

## Rev. Bishop Caldwell.

I do not think it desirable that Government should undertake the relief of so-called gosha women. As a rule I do not believe in the existence of gosha women in this part of India. Where they exist and suffer real distress their relief may safely be left to the help of friends. If they are really people of that class, they belong to influential families and can make their voices heard, and when they do so private help will not fail to reach them. This is a department of charity in which Government will find itself utterly unable to provide against abuse.

## Rev. Newport.

I consider the question of gratuitous relief to gosha women a very difficult one. I believe that, in proportion to the amount disbursed, a larger amount of fraud has occurred in this form of relief than in any other. The number and condition of these women in any given house can be ascertained solely from the parties most interested in deceiving the inquirer. No one can test, corroborate, or disprove any statement made by the head of such an establishment. The employment of females as investigators would be a stringent (but not a complete) check on falsification and duplicate personification, but I am not aware that in any part of the famine area in this Presidency females have been employed to visit gosha women with a view to relieving them either from Government or from Mansion House Funds. In any systematized relief in future females should be employed in this particular branch of the work. Even this, however, would barely prevent the production of the same women in half a dozen different houses as candidates for relief. Identification and detection would be impossible in nine cases out of ten.

Still the question recurs, *what* women are to be employed in this way? Gosha women themselves and a number of other classes are *ipso facto* disqualified. Practically the choice would be limited to about three classes—Europeans, Eurasians, high-caste Christian Natives. The first are too few in number, and not generally sufficiently acquainted with the vernacular, and moreover not many of the few would be *willing* to do the work. High-caste Christian Natives are not very numerous either. It appears therefore that, while all classes should be invited and induced to come forward to devote themselves to this work, the Eurasians will have to be most relied on. All persons engaged in the work should be temporarily recognised as Government servants and have the support of Government officers whenever necessary.

As the natives of India admit the claim of poor relations to support, it is expedient on various grounds to encourage and develop this national trait of character. If we are satisfied that any person is *able* to support those who are generally admitted as lawfully dependent on him, we ought to insist on his doing so. In so doing we commit no injustice from his point of view. We utilise wisely the peculiarities of the native social economy, strengthen the ties between the different members and connections of the family, preserve the poorer dependents from the demoralising influences of public pauperism, and at the same time narrow the area of Government relief. I would therefore recommend that the head of the family be made to understand that he is expected to support his dependents as usual, and that, if he becomes unable to do so, he must apply to Government for help, but must not cast off his dependents. Government should then aid him, and hold him responsible for the welfare of those under him. The utilisation of these semi-feudal agencies will be better than ignoring or

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destroying them. It will not only be more in harmony with the sympathies of the people, but more convenient and economical for the Government.

Major Baynes.

(a.) It is impossible for any male official to verify information about these women; the only method is to obtain muchalikahs from the leading members of the Mahomedan community. I should of course, if I could, compel a person to support his relatives who had legal claims upon him, if he were able so to do; but the greater number of men desert their families, and so it is impossible to make them support them except at the risk of their starvation. To all gosha women I should give relief in money; it is the simplest and most economical, the payment should be made once a week, and should be sufficient to provide a poor-house ration of the lower scale; when prices fell to normal rates and their relatives returned, the continuance of the dole would of course be unnecessary.

(b.) Such have sought relief, but where they were known to be relatives of wealthy persons relief was refused when there was no doubt about the result of the refusal.

Gratuitous relief of gosha females.

Dependent persons in easy circumstances seeking relief.

Mr. Hurry Row.

No force of any sort other than that mentioned in 25 is necessary. To attempt to do more would give power in the hands of petty officers to tyrannize.

QUESTION 31.—Another class consists of the sick, infirm, cripples and bed-ridden folk in towns or villages, who cannot leave their homes. How would you organise a system for relieving them? How inquire into and ascertain their cases? How convey relief to them when they are put on the registers, and what relief should it be? When should relief of this kind be closed?

Sir W. R. Robinson.

There are persons in every town and in almost every village to whom gratuitous relief must be ministered on the spot from causes beyond their own or our control. But not only so; according to my judgment no person needing or likely to need gratuitous relief—and this should be largely the case as regards destitute children, and perhaps women from the first—should be allowed to receive it, except under casual circumstances (absence in hospital, relief to wanderers while still afield, &c.) for which provision can be made out of the town or village where he is known and his circumstances best understood, and amongst a more sympathising and interested class of persons than he is likely to meet elsewhere.

It is an admirable law (though it has perhaps other motives) which in Great Britain remands every such person to his parish; and the practical application of this principle of relief—so pre-eminently in keeping with and suited to the communal and parochial (to use a conventional term) conditions of Indian polity and society—to the new state of things—viz., dealing with famine as a poor law obligation on Government, is I believe indispensable. I do not myself hesitate to attribute much of the disaster—both in administration and mortuary results—which has overtaken us, to unreadiness in this respect and to our having failed to rely

Sir W. R. Robinson—continued.

adequately and encouragingly on the better classes of rural society in the villages for the guidance and ministration of relief. The village is the very pivot of South Indian administration. Our Revenue, Magisterial, and Police systems turn on the village system; and in fact there is not a successful branch of our administration of which it is not the fulcrum and support. It may therefore be safely predicated, as results have told us, that we cannot administer what is practically a sudden accession of poor law obligation of the most difficult and intricate character, outside and without the most material aid of the village system and of the people's conditions and sympathies. I would make the village system the very pivot of famine relief administration, more especially as respects gratuitous relief, and rely with well-grounded assurance on a worthy people.

As respects organization, I would ask what has been done in England and in every civilized country as respects ministration of the relief of the poor in or about their homes. The same may be done here—but more effectively, because the local social bonds are closer and less disturbed throughout India. I should say call out your proper village or local guardians, associate the wealthy and respectable inhabitants of villages or groups of villages or unions with the village and taluk establishments and you have an unpaid agency of inquisition and administration of the most valuable character and of increasing useful and thrifty efficiency. I would couple up the rich and poor in their respective positions and duties with each other, and transfer to the proper shoulders those responsibilities as respects their poor to their countrymen which belongs to the richer classes more directly than to the Government. The rich would soon find that they cannot cast off their dependants on the casual charity of the State or of the public; and the poor will have some body of respectable and responsible persons on the spot to look to. We might thus possibly repair on a future occasion the wrong that a too exclusively bureaucratic administration of the late famine has caused to the country and its people. I scarcely know how the last two queries can be dealt with by the Commission. Circumstances must guide both; and if we secure the agency the less we tie up their judgment and hands the better.

The official bureau might and should confine itself in the main to close scrutiny of the information and acts of the village relief agency and to the thrifty supply of funds. This scrutiny, &c., present no difficulties to the mind of any one who has been in the habit of close observance of village life and who has conducted his Jamabandi year after year or held his investigation into a police case under the protection of village tree. But the thing has to be pre-arranged so as to be ready to be set in motion the moment famine threatens; for once the poor begin to wander, the hold is lost or seriously impaired, and it becomes difficult to allay the confusion and costly to remand masses to their villages or parishes.

Mr. Longley.

A system somewhat as follows must be organized for such relief:—One or two or more superior officers (Europeans) to be appointed for each taluk according to its size; whose duty should be to supervise all relief. There should be under them a staff of relief inspectors so arranged that each inspector should be able to inspect each village in his range *at least once a week*, and under them should be placed the local town or village authority in immediate charge of the relief in each town or village.

**Mr. Longley**—continued.

No form of relief for a district is, in my opinion, complete without the money dole in villages for the description of persons mentioned in the question, also “goshas” who have no one to support them (*vide* paragraph 30) and “caste persons.” I am writing more fully on the money dole in connection with Question 38.

The inspectors should inquire into and ascertain the cases of all in need of such relief by moving about from village to village and entering all to be relieved in a register to be kept in each town or village. This register to be checked by the European Relief Officer at his fortnightly visit (*vide* Question 38).

Relief to such persons should be in the form of a money dole to be distributed weekly or bi-weekly, according to circumstances, money for the purpose being procured on indent from the nearest local treasury.

Relief of this kind should close when prices have fallen considerably, distress is rapidly declining, and the general state of the country improved.

**Mr. Crole.**

The present rule regarding sick, bed-ridden, and all other paupers who cannot by any possibility be made fit for even light labor is that they are to be relieved at their own homes. I have always doubted the expediency, and even the humanity, of this arrangement. To begin with, it is a simple impossibility to provide a trustworthy inspecting staff to supervise village relief efficiently, and the consequence is that the fraud and waste, which have accompanied its administration, condemn this mode of relief, although it may be admitted that, theoretically, with an available staff as strong as it is weak, and with a population as honest as it is unfortunately corrupt, it would contain the elements of a perfect though utopian system. In the next place, these persons, from their circumstances, are separated from any relations they may possess. The latter, of course, are generally on works or in camps. The poor wretches therefore are, perforce, left very much to the tender mercies of the village officers, and there has been to my mind nothing more disappointing about this famine than the callousness to suffering which it has produced, and the cold-blooded way in which a native official, of the lower sort especially, will leave his neighbour to die either from neglect or while he battens on his miserable dole. I would remove all such persons from their homes where they are really uncared for to the relief-camp or relief camp hospital, in which they would be certain, at all events, of obtaining all for which Government pays.

**Mr. J. G. Horsfall.**

The village-dole system is generally considered the only effectual method of relieving such cases. Each taluk should be divided into sections, say six or more, and placed under the charge of Village Inspectors, whose duty it is to be constantly on the move visiting their villages, entering on the village registers such as require relief and striking off such as are able to obtain their own livelihood. The Inspectors must exercise a strict supervision over the paying officers, the village Munsif and Curnam, check their daily returns and see that they pay the dole fairly and honestly. The Inspectors will work in conjunction with the Revenue Officers and three or four of them with their division and being directly under the Tahsildar or Deputy Tahsildar of the taluk, besides a separate famine officer for one or more taluks.

**Mr. J. G. Horsfall**—continued.

The village officers must be responsible that all the deserving persons are placed before the village Inspectors and issue the dole, keeping daily accounts which are checked by the Inspectors and superior officers. This system is reported to have worked well and cheaply. It is essential that the Inspectors should be selected for energy, intelligence, and honesty; and if men of this stamp can be obtained, the village-dole system is as perfect as any that can be devised. For towns with 5,000 inhabitants or more local committees should be fixed to supply the information otherwise furnished by the village officials and for the better distribution of money dole. The village dole may be closed gradually as the circumstances of the recipients and of the season improve. Generally speaking a fair percentage are ordinarily maintained by the charity of their fellow-villagers, and when the numbers receiving dole become very much decreased they may very safely be left to charity. The village officers would still be responsible for bringing them to notice again should it be found that private charity did not suffice to maintain them.

**Mr. Price.**

I believe the only way to meet cases of the kind mentioned to be to form each taluk first into small circles of, say, five or six villages at the outside, and to hold a house-to-house inspection by special agency. If reports from village officials are acted upon, the grossest frauds will occur, and in famine times every one who thinks that he has a chance of getting anything out of Government is prepared with a doleful story. I should begin, as I have said, with small circles and open a register for each village, to be filled in by the inferior inspecting officers, showing the village, name, sex, caste, and age of the person entered, the cause which renders it necessary to put him or her on relief, the date of entry, a column for how disposed of, *i.e.*, when discharged, or died, and remarks. These registers should be given to the village officers who should receive funds from which to make payments. Each set of small circles should be grouped into larger ones under a subordinate inspecting officer who should go round, personally inspect the persons entered, and add or strike off as may appear necessary, examine and check the accounts, make inquiries as to payments to paupers, and superintend some of these. The larger circles should be formed into divisions of half or whole taluks, as may appear requisite, and placed under an European Inspecting Officer whose duties over the whole of his circle should be the same as those of his subordinate Inspectors. This would provide sufficiently, I think, for the discovery of those in want of assistance and unable to help themselves. I would, through the lowest class of Inspectors, pay to the persons on village relief a money dole and subject this to the constant supervision of the Circle and Divisional Inspecting Officers. There are so many incompetent and knavish village officers that I would, had I to deal with another famine, not pay, as we did, through them, but make them only assist the minor circle Inspectors. These latter might very well be chosen from the best of the village officers. I would make the inspectors keep an account of payments to each individual, and these might be made two or three times a week. I hardly think daily payments necessary. The amount of the dole given should, I think, correspond to the value of the poor-house ration. This, of course, supposes that only those unable to support themselves, and having no one capable of maintaining them, are admitted to relief. The question of how to deal with the sick is a difficult one, for giving

**Mr. Price**—continued.

them all medical aid would involve very heavy outlay; and I have more than once found that when I sent a medical officer to any place where sickness was very rife, the people refused to have anything to say to him or his medicines. The only thing that I can see to be done would be to give the sick relief in money and leave nature to herself. I would allow paupers unable to come to the place of distribution to receive their dole from the Inspector in person or, subject to frequent inspection and inquiry, to send some one for it. I would close village relief entirely when the condition of the country and people approached its normal state, compelling such of those then receiving relief, and who had no means of support, to go into a poor-house, which should not be closed until the famine was completely over.

**Mr. McC. Webster.**

Many such people have been sent to the poor-houses, and I do not see why in future seasons of distress they should not be sent there at the first. Only the more respectable classes who would lose caste by going to the poor-houses should be relieved by money dole in the villages. The money dole should be paid daily by the village Monegar (headman). If there were arrangements for the separation of castes in the poor-houses, I think that all destitute infirm people in the villages should be compelled to go to the poor-house, except parda-nashin women who should be relieved by a money dole; but if no such arrangements are made, then I would give money-dole relief to the caste people, and compel all infirm people of the lower class to go to the poor-house.

**Mr. Grose.**

Infirm and bed-ridden people should be sent compulsorily to relief-camp. There only can they get medical supervision and the certainty that they will not be forgotten and left to die, or deprived of the doles that may be allowed them by the peculation of the minor officials who must be entrusted with the payment of them.

**Mr. Knox.**

Excluding gosha females the only persons who should be relieved in villages are people who from age, chronic sickness, infirmity, physical defect, or any other cause are permanently incapable of earning their livelihood by work, and together with them should be relieved young children who cannot take care of themselves and who are dependent on the above persons. Of course, if these people had relations able and willing to support them, there would be no need of Government help; but as in the case of gosha women they might have relations who were too poor to help, or who, though able to give help, refused it and were beyond the jurisdiction of the Courts. Under these circumstances Government would be obliged to give help equally as if there were no relatives.

In times of famine European agency should be employed as much as possible; not European loafers or rolling stones on the look-out for something, but men of some official standing of a respectable position in society. These officers should be used in the inspection of villages and should be placed under the orders of the Divisional Officer. The latter would have village relief under his control, and he should be left free to make what arrangements he thought best for ascertaining the fitness of any person for this kind of relief. Without his orders no one should be put upon the register, and, being responsible for the results, he would take care either that he himself saw the paupers or that they were seen and

Mr. Knox—continued.

reported to be proper objects for relief by one of his European assistants. In an ordinary taluk it would probably be sufficient to have two assistants to help the Divisional Officer in carrying out this and other duties connected with village inspection.

The first thing to be done would be to have a register prepared for each taluk of all people to whom village relief was to be given; this would necessitate that all the villages should be visited by the Divisional Officer or one of his assistants and the people examined. This would be a work which need only be done once; there might be a few persons omitted, but the exceptional cases could easily be taken up afterwards. By a regular scheme of inspection being made and carefully carried out there would be no danger of the class of people I am now speaking of being neglected in any particular tract. In some places where villages were near together it would not be necessary always to visit every village; the people might be brought to be inspected, and the whole work might easily be completed in a fortnight.

As to the form of relief, I think it should consist of a periodical money dole to be given personally by the European Inspecting Officer. Hitherto the dole has been a daily one given either in money or grain by the reddy. I do not think this arrangement is a good one. The reddies cannot be depended upon even if they are honest to discharge this duty with the regularity that is necessary, and hence ensues much distress; and, if they are dishonest, fraud is easy. Of this there were numerous instances in the late famine. Suppose a village inspector had half a taluk or about fifty villages to look after, I think he could with a little care and system arrange to visit every village once in two months and could pay the periodical dole at that visit. The dole, which of course would have to be carefully calculated so as not to give more than sufficient, need not be given oftener than once in two months. If the people knew they could get nothing else till the next visit, they could doubtless be careful of their money; probably once a month would be a better period, but for this more inspection would be required.

No payments should be made unless the pauper appeared before the Inspector, and all lapses among paupers should be reported by the reddy to the Inspector and the Divisional Officer. It would be best to leave to each Collector of a district and his Divisional Officer such details as prescribing forms of diaries, accounts, reports, and such like, and settling the exact manner of inspection. What might suit in one district might not work well in another.

This kind of relief would have to continue as long as famine works continued in the case of those people who had relations; when there was no further need of relief works, it might be assumed that the people would, as in ordinary times, undertake the support of those dependent on them. In the case of those who had no relatives or whose relatives had died in the famine it would be necessary often to continue the relief somewhat longer, for they would have to depend on charity alone (unless Government intended to introduce a regular poor-house system), and it is reasonable to suppose that it would take some little time after a famine before the ordinary springs of private charity commenced to flow. No hard-and-fast rule on this point could be laid down.

Mr. Austin.

This question brings me to the subject of Vellore relief. I have been supervising this form of relief more or less since its introduction. My opinion is that it has been a very great failure. The chief result of the system has been to hopelessly demoralize our village officials in the first place and the people generally in the second. The number of village officers who have been dismissed and suspended for offences connected with village relief is enormous. In some instances the whole of the village officers' relatives were put *en masse* on relief, in other cases only a few of their near relatives; complaints by the paupers of non-payment of relief were numberless. The usual trick was to pay for several days at once and then deduct a large percentage of the pay as a perquisite. In other cases they were always paid correctly enough, but were obliged to purchase their food from a bazaar kept by some relatives of the Monigar, who thus plundered them by selling grain at prices far beyond their ordinary rate. If they grumbled they were simply struck off relief, and when an officer inspected the village he was told that their names had been removed as some relatives had come forward to support them, or something of the kind. Meanwhile the unfortunate paupers had probably died from starvation or wandered away from the villages in hopes of getting a subsistence by begging. It was found to be almost useless to attempt to hold magisterial inquiries into such cases. Long before the case could be heard the paupers had been settled by the village officers, and when they appeared in the witness-box affected to be unable to remember what they had received or when they received it.

