Prussia.

58. There are no details as to the extent of land cultivated and waste in about one-fourth of this area, but it is known that of the remaining three-fourths, one-third is under cultivation, and supposing the proportion of waste to cultivated land to be the same throughout the Presidency, a very rough approximation to the total cultivation of the Presidency may be arrived at. It may be estimated to be

Ryotwary lands... ..	16 million acres (actual.)	about 28 millions
Inam lands.. .. .	4½ million acres (actual.)	of acres, as noted in
Zemindary lands.....	5½ million acres (estimated.)	the margin.* There
Malabar and Canara.*	2½ million acres (estimated.)	are no means at
	—	hand to compare
	28 million acres.	this area of cultivation with the re-

* In the Ryotwary, or Government lands of other districts, the land tax is fixed on each field in regard to its extent and quality, but in these two districts, the tax is upon the holding, and there are no details of the area under cultivation.

results of actual measurements in other parts of India, but from the statistics of France in 1865, it is found, that there were then 85 millions of cultivated acres to 47 millions of acres of forest and waste land. In the same year, half the area of Spain was uncultivated, and in 1846, there were, in the British Isles, 46 million acres of arable and pasture land, against 31 million acres of waste.

59. The available returns show, that of the 20½ million cultivated acres of Ryotwary and Inam lands of which there are details, a little less than one-fifth is irrigated, and supposing the estimated cultivation of the whole Presidency to be divided in the same proportion, there would be about 5½ million acres of irrigated land, and 22½ million acres of unirrigated

land, under crop. The proportion of the irrigated land applied to the production of any crop, but rice, is so limited, that it may be assumed that the whole quantity of this description of land is under that crop, without seriously affecting the calculations about to be made, and it may perhaps be similarly assumed, that of the 22½ millions of unirrigated acres, at least 15 million acres are devoted to producing other food grains. As already observed, no complete returns are available showing the extent even of the Ryot-

Years.	Indigo.	Cotto .
	Acres.	Acres
1861-62	173,436	1,020,184
1862-63*	203,131	1,309,234
1863-64	163,665	1,766,312
1864-65	128,140	1,747,501
1865-66	151,542	1,395,697

ed crop, except in regard to cotton and Indigo, the details of which for the last five years are given in the margin. It will be seen that these products have never yet occupied so much as 2 million acres, and if 5½ mil-

lion acres are allowed as being cultivated with oil-seeds, and other products not used as food, it will probably be beyond the mark, so that it may fairly be estimated that, on the average, 15 million acres of dry land are devoted to the production of food grains, and that 5½ million acres of wet land are used for the same purpose.

60. The Revenue Settlement Department, after elaborate inquiries, and experiments extending over the last ten years, estimate the produce of an acre of the best rice land to be from 1080 Madras measures

(about 30 cwt.) in the southern districts, to 1,200 measures (about 33 cwt.) in Godavery and Kurnool, and the produce of the worst rice land to vary from about 300 measures (about 8 cwt.) in the former districts, to 533 measures (about 14 cwt.) in the latter. Probably, therefore, 20 cwt. of paddy, (rice in the husk) or 10 cwt. of cleaned rice, may be fairly taken as a good average of the productive powers of the $5\frac{1}{2}$ million acres of irrigated land, and 190 measures, or about 5 cwt., may similarly be taken as the productive power of the 'dry' land, whether it be devoted to the growth of Raggy, Cumboo, Cholum, or any other of the numerous unirrigated crops which are used as food by the lower classes. One acre of wet land will thus produce as much food as two acres of dry land. The rough estimate of the annual production of the country, in food grains, would thus be 55 million cwt. of rice, and 75 million cwt. of dry grain. Excluding the considerable import of inferior grain, by land, from foreign territory, (into Canara from Mysore, for example) the average excess of the exports of food grain over the imports, during the five years ending 30th April 1866, was about one million cwt., per annum, of which about three quarters of a million may be taken to be rice, and a quarter of a million inferior grains. There would thus be left for the consumption of the people $54\frac{1}{4}$ million cwt. of rice, and $74\frac{3}{4}$ million cwt. of dry grain, or 129 million cwt. in all.

61. By the census taken in 1850-51, the population of the Presidency was estimated at about 22 millions.

The census of 1856-57 gave it as about 23 millions, excluding the district of North Canara, (now transferred to Bombay) and the census of 1861-62, at about $24\frac{1}{2}$ millions. In all these estimates, the population of the town of Madras is taken as 720,000, which is probably about 270,000 beyond the mark. Supposing, however, that the population has averaged 25 millions during the last 5 years, there has been an annual supply of 129 million cwt. of grain for their support, or more than 5 cwt. for each person, being more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ lbs per diem, whereas, a family of five can subsist upon 7 lbs per day, without difficulty, and three acres of superior land, supposing one acre to be irrigated, or four acres of unirrigated land, would support such a family for a year.*

62. If the same calculations be applied to any separate district, it will be found that the local supply of grain should, apparently, be able to meet the local demand, in most cases, *e. g.*, in Kistna, with a population of less than a million, more than a million and a half of acres are under crop; in Bellary, upwards of two million acres of cultivation should easily support a million and a quarter of people; in Salem, a million and a half of people can probably subsist on the produce of a million acres; and in Tinnevely, upwards of a million acres should provide food for the million and a quarter of inhabitants, and, probably, the districts of Madras, North Arcot, and

* Sir Arthur Cotton estimates that two acres of rice land will feed seven people for a year, and Mr. Fischer, the Manager of the Shevagunga Estate, considers that a family of five will consume under 6 lbs. of grain, per diem.

Malabar are singular, in being in some measure dependent on other districts for their food supply. Though, of course, these estimates of the food supply of the country must be necessarily of the very roughest description, it is clear that the figures as to production &c., have been rather under, than overstated, for, as before observed, it is well known that previous to 1856, upwards of 16 millions of people, being four-fifths of the population, (occupying Ryot-way lands) had for long subsisted on the produce of less than 11 millions of acres. It may thus be fairly assumed, that except under very unfavorable circumstances of season, the supply of food in the whole Presidency is sufficient to support the population, and also to provide for a considerable export trade.

63. The next point to be considered, is the means of transporting grain from one part of the Presidency to another. So far as the coast districts are concerned, there is a sea-board of about 1,000 miles in length on the east coast, with no less than ten good road-steads, which are open during the greater part of year, and the ports of the districts on the western coast are also open, except during the prevalence of the south-west monsoon, which rarely lasts more than two months. • The inland districts are provided with four lines of Railway, one extending across the peninsula from Madras to the westward, two others, being branches of the same line, extending in a north-westerly direction, (the one through the Cuddapah district, and the other through North

Arcot to Bangalore) and the fourth, from the southern port of Negapatam, through Tanjore and Trichinopoly, and part of Coimbatore. Thus, with the exception of Bellary and Kurnool, every district of the Presidency either possesses a sea-board, with comparatively accessible ports, or a rapid means of communication with those ports by means of Railway, and those two districts will be similarly provided, when the north-west branch of the Madras Railway is extended towards Bombay, next year. In addition to the means of transport afforded by the sea-board, and the lines of Railway, the western districts are provided with inland water carriage, extending north and south, parallel with the coast. The whole country is also intersected with roads, which are kept in fair order. In 1852, there were under 4,000 miles of *made* road, in good repair, in the whole Presidency, whereas in 1866, there were upwards of 8,000 miles of Imperial roads, with regular annual allowances, for their repair, and in addition to the outlay made on this account from Imperial funds, about two lacs of Rupees, (£ 20,000) has been expended annually on repairs to District roads, from local funds. Supposing the annual expenditure on the repair of the local roads to be Rupees 50, per mile, on the average, this sum would represent the annual charge for 4,000 miles of local roads, and the total mileage of made road in the Presidency would thus be made up to 12,000. These ordinary communications throughout the country are, however, still very imperfect and very incomplete, but matters will improve

every year, especially as there is now a large amount, the produce of local taxation, annually available for this special purpose. Upon the whole, it may perhaps be assumed, that at the end of 1865, there was in most parts of the country, *though certainly not in all*, a fair means of transit for grain from one locality to another.

64. Supposing, however, that it be perfectly demonstrated that the country produces sufficient food for its population, and that the means of transit are sufficiently complete to enable the surplus supplies of one quarter to be thrown into another, to relieve a deficiency, still, if the people are in such a pauperized condition as to be without the means of buying grain, that is to say, if a large proportion of them are in the habit of subsisting upon the smallest quantity of food which will support life, and their average annual gains, whether obtained in grain or money, are only sufficient to enable them to do so, the sufferings produced by a scarcity must always be very severe. This, however, can hardly be said to have been the position of the inhabitants of the Madras Presidency at the end of 1865, at any rate, their position at that period must have been very superior to what it had been in 1845, or 1855, as can easily be demonstrated by a consideration of the general progress statistics of the Presidency.

65. As about three-fourths of the population are agricultural, the price of agricultural produce, and the general position of the landed interest must al-

ways very largely influence the comfort and wealth of the bulk of the people. The price of rice in India, is thus quite as important a matter, as the price of corn in other parts of the world. It has been shown in a previous part of this paper, that in the early years of the seventeenth century, rice had been very cheap, Rs. 87-8 per garce,* being then deemed

* About 9s. 9d. per a fair rate, but that in 1733, it was
British Quarter. considered cheap at Rs. 175 per

* About 19s. 6d. per grace,* and that in 1783, when the
British Quarter. scarcity of the previous year had

* About 52s. per British passed over, the market price was
Quarter. Rs. 465 per garce.* Unfortunately,

detailed average price lists are not generally available for years previous to 1814, but a reference to those since that year, will show, that the average price of second sort rice, from 1814-15 to 1855-56, or during a period of 42 years, has been Rs. 172, per

* About 19s. per British garce* This series of years includes
Quarter. several years of scarcity, when

prices were, of course, unusually high, but, if these years be altogether excluded, it will be found that

* About 18s. per British the average will only be reduced to
Quarter. Rs. 164.* From 1814 to 1820,

the average was Rs. 166, per garce, and from 1820 to

* About 20s. 6d. per 1830; including the famine year,
British Quarter. 1824, Rs. 188,* per garce. From

1830 to 1840, including the famine year 1833, Rs. 188, per garce, and from 1840 to 1850, Rs. 155, per

* About 17s. per British garce.* It will thus be observed,
Quarter. that between 1814 and 1840, the

price of rice only rose about 13 per cent. on the average, and that between 1840 and 1850, it fell upwards of 17 per cent. In the Bellary district, price lists are on record as far back as 1784-85, in which year, the price of rice was Rs. 210, per garce,* and except in the two following years, when it reached Rs. 244, and Rs. 226,* respectively, it was never above this price until 1800. The average price of raggy and cholam, during the same period of 14 years, was Rs. 98-7, and Rs. 103-4, per garce,* in this district. The annexed statement gives the average price of 2nd sort rice in each District, from 1814 to 1855, and from 1855 to 1865.

DISTRICTS.	Average per garce of 2nd sort rice from 1814 to 1855.		DISTRICTS.	Average per garce of 2nd sort rice from 1855 to 1865.	
	Rs.	Rs.		Rs.	Rs.
Ganjam.....	116	229	South Arcot.....	172	307
Vizagapatam... ..	142	255	Tanjore.....	148	284
Godavery.....	166	228	Trichinopoly.	160	339
Kistna.....	192	295	Madura.....	176	373
Nellore.....	182	300	Tinnevely ...	186	391
Cuddapah.	208	374	Coimbatore... ..	176	397
Bellary.....	178	357	Salem.....	176	330
Kurnool....	196	359	South Canara.....	„	304
Madras.....	190	327	Malabar... ..	150	357
North Arcot.....	194	302	<i>General Average.</i>	172	321

66. It will be seen that during the first period, the average price in Cuddapah, Kurnool, and Kistna, was 80 per cent higher than the average price in Ganjam, whereas, the price in the districts of Tinnevely, Coimbatore, and Cuddapah, which were the dearest districts during the second period, was little over 70 per cent beyond the price in Ganjam, during this period. The average price of 2nd sort rice throughout the Presidency, in 1856-57, was Rs.

* About 25s per British Quarter. 226 per garce,* or about 30 per cent above the average of the previous 43 years, and since that date, there has been a steady rise in each year, and in 1865, the price

About 48s. per British Quarter. was Rs. 431, per garce. Similarly, the price of raggy had risen from

Rs. 115 to Rs. 231, the garce, during these 10 years, and cholum from Rs. 125, to Rs. 260, the garce. It will thus be observed, that during the ten years preceding 1866, the price of all agricultural produce has nearly doubled, and that consequently the agricultural proprietor was much better off, at the beginning of 1866, than he was at the beginning of 1856, and that there was a still greater improvement in his position, as compared to what it had been in 1846. As nearly the whole of his out-goings, whether for food or wages, are mere deductions from the gross produce of the land, as his family subsist on the grain raised and wages are paid in the same commodity, his surplus produce has remained nearly the same in quantity, during the twenty years, whereas, the market value of that surplus has increased three-

fold, if no allowance be made for the depreciation of the value of the precious metals which has taken place during this period.

67. In order to the better understanding of the extraordinary improvement that has taken place in the position of the agricultural interest, it will be advisable to consider the nature of the tenures on which land is held in the Madras Presidency. As already stated, a very large proportion of the cultivated area is held direct from government, by peasant proprietors, termed government ryots. According to the statistical returns, there were no less than a million and three quarters of these persons entered in the registers as land-holders, and their holdings are usually infinitesimally small. Only 420 paid 100*l.* and upwards, as government land tax, which is supposed to represent half the net produce of the land.* Upwards of a million and a half, paid less than Rs. 31, or 3*l.* 2*s.* and of these latter, upwards of a million paid less than Rs. 10, or 1*l.* As has been already shown, the cultivated land held by the registered ryots is about 18 million acres, the average extent of the holdings is therefore 9 acres, but if the million sub-tenants who are entered in the returns as holding under these registered ryots be taken into account, the average size of the holdings will be reduced to 6 acres, supposing of course that

* The great rise in prices has of course quite upset this calculation, but probably it was generally correct about ten years ago.

In the revisions of assessment which have been recently carried out, the same principle is followed, that is to say, the half of the net produce is arrived at, as nearly as possible, and then commuted into money, at an average of the prices of say 50 years.

every registered ryot who sub-lets land retains an equal quantity for his own use. This minute subdivision of the land into small holdings, has often been advanced as the great objection to the Ryotwary system of tenure, but after all, it should be remembered, that this objection applies equally to the Zemin-dary system, and that notwithstanding the difference in the value of money, only a few years back, there were nearly two millions of small landed proprietors in France, whose holdings in no case exceeded 5 acres ; that in the present kingdom of Prussia, out of a population of nine millions dependent on agriculture, there are upwards of two million proprietors of land, and that upwards of a million of these do not possess more than three acres ; and that in Ireland, in 1861, there were 39,210 persons holding land less than an acre in extent, as proprietors or tenants, 75,141 holding between one and two acres, and 164,000 from five to fifteen acres.

68. The Ryotwary system of tenure is thus described in the administration report for the Revenue Department in 1855-56—

“ Under the Ryotwar system, every registered holder of land is recognized as its proprietor, and pays direct to Government. He is at liberty to sub-let his property, or to transfer it by gift, sale, or mortgage. He cannot be ejected by Government, so long as he pays the fixed assessment, and has the option annually of increasing or diminishing his holding, or of entirely abandoning it. In unfavorable seasons, remissions of assessment are granted for entire or partial loss of produce. The assessment is fixed in money, and does not

vary from year to year, except in those cases where water is supplied from a Government source of irrigation to convert dry land into wet, or one into two-crop land. Nor is any addition made to the assessment for improvements effected at the Ryot's own expense. The Ryot, under this system, is virtually a proprietor on a simple and perfect title, and has all the benefits of a perpetual lease, without its responsibilities, inasmuch as he can, at any time, throw up his land, but cannot be ejected, so long as he pays his dues; he receives assistance in difficult seasons, and is irresponsible for the payments of his neighbours.

“ The assessment is fixed in perpetuity (so far as any increase to it is concerned) on each field, and the mode in which this was done is as follows :—A certain portion of the produce was first set aside from the gross produce, as a joint contribution of the Ryot and Government for the pay of Village officers, and the remainder divided in certain proportions, the share allotted to Government being commuted into money, at the average value of the produce for a period of years antecedent to the settlement.

“ Unfortunately, the share of Government was generally fixed too high, and the result of this over-assessment, increased as its pressure has been, by the fall in the value of produce since the settlement was made, has never allowed the system a fair trial. Various restrictive rules, also, led to much interference with the Ryots, though they were far from being a necessary consequence of the system. These restrictions are now being removed, and the reductions recently made, or in progress, and the correct survey, classification and re-assessment of the land now in contemplation, will do away with these disadvantages, and it may be expected, that the superiority of a system which encourages industry and enterprise, by being based on individual proprietorship, will be more clearly evinced.

“The “annual settlements” under Ryotwary, are often misunderstood, and it is necessary to explain that they are rendered necessary by the right accorded to the Ryot, of diminishing or extending his cultivation from year to year. Their object is to determine how much of the assessment due on his holding, the Ryot shall pay, and not to re-assess the land. In those cases where no change occurs in the Ryot’s holding, a fresh puttah or lease is not issued, and such parties are in no way affected by the annual settlement, which they are also not required to attend.

“The greater portion of the Presidency is under Ryotwary, and a correct understanding of its principles, when properly carried out, is therefore particularly desirable. To revert from Ryotwary to the Zemindary tenure, would be to place a middleman between Government and the people, to strike off from 15 to 33 per cent. of the existing revenue, and to alienate the waste lands which now afford Government the means of lightening the heavy assessments now prevailing; to have recourse to village rents, would be to annul individual property in the land, and to make the community responsible for every member’s short-comings.”

