



REPORT

ON



PAST FAMINES

IN THE

NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES.

BY

C. E. R. GIRDLESTONE,

On Special Duty.

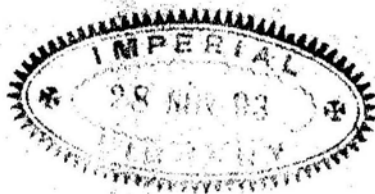


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1868.





From

C. E. R. GIRDLESTONE, Esquire,

On Special Duty,

To

R. SIMSON, Esquire,

Secretary to Government, N.-W. P.

ALLAHABAD, MAY 26TH, 1868.

Sir,

I beg to forward the Report on Past Famines in the North-Western Provinces, which I was deputed to compile by letter from your office, No. 231, dated January 16th, 1868.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

C. E. R. GIRDLESTONE.

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REPORT ON PAST FAMINES

IN THE

NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES.

INTRODUCTION.

1. Plan of the Report.—In collecting materials for the following report, I have taken it for granted that the Government of India wishes to have as comprehensive an account of past famines in the North-Western Provinces of India as the available sources of information will admit of. The letter from the Home Office which enjoins the compilation leaves a wide margin for discretion, and neither the Local Government nor the Sudder Board of Revenue, under whose immediate control I was placed, issued any special orders at the outset. Being left to my own devices, I took such steps as seemed most likely to secure a useful report, and endeavoured to collect round me everything which would throw light on the subject. In process of time the Sudder Board raised the question whether it was desirable to push the investigation so far. Under these circumstances, it became necessary to ask for definite instructions. I therefore related in a short note the system which I had been pursuing, and received the Lieutenant-Governor's* permission to continue the work in the same manner as before. The truth is, it became clear to me at an early stage that, owing to the Mutiny, the information which the local annals could afford would be very imperfect. It seemed advisable, therefore, to supply the missing links in the chain of evidence by referring to the files of old newspapers, historical writings, books of travel, irrigation and settlement reports, and the like. By this means I hope to give some idea of the famines that occurred under native rule; to determine with tolerable accuracy the tract of those that have happened during the period of British administration, and to show what caused them; to test the degree of suffering on each occasion; to bring to notice the various precautions and remedies adopted at different times; and to decide what measures will be most effectual in neutralizing the effect of drought hereafter. Enquiry proves that the materials do not now exist for a complete report; but, at any rate, I trust that this narrative may be of more interest than it could have been if the sphere of my researches had been more circumscribed.

2. Sources of Information.—The list in Appendix I. shows the various authors and documents that I have consulted. In addition to the sources indicated, I only know of three others whence I was likely to derive information,—namely, the Asiatic Society, the *Englishman*, and the *Indian Daily News*. In answer to my application, the Secretary of the Asiatic Society and the Editor of the *Englishman* regretted that they could trace nothing in their libraries which would be of use to me. The Editor of the *Indian Daily News*, in whose office I have reason to believe the files of the defunct *Bengal Hurkaru* are now deposited, has so far vouchsafed no reply, though I have written to him twice. By some unaccountable delay the whole of the papers promised by the Record Commission have not yet arrived. It is possible that what remain to be seen may contain further particulars of famines subsequent to 1828, though I am rather inclined to think they will do no more than confirm facts which I have already elicited from other quarters. At any rate, when they have been read through, I hope to intimate the result in a supplementary letter. As all other available means had been exhausted, it seemed hardly worth while to retard the

* Mr. Drummond.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION.

preparation of this report till their arrival. Of the records put at my disposal by Government, the most lengthy are the Proceedings of the Sudder Board of Revenue. The correspondence that bears on the question is scattered over a hundred or more manuscript folio volumes, each one of which has been carefully inspected, page by page, for fear any letter should be overlooked. Owing to the negligent manner in which they have been compiled, the indices unfortunately give little assistance. I have frequently found, indeed, that a volume which according to the index ought to have contained nothing for my perusal, has, on the contrary, abounded in interesting matter. Moreover, the principle on which the Proceedings have been compiled detracts in some degree from the value and completeness of their information. In the majority of instances, only so much has been copied as sufficed to indicate the general policy of the Board on the subject under notice. Thus, it often happens that covering letters are recorded, whilst the enclosures necessary to fill up the outline have been omitted. The result in such cases is that one obtains the bare announcement of a fact, but nothing more in elucidation of it. Disappointment on this score frequently occurs, and the difficulty of giving a sharp impression of events is as great as though one should attempt to draw up an elaborate note from the abstract of contents which is endorsed on each paper of a modern file. Besides this shortcoming, there is another inseparable from all early records. In former days, reports were neither so detailed nor so systematic as they are now. Famines and such like catastrophes were accepted as necessary evils, to be alleviated as far as possible at the time, and to be forgotten as soon as the emergency had passed. Though more than one Collector in his correspondence during the spring of 1804 casually mentions that he had adopted measures of relief on account of the prevailing distress, not a single one seems to have recognized the advantage which it might be to posterity to know in what manner he was providing for the destitute, or what was the price of wheat in his neighbourhood. Such was the spirit of the period, that these were evidently regarded as unimportant items for a public letter. The realization of the revenue was then the all-absorbing topic, and the correspondence represents faithfully, not to say exclusively, the alternate hopes and fears in this respect. So long as a man could say that he had collected all that was due on behalf of Government, he might reckon on escaping censure; but if instalments were unpaid and balances were accruing, he was fortunate if he could devise reasons which would reconcile his superiors to the emptiness of his treasury, and no excuse that he had been looking after the wants of the poor and helpless was likely to compensate in their eyes for his disregard of the pecuniary interests of the State. Next in importance on the catalogue of official documents, but not commencing nearly so soon as the Board's records, are the Narratives of Proceedings of the Local Government. These are especially valuable for the light which they throw upon the events of 1837-38,* just as the Summary in Mr. Edmonstone's Administration Report for 1860-61 is for the famine of 1861. In matters of detail about which these are silent, I have not unfrequently been able to fill up the gap from the files of the *Friend of India* and the *Delhi Gazette*. As independent exponents of opinion, these papers have also been useful in enabling me to test the feeling of the people towards Government, and to learn something of the temper of the country under adversity. For the later famine, too, there is the detailed account of Colonel Baird Smith. I had expected at first that, owing to his investigations, there would be little relating to this calamity which he would not have described. A more intimate acquaintance with his report, however, showed that, so far as facts are concerned, it does not extend over the whole period, but only deals with the months when distress was most aggravated. Colonel Baird Smith's appointment was not sanctioned till February, and he was back in Calcutta towards the end of June. Both before and after that interval there is much that requires notice, and therefore, though I have borrowed in places from him, I am indebted to other sources for my knowledge of the famine with which his name

* The Narratives of 1838 are inspired by Lord Auckland, who took over charge of the North-West from Sir Charles Metcalfe at the beginning of the year.

ENUMERATION OF FAMINES.

as mentioned. Many of the questions which he took into consideration, of course, lie beyond my province, and in these it is best that he should be left to speak for himself. Indeed, no subsequent history of the events of 1861 would be complete unless read in connection with his report.

3. What constitutes a Famine.—The famines of 1783-84, 1803-4, 1837-38, and 1860-61, are decidedly the most severe that the North-West of India has experienced during the last hundred years. In the intervals between these occur others of more or less intensity, but not so disastrous in their results, inasmuch as smaller tracts of country were afflicted. It is difficult, of course, to draw the line and say where the direct effects of drought cease, or to decide what extent of distress merits the appellation of famine. In the early days of British power, when communication was defective, and little had been done to improve the internal condition of the people, it often happened that persons were dying of hunger in one district whilst there was comparative plenty in the next. Indeed, it is not till the last of the great famines that any perceptible efforts could be made to diminish scarcity by the introduction of food on a large scale. Again, one of the first resources of a starving population in India is to emigrate. When a man has sold his last article of property and mortgaged his fields to the last anna, he and his family leave house and land, in the hope of maintaining themselves elsewhere until better times enable them to return to their village. In proportion to the area which drought influences is the force of this movement, and in proportion to the number of houseless wanderers, roaming like locusts from one green spot to another, is the tract in which relief must ultimately be provided, or else people die. In the following narrative, therefore, besides treating of the famines of wide extent, I propose to describe briefly, so far as my materials will allow, all cases of excessive local distress. For, to all intents and purposes, want, though only felt over a limited area, is famine, provided the scarcity reaches starvation point. This seems to be the best test for deciding what is and what is not famine. In obedience to it, I should exclude, amongst other cases, that of Kumaon in 1846, when difficulty was experienced for a short time in providing the troops on the frontier, owing to the partial failure of the spring crop; but I should admit the case of that province in 1867, for then, according to all accounts, the distress, though not of more than three or four months' duration, was sharp whilst it lasted. Had it not been for the importation of grain, it seems probable that many deaths would have occurred. As it was, many persons were on short rations for a considerable period.

4. Value of the Sudder Board's Revenue Statistics as a means of ascertaining local suffering.—The detailed tables in the Sudder Board's Proceedings relating to the realization of the revenue have in several instances given me a clue to local suffering which might otherwise have remained undetected. As these statements are recorded year by year, it is easy to judge, by the amount of suspensions, remissions, and balances, when there has been extraordinary difficulty in meeting the State's demand. Acting upon this hint, I could then examine the records of the time, on the chance of eliciting more definite information, and the search has usually proved that, where over-assessment was not in fault, an unfavourable season, with its consequent privations, had caused the mischief.

5. Enumeration of Famines.—Following the principle already laid down for determining what constitutes a famine, I am inclined to think that my narrative should embrace the events of the following years:—

1845.	1770.	1819.	1837-38.
1471.	1783-84.	1825-26.	1860-61.
1631.	1803-4.	1827-28.	1865.
1661.	1813-14.	1832-34.	1867.
1739.			

RANGE OF THE NARRATIVE.

Comparison will show that this list is rather more detailed than that of Colonel Baird Smith, so far as the present century is concerned. For the past century he has met with traces of famines in 1733, 1744, 1752, and 1790 also. All I can say is that nothing in regard to these years has come to light in the course of the present enquiry, and I do not know where else, besides the sources indicated, to turn to in quest of information.

6. Range of the Narrative.—An account of the droughts which befell the Delhi territory, or parts of it, during the period when it was not under a separate administration, seems to come naturally within the scope of this narrative. Were I to refrain from all mention of such incidents, it is probable that much interesting matter, which the annals of these Provinces alone can furnish, would remain in obscurity. If it be the object of Government to learn everything about famines that local records can teach, such an omission could not fail to be inexpedient. And in thus overstepping the boundaries of the North-West, as at present defined, I do not think that I can be fairly charged with travelling beyond the issue, for at the time of which I propose to speak the Delhi territory was an integral portion of the dominions subject to the Governor of Agra. The same argument holds good of any remarks that may be made in the course of these pages concerning the Saugor and Nerbudda Districts, and parts of Bundelcund.

SECTION I

FAMINES PREVIOUS TO 1783.

7. Famine of 1345.—The disastrous policy of Mohamed Toghluk seems to have resulted, in or about the year 1345, in a famine which raged more or less over the whole of Hindustan. The constant expeditions which this monarch undertook in order to put down rebellion in distant provinces, and the magnificent ideas which he conceived of conquering Khorasan, and even China, necessarily led to increased taxation throughout his dominions, and caused men to be pressed for the army who would otherwise have remained peaceful tillers of the soil. Not content, too, with this drain on the agricultural population, he on more than one occasion ordered out troops as though for a wild-beast chase, but really with a view to kill unfortunate villagers, whose only fault was that they could not satisfy his arbitrary demands. Even now his name is better known for the massacre of unoffending men at Canouj, than for those wonderful talents and accomplishments which were almost unique in the days when he lived. A long series of oppressions ended, as it might be expected that they would end, in wide-spread distress. The peasants fled from their houses and resorted to the jungles in despair. Many adopted a career of plunder, many more died through sheer starvation. To make matters worse, the calamity which man's violence had originated was enhanced by unfavourable seasons. There were neither labourers nor cattle enough to ensure a sufficiency of food, and the few crops that were sown failed for want of rain. The fertile plain of the Doab relapsed into a wilderness, and in the provinces beyond the Jumna the desolation was equally apparent. In Delhi,* says Mr. Thornton, so great were the pangs of hunger, that men ate one another. The intense sufferings in this particular city seem to have been due to the return of the wretched inhabitants whom Mohamed Toghluk, for the gratification of some passing whim, had forced a few years previously to migrate *en masse* to Deogiri, in the Deccan. Famine and pestilence had been their lot almost from the moment that they had reached their new abode. When at last they received permission to go back, they were so reduced that many died on the road, and the remainder, according to the historian, "escaped death by the way only to encounter it in the same frightful form at the place from which they had been so capriciously expelled."

8. Famine of 1471.—The Orissa Commissioners speak of a notable famine in 1471, but I have not been able to trace any mention of it in the histories of either Thornton, Mill, Elphinstone, or Hamilton. The date falls within that long period of twenty-six years during which the royal house of Jaunpore was contending with Behlol Lodi. It may very possibly have happened that scarcity was one of the evils attendant on this protracted war. The struggle began in 1452, when Mahmood of Jaunpore laid siege to Delhi, and ended in 1478 with the annexation of the former district to the Empire. The field of operations, it will thus be seen, was an extensive one, and, if an unfavourable season befell the country whilst the issue was still undecided, it is not improbable that famine would have occurred.

9. Famine of 1631.—The reign of Shah Jehan is marked by a famine which† afflicted not only India, but almost the whole of Asia. Two‡ successive droughts in 1629 and 1630, and the devastation which the Emperor's army caused throughout the Deccan, reduced the inhabitants of that quarter to the utmost straits. The suffering reached its height in 1631. With no means of support at home, the people of the south emigrated in multitudes, and carried sickness and want with them wherever they went. No amount of public benevolence could avail to stop the hand of death, for food was everywhere lacking. Of the effect on the North-West we know no more than is contained in the remark quoted by the Orissa Commissioners,

* Vol. I., p. 17.

† See Mill, Vol. II., p. 329.

‡ See Elphinstone, p. 507.

that "money could not purchase bread, and a prodigious mortality ensued. Disease followed famine, and death ravaged every corner of India."

10. Famine of 1661.—The next famine on the list is that of 1661. This, too, was mainly owing to extraordinary drought. Although the records of that time do not specify its tract, it is not altogether impossible to give a rough sketch of the country over which it extended. The date of its occurrence coincides with the fourth year of Aurungzebe's reign. During the period that intervened between his accession to the throne and the illness which prostrated him at Delhi early in 1663, we know that Aurungzebe had been engaged in various expeditions, which took him successively to Lahore, Delhi, Etah, Cawja (half-way between Etah and Allahabad), Agra, and Jeypore. Operations against the Mahrattas had not then commenced, nor does the Emperor seem to have had influence enough in the Deccan at that time, or, at any rate, resources available, for checking Sevajee's encroachments. We know also that the events connected with the famine of 1661 made a great impression on Aurungzebe, and that he personally superintended the relief of his subjects, one of his plans having been to bring grain on a large scale from Bengal and the Punjab—a circumstance which shows that those provinces were unhurt. It is reasonable, therefore, to infer that the scene of the famine lay about Delhi and the upper half of the Doab. Several things tend to prove that the calamity was severe. The Emperor opened his treasury and granted money without stint. He gave every encouragement to the importation of corn,[†] and either sold it at reduced prices, or distributed it gratuitously amongst those who were too poor to pay. He also promptly acknowledged the necessity of remitting the rents of the cultivators, and relieved them for the time being from the burden of other taxes. Economical himself in his personal expenses, he had always inculcated the folly of extravagance amongst his courtiers; and so, when the hour of need came, he had large means at his command. The vernacular chroniclers of the period attribute the salvation of millions of lives and the preservation of many provinces to his strenuous exertions. Even when a margin has been left for manifest exaggeration, there can be little doubt that Aurungzebe's foresight and administrative ability caused the area of this famine to be much less extensive than was the tract of that which had devastated the country thirty years previously.

11. Distress at Delhi in 1739.—The spring of 1739 was a time of acute suffering to the inhabitants of Delhi and its neighbourhood, for this was the year of Nadir Shah's invasion, who left famine in his train wherever he went. It needs only to recall to mind the outrages which he sanctioned, to justify the conjecture that for long after his departure the people did not recover from the effects of his barbarity and exactions. The pitiless massacre which he acquiesced in probably numbered amongst its victims many of the agricultural classes, whose labour in those disorderly days could ill have been spared; and, after the depredations which he made on the imperial and local treasuries, little could have remained for the purposes of cultivation. It must be borne in mind, however, that this was an exceptional catastrophe, due wholly to the inroads of an enemy, and not in any way dependant on climate.