Had I to go through another famine I should strongly advocate the giving of no village relief whatever, and in its stead would organize relief camps on improved principles and in far greater number. A close house-to-house inspection would be necessary in every village to see that the sick and helpless were not left to die of starvation, but this would be an easy matter compared with the supervision of village relief. The Monigars would be held criminally responsible for any death that occurred through their negligence, and as he would have nothing to gain by keeping such paupers in his village he might be safely trusted in most cases to send them to the nearest camp.

By this change of system I believe both Government and the unfortunate pauper would greatly benefit. It is notorious that the money dole is utterly insufficient, and partly from this cause, viz., that the rate is fixed with reference to the price of grain in the cusba town, while the value of grain varies greatly in the towns and the villages.

Mr. Martin.

I think nothing can be devised better than the money-dole system which was instituted by Government, assuming that an establishment at the rate of one trustworthy European officer or Native public servant not lower in rank than a Taluk Sheristadar can be spared for every fifteen villages. With such a charge, an average officer could himself make the distribution twice a week, and could render it impossible either that persons unfit for relief should be on the rolls, or that there should be any peculation of part of the dole. The cost of such an establishment would be very large, but the diminution of expenditure on dole would far more than compensate for it.

Such relief should close so soon as a sufficient crop has been reaped to make it certain that the householders in the village have all a fair supply of grain in their houses, for they will then contribute to their long-standing dependants.

Mr. Fawcett.

The classes of people mentioned in the question were relieved in their villages according to the principles laid down by Government for village relief. It is not necessary to go into that system here. On the whole I think it worked well since proper supervision was established. Close supervision is necessary, else reddiees have a tendency to pay themselves instead of the persons to be relieved.

Mr. P. Soobien.

The sick, infirm, cripples, and bed-ridden folk in towns or villages who cannot leave their homes should be relieved in their villages. The inspecting officers should find out such cases and make inquiries about them. If on inquiry they are found to be deserving cases they should be taken on the list and relieved in the villages or at places which are at convenient distance from them. If convenient, a number of villages may be formed into a group and a village occupying a central position selected as the place of payment. The village officers may be constituted as the dispensers of this kind of relief, and it will be the duty of the inspecting officers to examine these cases from time to time, to reject any unworthy cases, and to bring on the list any additional deserving ones that may come to their notice. The relief should be in the form of weekly or bi-weekly payment of money necessary for their subsistence. When the prospects of season improve, and when the persons on whom the class of persons indicated in this query depended return home and resume their ordinary avocations and are able to support them, then this form of relief should be closed.

Dr. Gray.

European gentlemen in Government employ should be deputed to this task. They should be called Superior Inspecting Officers. They should be in charge of a certain number of villages, which they should visit at least twice in a month. This officer should inquire from the reddy and others regarding applicants. When found deserving they are to be put on the register. The relief officer should himself see that the authorised money or grain is given into the hands of the poor. Half a seer (84 tolas), *i.e.*, 1 lb. of grain and a quarter of an anna will be sufficient; and this should be paid in quantities to last for one or two weeks. If grain is not issued the equivalent value of grain should be given. This system was adopted in the Kurnool District, and I have seen it work well.

Mr. Oldham.

*The house-ridden, cripple, and decrepit class.*—I would only give relief to those who have homes—houses—to which they are confined, and would collect the rest in relief hospitals. I would then relieve through the circle system making the village officers the dispensers of relief which should be in dry grain. Dry grain is to be recommended instead of money for a good many reasons. One of the most obvious is that, though frauds occur in connection with it, still a village officer who will not scruple to pocket a pice out of a single dole, does not care about pocketing a handful of grain out of a single dole; while if the dole be given weekly or monthly the recipients can much more easily measure their grain, which does not vary in quantity, and complain at short measure, than calculate their varying rate of payment in pice or pics and complain about them. With reference to this and the last paragraph, *vide* my answer to paragraph 22 on the subject of spinning.

I have three times had experience of this sort of relief (home relief), and never found the slightest difficulty in closing it. As I

**Mr. Oldham**—continued.

have said, the recipients themselves recognise the time when it should cease. I have heard objections raised to it by very high authority on the ground that it could not be closed, that it pauperizes the recipients and so on, and all such objections have struck me as being in practice entirely futile.

**Mr. Weekes.**

I should require the village officers, munsifs, Jet ryots or putwarreers to feed the house, bed, or village ridden class. In the height of a famine they should be fed with cooked food twice daily. At the end of a famine or in scarcity only they might have a money-dole given them daily, but the money dole doubles the difficulty of inspection and the danger of speculation. The village officials are fonder of money than of cooked food, and it only takes two or three minutes to distribute the money, while it takes hours to prepare, cook, and distribute the cooked food, so that an opportunity of paying when no inspector is by can nearly always be seized, whereas the danger of inspection of cooked food continues for hours. There are many other good reasons for preferring cooked food to money. The class are by the hypothesis almost or quite unable to cook their own food; many of them are ill; many are children. Grain in the height of famine cannot easily be bought, often not at all, or, if bought, only at exorbitant rates when it is not the market-day. The village officers can always produce good grain and at proper rates. This is very important. All the cases should be inquired into separately by relief inspectors and also by European officers. The country should be divided into circles, to each of which an inspector should be appointed. The ordinary establishment of Revenue Inspectors is insufficient and inefficient for the purpose, especially when jamabandi is going on. The present Collector of Kurnool refused my repeated request for an inspection establishment, and the consequence was, I believe, that hundreds died in the villages. I found thirty-six emaciated persons in one village as I reported to him, and in three days three of them had died. There is no more important part of a relief officer's work than house-to-house inspection. Registers should be kept and weekly reports made and bills paid weekly. This kind of relief should cease when private charity again commences.

**Mr. H. Shaw.**

The class of persons mentioned in this paragraph received gratuitous relief during the Madras Famine at their own houses. Headmen of villages were directed to pay them, and expensive establishments were maintained for the supervision and control of the arrangement.

In theory this principle is excellent, but in practice it is liable to serious abuses as experience has shown.

Members of well-to-do families and the friends and relatives of the headmen themselves have managed through some means—generally misrepresentation and falsehood on their behalf—to have themselves enrolled in thousands as recipients of village relief, and I have heard it stated, with some truth I believe, that the village headmen received a percentage on all relief which was served through them and that the Relief Inspectors shared in the spoil. This, in return, for misrepresenting to superior officers the true circumstances of the recipients of relief, which was invariably described to be helpless in the extreme.

As it is almost impossible to check such malpractices, and as this system entails an immense waste of money, after one year's experience in this particular business, I am strongly of opinion that it would be

Mr. H. Shaw—continued.

more profitable to Government as well as being more advantageous to the really destitute to have all the sick, infirm, cripples, and bed-ridden among them, at a considerable expense if needs be, conveyed to a poor-house, there to be cared for until the condition of the country had resumed its normal state.

Mr. Cook.

In order to relieve the sick, infirm, cripples, and bed-ridden folk in towns and villages, I divided my taluk into three portions, each under the supervision of a Circle Inspector, whose duty it was to inspect each village and hamlet and find out the number of each class shown above with the aid of the village authorities. Their names were then entered in a nominal register, a copy of which was kept by the Inspector and another by the Monigar. Twice a month each Circle Inspector had to visit each village and pay these people money-dole in the presence of the Village Monigar. Weekly or bi-monthly distribution of dole by paid Circle Inspectors, I think, is preferable to daily distribution by the Monigars, because it often happens that a village has many hamlets miles away from the head village, in which perhaps there might be one or two bed-ridden people. It would be next to impossible for the Monigar to go round these hamlets daily and pay the people; because, apart from the distance he would have to travel, it is quite possible that he may have other duties to attend to, such as magisterial inquiries, inquests, &c., so that either the people would not be paid daily or else the Monigars would make false accounts. It is much easier to supervise and check a few Circle Inspectors than some hundred Monigars.

This sort of relief should be kept on till the last, for the recipients of money-dole are all friendless and beggars and living on charity, which will not be resumed till crops are abundant and prices decreased.

Right Rev. Bishop Caldwell.

*People who cannot leave their Homes.*

People who are unable to leave their homes will have, I fear, to be left to the care of their friends and the charity of their neighbors; but when this is found to be the case, the number of such persons will be found to be exceedingly small. Anyhow, whatever arrangements may be made, the help of friends is probably the only help they will actually receive.

With regard to both this question and the previous one, it may simplify matters if I state that, in my opinion, the gratuitous relief given by Government should be absolutely confined to the relief given to the inmates of poor-houses. Every thing beyond this should be left to private charity.

*N.B.*—I take the opportunity of expressing here an opinion for which I do not see any appropriate place elsewhere.

I am of opinion that under no circumstances should money be entrusted to petty village officials for distribution amongst the famine-stricken in the shape of doles of money or food. There is absolutely nothing to prevent such persons, wholly uneducated themselves and living amongst a population wholly uneducated, making the greatest misuse of the money entrusted to them. Public opinion does not yet exist amongst such classes, or if it exists is on the wrong side. No charitable Native, if he wishes his charity to be useful, will make petty village officials his almoners.

**Rev. Newport.**

These persons roughly divide themselves into two classes, viz.—(1) those that form an integral part of the existing families and share the varying fortunes of those families, and (2) those that are isolated, friendless, solitary, who live by themselves in their own way and by their own efforts. In the former case, if help is afforded to the families in which these persons are found, no special aid need be provided for the sufferers themselves. If, however, this help takes the form of necessitating the removal of the family to a distant relief-work, the case is materially altered; and this is another argument for modifying the distance test *at the beginning of the famine*. In such a case the sufferers pass into the second of the two classes above mentioned.

In the second case, as watchers and helpers are absent, I see no alternative but for the Government to form a kind of central poor-house for every ten or a dozen villages, and have all such sufferers brought into that house. Daily doles of money or food according to the exigencies of each case will have to be made. The aim in such relief must be to provide the necessary sustenance without interfering more than is essential with the freedom of those who are already suffering sufficiently. They will not wander hither and thither like the lazy vagrants previously dealt with.

**QUESTION 32.**—What has been held to be the duty of Government in respect to orphans or deserted children, and what appears to be the correct principle to follow? What number of such children have been thrown on the State during the recent famine? What arrangements have heretofore been made for receiving and supporting them, and what has been their ultimate destination? What have been the practical results of the measures thus taken in the past? What appears to be the best system to adopt in the future?

**Sir W. Robinson.**

The correct principle is to rescue the orphans and deserted children at once; and in the main by village relief, on the responsibility of local managers. Some of the terrible mortality that occurs amongst long-neglected and wandering infant life may thus be spared, and they are in their place to pass, if they survive, under the care of their proper guardians when the exigency is over. Wherever village relief fails, nurseries, apart from promiscuous relief-camps, would be formed under careful female supervision. The Commission should insist most firmly on proper care of the rising generation, whether waifs and strays or the families of distressed people. A mortality of between 25 to 30 per cent. of infant life amongst the famished poor is a serious loss of strength in the country and perhaps carries a reflection against the famine management. Although naturally more imperilled than any class, this precious section of our population may, I am satisfied, be more effectively saved than has hitherto been the case; everything is against them, and in more than one respect our administration has been needlessly defective and severe herein.

**Mr. J. G. Horsfall.**

Government must maintain orphans and deserted children so long as private charity does not do so. Eventually very few orphans are left in the hands of Government. In nearly all cases they are claimed by parents or relatives or taken charge of by charitable natives. The number left under the protection of the State in this district is only three, and out of these the American Mission are willing to take two.

*Clause III.*—After the Ganjam famine the orphans were distributed to the three religious institutions in the district, Mr. Okley,

Mr. J. G. Horsfall—continued.

the Chaplain, taking some, the Roman Catholics others, and the Baptist Mission the rest. A lump grant was made on account of them from surplus subscription funds, and Government further contributed a monthly grant for each child up to a certain age. The orphans have been taught to read and write and brought up to useful trade and professions, and have generally been able on arriving at maturity to earn their own living. The cost to Government now is very trifling and will cease altogether in another year or two. Where existing institutions are willing to absorb all the State orphans this plan might be continued. It will be under very exceptional circumstances that Government will find it necessary to establish an orphanage of its own.

Mr. Price.

I do not know that any dictum has been laid down. The principle followed—and I believe it to be correct—has been that it is the duty of the State to receive and protect all orphan and deserted children. During the famine these, or children alleged to fall under this category, came upon our hands in very large numbers, and were either placed in the charge of Village Magistrates to be fed, or to receive the dole fixed by Government, or else were taken into the poor-houses. They were picked up by the Village Magistrates and the Police, and found in the villages by inspecting officers. As organization progressed all orphan and deserted children on village relief, who had not friends or relatives willing to look after them, were taken into the poor-house, placed under a selected nurse, and there fed and cared for. I really could not say how many orphans and deserted children were thrown on the hands of the State during the famine. In Cuddapah a register of those actually found to be friendless was kept, and a return sent in every week to the Collector. These statements are on record, but they did not show orphans in villages whose relatives were taking care of them. Here no lists were, until a very late period, kept. At the beginning of the famine orphans and deserted children were, in Cuddapah, placed in the charge of a woman selected by the Tahsildar, who received a monthly payment of from 2 to 4 Rupees, but I found this plan unsatisfactory and discontinued it. By far the larger number of orphans and deserted children have been claimed by relatives; a few have, I believe, been taken by charitable people and religious societies, and a very few are still left in the poor-houses. As far as this district is concerned, I consider that there will not be twenty-five of these children, if so many, on the hands of Government when the famine is over. As far as the Cuddapah District was concerned, I believe that the measures taken resulted in saving the lives of many hundreds of children and in their being, when discharged from relief, in excellent condition and spirits. In future I would, from the first, have no giving out to nurse. I am very much in favor of at once putting all children ostensibly without parents or relatives who cannot shift for themselves into a poor-house. This course would—so I found when I adopted it—bring forward the relatives or sometimes even the parents who were alleged to be dead, and would enable the officers concerned to get at a much earlier period, than the end of a famine, some definite idea of the real number of orphans and deserted children on their hands. As regards the disposal of children left on the hands of Government after a famine, I believe that the religious institutions of the country and the charitably disposed would take charge of all whom we are ever likely to have. If not, I would have a home for the girls, and put the boys upon a Government Farm in order that they might be brought up as skilled laborers. They

**Mr. Price**—continued.

would always be able to earn a livelihood by these means and would, to a certain extent, pay for their maintenance.

**Mr. Crole.**

It is impossible, at this stage of the famine, when relief operations are still in progress on a considerable scale and prices are still at full famine rate, to give any trustworthy approximation of the number of orphans. Many of those calling themselves so are impostors, and have relatives, if not parents, who will be able to support them hereafter. The remainder, I believe, will be absorbed by adoption and otherwise after the famine is really over, without becoming a charge on Government.

**Mr. Longley.**

The orphans and children, deserted by their parents, have been cared for in camps during the famine, and this appears to me the correct principle to follow. There are now about 850 children in the thirteen closed camps of the Salem District. How many will remain when the camps are abolished it is impossible to say, but it is probable that many who are now supposed to be orphans or deserted, will be claimed when relief ceases to be given; for the protection of those that remain, many will be taken by natives, and the rest will have to be provided for at Government expense—the boys until they can earn their living, and the girls until they marry. There are no native charitable institutions in the Salem District which would receive such.

There is a Roman Catholic Orphanage, but the conditions under which the children would be admitted would not probably commend themselves to Government. I do not think that they should be made over to the Missions either, for the same reason that I would not have them made over to a Roman Catholic Orphanage.

**Mr. McC. Webster.**

The number of such children who have no means of support, and who are in consequence in the poor-houses is 275. Probably however, when the distress is over, many of these children will be claimed by their relations who are now holding back.

**Mr. Grose.**

I understand that Government hold themselves responsible for the protection of "famine orphans," but no final decision as to what is to be done with them has been arrived at. I have twenty-nine now in Nellore awaiting orders. In my opinion such orphans, when the people refuse to take them, should be sent to Christian orphanages. This was done after the Ganjam famine, but I do not know with what result.

**Mr. Knox.**

It has been assumed throughout that the duty of taking care of orphans was one that devolved on Government, and during the famine such children, when they have been discovered, have been usually sent to a Government camp. Much good was done by means of the Mansion House Fund in the way of establishing nurseries in which large numbers of children were fed daily; among them were often found orphans or deserted children, but these nurseries were not intended for orphans whom Government undertook to support, and if, on inspection of nurseries, orphans were discovered they were frequently sent to a Government camp.

Mr. Knox—continued.

It is most certainly the duty of Government to provide for these unprotected children, but at the same time I think that such are very proper objects for private charity, and I see no reason why Government should insist on having this burden all to themselves and not give up children to such persons as give proper guarantee to be able and willing to support them properly. During the recent famine Government have, I think, shown an inclination to check private efforts in this direction, and such a policy is not in my opinion a judicious one. Perhaps the object of Government was to prevent proselytizing, but in many cases this is not the object in view, and besides it would be always open to Government to impose any reasonable conditions before giving up a child.

I have no data by me by which to determine the number of children that will be left on the hands of Government, and, as the famine is not yet over, it cannot be said what will be their ultimate destination. Before anything can be done it will be very necessary for every Collector to make careful inquiries to ascertain how far the alleged orphans are really so, and it will probably be found in many cases that, even if there are no parents forthcoming, some near relation will offer to keep the child. When such is the case the child should be given up if the relative is a proper person to take care of it.