69. Two-thirds of the Presidency being held on the tenure just described, the remainder is held on permanently settled tenures, either termed ‘Zemindary’ or ‘Inam.’ The zemindary, or as it is sometimes called ‘mootahdary’ tenure, leaves large tracts of country, or occasionally only a few acres, in the hands of the zemindar, or mootahdar, who acts as a sort of middleman between the ryot and the government, being bound to pay a certain annual sum to government, as his land-tax, which is thus ‘permanently settled.’ This sum was originally fix-

ed, with reference to his collections from the ryots, allowing him a fair percentage for his trouble in collection. Several of the largest of these estates, are in the hands of the hereditary chieftains of the country, and were confirmed to them on the British accession, on various terms, though usually, on those above noted, a careful valuation of the estate having been made for the purpose. In most parts of the Presidency, the Ryots in the zemindary and mootahdary estates have the same rights of occupancy, as those holding direct from government, though in some quarters, these proprietors claim to have the power of ousting them, at will. The payment of rent, in kind, is however very general among them, the old land tax of India, which the zemindar professes to collect, having been a certain defined share of the annual produce of the land. The consequence is, that even the hereditary ryot of a zemindary estate, is in an inferior position to the ryot who pays direct to government, as he shares with the zemindar the large gains which all agriculturists have obtained, during the last 15 years, by the extraordinary rise in the price of agricultural produce, whereas, the government ryot enjoys the entire advantage himself.

70. The Inamdar, again, is frequently a Zemindar to all intents and purposes, except that he pays a very small proportion of his collections from the ryots, or sometimes nothing, to the government, the Inam tenure having been conferred upon

him or his ancestor, by the State, for services, or as an endowment to some institution, charitable or religious, of which the original Inamdar was the trustee. In most cases, the Inamdar was granted occupied land, and was therefore only entitled to collect from the ryots in possession, the full rate of government tax which had hitherto been collected from them, on behalf of the State, but he, like the Zemindar, probably took this tax in its original shape, *viz.*, as a portion of the produce. It occasionally happened, however, that unoccupied land was granted as inam, in which case, of course, the Inamdar became possessed of an absolute right in the land, and instead of merely collecting the government tax from the ryots, he either cultivated the land himself, and so made large profits, or he sub-let to ryots, on very favorable terms to himself.

71. The position of every description of land-holder, whether ryot, zemindar, or inamdar, must have improved very materially during the last fifteen years. So far as the first class was concerned, the fall in prices which had taken place between the early part of the century, when the money rates of land-tax payable to government were fixed, and the year 1850, had had such a serious effect upon their resources, that very liberal reductions were then made in the assessment of all the Ryotwary lands, in those districts where the rates pressed with severity upon the ryots, or where they were so high, as to keep land out of cultivation altogether. A

special department for the re-assessment of all districts on liberal and scientific principles, was also organized. The position of the government ryot was, consequently, at once much improved, and the steady rise in prices which has taken place since that period, has, of course, still further benefitted him, but this latter benefit has also been obtained by the holders of land on other tenures, the zemindar, and the inamdar, and their respective tenants. It has been already shown, that an acre of unirrigated land produces on the average 190 Madras measures, or about 5 cwt. of grain, and that an acre of irrigat-

	Rs.
1856.	
Value of the produce of 6 acres of dry land... ..	50
Do. do of 2 acres wet land	55
	105
Deduct tax (say)	Rs. 20
	Rs. 85

	Rs.
1866.	
Value of the produce of 6 acres of dry land... ..	104
Do. do. 2 acres of wet land.....	105
	209
Deduct tax (say)	Rs. 20
	Rs. 189

ed land produces 370 Madras measures, or 10 cwt. of rice. The Government ryot, therefore, who held say 6 acres of 'dry' land, and 2 acres of 'wet,' for which he paid, say Rs. 20, per annum, to Government as land tax, obtained for the produce Rs. 105 in 1856, and Rs. 209 in 1866, as noted in the margin. On the other hand, the ryot holding the same extent of land under a zemindar, or inamdar, after giving half

the produce to his landlord, obtained, in 1856, only Rs. 52-8, the price of 15 cwt. of dry grain, and 10 cwt. of rice in 1856, and in 1866, Rs. 104-8, the price of the same quantity of grain in that year, the zemindar,

or inamdar, in this case, taking the balance of advantage obtained by the government ryot. This improvement in the position of the agriculturist, has manifested itself in the very large increase in the area of land under cultivation, for, whereas, even in 1856, there were less than 10 millions of acres held by registered government ryots, there were upwards of 16 million of acres so held in 1865.*

72. The number of ryots holding direct from government, has already been given as a million and a quarter, and the returns show that these peasant proprietors had, in 1861-62, upwards of a million sub-tenants. Most, if not all of these sub-tenants, hold from government ryots, on the same terms as ryots hold from Zemindars. *i. e.*, they pay their land-lord, not a fixed money rent, but half the annual produce of the soil. Hence, it may be safely assumed, that there are now nearly $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions of persons interested in the lands held on ryotwary tenure direct from government, who have largely benefitted by the rise in prices adverted to above. With their families, these $2\frac{1}{2}$ million land-holders and tenants would represent 13 millions of the population, exclusive of the zemindars, and inamdars, and their respective tenants, having a direct interest in the land. It has been already estimated, that about one-third of the Presidency is occupied on tenures of the latter des-

* As already shown, but a very small portion of this increase, (certainly not more than one-sixth) is attributable to the increased cultivation of cotton, and it is therefore quite a mistake to suppose that the food supply of the country, has been at all affected by this description of cultivation.

cription, and there is no reason to suppose that the zemindary or inam lands are less sub-divided than the government lands, so that the proportion of the whole population who are interested in agriculture, *i. e.*, who have some absolute interest in the soil, would seem to have been understated in 1861-62, when the whole agricultural population was put down at under 18 millions. If there be, as roughly deduced above, thirteen million of persons dependent on agriculture, in two-thirds of the Presidency, there should be seven millions of the same class in the remaining third, and including the agricultural laborers, the agricultural population of the whole Presidency might perhaps be estimated at 20 millions, or four-fifths of the whole, instead of about three-fourths, as given in the existing returns. It is hardly likely, however, that such a serious error should have been made in the census returns, and a more probable explanation, perhaps, would be, that five is too high an average to take for the families of ryots, and that the class of agricultural laborers having no direct interest in the land, beyond, their wages, is an excessively small one. In support of the latter presumption, it has already been shown, that no less than a million land-holders pay less than Rs. 10, or 1*l*, per annum, to Government, as land tax, so that their holdings are of course on much too small a scale to require any hired labour for their cultivation.

73. But be this class large or small, the position of the agricultural laborer, and indeed of all those de-

pendent upon wages, had not, at any rate, seriously deteriorated during the 10 years preceding 1866, though the enormous increase which has taken place in the price of food, must press hardly upon those trades for which the remuneration is fixed, by custom, at a certain rate in money. When reporting on this subject, about three years ago, the Board of Revenue, after communicating with the Collectors of districts, stated that, as a rule, all agricultural laborers were still paid in grain, and that these grain wages had not risen materially during late years. As to other classes of laborers who were paid in coin, they observed, that their wages had risen considerably, and that the increase had then kept full pace with the enhanced price of food. Compared with former rates, the wages were stated to be, in some cases, double what they formerly were, but, the general proportion of increase was 50 per cent., and, only in a few cases, had the increase been as small as 25 per cent. These conclusions are borne out by the increase which has taken place, during the last fifteen years, in the pay of all domestic servants in the families of Europeans in India.

74. The position of that portion of the population, whose wealth is derived from mercantile operations, has improved, at any rate, in an equal ratio with that of the agriculturist, if we may judge by the progress which has taken place in the trade of the Presidency. The principal portion of this trade is carried on at the port of Madras, that is, about one-half of the ex-

port trade, and two-thirds of the import trade. The greater part of the balance of the export trade, is from the ports of Cocanada, Negapatam and Tuticorin, on the east coast, and from Calicut, Cochin and Mangalore, on the Western Coast. Large exports of cotton take place from Cocanada, and Tuticorin, and of grain from Negapatam, whereas, the principal articles of export from the western ports, are Coffee, and oil-seeds. The principal item of import at most of these ports, is piece goods, though grain is also largely imported into the Malabar District.

75. In 1856-57, the total value of the imports to the Madras Presidency, exclusive of bullion, was about two millions and a third, sterling, (about 2s. 3d. per head), the exports being valued at upwards of 3½ millions, (about 3s. per head). In 1860-61, the imports had risen to nearly 3½ millions, and the exports to 4½ millions, and in 1865-66, the imports stood at 4¾ millions, (nearly 4s. per head) and the exports at 9 millions, (upwards of 7s. per head.) The value of the trade has thus more than doubled during the ten years, a rate of progress which will bear comparison with the advance made by the trade of almost any other country in the world, during the same period. In the seven years preceding the war, the trade of the United States only increased by 40 per cent. and the trade of France only increased 50 per cent., between 1860 and 1865. It must be borne in mind, however, that the Cotton famine in England gave an extraordinary stimulus to

the cotton trade of India during some of the years under notice.

76. The principal articles of the import trade, are piece goods, metals, twist and yarn, grain and pulse, and timber and planks. The chief articles of export, are cotton wool, indigo, grain and pulse, fruit and nuts, oil and seeds, coffee, and sugar, the value of the exports in these articles during the last five years is given in the following table :—

ARTICLES.	1861/62.	1862/63.	1863/6/4.	1864/65.	1865/66.
	,Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Cotton Wool ..	1,70,40,215	2,38,12,882	4,47,18,112	4,04,18,937	4,84,16,348
Indigo.....	48,69,090	51,67,234	40,37,259	33,35,915	34,57,070
Grain & Pulse	60,24,113	54,69,050	70,08,263	77,67,378	78,29,404
Fruits & Nuts	35,83,950	39,04,817	38,91,613	40,31,784	24,34,011
Oils....	16,48,565	27,16,880	37,12,229	25,07,457	15,43,435
Seeds.....	26,29,795	36,50,033	26,61,306	27,57,538	22,69,161
Coffee....	47,10,369	53,55,681	65,55,671	76,84,938	78,13,813
Sugar.....	22,74,519	19,18,694	25,51,907	22,40,991	13,36,572

It will be observed, that until the mercantile crisis which occurred in 1865, and altogether paralysed trade, there had been a steady annual increase in the export of most of these articles. These figures may be taken, as an indication, that the mercantile classes in this Presidency are steadily increasing in wealth, and the general increase in imports, may also be taken as affording evidence of an increase

in the general wealth of the whole population. The value of piece goods imported in 1865-66, was upwards of a million sterling, against goods of the same kind imported in 1855-56, of a value of not much more than one-third of that amount, *i.e.*, in 1855, each person on the average spent a little less than $3\frac{1}{3}d.$ on these goods, whereas, in 1865, taking into account the increase in the population, they each spent upwards of $9\frac{1}{2}d.$ These figures are not, however, strictly correct, as no doubt a considerable portion of the Hyderabad and Mysore territories, are supplied with piece goods from ports of the Madras Presidency, and the population of these territories is not included in making the calculation. Further, the consumption of the home-made article, has fallen off considerably, during the period under consideration, as the hand-made goods cannot compete with the machine-made.

77. If any further evidence be required as to the great advance in wealth, which has been made by all classes of the population in the Madras Presidency, during the past ten years, beyond what has already been afforded by the foregoing remarks upon prices, land tenures, and trade, it may easily be obtained from a consideration of the progress of the revenue, during this series of years. The land tax, which forms the principal item of revenue in the Madras Presidency, whatever it may have been in former years, must have been sensibly alleviated in late years, and the pressure of taxation of other descrip-

tions, is by no means heavy. The total revenues of the Presidency were a little over $4\frac{3}{4}$ millions sterling, or $4s. 1\frac{1}{2}d.$ per head, in 1856-57, and had risen to upwards of $6\frac{1}{4}$ millions, or $5s.$ per head, in 1865-66,* although the transfer of the district of North Canara to Bombay in 1862-63, and the abolition of the Moturpha, or professional tax, in the same year, reduced the revenue by £250,000. The true increase of revenue, during the ten years, may therefore be fairly set down as reaching nearly two millions sterling. Of the total revenue of $6\frac{1}{4}$ millions, $4\frac{1}{4}$ millions are derived from the land-tax, against about $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions obtained from this source, in 1855-56. Nearly half a million is obtained from the tax on spirituous liquors, though less than a quarter of a million was obtained on this account ten years ago. As this revenue is rented out to farmers, who purchase the exclusive privilege of manufacturing country spirits and selling them at certain minimum prices, fixed by government, it is clear, that the increase of revenue must be ascribed to a largely increased consumption, probably owing to an ascension of wealth to the agricultural and commercial classes. The taxation on this account, has risen from under $3d.$, per head, in 1855, to nearly $5d.$, per head, in 1865.† The large increase in the revenue derived from the

* In Switzerland, the revenue is $6s. 5d.$ per head, in Turkey $8s. 4d.$, but in few other European countries is it less than $1l.$, per head, and in Great Britain it is £2-8-9.

† The excise taxes in Great Britain, amounted to nearly 20 millions in 1865-66, or about $13s. 4d.$, per head. The proportion levied from liquors was probably about $9s.$, per head, as in 1850, three-fourths of the excise duties were raised from this source.

salt monopoly, is also indirect evidence of an improvement in the condition of the lowest classes of the people, who, in former years, can hardly have consumed a proper quantity of this necessary of life. The salt revenue is now upwards of a million sterling though in 1855-56, it was little over half a million. This large increase, is, in part, to be ascribed to the increase of price from one rupee to Rupees 1-11-0, per maund of lbs. 82, but, the quantity actually consumed in 1865-66, was about 500 million lbs., whereas, in 1856-57, not more than 400 million lbs. were consumed. The population in 1856-57 was 23 millions, so that the consumption of salt was then about 17 lbs., per head, per annum, and it is now 20 lbs., per head. A large proportion, however, of the salt manufactured in Madras, finds its way into Mysore, the Central Provinces, and the Hyderabad territories, and the actual consumption is not more than 16 lbs., per head. The contribution of each person to this branch of the revenue is thus about 8*d.*, per head.* The revenue from stamps has also largely increased since 1856-57, having risen from £ 70,000 to upwards of £ 280,000. The increase, is, in part, owing to an augmentation of the rates of duty, but, the revenue has steadily increased since 1862, when the present rates were adopted, having risen by upwards of 50 per cent. since that year. This increase may also fairly be taken to indicate an advancement in the wealth of the people. The revenue from cus-

* The Salt tax in the Duchy, of Baden is now upwards of a florin, (1*s.* 8*d.*) per head, and, previous to 1823, it was levied at a very much higher rate in Great Britain.

toms fluctuates with reference to the rates of duty imposed, and, though the trade, as already shown, has largely increased, the revenue from this source is considerably below what it was in 1859-60, or 1860-61.

78. On the whole, then, it is impossible to arrive at any other conclusion, than that the mass of the population of the Madras Presidency have considerably progressed in wealth, during the 10 years previous to the famine of 1866. The whole of the agricultural interest, which includes certainly three-fourths, and perhaps four-fifths of the population, were in twice as good a position at the end of this period, as they had been at its commencement, and a large number of them had made enormous gains during the cotton famine in England, the ryots of the district of Bellary alone, having, it is estimated, obtained an increase to their capital of nearly a million and a half, sterling, on this account. The mercantile class, or, at any rate, such portions of them as were interested in the over-sea-trade, had doubled their business, and the position of the poorest classes had certainly not deteriorated. Further, while private wealth had increased to this extent, taxation had been augmented by less than 25 per cent., so that, certainly, three-fourths of the increased profits obtained by the population were enjoyed tax free. At the commencement of the distress which will now be described, the people were, consequently, in a better position than they had ever occupied in any previous year of famine.

PART III.

THE FAMINE OF 1866.

79. Though the two years, 1864 and 1865, had been generally unfavorable to agriculture, the first evident indication of the approach of the general scarcity with which the Madras Presidency was visited in the year 1866, was, a report received by the Madras Government at the end of October 1865, from the Inspector General of Police, who was then in Ganjam, the most northerly district of the Presidency, to the effect that there was much distress in that district from the scarcity of provisions. The Government, thereupon, despatched a telegram to the officer who was temporarily in charge of the district, directing him to make such proposals as occurred to him for the mitigation of the distress, and to report on the stock of grain in the district, and on the position of the market, and prices. He was also instructed to send information on the latter points, to the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce, and to the neighbouring districts, in hopes that the high prices would induce the importation of grain.

80. In reply, he informed the Government, by telegram, that there was much distress owing to

partial cessation of sales, and that prices were very high, and this information was given to the Chamber of Commerce, and the Trade Association, at Madras. Further steps were also taken by the Government to direct the attention of the trading community of Madras, to the state of the Ganjam grain market, which resulted in a leading firm despatching 3,000 bags of rice, by the coasting steamer. The same firm made arrangements, for throwing a further supply of rice into the district, from Chittagong, and the Collector reported that a local merchant was importing 2,000 bags of grain, by steamer, on his own account. With this information before them, the Government declined to entertain the Acting Collector's subsequent proposal to purchase and sell grain on government account, being of opinion that it was inexpedient to interfere with the market, when private traders were importing.