12. Famine of 1770.—The burden of evidence is against the idea mooted by Colonel Baird Smith that the great famine of 1770 had its origin in excess of rain. Drought was really the cause,[§] as it has been the cause of almost every

* See Elphinstone, Book XI, Chapter 1.

† Report of Orissa Commissioners, Part the Third, Sec. 6.

‡ Mill, Vol. II., p. 349.

§ See the various letters from Mr. Runbold, Resident of Behar, and Mr. Becher, Resident of Moorshedabad, and the passages from their Minutes dated 23rd October, 1769, given by Mr. G. Campbell in his "Extracts from the Records of the India Office." See also, in the same volume, the letters from the Government to the Court of Directors. The only ground for the supposition appears to be the fact that there had been floods in Behar during August, 1768. After this date there was unquestionably drought in Bengal, which continued up to the time of the famine.

calamity of a like nature that has befallen India, in whatever quarter of the Peninsula. The autumn crop of 1768 and the spring crop of 1769 had both partially failed, and consequently the price of grain had risen by degrees to such a height that, by November of the latter year, starvation was staring the poorer classes of Bengal in the face. The distress was worst in the Bengal districts to the north of the Ganges, and in Behar; but it is questionable whether the famine was not felt considerably above the Kurumnassa also. On the 16th of February, 1770, Colonel Primrose Galliez, commanding at Allahabad, had been ordered to form a depôt of grain in the Fort, for the subsistence of his garrison in case of emergency. On the 3rd of May he received orders, as his situation was deemed less precarious than that of the Lower Provinces, to forward at once to Behar whatever he could with prudence spare of his store, and to despatch as soon as possible to Patna any further supply that he was able to collect. He excused himself unhesitatingly from the first part of his instructions, and his letter shows that he had little hope of executing the second. "Relative to the grain,"* he writes to the Select Committee on the 19th of May, "I am sorry it is not in my power to comply with your directions. The quantity I have been able to collect to the present time would be barely sufficient to support the garrison a month in case of necessity, and the prospects of getting more are very distant. Though the inhabitants are not in such distress here as in the provinces, yet grains of all sorts are immoderately dear, and His Majesty has absolutely refused me liberty to buy up any to send down the country, lest the inhabitants of this place should suffer in consequence of it. It is true that I have been able to purchase some grain at Corah; but there is such difficulty, perpetual interruptions, and disputes in getting it down, that I fear little can be obtained from thence. It is but a few days since three or four boats laden with grain arrived from Corah, after a passage of three months, owing to the continued molestations they met with from the people of Sujah-ul-Dowlah, who no sooner, in consequence of perwannahs I procured from the Nabob's son, released them at one place, but they stopped them at another. I cannot help thinking there was some design in this, as I wrote to the Vizier on the subject, but received no answer. From the grain which I have collected for the use of the garrison I cannot with prudence spare any, as affairs are now situated; nor, indeed, would the trifling quantity I have in garrison, could I spare it, be of any service. I shall, however, in obedience to your orders, endeavour to purchase what grain I can, and will, if I succeed, forward it to Patna with all possible expedition." The officer in charge at Fyzabad received the same injunction, but experienced equal difficulty in carrying it out. These frequent attacks on the boats seem to imply that, as far as Allahabad and Fyzabad at all events, the people were driven to plunder by stress of circumstances. Of the mortality due to this famine I can find nothing more definite than the remark of the Governor-General in Council to the Court of Directors, that more than a third of the inhabitants of Bengal were computed to have been destroyed. Colonel Baird Smith has ascertained the price † of food in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, but no records like those of Chinsurah exist to give the same information for these Provinces. Indeed, it was not to be expected that such particulars should exist, for even Benares at this time had not finally passed into the hands of the British.

* See Mr. George Campbell's Extracts, pages 25 and 28.

† The prices in Bengal at this time were per rupee—

		Saers.		Saers.
Rice, No. 1, ...	...	3	} compared to which ordinary prices were {	28
Do., No. 2, ...	...	3½		40
Inferior grain, ...	...	4½		45
Dal, ...	...	4		30
Wheat, ...	...	4½		26

SECTION II

FAMINE OF 1783-84.

13. First Symptoms of the Famine.—If the region which we now designate the North-West Provinces escaped the brunt of the attack on the last occasion, it fared otherwise with it in 1783-84.* The first sound of alarm came from the neighbourhood of Agra, and from this centre distress seems to have diverged both to the East and West. The prices of grain for many months previously are said to have indicated much disturbance of the ordinary seasons. In the upper part of Hindustan, indeed, an extraordinary drought had prevailed for two years. During the spring and summer of 1783, the inhabitants of Delhi and its vicinity had experienced great difficulty in providing for their own wants, and the gravest apprehensions were entertained for the cold-weather crop, owing to the continued absence of rain. The dwellers beyond the Jumna were emigrating in the direction of Lucknow as early as October, and death left its mark freely along the road. Such was the general apathy that the bodies were not removed from the spot where they lay, even in towns or villages. No relief was held out to the sick or dying. Every man's hand was against his neighbour, and the strong ruthlessly seized the portion of the weak, for the struggle to maintain life overcame all scruples. In this solitary instance the drought affected Oudh also, though in a less degree than the surrounding country; and it was feared that this province, so fortunate hitherto, would not escape the horrors of famine. Lastly, on the 18th of November, the very day on which Mr. Fox was introducing his abortive East India Bill into the House of Commons, tidings came to the Government of riots in that very city of Benares which was destined hereafter to furnish the English Statesman with proofs against Warren Hastings. In utter despair of obtaining food by fair means, the poor had resorted to violence.

14. Precautions taken by the Bengal Committee of Revenue.—The first measures of relief were taken in September. A Committee was appointed with absolute powers to regulate the price, distribution, and sale, of grain, to establish store-houses, and, if need be, to prevent exportation from the Company's territories. Early in October, the Committee of Revenue issued the following Circular "to all Chiefs and Collectors." It deserves to be recorded, if only for the policy which it advocates, so opposite to that of more modern times:—

"The general information we have received from many districts of the crops having been considerably hurt from a want of rain, and the consequent rise in the price of every article of produce, renders it necessary that immediate and effectual precaution should be taken to prevent the ill effects arising either from a real or—what will be equally distressing to the inhabitants—an artificial scarcity, created by the merchants from hoarding grain, and greatly enhancing the price of it, and withholding the usual supplies from the public markets.

"We direct that you do in the most public manner issue orders by beat of tom-tom in all the bazars and gunjes in the districts under your charge, declaring that if any merchant shall conceal his grain, refuse to bring it to market, and sell it at a reasonable price, he will not only be punished himself in the most exemplary manner, but his grain will be seized and distributed among the poor.

"The objects to which we also direct your attention are to obtain the most accurate state of the districts under your charge, in regard to the quantity of grain which may be expected from the crops on the ground, comparatively with the ordinary produce of former years.

"You will endeavour to obtain an account of all deposits of grain of every denomination, the places where it is lodged, and the names and places of abode of the persons to whom it belongs, and transmit it to us twice in every month, noting the quantity that may at different times be exported, and that which may be consumed in the district.

"You will particularly attend to the price of grain in the public markets, and order daily reports of it to be brought to you, an abstract of which you will transmit to us four times every month; and, to frustrate any attempt to raise the price of grain to a higher rate than any real deficiency might give cause

* Much of my information for the events of this period is derived from Mr. George Campbell's Extracts,—see pages 112—129. Luchmun Singh, Deputy Collector of Boolundshahur, has also given me some valuable assistance.

ENQUIRY CONCERNING THE PRICE OF GRAIN DURING THE FAMINE.

for, as well as to check any combinations of the merchants, we direct that, in any instance where a sudden or extraordinary advance of price is required, you will summon the persons to appear before you and assign their reasons for imposing such increase; and if they appear unsatisfactory, and with a view to extort a personal advantage from circulating a belief of a scarcity existing, you will prevent its having effect by forcing the sale of the grain at a rate which may be deemed reasonable and fair by such number of the principal inhabitants whom you will call upon for the purpose of fixing a rate of price; and, that a public example may be made of every person attempting such practices, we direct that you hold them in confinement till you receive our directions from the report of the case which you will immediately transmit to us.

"We recommend this subject to your particular and serious attention, more especially as the dominions of the Vizier are threatened with a famine, and will require every aid which the Company's districts can afford, consistent with their own safety. In your correspondence with us on this subject, you can suggest any further measures which from local information you may judge will be conducive to the purposes proposed."

The Residents at Lucknow and Benares were further enjoined to "give passports to all persons desirous of coming into the province of Behar from the countries beyond the Jumna, and to supply such other aids of money and provisions as in their discretion shall be absolutely necessary for the immediate relief and support of those who may be in need." This assistance was meant exclusively for those who were likely to settle and become cultivators of land. It was resolved also to take off the duties upon every kind of grain, and to allow free communication in corn throughout the Company's provinces, including Benares.

15. Testimony and Probable Conduct of Warren Hastings.—It was hoped at first that Bengal would escape the scourge, but the result proved that the Government had been too sanguine in its expectations. The constant demand on the granaries, together with the irruption of innumerable starving creatures, and a partial drought in the direction of Beerbhoom, Purneah, Rajshahye, and Tirhoot, caused want lower down also, though in a less terrible degree. Of the desolation which pervaded Cheyte Singh's former dominions, Warren Hastings was himself an eye-witness. "From the confines of Buxar to Benares," he wrote* with a curious candour to the Council Board under date of 2nd of April, 1784, "I was followed and fatigued by the clamours of the discontented inhabitants. The distresses which were produced by the long-continued drought unavoidably tended to heighten the general discontent; yet I have reason to fear that the cause existed principally in a defective, if not a corrupt and oppressive, administration. I am sorry to add that from Buxar to the opposite boundary I have seen nothing but traces of complete devastation in every village." Oppression had indeed brought the province of Benares to the most abject state of misery. The resources of the people had been exhausted by the Governor-General's extortions, and an unfavourable season gave the finishing stroke to their misfortunes. That Warren Hastings took any steps to alleviate the distress I can find no intimation whatever. It is impossible that, even with the will to distribute money, he should have had funds at his command. The whole tenor of the Court of Directors' instructions to him at that time was to keep the peace with his neighbours and make large remittances to England, and the enormity of the exaction was in his case the measure of his loyalty to the Company's interests.

16 Enquiry concerning the Price of Grain during the Famine.—Colonel Baird Smith has observed that, so far as he could learn, the price of grain never was higher than 10 to 12 seers for the rupee. If this were really the case, a reason for it might perhaps be found in the emptiness of Warren Hastings' treasury, and the still greater straits of the people; but I am not satisfied that his statement on this point can be taken as conclusive. The *Calcutta Gazette* † of May 13th, 1784, contains the announcement that wheat was selling then at Buttaleh for 9 seers, at

* See Mill, Vol. IV., p. 439.

† See Mr. Seton-Karr's Selections from the *Gazette*, under the date quoted.

LOCALITIES WHERE THE FAMINE WAS MOST SEVERE.

1840 for 2 seers, and at Jummoo for 3 seers the rupee. Mr. H. G. Keane* has had the good fortune in the course of his career to meet and converse with an old Gossain who served under Himmut Bahadur, and from him he heard that flour sold in 1840 Sumbut (1783-84 A. D.) for 8 seers for the rupee, "which," observes Mr. Keane, "allowing for the subsequent fall in the value of money, is equivalent to a rate of 3 seers for our present rupee—a state of things partly conceivable by English readers if they will imagine the quatern loaf at four shillings, and butcher's meat in proportion." I myself have also learnt from native informants that grain was selling in Meywar and Marwar at six seers during the height of the famine. As want of rain was the chief cause of this famine, it is hardly conceivable, when we know that the suffering was acute throughout the greater part of the Bengal Presidency, that prices should have ranged between 10 and 12 seers lower down country, whilst only 4 seers were obtainable for the rupee at Lahore. It is much to be regretted that there are no records in the office of the Commissioner of Benares to throw light on this matter. Although letters dated so long ago as June, 1780, are extant, there is unluckily a break in the correspondence between November of that year and the beginning of 1787. But for this hiatus we might have profited by the knowledge which the Resident must have had of the current rates within his jurisdiction. Very likely, too, some mention would have been made of the extent to which the province had been depopulated by death or emigration.

17. Difference of Opinion between Colonel Baird Smith and Mr. Rose concerning the effect of the Famine in Cawnpore.—On other points, too, my information is contradictory. Mr. Rose, who was himself an eye-witness of the famine of 1837-38 in the District of Cawnpore, who from his position as Collector would be likely to hear all the old traditions that would be raked up at such a time, and to whose energy and intelligence those of his contemporaries who still are serving in India give ample testimony, says† that though the Chalisa, as this famine is termed from the Hindu years in which it occurred, lasted for two years, yet, comparatively with the duration of each, its devastations were not so dreadful as those of 1837-38. There was not such a total absence of vegetation, and therefore cattle lived; and moth, a valuable means of sustenance, was spared to the people. Colonel Baird Smith, on the other hand, observes:—"When‡ recently in Cawnpore, I had some conversation regarding it with a very old native merchant, a man who said he believed he was ninety years of age, and was, at any rate, old enough at the time of this famine to have retained some personal recollections of it, strengthened, no doubt, afterwards by the traditions relating to it which even still linger among the native community. He had recollections also of all the other subsequent famines specified in the second list given in paragraph 24, but among the entire series he ranked that of 1783 as the most severe, even more so than that of 1837-38, and much more so than that of 1860-61. The old man's faculties seemed scarcely impaired, and his benevolence of character was shown by the fact that he was, at the time I saw him supporting at his sole cost fifty or sixty starving people."

18. Conclusion as to the Localities where the Famine was most severe.—I believe myself that the chief suffering was in the country round about Jummoo, Lahore, and Agra, and in the Native States of Rajpootana to the South-West of the Jumna. It was from these quarters that the hordes of emigrants flocked toward Lucknow,§ and it was in them too that prices, so far as our scanty information guides us

* See his *History of the Moguls*, p. 140.

† See his letter No. 9 of 1838 to the Commissioner of Allahabad.

‡ See his Report, Section II., para. 25.

§ In a letter, dated Lucknow, June 16th, 1784, to the Court of Directors, Warren Hastings observes that Oudh had suffered less than the countries to the Westward, though even in Oudh he had been forced to concur in the proposition of the Nawab Vizier's Ministers to reduce the revenue for the year, owing to the unprecedented badness of the season.

CLOSE OF THE FAMINE.

were highest. The inrush of such numbers of strangers into regions themselves affected by the prevailing drought must have caused want almost as pressing as that which the exiles left behind them. There are many men still living who have heard the story of these days from their fathers, though not many who can recount the events on their own authority. I have consulted several whose opportunities should make their tale trustworthy, and all agree in saying that the famine of 1783 was the most awful that the country above the Kurumnassa ever underwent. Throughout its tract, natives date events from the "Chalisa," as we ourselves do from the Mutiny. Every child in the Punjab, the Doab, and Oudh, has heard of it. If there is strength in the multitude of witnesses, tradition in this instance is not so valueless as it is when the story has passed through several generations.

19. Close of the Famine.—At the end of February, 1784, there were signs that the distress was abating both in Bengal and in the West. An early and copious fall of rain helped further to alter the aspect of affairs. Although on June 16th* Warren Hastings wrote from Lucknow to the Court of Directors that barley and nuhoot, the chief articles of food amongst the lower classes in that part of India, were still selling at the rate of 15 seers, in contrast to their ordinary prices of a maund and a half for the rupee, it was evident that Government had no forebodings about the Khureef, otherwise it would hardly, after its recent exhibition of terror, have allowed grain to be shipped in moderate quantities during March and April for the relief of Madras. The out-turn of the autumn crop fully confirmed the anticipations of plenty, and in December the Government considered itself justified in taking off the embargo which it had laid on the general exportation of corn a twelvemonth before.

* See Mr. Campbell's Extracts, p. 118.

SECTION III.

FAMINE OF 1803-4.