Having then ascertained as accurately as possible the number of real orphans and deserted children on our hands, I think the best plan to adopt with respect to them would be to establish an orphanage in the chief town of the district under the general supervision of the Local Fund Board. There might be two divisions—one for boys and the other for girls. This orphanage should partake of the nature of a school, residence would be necessary, discipline would have to be enforced, and efforts should be made to give such of the children as were old enough an elementary education, particular attention being paid to teaching the children some trade, so that they would be in a position to earn their livelihood when they grow up. All these details connected with the maintenance and teaching of the children would have to be determined by the Board under the general orders of Government.

The cost would have to be borne by the Local Fund Board, aided, if necessary, by a grant from Provincial Funds, and a proportion of the cost might be paid by the Municipal Commissioners according to the number of town orphans supported. If it was found that the number of children in each district was small, so as to make it unnecessary to have so many institutions, the number might be reduced, and it might perhaps be found practicable to have only one in Madras, but this point cannot be ascertained until the number of unclaimed children is known.

At the same time I think private charity in this direction should not be discouraged. If Government were satisfied that the children would be taken care of and brought up properly, they should not object to resigning them on such conditions as were thought fit. To avoid any improper attempt at proselytizing, it would be sufficient to require that no child under age should be baptized, but religious instruction might, and indeed ought to, be given. If the parents or any relatives are hiding and do not like this, they can come forward and claim the child; if there are no relatives, no one has a right to complain.

In some instances private persons, missionary societies, &c., might come forward (I have heard of a particular instance) and offer

**Mr. Knox**—continued.

to maintain the children for a certain small yearly sum. Government might find it advisable to accept some of these offers and thus relieve themselves of the burden of management.

I may add that every effort should be made after the famine to let it be very generally known that so many children in such and such places are on the hands of Government.

**Mr. Lee-Warner.**

I believe it was held to be the duty of Government to take charge of orphans under any conditions till the end of the famine. The consequence was that in every camp I visited during the famine I found a certain number of healthy-looking children classed as orphans, and as the number of them was rapidly increasing even under close supervision, and I had ascertained that the parents of many had not died in the camps, I instituted the closest inquiries, and the conclusion which I have arrived at is that the children whose parents have not died in camp or in relief-works presenting themselves as orphans should be rejected as other persons, if they are in fairly fit condition. I have never been so grossly imposed upon in my life as by some of these tender children of ages under seven years standing cross-examination as to their homes, &c., as if they were practised District Munsif's Court witnesses, when every single statement that they were uttering was false. The peons and watchers of the camps are often responsible for introducing children as orphans.

**Mr. Pattabhiram Pillay.**

Orphans and deserted children incapable of maintaining themselves were at all times held as a charge upon the State, till some one is found to take care of them, and, in my humble opinion, there cannot be a more correct principle. It is not difficult in India to find charitably-disposed men willing to take care of such children out of sympathy for them. There are besides several Christian institutions where they will readily be admitted in view to their being made converts. I would rather leave it to the conscience and good feeling of those in charge of such institutions to make these orphans their converts or not as they choose, but would make such children over to the first applicant who wishes to take charge of them, as the duty of Government to protect them ceases as soon as some one offers to take charge of them.

**Mr. P. Soobien.**

As regards orphans and deserted children, the duty of Government has been held to be to take charge of them and support them, and the correct principle to follow appears to be the same. I have no statistics regarding such children with me now, and am therefore unable to state the number of such children thrown on the State during the recent famine in the Madura Taluk. These children were received and fed in relief-camps with the ultimate object, in the case of deserted children, of making them over to their parents when they were found. In some places such children were made over to missionary bodies with the certain result of their being converted to Christianity. This appears to me, however, to be objectionable, as the accidental circumstance of their being left parentless and friendless owing to the horrors of famine should not be taken undue advantage of in bringing them up in a religion different from that of their parents. The proper course appears to me to be to bring them up as they were found till the parents or some one of their caste willing and able to adopt and support them

**Mr. P. Soobien**—continued.

are found, or till they become able to support themselves, or to send them to any public workshop where neutrality of religion is observed and where a useful industry can be learnt.

**Mr. Weekes.**

It has been held to be the duty of the State to support orphans till able to work and then to give them help to start in life independently. I think that, if thoroughly respectable persons of the same denomination are willing to take over the charge of orphans gratuitously, they should be allowed to do so, and that otherwise they should be made over to the best persons offering to take them. It is a case in which Government is directly called upon to act for the best interests of the orphans; many of the so-called orphans are not really so, and I have frequently in villages elicited claims to the children by uncles and so forth by declaring that the orphans must be sent to the relief-camp at Cuddapah. In Chota Nagpore a German Missionary, who had done the hardest work in famine relief, offered to take over all the children, and was finally, I believe, entrusted with all those of the indigenous tribes of Chota Nagpore. In this famine very many of the children have been claimed. It is not yet known for certain how many will be finally on the hands of Government. Heretofore such children have been kept in separate huts in relief-camps in Cuddapah and attended to by paid nurses. I think the correct principle to adopt in the future is to interfere as little as possible with caste and religion if proper persons are found to satisfy requirements.

**Mr. Oldham.**

The practical results of the measures taken with regard to the orphans of the Orissa famine of 1866 have been that the orphans have been brought up as Christians, and cut off from their own caste and village people as far as their religion and its consequences cut them off, but have otherwise fared well and been turned into useful workmen or servants.

**Mr. H. Shaw.**

Famine orphans thrown on the hands of Government should in the first instance be offered to the charitably disposed among the respectable native community of their own caste and creed. Any one taking over children should be required to execute a written agreement, duly stamped, to the effect that he will adopt and not treat the children as servants to be turned away at pleasure.

After orphans have thus been disposed of, those, if any, who remain might be made over to Christian missions, there to be brought up, an allowance being made for their support if necessary until they attain an age when they can provide for themselves.

**Major Ross.**

I have found that many children doubtless without parents in camps and who were always thought to be orphans have been claimed by fathers or mothers or near relations directly any steps were being taken for their removal elsewhere, and I consider that this removal or threat of such is the only test which can be applied for the discovery of the truth.

The orphans have been supported in the camps and a schoolmaster employed in most cases to instruct them; some have been given over to the Missionaries, both Protestant and Catholic, who treat them well and with great kindness.

I would have all the orphans collected together from the different camps at one centre and have them instructed during the continuance

Major Ross—continued.

of the famine ; many who were thought to be orphans will be claimed by relatives when times get better, and the residuum of those who are really orphans, and which will be comparatively small, would doubtless be taken by Missionaries.

Major Baynes.

Orphans such as could not work were fed in kitchens. I have not papers by me to give numbers, but various reports were submitted by me. I do not advocate the promise of great things to orphans, as they will be fabricated at once ; in the famine time many children were reported orphans till their removal to a Government school was proposed. I remember in one instance finding mothers for forty-five children all collected together in one spot, by simply stating that they would have to be removed to some orphanage. I would not therefore advocate any other course than the removal of orphans from their villages ; if children are allowed to go, the fact of their orphanage may be assumed, and I would then cause them to be adopted or be taken into families by some member of their caste, to whom I should pay through the Civil Officers a monthly subsistence allowance until the child reached maturity ; the practice of collecting orphan children to be made semi-Christians and utterly incapable of earning their bread is attended with the most evil results. I remember in Berhampore, as the result of this course, that a very large number of young women would have been quite unable to support themselves except by prostitution if Government had not continued to maintain them, and even then they were placed in sore temptation to go wrong.

Hurry Row.

The Hindu orphans should be handed over to such Hindus as would undertake their maintenance. If no Hindu would take charge of them, they should be handed over to such as would receive them. The same should be done to Mahomedans and Christians.

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QUESTION 33.—Another form of relief, independent of a labor test, is by purchasing grain and selling it at or below cost price, and consequently below the retail market rate. Was this measure resorted to in your district, under what circumstances, and with what results ? Do you consider that there are any conditions under which it is proper for Government to have recourse to a such a step ? (This question does not refer to the propriety of Government importation generally, but of importing or purchasing in order to sell cheaper than the market rate.)

Mr. Longley.

No. There was no occasion for such a measure, as private trade was sufficiently active and the markets were kept fully stocked.

Government interference is inexpedient till private trade becomes too slack, and the high prices ruling fail to induce traders to import and throw grain into the market to meet the demand. When matters come to this pass, and the market is under-supplied, Government *must* interfere ; but the interference must be confined to—

- (1) use of personal influence to induce foreign traders or large firms to undertake the importation of grain.

Mr. Longley—continued.

- (2) affording facilities for importation (a) by improving communications; (b) by suspension of the *export* duty on grain; (c) by grant of advance to traders willing but unable to embark on such enterprises; and (d) by offering bounties on the quantity of grain imported, &c.

When these measures do not avail in keeping the markets sufficiently stocked, Government must import grain on its own account; but it must not under-sell either the local or the adjacent markets, as, if this is allowed, it will have the effect of putting down the whole private trade and discourage private enterprise.

Mr. McC. Webster.

No such measure was resorted to in this district. The only conditions under which it would be proper for Government to have recourse to such a step would be in the event of there being absolutely no prospect of private trade supplying the market. This is not a contingency likely to occur in this district.

Mr. Grose.

I do not think that grain should ever be sold by Government below the market-rate.

Mr. Fawcett.

No grain was imported here for the purpose of selling at rates below the retail market rate, though some of the grain imported for other purposes was so sold.

This form of relief would, I imagine, be very efficacious in preventing a scarcity from turning into famine, but where a severe famine was established I do not think it would be any use.

Mr. Crole.

The only condition under which the State is conceivably justified, as a measure of relief, in selling grain below the market price is, in the very rare case of a proved nefarious combination among merchants, or of an utter collapse of trade. This measure was not resorted to in this district.

Mr. Soobien.

The system of relief of purchasing grain and selling it at or below the cost price and consequently below the retail market rate was not resorted to in this district. In outlying places where there is a lack of capitalists to import grains or where the difficulties attending the transport of grain by private agency are so great as to repel private trade or where by a combination among themselves the merchants seeing the helplessness of Government officials to interfere in the matter of price of food-grains keep up the prices at very high rates, such a measure as that indicated in the query may be advisable, but it should not be resorted to unless proved, and great necessity exists for such a step.

Rev. Newport.

The question of purchasing grain wholesale and selling it retail at less than market-rates was brought forward by a Government Officer in the Salem Famine Relief Committee. I opposed the scheme on the ground that "trading" was not in accordance with the principles on which the Mansion-House Fund was distributed. But I believe that, had such a scheme been successfully set on foot, the result would have been very good. At that time it was possible to buy grain at Madras wholesale, and, after paying all charges on it,

**Rev. Newport**—continued.

to sell it at Salem under the market-rates without the loss of a single pie. A combination of merchants or some other occurrence had raised the local rates of grain far above those of Madras.

I am not prepared to say that Government should undertake this work. In outlying places far from railways and good roads, there may be occasions when recourse may be justifiably had to such a means, but as a general rule private speculation and mercantile competition will be quite sufficient to meet the difficulty.

Where no grain is to be had at all, the Government is surely bound to get a supply and sell it at whatever price the people can afford to give.

**Major Baynes.**

I would not advocate this measure as a general one, because then  
Under sale of local dealers  
by Government. Government would relieve a large number of persons who are in the position to go through a time of high prices ; but, as recommended in this Section, I would supply grain for sale to recipients of relief on work or on the money-dole and for use in kitchens, if I could do so more cheaply by importation than by local purchases.

**Mr. Hurry Row.**

The system of purchasing grain and selling it at or below cost price is bad. It is wrong in theory and injurious to the people in practice. It shuts up all ordinary shops. Wherever a combination among traders is expected, to break it down, it would be necessary to buy grain and sell it at a fair profit to the public. To sell grain at or below cost price is interfering with the market in a most imprudent manner.

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### SECTION III.

QUESTION 34.—(Vide Appendix.)

QUESTION 35.—Has Government ever attempted to organise emigration, permanent or temporary, from districts suffering from famine to other parts of India or foreign countries as a relief measure? if so, with what success? Under what circumstances could any such emigration be organised or encouraged? To what extent has emigration been resorted to by the people voluntarily? Have any gone beyond sea? Have any permanently gone off to settle in other parts of India? How many (approximately) left their district on a temporary expedition to search for food or employment elsewhere during the recent famine? Did they go alone or with all members of the family, and with their cattle and property? Where did they go to, and were their hopes of alleviating their distress realised? How many (approximately) have not come back, and how many are supposed to have died?

**Sir W. R. Robinson.**

The inaccurate use of the term "Emigration," as applied to a rather wider form of the wild wandering of masses under our late famine conditions, has caused a good deal of misapprehension as well as confusion as to both facts and hopes. It may be broadly stated that there was no increased "Emigration" properly so called during the famine period in South India, such as needs occupy the notice of the Commission.

Below is shown the movement of population across seas during fourteen months of the rise and height of the famine. As

Sir W. R. Robinson—continued.

regards emigration properly so called—even including the Straits Settlements and Burmah—the fluctuation was unimportant. As regards the casual labor-field of the Tinnevely and Madura population in Ceylon, it will be observed that about twice the usual number of persons wandered thus far afield in search of food and work, but it was in the main simple wandering as respects this excess. As a rule, labor is searched up by emissaries from Ceylon, and family advances are made to those proceeding from South India to estates in Ceylon; what labor can be fully employed is thus procured. These measures affected the movement of possibly somewhat more than the ordinary average; but the rest left their women and children in the Zemindaris of Madura, Tinnevely, &c., (where the destruction of life has been very great though less known) and simply wandered in a more or less hopeless state to Ceylon, with the inevitable consequence of much loss of life at home and abroad. The causes of this part of South India's famine wandering are obvious, and the Government and planting community of Ceylon bore the unusual and unsought strain bravely; but the consequences both in the homes that were deserted by the bread-winners and to the wanderers themselves turn I believe the balance greatly against this form of temporary escape from local distress. I do not think that the thing should be encouraged in famine times.

Statement showing the Number of Emigrants to Ceylon, &amp;c.

	Number of Emigrants during fourteen Months ending November 1877.								Average Number during the corresponding periods of previous three Years.							
	Ceylon.	Burmah.	Straits Settlements.	Mauritius.	Reunion.	West Indies.	Natal.	Total.	Ceylon.	Burmah.	Straits Settlements.	Mauritius.	Reunion.	West Indies.	Natal.	Total.
Ten months ending 31st July.	195,693	3,706	2,506	...	1,500	1,199	...	204,664	87,632	3,648	1,894	791	683	1,132	...	96,680
August	30,087	903	606	339	...	...	...	31,935	11,848	798	328	147	78	177	50	13,426
September	19,815	3,906	196	...	...	...	472	23,979	12,522	5,324	1,599	...	78	55	50	19,138
October	12,233	422	283	365	...	442	498	14,376	12,008	597	208	...	78	55	50	12,996
November	7,451	1,232	531	...	...	...	215	9,429	10,596	1,263	...	...	78	460	50	12,447
Total	364,779	10,259	4,122	704	1,560	1,641	1,185	284,383	134,606	11,630	4,029	938	1,295	1,879	200	154,107

The so-called emigration from Mysore, &c., to Wynad and the Nilgiri Hills is not the least ghastly section of our famine story, either as respects its reasons, consequences, or administration. The wretched wanderers were no gain to the country they sought, and mortality amongst them was excessive.

The fact with which the Commission have to do in this reference is I believe this:—that the sudden and promiscuous swarming of emaciated famine-stricken persons—uninvited by employers and unjustified by conditions of the labor-markets—over distant fields of enterprise, which employ a certain average of surplus cooly labor under ordinary circumstances, is a very serious evil during a season of tropical famine, high prices and necessary contraction of enterprise. Such wandering (call it what we may) simply carries the distress further afield as regards wanderers, and leaves behind it unaided wretchedness amongst the women and children who are in the main deserted. I am inclined to recommend the Commission to discourage it firmly, if possible.

As respects organized emigration, I do not think Government can satisfactorily enter into this field of action during a temporary

Sir W. R. Robinson—continued.

famine occurrence. In the first place no district in South India needs relief at this time as respects its ordinary population, or will do so for generations; there is therefore present and future loss by expatriation. And this consideration applies specially where famine is actually decimating the existing laboring classes of the country and checking recuperative power.

Organized emigration of large masses is expensive and difficult under any circumstances, and especially so in comparison with temporary home-administration, while as applied to a famine-stricken, declining and discouraged population is not likely to be successful or beneficial from any point of view. Emigration at the suggestion of authority is apt under the circumstances and in the confusion inseparable from the conditions, to degenerate into coercion, &c., in subordinate hands. Under the condition reluctant expatriation is unlikely to prove a permanent benefit to any country to which the distressed poor may be induced or driven to remove themselves for a time by temporary distress at home. I would put emigration aside as an unlikely expedient for the relief of famine, and not succumb to the temptation to transfer the burden of famine support elsewhere. There is little reason to expect cheerful acceptance.

Mr. Longley.

No special emigration was ever *organised* by Government from this district (Salem) during the famine, either to other parts of India or to foreign countries as a relief measure. Notice was given that favorable rates of labor would be given in Burmah, but none went.

The usual emigration agency was at work for relief coolies for the Mauritius and Bourbon. Between January 1877 and July 1878 two hundred emigrants only were registered.

I am not aware that any persons have left the district during the famine to settle permanently in other parts of India.

It is quite impossible to give the number of those who left the district during the famine in search of food and labor; but that very large numbers, especially of the weaver class, did so, before labor for these specialists was provided, is quite certain, but no register of these was kept. They went, as a rule, with the members of their family and did not take their property or cattle, which had been previously sold (except a few cooking utensils), with them.