81. The Acting Collector, in a detailed report submitted through the Board of Revenue, early in November, though stating that the markets were ill supplied, and the poor suffering much, observed, that he had been "informed by those who ought to know, " that there is no real scarcity, and although crops are "bad, there is every prospect of the district produc-
"ing ample for its own supply, during the coming
"harvest." The Government, in reply to this report, adverted to the coming supplies from Chittagong and Madras, and stated their readiness to consider favorably, any proposals for giving employment to the

poorer classes, on public works. They had previously, on the Acting Collector's application, sanctioned an expenditure of Rupees 10,000 for this purpose.

82. In the latter part of November, the Acting Collector reported that the markets were open, and fairly supplied, that some rice had arrived from Arracan, and viâ the Chilka lake, and that the coasting steamer had brought large consignments of grain. He added, that the holders of grain were now coming forward more freely to sell from the local stores, and that the difficulty of obtaining food, on payment, which had existed a few weeks previously, had passed away.

83. In consequence of these favorable accounts, no apprehensions regarding the condition of the Ganjam district were entertained during December 1865, or January 1866. Towards the close of the latter month, Mr. Forbes, who had been many years in charge of the District, returned from sick leave. He found the people in serious distress, and at once drew public attention to the state of affairs, by publishing a notification in his District Gazette calling for subscriptions. He also addressed the Madras Government, reporting that the labouring classes were in great straits, for want of food, being forced to subsist upon wild roots and plants, and, in order to mitigate the pressure on the grain markets in large towns, he suggested that the troops and public establishments of the district, should be supplied with grain imported by Government. In view to

increasing the supply of drinking water, which was reported to be failing in the district, he further proposed that artesian wells should be constructed in all suitable localities.

84. The Government, referred the latter proposal to the geological department, and directed the Collector to keep the Government acquainted with the state of the grain market, and the condition of the people, and to report what government works there were in the district, not requiring skilled labor, on which the poorer classes could be given employment, should necessity arise. They pointed out that the Collector's proposal to supply the public establishments with grain, by importing it, on government account, or contracting for its supply, was open to grave objections, on general principles, and they explained, that the only satisfactory method in which Government could interfere, was by affording work to the poorer classes, but that this measure should be resorted to, only, in the last extremity.

85. Early in February, the Board of Revenue addressed the Government, stating that the prospects of the season were most disastrous in almost every district of the Presidency, and reporting that deaths from actual starvation had taken place in the Ganjam district. The Board, in reply, were directed by the Government to require Collectors to keep them acquainted with the state of the season, and to suggest such remedial measures as they might consider necessary. The Board of Revenue ac-

cordingly issued the necessary instructions to Collectors of districts, and during March and April, they forwarded to Government the reports which they received from the several district officers, in reply to their requisition. The officers in charge of North and South Arcot, writing at the end of February, reported, that though the high prices of food were causing considerable distress, still, there was nothing so unusual or disastrous in the failure of crops, as could not be met, and relieved, by ordinary remedial measures. The Collector of Trichinopoly was of opinion, that the recent reduction of assessment in that district, had done all that was required to assist the people through their difficulties. The Collectors of Kurnool, Madras, Malabar, and Kistna, writing in the latter part of March, reported, that though prices were high, the circumstances of these districts were not such, as to create any alarm, and the officers in charge of South Canara, Madura, and Tanjore, also expressed themselves to the same effect. In Salem, and South Arcot, however, some fears were entertained of the results, if rain should not fall, as the want of water was then severely felt. In Tinnevely, and Godavery, the season was reported to be favorable.

86. There was thus, apparently, no serious apprehension, in March, in the districts of North and South Arcot, Trichinopoly, Salem, and Madura, which were afterwards the scene of such serious distress, and it may be presumed that no anticipations of the coming

disasters were then entertained in Bellary, Kurnool, or Coimbatore, as the officers in charge remained silent.

87. In March, the Collector of Ganjam, addressed the local Journals of Calcutta and Madras soliciting subscriptions, and during this, and the previous month, Relief Depôts had been opened by private subscription at several places in the Ganjam district, and the proprietors of several of the large estates had opened similar institutions at their own expense. The Collector also obtained sanction, for the expenditure of public funds in the employment of the poor in the neighbourhood of Berhampore, and work was thus provided for about 600 person, from April to November. His proposal, however, to commence the excavation of the Chilka Canal, a large and important work, calculated to give employment to a large number of persons, was not sanctioned, as no funds had been provided in the Budget. Special sanction was obtained for the work, later in the year, when Lord Napier visited the District, but, unfortunately, the working season was nearly over, and, but few, were employed when employment was most needed. In the following month of April, Mr. Forbes, found himself compelled to report to Government, that the Relief establishments were unable to meet the demands of the numerous starving applicants, and that death from starvation was becoming of frequent occurrence. In reply, he was directed by telegraph, to report more fully on the condition of the district.

88. The want of water was reported to be severely felt, in Vizagapatam, in April, but there was not, apparently, any severe distress in any of the other northern districts in this month. In Bellary, it was said, that the people suffered severely, and in some places subsisted on boiled leaves, roots &c., and measures for giving employment to the poor were suggested by the Collector, and approved by the Board of Revenue, but, in Kurnool, rain had fallen, and the prospects of the season looked better. In Coimbatore, Salem, and North Arcot, there was much distress among the poorer classes, those in Salem, eating roots and leaves, but the accounts from the southern and western districts were not unfavourable.

89. In the middle of May, the Collector of Ganjam reported, at some length, on the condition of his district, stating that the people were in the greatest distress in all parts of it, that many of them had been for long subsisting on the natural products of the jungles, and that in spite of the efforts of private charity, no less than 252 deaths from starvation had been credibly reported. Writing on the 29th of the month, the Collector gave a still more harrowing account of the province under his charge, reporting that in one estate alone, over 700 persons had perished from starvation, in addition to the number reported in his previous letter. He urged, that the period had now arrived, for a departure from the several principles and politico-economic laws, which seem to forbid direct State assistance,

in order to prevent starvation. The Government, had, in the mean time, on the receipt of the Collector's first letter, made a special grant of Rupees, 10,000 for the purpose of supplementing private subscriptions for the relief of the distress, and on receipt of his second report, they despatched a large supply of rice to the district, by steamer. No change took place in the condition of the other northern districts in the month of May.

90. In Bellary, the distress had become so serious, during this month, that the people were leaving the district, and in many places subsisting on leaves, and tamarind and date seeds. In North Arcot, Salem, and Coimbatore, the distress was still severe. In Salem, the poorer classes were subsisting on roots, and in Coimbatore, want of water even for domestic purposes, was much felt. The accounts from the southern and western districts, during May, were favorable, though there was some pressure on the poorer classes from the prices prevailing. In Madura, there had been partial showers of rain, prices had not risen, and there was no distress in the district requiring any special help from Government.

91. It was in the following month of June, however, that the state of affairs became really critical. The rains, usual in this month, failed in many parts of the country. All agricultural operations were brought to a stand still, and that class of the people who live by daily labor, were reduced to very great

straits. In Ganjam; 101 persons died of starvation, during the first fortnight, and 201, in the second fortnight of the month, and 5,000 people were being fed at 15 Relief Houses in the district. Prices were enormously high, so, much so that the Collector petitioned for, and obtained, a slight increase of pay for the subordinate servants of the district, to last for three months. The Bengal Government, to whom Mr. Forbes had applied, as far back as March, at length sanctioned a grant of Rupees 20,000, from the balance of the North-West Provinces Famine Relief Fund, which was chiefly expended in grain, on the public account, and despatched to Ganjam. Considerable sums were also raised, locally, and in Madras, for the relief of the distress in this district, and the Madras Government sanctioned an expenditure of Rupees 3,000, per mensem, from the State Funds, for the same purpose.

92. The state of the other Northern districts remained, during June, much the same as it had been in May. In Bellary, though some slight freshes in the rivers, and partial falls of rain in some localities, had revived some of the withering crops, the people were suffering much, prices were extravagantly high, two persons were stated to have died of starvation, and an increase of crime was reported. On receipt of this information, which did not reach Government till late in July, the Collector was directed to promote relief societies, and was promised one-third of the amount subscribed, as State

assistance. Though the scarcity of grain and water was severely felt in the adjoining districts of Kurnool, and Cuddapah, the distress was not reported to be extraordinary.

93. In Salem, North Arcot, and Coimbatore, the distress was still increasing. The people were emigrating from some parts of North Arcot, and in Salem, many persons were subsisting on roots, leaves, and the fruit of the prickly pear, the prices of grain having risen to such unprecedentedly high rates, as to place it out of the power of the poorer classes to make purchases. In the southern and western districts, prices were generally rising, and the scarcity was increasing.

94. In the early part of July, the accounts of the state of the population in all parts of the country were most distressing, and prices had made such a rapid rise in the Presidency town, and pressed with such severity upon the poorer classes of the people, that a movement was made among the leading members of the Mahomedan community, in view to purchasing grain from elsewhere, and retailing it, at low rates, to distressed persons. A simultaneous movement took place among the principal Hindu gentlemen, for the purpose of raising funds for the relief of local distress. The information received by the Government regarding the condition of the Ganjam district, was so alarming, that Lord Napier, the Governor of the Presidency, promptly determined on a personal visit to that

province, notwithstanding the unfavourable nature of the season for such a journey. Previous to embarking for Gopalpore, the principal port of the Ganjam District, he authorised his secretary to address the Treasurers of the Ganjam Relief Fund, at Madras, suggesting that a General Fund should be formed for the relief of the distress known to exist in other places, as well as Ganjam. This letter was published in the local journals, and public attention being now thoroughly aroused, on the 15th of July, a requisition to the Sheriff to summon a General Meeting of the inhabitants of the town, was put in circulation, to which the names of all the most influential persons of the community, European, East Indian and Native, were attached.

95. The Meeting was held on the 21st July, with the Lord Chief Justice in the chair, and was

FAMINE RELIEF COMMITTEE.

Azee-zool-Moolk Bahadoor, Esq.	Hyder Jung Bahadoor, Esq.
J. Ansell, Esq.	Humayunjah Bahadoor, Esq.
A. J. F. Arathoon, Esq.	Hafiz Sudrool Islam Khan Bahadoor, Esq.
A. Alwar Chetty, Esq.	Colonel R. Hamilton.
The Hon'ble A. F. Brown.	Major C. S. Hearn.
F. H. Church, Esq.	C. V. Iyasawmy Moodelly, Esq.
T. G. Clarke, Esq.	S. Jeyaram Chetty, Esq.
J. G. Coleman, Esq.	The Hon'ble G. Lutchnernursoo Chetty, C. S. I.
R. P. Campbell, Esq.	Revd. F. G. Lys.
L. Chengleveroya Naick, Esq.	E. Lecut, Esq., K. L. H.
Colonel Dyer.	Colonel E. E. Miller
R. A. Dalryell, Esq.	T. Ramechundra Row, Esq.
H. D. E. Dalrymple, Esq.	V. Rungasawmy Iyengar, Esq.
The Hon'ble R. S. Ellis, C. B.	P. T. Ramanjooloo Naidoo, Esq.
Revd. S. Fennelly.	Lieut. Colonel A. C. Silver.
J. W. Gantz, Esq.	

very numerously attended. Subscriptions and donations to the large amount of Rs. 20,000, (£2,000) were raised on the spot, and the General Famine Relief Committee,*

The Hon'ble Sir Shurful Oomrah Bahadoor, K. C. S. I.	Colonel J. Temple. R. Thompson, Esq. Dr. W. J. van Someren.	including re- presentatives of all the weal- thier classes of the Presi- dency town, appointed.
Sum Saum Ood Dowlah Ba- hadoor, Esq.	M. Venkatasawmy Naidoo, Esq. S. Viziagaravooloo Chetty, Esq.	
Shah Roshillah Sahib, Esq.	Lieut. Colonel R. S. Wilson.	
P. Somasundra Chetty, Esq.	The Hon'ble John Young.	
To these were subsequently added the following gentlemen,		

V. R. Bassovah Pillai, Esq.	Moothoosawmy Moodelly, Esq.	96. The Government
J. B. Cardozo, Esq.	P. Vasoodeva Moodelly, Esq.	
B. Gopalier, Esq.	V. Ramiengar, Esq.	
W. Fraser, Esq.		

nobly seconded the liberality of the public, by publishing a general order on the 25th July, promising contributions to the Relief Fund, equivalent in amount to the private subscriptions which might be raised in Madras, and in the provinces, and authorizing the Collectors of those districts, in which the pressure from the high price of food was reported to be most severe, to give immediate employment to the able-bodied among the sufferers, in gangs of moderate strength, either at, or in the vicinity of their own villages. In view to giving ample employment to all in the Presidency town, who were willing to work, the same order authorized the commencement of two large and important public works, in the immediate neighbourhood of Madras.

97. It will be observed from the foregoing resumé of the official information on the subject of the condition of the country, during the first half of the year 1866, that though a few deaths from actual starvation were reported to have taken place, in Ganjam, in February, and though some of the needier

classes in that district, and in the districts of Bellary, and Salem, were said, in the month of April, to be subsisting principally on roots, and leaves, no special state measures of relief, beyond the partial employment of the people on public works, were directed in the first named district, until May, nor in the other two districts, until July, (though the accounts received of them in May, and June, were most unfavorable.) This hesitation is doubtless to be ascribed to the apprehension, lest State intervention should have put an end to private charity, and thus have aggravated the evils it was intended to remedy, and to the hope, that the opening of the usual agricultural season, in June, would have mitigated the distress, and enabled the people to tide over the scarcity, without any extraordinary measures of State relief. Had there been a plentiful fall of rain throughout the country, in June, in all probability, no such measures would have been needed, except, in the Ganjam district, but, as matters eventuated, it cannot but be regretted that earlier action was not taken, for had the system of State employment, and semi-state relief which was subsequently adopted in Bellary, North Arcot, South Arcot, Salem, and Coimbatore, been initiated in these districts, during the month of June, instead of during the month of August, a large amount of human suffering would have been alleviated. It is to be feared too, that from difficulties of organization, and a variety of other causes, the advantage of these

measures was not fully obtained by the people, until September, or October, in some districts.

98. On the other hand, as no notice was taken of the distress (except in Ganjam), before June, and July, in the public prints, though the local journals have correspondents in all parts of the country, it may be hoped, that some of the official accounts given of the condition of the people of Bellary, Salem, North Arcot, and Coimbatore, in April, and May, were somewhat exaggerated, though in some cases, it is now well known, that the distress was under-stated. The picture drawn of the state of Ganjam, in July, in the following extract from Lord Napier's minute, and the account given of Salem, and North Arcot, in the Sanitary Commissioner's report on the condition of those districts, in August, leaves, however, no room for doubt, that the people had then been suffering very great privations for a considerable period. His Lordship writes as follows—

“The population may be divided into four categories:—
 (1) The Ryots. (2.) The Coolies, or people without land, engaged in rural labor. (3.) The mendicant, vagrant, out-cast, or criminal class. (4.) The small Traders and mechanics in the Towns.”

“Of these classes, the Ryots are the most meritorious and the most to be pitied. They have suffered with great resignation and self-respect. The decency of their caste, prevents them from appearing at the relief houses, as sharers of promiscuous charity. The necessities of agricultural labor, bind them to their holdings and homes, where it is difficult to search them out. There can be no doubt of the extremi-

ties of distress which they have endured, and still endure. Some of the Ooryah cottages I have myself visited, where destitution and starvation might be seen, in every pathetic and terrible form. The same story was told, by the multitudes of persons gathering a precarious and unwholesome sustenance, from half edible roots, berries and leaves, of which Mr. Forbes, the Collector, possesses a variety of specimens. The miserable condition of whole villages, was attested by the emaciated appearance of their leading inhabitants, sent in numerous deputations to solicit help from the Collector, at Chetterpore. The roads were full of wretched creatures prostrated on the earth. In many places, I was pursued by clamorous crowds, which might be likened to flocks of skeletons or ghosts. To an unpractised European eye, the distinction between the ryot in his ordinary garb or ordinary nakedness, and the landless laborer, is scarcely perceptible ; but there is no doubt that the substantial ryot, especially on Government lands, feels his social elevation, as much as the farmer in England. It was pitiable to see the reduction and ruin of an industrious order of men, invested in primitive forms with all the duties and obligations of property, and to reflect that nothing less than a succession of prosperous seasons, combined with considerate usage on the part of the Revenue Department, can restore these people to physical vigour and material welfare. • While the peasant farmer starves, his cattle thrive. Repeated showers had fallen in the country, and the forage was abundant. The Hindoo peasant will perish by hunger, beside a fat bullock. The prescriptions of superstition, which appear cruel to the individual, are conservative for the community ; and the preservation of the laboring cattle secures the power of cultivation, and the sources of future life and wealth. It may sound harsh and sad to say so, but, in India, it is more easy to replace a man than an ox. The chastisements of nature are rarely universal. There will still be some feature of

consolation and promise. In the condition of the live stock, I saw the "attenuating circumstance" of the Ganjam famine. It was reported that the pastoral ryots, who would under no pressure kill their cows, drink the blood of their living goats, and reserve the animals for successive depletions."

"The impoverishment of the ryots, and the general absorption of money for the mere purchase of food, had naturally arrested every kind of labor demand; and the cooly class, who have no savings and no credit, must have suffered, in the first instance, even more than the ryots. The scarcity would touch them sooner, and more sharply. The cooly has, however, fewer ties, fewer scruples, and a greater habit of migration. He can resort, without degradation, to the alms-house, and can travel further in quest of employment. Government food and government wages, will henceforward be sufficiently operative to save persons, habituated to unskilled rural labor, from the worst degrees of suffering, and from death. The recipients of public charity in the cooly class will diminish, but those from the ryot class will increase in number, between the present time and next harvest."