20. Preliminary Remarks.—The famine of 1803-4 is the first on which the Sudder Board of Revenue's Proceedings throw any light. Indeed, were it not for them, I should have been at a loss whither to turn for information. The historians of this period, so far as I can discover, are silent on the subject. The pages of Mill and Thornton, whilst they give detailed accounts of the military operations against Holkar and Scindiah, do not contain a word which would enable their reader to learn, even by inference, that the country had been laid waste by a scourge far more terrible than war. As a rule, the devastation of armies is trifling compared to the ruin which famine causes. It is only in the neighbourhood of the battle-field and the camping-ground, and along the line of march, that the evil effects of an enemy's movements are felt. But famine strikes a whole tract, and leaves its mark on all but the very rich. Within the limits of its incidence, the poorer classes, if left to themselves, must either starve or emigrate; and emigration, their first resource, only extends the area of want. Even those who can boast of accumulated wealth are not always safe, for money is useless when food is not at hand. Recovery, too, is easier in the one case than in the other. When once the tide of war has passed along, the husbandman breathes freely again. His temporary disasters are soon repaired; the plough, the cattle, and the seed are brought forth from their hiding-place; and the land, as fertile as before, can at once be made available for production, without the invariable necessity of extraneous help. But in a season of drought everything is sacrificed to ensure mere existence. Cattle, implements, clothes, the very bed on which he sleeps, and the very vessel from which he drinks, are disposed of, before the peasant proprietor will move from the home of his fathers. And, granted that his resources enable him to keep body and soul together till the rain unbinds the soil, he is then utterly without the means of renewing his cultivation. He is involved in every sort of difficulty. The little capital he possessed is gone. He is in debt to every money-lender who would give him credit. He owes more on account of his land than he can hope in a long series of years to repay. He must have aid from without, or he is lost. So it happens that he begins life afresh with a millstone round his neck, with instalments of revenue thrown back on subsequent years, with a lien on his future crops to secure the advances which enable him to purchase bullocks and seed, and with the knowledge that, under the most favourable circumstances, the labour of his hand cannot result in more than a mere pittance for his own support during several years to come.

21. Extent of the Famine.—Such was the condition to which hundreds of thousands were reduced during the autumn of 1804 in Moradabad, Bareilly, Etawah, Furruckabad, Cawnpore, and Allahabad.* Nearly three years had elapsed since the Nawab Vizier had ceded these districts (together with Goruckpore) to the East India Company, whilst Benares had then been under the British administration for more than a quarter of a century. In the trouble of those days the latter province fortunately had no share. Fear† was entertained of a scarcity early in September,

* These districts were much more extensive then than now. I gather from the correspondence of the period that Budaon belonged to Moradabad, Mynpoorie to Etawah, Shahjehanpore to Bareilly, and Futtehpoore to Allahabad.

† The accompanying letter shows what were the apprehensions in the north of the province. Jaunpore at this time was a sub-division, and not a separate district.

To

GEORGE DOWDESWELL, Esq.,

Secretary to Government, N.-W P., Judicial Department

DATED JAUNPORE, THE 17TH SEPTEMBER, 1803.

Sir,

"I am concerned to be under the necessity of representing to Government the distressed situation of this district from the loss of the Bhudvee and Khannaf crops and the small prospect of a public harvest from the same cause.

REPORTS FROM COLLECTORS OF DIFFERENT DISTRICTS.

1803, and the Resident was ordered to report on the state of the people, and on the price of grain, which had risen rapidly. He also received authority to make any advances that he thought fit for digging water-courses, wells, and tanks. But in October a favourable change took place, and a downpour of rain dissipated all anxiety for the future.

22. Famine Due partly to Drought and partly to the Short-sighted Policy of the British Government.—With the "Division of the Ceded Provinces" it fared otherwise. Independently of the influence of drought, the policy of the British Government, from the time that it came into possession of this territory, seems to have been accountable for some portion of the calamity. As the Nawab Vizier made the cession in commutation of his former subsidy, it was hardly likely that he would have under-estimated the productive powers of the soil. The land assessment, as returned by him on the 22nd September, 1801,* amounted to Lucknow Siica Rs. 1,35,23,474. In 1802-3 (1210 Fuslee), the first unbroken year of our management, there was no enhancement. We limited the demands to Rs. 1,34,53,829, the collections were Rs. 1,33,74,238, and the balances Rs. 1,09,091. In 1803-4 (1211 Fuslee) the reign of exorbitance commenced. The demands were Rupees 1,42,50,140, the collections Rs. 1,18,21,821, and the balances Rs. 24,28,312. The sum of Rs. 15,52,417—the difference between the collections of this year and the former year's receipts—may fairly be ascribed to the influence of the drought; but, with this deduction, there is still an item of Rs. 7,66,811 attributable to gross miscalculation of what the country could bear. Moreover, the people were utterly unprepared to grapple with any sudden calamity. They had just been released from the yoke of a Sovereign whose oppression and tyranny were notorious. They were weighed down with poverty, and long years of experience had taught them to look upon Government as their common enemy. In the face of this universal destitution, and on the strength of the exceptionally good autumn harvest of 1802, the triennial settlement was made, and, simultaneously with the imposition of heavier rates, came bad seasons to add to the general exhaustion of the country.

23. Early Reports from the Collectors of the different Districts.—In the spring of 1803, hail-storms were prevalent in Etawah and Furruckabad, and considerably diminished the out-turn of the Rubbee. This was only the prelude to

2. This circumstance, together with the superstitious prejudice attached by the natives to an earthquake, and the late irruption of the Mahratta Horse into the Doab, has so alarmed the minds of all, that the possessors of grain can scarcely be induced to bring it to market at any price, and the evils of famine already begin to be felt, while the whole country is notoriously stocked with a supply sufficient for at least three years' consumption. This store is almost exclusively in the hands of the zemindars, and generally not kept for sale.

3. *The only modes which occur to me of relieving the industrious and poorer classes of the people, who alone materially suffer by this pressure, are by large importations of grain from the Eastward, and by Government receiving part of the revenue in grain and selling it to the people, unless some means could be devised of bringing the hidden stores of the zemindars to market. The nature of the food of the inhabitants does not admit of any large aid from the introduction of economy, otherwise than by curtailing a part of their daily diet.

4. All the requisite suggestions for the better security of the public revenue, by the usual advances of tuccees to the ryots, digging wells, shutting up the mouths of nullahs, repairing embankments and reservoirs, &c., will of course have been submitted to Government from the Revenue Department. There is still time for active zeal to effect considerable benefit by an immediate adoption of the above measures, but after the expiration of another month it will be too late to commence on the most useful with a fair chance of success.

I am, &c.,

(Signed) J. DEANE,

Magistrate.

* This was immediately previous to the cession. The date of the Treaty is November 14th, 1801.

greater disasters, for these districts, in common with the others included in the Division of the Ceded Provinces, were destined to see a more or less complete failure of rain at the time that the cultivators were sowing the autumn crops. On 5th July, Mr. W. Leycester, Collector of Moradabad, informed the Board of Revenue in Calcutta that the cotton and sugar plantations were drooping for want of water, and that he entertained great apprehensions for the entire Khureef. The same want of rain had been experienced in the country to the West, and hence the usual influx of grain to his district had been stopped. In fact, contrary to custom, at the time that he wrote Moradabad to his sorrow was exporting instead of importing corn, and prices were rising steadily every day. In a letter written afterwards, during the first half of September, he intimated that balances were accumulating, and that, unless the rain fell soon, it would be of no use to sow the seed for the Rubbee in any but irrigated fields. The prosperity of the country, the attachment of the people, and the peace of the district, he considered, required that Government should openly admit its determination, in case of famine, not to enforce its demands. He also announced that he had been busy in making enquiries how to promote the irrigation of the Rubbee by damming up rivulets, and had begun to bank up the River Gongun, the cost of which work he estimated at Rs. 5,000, and from which he hoped to save revenue to the extent of a quarter of a lakh. On July 26th, Mr. Richardson, the Collector of Cawnpore reported that the rains had been late in setting in, that so far the fall had been very partial, and that the cotton and Khureef crops had already suffered. Later—on 4th September—he wrote that all his Tehseeldars had sent in reports which confirmed his previous suspicions. So far as he knew, not a single shower had fallen throughout the Ceded Provinces since the 12th of August, and hot winds were blowing, just as in May and June. From Bareilly, complaints of scanty rain came in the course of July; and on the 28th of that month Mr. R. Ahmuty, the Collector of Allahabad, applied for a large sum of tuccavee, in order to replace the cattle which had died by reason of the drought. On the 4th of September, Mr. Claud Russell, the Governor-General's Agent, informed the Board that the entire Khureef was injured or destroyed in Furruckabad, and that the balances were increasing. Two days later, Mr. Ross, the Collector of Goruckpore, reported the alarming state of the weather in his district. Not a drop of rain had fallen since the 18th of August, and very little before that date. The small-grain crops were much injured, and the cultivation of paddy, of which much had always been grown in the low lands of Azimgurh and Goruckpore, had been checked owing to the dryness of the soil. If rain did not descend shortly, he feared that the Rubbee would be affected also. Similar apprehensions and similar failure of the Khureef were intimated about the same time from Etawah.

24. Measures taken by the Board.—The result of these representations was that the Board instantly took steps to show the people that the Government sympathized with them in their trouble. They enjoined on Collectors the necessity of transmitting such accurate information on the state of the weather, the price of food, and the condition of the crops, as should enable them to be prompt in dealing with distress. They allotted Rs. 94,123, equivalent to about 5 per cent. on the jumma of the district, as tuccavee to Allahabad, and have recorded that they made considerable advances, though it is not specified how much, to Furruckabad. They recognized the expediency of suspensions, and submitted a proposition embodying their views for the Governor-General's sanction. They also recommended temporary works of irrigation to be undertaken, set on foot an enquiry whether it would be advisable to restrict the exportation of grain to foreign territory, and at their suggestion the following proclamation was issued from Fort William on the 27th of September :—

"Information having been received that the price of grain has been considerably enhanced in the province of Benares and in the provinces ceded to the Hon'ble Company by His Excellency the Nawal Vizier, His Excellency the Most Noble the Governor-General in Council, with the view of encouraging the importation of grain into those provinces from the province of Bengal, has been pleased to direct that a bounty shall be paid on all grain imported at the city of Benares or Allahabad from the province of Bengal within three months, and at Cawnpore or Futtehgurh within four months, from the date of this proclamation.

"The following is the rate of bounty which will be paid on the different kinds of grain at each of the above-mentioned stations:—

"On all Grain, Wheat and Barley excepted —				Per 100 mds.
At Benares, ...	...	...	...	Ra. 15 0 0
" Allahabad, ...	...	...	...	" 19 0 0
" Cawnpore, ...	...	...	...	" 23 0 0
" Futtehgurh, ...	...	...	...	" 27 0 0
"On Wheat and Barley:—				
At Benares, ...	...	...	...	" 17 0 0
" Allahabad, ...	...	...	...	" 22 0 0
" Cawnpore, ...	...	...	...	" 24 0 0
" Futtehgurh, ...	...	...	...	" 31 0 0

"The bounty to which persons importing grain at the above-mentioned places may be entitled agreeably to the tenor of this proclamation will be paid at Benares, Allahabad, and Cawnpore by the Collectors of those districts respectively, and at Futtehgurh by the Agent to the Governor-General at Furruckabad. In order, however, to entitle the importers to the payment of the bounty, such persons will be required to produce the rowannahs for the grain, bearing the seal and signature of one of the Collectors of Customs in the province of Bengal, and the usual endorsement of the Collectors or Darogahs of the intermediate Custom-houses. The officers of Government shall likewise be at liberty to examine the boats whenever they may have reason to apprehend that the quantity actually imported is inferior to the quantity on which the bounty may be claimed.

"Persons importing grain into the province of Benares or the Ceded Provinces from the province of Bengal in consequence of this proclamation will be at liberty to dispose of their grain at such price and in such manner as they may judge proper.

"Maafce rowannahs will be granted for the transportation of the grain."

25. False Hopes Excited by a Partial Fall of Rain at the end of September.—There is little in the records of these days to show in what portions of each district the distress was worst. With one or two exceptions, the statements are general rather than particular, and, such as they are, we must perforce be content with them. I gather that, up to the middle of September, 1803, the Khureef had more or less failed throughout the Ceded Provinces, and that there was grave anxiety about the ensuing harvest. At the end of the month came a ray of hope to cheer men's minds. Tidings poured in to Calcutta from one district after another that rain had fallen in abundance; that food^a was cheaper; that timely labour had saved a remnant of the Khureef in some places, notably in Cawnpore; and that there was a general expectation of good spring crops. Restrictions on the exportation of grain from those districts whence exportation was usual were deprecated, the Rubbee sowings were extensively taken in hand, and, in the prospect of a joyous harvest, the Board declined at present to allow remissions of revenue, but contented itself with issuing instructions to postpone the payment of instalments in proportion to the losses actually sustained.

26. Aspect of Affairs up to the end of 1803.—Meanwhile, with an ingenious sort of duplicity, the Board intimated it as their opinion to the Governor-General that the failure of the Khureef had been in no wise exaggerated. Though they had cautioned Collectors not to hold out to the zemindars any expectation of absolute remission, they suspected that eventually a large sum must be abandoned. Indemnification was due also to the Revenue Contractors† who had so far been punctual in their payments, though the landholders on whom they relied for recouping themselves were already defaulters to a large extent. Of the instalments for which the Khureef of 1803 was answerable, the ryots furnished little or nothing, and the zemindars, being dependent on the ryots, were equally in arrears. Whatever proportion of its demand Government realized was at the expense of the Tehseeldars, who raised loans at high rates of interest on the security of their own resources. Having themselves paid, but not received, their dues, they were naturally enough hard on the zemindars, as the latter were on the cultivators. So what with the pressure brought to bear

^a In Furruckabad, wheat, which had fallen from 34 to 20 seers for the rupee, now rose to 32 seers.

[†] In the correspondence of this period, the term "Tehseeldar" is always used to designate these individuals.

on them by those of their own colour to extract money, what with their uncertainty as to the Government's intentions, and what with the state of poverty to which the drought had reduced them, the agricultural population were ready to emigrate, plunder, or resort to any expedient which seemed likely to give them a respite from their sufferings.

27. Relief Proposed about this period in the way of Remissions and Suspensions.—I have not been able in every instance to ascertain the actual results of applications, but from various sources I have collected the following items, which will show the relief that was thought necessary on account of the Khureef alone:—

				Rs.	Rs. *
Collector of Etawah suggested on account of the					
losses* on the Koar and Kartick kists, ...	Remissions,	1,00,000			
	Suspensions,	50,000			
				—————	1,50,000
Suspended for Allahabad on account of the above					
kists, ... ..	...	...	...	...	1,81,000
Ditto ditto in Bareilly, ...	...	...	...	...	2,62,800
Governor-General's Agent for Furruckabad suggested for losses on the Khureef, ...					
	Remissions,	28,125			
	Suspensions,	1,46,010			
				—————	1,74,135
Board recommended for Cawnpore on account					
of Khureef losses,	Remissions,	2,33,197			
	Suspensions,	2,33,197			
				—————	4,66,394
Board recommended suspensions for Moradabad					
on account of Khureef losses, ... ..	...	...	...	...	2,50,000
				Total Rs.	14,84,829

In other words, rather more than a tenth of the whole year's revenue was thought to be irrecoverable from the effects of one bad harvest. Concerning the condition of Goruckpore at this period I can find no mention at all; but as the Collector wrote after the rain of September that there was no great apprehension then of default, the probability is that so far the loss to the Government, if any, was inconsiderable.

28. Aggravation of Distress in January, 1804.—By the beginning of 1804 it proved that too sanguine hopes had been expressed of the Rubbee. The rain at the end of September had been sufficient to moisten the soil, and so to admit of the seed being sown, but the Mahawut, or cold-weather showers, had been everywhere wanting, and the growth of the young crops had been generally stunted. The Tehseeldars and Government officers still did their best to encourage artificial irrigation, but the people were becoming disheartened and reckless. Many were disposing of their cattle and implements, whilst those who had nothing more to sell were forsaking their homesteads and emigrating. There had only been want before; there was now actual starvation. Famine had laid its hand on the people, and an awful stage of suffering had to be passed through before any relief could be expected from Nature. The balance had been increasing at an alarming pace. In October, 1803, there were Rs. 5,22,645 due upon a demand of Rs. 10,51,387. The proportion was much the same in November but fell to about two-fifths of the demand for the instalments of December. In the

* The losses on the Khureef were estimated at Rs. 7,34,807, of which the Collector expected to realize Rs. 3,94,000 from the Rubbee.

next two months there was an alteration for the worse, as will be seen from the following figures:—

		<i>Demand.</i>	<i>Balance.</i>
January,	...	Rs. 26,82,641	Rs. 11,50,186
February,	...	„ 28,52,189	„ 14,41,661

Henceforth I propose to deal with each district separately. This mode of treatment will admit of greater clearness of description, and will enable me to give a few particulars which there has not so far been an opportunity of mentioning.