I should advise a register being kept in any future famine of all *weavers*, &c., who leave the district in search of food or labor elsewhere. In villages this can be easily done by Munsifs and Curnams. Though we cannot enforce a rule to the effect that every person leaving his village must report before doing so, the village authorities will have no difficulty in ascertaining this.

Large numbers (of weavers) went to Tanjore, Trichinopoly, and South Arcot. Coolies and famine-stricken cultivators went across the Cauvery to Coimbatore and the west.

It is quite impossible to say how many have *not* come back. A very great number have returned and are still returning. There is no information available as to the numbers of deaths, or how the persons fared who left the district in search of employment, *i.e.*, whether their hopes of gaining employment were realized or not.

Laborers are now returning in small numbers, the majority having already returned. Some of those who left the district found employment in Wynad plantations and in Kandy.

Mr. Longley—continued.

The Salem weavers went to Combaconum, but returned without being able to find employment. This fact has been ascertained from the returned Salem weavers themselves.

I am having inquiries made villagewar, through the Munsifs, of the numbers who left their village and the numbers who have, up to the 30th September, returned; and I hope to get some information as to what has become of those who have *not* returned, from those who have, and I shall send this information on to the Famine Commissioner as soon as possible.

Mr. McC. Webster.

There is a considerable traffic in labor between this district and the Nilgiri Hills and the Wynad, coolies from this district going to works on the coffee and tea plantations. During the last year an unusual number of people left in search of work in those districts, a few were accompanied by their families, several by their wives, but had no other property; many of them obtained labor, many however failed to do so, some died, and others were sent back in an emaciated condition. It is not possible to give particulars of the number of emigrants, how many have returned and how many have died. The trial census taken in March last shows the probable decrease in the population to have been about 18 per cent. Part of this decrease is owing to excessive emigration, but it is not possible to state what portion is due to this cause and what portion to deaths.

Mr. Price.

I am not aware of any such organization. The only emigration movement attempted by Government was from one district to another. I can form no opinion as to the circumstances under which emigration to other parts of India or foreign countries could be organized or encouraged in times of famine. The people of the interior, three districts of which I know very well, are at all times averse to emigrate. The people did not, during the famine, voluntarily emigrate. It is impossible to say whether any went beyond sea or to other parts of India (out of the Presidency). No emigration is recorded as having taken place in this district, nor was any in Cuddapah. If any went the number must have been but small. It is impossible to say how many left their villages temporarily during the famine. In Chingleput the number was very large, amounting to several thousands, and the centre of attraction was Madras. They went both alone—men deserting their wives and children—and they also went in families. They took merely their actual personal property, and if they had cattle left them with others. The wanderers everywhere were generally of the poorest classes, and they had, before they started, sold their little ornaments and so on and very often such of their cattle as were alive. They filled the streets and poor-houses of Madras and its neighborhood. A safe estimate of the number of persons who have not yet returned is, I believe, not possible without making a detailed inquiry. I do not think that the figure can in this district be anything large. The census of the Ponneri Taluk was taken in March 1878, and the difference between the enumeration and the census of 1871 was, I believe, on the average 10 per cent. I did the Jamabandi of Ponneri in May and June and was then told by villagers that "half" the people had gone and not come back; but, when inquiry came to be made, I found this story to be a gross exaggeration. I believe that if a census was again taken in Ponneri

**Mr. Price**—continued.

it would be found that the population has in the interval been increased in a marked degree by the return of the runaways. I know that whilst I was doing Jamabandi work many came back, and that several have since returned. As for the number of deaths amongst those who left their villages I can form no estimate. The death returns of the Madras relief-camps, which are not in my hands, ought to give some sort of basis for a fair guess.

**Mr. Grose.**

There was no emigration across sea. Large numbers of people went by land to Kistna, where there was pasturage for cattle, or to Madras where there was money and where the relief-camps were said to be more agreeable. Some went with and some without their families and their cattle. I do not know how many are dead and how many have returned.

**Mr. Crole.**

Government organized emigration from this district to the Buckingham's Canal Works in the Nellore District in 1877. It was unsuccessful. Nearly all the people either deserted on the line of march or returned soon after arrival at the coast. Out of 14,145 sent, only 2,050 actually worked on the canal. No permanent emigration. There were some wanderers of course, but no reliable data as to their numbers or fate exist.

**Mr. Stokes.**

Government have not organized emigration. The Ceylon Government has an Emigration Agent at Paumben who sent 46,740 laborers to Ceylon last year. Most of these returned. Many whose number cannot be estimated left the poorer parts of the district for Tanjore and other places. It is not known what has become of them. Many of them left their women and children behind. This is said to be particularly the case with laborers who have gone to Penang. None of them took cattle or any property for they had none. Many have already returned from Ceylon, but their number cannot be guessed; nor can the total of persons who have gone to Ceylon be known as many go by rail to Tuticorin and go across.

**Mr. Lee-Warner.**

There are some districts in the Presidency in which the dry grains form the chief food of the lower classes, and wet cultivation is a luxury. As soon as the dry grains are gathered great masses of the people move off to the next districts wherever wet cultivation is extensively carried on, with their cattle and their families and get employed there. This has been the case with the Ramnad Estate in all seasons, good as well as bad, though there too there is a good deal of wet cultivation, because the landlord's share of the wet crop is so large and is taken in such an oppressive manner. Therefore as soon as the dry grains are harvested a large part of the poorer classes of ryots move off to Tanjore or Tinnevely in search of employment. In the famine some villages were nearly depopulated by this movement; large numbers also left for coffee-picking in Ceylon, taking their families with them.

**Mr. Lewis Moore.**

Government have never attempted to organize emigration, permanent or temporary, from Trichinopoly District as a relief measure. There is in ordinary years a considerable amount of

**Mr. Lewis Moore**—continued.

emigration from this district, principally to the Mauritius and Ceylon. In 1876 and 1877 the numbers registered as having emigrated amount to 147 only. It must be remembered, however, that these figures give but little information as to the number that actually left the district, as it is only a very small fraction of those that emigrate who came into Trichinopoly to be registered in the Collectors's Office. It is impossible to give any accurate information as to the numbers that actually left the district during the famine, or as to how many of these have not come back or have died.

**Mr. J. G. Horsfall.**

Not in this district.

*Clause III.*—People generally are averse to emigration beyond sea. The number who go as far as Rangoon, even where high wages are paid, is very trifling, and to other countries almost nil. I believe it would be impossible to inaugurate emigration as a relief measure.

*Clause IV.*—Emigration from a distressed district to a more favored one was extensively resorted to. Nearly half the people employed upon works in this district during the recent famine were wanderers from other districts.

*Clause V.*—No.

*Clause VI.*—No. Those who came here got employment, but left at the end of the year.

*Clause VII.*—None from this district.

*Clause VIII.*—Whole families came here with only necessary utensils.

*Clause IX.*—Chiefly into the Gudivada Taluk, where there is ample work. Thousands returned in September last only at the finish of this year's cultivation in that taluk.

*Clause X.*—There were virtually no emigrants from this district.

**Mr. Soobien.**

The Government has not attempted in this district to organize emigration to any place. But there is an agency established by the Ceylon Government for inviting migrant coolies from this and the neighbouring districts to Ceylon. The whole of the emigration resorted to by the people in this district is voluntary. The emigration has been to the neighbouring districts and to Ceylon, which is beyond sea. Very few, I think, have permanently gone off to settle in other parts of India. Those that left the district on a temporary expedition to search for food or employment in the neighbouring districts will be within 20,000 I think, and I have no emigration returns with me to state approximately how many left the district for Ceylon. The emigrants went generally with the members of their families, but they took no cattle or property with them. It is only after their cattle and other saleable property have been disposed of wholesale emigration takes place. They generally went to Trichinopoly and Tanjore Districts, and their hopes of alleviating their distress were generally realised, though not to the full extent. Among the emigrants who went to the neighbouring districts it is generally supposed that about one-eighth of the number died there and have not returned to this district. The corresponding proportion for the emigrants to Ceylon is supposed to be somewhat higher.

**Mr. Oldham.**

Emigration from Adoni to the Buckingham Canal in the Nellore District was organized last year as a temporary measure. The distance to be traversed was 160 miles by rail and then 70 miles

Mr. Oldham—continued.

by road. Operations were confined to the interval between the 7th April and the 2nd May 1877, and the number of emigrants was—

Men	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,244
Women	...	...	...	...	...	...	755
Children	...	...	...	...	...	...	396

They returned by the end of September, and all in very good condition. There were no more casualties than might have been expected had the operations been conducted in any ordinary time.

The operations were not conducted without pressure, that is, persons were registered and then excluded from the relief-works and given their choice of emigrating or of relief being withheld from them till their condition demanded it. This last alternative too was not announced to them. A small premium was also given to gangsmen who started with a full gang of emigrants, and the Government granted a premium to each emigrant on arrival at their destination.

Of other emigration there appears to have been little or none. When I was making over to the Nizam's Dominions and to the authorities of neighbouring districts the residents of their countries and jurisdictions by thousands, there was not an instance in which a resident of Adoni was similarly made over to me.

These immigrants used to come sometimes alone, sometimes with all the members of their family, never bringing any property except some utensils and personal effects.

Mr. Weekes.

It became a question when the south-west monsoon held off in 1877 whether it would not be necessary to march down some five millions from Cuddapah and neighbouring districts to near Arkonam, as the railway could not have carried sufficient food up-country if there had been another failure of harvests. I scarcely think it could have carried sufficient food if the numbers who are supposed to have died had lived till September 1877. I believe Government did organize a scheme for emigration to British Burmah, and that some few went there, and that the Commissioner of the Central Provinces tried to persuade people to emigrate into parts where the population is scanty; but both these projects were comparatively unsuccessful. In 1866 large numbers of Coles, Bhumijes, and Sonthals emigrated, but then they emigrate annually for the dry season as they can then make nothing out of their rocky and dry country and are too simple and industrious to sit and do nothing. In 1866 the emigration was larger than usual. They are employed as coolies in Calcutta, Hooghly, and Burdwan Municipalities and in most of the indigo factories of Bengal and on the tea plantations in Assam. A few settle down for good near factories, but most of them return to their country sooner or later. Large numbers later on in 1866 went to Ranigunj, Burdwan and Calcutta, and were relieved in poor-houses or given employment. Numbers in 1877 emigrated from Mysore into Cuddapah, but I had no experience of any such emigration, except on a small scale, of people from other taluks into mine. In the Ganjam famine some went, I believe, to the Mauritius, and in the last famine I believe emigration to Mauritius and Natal and other countries beyond was more common than usual. There has been nothing like the Rajpootana exodus in Madras, and the last famine has been too widely extended for much emigration, and such as there has been principally in search of Government relief.

**Lieut. Henderson.**

Yes, in 1877 from Bellary, Cuddapah, and Kurnool Districts to the Buckingham Canal Works, Nellore. The emigration was not a success. On the south of canal 50 miles in length, under my immediate charge, in ordinary years, I could have counted on having about 3,000 coolies at work all the year round; during the famine for months the numbers ranged above 30,000, of which at least 20,000 were volunteers.

**Hon. Gajapathi Rau.**

I have received reliable information that many impoverished cultivators and field laborers and their families went away to the Godavari District during the last two years; but they carried no property nor cattle when they did so.

Godavari District certainly afforded relief to several thousands who emigrated to it both from the southern and this district.

**QUESTION 36.**—If famine-stricken people begin to emigrate to a part where it is known they would not find things better than in the country they left, or if they wander aimlessly from their homes, settling nowhere, should steps be taken to stop this, and how? Would you employ the Police under any circumstances to turn them back, or to compel them to go to relief works or poor-houses? or would you let them learn by their own experience? If they crowd into a town, say the head-quarters of the district or the province, would you do anything to stop them on the way or to prevent their begging and straggling about the town when they get there? Refer to para. 25 in answering this question, and add anything that seems requisite in relation to the points now raised.

**Sir W. R. Robinson.**

When famine-stricken people wander, it is because they are unable to get food or work at home or near their homes. There is nothing wanton or wicked in it, and it is the first and only resort of the village starvelings without a Poor Law provision. The occurrence of wandering further is probably evidence of neglect and maladministration where the wanderers come from. The way to stop wandering—that first object of famine administration—is to rectify and remove these causes; and where the thing has taken place on a large scale and it is known to be hopeless, the proper measures to be taken are to collect and comfort the wretchedness which it represents, and return the sufferers so far as may be to their homes and districts—to well-defined and pre-arranged means of relief. The proper way to effect this is by establishing frequent places of relief and collection on the routes of wandering and in the towns to which the starving gravitate, and thence to arrange their early relegation to suitable relief elsewhere. The action taken in the town of Madras in this respect affords an excellent model of what should prevail throughout.

The employment of an Indian Police on such things—more especially as respects compulsory measures—is hazardous and requires much care. It should only, therefore, be resorted to under supervision. But under humane superiors, and, if made to feel that the policy of the Government is directed to saving imperilled life and is not resistive of obvious need, the Police organisation of the country may be made very useful in collecting and aiding the famine-stricken and passing them on to places of rescue and of work. When the spirit of the administration is jealous, suspicious, and resistive, it cannot have worse agents than a reckless Indian Police.

Sir W. R. Robinson—continued.

I do not understand the expression "letting them learn by their own experience," which, under the circumstances, must often be mortal. Where are the starvelings to take their experience should they survive the lesson? Under the circumstances letting things "slide" is very hazardous.

Every town must, of course, keep up the means—generally temporary camps with hospitals attached—of collecting, relieving, and relegating to their homes and districts—for relief or work—the famine-stricken wanderers within their limits. The rest is mere Police and Municipal arrangement and better be left to that adjustment; of course begging has to be stopped and its necessity removed.

Mr. Longley.

Most assuredly steps should be taken to prevent persons wandering away aimlessly, as no doubt many did during the recent distress, especially to Coimbatore, where matters were very little better than in Salem; and for this purpose I would place a cordon of patrols (Police) on the frontiers of the district to turn such aimless wanderers back to organised relief works or to camps, according to the circumstances of the case.

I would have a cordon of patrols (either Police or special patrols) round the head-quarters and the principal towns to prevent distressees crowding into them. This course has been adopted with success at the head-quarters (Salem), and the town throughout the famine has been kept fairly clear of destitute wanderers. I am strongly of opinion that (*vide* reply to Question 25) all wandering emaciated should be *compelled* (when life appears to be endangered by continued wandering without sufficient food) to go to a relief-camp.

Mr. McC. Webster.

Famine-stricken people not in a fit condition to do an ordinary amount of labor should not be allowed to wander, but should be stopped by the Police and at once taken to the nearest poor-house. It will be necessary, however, to take every precaution against wanderers being hustled, and they should be given a meal as soon as possible after they are stopped; the weakly too should be sent to the poor-house in carts or carried.

Mr. Price.

Experience would certainly be the best means of teaching the people sense, but this would not only involve the death of very many emigrants but would also cause another evil, *viz.*, the pressing upon the district into which immigration took place a large number of people in addition to those already to be cared for. I would, therefore, in the district from which the emigration occurred give notice, as far as possible, that no work or relief would be, in the other districts, given to strangers. I would, as a temporary attraction, provide works not far removed from the people's homes and open poor-houses along the main lines of exit. I would then place Police on the confines of the district and at any large centres, turn the people back telling them where to get work, and sending in by force to the poor-houses such as were in a badly emaciated or sickly condition; in the neighbouring districts I would employ the Police, both ordinary and village, and turn back all wanderers. I would give no work to strangers, and where relief had, to save life, to be given, I would administer it under such circumstances as would make it as unpleasant as possible. I would forcibly

Mr. Price—continued.

deport all wanderers to their own districts and make such a step legal by passing an Act empowering the local Government to direct such measures to be carried out. Where paupers crowd into a town, I would stop them by means of the Police and force such as found their way in to go into poor-houses to be placed all around the town, they being thence relegated to their proper taluks. I have nothing to add to what I have said in paragraph 25.

Mr. Grose.

It is only to prevent people from going into towns like Madras that wandering should be compulsorily prevented by the Police. No such measures were needed here. When wanderers were found to be emaciated and starving they were forced into relief-camps, and this was sufficient.

Mr. Goodrich.

I would have relief works near each town and compel those applying for relief who might be found fit to work.

Mr. Crole.

People wandering aimlessly should most decidedly be turned back by the Police. Those found in town should, along with all others, be compelled either to go into camps or on works. There would be no difficulty about this if the system was uniform everywhere. This fatal habit would soon cease when it became known, as it would not be slow to do, that one certain result would follow.

Mr. J. G. Horsfall.

I think not. I do not believe they will wander in this way if timely relief is offered in the shape of work nearer home. It is in search of food—in fact, in search of work—that they originally start wandering. The character of the Hindu is adverse to wandering. It is, or rather was, considered a disgrace to a man to have travelled to places far from home.

*Clause 2.*—In the case of large towns, naturally the centre of attraction, I would certainly employ the Police to keep out wanderers, with power to send them back to their own district or to the nearest relief works if capable of work. In the case of such as were incapable of work, to the nearest relief-camp.

*Clause 3.*—Yes. *Vide* above.

Mr. Sewell remarks upon this: "To let people learn by their own experience means death to a large number of them; and I would certainly use compulsion in such cases not only in compassion to them but in justice to the villages amongst which they would wander. These wandering beggars are an intolerable pest. I would not forcibly turn them back, but would compel them to go to the relief works."

Mr. Austin.

I have answered this question in my answer to No. 25. I would compel all wanderers to go to a camp, and would entirely put a stop to the practice of allowing beggars to flock in large numbers from all parts of the country into the big town. Their doing so is fraught with danger to the health of the town, and they are moreover an intolerable nuisance.

Mr. Knox.

I think it would be most difficult to check to any appreciable extent by direct means the movements of the people either when

Mr. Knox—continued.

seeking new homes or when only wandering about. Neither do I think it would be at all judicious to attempt to do so through the agency of the Police or others. The measures taken would never be understood, would create a great deal of alarm, and would undoubtedly lead to much oppression. The people should be, as much as possible, left to themselves to find out from experience what is best for them.