99. Mr. Ellis's account of Salem and North Arcot is not quite so distressing. He reports as follows:—

"I am happy to be able to state that this suffering, though general in both districts, has not as yet increased to that point when distress becomes famine. I neither saw nor heard, of any number of people perishing of hunger, as was the case in Ganjam, and more recently in Bengal, and the people I met on the roads, rarely presented any outward appearance of great suffering."

"It was only at the Relief Houses that there were any outward signs of severe privation; at these places were con-

gregated the aged and infirm, and a large number of children who were very sickly, and in many cases very emaciated. This was especially the case in the Salem District. At some Relief Houses, the old and infirm were just able to crawl to their meals, and the children were so reduced from exhaustion, that they could hardly lift the cups of food to their lips. Now that the Relief Houses have been thoroughly organised, this suffering is speedily relieved, and it may be confidently hoped, that there will be no deaths from starvation, such as undoubtedly occasionally occurred in the more distant jungle tracts, and in the hill villages."

100. The General Relief Committee held their first meeting on the 24th of July, and nominated the Honorable R. S. Ellis, C. B. to be their President, and Mr. R. A. Dalyell to be their Honorary Secretary. They also elected ten of their number to form an executive committee, for the management of the town Relief Fund, and requested them to make careful enquiry as to whether any, and what special remedial measures were then necessary, for the relief of distress within the town.

101. At the same meeting, it was resolved to address all persons of influence throughout the Presidency, requesting them to raise contributions for the famine funds, and grants-in-aid were made to the districts of Bellary, North Arcot, South Arcot, and Salem, with the Committee's request that they might be expended in relieving distress, among those unable to labor, by the issue to them of cooked food, uncooked grain, or small doles of money. The Collectors of the districts in ques-

tion were also requested to keep the Committee fully informed of the condition of their districts, and to bear in mind the importance of distributing the relief in the actual locality suffering from distress, in view to preventing any general congregation of the distressed persons at the principal towns.

102. At the next meeting of the Committee, a grant was made to the Coimbatore district, in consequence of the unfavorable accounts received from Caroor, and Collegal, and the Town Committee's proposals to open Relief Houses in different parts of the town, were sanctioned, on their representation, that though the distress within the town limits was trifling, as compared with that prevailing in some parts of the Presidency, still, enough had been elicited during their inquiries to show, that an unusually large number of persons were suffering considerable distress, owing to the high price of food.

103. Early in August, the President of the Committee was directed by Government to visit the famine-stricken districts, in his capacity of Sanitary Commissioner, and the Committee took the opportunity of entrusting him with funds, to be expended at his discretion, in giving relief to the sufferers in the districts of Salem, and North Arcot. Two additional grants were also forwarded to the Collector of Bellary, during the month of August, the one on his application, and the other, in consequence of the very unfavorable accounts of the state of the district,

which were communicated to the committee towards the close of the month.

104. In the month of August, the prices throughout the country were higher than they had ever been in the memory of the existing generation, and they so ruled during the next two months, but, in Ganjam, a very propitious change in the season revived the drooping spirits of the people. In the other distressed districts, viz., Bellary, Salem, North Arcot, South Arcot, and Coimbatore, Relief Depôts were opened by the aid of the contributions from the General Relief Fund, adverted to above, and under the authority given by Government, employment was found on public works for all capable of work. The accounts from the Madura district, and from the town of Cochin, during this month, were distressing, and it was found necessary to adopt the same special measures of relief in these localities, as in other districts.

105. In September, Trichinopoly, and Kurnool, were added to the list of distressed districts, and though the season began to improve in October, there is little doubt that all over the Presidency there was very considerable suffering among the poorer classes, throughout the months of June, July, August, September, October, and part of November, but the distress was much alleviated in the three last-named months, by the remedial measures taken by Government, and the public.

106. The Relief Committee were in constant communication with all parts of the Presidency, both

on the subject of the distress, and of raising subscriptions for its relief, and the Government were pleased to communicate to them all papers on their records, and all the letters which were received on the subject of the condition of the country. During the months of August, September, and October, no less than 350 letters were despatched by the Committee, and upwards of 600 papers, and reports, were received, and disposed of by them. They held nine general meetings during these months, for the disposal of business, and applications for assistance from all quarters were promptly met. General recommendations were also made as to the proper course to be adopted in administering relief. A model scheme for the establishment of a Relief House was circulated with the first grant of funds to each district, and the advantage of adopting this plan of relief, wherever practicable, was pressed upon the local officers.

107. The Town Sub-Committee alluded to above, also held weekly meetings, and personally superintended, and directed the relief operations of the town, on the following system. Each Relief House, where cooked food was supplied to the sufferers, was under the control and management of a Committee of three, who issued tickets to applicants, after an enquiry into their circumstances, and no tickets were given to persons who were able to obtain their livelihood by labor, the relief being thus limited to the old, the young, and the infirm. The money payments made by each Relief House Sub-Committee were

restricted, as much as possible, and were only given to those, who by caste, or by extreme age or infirmity, were not able to attend at the Relief House. These payments were limited to Rupees 2, or Rupees 4, per mensem, according to the number of the family, payable, either weekly, or monthly, at the discretion of the Sub-Committee. Some expenditure, however, was also incurred, in giving money relief to those of the European, and Eurasian population, on whom the high prices pressed with peculiar severity, and monthly grants were made from the Town Relief Fund to the Madras Friend-in-need Society, which were likewise expended in assisting these classes.

108. As some difficulty was experienced in obtaining accurate and continuous information of the state of the different parts of the Presidency, and as it was absolutely necessary that the Committee should have before them, a correct picture of the position and prospects of each district, a series of questions was prepared by the Secretary, and circulated to nearly every official in charge of a district range, early in September.

109. In this Circular, information was solicited in regard to the tract of country which was administered by the officer to whom it was addressed, on the following points.

- (1.) The comparative increase which had taken place in the price of food.
- (2.) The apparent cause of the scarcity of grain.

- (3.) Whether certain localities had suffered, or were suffering more than others.
- (4.) At what period the distress had manifested itself.
- (5.) What class of the population was most seriously affected.
- (6.) Whether crime had increased.
- (7.) Whether the public health had been materially affected.
- (8.) Whether any deaths had taken place from actual starvation.
- (9.) What special measures of relief were in progress.
- (10.) On what system Relief Houses, if in operation, were conducted, and from what funds.
- (11.) What prospect there was of a fall in prices, and
- (12.) What means were available to provide for the sufferers until the scarcity had passed over.

110. In reply to these queries, it was reported, that though prices for several years had been rising considerably, the increase which had taken place in all quarters, during the year, was quite unprecedented. Rice is the grain most generally consumed by all the well-to-do among the population, and raggy, when converted into flour, forms the staple food of a large

portion of the laboring classes in many districts. The

District.	Price of Raggy per Madras Garce.			Price of Rice per Madras Garce.		
	September 1865.	September 1866.	Increase per cent.	September 1865.	September 1866.	Increase per cent.
	Rs.	Rs.		Rs.	Rs.	
Bellary -	220	763	247	451	1,044	131
Coimbatore -	247	559	126	483	865	79
Salem -	171	484	183	403	718	78
Kurnool -	236	461	95	470	706	50
Cuddapah -	227	460	102	466	664	42
Madura -	275	456	66	507	769	52
Malabar -	254	433	70	468	616	32
Madras -	206	426	107	371	624	68
North Arcot -	173	413	138	364	614	69
Tinnevely -	306	409	34	505	703	39
South Canara -	273	394	44	395	588	49
South Arcot -	178	393	120	382	633	65
Trichinopoly -	203	389	92	416	698	68
Ganjam -	188	381	95	380	651	71
Tanjore -	186	334	79	379	587	55
Vizagapatam -	200	276	20	437	480	8
Kistna -	181	269	49	398	430	8
Nellore -	166	246	48	349	434	24
Godavery -	165	242	46	291	391	35

average intensity of the scarcity, in the different localities, may thus be gathered from the marginal statement, which exhibits the average wholesale prices, per Madras garce, (about eighteen British quarters), during the month of September, when prices were at their highest. In the cases of the districts of Ganjam, and Vizagapatam, the

August prices are quoted, as a slight fall had taken place in those districts, in September. As the average wholesale prices, *throughout* each district, are given in the statement, it is of course possible, that in certain localities of a particular district, the prices may have been much higher, than those quoted for the whole district, and the pressure proportionately greater. This was probably the case in parts of the Ganjam and Madura districts. The Committee were, in fact, informed, that in some places in the district of Coimbatore, rice was selling, in September, at three Madras measures, the Rupee, ($2\frac{2}{3}d.$ per lb.) that at the same period it

was selling in the Salem district, at $3\frac{3}{4}$ measures, the Rupee, ($2\frac{1}{2}d.$ per lb.) and in some parts of North Arcot and Trichinopoly, at four measures, the Rupee, ($2d.$ per lb.) and that raggy was at one time selling at 5 measures, the Rupee, ($1\frac{3}{4}d.$ per lb.) in some of the upland talooks of Salem. It is probable too that these rates were exceeded in the Bellary District, and in the Pattikonda taluk of the Kurnool district.

111. It will be observed from the statement, that the position of the district of Bellary was quite exceptional, that the prices of both descriptions of grain, ranged very much higher there, than in any other quarter, and that the augmentation of prices, beyond those ruling in the same month of the previous year, was far greater in that district, than in any other, amounting to 247 per cent. in the case of raggy, and 131 per cent. in the case of rice. Raggy had risen from 24 shillings, per British quarter, to 83 shillings, and rice from 48 shillings, to 110 shillings. Next in order may be classed the districts of Salem, North Arcot, Coimbatore, and Ganjam, for, though the price of raggy in the last-named district, had only increased 95 per cent., the price of rice had risen at the same rate, which was a larger advance in price, than had taken place in any other district, except Bellary, Coimbatore, and Salem. The rise in the price of raggy in the districts of Madura, Malabar, Ganjam, Tanjore, Trichinopoly, Kurnool, Cuddapah, Madras, and South Arcot varied, from 120 per cent. in South Arcot, to 66 per cent. in Madura, and the price of rice had been augmented by upwards of

50 per cent. in all these districts, except Cuddapah, and Malabar, where the rise had been 42 and 32 per cent., respectively. In all the remaining districts, Kistna, Nellore, South Canara, Godavery, Tinnevelly, and Vizagapatam, with the exception of Tinnevelly and Vizagapatam, (where this grain was only 34 and 38 per cent dearer than in the corresponding month of the previous year) raggy had increased in price by 50 per cent. An advance of upwards of 25 per cent. had also taken place in the price of rice, in four of these districts, but in Kistna, and Vizagapatam, the rise was only 8 per cent. It will be noticed, that it did not always follow that in those districts where prices ruled highest, the greatest pressure was felt, as in certain favorably situated localities, prices are always much lower than in others, and the pressure of the scarcity must therefore be gauged, by the *comparative* rise in prices, in each district. For instance, it will be observed that the price of rice had risen 95 per cent., in Ganjam, and only 39 per cent., in Tinnevelly, and that the former district suffered severely, whilst the latter was quite free from distress, yet, the actual price of rice, was Rupees 703 per garce, (75s., per quarter) in Tinnevelly, and only Rupees 651, per garce, (72s., per quarter) in Ganjam.

112. In all parts of the country, with the exception of the Godavery and Kistna districts in the north, South Canara in the west, and Tinnevelly in the south, where no severe pressure had been felt, the scarcity was reported to have been caused more by

deficient production, owing to a series of unpropitious seasons, than increased exportation, and this is

TRADE IN FOOD GRAINS.

Year..	Exports. cwt.	Imports. cwt.
1861-62...	1,781,741...	1,073,513
1862-63...	1,532,598...	1,267,089
1863-64 ..	1,834,446..	1,452,705
1864-65 ..	1,772,402...	1,409,862
1865-66...	1,736,223...	1,100,554
1866-67...	1,791,352...	815,593

confirmed by the statistics of trade in food grains,* which show that the exports during the years 1865, and 1866, were not so much in excess of those of previous years, as to cause any scarcity of food, though those

of the latter year were extraordinarily large, under the circumstances of the year, and the imports were much below those of any of the previous five years.

113. It would seem from these figures, that the high prices were not caused by a general deficiency of grain, throughout the country, but, rather, by the scarcity in particular localities, and it is clear, that they had little or no effect upon the over-sea grain trade. Their effect upon

	Exported by rail.	Imported by rail.
	Tons.	Tons.
Madras - -	6,385	0
North Arcot - -	10,105	0
Cuddapah - -	2,619	1,136
Salem - -	9	2,334
Coimbatore - -	0	6,476
Malabar - -	816	1,822
Bangalore - -	38	7,604
Total...	19,372	19,372

the inland trade, in grain, may be partially ascertained from the annexed statement, drawn up from an elaborate document giving the carriage of grain by Railway, through the districts of Salem, Coimbatore, North Arcot, and Cuddapah, dur-

ing July, August, and September 1866, which was kindly furnished by Mr. Church, the traffic manager

of the Madras Railway, one of the most active members of the Relief Committee.

114. It would appear from this statement, that notwithstanding the distress in the North Arcot district, and the high prices there prevailing, about 10,000 tons of grain were exported thence to Mysore, Coimbatore, Salem, and Malabar. From Madras, about 6,000 tons were carried to the same localities. Of course, a large portion of this grain found its way to the distressed district of Bellary, and there can be little doubt that the sufferings of the people in all parts of the country, were in some measure mitigated by the rapid means of transit afforded by the Railway. Mr. Church, in his memorandum, shows by an elaborate calculation, that 16,858 carts would have been required to carry the quantity of grain taken by rail, during the three months of July, August, and September, and that they could not, even if procurable, have done so at a lower rate than 4 annas, per ton, per mile, whereas, the Railway carried it at one anna, per ton, per mile.

115. There are, however, certain anomalies presented by this statement, for, it appears, that in some districts, Cuddapah, for example, the grain was carried backwards, and forwards, over the same ground. This appears not to have been occasioned by sudden fluctuations of prices at places within a short distance of each other, but, rather, was the result of the uncertainty in the minds of the merchants as to the action of the Government. Accustomed under Native

rulers to being compelled to sell at fixed rates, in times of famine, they were unable, even after half century of free trade in prices, to realize that they would be permitted to sell at their own rates, and whenever prices rose to real famine rates, in their own locality, they at once despatched their grain to another market, thus obviating the fear of loss, by the establishment of a 'nerrick,' or fixed rate of prices, and the still greater danger of a 'loot' by the starving population. The Sanitary Commissioner, in his report on Salem, and North Arcot, remarks as follows :—

“The grain merchants, always a timid race, have been chary of shewing that they have any abundant stores of grain. They have preferred exporting their grain to other Districts, where the excessive prices enabled them to make large profits, rather, than increase the prices much beyond the present high rates in their own towns and villages. They fear popular indignation and riots ending in attacks on the grain shops.”

116. With the exception of the favored districts of Godavery, Kistna, South Canara, and Tinnevely, all parts of the country appear to have suffered considerably from the scarcity, though the 'pressure' in some portions of the distressed districts, seems to have been more severe than in others. Among these may be mentioned the Zemindary estates in the northern portion of the Ganjam District, and the Berhampore taluk, and the upland taluks in the distressed districts of Salem, North Arcot, and Coimbatore. The whole of the Bellary district suffered very severe-

ly, though the pressure was greatest in the taluks of Alur, Koodligi, Madaksira, Raidroog, Gooty, and Bellary. In Tanjore, the distress was considerable only in those taluks where dry cultivation is chiefly carried on, and in Madura, the taluks of Melur, Dindigul, and Tiroomungalum suffered most. In Trichinopoly and Kurnool, the distress was chiefly confined to the two Head Quarter towns, but the taluk of Pattikonda in the latter district, which adjoins Bellary, suffered very severely in August and September.

117. In reply to the Committee's enquiry regarding the date at which the distress first manifested itself, in each locality, the information received from the district officers, concurred with the official information on the subject, which has already been summarized, shewing that while in Ganjam, severe pressure was felt in January, in Kurnool, Trichinopoly, and Madura, there was no real scarcity until August, and September. The progress of the scarcity, so to say, may probably, however, be best ascertained, by comparing the increase in the price of cholum, raggy, and rice, which took place in each month of the year, in each district. It is found that in Ganjam, in January 1866, prices were nearly double those of the same month in the previous year, which was not the case in Bellary, until July, nor in Salem, Coimbatore, North Arcot, and South Arcot, until August, in which latter month, prices at Bellary, were three times those of the same month in 1865.

In September, however, the prices in Salem, and Coimbatore, were nearly three times the usual rates in this month, and those of Madras, Trichinopoly, and Kurnool, were doubled, but in Madura, the double price was not reached until October, in which month, there was a general fall everywhere else, the prices in Bellary, Salem, and Coimbatore, being considerably less than double the rates of that month in 1865. From this month, a steady fall took place everywhere, except in Madras, where comparatively high prices were maintained, until the middle of February.