29. Progress of the Famine in Moradabad.—On the 7th of February the Collector of Moradabad reported to the Board that the state of the crops throughout his district afforded little hope of a good harvest. Although great exertions had been made, his people were, he considered, worse off than their neighbours, for the soil of their fields, being for the most part sandy, did not admit of the possibility of making wells. The water of the nullahs was the only means that they had of irrigation. There was no hoarded wealth and few money-making men in the district. Internal discord was rife, and the dread of invasion by the Mahrattas and the expectation of a revised settlement made many conceal the real capabilities of the land. The defalcations in the revenue were already so great that the Collector was unable to make the usual advances for sugar-cane from the Treasury. The zemindars were absconding in every direction, and much land was lying fallow. The price of grain on the 28th of January stood thus:—

- Wheat, 39 seers for the rupee.
- Gram, 49 ditto.

And on February the 5th—

- Wheat, 31 seers for the rupee.
- Gram, 35 ditto.

The cost of every article of food was becoming greater every day. Towards the end of March the Collector announced that the cultivators were clandestinely removing whatever of the crops had arrived at maturity. Another device of the zemindars at this time was to cite the Tehseeldars into the Criminal Court on some false charge, in the hope of having them put under restraint till the case was settled. By this ruse they prevented them from making the collections. Towards the end of April it was possible to judge of the Rubbee, and by common consent it was allowed to be worse than that of many previous years. The Collector represented that it was quite out of the question for the people to make up any deficiencies. As the standing crops were being ruthlessly plundered, he urged the expediency of sending a military force to overawe the people, and so letting the Civil authorities have a chance of collecting the revenue. He also asked for a large allotment of tuccavees as the only means of giving an impulse to the succeeding year's cultivation. By the end of July, when the rain had begun to fall, Moradabad had attained the unenviable notoriety of having the largest balances (Rs. 9,32,759) of any of the suffering districts.

30. Progress of the Famine in Bareilly.—The loss from the Khureef was probably greater in Bareilly than in any other district. This is essentially the crop from which the food of the agricultural classes always has been, and is likely always to be, derived. When this therefore fails, want, if not a worse calamity, is imminent. According to the kistbundee of 1802-3 (1210 Fuslee), the payment of the instalments had been so arranged in the settlement that eight annas should fall on the autumn and eight annas on the spring crop; but on enquiry it turned out that no more than four annas could be realized from the Khureef. The balances rose from Rs. 1,38,166 in October to Rs. 2,97,000 in November, and many of the ryots fled through fear of payment being enforced. The arid soil of Rohilcund, the Collector maintained, made it peculiarly liable to all the evil effects of drought, and, beyond embanking a nullah

within two miles of Bareilly, and another not very far from Kasheepore, in the jagheer of Rampore, nothing could be done by art to counteract the niggardliness of Nature. The result in the neighbourhood of the streams so arrested was admirable, for the water spread itself over a considerable area. But the money or the organization was not at hand to carry out similar works throughout the district. In April, when the famine was at its height, the Collector took a tour in order to satisfy himself of the actual condition of affairs. The reports of his subordinates were amply confirmed by what he saw with his own eyes. The people were everywhere starving. The Rubbee on the lands of sandy soil was so scanty that it was not thought worth reaping, and the farmers fed the shrivelled stalks down with their bullocks.

31. Progress of the Famine in Etawah.—Early in 1803 cultivation had been stopped in Etawah by the menacing attitude of the Mahratta army, which was encamped on the border at Bidjighur. The zemindars as a body were poor men, who under ordinary circumstances had difficulty in supporting themselves after paying their malgoozaree. They were now living in daily expectation of a raid which should deprive them of their cattle and their crops, of which the indigo gave the best promise. The merchants who held stores of corn were eager to empty their granaries at any price. This cause probably operated here as elsewhere to make prices lower than they might have been but for the vicinity of the enemy. Besides this, the rebellion of the Tettiah Rajah had tended to make life and property insecure; and what he and his followers spared a succession of furious hail-storms destroyed. Then came the drought of June, July, August, and September. No wonder that under this accumulation of disasters the loss of the Khureef was estimated at Rs. 7,34,807,—about a quarter of the whole jumma of the district,—or that the malgoozars should have asserted that much which they paid on account of the Khureef instalments was really raised upon their private credit. From this time matters went steadily on from bad to worse. A violent hail-storm swept down upon the district in the second week of 1804, and left ruin in its track. Though seed had twice been sown, the ground was too baked to allow of its germinating. Water was too far below the surface to be procurable. The consequence was that the land lay bare. Emigration was constant during February, March, and April, and many years elapsed before the district recovered the blow which this famine dealt it.

32. Progress of the Famine in Furruckabad.—Here, too, in Pergunnahs Koralee, Bewur, and Sonj (which have since been attached to the later-formed District of Mynpoorie), violent hail-storms had occurred in the spring of 1803, and again in January, 1804. On the 27th of this month the Agent to the Governor-General wrote to the Revenue Board in Calcutta that many defaulting zemindars had fled across the border into the Nawab Vizier's dominions through fear of coercion, and that the aspect of affairs was as bad as bad could be. Later—in May—he estimated that a remission of about one-third of the whole jumma would be needful. At the end of July the gross balances were Rs. 3,20,391.

33. Progress of the Famine in Cawnpore.—In a letter to the Board dated November the 22nd, 1803, the Collector of Cawnpore had given it as his opinion that all reason for fearing scarcity was then at an end, thus giving a signal proof of how little he anticipated the extreme suffering which he was destined to witness. On February the 1st, in consequence of the failure of the winter rain, he started on tour in order to learn by personal experience what was going on. He found that with the exception of Canouj, where the crops were fair, the prospects of the Rubbee were universally bad. Many of the zemindars had levanted, and only the members of the industrious castes were trying to remedy their misfortunes by digging wells. The sole means that he could suggest of checking emigration was for Government to grant an indulgence of some Rs. 4,60,000 at once—half by way of remission and half as a suspension—to be liquidated with the instalments of the following year. In May, to promote future cultivation, he urged the distribution of tuccavee on a large scale.

Two and a half lakhs were asked for, and Rs. 1,80,826* were allowed. The out-turn of the spring crop proved inconsiderable. The returns from Abkaree, Stamps, Customs, and Sayer, attached to Mr. Montgomery's Report, have enabled me to judge indirectly of the people's resources during this period. The last two items included at this time taxes on all productions of the soil, and on all manufactures and professions. The test is not an unfair one, for there is a disinclination, not to say an inability, to pay such duties on the part of persons plunged into acute distress. The collections for Abkaree were, in

						Rs.
1802-3,	...	...	...	...	...	21,733
1803-4,	...	...	...	...	...	62,657
1804-5,	...	...	...	...	...	53,539
1805-6,	...	...	...	...	...	70,026

These figures are curious, as showing that the diminution was after rather than during the crisis. The following abstract shows the sums paid into the Cawnpore Treasury on account of Customs, Stamps, and Sayer for the same four years:—

		Customs.	Stamps.	Sayer.	Total.
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1802-3,	...	3,29,133	2,625	1,56,181	4,87,939
1803-4,	...	1,93,647	2,172	1,03,117	2,98,936
1804-5,	...	1,38,378	5,251	77,691	2,21,320
1805-6,	...	2,12,391	6,318	86,158	3,04,867

From this it will be seen that in 1803-4 the receipts from these sources had fallen off by considerably more than a third of the previous year's amount, and that in 1804-5, though there had been a marked improvement in Stamps, the three items taken together showed a diminution in round numbers of three-fifths of the sum obtained before the famine. I may add that it took some years before the income from Customs and Sayer reached its normal condition. Mr. Montgomery makes no mention of the price of grain or the extent of crime in these days.

34. Progress of the Famine in Allahabad.—On the 23rd of January, 1804, the Collector of Allahabad was obliged to admit that the Rubbee, which had looked so luxuriant a short time before, was in consequence of the drought dried up and dwarfed in growth. The wheat and barley were in worst plight, but there was no crop which had not fallen away from its early promise of abundance. The peasants were making the most of their wells, but the prospects of a good harvest, or rather of any harvest at all, were fading away daily. To the inclemency of the season he added, as a reason for the deficiency, the depredations of the Boggailahs in Pergunnah Barah, and the proximity of the Mahrattas to the line of the Jumna. In April the Collector estimated the loss in the Rubbee at half of the previous year's produce in some parts, and one-third in others. Under such a state of things it was evident that the spring crops could not redeem the default on the Khureef. Indeed without tucavee he declared that it was impossible to undertake the sowings, and accordingly he sent in an urgent request for more advances, though in the preceding September he had been credited with Rs. 94,123 for this purpose. From all accounts the suffering in this district was worst in the pergunnahs situated beyond the Jumna and in the Doab, though here and there in the latter the greater number of wells caused plots of ground to yield tolerable results.

35. Condition of Goruckpore—The records are almost silent concerning Goruckpore. I have ascertained that in October, 1803, a considerable exportation of grain to the reserved dominions of the Nawab Vizier took place. This could scarcely

* Mr. Montgomery says Rs. 1,88,836 (see para. 29 of his Statistical Report). My figures are according to the Collector's own application, and the letter from Government conveying sanction (see the Board's Proceedings for July, 1804).

LOSS INCURRED BY GOVERNMENT.

It happened if there had not been supplies enough in store for home consumption. It is also stated that rain fell for many days continuously in August and September. At the time of the cession, Goruckpore was the least populous of all the districts which came into our possession. It is probable therefore that, with more moisture and less mouths to feed, the Khureef placed the people above actual want. There are other reasons besides for this inference. The revenue was realized up to March with only trifling balances, and the subsequent monthly accounts show Goruckpore to have consistently maintained a smaller gross balance than any other district. No remissions were thought needful up to November, 1804, when the crisis had passed.

36. Setting in of the Rains, and its result.—At last in June and July the long-desired rain fell throughout the Ceded Provinces, and so copious was the supply that fears for the future speedily vanished. The country however still staggered under the shock. A dash of cold water recalls the fainting person to his senses, but does not at once give him back his strength. So too the people revived, but did not immediately return to the point from which they had sunk. The Tehseeldars showed a general inclination to send in their resignations. Many of the malgoozars were so disconsolate that they asked to have their engagements cancelled for the last year of the triennial settlement, and individuals could not be found to take the estates of defaulters, unless they were absolved from all liability for the balances. In Cawnpore alone, within twelve months of the famine, 238 estates, assessed at Rs. 3,64,386 annual jumma, were sold; and others that were put up were thrown back upon the hands of Government for want of purchasers, and were managed under the peculiar circumstances at great loss. Slowly the emigrants came back to their homesteads. Government showed itself alive to their necessities by authorizing large advances, both for purchasing seed and for replacing bullocks and implements, and this timely help enabled many to profit by the favourable season.

37. Loss incurred by Government.—Besides pledging itself to grant tuccavee, Government had a still heavier burden in the suspensions and remissions which became necessary. The tables in Appendix II., which have been carefully compiled from the statements in the Revenue Board's Proceedings, show in detail the demands, collections, remissions, and suspensions between November, 1803, and October, 1804—the period during which the famine and its effects were most felt. They are also useful as exhibiting what were the balances which accrued month by month in each district, and therefore as proving by inference when and where the mischief was greatest. The following statement gives the results in a more concise form :—

ABSTRACT OF TOWZEE ACCOUNTS FOR 1803-4 (NOVEMBER TO OCTOBER, INCLUSIVE.)

District.	Net balance at close of October, 1803.	Aggregate of Kists for the twelve months, from November, 1803, to October, 1804.	Total Demand.	Total Collections.	Gross Balance at the end of October, 1804.	In train of liquidation at the end of October, 1804.	Remissions between November, 1803, and October, 1804.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Allahabad (Rupees of sorts),	90,446	28,95,532	29,85,978	23,74,130	10,8,779	1,08,779	1,60,463
Bareilly (Bareilly Rupees),	39,420	19,23,322	19,62,742	17,38,140	1,39,878	15,025	*2,96,030
Etawah (Furruckabad Rupees),	2,30,736	28,99,357	31,30,093	22,60,048	1,08,217	...	...
Furruckabad (ditto ditto),	11,524	9,48,357	9,59,881	8,51,127	39,428	39,428	1,49,605
Goruckpore (Lucknow Rupees),	No account received.	16,20,001	16,20,001	14,65,606	1,06,985	1,06,985	...
Gawnpore (ditto ditto),	13,990	26,06,858	26,20,848	21,65,456	34,758	34,758	4,09,842
Moradabad (Moradabad Rupees),	1,53,743	22,39,354	23,93,097	14,08,901	1,18,102	...	...
Total (Rupees of sorts),	5,39,859	1,51,32,781	1,56,72,640	1,22,63,408	6,56,147	3,04,975	10,15,940

* Of this, two lakhs were remitted on account of over-assessment.

From this it will be seen that the total demand during the period that I have assigned to the famine was Rs. 1,56,72,640, the collections Rs. 1,22,63,408, and therefore the balances Rs. 34,09,232. Of this sum, if allowance be made for the two lakhs abandoned in Etawah on account of over-assessment, Rs. 8,15,940 were remitted during the year in consequence of the drought. Later entries in the Board's Proceedings show that remissions to the amount of Rs. 5,11,679, Rs. 6,17,699, and Rs. 8,385 were sanctioned for Moradabad, Etawah, and Furruckabad respectively, after the compilation of October's accounts. From Mr. Montgomery's Report I learn also that Rs. 1,03,877 additional were relinquished in favour of Cawnpore. These are the only items regarding which the information is precise. In other points the calculation, though not hazardous, cannot claim to be absolutely accurate, particulars being wanted to complete the tale. Thus it will be seen from the above abstract that the gross balances at the end of October, 1804, were Rs. 6,56,147, of which Rs. 3,04,975 were in train of immediate liquidation. Did all the entries harmonize with one another, it would be reasonable to conclude that Rs. 27,53,085 were suspended during the period, and Rs. 3,51,172 after its expiration. But there are discrepancies which it is not easy to account for. In the case of Bareilly and Furruckabad, for example, the sum of the figures in columns 5, 7, 8, exceed the total demand! For this I can suggest no better excuse than that, perhaps in ignorance of what was being contemplated at head-quarters in the way of relief, Collectors on the spot were doing their utmost to realize the revenue at whatever cost to the contractors, and that literally money was received for the relinquishment of which Government had given its sanction. The extent of the suspensions therefore must remain an open question. All I can say in elucidation of it is, that in the Board's Proceedings for 1804 it is casually mentioned more than once that the suspensions for the North-West Province up to and including June amounted to Rs. 10,13,972. This tallies with the sum total in column 9 of Table H., Appendix II., and hence I am led to infer that the column of suspensions up to that date reiterates, with corrections and additions, the items of former months. It certainly cannot be that the account of each month contains only the suspensions for that month. On this supposition, the aggregate suspensions alone on the year would exceed 73 lakhs—a sum more than double the balances, independently of any remissions. It is impossible to say what amount of the suspensions would in time be written off as irrecoverable. I am inclined to think the greater part would never be realized. The Proceedings of the Board abound in applications and sanctions for abandoning balances. The total sum so abnegated between 1804 and the conclusion of the settlements made in virtue of Regulation IX. of 1833 must have been enormous. Unfortunately the reasons for the accretion of the debt are seldom or ever given, and though I have no doubt that much was owing to bad seasons, there is no evidence to establish the fact. But, confining myself to the enumeration already given, I do not think Government could have lost less by non-payment of revenue alone than some Rs. 30,71,552. In tabular form the figures stand thus:—

				Rs.
Remitted for Moradabad,	...	...	...	5,11,679
Bareilly, ...	...	...	...	96,030
Etawah, ..	...	...	...	6,17,699
Furruckabad,	...	...	1,49,605	
			8,385	
			<hr/>	1,57,990
Cawnpore,	...	...	4,09,842	
			1,03,877	
			<hr/>	5,13,719
Allahabad,	...	...	...	1,60,463
Suspensions for the North-West Province to end of June,	...			10,13,972
				<hr/>
				Rs. 30,71,552
				<hr/>

This calculation I give for what it is worth, for I am well aware that it is not exhaustive. The suspensions certainly must have been more during the period, but as they would probably include the sums ultimately remitted for Moradabad and Etawah, the very low total at which I have put them is roughly balanced by the amount of the remissions. The sum, if it at all represents the cost to the State, proves plainly the extreme severity of the distress, for the area within which Government abandoned its revenue was less than that in which the two great famines of 1837-38 and 1860-61 prevailed, and the value of money was far larger then than later.