But though except in special cases, direct coercion even for their own good is, in my opinion, objectionable, indirectly much may be done to assist the people in finding out what is best for them. I do not think that enough was done during the recent famine to acquaint the people with the measures adopted for their relief; those with whom we have chiefly to deal are very ignorant, and it is necessary to din things into their ears repeatedly before they thoroughly comprehend them. I assume, of course, that we have a good system of relief, plenty of work, and good, well-managed camps accessible to the people; this being so, it should be the duty of village officials and others constantly to promulgate in the villages and explain where and how the people can get work, where the camps are situated, who are the officers to whom they should apply, what are the wages given on works, the advantages of a camp to those who are sick, &c.; and the European inspecting officers, when going their rounds, ought to try and find out how far the people comprehended all this. Printed placards might be posted about and proclamation by beat of tom-tom made.

It would be useful also to obtain as accurate information as possible about the state of adjoining districts, the prices of food, the state of the labor market, the condition of the communications, whether there was much sickness, &c., and then promulgate these details; by these means the people would be able to determine for themselves whether emigration was advisable and, if so, in what direction.

I feel convinced that much good might be done in the way of guiding people by these means, viz., by having a better system of communicating to them correct information both concerning their own district and also those adjoining it. I think that it is probable people when in distress would come more freely and at an earlier stage to our works and camps, and that there would be less aimless wandering about. This is the great object to be attained, for the high rate of mortality which prevailed is in a great measure due to people not seeking relief till it was too late.

But we might also make it as unpleasant and difficult for stragglers as possible in the manner indicated above (*vide* answer to paragraph 25) by putting down begging in public and putting in force more stringently the provision of the law concerning vagabonds. The principal objects of wanderers are stealing and begging, and the more difficult the attainment of these objects was rendered, the more would aimless wandering be discouraged.

I repeat there should be no coercion of the people except in individual instances where there is danger to life; no driving them that way, or pulling them this way like sheep; they must be treated like rational beings, ignorant no doubt, but still not utterly unable to appreciate what is to their own advantage. Our policy should be (1) to establish a good system of relief, (2) to see that the people know and understand what measures have been adopted to give them relief, and (3) to put difficulties in the way of vagabondism.

**Mr. Lee-Warner.**

About the end of April this very subject presented itself for solution, Mr. Elliot, of the Ceylon Service, being sent over to request the Madura Magistracy and Police to turn back the excessive crowds of immigrants coming into the island. The Ceylon Government really had the means of reducing the immigration in a moment by taking off their established agencies as I pointed out to them. But when assured by Mr. Elliot that the people going over could find no employment, and that his Government would take no steps, I did all in my power to stop them on this side by advice and warnings of cholera along the route. But all my efforts were useless, the gangsmen easily overpersuading their victims that I had an object to misrepresent matters; so I came to the conclusion that it would be better to let them learn by experience.

As to inter-district immigration, or crowding into the towns, all that can be done is to guide the movement and to have arrangements ready to meet it. If the wanderers learn that anything like deportation or turning back is contemplated, they will meet it with false accounts of themselves. As for begging and straggling about a large town, they will not do it if there is nothing to be picked up by it. I consider that however the final protection of the lives and property of the grain-dealers may be the duty of the Government, it is also theirs to increase precautions in times of general distress. Instead of this they pile their mountains of rice bags in the most open places, attracting the homeless poor. The Police already have the powers requisite to enable them to disperse disorderly crowds and to stop offences; and it seems to me that these powers combined with the establishment of proper relief-works and camps will be sufficient, without any further legislation to protect the interests of towns and keep the wanderers "moving on." I do not see on what principle the distress is to be localised entirely among the villages.

**Mr. Martin.**

A great deal of this emigrating and wandering takes place before a famine or scarcity has declared itself sufficiently to enable it to be said with certainty that relief measures will be necessary. People see that grain is scarce and dear; that their own crops will very probably come to nothing; and that possible trouble to come is spoken of in the village, and they early move to places which have the repute of possessing plenty.

It would be very difficult—if not impossible—to interfere at all at this stage. It would hardly be desirable either, for many of the people may better themselves slightly by getting the help of well-to-do relatives, or by actually reaching places out of the influence of the famine; but when relief measures have once been fairly instituted and a sufficient establishment introduced into the district to do what is wanted, emigration and wandering ought to be stopped, and the Police might safely be employed to put a stop to them by sending the people either to a relief work or poor-house. I would not allow such people to straggle about a large town at all. There ought, I think, to be a guard at each entrance of such a town to direct wanderers either to the relief-camp or to the officer in charge of classification for work, and every now and then, without notice, the streets should be visited suddenly at night by a strong body of peons or constables to remove in a body all persons begging to a shed outside the poor-house, where they should be sorted in the morning into those fit for camp and fit for work. There will always be a certain percentage of incorrigible idlers

**Mr. Martin**—continued.

among those sent to work who will return again to the town to beg and on whom the above process must be repeated, until by persistence they succeed in getting qualified for camp by a long course of semi-starvation.

I do not think that the people of this part of the country would be alarmed by legislation, which would give the Police the necessary power to arrest them when in danger.

**Mr. Lewis Moore.**

As far as I understand, it would not at present be legal to employ the Police to turn famine-stricken people back from any part of a country to which they have begun to emigrate, or to compel them to go to relief works or poor-houses. Such being the case, it is clear to me that no officer would have been justified in the late famine in taking any such action. Few things are of more importance than to impress on all classes of officials, European as well as Native, that they should act up to the powers legally given them, and never exceed them. If increased powers are required by district officers in a famine—and I think that there can be no reasonable doubt that such is the case—a special Famine Act should be passed giving the powers required. I am most decidedly of opinion that famine-stricken people should be prevented from crowding into large towns, such as Trichinopoly. During the late famine their doing so proved to be a most intolerable nuisance, but at present it is impossible to prevent this. One cause why the poor flocked into Trichinopoly during the prevalence of distress to such an extent was no doubt in order that they might avail themselves of the private charity that was being distributed there. Almost all the well-to-do inhabitants of the town were in the habit, during the famine, of distributing small doles of food at their house-doors to beggars and distressed persons. Their reasons for doing so were no doubt most praiseworthy, but the result was by no means beneficial, as the food thus given was scarcely enough to support life, and yet the fact that it was given offered an attraction to distressed wanderers and was thus calculated to be prejudicial to their real interests. The generality of the distressed people, it was invariably found, preferred a spare and precarious diet with freedom to a substantial one within barriers, and consequently the relief-camp established on the Tanjore road with the express object of taking the famine-stricken people away from the town was never half filled, while the streets continued to be infested with beggars, &c.

**Mr. Oldham.**

The aimless wandering and congregating of the famine-stricken at large towns and capitals is, when it has set in, one of the most embarrassing incidents of a famine, and, when relief measures are in progress, probably the chief causes of mortality. That it can be stopped or prevented is proved by the example of Behar in 1874. In Chumparun there was none of it, the reason being, of course, the promptness and adequacy, perhaps at first the profuseness, of relief measures. On the other hand in the adjoining district of Gorakpur (N.W.P.) this feature was marked, and many wanderers thence came into Chumparun. But with a much more contracted system of relief and with central works the evil could, I believe, be much reduced by organising the circle inspection system at the beginning of the distress, and before the Circle Inspectors became actual dispensers of relief, employing them to direct the people where to go for work, and to keep each village informed of the relief measures in progress. They might do more

Mr. Oldham—continued.

than this. In numberless instances, when applicants for relief have refused to stir when addressed individually, they have marched cheerfully and at once when given even a semblance of cohesion and a mere nominal head, and particularly if granted a list of their names to take with them to the officer in charge of the work to which they are referred.

The aimless wandering of inexperienced people is infinitely easier to deal with than the vagabondage of relief recipients, who prefer to straggle in a town and beg or pilfer to undergoing the discipline of a relief work or camp. At present from 100 to 300 of this class are picked up by the Police every day in Bellary. Those in good condition give no trouble, but the emaciated have us at their mercy. They must be fed when they are first collected, and drafted away by easy stages, and fed at each stage; and if they do not escape on the way they only stay on a relief work till pay-day and then return to their old existence; and as the most restless generally manage to draw off some old relative or weak child or ignorant dependent in low condition with them, the mortality which follows this systematic vagabondage is very great.

At present the only remedy applied is to keep them moving, to collect them daily, and draft them again and again. The plan of having the approaches to the town guarded by a cordon of soldiers or Police has, I believe, been tried and failed for obvious reasons. As the men must be in small parties and under inferior officers, or acting without them, they cannot be trusted to interfere with wayfarers.

In Bellary there is a double agency for collecting these people every day. One is the Police. A far more effectual one is a body of Inspectors and Peons employed by the Town Charitable Relief Committee. The employment of this agency effectually prevents any complaints on the ground of illegality or compulsion, and never has there been any such complaint. Operations would be further facilitated if these systematic wanderers could be marked. The plan has, I believe, been tried and with good results. As regards the prevention of aimless wandering by inexperienced persons, *vide* my answer to paragraph 10 of Chapter II.

Mr. Weekes.

It would be hard to stop them if they were really right in their surmises and expectations, *e.g.*, it would have been unwise to stop emigration from Mysore as it was cruel to stop it from Cashmere, if all accounts are true. But that is not the question. I certainly think it would be better, on the assumption that they are really deceived, to stop them, but they are often right. I do not think that, if suitable relief were really offered them, they would emigrate and wander. A good system of village relief would have prevented anything of the kind. It is this that would have prevented the great mortality in the last famine, but this fact and the importance of village relief and of keeping the majority of the people in their houses does not seem to be yet realised. The usual practice has been to allow the people to starve in the villages and to wander about the country, and then to erect camps as a preventive, and to consider them as instruments of famine relief; whereas they are merely necessary evils, evidence of maladministration, and are extemporized remedies for failure of relief. Except the bed, house and village-ridden, who, it is admitted, should be fed at home, the whole of the class of wanderers and people temporarily unfit for work (who are the only people that had been ordered to be sent to camps) would not require to be sent if the

**Mr. Weekes**—continued.

famine were adequately relieved. I do not think the Police would be the fittest agency to employ to turn the people back or to send them to works or camps, or that there would be any necessity for compulsion if suitable relief were offered and the matter well explained and made known.

**Mr. Hurry Row.**

Answered in 25. I would not advocate more. Any amount of persuasion may be used but no force.

**QUESTION 37.**—Is it a recognised feature of the Revenue administration in your district to give relief by the remission or suspension of the demand for land-revenue when the crops fail? If there are any established rules, quote them. Is the land-revenue assessment based on the principle that profits of good years should cover losses in bad years? Is it assumed that a sufficient margin of profit is left to the land-holders to admit of the regular payment of the revenue under all vicissitudes of season, or only in the ordinary fluctuations that occur, excluding seasons of extreme drought? What is the practical state of the case? How far is it found to be possible to collect the land-revenue in a year when the crops have totally failed, without pressing unduly on the land-owners? What amount of failure of crops is held to justify what amount of leniency in collection? Where the occupier of land pays rent to a landlord, how is the payment of such rent affected by failure of crops, and to what extent does the remission or suspension of land-revenue lead to corresponding treatment of rent? What are the arguments in favor of giving relief in the form of remission or suspension, respectively? To what extent has it been customary in actual practice in your district or province to remit or to suspend in such cases? Up to what limits do you consider that it is practicable to recover in future years the postponed demand of bad years, or does suspension practically mean remission in all but a few cases?

**Sir W. R. Robinson.**

In reply to the question I append two minutes on the subject of remission of revenue demand under famine conditions recorded by me, under date 29th January and 10th July 1878, respectively—the latter in review of Mr. Bernard's arguments. No settlements are adjusted to include famine years in South India. The revenue demand (after equitable remission) can be collected (in arrear in a large number of cases) from the ryots, &c., but mainly by large use of their credit and at heavy interest.

**Mr. Longley.**

*Is it a recognised feature of the Revenue administration in your District to give relief by the remission or suspension of the demand for land-revenue when the crops fail?*

Yes. Remission of the full assessment on irrigated lands under ryotwari settlement is granted when the land is left waste, or when the crop is totally lost owing to either deficiency or excess of water, provided that such deficiency or excess has not been occasioned by laches of the owners of such lands. Suspension of the demand is not a recognised feature of the Madras Revenue administration, though in the present famine the issue of coercive process for the collection of revenue was suspended for a few months except in the case of well-to-do persons.

*If there are any established rules, quote them.*

*Vide Board's Standing Order, No. 137.*

Mr. Longley—continued.

*Is the land-revenue assessment based on the principle that profits of good years should cover losses in bad years?*

A small deduction, 20 and 15 per cent., in the case of dry lands and a reduction of the rates fixed for the several groups in the case of wet lands were made from the ascertained gross produce in fixing the assessment of 1871 to cover ordinary fluctuations in the yield; but these deductions were not intended to meet losses occurring in seasons of extraordinary drought, &c., and scarcity. This applies to lands under ryotwar settlement.

It is assumed that a sufficient margin is left to the ryotwari landholders to admit of payment of regular assessment of revenue only in ordinary fluctuations, but not in seasons of extreme drought.

The practical state of the case confirms the above assumption.

There has been no *total* failure of crops within the last thirty years, but there was a partial failure in some years. In the present famine the yield in 1875-76 was about 6 annas, in 1876-77 2 to 3 annas, and in 1877-78 about 4 or 5 annas, the consequence of which was that most of the petty puttadars paying revenue under Rupees 30, and a portion of those under Rupees 50, became extremely impoverished, so much so, that a great number of them either found admittance into relief-camps or on famine works, and a number left their homes for other districts in the hopes of bettering themselves; and it may well be supposed that a portion of these have succumbed to starvation. As these petty landholders form the bulk of the ryotwar puttadars in this district, the collection of the revenue due by them is hopeless.

Total number of	
Puttadars ...	188,809
Puttadars paying	
under Rupees 10.	142,495
Puttadars paying	
between Rupees	
10 and 30 ...	40,393

The above remark applies to the case of puttadars whose *sole means of livelihood is agriculture*. In the case of puttadars who have some other occupations besides, the revenue was collected with great difficulty. A number of them are persons of middling circumstances who have been reduced to extreme poverty or to the level of other petty puttadars owing to prolonged continuance of the famine.

All petty Zemindars and other landholders were obliged to borrow money to meet Government demand, as neither class could expect much in such times—the former from his ryots and the latter from his lands. The collection, therefore, in the case of these proprietors was enforced with some difficulty, and they are still in arrears to a large extent.

*What amount of failure of crops is held to justify what amount of leniency in collection?*

There is no fixed rule laid down. Most of the landholders paying under Rupees 30 as also a portion of those under Rupees 50 generally supplement their income from land by wages earned by ordinary labor, &c. In times of distress resulting from a general failure of crops labor is not procurable. The consequence is that they fall back on State relief for maintenance. In such cases a rigid collection of revenue from landholders of this description would be undesirable; for they will be compelled to dispose of their *all* for what it will fetch, and such sales would not (with land and cattle depreciated in the market) meet the Government demand, but would simply ruin the cultivator, whilst relaxation in collection or total remission would probably enable these poor cultivators to continue as such. I would therefore propose in future, when the yield of dry lands is between 6 and 8 annas, the collection be suspended for two years, and when it is between 3 and

Mr. Longley—continued.

6 a portion, and when less than 2 annas, the whole of assessment be remitted. In the case of landholders paying Rupees 50 and upwards a suspension of a portion of their kists is desirable for, say, a year.

Where the occupant is hopelessly insolvent, the rent must be foregone; but where the ryot is merely impoverished, and there is still hope of his solvency, the landlord requires them to execute a bond to pay the rent at some future period. But it is very doubtful if payment will be made according to the bond. Landlords, as a rule, would make no concession to their ryots in consideration of the suspension of the land-revenue by *Government*; but such suspension would certainly relieve the landlord to some extent, as he would be in difficulties because of the non-payment of rents by his ryots. This remark applies to the case of zemindari landholders.

In the case of ryotwari landholders holding directly from Government, who have let their lands to others, the tenants do not pay them when there is a failure of crops (*vide* answer to Question 10, Chapter I).

In the case of wet lands the whole assessment is remitted in all years when there has been no crop or a total failure of crop. If dry crops fail to a large extent, as in times of extreme drought, portion of assessment in the form of percentage is remitted in proportion to the failure. There has been no suspension allowed.

It will not be possible to recover in future years the postponed demand of bad years, if any, except in the cases in which suspension has been recommended above, for a year to puttadars of some little substance.

Mr. McC. Webster.

In a year of short crops it is the practice to give a remission of revenue. The rules are published in Standing Circular Order of the Board of Revenue, No. 137-1. Remissions of land-revenue on wet lands irrigated from a Government source are granted in ordinary years in individual cases when the crops fail owing to want or excess of water beyond the ryot's control, and in unsettled districts, under certain circumstances, for partial loss of crops. Remissions on dry lands are not granted for individual loss of crops, but when remissions are necessary owing to serious failure of the harvest, they take the form of a percentage reduction of the assessment throughout the affected tract, the percentage reduction being proportionate to the total loss in the tract. This year a different principle was specially introduced to meet the very severe cases of individual losses. The settlement of the district is now under revision. The revised settlement is based on the principle that profits of good years should cover the losses in bad years, and for this purpose 20 per cent. is deducted from the estimated gross value of the crop, but this will not, I think, much affect the majority of the ryots, whose profits in a good year are not sufficient for their sole support. In making the settlement it is assumed that a sufficient margin of profit is left to the landholders to admit of the regular payment of revenue under the ordinary fluctuations of season, but not in seasons of extreme drought.