118. All classes of the population were reported to have suffered, but the non-agricultural classes had suffered most. All persons, on fixed salaries, at low rates, were placed in great straits, and the Mussulman population were stated to have suffered severely, in many districts, owing, probably, to a large proportion of them being dependents of noble families, and subsisting on meagre monthly allowances. In the early part of the year, some of the ryots of the higher castes in the Ganjam District, suffered, in some instances, terrible privations, rather than partake of the State charity, and many preferred a miserable death to the supposed degradation. Later in the year, it was found necessary to issue uncooked grain to these persons, in large quantities, as they were willing to accept assistance in this form, though they would not eat the cooked food at the Relief Houses. The inhabitants of villages in the zemindary estates, ap-

pear, generally, to have suffered more than those of government villages, in consequence of their comparatively impoverished condition, the government ryots, as already shown in a former section of this paper, having, for a series of years, obtained the exclusive benefit of high prices, owing to their paying a fixed money assessment for their land, whereas, the zemindary ryot, obtains only his old proportion of the produce, and thus, any gain from the increased price of agricultural produce, is shared by the landlord. Writing on this subject, Mr. Forbes, the late Collector of Ganjam, after 10 years experience in a district, where both the zemindary and ryotwary systems are in force, states, as follows:—

“I will now add a few words on the comparative merits of the ryotwary and Zemindary tenures, as regards the condition of the tenant. In Ganjam, the assessment on ryotwary lands held under Government, is light, and a series of years of very remunerative prices, had enabled the ryots to accumulate substance, they had begun, prior to the Famine, to achieve an independence before unknown to the class, and to hold their own with the Soucar*, in bargains for produce; had it not been for this circumstance, we should have had to choose between agricultural depopulation and the alternative of maintaining the whole class, as we have already maintained more than 20,000 souls.”

“The Government ryot, in Ganjam, pays a light rent, and his interests are cared for by the preservation of existing sources of irrigation.”

* Soucar, money-lender.

“The thirteen Ooriya Zemindars of Ganjam, are, with few exceptions, the most grasping Land-lords, and the least enlightened Proprietors in the world. They take 50 per cent of the crop, and lay out, little or nothing, in improving or even maintaining irrigation works. They rack-rent their villages to middlemen, and the under-tenants are, consequently, deprived of all chance of accumulating capital, and are little better than serfs of the soil, the bulk of the ryots in Zemindary Estates would hail a change to Government management, with joy. I limit these remarks, of course, to the Zemindary system as it is worked here. There may be liberal native Land-lords, in other Districts, whose policy produces different results, but, in the Ganjam Zemindaries, the profits of the soil are divided between the ryot, the renter, the Zemindar, and the Government. In the Government talooks, the ryot, and the Government, divide the produce, the ryot taking far the larger share. There can be no question which class lives under the more favorable conditions, and, in fact, where the Famine fell upon zemindary estates, the misery and mortality were far greater than in government talooks.”

119. There was not, apparently, any material increase of violent crime throughout the country, but nearly in every district, the number of grain thefts, and robberies, was largely augmented. In the account of the famine in Ganjam, prepared by an officer of the district, the following remarks occur on this subject:—

“The offenders belonged, in the main, to the very low castes, who were driven to this course, through want and hunger.”

“The cattle of the ryots were stolen, and slaughtered, especially in some of the smaller and unprotected villages. These thefts were of daily occurrence, but detection was very

difficult, as, usually, whole families were concerned in the commission, and all traces soon disappeared. However, during the last two months, few offences of this kind have been reported, and crime, generally, has decreased wonderfully."

"The offences against property were, generally, of a simple character, and consisted, chiefly, of petty thefts of grain, and household utensils."

"Only one case of serious gang robbery occurred, and even that was not of an aggravated description."

"The large per centage of convictions, as compared with former years, is worthy of notice. Of 1,466 cases filed in the Sub Magistrate's Courts in the principal Division, in 1864, 638 cases were discharged."

"In 1865, of 1,829 cases, 431 were similarly treated, whilst in the nine months of 1866, ending in September, of 1,427 cases, only 286 were discharged."

"The following statement will show the comparative increase in crime."

Cases disposed of at the Senior Assistant Magistrate's Office.	
January to the end of September 1864...	122.
do.....do...	1865...123.
do.....do...	1866...430.

The people, however, on the whole, behaved with remarkable patience, and the Collectors of all the distressed districts, unite in praising the moderation which was shown by the starving multitudes seeking relief.

120. The public health was, undoubtedly, severely affected by the scarcity of food, the deaths from cholera, fever, and small pox, being largely increased.

The reported deaths from actual starvation, however, were very few, except in the Ganjam district, where nearly 11,000 persons so perished, and, in one part of the district, upwards of ten per cent. of the population died from want of food. The registration of deaths in the Madras Presidency was only organized in June 1865, and cannot be expected, as yet, to afford reliable statistics. It is difficult, therefore, to make any accurate estimate of the number of deaths which occurred from want of food. A few cases of deaths from positive starvation, were, however, specially reported from twelve, out of the nineteen districts which form the Madras Presidency. During the year 1866, the deaths in the Bellary district were 50,357, being a death rate of 4 per cent., per annum, which is far above the average death rate. The rate for the 6 months, ending 30th June last, when the scarcity had subsided, was only .75 per cent. in this district. It appears, too, from the other returns, that the average death rate throughout the Presidency for the last six months of 1865, was .88 percent., for the first six months of 1866, .87 per cent., for these second six months, 1.63 per cent., and for the first six months of 1867, only .77 per cent. As there is no reason to suppose that the returns of any one half year are less reliable than the others, it may, perhaps, be fairly assumed that the death rate was nearly doubled during six months of 1866, so that the pressure of famine must directly, and indirectly, have caused nearly 200,000 deaths throughout the Presidency.

121. From the replies received to the Committee's queries regarding the measures in force for the relief of distress, it appeared that in the districts of Bellary, Kurnool, North Arcot, South Arcot, Salem, Coimbatore, Madura, Trichinopoly, and Madras, Relief Houses for the aged and infirm were in operation, supported by private subscriptions, aided by the Committee's grants, and that special State works provided labor for all the able-bodied. In Ganjam, the same system was in force, the private subscriptions being supplemented by the grant from the Bengal Famine Fund, already alluded to, and by direct grants from the Madras Government, but in addition to the persons fed at Relief Houses, a large number of persons were fed by the issue of raw grain. The relief given by Government, and the Committee, was, also, everywhere largely supplemented by private charity. Many of the zemindars of Ganjam showed the greatest liberality, the zemindar of Peddakimedy not only feeding all comers at several Relief Houses, but employing a large number of his people on useful works. In North Arcot, three of the principal zemindars had established 12 Relief Houses on their estates, all of which they maintained at their own expense for several months, at an expenditure of nearly Rupees 100, per diem. In Vizagapatam, the Maharajah of Vizianagaram supported a large number of paupers at several Relief Houses, entirely at his own cost, and the principal land-holders, and others, had also established private Relief Houses. In Nellore, Cud-

dapah, and Tanjore, private subscriptions had also been raised sufficient to deal with the distress, 13 Relief Houses having been established in the latter district, by this means alone. A rich ryot, in the Kurnool district, Owla Reddy, was reported by the Sanitary Commissioner to be feeding a very large number of people, from his own resources, and, Kardapah, a cotton merchant in Bellary, was stated by the Collector to have relieved 700 persons, in July, almost entirely at his own cost. In the town of Madras, too, several private Relief Houses were opened, independent of the four which were established by the Relief Committee. One, situated in Preamettu, was kept up, throughout the scarcity, by a Committee of native gentlemen, three others were supported by other native gentlemen, during portions of the period when the pressure was most severely felt, and a fifth was maintained, at his own expense, by the French Consul, Mr. E. Lecot.

122. In Madura, the landed proprietors had, also, assisted their tenants, and the Lessee and Manager of the Shevagungah Zemindary had been especially active in the good work. In addition to numerous liberal measures connected with the revenue administration of the estate, the Lessee contributed Rupees 5,000 towards the formation of a Famine Relief Fund, and subscriptions amounting to Rupees 3,000, had been received up to November. Four Relief Houses had then been opened, at which an average number of 1,000 persons were fed daily, on a system almost pre

cisely the same, as that laid down by the Madras Committee. It is thus described by the Agent and Manager of the estate.—

“The system under which each poor house is conducted, is as follows:—Having secured a sufficiently commodious building at each place, a strong enclosure, large enough to accommodate about 800 or, 1,000 people, is erected on its front, with one door-way only for the purpose of egress and ingress. On the ground, within this enclosure, are a number of shallow trenches, about nine inches deep, and six feet apart from each other. The building before which the enclosure is erected, is for the purposes of storing and cleaning the grain, and for the purposes of cooking. The hour at which the poor are fed is 3 P. M. Previous to this, the food for the day has been cooked, and brought into the centre of the enclosure ready for distribution.

“Each poor house is managed by a Committee consisting of six working members. The duty of the first and second, is to determine who are really fit objects of relief; all who, in their opinion, are not proper objects of charity, are peremptorily excluded. Relief is confined to the blind, lame, aged, sick, and others of both sexes, who from starvation, or any physical infirmity, are unable to work. To each is given a printed ticket, which insures his admission into the poor house. Precisely at 3 o'clock, the first bell rings; all who hold tickets, immediately present themselves at the door of the enclosure, for admission. A member of the Committee who stands at this door, admits only such as hold tickets. As each ticket-holder is admitted, he takes up his place, and sits down in a line with the trenches on the ground in regular order, the vessels which the poor bring with them they place into the trenches, by the side of which they sit. The men sit apart from the women, and silence and order is persistently maintained.

“ When all have sat down, and the tickets have been examined, and it is seen that no unworthy object of relief has been admitted, the second bell rings, and the cooked food is at once carefully distributed ; as much is given to each person as he can reasonably require. With each dole of food, is also given a small ball of “ chatney,” consisting of various digestive condiments. After half an hour, when all have been fully supplied with food and water, the third bell rings, and at this signal, the poor at once quit the premises. The three bells regulate the admission and dismissal of the poor, and the distribution of the food, and prevent confusion which there would otherwise be. The rules for the management of each poor house are strictly carried out. The food is, rice on Sundays, and cholum and raggy, on all other days, made into a palatable conjee. It must be eaten on the spot ; none is allowed, except by special permission, to leave the premises. Relief is extended to all who are fit objects of charity, irrespective of caste and creed, and they are treated with pity and compassion. The grain purchased for the poor is the best procurable, and is carefully cleaned and cooked, the provisioning and cooking departments, being under the immediate supervision and orders of the third and fourth Members of the Committee. Each poor house, with its enclosure, and all the cooking and other vessels, are always kept scrupulously clean. Any respectable person is at liberty to visit a poor house, and to make whatever remarks he pleases, as to how it is conducted, &c., in the visitor’s Book, which will be expressly handed to him for the purpose, by the sixth Member of the Committee, who generally resides on the premises.”

In view to relieving the tightness of the grain market, the Agent of the estate had also established fairs at the chief towns, and larger villages, for he found that though many persons had

money to buy grain, they had the greatest difficulty in obtaining it.

123. In reply to the Committee's last query, it was reported that it was not anticipated, in any part of the country, that prices would fall to any considerable extent, until February of the present year, but the letters from all quarters stated, that the measures adopted, under instructions from Government, and by recommendation of the Relief Committee, would enable the population to sustain their difficulties until that period, though, it was not expected that it would be necessary to maintain the system of relief, for so long a time. The result has proved that these anticipations were, in the main, correct, for in very few districts was it necessary to continue the relief operations, after the end of February. In Bellary, and Coimbatore, however, a few Relief depôts were kept open during March, and April, and a considerable number of persons were employed in several districts up to May. The Melur talook of the Madura district was unfortunate again this year, in regard to the season, and it became necessary to continue relief operations there, until June.

124. It will be observed, that very shortly after the crisis was properly recognised, measures were in operation in all the distressed parts of the country, for the relief of the sufferers; thanks to the liberal contributions of the local residents, aided by grants from the Central Committee, and the large outlay by Government on public works. It soon became well known, in all these localities, that ample funds

were available from the sources indicated, for the support of those unable to work, and that the Government were prepared to incur any expenditure necessary in providing labour for the able-bodied, and all serious apprehension for the lives of the population passed away. The Government, also, greatly assisted the people, by adopting the most liberal measures in the Revenue Department. Large remissions of the land tax due to Government, were granted, wherever needed, as well as advances for the purchase of seed grain, &c. The low classed servants of the Department, were also given a small increase of pay, in the districts which suffered most. A quantity of seed paddy, for gratuitous distribution in the Ganjam District, was purchased in other districts, by the Board of Revenue, and the Collector, when writing on the subject, observed as follows :—

“ The Ryots of the Berhampore Talook have now received, or are receiving, by means of this, and the Board’s earlier grant of Tuccavy,* by the refund of surplus collections, by remissions, and, lastly, by the weekly distribution of rice to upwards of 9,000 persons of this class, all the aid that circumstances permitted us to afford, and though they have gone through much suffering, and food is still scarce among them, and though we have lost many by death or migration, in search of maintenance, I think the Board may reflect with satisfaction that their efforts have arrested a tide of misfortune, which, if unchecked, would have depopulated half the Talook, and occasioned great loss of revenue to the State.”

* Tuccavy, advances for cultivation,

125. The Central Relief Committee promptly met all calls upon them for assistance, by liberal grants-in-aid, and, indeed, in some cases, Bellary for example, they forwarded sums in anticipation of the requirements of the district. The marginal statement exhibits the grants made to each district, by the Committee. Later in the year, the Committee called for returns shewing the expenditure, in each district, on measures of relief, and the table appended to this paper gives this information up to June 1867, up to which period, it has been found necessary to continue relief in the Melur taluk of the Madura district. The table, however, does not give the particulars of the relief given by private persons in Vizagapatam, and Cuddapah, nor that by the Zemindars and rich ryots in many other districts, as alluded to in paragraph 121 above. The operations in the Ganjam, and Tanjore districts, though not carried out under the directions of the Central Committee, have, however, been included in the table, in order that it shall exhibit, at one view, the details of the relief operations throughout the Presidency, so far as they are known to the Central Committee.

	Rs.	A.	P.
Bellary	...	84,000	0 0
Madura	..	12,100	0 0
Salem	...	11,000	0 0
Kurnool	...	9,500	0 0
North Arcot	...	6,000	0 0
Coimbatore	...	6,000	0 0
Trichinopoly	...	4,000	0 0
South Arcot	..	3,000	0 0
Malabar	..	1,403	4 0
Madras District.		700	0 0
Tanjore	...	50	0 0
Madras Town	...	25,000	0 0
Total Rs ..		<u>1,62,753</u>	<u>4 0</u>

126. It will be perceived from the entries in this tabular statement, that the relief operations commenced in Ganjam, in February, when about

600 people were fed at the Relief Houses there established by private subscription. This number was increased to 1,500, in April, and to 14,000, in July, during which month about seven thousand persons were similarly relieved in Bellary, Salem and Malabar. By August, the Central Committee's grants in-aid had been freely distributed, and Relief Houses were generally established in all the distressed districts, though, as already stated, in some districts, difficulties of organization prevented full advantage being then taken, either of the charity of the public in providing food for those unable to labor, or of the liberality of the Government, in giving employment to all the able-bodied who were willing to work. In Bellary, for instance, several of the Relief depôts were not opened until late in August, or early in September, and only about 16,000 people, per day, were fed in the former month, and about 3,000 employed on public works, whereas, in the latter month, nearly double this number of persons were fed, and considerably more than double, employed. So, also, in Coimbatore, in August, only an average number of 628 persons were fed, and only an average of 26 persons employed, during the month, whereas, in September, the number fed was 1,558, and the average number employed, each day, was 1,237. Indeed, if the range of prices at all represented the comparative pressure of the distress, in this district, the relief, generally, must have been inadequate, but, it is questionable, whether this was the case, as the accounts of the condition of the district

received by the Committee, from time to time, were not very unfavorable. The district officers of Salem, and North Arcot, however, appear to have been more successful, in at once availing themselves to the fullest extent of the Means of relief afforded.

127. The average number of indigent persons fed throughout the whole Presidency, (excluding those relieved by the private charity of the land-holders, and others, of which the Committee have no details) seems to have been about 95,000, per day, during August, September, and October, and about 70,000, per day, during November, and December. In the month of October, upwards of 100,000 persons were fed throughout the country, of whom 32,000 were natives of Bellary. It is said that 24,000 persons were fed during the month of August, in Malabar, and the number provided with food, in Ganjam, rose to upwards of 30,000, in November. In North Arcot, over 8,000 persons were fed during August, September, and October. The numbers fed in Salem nearly reached 7,000, in September, and considerably, upwards of 5,000 were being fed in Madura, in September, and October. In Trichinopoly, over 4,000 were fed in September, and a similar number in the town of Madras, in November, but, in Kurnool, the largest number fed during any month was but little over 2,000, and in Coimbatore, they never reached this number. The Relief Houses in Trichinopoly, and Malabar, were closed in November, and the numbers attending these institutions in

other districts was considerably diminished, in December. During the whole period of the distress, viz, from February 1866 to May 1867, an average number of about 30,000, per diem, were fed at the several institutions, at a total cost of about five lacs of Rupees, (£50,000) for the sixteen months, being an average cost of about one Rupee, per head, per mensem.

128. During the seven months ending 31st March 1867, an average of 20,000 persons were daily employed on special public works, at the expense of the State. In January 1867, upwards of 33,000 persons were so employed throughout the Presidency, of whom nearly 20,000 were in the Bellary district, and 6,000 in Madura. In North Arcot, 5,000 were employed during November, December, and January, but, in other districts, the average number employed during any month rarely reached a thousand. The small number of persons employed in the Ganjam District, is accounted for, by the fact of most of those requiring to be provided with labour, having obtained it on the ordinary works, so that they were not included in the lists of those employed on special famine works. Further, these special famine works were not organized until after July, whereas, special employment for most of the Ganjam poor had been sanctioned from ordinary funds, before that month. The average number employed throughout the country for the 15 months, from May 1866 to June 1867, was about 12,000, and the expenditure was somewhat beyond $6\frac{1}{2}$ lacs of Ru-

pees, being an average wage of about Rupees 3-6, (6s. 9d.) per mensem. In Bellary, however, where the largest number of persons were employed, the wages were at first fixed at 3, 2, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ annas,* per day, for men, women, and children. This rate was continued until December, when the fall in prices enabled a reduction to be made to annas 2, $1\frac{1}{2}$ and 1, respectively. It appears that in this District, 261 miles of road were newly made, at a cost of Rupees 1,82,826-1-8, or about Rupees 700-7-8, per mile, 216 miles of road were improved, and other miscellaneous useful public works undertaken.