38. Distribution of Tuccavee.—I have already stated that as early as September, 1803, the Collector of Allahabad had received Rs. 94,123 tuccavee, and was pressing for more afterwards; and that in June, 1804, Rs. 1,80,826 were sanctioned for Cawnpore. Other districts made as urgent applications about the same time as Cawnpore, though I can trace no final orders in any other but the cases cited. Doubtless their claims were recognized also, for the Board was constantly inculcating on its officers the wisdom of this plan. If I put the whole amount of advances at ten lakhs, I believe that I shall be well within the mark. There would be a fair chance, but not a certainty, of recovering money thus lent, for in those days balances under this head were almost as frequent and quite as difficult to realize as were those of the land revenue.

39. No Particulars extant Concerning other Losses.—No information exists on which to form any idea of the number of deaths, the cost of relief to the starving, the probable value of the crops that perished, the damage done to the trading classes by the stagnation of their business, or to the agriculturists by the destruction of the capital embarked in seed, implements, and cattle. All these are items in the aggregate of loss which is attributable to a famine. But we can describe roughly the area of the tract; we know that emigration was common, and therefore may conjecture that considerable mortality must have occurred amongst the homeless and hunger-stricken multitudes as they travelled hither and thither in search of food, and we can calculate approximately the reduction in the income of Government. From these premises I think it is just to include this famine in the category of those which have most severely afflicted the North-West.

40. General Policy of Government and the Board of Revenue.—The measures of relief taken by Government and the Board of Revenue appear on the whole to have been wise. They did not anticipate the extent of the calamity, it is true. But experience shows that this is the most difficult error to guard against on such occasions. Panic must be avoided on the one hand, and the interests of private persons must be respected on the other. The principles of political economy must be borne in mind, but not slavishly followed. If Government is too precipitate in proffering help, and a favourable change of season ensues, the policy which has inclined the people to abandon their habits of self-reliance is deprecated; and if the signs of distress are too evident to be mistaken, Government in providing food and labour must take care not to clash with the mercantile community. This contingency fortunately did not exist in the days of which I write, as the Company had virtually a monopoly of trade. The question therefore whether it would be advisable to restrict the exportation* of grain from the Ceded Provinces into foreign territory, which the Governor-General asked of all Collectors through the Board in September, 1803, was certainly not unbecoming the consideration of Government in such an emergency; and, under fear of a scarcity, the retention of corn within British territory would have been excusable. Though the prohibition, if issued, might have

* Bareilly at this time exported rice to Hattass, Moradabad wheat to Delhi and the Mahratta country, and Goruckpore rice and other grains to the reserved dominions of the Nawab Vizier. The traffic however was on a small scale comparatively speaking.

affected the transactions of petty dealers, the lives of many would have been spared by the system of protection. But no sooner had the enquiry been instituted than the rain fell, and the Collectors who had been consulted unanimously declared their conviction that there was no need to stop the free transit of grain. Government acted on their advice, and it is possible that, in the short-lived joy which overcame every one at the prospect of a plentiful spring harvest, sufficient thought was not taken for the morrow, and food which would have been afterwards invaluable was allowed to find its way to foreign markets. In the early days of drought, the necessity of suspensions had also received attention, and the Board were liberal in their permission to throw back on future months the instalments which the proceeds of the Khureef were inadequate to defray. Their great object was to let the agricultural classes be assured of indulgence, if their case was deserving. But the instances of contumacy and abuse of kindness were at this time so numerous and so flagrant that there was always the risk of showing sympathy to the wrong person. Hence it was needful, even after the Board had owned that remission would ultimately be required, to conceal their intentions from the public at large. Tuccavee was given freely, not only for the sinking of wells and the embankment of nullahs, but also for the purchase of seed, cattle, and implements. This course was uniformly pursued throughout the whole period of distress. When there was a likelihood that the Rubbee of 1804 would make up for past deficiencies, and again in May, when the usual rains were being anxiously looked for, every encouragement was given to the people to replace their stock and tools by loans from the Treasury. This generosity eased the burden of the country, and was the source of true economy in the end; for had not Government supplied the money, so great was the dearth of wealthy individuals, that the agriculturists would have had no way of rescuing themselves from their destitute condition, and the payment of revenue would have been indefinitely postponed, for want of the means to till the land.

41. The Board Discountenanced all Coercion.—The Board also consistently warned its subordinates of the danger of coercion. They thoroughly perceived that drought had been the principal cause of the existing state of things, and they refused in consequence to press the malgoozars. As long as they dared, they held out hope of nothing more than suspension; but at last, in April, the frequency with which landholders and their labourers were absconding, made it imperative upon them to avow their ultimate intentions. A good Rubbee was no longer possible then. Famine had so completely got the upper hand that there was no chance of arresting it till rain fell. The only thing left was, in the interest of a future crop, to induce the country folk to stay by their lands. This could only be done by the promise of remissions. Whatever loss Government would thus incur would be trifling compared with the disastrous effects of a general emigration. It is probable that the Board's fear of being over-reached by unscrupulous persons made them delay too long before they accorded this measure of relief. The people laboured under a general uncertainty of the Government's intentions. They were strange to the new race of administrators, as the latter were to them. They would fain trust in their promises of mercy, and did so for a time. But when, month after month, their balances were accumulating, and they received no conclusive intimation of release, many could bear the anxiety no longer, and crossed the border in hope of better times, and sure, at any rate, that they had thrown the load of debt behind them.

42. Mistake of the Board in not subsequently completing Irrigation Works temporarily thrown up during the Famine.—Another error of judgment on the part of the Board was that, when the danger was over, they refused to sanction money for the completion of those temporarily-constructed works, which, if they had been properly finished, would have perhaps lessened the chance of future scarcity in their respective neighbourhoods. On this point the Collector of Moradabad made frequent applications. In the course of the famine he had, on his own responsibility,

commenced damming up various small streams,* with the object of flooding the adjacent country. He had proved very successful in these undertakings, and beyond a doubt managed thereby to raise crops which would otherwise have perished. So long as the necessity of his operations was apparent, the cost was allowed to be defrayed by tuccavee. As was to be expected from dams hastily thrown up, greater solidity was needful, if they were to be permanently useful. But unfortunately the Board would listen to no proposal which necessitated a further expenditure.

43. View taken by the Government of the Famine.—The lesson of the famine is admirably detailed in a letter dated the 27th of September, 1804, from the Secretary to Government, in the Department of the Ceded Provinces, to the Board of Revenue, Fort William. With the paragraphs that I shall quote ends all that I can put on record concerning the events of 1803-4 :—

“His Excellency in Council having now sanctioned the remissions proposed by you to be granted in the several zillahs in the Ceded Provinces (with an exception to Goruckpore, in which zillah it is not expected that the remissions will be considerable), on account of a drought of unusual duration, His Excellency cannot avoid recurring to the magnitude of the amount of those remissions, and to the causes which have rendered such remissions indispensably necessary.

“A doubt cannot be entertained that a just application of the resources of the Ceded Provinces, and a due attention to their improvement, combined with the beneficial effects which may be expected to result from the system of internal government established in those provinces, will enable the generality of the landholders and cultivators of land at no distant period of time to supply the deficiency of an unproductive season from their private funds, or to obviate such deficiency by increasing the artificial means of irrigation and by other improvements.

“The liberal remissions of revenue which have been already granted in the Ceded Provinces, in consideration of the impoverished state of those provinces, occasioned by the oppressive administration of the former Government, and of the consequent inability of the malgozars to fulfil their engagements in an unfavourable season, must have sufficiently manifested the desire of the British Government to promote the prosperity of the Ceded Provinces, and the welfare of the inhabitants. His Excellency in Council, however, is not without apprehensions that the general remissions of revenue granted in the Fuzlee year 1211 may induce the landholders to rely on obtaining remissions whenever the periodical fall of rain shall prove insufficient for the purposes of cultivation. Under this reliance on the liberality and generosity of the Government, some of the landholders might omit to use those exertions for the improvement of their lands which Government is justly entitled to expect they should employ. The public revenue would consequently be rendered fluctuating and precarious, and material embarrassment might arise in the financial arrangements of the Government.

“His Excellency in Council therefore considers it to be of importance that the persons paying revenue to Government in the Ceded Provinces should be apprized that the remissions allowed to them in the Fuzlee year 1211 were granted (as already stated) in consideration of the unprecedented extent in which the calamity of drought had prevailed, and also of the generally impoverished state of the country, and that the most confident expectations are entertained that they will obviate the necessity of preferring similar claims in future, by employing their utmost exertions for the extension of the cultivation and for the general improvement of the country. The great extent of the indulgence which the proprietors of land and other descriptions of landholders have experienced from the British Government, and the laws which have been enacted for the protection of their persons and property, and for securing to them the enjoyment of the fruits of their industry, will, the Governor-General in Council trusts, satisfy them of the justice and reasonableness of these expectations.

“In order to guard more effectually against any future calamity of season similar to that which has occasioned so considerable a defalcation in the revenues in the Fuzlee year 1211, His Excellency in Council observes that the several Collectors in the Ceded Provinces should consider it to be an important part of their duty to obtain the most accurate information respecting the means afforded in their respective zillahs of watering the lands in cases of drought, and for the usual purposes of cultivation, and to suggest such measures as may appear to them to be calculated to render those means equal to the occasion for them.

* In 1865, when a scarcity was apprehended in the Doab, Mr G. H. M. Ricketts, the Collector of Allahabad, advocated the damming of the Susoo Khadere and Barna Rivers in his district; but nothing appears to have come of the proposition. Besides the more extended irrigation which it affords, the plan has this advantage, that it raises the level of water in the wells round about by infiltration. The tanks constructed on this principle throughout Marwar by Colonel Dixon are a proof of how the water running streams can be utilized.

VIEW TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE FAMINE.

"In issuing the necessary instructions to the several Collectors in the Ceded Provinces under the present orders, you will call their particular attention to the present state of the rivers, nullahs, water-courses, tanks, and wells in their respective zillahs capable of being converted to the purposes of irrigation. You will at the same time inform them that Government is disposed to afford every reasonable assistance to such of the zamindars and cultivators of land paying revenue to Government whose means may be insufficient to provide for the watering of their lands to the extent required. Whenever a Collector shall have reason to believe that the expense attending the execution of any work immediately connected with the irrigation of the country may be too considerable to be defrayed by the landholders, and he shall be of opinion that the work should be undertaken at the charge of Government, he will submit to you his sentiments on the subject, together with the grounds of his opinion.

"The Governor-General in Council has been the more desirous of directing your attention to the important objects comprised in the foregoing observations and orders, from the consideration that the amount of the ensuing settlement of the land revenue in the Ceded Provinces will be principally regulated by the extent of the produce of the Fualce year 1212."

SECTION IV.

MINOR FAMINES BETWEEN 1813 AND 1837.

***44. Famine of 1813-14—Condition of Agra.**—The next mention of famine* is in connection with Agra, Cawnpore, and Bunde'cund. The autumn crop of 1812 failed in many parts of the former district, and the harvest of the following spring was indifferent. Yet about this very time reports were pouring in from neighbouring districts that the prospects of the Rubbees were excellent. Contrary to the general run of luck, every week was adding to the trouble in Agra, and by July it was computed that half the inhabitants had left home in search of food and employment elsewhere. The rains set in late, but on the chance of arresting the mischief large advances of public money were made to all who returned to the cultivation of their fields. In this way the tide of emigration was checked; and not only this, but a large number of strangers from the Western States were attracted by the same inducement to settle in the district. The exertions of the labouring classes were worthy of all praise. Those who had no ploughs took to their hoes, and by this means alone some thousands of beegahs were prepared to receive seed. Had the season been favourable, it was thought that the proceeds of the harvest would have gone far to repay the balances of the previous year. But the rain-fall was only partial, and in the majority of places there was no adequate return to the toil and money that had been expended. Suhar, Sirhindiee, and Jagneer were the localities which suffered most. Every tank and stream[†] was dried up, and wells were the only source from which water was procurable either for domestic or agricultural purposes. "Many died from hunger," says Hamilton, "and others were glad to sell their women and children for a few rupees, and even for a single meal." Those who could recall the past considered that the distress of 1783 was not to be compared for intensity with that which existed before their eyes.

45. Relief proffered by the Board, but declined by the Collector.—As early as the summer of 1813, the Board had intimated to Mr. Wright, the Collector, their readiness to allow a remission of revenue, subject to the acquiescence of Government. But at that time the Collector did not despair, and preferred to wait and see what good a liberal application of tuccavee would effect. He evidently did not take into account the possibility of a second season more disastrous than the first. The result was that in the spring of 1814 the arrears were great. The Collector then resorted to coercion, but apparently without the knowledge of the Board. "I released the malgoozars from confinement," he writes on July the 14th, "in compliance with your instructions, and required them to state what measures they purposed adopting for extending the cultivation of the ensuing year and liquidating the balances of the past year. Some eagerly entered into engagements, others reluctantly complied, several positively refused to come to any terms, asserting they had exerted themselves to the utmost of their abilities, and that their losses and sufferings had been very great. If there was rain in season, they would do their duty, and the produce might be appropriated for the discharge of the revenue. They merely required food for themselves and their families. If these terms were not agreeable, they and their estates were at the disposal of Government. One of the landholders plainly told me that he did not wish to quit the jail, as he had not been so well off for the last two years."

***46. Meagre Scale of Remissions.**—It is almost impossible to understand why, with the knowledge of this continued drought, the Board should not have sanctioned a remission of more than Rs. 994 up to the end of April, 1815, when the crisis was over.* Their conduct in the early stage of the famine is explained by the Collector's disinclination to grant relief; but their subsequent omission to help the distressed zemindars is utterly unaccountable, except on the supposition that pressure was brought

* The information concerning this famine is derived almost entirely from the Proceedings of the Board of Revenue.

to bear upon themselves by the Government so as to compel the realization of the revenue at any cost. Despite the catastrophe, the State did not suffer materially, for the last of the Board's statements appertaining to this period only shows a balance of less than three and a quarter lakhs, out of a jumma of Rs. 97,69,200, for the four Conquered Provinces of Agra, Allygurh, Seharunpore, and Bundelcund.

47. Price of Grain.—The following table shows the average market prices^a in Agra for the three years in which there was distress, and for one year afterwards:—

Years.				Wheat.		Barley.		Gram.		Rice.	
				S.	C.	S.	C.	S.	C.	S.	oC.
1812,	...	...	...	33	14	50	15	48	5	19	7
1813,	...	...	...	20	9	25	3	21	7	15	10
1814,	...	...	...	30	7	44	11	33	1	13	14
1815,	...	...	...	41	9	62	7	47	15	20	3

48. Condition of Cawnpore.—With reference to Cawnpore, the details are fewer, but what little information is extant tends to prove that the blow was heavy. In a letter dated October the 25th, 1813, Mr. Newnham, the Collector, wrote to the Board of Commissioners that the drought of 1220 Fuslee (1812-13 A. D.) was generally more severe in his district than that of 1211 (1803-4), and that in the latter year grain never sold at the price which it had recently reached. It is a pity that he gave no figures, for I have not been able to learn the market rates from other sources. In a single month's (September's) accounts there were balances of Rs. 52,274, compared with Rs. 37,227 collected. The remissions for the year were according to the Board's statistics—

						Rs.
In 1813-14,	...	...	...	..	...	4,525
„ 1814-15,	...	...	...	...	...	1,498

And according to Mr. Montgomery—

In 1813-14,	...	...	...	...	...	5,830
„ 1814-15,	...	...	...	...	...	21,275

Whence the discrepancy, I have not been able to find out.