It is not possible to collect the land-revenue in a year when the crops have totally failed without pressing unduly on the landholders, and, indeed, it would not be possible to collect it fully even if undue pressure was used.

Mr. McC. Webster—continued.

Last year the dry crops failed to the extent of three-fourths, and the remissions on dry lands amounted to about Rs. 1,94,458, or 10·7 of the dry assessment. Remissions were sanctioned at the maximum rate of 75 per cent. of the assessment on dry waste and 50 per cent. of the assessment on "shavi," *i.e.*, lands cultivated but the crops on which failed. It will be observed that the actual remissions granted did not at all come up to this proportion owing to the Board of Revenue having enjoined the greatest care in granting remissions and having remarked that remissions were not to be given up to the maximum as a matter of course. The remissions were not, I think, in sufficient proportion to the loss of crops and were considerably below what was originally recommended by the Division Officers and the Collector. A considerable amount of the demand has in consequence not been collected, and, if hereafter collected, will result in the ryots having to pay far more than their usual share of subsequent crops. It is considered more suitable to remit once for all a certain percentage of the demand than to suspend collections. The former certainly seems to me to be much the best policy, for the ryot has not a demand hanging over his head that he has no prospect of paying and which would put it into the power of the subordinate Revenue officials to harass those who do not secure their goodwill. Even, however, when remissions are given, they are not given to such an extent that the ryot would be able to pay up the balance of the demand at once. Experience has shown that when partial remissions are given the collection of the balance has in many cases been attended with delay, but that most has eventually been collected. With regard to suspension of the collections the nature of the Government assessment must be considered. The principle on which it is fixed is that by the Shastras the Government is entitled to a certain share of the produce. This share has in newly-settled districts been arrived at by estimating the outturn of particular classes of lands; deducting expenses, &c., leaving a margin for ordinary fluctuations of seasons, and then commuting into a money payment a proportion of the net proceeds. In the new settlement of this district the proportion is taken at a little less than one-half. This is converted into a money payment. The existing settlement which was effected soon after the British acquisition of the district, and which confirmed the conversion by Tippoo into a fixed money payment of the share of the crop paid up to that time, was conducted virtually on the same principle, *viz.*, that a money-tax was fixed to represent the Government share of the produce. Now, this being the principle of the settlement and the revised rates not providing for seasons of extraordinary drought, the Government in such exceptional seasons should, I consider, remit either the whole or a portion of the land-tax on the ground that there has been no crop to a share of which they are entitled. The necessity for such remissions will not often occur, as the revised settlement will provide for ordinary fluctuations of season. The principle of assessment being as above stated, Government are very much in the position of a superior landlord who should deal with his tenants according to the custom of the country as shown in the following answer:—

*"Where the occupier of land pays rent to a landlord, how is the payment of such rent affected by failure of crops and to what extent does the remission or suspension of land-revenue lead to corresponding treatment of rent?"*

In this district only those irrigated lands which have a tolerable certainly of water-supply are rented at a fixed rent either in money

Mr. McC. Webster—continued.

or in kind. Dry lands are almost invariably rented at a "Warum" (*i.e.*, a rent fixed at a certain share of the crop for the year). In this district the "Warum" is usually one-half of the gross produce, the landlord paying the Government assessment. The payment of rent to the landlord is therefore directly affected by the failure of crops, as, if there is no crop, he gets no rent. In such cases, if he has to pay the full assessment, he suffers a dead loss, and I do not think that a suspension of collection would meet his case at all, for he cannot collect any additional rent from his tenants in subsequent years. In a calamitous year Government should treat him exactly as he treats his tenants and should remit either the whole or a portion of the assessment and should not merely suspend its collection.

*To what extent has it been customary in actual practice in your district to remit or suspend in such case?*

The following statement shows the demand, collection, and balance of the last seventeen years:—

Fasli Year.	Character of the Year.	Gross Demand for the Fasli.	Deduct Remission.			Net Demand.	Current Collections within the Year.	Arrears at End of Year.	Arrears of previous Years collected within Year.
			Dry Remission.	Other Fixed Remission including Remission for Wet Lands.	Total Remission.				
1270	Season indifferent ...	Rs. 29,00,881	Rs. 69,648	Rs. 4,99,665	Rs. 5,69,313	Rs. 23,31,568	Rs. 22,43,869	Rs. 87,699	Rs. 75,398
1271	More unfavorable than past year.	28,72,809	1,78,909	4,30,933	6,09,842	22,62,967	19,94,056	2,68,911	87,221
1272	Season favorable ...	29,60,311	...	4,14,857	4,14,857	25,45,454	24,32,654	1,12,800	2,71,212
1273	More unfavorable than past year.	28,11,918	...	1,86,698	1,86,698	26,25,220	25,48,238	76,982	1,13,918
1274	Not so favorable ...	25,76,669	...	1,53,074	1,53,074	24,23,595	23,11,165	1,12,430	76,256
1275	Season unfavorable ...	26,67,290	* 1,404	1,90,994	1,92,398	24,74,892	24,09,182	65,710	1,13,264
1276	Season very trying ...	27,22,236	...	1,34,208	1,34,208	25,88,028	24,95,536	92,492	61,817
1277	A very bad season ...	27,06,016	2,40,646	1,61,008	4,01,654	23,04,362	21,22,673	1,81,689	77,521
1278	Not favorable ...	27,24,622	...	1,37,826	1,37,826	25,86,796	24,48,814	1,37,982	1,79,264
1279	Favorable ...	27,54,486	...	1,14,947	1,14,947	26,39,539	25,06,571	1,32,968	1,34,468
1280	Do. ...	27,57,884	...	1,25,713	1,25,713	26,32,171	24,64,685	1,67,486	1,29,678
1281	Not very favorable ...	27,13,491	...	1,40,438	1,40,438	25,73,053	24,55,130	1,17,923	1,62,465
1282	Do. ...	27,06,702	...	1,13,945	1,13,945	25,92,757	24,79,062	1,13,695	1,16,173
1283	Do. ...	27,06,674	...	98,797	98,797	26,07,877	24,24,629	1,83,248	1,08,724
1284	An average one ...	27,22,845	...	1,00,859	1,00,859	26,21,986	23,75,153	2,46,833	1,76,944
1285	Unfavorable ...	27,88,429	...	1,59,612	1,59,612	25,78,817	23,45,081	2,33,736	2,41,731
1286	A very bad season ...	27,33,453	1,94,458	2,05,463	3,99,921	23,33,532	10,17,509	13,16,023	2,28,076

\* Remission not consequent on drought.

Mr. Price.

When wet crops fail through want of water or other causes beyond the control of the cultivators, remissions are given. In the case of dry crops no remission is given without special sanction.

The orders bearing upon the subject are quoted in the margin. The suspension of the demand for land-revenue is not a recognised feature of the Revenue administration of the district. The present assessment, *i.e.*, that which has this year been introduced, is fixed with regard to the ordinary vicissitudes of seasons. The calculations upon which it is based are elaborate and will, no doubt, be fully detailed by the Director of Revenue Settlement. It is assumed that in all usual seasons the landholder will have a margin of profit—and I believe that it is

Revenue Board's Standing Circular No. 137-1, dated 7th December 1872, &c.

Mr. Price—continued.

generally speaking much greater than is calculated—which will allow of his paying up regularly his dues to Government. Consideration of seasons of extensive drought has not been had. The assessment which held before the introduction of the new settlement was, though not containing any allowance for vicissitudes of season and perhaps at first too heavy, so much reduced by revision from time to time that finally there has been no great difference between it and the settlement rates now in force. I certainly do not think that on the average it was, at the time that it was abolished, too heavy. The practical state of the case in this district is this. The assessment is quite light enough to allow of any cultivator who works for himself paying the assessment to Government and making a handsome profit out of his land. The regular calculation is that, with a good wet crop, *the straw* pays the assessment. I have talked to scores of ryots in different districts on this subject, and they one and all have admitted that it is true. What causes difficulties as regards payment of assessment here is the fact that nearly every large Puttadar is an absentee and lives in Madras; that the Mirassidars and the Sukavasies, the latter of whom are the real cultivators, are eternally quarrelling; that land which ought under the rules to be cultivated is in consequence left waste, and that then Government have much trouble in getting their money. It is, where there has been total failure of crops for one year, not possible, excepting in the case of the wealthiest ryots, to collect the assessment without putting on undue pressure. It is impracticable to lay down any hard and fast rule as regards relaxation of collections; each case must be judged by itself. I myself would not, as a general principle, relax collections at all if one-third of a crop was lost; with half, I should not press the smaller puttadars; with three-fourths, I should relax generally; and with the failure of the whole crop, collect from none. Under the rules in force in the Presidency, entire failure of crops would involve very extensive remissions. I would however cite, in illustration of my previous remarks, the case of salt ryots in this district, many of whom have but a small putta, but who nevertheless make a good income from manufacturing salt for Government. I have made inquiries in several places in this district, both from ryots and officials, and my decided belief is that whether remissions are granted or not, and whether crops failed or not, the landlord wrings from his tenant every penny that he, under the law or by moral suasion, can. I consider that remission or suspension of collection never affects the unfortunate tenant. I am opposed to remissions and I have always been. Where, according to certain fixed rules, remissions ought to be given, let them be given, and where it is a matter of certainty that the money can never be collected, as was the case with a great deal of the revenue lost during the late famine, I would also remit, but I do not hold the theory that because the season is a bad, or even a very bad one, remission should be given as a means of relief. They are not a relief and are, for the following reasons, very objectionable:—

- (1) That the greater part of the remission never goes to the ryots at all, for contributions have to be made to a host of officials, each of whom must receive his *douceur*.
- (2) That remission once given is a loss to the State, and that officers in the hurry and pressure of famine are very apt to overlook the fact that rain might come before the season is over, and that lands might after all be cultivated; where they are they do not, unless in the taluk of a smart Tahsildar, ever come to account.

Mr. Price—continued.

- (3) That where the system of landlord and tenant, as is in this district the rule, holds, the tenant pays his rent if it can be squeezed out of him whether there are remissions or not, and that the landlord, who is able in many instances to pay, pockets the remission granted.
- (4) That remissions have a demoralizing effect, inasmuch as they render the people, even though they have a comparatively small share in them, and the village officers who take a large share, prone to cry out on the slightest provocation, and to try to make it worst of everything. \*I have, from my recent experiences of Jamabandi work in this district, in which remissions were last year given wholesale, little, if any, doubt that the accounts presented this year have been largely falsified, and I have had actual proof that statements made to me regarding crops, &c., were utterly untrue.
- (5) That giving remissions tends to slackness of cultivation, as the ryot says, "I have only to cultivate as much as convenient and I shall get off the rest, if I, at the Jamabandi, tell the gentleman, and get the Monigar and Curnam to back me, that there was not enough water."

In favor of suspension of collections I would advance the argument that it involves no hardship on the people to charge the assessment and stay collection. If things turn out badly, the amount which cannot be recovered by, if necessary, spreading collection over two or more years, can be written off; the people do not fall into the groove, which they now have, of supposing that to cry "famine" and tell falsehoods is sufficient to bring a shower of remissions, and the landlords do not escape and, at the expense of the State, pocket their shares of produce or rent in addition to avoiding having to pay their dues to Government.

I do not think that the assessment is so heavy as to warrant the grant of large remissions except in very exceptional cases. I admit that last year was one of this kind. It would have been, considering the season which preceded it, and the depth of misery and want to which the people had been reduced, futile to hope, without very great pressure and troubling the ryots very much, to collect the full assessment. But the recuperative process, I believe, is much more rapid than is supposed. Prices throughout this season have maintained a high level, whilst the cost of cultivation has been the same as in ordinary years, and I have, during the Jamabandi, collected some rather startling statistics touching cattle, the loss of which in this district was supposed to be enormous. Hoarded savings have, no doubt, disappeared in very many cases, but I believe that a by no means small proportion of the ryots are, as far as the means of cultivating go, pretty well in their normal condition, and they have increased profits from which to pay their assessment.

Every Collector has a different view on the subject of remissions and suspending collection. As far as I can ascertain, last year but one per cent. of the whole assessment of this district was charged, and collections were, for a considerable period, suspended. In Cuddapah, to the best of my recollection, the remissions throughout the district were 63 per cent., and we suspended the collections until times mended. The practice for many years has, I believe, been to remit freely. I have, in the taluks settled by myself, made careful and personal inquiries and given but very little. I know of no case previous to last year in which in this district collections were suspended. I believe that, by judicious arrangements, the demands of bad years (presuming that all patent cases calling for remission are dealt with at the annual settlement) can be without difficulty collected in future seasons. I should, when suspending collections, not look forward, unless matters turned out far worse than I anticipated, to having to remit the greater part of

**Mr. Price**—continued.

demand. By "demand" I mean the "settled demand," that is, the demand fixed at the Jamabandi. Where "current" collections are stayed, the matter is different, for the demand is not settled until the Jamabandi is over, and that is frequently not completed until the year to which it relates has nearly closed.

**Mr. Grose.**

Remission is given for "wet" lands when water fails, and for "dry" lands in seasons of great drought (Board's Orders, No. 137).

The new settlement of this district has arranged the assessment so as to recognise vicissitudes of season. Probably in their averages famines (which seldom occur) are taken into account, but this does not prevent the people, who generally live from hand to mouth, from being resourceless at such a time.

It is impossible to collect the land-revenue in a year when the crops have totally failed without pressing unduly on the land-owners.

Total failure of crops has been held to justify total suspension of the power of collecting by coercive process, and this necessarily stops collections almost completely. No rules are laid down for lenient treatment when there are partial failures of crop, but the remission rules do something, and so does the discretion of the superior officers, who can relax the pressure on the collecting officials which is exercised in good years.

Private landholders collect their rent, if they possibly can, whether the crops have succeeded or not. If a landlord's payments are suspended, that and the difficulty of collection will make him suspend his demands. If his payments are remitted, it should be done conditionally on his allowing remission to his tenants.

If there have been no crops, there should be remission not suspension of the demand. It is very difficult, indeed, to collect more than one year's revenue at a time, and a suspended demand will make the ryots listless and prevent the recovery of the country. The loss to the ryot by collecting such a suspended demand must be far greater than the profit to the State.

**Mr. Goodrich.**

In Government villages there is no suspension, demand may be remitted or collected. If suspension were allowed the whole demand would be eventually collected if the taluk and village officers were looked after, and if the latter were in this district replaced by efficient men. I do not mean that where ryots had died leaving little or no stock after several years of distress that the suspended demand would be realized, but the cases would be few. If heirs were left who could work the land they would take it with its burden in nearly all cases.

It is this practice of remission which has demoralized those who have been, those who are, and those who hope to be, Tahsildars. Although the most extravagant allowances are made in every settlement scheme for the effects of bad seasons, Collectors have been unable to break through the vile old custom even in settled districts.

The land-revenue assessment in every settled district is based on the principle that only what might well be paid in an unfavorable year may be named as the demand. It is only the free permission to subdivide and alienate, and the acceptance as a tenant of any creature, no matter how helpless, that has reduced ryotwari districts to rabbit-warrens of pauper cottiers. Ninety-five years ago Parla Kimedi, Tekkali, and Chicacole, three

**Mr. Goodrich**—continued.

adjacent tracts in the south of the Ganjam District, were reported on. Parla Kinedi and Tekkali were inhabited by tenants who paid for their lands Rupees 2,41,000, Chicacote by tenants who paid Rupees 2,95,000. In 1871 Parla Kinedi and Tekkali having been for nearly the whole interval Zemindaris, paid Rupees 5,86,000 to their landlords. Chicacote, which had been ryotwari, paid Rupees 2,77,000, and its population was far too dense for a purely agricultural community. The Zemindari and proprietary villages are far the most prosperous.

**Mr. Crole.**

It is a recognised feature of the revenue administration in this (settled) district to give relief by the remission of the demand when the crops fail utterly. *Vide* Board's Standing Circular, No. 137-1.

The assessment on dry lands is fixed so as to cover ordinary fluctuations only. In regard to irrigated land there is no charge when Government supplies no water.

The demand is suspended on a general failure, but the well-to-do ryots can always pay, and there is no ground for the assertion that suspension of the demand is equivalent to its remission. It is being disproved, at this moment, by the active collection of the arrears of revenues as settled at the last two Jamabandies, and it is extremely unlikely that any but a small proportion of the postponed demand will have to be written off as irrecoverable. In the cases in which such a course may be found necessary, the cause will nearly always be found to have arisen owing to a mistake in the Jamabandi Officer in having brought to demand the assessment of land which, under the rules, should have been properly remitted.

The Madras Revenue system can hardly be improved on in the above respects.

**Mr. Stokes.**

It is a recognised feature of the revenue administration in the district to give relief by remission when the crops fail. The rule for remission is as follows:—

I.—Remission of the full assessment on irrigated land will be granted when the land is left waste, or when the crop is totally lost, owing either to deficiency or excess of water, provided that such excess or deficiency has not been occasioned by any act or neglect of the persons to whom the land belongs.

II.—In districts which have not been settled by the Settlement Department partial remission of the assessment on irrigated land will be granted when partial loss of crops is occasioned either by excess or deficiency of water, and such excess or deficiency has not been occasioned by any act or neglect of the persons to whom the land belongs.

In granting this remission no attempt is to be made to estimate individual losses. Excluding fields which have borne a fair crop, as also occupied and unoccupied waste land, the ayacut of each irrigation work under which crops have been lost must be considered by itself. The condition of a sufficient number of the fields which have suffered must be examined and the demand in all the fields that have suffered must be reduced by the percentage thus calculated.

When under similar circumstances dry crops are cultivated on wet land which must otherwise have remained waste, only the highest dry rate of the village should be charged.

III.—No remission of assessment on unirrigated land will be granted except in very exceptional years or under very exceptional circumstances and with the sanction of the Board, which must be applied for before the end of January.

Mr. Stokes—continued.