129. In February, and the following months, the relief operations were gradually discontinued, though it was found necessary to feed some thousands of people in Bellary, up to May, and some of the Relief Houses were kept open in the Madura district, until the middle of June. The numbers employed on Famine works did not of course diminish so rapidly, for though prices had fallen considerably, no work was available until after the commencement of the harvest.

130. The figures entered in the tabular Statement, only, in a partial measure, corroborate the facts deduced from the comparative increase of prices which has been given in a previous page. As the officers, and local Committees administering relief, had almost '*carte blanche*' as to expenditure, after the month of July, being well aware that ample funds for the relief

* The Anna is one sixteenth of a Rupee, or three half-pence.

of the infirm, the young, and the aged, were at the disposal of the Central Committee, and that the Government were prepared to incur any expenditure which might be needed, in providing employment for the able-bodied, it may be fairly assumed that, at any rate, as soon as these measures were properly organized, all those really needing assistance, whether in the shape of employment on the public works, or subsistence at the Relief Houses, obtained it. On this supposition, it would seem that taking into account the numbers fed, the numbers employed, and the expenditure incurred, as shown in the margin, Bellary, and Ganjam, needed the greatest assistance, upwards of a lac of Rupees, (£ 10,000) having been spent in food, and nearly 4½ lacs, (£45,000) in providing labour in the former district, and

Districts.	Expenditure in feeding.		Expenditure in providing employment.	
	Rs.	A. P.	Rs.	A. P.
Bellary	1,06,793	2 8	4,32,606	4 0
Ganjam	2,10,999	12 10	8,967	9 11
North Arcot	27,449	11 1	1,00,000	0 0
Salem	24,595	0 2	27,886	10 9
Madura	23,524	0 5	19,408	2 0
Madras Town	31,227	13 6
Coimbatore	11,798	4 1	19,145	0 4
South Arcot	7,490	5 9	15,910	3 11
Malabar	18,766	12 4	5,758	5 3
Kurnool	11,729	1 0	15,016	9 8
Trichinopoly	4,964	11 9	930	1 6
Madras District	1,430	3 2
Tanjore	17,920	6 8
Total Rupees ..	4,98,689	5 5	6,45,628	15 4

considerably upwards of 2 lacs, (£20,000) on food, and nearly Rs. 9,000* in providing labor, in the latter. It would also appear that North Arcot, where upwards of a quarter of a lac was spent in food, and

* The cause of the apparently small expenditure on labour in this District, has been explained in para 128.

a lac on labour, should be placed next in order, followed by Salem, Madura, and Madras Town, and that Coimbatore, South Arcot, and Malabar, were not so severely visited by distress, while the pressure was still lighter in the other distressed districts of Kurnool, Trichinopoly, and Madras. The numbers fed in Ganjam were, on the average, in excess of those fed in any other district. This was occasioned by the adoption of a system of relief, in this district, which was not anywhere else in force, though, probably, the circumstances of that District required it, as the pressure was severely felt by a higher class of persons than suffered elsewhere. In all other parts of the Presidency, food was, as a rule, administered only to those who attended at the Relief Houses, and who were incapable of labor, but, in Ganjam, the poorer cultivators were relieved by donations of uncooked grain, to the extent of from about 5,500 persons, in July, to about 24,000 in November.*

131. The expenditure in each district, with the sources from which funds were obtained, is given in detail in the tabular statement. It will be seen, that sums varying from Rs. 1,430-3-2, (£143) in the Madras district, to upwards of two lacs of Rupees, (£20,000) in Ganjam, were spent in providing food for the starving population, the total amount expended for this purpose, being, as already stated, about 5 lacs of rupees, or £50,000. Upwards of one-third of this amount, was provided from private subscriptions, raised locally, for local expenditure, and the ba-

lance was supplied, in most cases, by grants from the General Relief Fund, at Madras, though, in Ganjam, and some other cases, the private subscriptions were supplemented by grants direct from Government. A sum of Rs. 20,000, was also contributed towards the relief of Ganjam, from the balance of the North-West provinces Famine Relief Fund, and the Court of Wards made grants in the same district, from the funds of the estates under their charge, amounting to Rs. 8,500, of which Rs. 6,954-14-6 were expended. The expenditure incurred by Government, in providing employment for the able-bodied, has amounted, certainly, to about 7 lacs of Rupees, (£70,000) as the details of some of this expenditure has not been received. Thus, including Rs. 5,00,000 expended on food, the total sum disbursed in relieving distress was Rupees 12,00,000 or £120,000. Of this amount it will be perceived that, taking into account the grants to the General Relief Fund, the Government has provided more than 10 lacs of Rupees, or £100,000 and, this sum, is exclusive of the large remissions of revenue, and advances, which have been sanctioned in several of the distressed districts. It has been estimated that the famine in Ganjam alone, including disbursement and losses of every description, has cost the Government £60,000.

132. The Committee's efforts to raise subscriptions for the relief of distress, were, everywhere, most successful. The General Relief Fund obtained direct subscriptions to the amount of Rupees 86,454-14-1 as noted overleaf :—

	Rs.	A.	P.
The Right Hon'ble the Governor.....	1,000	0	0
His Highness the Maharajah of Travancore ...	1,000	0	0
His Highness the Prince Azeemjah*	1,000	0	0
His Highness the Rajah Holkar.....	1,000	0	0
The Hon'ble the Maharajah of Vizianagarum...	1,000	0	0
Messrs. Parry and Co.....	1,000	0	0
The Dowager Lady Jeejeboy	800	0	0
Messrs. Shand and Co.....	700	0	0
The Hon'ble Sir C. H. Scotland†.....	500	0	0
The Hon'ble John Young†	500	0	0
The Hon'ble W. Holloway†.....	500	0	0
The Hon'ble J. D. Mayne†.....	500	0	0
Messrs. Lecot and Co†.....	500	0	0
Messrs. Binny and Co†.....	500	0	0
Humayunjah Bahadoor, Esq†	500	0	0
The Hon'ble C. Pelly.....	500	0	0
R. Taylor, Esq.....	500	0	0
The Hon'ble Sir T. Pycroft.....	500	0	0
The Hon'ble A. J. Arbuthnot.....	500	0	0
The Hon'ble L. C. Innes.....	500	0	0
W. Hudleston, Esq.....	500	0	0
A. F. Pater, Esq. (Messrs. Dymes and Co)	500	0	0
His Highness the Rajah of Cochin.....	500	0	0
His Highness Rama Vurma 1st Prince of Travancore.....	500	0	0
M. Vencatasawmy Naidoo, Esq	500	0	0
Subscriptions received from Bombay.....	14,177	1	6
Subscriptions received through Provincial Committee.....	34,061	2	3
Subscriptions of less than Rupees 500, received direct, chiefly from residents in the town of Madras.....	22,216	10	4
Total Rupees...	86,454	14	1

* His Highness subscribed Rupees 1,000 to the Town Fund, in addition to this amount.

† An additional sum of Rupees 500, was subscribed to the Town Fund by these gentlemen.

133. In addition to this sum, no less than Rupees

	Rs.	A.	P.	
Bellary	-	47,429	15	6
Ganjam	-	20,127	6	0
Tanjore	-	19,874	15	5
Madras Town	-	18,769	0	9
Malabar	-	17,866	12	4
Salem	-	15,464	15	5
Madura	-	13,922	12	3
Coimbatore	-	8,125	14	1
North Arcot	-	7,030	11	4
South Arcot	-	6,792	9	10
Kurnool	-	6,141	0	0
Trichinopoly	-	4,110	11	3
Madras Dist.	-	821	3	2
		<hr/>		
Rupees.	1,86,477	15	4	

1,86,477-15-4, including the Madras Town Fund, were subscribed and collected locally, for local expenditure, in the relief of distress, as detailed in the marginal statement,* making up the total amount of private subscriptions to Rupees 2,72,932-13-5. The Government granted Rupees 1,30,000 to the General Relief Fund, Rupees 5,492-8-10 to the Coimbatore and Bellary districts, Rupees 38,854-12-1 to Ganjam, in cash, and about Rupees 1,20,000, in grain, being in all Rupees 2,94,347-4-11. The Court of Wards, as already stated, expended Rupees 6,954-14-6 in the same district, and Rupees 20,000 were obtained from the North West Provinces Relief Fund. A further sum of Rupees 24,172-4-3 was transferred from the Lungerkhanah Funds in the North Arcot district. The total sum available for providing food for those unable to labor, was thus no less than Rupees 6,18,407-5-1.

134. As already observed, of this total amount, it was found necessary to expend only Rupees 5,08,068-10-1, and in several districts, there are balances of local subscriptions, and endowments, in hand, which the subscribers propose to devote to local charitable purposes. Of the total sum available for the relief

of distress, only Rupees 2,35,223-14-10 (being Rupees 86,454-14-1 general subscription, Rupees 1,30,000 Government donation, and Rupees 18,769-0-9 subscribed to Town Fund) were at the Committee's disposal, and of this amount, Rupees 1,62,753-4 were expended in making grants-in-aid to the different subordinate Committees, as detailed in the margin of paragraph 125 above, but, of this amount, Rupees 41,847-13-2, was returned as unexpended, so that the actual expenditure on account of grants-in-aid, was only Rupees 1,20,905-6-10. To this sum must be added the whole of the Town Fund, Rupees 18,769-0-9, all of which was expended, and Rupees 796-7-7, being the Honorary Secretary's expenditure for establishment, stationery, postage, &c., as passed from time to time, by the Committee, bringing the total expenditure by the Committee to the 31st August 1867, up to Rupees 1,40,470-15-2. The balance of funds left in their hands was thus Rupees 94,732-15-8, up to date, and of this sum, Rupees 89,251-4-10 is invested in Government Securities, and the balance Rupees 5,501-10-10, is now in the Treasurers' hands.* The Committee's account, as regards both the General and Town Funds is accordingly entered overleaf :—

* At the Committee's last Meeting, it was resolved to devote this surplus to the support of any charitable institutions in Bengal or Madras, which have originated in the distress occasioned by the famine of 1866.

GENERAL AND TOWN RELIEF FUND.

Receipts.	Amount.			Total.		
	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
Subscribed to General Fund up to 31st December 1866.	2,08,892	8	1			
Do do from January 1867 to 31st Au- gust	7,562	6	0	2,16,454	14	1
Subscribed to Town Fund up to 31st December 1866.	18,445	8	9			
Do do from January 1867 to 31st Au- gust.	323	8	0	18,769	0	9
Total Rupees..				2,35,223	14	10

Disbursements.	Amount.			Total.		
	Rs.	A.	P.	R.	A.	P.
Expenditure on a/c of Gene- ral Fund as shewn in ac- count.....	1,00,867	1	0			
Actual expenditure on a/c of Town Fund as shown by Committees' returns.....	39,603	14	2	1,40,470	15	2
Invested in Government Se- curities.....				89,251	4	10
Net Balance.....				5,501	10	10
Total Rupees..				2,35,223	14	10

135. On the whole, it must be a subject of cordial congratulation to the Committee to consider that, thanks in part to their exertions, the scarcity with which nearly the whole of the Presidency was afflicted, in June last, never became so severe as to be de-

scribed as a general famine, and that with the exception of the district of Ganjam, there was no locality in the Presidency, in which the number of deaths was very seriously increased by mortality from absolute starvation. It must also be satisfactory to them, to reflect that, for four months of the year, nearly 100,000 of the aged, the young, and the infirm, were kept alive by the measures of relief which they aided in directing, the greater portion of whom would probably have perished of starvation, had no system of gratuitous distribution of food been adopted.

PART IV.

THE PREVENTION OF FAMINES, AND THE DUTIES OF AN INDIAN GOVERNMENT ON THEIR OCCURRENCE.

136. Before concluding this narrative of the distress with which the Madras Presidency has been afflicted, during the past year, it will be well to consider what means are available to prevent a recurrence of such disasters, and information on this point was solicited by the Relief Committee from the officers in charge of the distressed districts. Preparatory to considering the suggestions made by these gentlemen, in regard to their particular districts, it will not be out of place to record such general considerations on the subject, as must occur to every one interested in the question.

137. It is obvious that until the communications between district and district, are quite complete, each locality must be, in a great measure, dependent upon local sources, for its supply of food, and attention should be first directed to ascertaining the means, by which this local supply can best be maintained, and increased.

138. It has been shewn, in a previous page, that the enlightened policy which has been adopted of late years, in regard to the land tax, combined with a great rise in prices, has had the effect of bringing

a large quantity of land under cultivation, which has hitherto been waste, and it may therefore be concluded that, if the Government continues consistently to follow the same line of policy, in future years, the breadth of cultivation will still more largely increase, as population is augmented. At the same time, it must be borne in mind, that an extension of cultivation, is not the only means by which the quantity of food produced, can be increased. The productive power of irrigated land, is largely in excess of the productive power of un-irrigated land, and the responsibility of keeping existing irrigation works in repair, and of taking advantage of the numerous natural advantages which are to be found in all parts of the Presidency, for the formation of new sources of irrigation, devolves upon the State.

139. The expediency of making a far larger outlay upon new works of this description, than has of late been done, has been persistently urged for many years, by every Madras officer of intelligence, whether belonging to the Revenue, or Public Works Department, and the advantages likely to be gained, so far as the revenue is concerned, from a liberal outlay for this purpose, has been constantly brought forward. It is also believed that these views have been consistently supported by the Madras Government, and that frequent applications for increased grants of funds have been forwarded to the Government of India. It will be sufficient, therefore, for the present purpose, to record an opinion to the effect

that a capital of at least half a million sterling, per annum, to be raised by loans, should be expended on new works in the Madras Presidency, for the next five years, and it is quite capable of demonstration, that if this amount was judiciously laid out, on well selected projects, the increased revenue derived from them would, in the course of a few years, not only provide an ample margin from whence to pay the interest of the loans, but would also, if formed into a sinking fund, repay the loans altogether, within a very short period of time.

140. The necessity of keeping the existing works of irrigation in thorough repair, is, however, of still greater moment, and it is much to be feared, that an inefficient system of management which lasted upwards of fifty years, and an insufficient allowance for the purpose, during the last ten years, have had the effect of permitting a large number of the irrigation works which were bequeathed to the British Government, by their Native predecessors, to fall into disrepair. The Sanitary Commissioner, in his report on his tour through two of the districts where severe distress prevailed in 1866, remarks, that the state of disrepair into which the irrigation works had been allowed to fall, was the subject of general complaint, and there is no reason to suppose that the irrigation works of these districts, are in a worse state than in other provinces of this Presidency.

141. There is a general feeling abroad, as will be seen from the extracts from the Collectors' reports to the Committee, that the annual grants for the

repair of irrigation works, are altogether insufficient for the purpose, and the supposition that the slight increase which has taken place in the wet cultivation of the country, is proof to the contrary, is altogether fallacious. There is very little doubt that the crops obtained, are, on the average, short of what were formerly reaped, solely because the means of irrigation are not so complete, or certain, as in former years, but when the value of irrigated land is three times what was, twenty years ago, it would be strange, indeed, if an acre of land, with a chance of obtaining water, was left waste.

142. Writing in 1852, the Public Works Commission state that, up to that period, the average annual outlay on repairs to irrigation works, had then been only 7 lacs of Rupees, (£70,000) and as the annual revenue derived from irrigated land was then 135 lacs, (£1,350,000) and, as it was estimated that 15 lacs (£ 150,000) of the revenue had been alienated in the rent free tenures, this would give an outlay of something less than 5 per cent. The Commission pointed out the miserably inefficient state of the irrigation works, at that time, and urged an annual outlay of 15 lacs, or 10 per cent on the estimated revenue from irrigated land. It appears that, in accordance with their suggestions, the outlay on repairs, was, in subsequent years, considerably increased, ranging from 11 to 13 lacs, and rising in 1858-59 to nearly 19 lacs. Since 1860, however, the amount expended on repairs has steadily decreased, never rising beyond 12 lacs, and falling to little

above 8 lacs in 1863-64, and this too with a largely increased revenue from irrigated land. The average revenue of this description from 1860-61, to 1864-65, not taking rent-free tenures into account, was 165 lacs, (£1,650,000) and the expenditure on irrigation repairs was under 5 per cent, on this amount, being less than one half that recommended by the Public Works Commission, after an elaborate enquiry.

143. In all probability, the simplest arrangement, in order to insure a proper outlay on irrigation repairs, would be to credit 10 per cent of the revenue collected from irrigated land, to a local fund, for this special purpose, and thus to keep this amount altogether distinct from the Imperial finances. The propriety of such a course, is evident, and, a somewhat similar plan, has, in fact, been long since adopted in Bengal, for the allowances granted to the Zemindars to cover their outlay in keeping up the irrigation works of their estates, and in collecting the revenue, &c., was a far larger percentage on the gross revenue from land, than what is now proposed to be deducted from that of the irrigated land alone.