49. Condition of Allygurh and Etawah.—An intimation in the Sudder Board's* tables that Rs. 3,474 were suspended in 1813-14 for Allygurh, and Rs. 6,129 remitted for Etawah, inclines me to think that the famine extended to these districts also, though to what degree I am not prepared to say. As regards Allygurh, the prices of grain seem to point to the same conclusion. The average for the year was as below:—

				Wheat.		Gram.	
				S.	C.	S.	C.
1812,	...	...	...	35	8	49	8
1813,	...	...	...	23	8	23	12
1814,	...	...	...	35	0	38	8
1815,	...	...	...	47	14	49	8

50. Condition of Bundelcund.—I can trace nothing more concerning Bundelcund than that the inhabitants of Punwaree were the greatest sufferers at this period. On the 22nd of July, 1814, the Collector wrote to the Board that there had been a succession of bad seasons in this locality for the two previous years, and that absolute famine was devastating the pergunnah at the date of his letter. Many persons

* See Appendix III., Table B.

had died, more had emigrated. Everything, indeed, seemed to have been against the cultivators of late. In the spring, when the prospects of the Rubbee were fair, a hail-storm had levelled the crops with the ground. The Collector's plan was to have a present distribution of tuccavee, and to grant subsequently a reduction of the jumma, which he considered must of necessity be too high when the balances were Rs. 11,862 upon a total demand of Rs. 18,653. The remissions were on account of

	Rs.				
1812-13,	11,105
1813-14,	3,504
1814-15,	3,448

As compared with the remissions sanctioned for other districts about this time, these sums appear too large for the relief of a single pergunnah, and therefore it is not unlikely that other parts of Bundelcund felt the famine also.

51. Scarcity of 1819. General Prevalence of High Prices.—Want of proper materials makes it impossible to give more than a very faint sketch of the events of 1819. Prices were high in various parts of the North-West during the year, but the increase seems to have been due not to one but to several distinct causes. In January a severe frost made havoc amongst the wheat and barley in Jounpore, and brought up the cost of the former grain to 10½ seers for the rupee. In Benares the price about the same time was 21 seers (the seer being about one-eighth less than at Jounpore), but the rate was attributed in part to the unusual shallowness of the Ganges, which prevented the larger grain boats from coming up the river. The average value at Allygurh throughout the year was—

	S.		C.	
Wheat,	19	12 for the rupee.
Gram,	20	4 „

And at Agra—

Wheat,	...	...	17	0 „
Gram,	...	...	20	9 „

Yet the Collectors of both Allygurh and Agra, as I shall presently show, had orders in the course of the autumn to export largely to Allahabad, Cawnpore, Banda, and Calpee—a circumstance which shows that these latter districts were in a bad plight at any rate.

52. State of the Revenue.—Unfortunately the Revenue Returns do not help to elucidate the matter, for, whether owing to the high prices or some other cause I know not, the remissions and balances for this year were remarkably small, as indeed they had been for the year previous. The accounts of the Ceded and Conquered Provinces and the Province of Benares for the year beginning May the 1st, 1818, and ending April the 30th, 1819, as made up on the 1st of July, 1819, stand thus:—

1818-19 A. D.

Total Jumma.	Collections.	Suspensions.	Remissions.	Collected to June 30th	Balance on July 1st.
Sicca Rs. 3,33,68,435	3,17,23,743	31,668	1,77,870	7,37,270	7,24,541

The details of the remissions and balances are only recorded in rupees* of sort, but for

* The difference in value is considerable. Thus, rupees of sorts 1,85,886 = Sicca rupees 1,77,870 (remissions), and Rupees of sorts 7,57,195 = Sicca rupees 7,24,541 (balances). Only the sums total, and not the individual items, are recorded in Sicca Rupees at this period.

REPORTS OF COLLECTORS.

the sake of showing where default was greatest, I give the entries as they appear in the Proceedings :—

			<i>Remissions.</i>	<i>Balances on July 1st.</i>
			<i>Rs.</i>	<i>Rs.</i>
Allahabad,	...	...	...	29,197
Bareilly,	...	..	73,546	29,957
Cawnpore,	...	...	...	46,464
Etawah,	...	...	15,853	41,834
Furruckabad,	...	...	...	36,539
Goruckpore,	...	...	...	6,491
Moradabad,	...	...	3,479	7,599
Shahjehanpore,	...	...	4,747	39,125
Agra,	...	...	...	2,91,718
Allygurh,	...	...	...	69,117
Bundelcund,	...	...	6,435	55,231
Meerut,	...	...	...	7,933
Seharunpore,	...	...	60,685	65,049
Benares,	...	...	21,641	30,941
			<hr/>	<hr/>
			1,85,886	7,57,195

Within this period, the distress, if it is to be judged in any degree by the country's ability to pay the revenue, must have been worst, for the returns of the next year are still more favourable :—

1819-20 A. D.

Total Jumma.	Collections.	Suspensions.	Remissions.	Collections to June 30th.	Balance on July 1st.
Sicca Rs., 3,32,67,672	3,19,20,424	13,602	49,684	8,88,253	4,09,310

In the districts which I have reason to believe were affected by scarcity the remissions and balances are thus distributed :—

			<i>Remissions.</i>	<i>Balances on July 1st.</i>
			<i>Rs.</i>	<i>Rs.</i>
Allahabad,	...	...	...	25,409
Banda,	...	...	10,859	16,421
Calpee,	...	...	4,210	15,007
Jounpore,	...	...	4,129	1,24,015
Cawnpore,	...	...	20,905	9,127

53. Reports of Collectors.—The little correspondence which is extant appears to me to justify the inference that the rains had set in late, and that consequently the fear of continued drought, coupled with the knowledge of high prices in various quarters, made Government take all precautions against famine. When rain fell, it seems to have come in abundance—too abundantly indeed in Cawnpore, according to the Collector's account. It is evident that some time in August or September enquiries had been made by the Board, then sitting at Furruckabad, from its subordinates, for several letters from Collectors on the subject of the weather and the state of the crops, dated during the last two or three days of September, are still on record amongst the Proceedings. On the 28th of September, the Collector of Agra reported that a favourable change had taken place in the crops, owing to a late fall of rain. Wheat had been selling at 20 seers instead of 14, and, though at the time he

writes the current rate was 16 seers for the rupee, he attributed this retrogression to the conduct of the merchants, who were exporting largely. The prospects of the Rubbee were good. From Bareilly, the Collector wrote on the 29th of September that the rain had revived the Khureef, and that there was every chance of a good harvest. Prices were high, but no rate was specified. On September 30th, it was intimated, both from Calpee and Furruckabad, that the Khureef would be below the average, but not by any means a total failure. In both places the market rates continued to be dear. On the same day the Collector of Meerut reported favourably of his district, and the Collector of Cawnpore that the rain had so far produced no good results. News had reached the latter that in Saugor multitudes were dying daily from famine, and that emigration was also taking place from Gwalior and Marwar. The prospects of the Khureef in his own district were good, provided the rain held off. Unfortunately the aspect of the sky gave no assurance of fine weather. Wheat had risen to 9½ seers—a price which he considered due to the exportation that was going on to the East. Under these circumstances, he asked that exportation should be prohibited. To this request the Board answered that they doubted whether Government would sanction such a measure whilst the new territories to the South and the Eastern Provinces were suffering so urgently from want. The following passage in a letter from the Collector of Moradabad, dated the 22nd of December, 1819, shows that there was no anxiety felt in the western half of Rohilcund:—"I have already," he writes, "had opportunities of personally visiting many of the pergunahs, and I am enabled to assure the Board that so fine a Khureef has never come under my observation previously; and this circumstance, combined with the extraordinarily high prices of grain of all descriptions, has removed the apprehensions which the reports of the droughts in other districts were calculated to produce." A letter from the Collector of Banda, dated October the 8th, announces that no rain had been experienced till the 20th of August, but that, when once it set in, the fall was incessant for three weeks. The land, which had hitherto been so dried up by the heat that sowings had been undertaken twice without any effect, became so drenched that a third sowing was not possible till the middle of September. Accordingly the Collector recommended a postponement of the Khureef instalments, to the extent of Rs. 1,97,327, till the time of the next Rubbee collections, and to this suggestion Government gave its sanction. A short time before the date of this letter wheat had been selling at seven and eight seers for the rupee.

54. Measures taken by the Board.—The result of these communications, and of others which, though not recorded, are spoken of in the Proceedings, was that the Board desired the Collector of Agra to buy up grain to the value of one lakh, and despatch it to Banda and Calpee. At the same time, the Collectors of Bareilly, Allygurh, Seharunpore, Meerut, and Moradabad received instructions to purchase supplies, each to the extent of half a lakh, and to furnish Allahabad and Cawnpore with the grain as quickly as possible. The Board considered that they were safe in issuing these orders, as a comparison of prices made it apparent that there was no chance of a deficiency in the districts which were chosen to export.

55. Further particulars about Bundelcund.—A Minute recorded by Mr. Newnham, Officiating Member of the Board, on January the 18th, 1820, gives incidentally further information about Bundelcund. The Khureef of 1819 failed extensively, and frost nipped the spring crops in the beginning of 1820. The people were the less able to bear the loss, as they had been subject to indifferent seasons for the two preceding years. During this continued period of drought they had struggled manfully against adversity, and had shown a disposition to fulfil their engagements to Government at any cost to themselves. This constituted one reason for the prosperous state of the finances, whilst another was the unparalleled speculation in cotton, which had made the prices of that article so high as to preclude the Board, despite the prevailing want, from buying seed for distribution. It was natural that, under such a stimulus, the ryots should devote all their energies to the more remunerative crop.

But with the increase in cotton cultivation, the production of grain fell off. When, therefore, drought befell the land, there were no stores on which the inhabitants could rely, and, till Government set the example of exporting, the district fared badly for the means of subsistence.

56. Mr. Waring's Settlement in 1816 helped to increase the Distress in Bundelcund.—Nature, however, was not altogether to blame for the misfortunes of Bundelcund. For the ten years subsequent to 1806, when our rule first commenced in this part of the country, "the administration," says Mr. William Muir in his report* on the settlement of the Calpee Pergunnahs, "would appear to have been just and equitable. The forbearance and happy arrangements of Government appear to have had their full effect in developing the resources of the country. We can conceive what an impulse must have been given to its onward progress from the combination of security and peace with a moderate and just assessment. We have it also on the authority of Mr. Waring that the Government expenditure in the district exceeded at this period the revenue received into the treasury—a circumstance which should not be overlooked in considering the enormous increase which was soon after demanded. In 1816, or the Fuslee year 1223—an era memorable in Bundelcund—a new settlement was made by Mr. Collector Waring. It raised at once the revenue of Humeerpore by three lakhs and a quarter. And here, again, I am compelled to state that, while the jumma of the other pergunnahs was increased by 33 per cent., that of Koonch was raised only 14. If so large an increase was in the one case demandable, it follows that on the other there was a strange dereliction of the duty we were bound by to improve the revenues of so important a trust. The truth, however, is that no course more favourable to the real interests of the pergunnah could have been adopted than the one unintentionally pursued by Mr. Waring; the assessment of that time has continued unchanged, and the result is a proof of the prosperity which similar treatment would have secured in the other pergunnahs. It may reasonably be enquired in what manner such an unparalleled enhancement of the revenue was procured. The answer is simple. The prosperity occasioned by favourable years and moderation of demand had so improved the aspect of this country that men began to think its resources inexhaustible. A crowd of speculators, who looked only at the extent of the fallow land, and took for granted the continuance of the same auspicious seasons, fancied they could see a source of great gain in contracting even at so enormous an increase. Trusting to these or some such fallacious grounds, there was no bound to their mad competition. Mr. Waring himself seized at every circumstance which could warrant the imposition of an increase, and rarely failed to adopt, often to exceed, the highest estimate of the Tehseeldar and Canoongoe. The good name of those officers was made to depend on the highness of their 'douls' and 'nuzzerandazes,' upon which the settlement was based; and we may conceive of what nature those statements must have been when the Tehseeldar of Calpee was dismissed from his appointment for submitting too low an estimate, and the Tehseeldar of Jelalpore was turned out of the Collector's camp with indignity because he failed to procure a farming offer sufficiently high. Surrounded by a band of capitalists, the unfortunate zemindar well knew that, if he refused the Collector's offer, his estate would be instantly snatched from his hands. Mr. Waring could have had no stronger proof of the injustice of his settlement than that, with this prospect before their eyes, the proprietors† of one hundred and seventy-eight villages, rather than accede to his

* See Reports on the Revenue Settlement of the North-Western Provinces, Vol. II., Part II., pp. 820-21, paras. 19-24.

† In consequence of the notification, made in Section 2 of Regulation IX. of 1818, that proprietors not willing to hold their lands under the proposed new settlement must intimate the same to the Collector before July 1st, 1819, the proprietors of 331 estates in Bundelcund paying an aggregate jumma of Rs. 8,68,168, and of 87 estates in Calpee paying Rs. 1,95,463, had sent in their resignations. The assessment for the whole district then was Rs. 37,36,641. There were also 239 estates in farm, with a yearly jumma of Rs. 4,37,663. (See Mr. Newham's Minute, above mentioned.)

"terms, allowed them to be let in farm. It would be useless to recount the more immediate miseries attendant on this settlement—the sickening detail of absconded zemindars, who, according to Mr. Waring, fled only because the real value of their estates was beginning to come to light; or of desolated villages whose lands, it was said, were thrown out of cultivation merely to procure a decrease of assessment. Suffice it to say that Mr. Waring entered with most sanguine expectations on the cultivation, from Government resources, of several of these deserted estates; but his eyes appear at last to have been opened, and in his final letter he acknowledges that his experiment had completely failed. Had he remained, it is most probable that he would have acted upon this acknowledgment; but he almost immediately left the district, and the flattering reports submitted by most of his successors could not fail to set him at ease when in a superior position he had it in his power to have effected a revision."

57. Probable extent of the dearth, and date of its termination.—

The returns for 1820, up to July the 15th, show a net increase amounting altogether to Rs. 3,60,229 over the receipts of the corresponding period of 1819. All districts but three shared in the improvement of the revenue. Those in which there was a diminution were—

	Rs.
Cawnpore,	44,919
Banda,	39,035
Calpee,	35,060
Total,	1,19,014

This falling off is attributed in the Board's letter which explains the details of the statement to the "failure of the Khureef harvest." As this letter is dated August the 15th, 1820, and no mention is made of deficiency in the Rubbee, I gather that the scarcity ceased with the cold weather of 1819-20, and extended only to Allahabad, Cawnpore, Calpee, and Banda, and that of these four the two latter districts were most severely affected. The rain-fall in this year is said to have been plentiful.

58. Severe Drought in 1824-25 in the Delhi Territory, Meerut, and Seharanpore.—During the season of 1824-25 the weather was so unpropitious in the Delhi Territory that the balances, which had amounted to Rs. 1,83,133 only on a demand of Rs. 26,87,643 in the preceding year, increased to Rs. 10,59,212 on a demand of Rs. 28,72,272. So severe was the effect of the drought in the Northern Division, that the Governor-General granted a remission of the whole year's revenue. In the Western Division the distress is said to have been considerable also. Further particulars than these I have not been able to obtain, and indeed this information is only given incidentally in a letter from the Board which accompanied the yearly returns transmitted to the Government at Fort William. I gather from some remarks in a correspondence, which I shall notice at greater length presently, that Seharanpore and Meerut were suffering from want of rain at the same time.

59. Drought of 1825-26. Area over which it prevailed.—A year later, drought had pervaded the whole of the territories then known as the Western Provinces. This designation comprehended all the districts above Cawnpore*—to wit, Etawah (including Mynpoory), Furruckabad, Shahjehanpore, Pillibheet, Bareilly, Suheswan (Budaon), Moradabad (including Bijour), Seharanpore, Mozuffernuggur, Meerut, Boelundshuhur, Allygurh, Saidabad (Muttra), and Agra. To the unkindness of the season must be added another cause for the deficiency of the crops. The existing settlement was on the point of expiring, and the landholders, in conformity with the practice which they had found so advantageous before, were lessening the cultivation on their estates and rack-renting their tenants unmercifully, in the hope of a reduc-

* The Proceedings of the period relate to these districts only.

tion of jumma on re-engagement. These two circumstances combined to render Government so anxious that on the 22nd of December the Board were instructed to enquire from all Collectors what had been the loss on the Khureef, and what was the chance of the Rubbee proving equal to the average of ordinary years. A circular to this effect was accordingly issued on the 12th of January.