This remission will ordinarily be granted without any inquiry into individual losses, as a percentage reduction on the demand of the tract of punjah which has suffered proportionate to the total loss in that tract.

IV.—In all cases where remission is granted, refunds of remitted amounts already paid may be made under Standing Orders Nos. 341 and 341-2.

V.—These rules are to be strictly enforced, and no remissions of assessment are to be granted except in accordance with them.”

The demand for revenue was not formally suspended, but coercive process was resorted to as leniently as possible. Doubtless much of the uncollected demand will have to be written off, but how much will depend on subsequent good or bad seasons. The assessment is not based on the principle that profits of good years should cover losses in bad years. In the case of nunjah (irrigated) lands, it is not assumed that a sufficient margin of profits is left to the landholders to admit of the regular payment of the revenue under all vicissitudes of season or even in the ordinary fluctuations that occur. But in the case of punjah (unirrigated) lands, the assumption is that the profit will suffice for payment in the ordinary fluctuations excluding seasons of extreme drought. When the crops totally fail, no amount can be recovered without pressing unduly on the land-owners. The remission of full revenue where the crops fall below half the average, and of half, one-fourth, and one-eighth, as the circumstances may require, where the failure is above half, appears reasonable. No remission of peishcush or revenue is granted to the landlords, but the extent to which leniency is shown by them in collecting rents depends wholly on their disposition. The fact that when the assessment was fixed the probability of the occurrence of famine was not considered sufficiently shows that remission is necessary. When crops fail the impoverished condition of the ryots in a certain season may necessitate the postponement of the collection of revenue.

Mr. J. G. Horsfall.

Yes. Full remission is granted in the case of wet crops, where the entire crop is lost from want of water or from too much water. In dry crops partial remission is granted only under very special circumstances, not ordinarily, and this only with the special sanction of the Board of Revenue. The suspension of the demand has only recently been permitted, that is, during the recent period of distress.

*Clause 2.*—Yes. Ordinarily, famine years excepted.

*Clause 3.*—The latter.

*Clause 4.*—As a fact no remissions are given in ordinarily bad years for dry lands; for wet the case is different. The maturity of the crop in every year depends upon a sufficiency of the supply of water for irrigation; and where the supply fails and in consequence the entire crop is lost, remission is invariably given; so also where the crop is lost from too much water. It is important to notice that in wet lands to entitle to remission the loss must be total loss, not partial.

*Clause 5.*—It would be impossible to collect the land-revenue in a year of total failure under the system in force; in Madras it has never been tried.

Mr. J. G. Horsfall—continued.

*Clause 6.*—In wet crops, individual total failure where it is caused by either too little or too much water. In dry crops there must be a general and complete failure; and with the special permission of the Board of Revenue before remission is granted. It is only in a famine year that any delay in collection is allowed.

*Clause 7.*—The rent is very seldom foregone where the occupier pays rent to a landlord. The landlord does not, however, as is the case with Government, turn out his tenant in case of failure. The rent is carried on from year to year, and is recouped with interest in favorable years.

Remission is never granted to Inamdars nor to Zemindars holding on a Sanad-i-milkiat istimrar. The remission or suspension of land-revenue does not therefore affect rent. Where, however, special consideration has been shown to any Zemindar, it has been usual to insist that he should show the same to his tenants.

*Clause 8.*—With regard to ryotwari lands the present system seems advisable. The assessment has been calculated and fixed upon the average outturn of several seasons—good, bad, and indifferent,—leaving out, however, such seasons as a famine year. In extraordinary years consequently extraordinary relief measures are needed. The ryot lives upon the produce of his land, but that is all, and his savings will not, as a rule, enable him to meet a succession of adverse seasons. Our present system is a little harsh in one respect,—failure to meet a single instalment is followed by the attachment and sale of the personal and real property of the defaulter, resulting in a loss to Government. The Zemindari system of allowing the excess in good years to be made to meet the default in bad years might with advantage be adopted to some extent. Such a procedure would lead to large outstanding balances appearing in our accounts at the end of the year. I do not see, however, that this is of vital importance.

*Clause 9.*—With regard to ryotwari I have explained above. It is not usual to remit Zemindari peishcush, and the occasions of suspending it are very rare indeed.

*Clause 10.*—In a famine year remission is positively required, because, as stated above, the assessment has been fixed upon the average yield of the land. I see no reason to doubt, however, that excluding a famine year, the assessment could be collected in subsequent years were a system of suspending collections in ordinary adverse seasons introduced. The system has been practised in Zemindaris from time immemorial. In the Nuzvid Estate now under the Court of Wards, I find arrears still in the accounts of over thirty years' standing, and yet not considered irrecoverable.

Mr. Lewis Moore.

It is a recognised feature of the revenue administration that, under certain restrictions, the demand for land-revenue should be remitted when the crops fail. The established rules on the subject will be found in Circular Order No. 20 of 1872 of the Board of Revenue. It will be remarked that in the second of the

**Mr. Lewis Moore**—continued.

rules to be found there a distinction is drawn between settled and unsettled districts, and it is laid down that in a settled district (as Trichinopoly is) remission of assessment on irrigated lands cannot be granted where there has been only a partial loss of crops. In a report by Mr. Puckle (the officer who, as Deputy Director of Revenue Settlement, drew up the revised scheme of settlement for Trichinopoly District,) dated 28th October 1860, paragraph 81, it is stated that, in framing his rates of assessment, he made a deduction of 20 per cent. on account of unfavorable seasons from the gross produce of dry grains, but that he did not provide for this contingency in the case of rice, as Government had sanctioned remission on all wet crops that perished through accident or failure of the monsoon. This statement may be considered as an answer to the question as to whether the land-revenue assessment is based on the principle that profits of good years should cover losses in bad years. As a matter of fact, remission is almost never granted on wet crops in Trichinopoly, and but rarely and to a very limited extent on dry crops. The rates of assessment introduced by the new settlement (1864) are very moderate, especially in the case of the lands in the well-watered valley of the Cauvery, and it may be said broadly that except in famine years remission need never be given in the district. In the late famine there was no failure of crops under the Cauvery and Coleroon, and no remission was required on them. To a limited extent remission had to be granted on dry lands, especially in the Iluppur Division of Trichinopoly Taluk and the Manapparai Division of Kulitalai Taluk. In these parts and in a few other similarly situated portions of the district it would not be possible to collect the land-revenue when the crops have totally failed without pressing unduly on the land-owners. In all the cases in which remission is granted at present in this district, it would not be possible to give relief in the form of suspension in view of remission. As has been shown remission is granted in only the most extreme cases, and in these it would be useless merely to suspend the collections, as the cultivators would never be able to pay, and the only effect would be to burden them with a debt to Government which it would be impossible for them ever to relieve themselves of.

**Mr. Martin,**

It has always been a recognised feature of the revenue administration to give remission when the crops fail. Suspension has not ordinarily been recognised at all, and interest at 6 per cent. is charged on revenue left in arrears. The rules on the subject are contained in Board's Standing Circular No. 137-1.

The assessment is calculated on the assumption that profits of good years cover those of bad years.

The practical state of the case is that there are a great number of pauper proprietors who derive more from odd jobs and coolly labor during the year than from the land, and who never save anything; when the crops fail and there is a dearth of labor, they come for famine relief and cannot pay their kists at first, though if time be given them they will work hard to keep their land by paying the first money they can earn or obtain by sales of their earliest crops.

I consider that remission is a mistake altogether. Our assessment is at present exceedingly light, and fosters a number of

Mr. Martin—continued.

pauper proprietors who speculate on some days of idleness if their crops are good, and on remission if they are bad. Those men who have a real interest in their soil will always take up enough land to live by, and give themselves a margin which may tide them over a bad year, but they may not be able to pay their revenue in all cases without great hardship. Suspension to such persons is a great boon, and the revenue is perfectly safe with them.

I do not think that more than 5 per cent. of revenue suspended is virtually remitted.

The people pay in every case what they can, and when they cannot pay they either emigrate or become day-laborers.

Mr. Soobien.

It is a recognised feature of the revenue administration of the district to give relief by the remission of the demand for land-revenue when the crops fail. Remission is granted under the rules embodied in the Board's Standing Order No. 137. There is no standing rule on the subject of the suspension of the demand for land-revenue, but it was allowed generally during the recent famine, and in ordinary years it is permitted with the sanction of the higher authorities in particular localities where, from special causes, such indulgence is considered to be necessary. The revenue assessment is not based on the principle that profits of good years should cover the losses in bad years, which is obvious from the fact of the grant of remission. Only in the ordinary fluctuations that occur, excluding seasons of extreme drought, the margin of profit left to ordinary landholders is assumed to be sufficient to admit of the regular payments of the revenue. It is found to be utterly impossible to collect the land-revenue in a year when the crops have totally failed without pressing unduly on the land-owners. As to what amount of leniency should be shown in the matter of the collection of the land-revenue depends on the discretion of the officer granting the suspension of the collection, as there is no standing rule on the subject. It is only during the recent famine that it was permitted generally. If the occupier of the land pays rent to the landlord in kind, then the failure of crops implies non-payment of the rent. If the rent is paid in money it is generally customary with landlords to collect it though there is a failure of crops. In this respect the collection, of land-revenue, which in failure of crops is usually remitted, differs from the collection of rent. The argument in favor of granting relief by means of suspension of land-revenue is that it removes one item of expenditure for the ryot at a time when he is hard pressed for money for his ordinary expenditure. The idea that he is still a debtor to Government weighs on his mind however, which is totally removed if the land-revenue is entirely remitted. Owing to the frequent division of lands and other causes the majority of agriculturists are landholders of petty holdings and are men who live from hand to mouth. The postponed demand of bad years would in the majority of cases press hard upon the ryots when it has to be paid in addition to the current demand of the year. In a large majority of cases in which suspension of the collection of revenue is granted suspension does not mean remission, but recourse to coercive measures for its collection becomes necessary in many cases, and this presses very hard upon the ryots. If any relief is therefore proposed to be given in the matter of collection of land-revenue, it would be preferable, I think, to give it in the shape of remission.

Mr. Weekes.

I believe it to be the custom in Cuddapah to suspend the demands for revenue on dry lands, not on wet lands, in season of drought. The permanent settlement in Bengal is based on the principle that profits in good years should cover losses in bad years. I do not think the Madras assessment is based on this principle, nor is any such assumption of a sufficient margin made. The practical state of the case is that where famines have not been very extensive there has been little loss in the revenue, the rise in prices making up to the cultivators for poorness of crop. In Orissa about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  lakhs were remitted and  $11\frac{1}{4}$  lakhs suspended, and afterwards not collected. In Madras, I believe, the collections have been in proportion to the crop raised as far as possible. I do not think Government have ever tried to collect revenue as usual when crops have entirely failed. The demand has generally been suspended. Practically many Zemindars under the permanent settlement live from hand to mouth almost as much as their ryots, and often squander their wealth and mortgage their lands. The landlord will not give up his rent generally if possible, and, if the ryot has any rights to lose, he will probably have to satisfy his landlord. If he is merely a tenant-at-will, the landlord will be able to get little from him except his bullocks. In Orissa, I believe, it was found that the suspension or remission of the revenue did not always ensure the remission or suspension of the demand for rent. There can be no doubt, in my opinion, that in a case of real famine, as soon as the reality has been established, remission of revenue should be made at once unreservedly. Nothing would, I believe, work such thorough and permanent relief to the mass of the people. Its effect would permeate the whole stratum of society and be felt everywhere. I know of nothing that would go so far as to take the sting from famine. On the 20th February I had the honor to recommend this plan to the Honorable Mr. Hope, Member of Council; I believe he was in favor of it. Certainly the class connected with the land feels famine less than any class, but that is not saying much, and they generally, as in the last famine, suffer most severely and permanently by the loss of their cattle—for want of cattle both to plough and to manure the land. But, if the agricultural class have the burden of the revenue removed from them, the benefit will react on the non-agricultural class. In Bengal it has been customary to suspend the demand, except in Orissa where remissions were also made. I take it that, if you collect revenue notwithstanding failure of crop, you permanently impoverish the country and prevent a speedy recovery from famine. The sum must come out of the collected wealth and capital of the country. It all depends on the character of the famine and the riches or poverty of the ryots whether a postponed demand can be realised; practically, after an intense famine, such demand is not collected as was the case in Orissa. In 1861 and 1868 in the North-Western Provinces I believe about two and four lakhs respectively were remitted. When even in permanently-settled Bengal the rule that good years are to pay for bad years is practically obliged to be broken through; it is no wonder that in the North-Western Provinces the same rule which exists is also broken through in practice. To do otherwise would be unwise and impolitic in the extreme as well as difficult, and I should always prefer a remission to the extent roughly guessed by the Collector to be necessary to a remission calculated on the reports of Tahsildars, Curnams, and Deputy Collectors; even if the Collector remitted too much the whole of the remission would react its object, and there would be no delay and no corruption.

Hon. G. N. Gajapathi Rau.

Suspension of payments is usually allowed in Zemindari taluks ; but the balances which remained due in bad years are recovered in the succeeding good years, where there is a good harvest according to the circumstances of each tenant. When the tenant is quite impoverished and meansless, remission is granted ; but such cases are of rare occurrence, and there are no established rules to this effect. As a usage settlements are made with ryots once in a year, or in three years, sometimes five years, either at or after harvest season. On finding that the tenant is unable to meet the demand, payments of rents either wholly or partly are postponed for a better season subject to the express understanding that the landlord is not thereby prevented from enforcing payment at any time before his claim is barred by effluxion of time. It is expected that a tenant on average makes as much profit for himself as he pays to his landlord. It is known however that in Ankapally and other taluks in the south of this district, a tenant's profits are more than double the landlord's rent. This margin of profit covers the losses of ordinary fluctuations of the season. But when there is actual famine, some tenants are much distressed after failure of crops for three successive years, landlords have excused them entirely in the third year when the failure was partial, the indulgence shown depends upon the circumstance of each case. In cases of a severe famine, I recommend that when tenants' crops have failed for three consecutive years a full remission of the third year's rent should be granted. But in other cases I think we can gradually recover the rent due in better seasons that follow the distress, say, one-sixth of the arrears in every year.

Mr. Hurry Row.

When crops fail, I, as landlord, allow remission of rent, it being a little below proportion to the failure.

QUESTION 38.—Is the duty of searching out distress in time of famine in the villages and the peoples' homes one that properly belongs to Government, or is it sufficient for Government to offer means of obtaining relief, and to expect that the famine-stricken will come of themselves and make use of those means? If it is proper to depute special officers to inspect villages and urge the people to accept the relief offered, what steps do you consider necessary for strengthening the ordinary district staff and enabling them to carry out this duty? What class of officers should be selected for such duties, and what areas assigned to them? May these officers best be servants of Government, or should they be taken from the non-official class? What should be their precise duties, and what supervision should be provided to see that they carry out those duties? At what period may it become expedient to organise such an extra famine establishment? To what extent, and under what general circumstances, has there been any tendency on the part of the people in distress to reject measures of relief offered to them? Where determined disinclination has been shown by any portion of the population to leave their villages and go to relief-works or poor-houses, what has been the probable cause of such a state of things? Can it be traced to improper arrangements for the reception of applicants for relief, or for admitting them to employment on works, to an insufficient allowance of food or wages, or to any such causes? Can any other causes be named which may have conduced to the disinclination to seek relief, such as physical prostration, or habitual want of confidence in officials, &c.?

Sir W. R. Robinson.

Whatever it may be possible or expedient to do in future in relief of famine where it first and most prevails—viz., in the villages and

Sir W. R. Robinson—continued.

homes of the drought-stricken tracts and in outlying parts of the country—from whence experience shows that the starving only partially seek our works and closed camps and often too late for any practical purpose—it is clearly the pressing duty of Government to search out this want and its victims from the very first, and to know what is going on in famine times in such homes in every village and town in the country. It will not do simply to await the monthly mortuary village register. If I were asked to indicate those most serious shortcomings in the administration of the Madras famine throughout, the most fertile cause of confusion, inadequate appreciation of the occurrence and probably of unexpected mortality, I would at once point to our inability to grapple with thorough village inspection and administration in the first stages of the famine, and to a probably inadequate appreciation—the error has been partially rectified in the later stages of administration—of the vital importance of village administration and village relief throughout the protracted occurrence.

Of course the effect of such inspection and administration would go beyond the mission of persuasion indicated by the question; and the means of relief, if sought there, are likely to be more resourceful and adaptable in the future than in the past; but be they what they may, they must be brought within reach of the starving, and that probably by village administration. On this point I would simply remark that if much urging is needed to induce acceptance of relief in the form offered by Government under the circumstances, if the proffered aid fails largely to be availed of under the mortal alternative, we may rest assured that there is something incongruous and out of place in its character as respects some classes; something possibly too exclusive, or unduly repellent and wrong-headed in its administration. To this matter the Commission will doubtless turn their special attention and suggestive resource. I myself am satisfied that “working a famine” on sparsely scattered works bristling with “Tests” and on subsistence wages, and feeding the starving and enfeebled poor in terribly lethal closed camps, avert much less death than may well be stayed; while they stop off multitudes who pass away unaided. And I believe that if expenditure and exertion are to stem more efficaciously than we have done the death-flood which a famine entails, more adaptive resource must characterise the means of relief, more conformity to the conditions of the people to be aided must be conceded in its administration. I think too that any change of front which may now have to be made in this respect should take the form of home and village relief much more widely than has hitherto been the case. Even as respects famine finance I believe that village relief will prove—man for man—more thrifty and life-saving than any other so far as gratuitous relief is concerned, while there are obvious, social and economical advantages in the system which brings the rich and poor into mutual relations and keeps the people together; a village system of relief should therefore be brought into influential action the moment famine threatens.