144. Were all irrigation repairs conducted from local funds, as proposed, and all new irrigation works carried out from loans raised by the local Government, the profits of such works being devoted to the payment of interest, and the repayment of the loans, the public works grant of the Imperial Government would be properly restricted to a provision for Imperial roads, buildings, &c., the injurious effects of the present system of centralization would no longer be

felt, and the Presidency of Madras would, in a few years, be in a position to contribute a still larger surplus, than it has hitherto done, to the Imperial Exchequer.*

145. In connection with the expenditure of loans on large projects of irrigation, it is also worthy of consideration, whether it would not be advisable to organize a system of lands improvement advances, similar to that formerly adopted by the British Government, in Scotland, and Ireland, and now largely provided by the Lands Improvement Companies in those countries. The system was to make an advance to any land-holder, on the security of his property, for such drainage works or other improvements, as he desired to make, and as had been approved by the Government surveyor. In order to prevent the loans from continuing to be a permanent burden upon the land, it was arranged that such a rate of percentage was to be paid to Government, by the landlord, as would extinguish the debt altogether in 20 years. If a portion of the public works loans proposed to be raised, were placed in the hands of district officers, for the purpose of making such advances for agricultural improvements, the arrangement would probably be largely taken advantage of, by the people. The system might be organized on a small scale at first, the advances being limited to the wealthier class of land-holders, whose lands were of

* In the Imperial Accounts, the Madras Presidency is not credited with receipts from the Provinces of Burmah, Nagpore, &c., though debited with their Military charges, hence the annual surplus in the Presidency accounts frequently escapes notice.

known value, and who were holders of land not paying less than Rupees 100, as land-tax. There is little doubt, that of the 40,000 persons who now hold land, with an annual tax of Rs. 100, and upwards, a large number would be willing to take money from Government for the construction of wells, and other irrigation works, mortgaging their whole property for the amount, and paying an instalment, of say, 12 per cent., per annum, a rate which would enable the Government to extinguish the loan, with interest, in 12 years, supposing the State to be satisfied with 5 per cent. interest on the advance. Such a concession would be viewed as a very great boon by the landholders of this Presidency, for it must be remembered, that the lowest rate of interest they now pay for money advanced by money lenders, on the best security, is 12 per cent. The benefit to Government would, also, be considerable, for in the course of a few years, all those land-holders who had taken advantage of the arrangement, would be much enriched, and the State would indirectly be a gainer, by the improvement in their social condition. The tendency of the system would, also, be gradually to relieve the Government of the repair of a large number of petty irrigation works, which it is most desirable should be left to private enterprise.*

* Under the old system of revenue administration, it was customary to give "Tuccavi," or advances, to ryots without capital, in order to enable them to cultivate, but the plan was given up a few years back, in consequence of the losses which it entailed on Government. The present proposal would, however, be free from this objection, as the advances would be made only to those who were comparatively well off, and who had valuable land as security. In former years, too, land had little or no saleable value, whereas the case is far otherwise at present."

146. But to proceed to the special recommendations made by the district officers with whom the Famine Committee have been in communication.—The Collector of Bellary strongly urges the expediency, of at once giving the Madras Irrigation Company, the necessary guarantee, to enable them to undertake the upper Bellary section of the Toongabudra irrigation project, which is said to be likely to provide irrigation to 150,000 acres of land, and would in itself produce such an *assured* addition to the food supply of the district, as would almost insure it against famine in future years. The completion of the Railway from Cuddapah to Gooty, and Bellary, and the general repair of the minor irrigation works of the district, are also urged by the Collector. In Madura, an equally important project with the Toongabudra is brought forward, viz, the Periyar project which, at a cost of 15 lacs of Rupees, (£150,000) is calculated to add very largely to the food providing powers of that district. In Nellore, the Collector, after many years experience in the district, urges the completion of the Pennair irrigation project, and the extension of the north coast canal to Kistnapatam, as his district would then be connected more nearly with the port of Madras, and the Railway. In Salem, the selection of sites for anicuts on the rivers of the district, is recommended, and the restoration of the Neringipett anicut, on the Cauvery, is strongly urged.

147. In North Arcot, South Arcot, and Coimbatore, grievous complaints are made of the inefficient

state of the irrigation works, owing to want of funds for their repair, the Collector of the first named district stating that 857 tanks are partially, or wholly inefficient, from this cause. He also brings to notice that the rivers of his district, are by no means utilized to their full extent, as the Palar, and Cheyur anicut projects, admit of large extensions in their net work of subsidiary channels, and as a weir across the latter river is absolutely needed, at some point in the south west of the Polur taluk, a locality which for years past has suffered severely from drought.

148. The Collector of Coimbatore writes more generally, to the following effect—

“For the prevention of a recurrence of famine, in this district, there is one, and that a notable remedy, viz, the utilization for irrigation purposes of that water, which, in the months of June, July and August, during the South West monsoon, runs waste into the sea; but which, I believe, might at a moderate expenditure of money, without any great engineering skill, be extensively used in turning thousands of acres of parched land into fields of Paddy.”

“An acre, at a moderate average, produces 750 Madras measures of Paddy, or 300 Madras measures of rice. Well, allowing to each human being one measure of rice, per diem, for food, no bad allowance, a thousand acres would produce sufficient for the support of 10,000 human beings, per mensem.”

“It is thus evident that artificial irrigation, if carried out to a limited extent in a district, would produce sufficient food to maintain a large population. At the rate abovementioned.

tioned, about 100,000 acres of irrigated land, would maintain a million of people for a month."

"For the construction of new original irrigation works in the district, it is difficult to give any idea of the sum that would be required to carry them out. The Hill Ranges in the district, afford peculiar advantages for the construction of reservoirs, for the storage of water, and many parts of the low country seem equally well suited for the formation of irrigation channels."

"Some works would be of considerable magnitude, and costly in proportion: but if carried out with skill and care, they would yield returns at Rupees 8, per acre, (which would be paid without question) which would amply compensate for the capital expended. There are many minor works, no doubt, which could be executed at a very moderate expenditure."

"The present state of the existing irrigation works, is very unsatisfactory; but how can it be otherwise, when the annual maintenance allowance is never sufficient to keep the works in repair. These remarks apply to the 5 years, I have been in this Province."

149. The Collector of South Arcot states that the resources of his District, are capable of far greater development, and that the outlay on irrigation works has been wholly incommensurate with the wants of the people, and the capabilities of the district to meet those wants. Writing on the subject of the available means for the prevention of such calamities, as that through which his district had recently passed, he makes the following remarks—

“ If only the resources of each District were more fully developed, than at present ; if old works of irrigation were better looked after, and repairs and improvements more promptly and efficiently attended to ; if projects for conserving water in large reservoirs, in eligible parts of the country, were every where set on foot, and carried out, how different would be the face of the country, and in what comparative prosperity would all classes find themselves, whether the producer or the consumer. These simple measures, adopted generally throughout the country, would, I am satisfied, be quite sufficient, humanly speaking, to avert famine, or anything approaching to it, in ordinary unfavourable seasons. Irrigation works should surely claim the paramount attention of the State in India. They are immediately remunerative ; and in a country whose main revenue is from the land, can there be a question as to the sound policy of providing for the increasing development of the resources ? It seems almost tempting Providence, year after year, to depend solely on the periodical rains, and to make no provision against an unrainy season. When we think of the innumerable rivers which annually empty themselves into the ocean, for the conservancy of whose waters, nothing is done, when every drop in India is as gold, and when, year after year, we witness irrigation works left in a state of decadence ; Tanks and Channels unrepaired and unimproved ; Lands unoccupied and waste, for want of applying the means of cultivation close at hand, can we wonder at occasional distress when the periodical rains even partially fail ; and can we attribute to aught else, than our own improvidence and imprudence the consequences which inevitably ensue. Ryots are hungry to take up land and to expend capital in its improvement, but they are discouraged and hindered, for want of a guarantee that Government will perform their part ; and surely this is suggestive, and can leave but one impres-

sion, and that is, that Government are not adequately alive to what appears to others a sacred duty; and the omission to turn to account the means so readily within reach of averting Famine, or even distress, certainly involves a heavy responsibility on the State. What is money, when placed in contrast with human lives, for after all, the question really resolves itself to this, and it is not only works merely for irrigation which are wanted, but works which would serve the double object of supplying water for cultivation, and water for the population and their cattle, especially in parts where rivers and streams do not exist; it is in seasons of drought, owing to this want in fixed localities, that diseases spring up, and deaths are so common, both among the inhabitants and their cattle. But viewing the matter merely in a financial point of view, I am prepared to contend, that it would be great economy to incur a large expenditure on irrigation works, and for the construction of vast reservoirs in various parts of the country, for the storage of water, which now, year after year, finds its way uselessly into the sea. I can truly state that, had the irrigation works in this district been in proper order, and had any such reservoirs existed, we should not only have had ample food and means of support, for all local wants, but, without any pressure on the consuming classes, we might readily have supplied other parts of the country."

150. In the Ganjam district, a considerable outlay is said to be needed to connect the ports with the interior, by good roads, and the late Collector considers that the cultivation of the Chicacole and Goomsur taluks, might be considerably increased, by carrying out certain irrigation projects, in the investigation of which, and in selecting sites for storage reservoirs in the less favorably situated taluk of

Berhampore, an Engineer officer might be advantageously employed.

151. While all the district officers who have favored the Committee with their views, appear to be strongly of opinion that a considerable outlay on the maintenance of existing irrigation works, is absolutely needed, and that a large expenditure on new irrigation projects is very desirable, they appear generally to consider that the funds recently placed at their disposal, by the imposition of the Road Cess, will enable them to do all that is needful for the district communications, provided that liberal grants are made, from Imperial funds, for the formation and maintenance of the Imperial lines.

152. If the special recommendations made by these gentlemen, and the general proposals set forth in the preceding paragraphs, should be carried out, something at least will have been done, towards the mitigation of any future scarcity in the Madras Presidency. At the same time, no amount of preparation can altogether prevent the recurrence of such calamities, as famines, in those portions of India, where the storage of water depends entirely on periodical rain.

153. If the failure of rain was to exceed any thing we have hitherto experienced, of course, no irrigation works could possibly save the country from a very serious loss of crop, as the supply to the works themselves, would be deficient, and were the communications ever so perfect, they would be of little

avail, if the crops throughout any very extended tract of country, had entirely failed.

154. It remains then to be considered, what lesson has been learnt from the calamity through which the Madras Presidency has passed, and to decide what steps, should be taken, should the country every be threatened with a recurrence of famine, in spite of all the efforts made to prevent it.

155. In an interesting pamphlet on the subject of the famine of last year, General Sir Arthur Cotton of the Madras Engineers, has laid down, in a few words, the proper procedure of Government, in such a case. This course was recommended to the Home Government, by him, in a letter dated 28th December 1865, and it would have been well for Orissa, it would have been well for Ganjam, and it would have been well for Bellary, if these suggestions had been telegraphed to the Governments of Bengal, and Madras, for immediate adoption. General Sir Arthur Cotton proposes, that whenever there is such a serious failure of crop, as to cause the authorities to anticipate serious consequences, preparation should be made by :—

1st.—Sending officers to plan, estimate, and mark out some great and important works in that part of the country, which should be of permanent benefit.

2nd.—To organise a complete staff of officers, &c., to superintend the execution of the works, distribute the food, and organise the system of relief.

3rd.—To collect tolls and materials on the spot.

4th.—To collect food, provide shelter, &c.

156. It has been already shewn that the accounts from the districts of Ganjam, Bellary, Salem,

North Arcot, and Coimbatore, were very disastrous, early in the year, and there is little doubt that some lives, and much money would have been saved, if preparation had been made in January, in Ganjam, and in April, and May, in other districts, for those measures which it was found absolutely necessary to take in the month of May, in the one case, and in the month of July, in the other cases.

157. The real objection to the adoption of Sir Arthur Cotton's proposals, and the reason, doubtless, why they were not adopted when suggested by him, on former occasions, is, that they are apparently opposed to what has hitherto been the recognised system of political economy, which seems to forbid any direct interference by the State, on such occasions, except in the last extremity, and which is decidedly opposed to any Government action, in the way of collecting food, as tending to disturb the ordinary operation of the grain market. And it is, doubtless, to this politico-economic theory, that is to be ascribed the hesitation on the part of the district officers to recommend, and of the State to undertake those decisive measures, which would have saved, perhaps, a million of lives in Orissa, and would have materially mitigated the distress which has been felt in Ganjam, in Bellary, and in other parts of this Presidency.

158. It is at any rate desirable, that after a crisis, such as that through which a great part of India has recently passed, the correctness of these principles, as applicable to the present condition of India,

should be considered, for it has been shown that they were laid down as infallible, at the beginning of this century, but that they were then as flagrantly departed from, as they were in the recent case of Orissa.

159. Dr. Adam Smith, the great pioneer of true political economy, was the first person who set forth, in a complete form, the principles which have been so generally admitted, and adopted. He states as follows :

“Whoever examines, with attention, the history of the dearths and famines which have afflicted any part of Europe, during either the course of the present, or that of the two preceding centuries, of several of which we have pretty exact accounts, will find, I believe, that a dearth never has arisen from any combination among the inland dealers in corn, nor from any other cause, but a real scarcity, occasioned sometimes perhaps, and in some particular places, by the waste of war, but in by far the greatest number of cases, by the fault of the seasons ; and that a famine has never arisen from any other cause, but the violence of Government attempting by improper means, to remedy the inconveniences of a dearth.”

“In an extensive corn country, between all the different parts of which there is a free commerce and communication, the scarcity occasioned by the most unfavourable seasons can never be so great, as to produce a famine ; and the scantiest crop, if managed with frugality and economy, will maintain through the year, the same number of people that are commonly fed in a more affluent manner, by one of moderate plenty. The seasons most unfavourable to the crop, are those of excessive drought or excessive rain.

But as corn grows equally upon high or low lands, upon grounds that are disposed to be too wet, and upon those that are disposed to be too dry, either the drought or the rain, which is hurtful to one part of the country, is favourable to another; and though both in the wet and the dry season, the crop is a good deal less, than in one more properly tempered, yet, in both, what is lost in one part of the country is in some measure compensated by what is gained in the other. In rice countries, where the crop not only requires a very moist soil, but where in a certain period of its growing, it must be laid under water, the effects of a drought are much more dismal. Even in such countries, however, the drought is perhaps scarce ever so universal, as necessarily to occasion a famine, if the Government would allow a free trade. The drought in Bengal, a few years ago, might probably have occasioned a very great dearth. Some improper regulations, some injudicious restraints imposed by servants of the East India Company, upon the rice trade, contributed, perhaps, to turn that dearth into a famine."

"When the Government, in order to remedy the inconveniences of a dearth, orders all the dealers to sell their corn, at what it supposes a reasonable price, it either hinders them from bringing it to market, which may sometimes produce a famine, even in the beginning of the season, or if they bring it thither, it enables the people, and thereby encourages them to consume it so fast, as must necessarily produce a famine before the end of the season. The unlimited, unrestrained freedom of the corn trade, as it is the only effectual preventive of the miseries of a famine, so it is the best palliative of the inconveniences of a dearth; for the inconveniences of a real scarcity cannot be remedied; they can only be palliated. No trade deserves more the full protection of the law, and no trade requires it so much; because no trade is so much exposed to popular odium."

160. The arguments so powerfully adduced by Dr. Smith in the same part of his work, also go far to show that the inadvertent action of the grain dealer, is the best preventive of real famine, that his own interests are identical with those of the public, and that the prices which his foresight adopts in the market, will, supposing there be free trade in grain in all the neighbouring countries, cause an influx of food to those places most requiring it. At the same time, Dr. Smith admits that there are circumstances, though he does not detail them, which justify an interference with free trade in grain. He observes :—

“ That to hinder the farmer from sending his goods, at all times, to the best market, is evidently to sacrifice the ordinary laws of justice to an idea of public utility, to a sort of reason of State; an act of legislative authority which ought to be exercised only, which can be pardoned only, in cases of the most urgent necessity. The price at which the exportation of corn is prohibited, if it is ever to be prohibited, ought always to be a very high price.”

161. All the greatest English political economists who have written on the subject, during the century which has nearly expired, since the first publication of Doctor Smith's work, appear to have concurred in the views expressed by him regarding the impolicy of any interference with the grain market, in seasons of scarcity, and one of the greatest of the French school of writers on this subject, M. Say, though he does not absolutely condemn the practice of storing grain, on Government account, on

such occasions, evidently has serious doubts of the expediency of such a proceeding, and concurs with Dr. Smith in considering, that in large and populous countries, the best security against famine, is the total absence of all official interference.

162. Mr. John Stuart Mill, when considering this important subject, writes as follows :—

“ In cases of actual scarcity, Governments are often urged, as they were in the Irish emergency of 1847, to take measures of some sort for moderating the price of food. But the price of a thing cannot be raised by deficiency of supply, beyond what is sufficient to make a corresponding reduction of the consumption; and if a Government prevents this reduction from being brought about, by a rise of price, there remains no mode of effecting it, unless by taking possession of all the food, and serving it out in rations, as in a besieged town. In a real scarcity, nothing can afford general relief, except a determination by the richer classes to diminish their own consumption. If they buy and consume their usual quantity of food, and content themselves with giving money, they do no good. The price is forced up, until the poorest competitors have no longer the means of competing, and the privation of food is thrown exclusively upon the indigent, the other classes being only affected pecuniarily. When the supply is deficient, somebody must consume less, and if every rich person is determined not to be that somebody, all they do by subsidizing their poorer competitors, is to force up the price so much the higher, with no effect, but to enrich the corn-dealers, the very reverse of what is desired by those who recommend such measures. All that Governments can do in these emergencies, is to counsel a general moderation in consumption, and to interdict such kinds of it, as are not of primary im-

portance. Direct measures at the cost of the State, to procure food from a distance, are expedient, when from peculiar reasons, the thing is not likely to be done by private speculation. In any other case, they are a great error. Private speculators will not, in such cases, venture to compete with the Government; and though a Government can do more than any one merchant, it cannot do nearly so much as all merchants."