60. Reports from Collectors. Pilibheet.—On the 21st of January, Mr. G. F. France, the Sub-Collector of Pilibheet, replied that rain had fallen without intermission for many hours, though at the time he wrote there was no prospect of more. The earth had been so thoroughly moistened that it was quite fit to receive the seed for the Rubbee. Five days earlier his account had been much more gloomy. “The malgoozars,” he wrote, “are so cast down by the want of rain that they are neglecting their interests. I have received innumerable petitions from the most respectable farmers, soliciting me to take the whole produce of their estates, and to realize whatever is obtainable from the sale of any private property they may possess; after which to allow the balances to lie over till next year, for the due payment of which they offer the best security.”

61. Furruckabad.—On the 21st of January, Mr. H. Newnham, Collector of Furruckabad, reported that the failure of rain had been much greater in his district during the last autumn than in 1803. In the neighbourhood of the Sudder station only one shower had been vouchsafed in the early part of the season, and in every village large patches of land, though broken up with the plough, remained unsown. In the Tehseeldarees of Taligram and Aligunj the rain had affected one village and not another. The Khureef crops, with the exception of the cotton, had perished. No pressure had so far been needful to enable the Collector to realize the Government dues, for the malgoozars had been exerting themselves bravely; but their labour was often in vain, for, even when wells were at hand, the high winds which prevailed dried up the soil almost as soon as it was watered. On the 6th of March, Mr. Newnham wrote that all hope of the Mahawut, or cold-weather rain, was gone. On this the people had staked the last chance of the Rubbee. If rain came now, it would involve hail, and that would make the cultivators worse off still. The only benefit that it could possibly bring would be to forward the growth of the sugar-cane and revive the drooping cattle. “With an accurate knowledge, due to a recent tour through the district,” he adds, “I think I can speak with some degree of certainty on the season. A line drawn from Mohamedabad to the Ganges, inclining Westward, nearly divides the district into two equal portions. To the West of this line are situated the Tehseeldarees of Shumsabad and Uzumnuggur. A close inspection of the Urhur crops which are not watered affords some criterion of the comparative extent of drought, and, generally speaking, they are good in this direction. The reason is, the rain in July was more abundant, and some showers in October materially assisted the cultivation of the Rubbee. The labour and exertion to secure a crop has been wonderful, and wells have been dug wherever the soil admitted, although many have failed. Price, as demonstrating the quantity of produce, is generally referred to by the zemindars, who seem of opinion that the present rates are much too low for the deficient quantity of grain produced in the Khureef or expected from the Rubbee. The cause of this comparative cheapness I cannot learn. Cotton has latterly fallen in the market, and many are of opinion that a scarcity of money has operated equally with increased produce. In the portion of the district to the East of the line above described the drought is excessive, the rain in July having been very light, and not a shower has fallen since that time to the date of this letter. Around the city of Furruckabad and Futtehghurh, where irrigation from wells was possible, the same industry and exertion has been exemplified, but with some diminished success, as the crops are lighter. In this tract the revenue will, I hope, be realized. Further Eastward, throughout a part of Pergunnah Bhojepore and the whole of Pergunnah Chupramow, Sowruck, Beewur, and Taligram, the scene calls for commiseration. A simple fact may possibly

" elucidate more than argument. About the 10th February, 1825, I was encamped
 " at a large village called Oomraen, on the banks of an extensive jheel, which was
 " then covered with water-fowl, and, I guess, of a depth varying from three to four
 " feet. I visited the same spot in last month, and found the same jheel had been
 " ploughed in October, but much of it, and particularly the deep part, remained unsown,
 " and the seed had not vegetated where the trial had been made. The whole tract of
 " country between the Rivers Kalee Nuddée and Eesun, with exception of the few
 " villages which possess wells, presented the same picture. The cultivation always
 " depended on the irrigation afforded by jheels (or, indeed, I might call them lakes),
 " and these resources, which had in many spots never been known to be dry in the
 " hot winds, were this year without water in the rains. I visited several such spots,
 " and saw with my own eyes the failure and its consequence. In this tract, wells very
 " generally fail, from the under-stratum being a quicksand called seelwah. To attempt
 " to estimate the crop in this direction would be useless. In a very great many villages,
 " there can scarcely be said to be any crop, and what may be produced will not
 " be sufficient for the food of the inhabitants. In the very finest villages, possessing
 " wells and cultivated by Koormees, the sugar-cane has not yielded an average, as its
 " growth has been impeded. The Rubbee, notwithstanding the labour and exertion
 " bestowed on it, promised to be exceedingly light; and the Urhur, to which I refer
 " as proof, was scarcely anywhere three feet high, and had generally dried up. The
 " Pergunnahs of Kunnouj and Bilhour, in Cawnpore, are said to be in a similar
 " condition. Under such circumstances, I know not how to estimate the produce,
 " though I would hazard the opinion that the crop will not be two-fifths of an
 " average one, and the produce will be equally influenced by the market rates, as
 " before noticed. The scene of general distress and poverty which I observed is
 " beyond my ability to describe. The villagers constantly declared that they were
 " without food and in despair. The zemindars urgently solicited me to look at their
 " lands, and some, quite forgetful of the usual respect, actually seized my horse's
 " reins, and attempted to force me to contemplate their sterile fields, although I had
 " no reason to doubt their representations. Here and there I could not fail to
 " observe the smoke of the charcoal pit, and at other spots the sawyers at work on the
 " mangoe-trees, which had been sold and felled, as one resource of realizing funds to
 " discharge the Government demand. This fact I believe to be sufficiently demon-
 " strative of the season, and, if another be wanting, I could add that, on a transfer of
 " a village, the tenant outgoing affirmed that out of Rs. 400 paid to Government he
 " has received only Rs. 75 from his ryots—an assertion which the new tenant
 " appeared to admit as correct, and promised to reimburse. Satisfied, therefore,
 " that relief must be granted to the suffering villages, I request the permission of the
 " Board and Government to some measure for this purpose. To agitate remissions or
 " suspensions without due consideration and sanction would only involve me in great
 " responsibility; to apportion them at once would be impossible. The general line
 " I would recommend would be to collect according to the year's produce for
 " the Government share, from the villages which are destitute of wells, and the soil
 " of which is bhoor or sand, and to press the more productive villages for the full
 " liquidation of the revenue. The good lands, though paying high rates, form indeed
 " the security of the revenue, and repay the cultivator in a course of years. Profit
 " from the inferior soils is always problematical, and I cannot ascertain the calculation
 " on which they are broken up. This year there is an entire loss of seed and labour
 " in the latter, and the cultivator has besides to maintain himself and cattle for a
 " whole year. In some cases this procedure may lead to almost an entire relinquish-
 " ment of the revenue, and in others to one-half. The better villages which have
 " produce may be secured in a great measure by the price of grain, which must,
 " I think, rise. The enquiry is difficult, and some abuses may occur. Those may be
 " in a great degree prevented by a reservation declaring the final adjustment to
 " depend on the revised settlement now in progress, which forces into notice the

"operations of past time, and will enable a Collector to satisfy himself that the ryots obtained the relief."

62. Agra.—On the 24th of January, Mr. James Fraser, Collector of Agra, gave it as his opinion that in all probability the revenue would fall very much short of the average, not only on account of the want of rain in proper season, but also by reason of the large army assembled on the frontier.

63. Shahjehanpore.—On January 28th, Mr. A. Campbell, Collector of Shahjehanpore, gave the tidings that the crops were in a singularly unfavourable condition. He had just concluded a tour through his district, and could vouch for the sterile appearance of the fields, so different from the luxuriance of former years. The *malgozars* had behaved well as a rule, but only in the Terai was there a chance of anything like an adequate return for labour. On the Bhoor lands the crops were completely withered, and sugar-cane, the refuge for the destitute in other districts, was here a failure to the extent of at least one-third. A frost during the cold weather had blighted the *Urhur*. The wheat and gram had not attained half their ordinary height, and the grain would not form in the ear. Hot winds were blowing incessantly. The Collector estimated the loss at about one-third of an ordinary year's yield.

64. Moradabad.—On the 26th of January, Mr. A. N. Forde, the Collector of Moradabad, announced that no rain had fallen in his district since the beginning of September, but that though the *Khureef* had failed the *malgozars* had been saved by the proceeds of their cotton and sugar-cane, from both of which the yield was good. The seed for the *Rubbee* had been widely sown in the ploughed land, but the *Khureef* grounds, which would have given a second crop in ordinary seasons, lay fallow. Prices had risen, but the poor were not actually starving as yet.

On the 6th of March, Mr. N. J. Halhed reported of the northern division of Moradabad that the *Rubbee* was so thin and unpromising that he expected on account of it alone a loss of one quarter of the year's revenue. A field near the tent in which he was writing, though of five *pucka beegahs* in size, was expected only to yield four maunds! This was a fair sample of all unirrigated land in the district. In the *Tehseeldarees* of Nugeena, Bijnour, and Shercoote, the *Khadir* of the *Ramgunga* and the *Ganges* was giving some return; but nowhere else was there a vestige of a crop. The condition of *Thakoordware* was very bad. *Chandpore* had suffered less, because it had escaped its usual inundation from the river. In *Bazpore* the loss was expected to be trifling, but in *Kasheepore* and *Jusspore* it would be heavy. The agricultural classes were enduring great privations, though corn had been imported largely for their consumption from *Kumaon* and *Gurhwal*. The grain sold by the merchants was the refuse of old pits. Many persons had been existing on the washings of the sugar cauldrons boiled up with cotton-seeds, whilst the *buthooa*, a vegetable which is only eaten in very hard times, was eagerly sought after. Such improper food had naturally caused many deaths. The Collector deprecated any present publication of Government's intention to remit, as likely to make the people less reliant on themselves.

65. Bareilly.—On January the 29th, Mr. S. M. Boulderson, the Collector of Bareilly, answered the questions put to him by saying that the *Khureef* had failed throughout the district, and had been even worse than the *Rubbee* threatened to be. As for the latter crop, he did not anticipate an out-turn of more than two-thirds, or perhaps three-fourths, of the produce of ordinary seasons; and in this estimate he was confirmed by the general opinion of those natives whom he had consulted. The Government would not suffer a greater loss, he thought, than two annas in the rupee. Where irrigation was possible, the yield would be fair, and the high prices which prevailed would secure large profits to the proprietors; but where the ground was sandy, and destitute of wells or streams, it was probable that it would not return even the cost of the seed.

In another letter, dated the 15th of March, the Collector represented that, as no rain had fallen in the interval, prospects were worse. He therefore urged the policy of postponing a portion of the jumma, equivalent to two or three annas in the rupee, in the case of all who would promise to continue their existing engagements, and repay the deferred instalments in future years with interest. He advocated a speedy declaration of Government's intentions, as the rumours which prevailed were unsettling the minds of the people, and tended to make them less energetic than they should be.

66. Seharunpore.—On February the 1st, Mr. M. Moore, Collector of Seharunpore, reported that the Khureef had failed, and that there was every probability of the Rubbee falling short of the produce of the last or any former year.

On the 7th of April, Mr. Fraser, the Second Member of the Board, wrote thus of his experience here and in Allygurh :—"In many places women and children were "begging in considerable numbers—not common, every-day beggars, but people who had before been supported on their own labour. Great numbers have crossed the Jumna and gone to the West, where the season has been most favourable. If it had not been for supplies of grain from that quarter, a more general emigration would have taken place."

67. Meerut.—On the 11th of February, Mr. R. C. Glyn, Acting Collector of Meerut, reported the result of a tour which he had just made in his district, where drought had prevailed for two years past, to the detriment of two successive autumnal harvests. The usual rain required for the Rubbee had not fallen in any part of the zillah. The crops in the Khadir of the Ganges and the Jumna had been kept alive by the inherent moisture of the soil, but in other parts there were no signs of any vegetation, except in the neighbourhood of wells, and even the irrigated crops had been deteriorated by the West winds. There was little provender either for man or beast, and already grain was being imported from the other side of the Jumna into the markets of Banghput and Shamlee. But this did not avail much, for the prices of imported food were too high for the poorer classes of zemindars and village labourers, who were subsisting chiefly on roots and berries, and could only allow themselves the occasional luxury of a handful of meal. Wheat was selling at 25 seers for the rupee, and sugar-cane at 20. The least distressed of the agricultural classes were the Jats, whose industry still enabled them to keep the wolf from the door. Under existing circumstances, the Collector estimated the loss to Government at two lakhs, out of a total jumma of Rs. 15,14,223.

68. Suheswan (Budaon).—On the 22nd of February, Mr. H. Sweetenham, the Collector of Suheswan, wrote that he estimated the loss from the drought at one-third of the average produce of the district, and that the balance would in June amount to Rs. 30,000, which sum he might with luck reduce to Rs. 18,000 by the close of the official year. Pergunnahs Ooseith, Suleimpore, Morareh, Sorund, and Islamnuggur had suffered most.

69. Belah (Etawah).—On the 24th of February, Mr. C. B. Elliott, Sub-Collector of Belah, intimated that in Talooqua Tirwa he feared there would be a balance of some Rs. 6,000. In the other pergunnahs under his jurisdiction he hoped to be able to realize the revenue, with the exception perhaps of a few hundred rupees.

70. Allygurh.—Mr. W. J. Hardinge, the Collector of Allygurh, writing on March the 8th, represented that the last Khureef was very poor, and had caused great loss to the zemindars. They had not been blessed with a shower for the last six months, and many of the ryots had left their homes. The consequence was that the cultivation of the Rubbee had much decreased—to the extent over the whole district, he estimated, of at least 8,000 beegahs. The crops on the irrigated lands looked flourishing, but the fields not under the influence of wells gave no room for hope of a tolerable harvest. The Collector expected to realize the revenue, but the task would, in his opinion, be a difficult one.

71. Sirpoorah.—On the 22nd of March, Mr. T. J. Turner, the Sub-Collector of Sirpoorah, the pergunnahs of which are now merged in Etah and Furruckabad, estimated the deficiency in the Rubbee at one-third of a common season's yield, and quoted as an instance of an ordinary year that very 1232 Fuslee (1824-25 A. D.) which I have already shown was in districts higher up a period of drought. The Tehseeldaree of Sukhravur, which, from its light sandy soil, precluded the digging of kutchha wells, suffered most. Pergunnahs Nidhpore, Oolai, and Putialee, from their surface being lower, had the benefit of partial inundations from the Ganges. Sukhet, Etah, Koraolee, and Marehra, all had their full share of adversity.

72. Boolundshuhur.—On March the 29th, Mr. R. Lowther, Collector of Boolundshuhur, informed the Board that all the pergunnahs to the West, Secunderabad and Tilbegumpore excepted, had suffered severely, and that so unfavourable a season both for Khureef and Rubbee had not been known for many years past. In September there was very little rain, and in December and January none; so that the seed had no chance of germinating. The consequence was that the crops had not attained half their proper height. Having been an eye-witness himself of the desolation which he described, he could safely recommend for the indulgence of Government the agricultural communities of Dadree, Shuckurpore, Dunkour, and Kasnah, in particular. For the whole district a suspension of at least Rs. 26,500 would be needful.

73. Saidabad (Muttra).—On the 7th of April, Mr. R. H. Boddam, Collector of Saidabad, forwarded returns of the Rubbee crops for the year, as contrasted with the produce for the same period of the preceding year. The comparison stands thus:—

<i>Produce of 1232 Fuslee.</i>	<i>Produce of 1233 Fuslee.</i>	<i>Decrease. "</i>
Maunds.	Maunds.	Maunds.
12,97 094	10,88,715	2,08,349

Mahabun and Jul'aysur were the pergunnahs in which the decrease was greatest.

74. Etawah.—On April 8th, Mr. H. T. Owen, Collector of Etawah, sent in his report, which was to the effect that the drought had been variable in his district. Some villages had wholly escaped its influence, others had not a blade of grass or a stalk of any kind remaining. He desired no close enquiry into the state of the people till the crops had been out, as the zemindars would undoubtedly take advantage thereof, and keep back their instalments; whilst if he called on the Tehseeldars to declare the damage done in the villages of their respective pergunnahs, he would infallibly be opening the door to partiality and corruption.

75. Mozuffernugger.—On April 12th, Mr. H. Dundas, Sub-Collector of Mozuffernugger, replied to the Board's Circular that the scantiness of the crops in his district, especially in the Bangur lands, was notorious. Before all hope of the cold-weather rain had passed away, the Tehseeldars had reckoned the probable amount of balances at $1\frac{1}{2}$ annas in the rupee on the whole jumma; but, with the additional knowledge that he had since gained, the Sub-Collector thought this estimate much below the truth.