I have already indicated the kind of village administration which is needed more especially in famine. I will only add that inspection of village relief and administration by State officials must be provided for from the very first—with a view to adequacy and thrift—and the addition to existing taluk establishment required to make the inspection complete should be the first step on the danger of famine arising. And if the constitution of the village agency be effective and complete, this inspection may be confided

Sir W. R. Robinson—continued.

to *superior* Native agency. I doubt whether low-paid village Inspectors are reliable.

The abnormal mortality which has occurred outside the measures of relief indicates to some extent the tendency there has been on the part of the distressed to reject—or rather not to avail themselves of—the measures of relief offered, and probably too of the inadequacy of the means taken at any time. A useful and suggestive diagram might be constructed showing the percentage of the population passing away under the abnormal circumstances of the time in each month, compared with that actually on relief in course of administration.

The causes of this disinclination are, I believe, in the main those indicated in the question as respects details of administration. But I believe also that there has been defect as regards principles of administration both as regards “works” and their more or less exclusive application, and also as regards “gratuitous relief” in closed camps as already observed.

Mr. Longley.

It is certainly a duty which belongs to Government to search out the class of persons mentioned in Question 31, Section 2, Chapter III, and should be done by a separate paid establishment proposed for each taluk in the answer to the above Question (31).

The ordinary taluk establishment could not undertake the work, but they would assist the special paid relief establishment of the taluk, at the head of which should be one or more European officers according to the size of the taluk. A relief circle should never exceed one taluk, and each taluk should be sub-divided into two or more sub-circles with a paid Inspector in charge of each sub-circle.

The extra relieving establishment may be composed of officials and non-officials (paid), but my experience leads me to believe that a European officer should be at the head of any such establishment. *Natives* would have no confidence (whatever the Government might have) in a purely native relief establishment, non-official and unpaid, unsupervised by a European official. Each Inspector should visit every village and hamlet in his sub-circle *once a week*.

Committees, however, may be formed associating respectable *Natives* with European officers for supervising gratuitous (dole or out-door) relief. In such cases the former must be paid charges incurred in travelling, &c. If a Government officer of high position and respectability is made President of the Committee, I have no doubt the system would work well; we have instances of this in Local Fund Boards and Municipal Commissions and in the late Local Famine Fund Committees. If, on the other hand, the Committees are to consist of purely Native non-official element, they are certain to prove a failure, of which, if a pregnant example were wanting, I would point to the Temple Committees.

This extra establishment should be organised when famine has been clearly diagnosed.

There has been a great disinclination on the part of the people to leave their houses and villages to go to relief works or to camps. The following may be assigned as reasons for this disinclination:—

- (1)—Knowledge that, as soon as they leave, their houses will be rifled, the rafters taken for firewood, and the straw for cattle.
- (2)—Unwillingness to be away from their village when favorable rain may fall.
- (3)—Knowledge that a large number of those who enter a relief-camp die there, and consequent fear that will also die away from home.

Mr. Longley—continued.

- (4)—Fear that on return they will not be admitted to caste privileges.
- (5)—In the case of relief-works, uncertainty as to proper payment and fear of disease where large numbers are congregated, the sickness on any work being, as a rule, greatly exaggerated.
- (6)—Apathy ; a preference for a precarious existence (but free of trammels or tests) on wild fruits, roots, &c.
- (7)—Among the hill-people a dread of the plains and large towns.
- (8)—Physical prostration.
- (9)—Among the following classes :—
  - Brahmins,
  - Rajputs,
  - Banians (Komities),
  - Chetties (of all description),
  - Thondamundalam Vellalars,
  - Sri Karnams,
  - Sathanies,

very strong caste and social prejudices against going either to a relief-work or camp ; and for these the only relief, to be really such, appears to be the money dole in their villages.

Mr. McC, Webster.

It is hopeless, I think, to expect that all the famine-stricken people will come of themselves to the Government relief establishments, and it is necessary to have special officers to inspect villages, select those for relief in poor-houses and by dole, and send the former to the poor-houses and supervise the payment of doles to the latter. The ordinary district staff is quite insufficient for the purpose and special officers are required. There should be at least one such special officer—a European in each taluk, with an assistant, a European or Eurasian—and some Circle Inspectors, each Inspector having an area of about 150 square miles. These officers should, as a rule, be servants of Government.

Mr. Price.

Looking at the peculiar idiosyncrasy of the Indian villager, I consider that the duty of searching out distress belongs to Government. If this is not done the sick, infirm, cripples, abandoned children and others would be left to themselves and die. The most absurd stories were promulgated during the famine by mischievous gossips and found ready credence. The consequence was that some who were really starving were afraid to come for relief. I do not think it necessary to *urge* the people to accept relief ; all that appears called for is that cases requiring it should be looked out and aided ; I would, to begin with, strengthen the staff of the district by sending one European officer to every taluk, relieving all the European District Officers and all Tahsildars of magisterial work, and putting Special Magistrates, who might be Natives, in their places. I would further appoint such number of Inspectors of the class from which the Revenue Inspectors are taken for relief inspection work. The number of these would depend upon the circles into which each taluk was divided. Where a taluk was a large one, as in the case of the taluks of Oosoor or Salem, in the Salem District for instance, I would have two European officers, and, if the distress deepened, divide every taluk but a very small one into two divisions, each to be placed under a European. I do not think that any man can properly supervise more than 200 or 300 square miles at the very outside. I would take the Europeans from the Covenanted, Military, and Uncovenanted branches, select young officers, and pick those who are known to be smart and active. I would send no sickly men, and not allow officers to palm off on famine work their "bad lots." I think it highly necessary

Mr. Price—continued.

that all the regular European staff of the district should be relieved, as far as possible, of other duty but famine, and that Tahsildars should also be, as they are the men who know or ought to know the district and the people and where things are wrong. I would have *no* Natives in chief charge. They are excellent subordinates if looked after, but they fail egregiously when they have to plan and act in emergency. The best plan is certainly to employ servants of Government; I do not mean to say that I would exclude those who are not public servants; I have had more than one of this class who worked right well, but there is some hold upon the Government employé and exceedingly little upon the other. I had amongst Europeans and East Indians not in the service of Government very many most worthless persons in every sense of the word. What should be the duty of each it is difficult to exactly lay down. The head of the district should be constantly on the move and constantly inspect in view to ascertaining that orders are obeyed and others do their work. The Divisional Officers should do the same in their own divisions, and the Taluk Officers in theirs, looking after the Tahsildars and Inspectors, checking the recipients of relief and payments, and going over villages in order to see whether Inspectors have omitted to put on relief persons who ought to be. All poor-houses should be under the immediate direction of the Taluk Relief Officer, and his duty should be to inspect these frequently, to examine the books, to receive all gratuitous relief accounts, pass them, and to draw up the necessary bills for transmission to head-quarters, where there should be a special accounting staff headed by a man who knows his business, and subordinate to the Treasury Deputy Collector. If it becomes necessary or advisable to open small relief-works, the position of Civil Officers in charge of them should be taken by the Taluk Relief Officer. I say nothing of minor establishment, such as clerks, &c., as it is impossible, except in practice, to tell what would be required. All would depend upon the degree of prevalence of the famine. I do not see what special supervision is required to look after famine officers. The Europeans ought, if properly selected, to perform their duties without driving, and if the head of the district and his Divisional Officers are unable to direct and control matters, and will not for that purpose move about, the only remedy is removing them from their appointments. Taking the last famine, I should say that the extra staff should have been appointed in March 1877 at the latest. When village relief and poor-houses become necessary, the work *cannot* be carried on by the ordinary, or a slightly augmented district staff. There was during the famine, but after the worst was past, a decided disinclination on the part of the people to go to relief-works or poor-houses. I have mentioned above one of the causes which led to this in the case of the latter. So long as works were close to the people's homes they never objected, though they murmured at delays in being paid and occasionally at the wage, to go to works. The distance test was the chief factor in keeping the people away, and the objection made was nearly always "it is too far:" the decreased scale of wages was also a cause, and I have been often asked "how one could live and work on such a pittance." It is true that there were other stories, such as of the coolies being kept waiting for their pay, their not being taken on unless they paid "black-mail" to the head coolies, &c.; but these tales, on inquiry, proved to have some small thread of truth in them bound up in a mass of falsehood and exaggeration. The real reasons were, in my opinion, the renewal of agricultural operations and

Mr. Price—continued.

the distance test. As regards poor-houses, during the real pressure of the famine the people were exceedingly anxious to get in, but when village relief got into full swing, the poor-houses were at a discount. Stories of the most extraordinary kind were set about, probably by designing village officers who wished to have the handling of as much money as possible and to keep the people on village relief. Amongst these I may cite the following :—

- (1) That Government were collecting people in Cuddapah poor-house and fattening them in order to, when they were in a fit condition, hold a Juggernath festival and crush them to death under the wheels of a train.
- (2) That Government were taking the people in, in order to ship them off to "Mourice" (the general term for any country to which emigration takes place), there to keep them for the term of their lives as slaves.
- (3) That the object of Government in opening poor-houses was to decoy all that they could into them, destroy their caste, and make Christians of them.
- (4) That no one who went into a poor-house ever came out alive. These and similar canards no doubt kept many people away from relief, but I believe that the main cause was the irksome character of the life, the want of liberty, of betel or tobacco, the regular hours, enforced cleanliness, and, perhaps, association in the same enclosure with people of all kinds; but the restraint and discipline were what mainly rendered the poor-houses, as the famine diminished, more and more unpopular, and this unpopularity was intensified by the freedom enjoyed by those on village relief and the opportunity which this afforded for wandering about and begging, picking up greens in the fields, and so on. I cannot call to mind any causes other than those mentioned; physical prostration would prevent people going to works or poor-houses, but I do not think that it had anything to do with their inclinations. As for habitual want of confidence in officials, I never heard the reason advanced, though I have heard many of them called rascals, and I think not without some cause.

Mr. J. G. Horsfall.

Most decidedly; yes.

*Clause 2.*—A staff of Village Inspectors to be specially employed, eight or ten to each taluk. Such men can easily be obtained for Rupees 10 a month; each Inspector to have from ten to twenty villages under him.

*Clause 3.*—Educated but young and active, necessarily non-official, as sufficient officials could not be found to do the work for the cost. The area assigned to each Inspector should admit of his being capable of inspecting it thoroughly twice a week.

*Clause 4.*—They must necessarily be taken, as a rule, from the non-official class.

*Clause 5.*—Their chief duty will be to ascertain the number of persons in each village who absolutely require to be maintained by Government, or who are in danger of perishing from want. To see that Government aid is granted to such only by constant supervision and check of the village expenditure. The ordinary establishment of the taluk, the Tahsildar, and Deputy Tahsildar and Revenue Inspectors will suffice at first to check their work; afterwards one or two special officers for each taluk should be added.

Mr. J. G. Horsfall—continued.

*Clause 6.*—I should say that village inspection should commence as soon as the necessity for special relief-works arises.

*Clause 7.*—On this Mr. Sewell writes: “There is a decided disinclination, and I believe it to be due to several causes. One is that the village people are devotedly attached to their own villages and their own houses, and have a strong natural disinclination to leave them, which they do only under great pressure.”

A second reason is the objection they have to any restraint. The relief-camps are shunned, because there they will be subjected to rules and discipline, and they have an exaggerated fear of punishment for any breach thereof.

Thirdly, a large faith in the charity of their own countrymen, that by persistent begging they will succeed in obtaining sufficient food to sustain life.

*Clause 8.*—People of caste are afraid, too, of contamination. In Ganjam, in the Orissa famine of 1866 people perished of starvation rather than take food, although Brahmins had been employed to cook it.

When the village money dole was started, there was no shrinking from coming forward to receive. The difficulty was rather to prevent its abuse.

*Clause 9.*—With regard to relief-works, many preferred wandering and begging on the ground that the wages allowed were insufficient, but this was with special reference to Sir Richard Temple's scale.

Mr. Grose.

In my opinion people should not be allowed to die of starvation even if they wish to, and there are many cases in which starving people are unable to move towards relief, so that it is the duty of Government to search out distress in the very houses of the people.

This search must be conducted first by the Revenue Inspectors assisted by the village officers, and afterwards by specially appointed officers of the same grade. Their ranges should be of such a size that they can visit each village in it at least once a week. They should be officers in the ordinary employment of Government who look forward to pension.

They should be required to inspect every village once a week, to inspect every house occasionally, to see that the village officers do their work, to examine the registers of village relief, to inspect or secure the *bonâ fide* inspection of all new applicants for relief, such as gosha women, to give food, or pay Village Munsifs for giving food when starvation cases are found, and to see that such cases are sent to the relief-camps. Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars can supervise to a certain extent, but when the duties of these men are onerous and responsible, the supervision of a European officer is required.

As I have already stated, I think that a special organisation for village inspection should be started when the reports of the village corporations and Revenue Inspectors have shown that relief-camps should be opened.

People show a great reluctance to enter relief-camps, chiefly because there are such a large number of deaths in them as there must be when they contain crowds of emaciated people. The

Mr. Grose—continued.

reluctance to enter on particular works and the tendency to leave them I have already spoken of.

I have not noticed habitual want of confidence in officials acting as a cause for the refusal to enter relief-camps, or go to relief-works, but such a want of confidence undoubtedly acts with reference to particular individuals. Any severity or harsh usage of which they may be guilty with regard to paupers is always exaggerated. It is one of the dangers to be kept in view that if relief-works or relief-camps are made *too* disagreeable, paupers will hesitate to go to them till they fall into such a state of physical prostration that they are unable to do so.

Mr. Crole.

It is the duty of Government to search out distress in villages. The disinclination of the people to leave their homes, their ignorance of the danger, and their callousness under suffering which leads to despair, render this measure necessary in order to prevent disaster.

Special temporary non-officials for village inspection have been a complete failure, whether the men were Natives, East Indians or Europeans. They are utterly useless, lazy, ignorant, and often corrupt, and their demoralization is increased by their knowledge that Government has no hold over them, and cannot, as a rule, reward them for exceptional exertions. Moreover, they do not command respect or obedience at the hands of the village officers.

The following scheme for house-to-house visitation and village inspection has worked well in Nellore and Kurnool under me. The basis on which it rests is the utilisation of the admirable village and taluk establishments which lie ready to our hands, and have nothing to learn, instead of trusting to an untried and ignorant special staff, which only looks well on paper.

The following printed circulars give a complete outline of this system, and I append them:—

1. House-to-house visitation and village inspection.—Circular to Divisional Officers regarding—No. I.
2. House-to-house visitation and village inspection.—Circular to Divisional Officers regarding—No. II.
3. Famine Village Order No. I.—Sending to camps.
4. Famine Village Order No. II.—Sending to works.
5. Famine Village Order No. III.—House-to-house visitation.

There should be one Covenanted or Commissioned Officer in immediate charge of each taluk constantly on the move inspecting villages, works, and camps, and reporting daily his proceedings to the Covenanted Officer in charge of the division consisting of two or more taluks, who in turn forwards weekly for the Collector's perusal the taluk reports (B) and the diaries of the Taluk Relief Officer. Selected young military officers (who should, however, belong, wherever possible, to the province affected), make very good taluk officers.

I should add that the ranges of the Revenue Inspectors should be reduced by the appointment of extra Revenue Inspectors, so that no officer has more than thirty villages and independent hamlets under him. This can be done by the promotion of Taluk Gumastahs, and the appointment of temporary hands to take their places in the Taluk Offices.

Special arrangements but on the same lines are necessary in Zemindaries, but every man employed on relief should be a Government servant, his permanent post being filled in the best way possible.

**Mr. Crole**—continued.

The only cases which I have ever heard of in which paupers refused to leave their villages for relief-works and camps have been traceable to demoralization caused by profuse and indiscriminate administration of relief in the form of money-dole in villages.

**Mr. Lee-Warner.**

The work of searching out distress in the village is not a duty that properly belongs to Government. It is sufficient that Government offers the means of obtaining relief at sufficiently numerous selected centres. Inspection of the villages is none the less necessary to procure information showing whether the centres selected are sufficiently numerous to meet the wants of the people or not. For this work every large village ought to be visited at least once a week by a revenue subordinate, who, if he has other duties, cannot well manage more than a area of fifteen square miles; but it is to be borne in mind that in time of real famine other revenue duties are very slight. The ordinary Revenue Inspectors make the best officers for this purpose if they can be got to do their duty; but they soon tire and send in false diaries. It is therefore necessary that there should be supervision which the district organization amply provides for if Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars are not confined to their head-quarters as Camp Superintendents. European supervision is of course valuable, if the officers have a considerable experience of the country and the habits of the people. If they have not this, it is to be doubted whether the value of their information compensates for the high cost of their entertainment. Villagers will never refuse to accept relief in the villages. They dislike going to relief-works or poor-houses away from their homes, because of their attachment to their own homes, some concealed means of subsistence or superstitious or other motives. I remember, however, an instance of villagers declining to take money-dole. It was my first visit to the village, and I selected about ten persons for gratuitous relief on the money-dole system after a minute inquiry in the village as to their circumstances. While the copper coins were being fetched, a heavy shower of rain came up, the first shower after months of drought, at the end of which the village headman came forward to beg that relief might not be given. Thinking that the persons selected might have a different opinion, I proceeded to pay them myself, but they were evidently afraid; perhaps the village headman had a superstition that the receipt of any gratuitous relief might ruin the village, or thought that this first shower was the beginning of change, and that people hanging about to get gratuitous relief would not come to his fields. Any way the paupers followed the whim of their headmen and asked that it might not be continued. Sometimes also in the camps persons in the last stage of famine disease came up to surrender their tickets, saying that they wanted leave, or must go home to get medicine, or giving any other excuse. No doubt in this last stage the strangeness of the camp was overpowering their imagination, and all they had left to wish for was to die near their homes. It is very saddening, but it became my conviction that after reasoning with such people it was the right thing to let them follow their own instincts.

**Mr. Austin.**

It is, I consider, undoubtedly the duty of Government to search out distress. It is not so much that the famine-stricken will not come forward, but they do not know where to go to make their