163. It thus appears, that though Mr. Mill is strongly averse to Government interference in such cases, he admits that there may be circumstances which justify an interference with private trade, by Government, to the extent of obtaining supplies of food from a distance. It is true that he limits this sanction, to such cases, as where this is not likely to be done by private speculations, but his dictum in another part of his very valuable work, that the only real limit which can properly be applied to the interference of Government with the affairs of its subjects, is 'expediency,' would seem to justify this course, whenever the State has any reason to fear that the people are likely to be reduced to famine, in consequence of the high price of food. His remarks on the subject of the English poor laws, are additional proof, that in his opinion, it is the positive duty of Government to take such measures as will hold out to its subjects the certainty of subsistence.

164. It will, however, be clearly perceived from the foregoing extracts, that all the greatest political economists of the century are of opinion, that any State interference with the natural price of grain is, as a

rule, to be deprecated. The effect of these opinions has been entirely to alter the policy of Government in India, on the occurrence of famines, for, while in probably nearly every scarcity which took place in the last century, the Government, whether Native, or British, fixed the price of grain by a tariff, (as was described in a former part of this paper to have been done in Bengal, in 1782, with marked success) no such action has ever been taken in the present century, and as early as 1806, the Government of this Presidency issued a general order to its local officers, laying down rules framed on the most rigid principles of political economy, and the effect of the change cannot be said to have been altogether satisfactory, though a return to a Government price for provisions could never be advocated. •

165. It is much to be regretted, that not one of the great masters of economic science have deliberately prescribed the course which a Government ought to follow, when its subjects are positively dying in large numbers from starvation. The principles advocated are self-apparent to every one, up to a certain point, and the advantages derived from those high prices which restrict consumption in a year of scarcity, must be manifest to all, but, if these prices are pushed beyond this, and not only check consumption, but stop it altogether, in the case of certain classes, it surely would never be advocated that this state of things was for the *general* good. Possibly, the rigid political economist might hold, that it was

for the general good, that prices should so rise as to create a famine and mortality, in order that the food supply might be sufficient for the reduced population, but such views could never be adopted by a Christian Government, and the consideration still remains, what should be the action of Government when prices rise to such high rates, as to cause starvation among the poorest classes of the people. The question is undoubtedly beset with difficulty, but the experience of last year in Orissa, and the experiences of former famines, as detailed in a previous part of this paper, certainly tend to the conclusion that a rigid and invariable adherence to the received rules of the economists, have not had the desired effect in preventing an *Indian* dearth from becoming a famine. It may further be demonstrated, that had they been strictly adhered to on such occasions of famine as have occurred, they would, in almost every case, have occasioned a still greater loss of life than actually took place.

166. The theory is, that the high prices produced by a scarcity, in any locality, must cause supplies of food to be sent there in the natural course of trade, and that any interference of Government, either in the way of prohibiting exports, or offering a bounty on imports, is unnecessary, and that to import grain on Government account, would be mischievous, as being likely to drive merchants out of the trade. From the accounts of the previous famines which have taken place in Madras, there can, however, be little doubt, that the pressure was greatest on those

occasions on which the Government endeavoured to adhere most closely to the received rules of economic science, for, though much distress was experienced in 1782, and 1806, it does not appear to have been so severe as that felt in 1824, and 1833. This is by no means positive evidence, either in favor, or against the correctness of those rules. Nevertheless, it is at any rate worthy of remark, that on each occasion on which the Madras Revenue Board, and the Madras Government, have laid down the infallibility of these rules, at the commencement of a scarcity, they have subsequently, as the pressure of the distress increased, found it impossible entirely to rely upon them, in fact they have proved them to be in themselves ineffectual, and they have either disregarded them, or have, at any rate, endeavoured to aid their action. Thus, in 1807, though the Government at first expressed the strongest disinclination to any interference with the grain market, they afterwards found it necessary to offer a high fixed price for all grain imported, and eventually ordered the sale of grain, on Government account, at low rates. Again in 1824, and 1833, they deemed it advisable as the pressure of the famine advanced, to offer bounties on grain imported. It is clear, therefore, that on these occasions, the action of these so-called rules of political economy, were found to be ineffectual for the purpose intended. In other words, though prices were enormously high, it was found that the natural course of trade did not supply the locality suffering from scarcity, with sufficient expedition. A reference to the price list given

in para. 110 of this paper, will also show pretty clearly, that the supposed laws of supply and demand did not operate in the Bellary, Cuddapah, and Kurnool Districts when the late scarcity was at its height, for it is impossible to suppose that the carriage of grain from the two latter places, to Bellary, distances of 150 miles and 100 miles, respectively, would, under any circumstances, have cost nearly 1*d.* per lb. which was about the average difference of price. The last notable instance of the failure of these so-called principles is the famine in Orissa, where private trade altogether failed to take advantage of the high prices ruling, and the loss of thousands of lives was the result of a blind reliance on the action of these supposed infallible laws.

167. The fact is, however, that these laws are quite as infallible as they are considered to be, by those who have enunciated and repeated them, but, in India, it has been overlooked, that a certain set of circumstances, has always been pre-supposed. They are based upon the assumption, that the merchants of any place, in which people are suffering from a scarcity, would be sufficiently alive to their own interests to import large supplies of food, and this assumption would, probably; be correct, so far as most European countries are concerned, but it involves the necessity of the merchants being largely supplied with capital, and being prepared to take rapid and decided action upon the state of the markets. Now it is at least very questionable, whether the grain

merchants of inland districts, in India, fulfil either of these conditions. They are usually people of very small means, and they are by custom so wedded to a particular course of action, that they would be very slow to extend their basis of operations, and this is the only explanation that can be given of the apparent anomalies which occur, during every period of famine, prices very frequently varying by 100 per cent, in localities within a few miles of each other.

168. It must also be remembered that the import trade in grain, has very frequently to be created, that is to say, the locality suffering from famine has probably, always, theretofore furnished its own food supply, and at the commencement of the pressure, there are no persons actually engaged in the trade upon which the lives of millions may shortly become dependent. It has been shewn in the first part of this paper, how, under somewhat similar circumstances, in 1846, the late Sir Robert Peel, one of the greatest statesmen that have ever guided the councils of the State, did not hesitate to import Indian corn, into Ireland, upon Government account, and how the present Lord Russell, his successor in office, did not scruple, in the following year, to establish depôts for the sale of food, in those quarters of the country, which were far removed from the sources of supply.

169. The Hindoo merchant is slow of action, even when his own interests are deeply concerned, and he is loath to make investments in a business which is

new to him, yet, if the so-called politico-economic rules are to be rigidly adhered to, unless he sees the advantage of employing his capital in a new import trade, and unless he takes prompt and immediate action in doing so, thousands of lives may be sacrificed in a few months. It is well known, that during the Guntoor famine of 1833, grain was comparatively plentiful in several of the Madras districts, yet, the natural course of trade, even aided by the grant of bounties on importation, did not supply the Guntoor district with sufficient food, to prevent the destruction of one third of the inhabitants, and, upon the whole, it must at least now be acknowledged, that it is not safe, on all occasions, to trust to the natural laws of supply and demand, and to the self-interest of those employed in mercantile business, when a large district is visited by famine. This is no new heresy, if heresy it be, so far as the Madras Presidency is concerned, for upwards of thirty years ago, a distinguished officer of the Madras Civil Service,* after a residence in India upwards of 20 years, when discussing the question in an article in the Madras Journal of Literature and Science, for 1839-40, writes as follows :—

“ It is not enough for the Government to offer the people work, and pay them for their labour when the crisis of famine has arrived—trusting to the native traders’ unassisted energies to provide the requisite supplies to meet the urgent de-

* Mr. John Fryer Thomas, who entered the Madras Civil Service in 1815, and after holding numerous appointments in the Provinces, and at the Presidency, became Chief Secretary to Government in 1843, and Member of Council in 1850.

mand for food—but they must, by a prudent foresight, and by their own energy, bring the abundance and stores of distant and foreign markets, within the timely reach of the retail trade, or the pressure of famine will remain in full force, till the population is brought down to the level of the numbers which the native trader can supply.

“ If these views are borne out by experience, they lead us to an inference wholly opposed to that assumed in the Government orders ; and in lieu of concurring in the opinion,—that “ if the Government were to throw a quantity of grain into places, which would not receive it in the ordinary course of mercantile speculation, the only effect of this measure, would be to convert a scarcity into a famine,” I should almost be disposed to assert the reverse, and to maintain,—that at present in South India, whilst its grain trade, and trade in general, are at so low an ebb, the timely and judicious interference of Government, instead of aggravating, is the only mode in general, by which scarcity can now be greatly mitigated, and famine prevented. And that an importation of grain, through the means of Government capital, and possibly of Government agency, *from foreign or distant markets*, where there is abundance, into districts suffering from dearth, may be under the existing circumstances of the country, a measure of sound policy ; and the best, if not the only practical method, by which the distress caused by the peculiar character of tropical droughts can be greatly alleviated.

“ It is no argument against an interference of this nature, to cite to us, as the orders of Government do, the fact, that native rulers in former times, participating in the ignorance, and the prejudices of the people, have converted scarcities into famines, by the barbarous policy of compulsory sales, or other arbitrary interference with the capital, or

with individuals in the trade. There can be no question now, as to the proper course to be pursued on this head; for Dr. Smith has placed beyond dispute the important principle, that the interest of the inland dealer, and the public, is the same, and the more free he remains, the better.

“ No interference with this branch of the trade is for a moment advocated; for if adequately supplied, the home-dealers, it is certain, are fully equal to the due distribution of all the grain brought into a district, in a year of famine, inasmuch as they distribute the larger supplies of abundant years. But it is in the importation—the foreign or wholesale trade, that we would propose the interposition of Government. Not by any restriction on the wholesale merchant, or the importer, but by offering to him the assistance of Government; and by endeavouring to infuse into the import and wholesale trade a spirit of adventure and activity, adequate to meet the urgent and large demand of famine. And should this, after full trial, fail to place the necessary supplies in due season, at the doors of the retail dealers—then only, by leaving the wholesale merchant to himself, and making use of a Government agency for introducing for sale into famine districts only, timely supplies from distant and foreign markets, at the risk of Government; whilst the home or the local trade, should be left altogether to take its own course, and purchase large or small supplies as it might see fit.”

170. Since the foregoing paragraphs of this paper were written, the views expressed have been confirmed by the general opinions given in the London journals of the policy adopted by the Bengal Government, in Orissa, during last year. The ‘ Saturday Review’ remarks, that there is a vast difference between acting in default of laws of political econo-

my, and acting in contravention of them, and that when it was found that from natural or artificial causes, the demand for food was wholly unanswered, the Government was not only justified, but bound to provide for the exceptional necessity.

171. The discussion which has taken place on this somewhat intricate question, will, it is hoped, put an end to that blind reliance, on every occasion, and under all circumstances, on a set of rules which, under certain circumstances, may be very advantageously followed, but which are not invariable in their application. At the same time, hasty action on the part of Government when a scarcity of food is impending, is, on all accounts to be deprecated, and were any attempt to be made to equalize prices, by the establishment of Government grain agencies in ordinary times, a fatal blow would be given to the growth of that mercantile enterprise which it is the duty of all Governments to foster, and upon which, when properly developed, the greatest reliance can be placed for the prevention of scarcity in any locality.

172. It would seem from a careful and impartial consideration of the subject, aided by the experiences gained during previous famines, and more especially during the recent terrible calamity with which the province of Orissa has been afflicted, that it is the duty of an Indian Government not to lay down fixed principles for its guidance, regardless of the varying circumstances of different localities, but

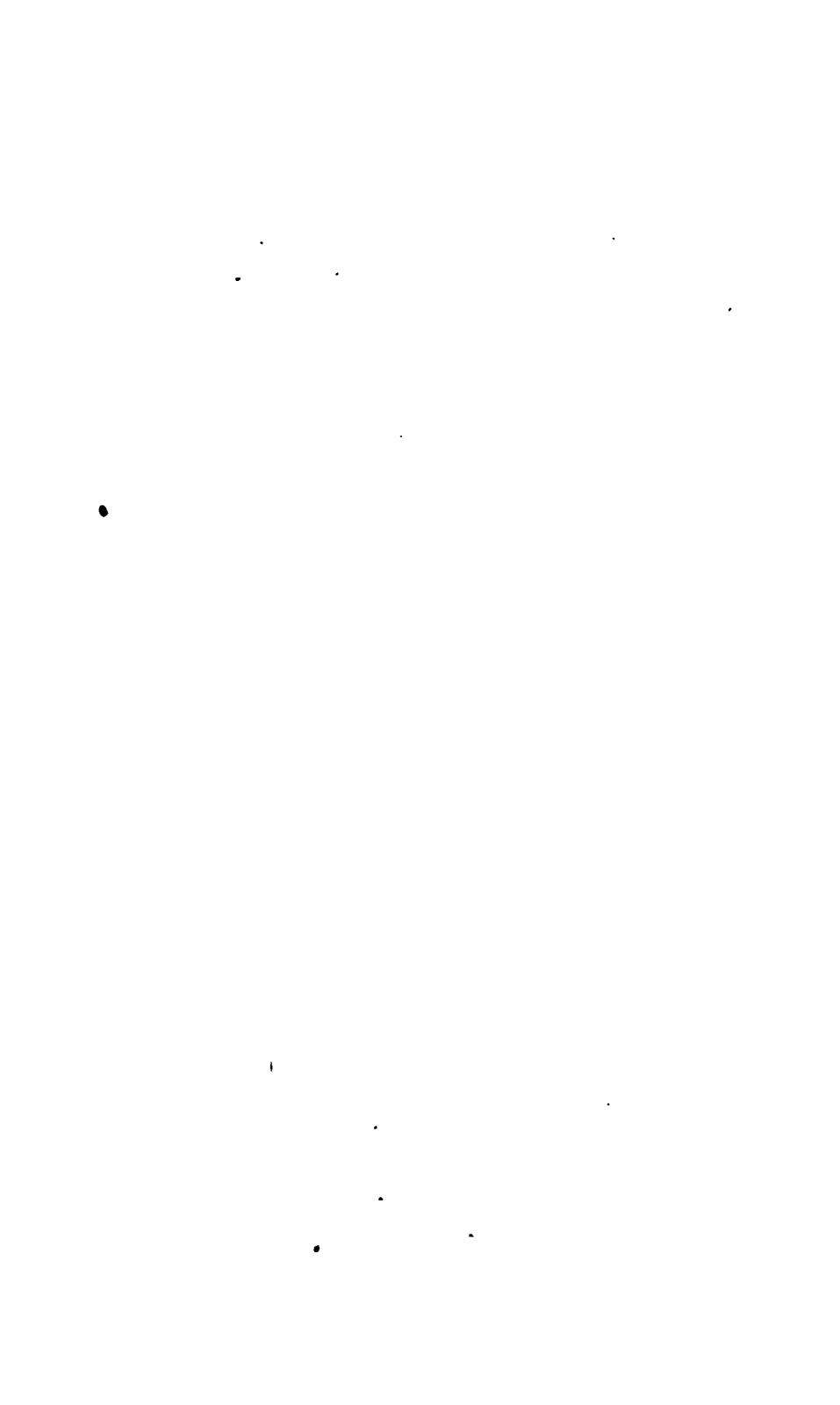
to keep itself thoroughly acquainted with the food supply, and the course of trade, in every portion of the dominions under its charge, to be ever watchful of any variation of season which may indicate the approach of drought, and to be prepared under certain circumstances, and should necessity arise, to import food for the preservation of the lives of its people, on Government account, or even to establish depôts for the sale of food in certain localities.

173. It is also questionable, whether the heretofore received system of providing labor for the able-bodied with *money wages, at rates fixed with reference to existing prices*, and food for those unable to labor, *purchased in the local market*, as the first measure of relief, whenever a district is oppressed with famine, without any regard to the position of the district, as to food supply and import trade in provisions, is correct. Such a course must tend to increase the scarcity of food, and thus must augment the distress it is intended to alleviate. Those who are provided with food at Government expense, or with money to purchase food in the same manner, will not, in any way, reduce their consumption, and the proceedings of Government must thus, to a certain extent, have the effect of counteracting the healthy action of high prices in times of scarcity. At the same time, these measures would cease to be objectionable in a coast district, which naturally drew its food supply from elsewhere, and in which a regular

food import trade was in existence, or in any district, if the Relief Depôts were provided with food imported by the State from a distance, and if the wages of those employed on relief works were paid in grain, obtained in the same manner. The action of the politico-economic rules as to consumption, would then be left unfettered, that is to say, all those of the people who could do so, without being reduced to starvation, would reduce their consumption of provisions, and the consumption of the lowest classes would cease to fall upon the local market, in the same manner as if they had perished of famine.

174. Probably, therefore, when a scarcity is apprehended in any particular locality, the first step to be taken by the State should be to provide labor on public works, with wages paid in grain, or money, according to the locality and state of trade in the district, and in order to insure rapid action, it would be well that during prosperous times, a large number of works not requiring skilled labor, should be planned and estimated for, in every village, the list and estimates being lodged with the Tahsildar of the taluk. Should matters become more serious, Relief Depôts, supplied with grain from a distance, should be opened for those unable to labor, and eventually, should it be found that prices were rising so much beyond those ruling in neighbouring countries, as to shew that the grain-merchants were not importing from without, then steps should be taken by the

Government to create such a trade, either by importing on Government account, or by offering a bounty on imports, or making advances to merchants, or any similar measure which would have the effect of throwing a supply of grain into the distressed locality.





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