76. Action taken by Government.—As quickly as the reports were received, the Board transmitted them to Government, and on the information which had reached the Governor-General in Calcutta by the 13th of April the following order was issued:—

"His Lordship in Council authorizes your Board to direct the Collectors under your authority to suspend one-fourth of the demand of the current Fuslee year in all cases in which they may have reason to believe that the malgoozars are not able to discharge more than three-fourths of the jumma-out of the produce of their lands. It will of course be competent to the Collectors to suspend any less proportion of the jumma than that above stated, and as different estates must have suffered in different degrees, it is necessary to leave a considerable discretion to the Collectors. They must in each case fix the amount of suspension to be granted, under such general instructions as you may furnish them with. They must not leave the determination of the matter to any of their native officers. They must be careful that the extent of the indulgence granted is fully made known to the malgoozars and under-tenants, and it must be required of the former that they engage to extend a like indulgence to the latter."

The advances that were made during May, June, and July, for the sake of the ensuing Khureef cultivation, were large. Sirpoorah received Rs. 3,500, Moradabad Rs. 42,000 (in addition to a previous grant of Rs. 28,000 for sugar-cane), Meerut, Rs. 50,000, and Etawah Rs. 17,715. Besides what has been put on record, it is probable that other districts, concerning which no special mention is made in connection with Tuccavee, received loans in proportion to their wants.

77. Revenue Returns for the Period of Scarcity.—After so unanimous a testimony to the distress of the Western Provinces, and after so liberal a measure of relief had been conceded by the Government, it would have been natural to expect large and frequent suspensions. Nothing of the sort, however, seems to have happened. To judge by the statistics of the period, the country was never more prosperous. In 1824-25 (May 1st to April 30th), after deducting authorized remissions of Rs. 6,496, and subsequent collections to June the 30th, there was only a net balance of Rs. 1,06,528, and this sum included Rs. 36,252, arrears for Kumaon. The following table shows the condition of the revenue for the two following years. The accounts of Kumaon are comprehended in the returns.

	Total Jumna.	Collections.	Remissions.	Suspensions.	Collected to June 30th.	Balance on July 1st.
1825-26,	1,83,12,045	1,72,40,167	2,841	440	*10,69,036	1,53,570
1826-27,	1,87,91,609	1,79,95,267	30,117	13,127	3,69,668	3,83,430

Of the Rs. 30,117 remitted in 1826-27, † Rs. 22,260 were for Pilibheet, and Rs. 8,046 for Etawah. Of the suspensions for this year, Rs. 1,324 were for Agra, Rs. 1,058 for Etawah, and Rs. 11,336 for Furruckabad. Further than 1826-27 I do not think it would be safe to go in estimating the effect of this drought on revenue. Certainly the contrast between the reports and the relief is most striking. In July the apprehension of further ill seems to have departed with the advent of rain. Concerning the prices during this period, I can only learn that the average of wheat in Cawnpore, Allygurh, and Agra, was about 20 seers for the rupee.

78. Scarcity in the Saugor and Nerbudda Territory in 1827.—During the spring of 1827, many parts of the Saugor and Nerbudda territory, and specially the Districts of Jubbulpore, Nursingpore, Hoshungabad, and Seonee, suffered from scarcity.‡ Blight destroyed much of the wheat in February and March, and at the end of the latter month and the beginning of April came a succession of hailstorms which beat down the standing crops, whilst heavy rain, alternating with the hail, did great damage to the corn that was reaped, but not stored, by causing it to swell and germinate. A report was at once forwarded to the Government, but, in the absence of detailed statements, the Governor-General's Agent could not give any idea of the loss that had been entailed. He intimated that, by way of immediate relief, he had directed his assistants to suspend the demand of all sums on account of rent which they might find on enquiry would ultimately require to be recommended for remission. This policy the Government highly approved of. I have not been able to ascertain from any source what was the amount of the sums abandoned. The volumes of the Sudder Board which should have contained the returns of this year were, I learn from the record-keeper, lost in the Mutiny.

79. Scarcity beyond the Jumna in 1827-28.—The autumn of 1827 and the following spring were marked by drought across the Jumna. In Pergunnahs

* Some of the later collections were probably, as often happened in these days, in anticipation of coming kists; otherwise the excess of collections, remissions, suspensions, and balances, when added together, over the demand, is unaccountable.

† New Furruckabad Rupees.

‡ The information contained in this and the succeeding paragraph is chiefly drawn from the papers supplied by the Record Commission.

Raneea and Sirsa, where the water lies further below the surface than in other parts of Hissar, and where consequently wells are few and costly, the rains commenced auspiciously, but stopped abruptly early in July, and did not begin again till the 22nd of September. It was then too late to retrieve the mischief which the drought had already caused. To add to the general distress, there was every chance of a failure in the wheat. This was the staple Rubbee crop in these regions, and its success was mainly dependent on the River Ghuggur overflowing its banks. On the present occasion the usual inundation did not occur. It had fared even worse with Government than with private cultivators. By the death of the Bhuttee Chief, Zabita Khan, the Kusbah of Raneea and some villages adjoining had, in the absence of fit persons coming forward to engage, been taken into kham management, and the result of the spring's out-turn was that Government realized Rs. 3,644 on account of rent, in the place of Rs. 19,300, the jumma paid by Zabita Khan as farmer in the previous year. In Pergunnah Bawana the Khureef was so much under the average that a remission of 10 per cent. was granted. Pergunnahs Hansee, Hissar, and Sewanee are also said to have suffered, but to what extent there is nothing in the correspondence to show. The loss to Government, so far as it is recorded, was as follows:—

	<i>Jumma.</i>	
Remissions to the proprietors of 15 villages in Pergunnah Raneea,	Rs. 9,893,	out of Rs. 23,165
Losses by estates under kham management in Pergunnah Raneea,	,, 15,656	,, , 19,300
Remissions to proprietors of 34 villages in Pergunnah Bawana,	,, 2,089	,, , 20,838
	<u>,, 27,638</u>	<u>,, , 63,363</u>

80. Distress in Rohtuck, the Delhi Territory, and Ajmere, during 1832-33.—The Punjab appears to have suffered again in 1832-33, but the information concerning the events of that period is very scanty. Rohtuck and the Western division of the Delhi territory were the parts principally affected, and in the case of the former suspensions had to be made, whilst in the latter a total remission was sanctioned. The drought was not so extreme as to deprive the cattle of pasture, and therefore when rain did fall, the cultivators were able to repair their disasters more quickly. The famine extended on this occasion also to Ajmere, which had now been some years under British rule. It is said that not a single shower fell during 1832. Fodder for the cattle was even more difficult to procure than grain, of which providentially small quantities remained in store. Many of the Mairs either resorted to plunder, or fled to Malwa in hopes of obtaining a livelihood. So great was the loss in population and in cattle that the improvements which had already been begun were brought to a stand for want of proper labour and means of transport, and several years were required before the country recovered its former state of prosperity. The remission of Rs. 92,024 which was sanctioned must have in fact been a relinquishment of all, or nearly all, the year's income, for in 1835-36 the jumma on the whole district only amounted to Rs. 96,805.

81. Famine in Cawnpore, Bundelcund, and Ajmere, during 1833-34.—The drought of 1833-34 was most severely felt in the Bundelcund Division and in the southern pergunnahs of Cawnpore. In the latter district, the Khureef* crop was a total failure. In the pergunnahs bordering on the Ganges the Rubbee was good, owing to the facilities for irrigation; but in Bhogneepore and the neighbourhood of the Jumna there was no harvest worth speaking of, either in the autumn or spring and, though the greater part of the Government demand was realized, "it is to be

* See Mr. Rose's Settlement Report on Cawnpore, paragraph 49.

"feared," writes Mr. Rose, "that all the profits which the poor people had for years accumulated were forced into the Government treasury." The remissions on account of unfavourable weather were Rs. 33,245, and of this sum

Rs. 21,525 were abandoned for Bhogneepore.

„ 5,900 „ „ Ghatumpore.

„ 1,400 „ „ Akburpore.

Rs. 28,825

Here, as elsewhere, over-assessment had its share in impoverishing the people. The sums which were ordered to be written off about this time as irrecoverable balances of land revenue and tuccavee, and also the sums abandoned on account of balances designated nominal, being the difference between former and revised assessments, were enormous. It will be remembered what a fatal policy Mr. Waring had pursued in his settlement of Bundelcund. His successor, Mr. Valpy, who superintended the settlements of 1821 and 1826, seems to have had equally erroneous views concerning the zemindars' ability to pay higher rates, and taxed them most ruthlessly. Balances increased as a matter of course. In the Pergunnahs of Calpee, Humeerpore, Julalpore, and Koonch, they rose from an average of Rs. 2,760, which amount they never exceeded previously to 1806, to an average of Rs. 5,535 in the first settlement, Rs. 16,001 in the second settlement, and Rs. 30,300 in the third settlement.* The Eastern pergunnahs of Humeerpore had suffered from a bad season in 1829-30, of the results of which all we know is that the balances† were very heavy. A new settlement was then in progress, and the number of resigned estates for which relief had to be given was estimated at "far more than half the whole number." The relaxation which was afforded was based on no regular system, and consequently, on the occasion of the next settlement in 1835-36, the proportion of persons still unwilling to engage was very large. Meanwhile drought had intervened, and caused unparalleled distress to the people and loss to the Government. Famine, pestilence, and emigration deprived the district of half its population. Whilst in other districts crime stood generally at or below the average of former years, it here showed a marked increase. Up to the 25th of May, 1834, Rs. 1,106, out of Rs. 1,900 set aside for this purpose, had been expended by Government for the support of the destitute,—Rath, Punwaree, Koonch, Humeerpore, and Jelalpore being the pergunnahs where the outlay was largest. By the end of November, Rs. 20,150 had been spent on account of relief throughout the whole of the Bundelcund Division, and this sum did not include private subscriptions, of the amount of which no mention is made. In the Calpee Pergunnahs frequent alienations of property occurred, and the villages became rapidly deserted. Of about 75,000 houses in the district, it is said‡ that 38,000 were abandoned. In Ajmere the drought still continued, and Mr. Edmonstone, who was deputed in 1835 to make a settlement of the Khalsa villages, represented the folly of such a proceeding, as, owing to the previous season's (*i. e.*, 1833-34) drought, the state of the district and its inhabitants was such that a correct knowledge of the resources of the land could not be procured. In the Jubbulpore districts there were remitted on account of inclemency of season Rs. 93,897, and in Meerut Rs. 921. The balances on the whole year's demand throughout the provinces (exclusively of Ajmere) were Rs. 66,70,556, and the remissions Rs. 1,19,922.

32. Condition of the Revenue between 1832 and 1837.—The following abstract shows the condition of the revenue for the Western Provinces and the Delhi

* See Mr. W. Muir's Settlement Report of the Calpee Pergunnahs, paragraph 27

† See Mr. Allen's Settlement Report of Humeerpore, paragraph 42.

‡ See Mr. W. Muir's Report, paragraph 29.

Territory up to the time when the famine became general. It has been compiled from the Board's annual statements of demands, collections, and remissions:—

Year.		Demands.	Collections.	Authorized Remissions.	Net Balance on April 30th.
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1832-33,	...	3,70,38,215	3,29,62,264	37,234	40,38,717
1833-34,	...	3,77,28,757	3,09,38,279	1,19,922	66,70,556
1834-35,	..	4,10,08,174	3,53,20,975	1,29,893	55,57,306
1835-36,	...	3,92,18,591	3,53,93,646	1,97,066	36,27,879
1836-37,	..	4,06,70,832	3,70,42,105	2,17,917	34,10,810

The details of each district are not given as formerly, but from a later volume* I have been able to ascertain that some of the balances which remained in 1835-36 and in 1836-37 were subsequently written off. For the former year there were remitted in 1245 Fuslee (1837-38)—

				Rs.
For the Meerut	Division,	...	...	77,813
„ Agra	„	...	...	5,729
„ Allahabad	„	...	...	3,495
„ Benares	„	...	...	4,167
„ Saugor and Nerbudda,		...	.	18,383
„ Delhi Division,		...	...	959
Total,				1,10,546

For 1836-37 there were remitted in the same year—

For the Meerut	Division,	...	...	1,21,207
„ Agra	„	...	..	18,786
„ Rohilcund	„	...	.	740
„ Allahabad	„	...	...	4,55,367
„ Benares	„	...	...	10,330
„ Saugor and Nerbudda,		...	...	23,906
„ Delhi Division,	...	...	...	1,27,205
Total,				7,57,541

The remissions to the Delhi Division were thus distributed:—

Delhi,	...	...	...	7,222
Goorgaon,	...	...	...	60,975
Paneeput,	...	...	..	1,693
Hissar,	.	..	...	22,630
Rohtuck,	...	...	..	7,335
Bhutteeana,	...	...	...	27,350
Total,				1,27,205

Of the remissions allowed to the Allahabad Division, Banda absorbed Rs. 4,53,386; Mozuffernugger appropriated Rs. 36,131, and Seharunpore the remainder—namely, Rs. 85,076—of the remissions granted to the Meerut Division. On what grounds Government relinquished these sums I have not been able to ascertain, but, knowing as we do that great irregularity of season preceded the crisis of 1837-38, there is good reason to believe that drought is answerable for the greater part of the loss.

* Sudder Board's Proceedings for May 8th, 1840.

SECTION V.

FAMINE OF 1837-38.

83. First tokens of a general Famine.—During the season of 1837-38 the misfortunes of the North-West reached their height. So far, though there had been a succession of indifferent seasons since 1832, distress had been strictly local, for only a small tract of country at a time had been reduced to extremities for want of rain. But in the summer of 1837 there were signs that a famine was looming over the greater part of the Doab and of the Trans-Jumna Pergunnahs. In and about Delhi strong west winds were blowing, and ratties were still in as great request as during April and May. At Meerut the thermometer was standing at 94° in the shade. In Allypore the bunneeahs would not produce grain, even when payment was offered at their own exorbitant prices, and the ryots could get no advances for seed from the bankers unless they possessed irrigated land. Throughout the Agra District not a drop of rain had fallen up to the end of the month, and wheat was selling at twenty-two seers for the rupee. Boolundshuhur was already being overwhelmed with emigrants from Marwar and Hurrianah. The jails of Mynpoory were filling rapidly, as the destitute peasants became alive to the fact that the commission of some trifling crime would insure them food there at any rate. At Futtchgurh wheat had risen to twelve and a half seers for the rupee. In Bareilly agriculture was said to be at a standstill, and the people were on the point of starvation. Shahjehanpore was the scene of great rioting in consequence of the drought. In Banda the cattle were dying by hundreds, and the price of wheat, which was as high as ten seers for the rupee, limited the consumption to the wealthier classes. At Allahabad the Ganges had only risen eight feet above its lowest level, whilst at the corresponding time in the previous year, late though the rains were in commencing, the rise had been twenty-four feet. Equally gloomy was the prospect beyond the limits of these Provinces. In Gwalior corn was as dear as at Futtchgurh. Sickness and mortality were rife in Behar, and the abnormal state of the weather was blamed as the cause thereof. In Cuttack insufficiency of wholesome food had made cholera prevalent. The pangs of hunger were compelling mothers to dispose of their children, and crowds of persons, the picture of misery and despair, were crawling about the town and the cantonments begging for a mouthful of rice. In Calcutta the tanks were empty, and the grain merchants had doubled their prices within six months.

84. Partial fall of rain in September. Subsequent disappointment. Attacks upon granaries.—Such was the state of things during July and August. Then came one of those breaks in the drought which on this as on other occasions only served to induce false hopes. Rain fell in torrents for some hours at Allahabad, and instantly all anxiety concerning famine ceased. The inhabitants of Furruckabad and Shahjehanpore had a similar piece of good fortune, and were equally sanguine about the harvest. The illusion proved short-lived, and people were soon deploring the partial character of the fall and its insufficiency. Between the western boundary of Mynpoory and the eastern limits of Meerut and Delhi scarcely a single shower had been vouchsafed. The utter hopelessness of their case was enough in the minds of the lower classes to justify recourse to violence, and soon in Rohilcund, Allahabad, Allypore, Agra, Boolundshuhur, Goorgaon, Rohtuck, and Delhi, neither store-houses nor grain-boats were safe from attack, whilst the public roads were dangerous to travellers, owing to the number of armed men who were roaming about in quest of plunder.

85. Policy of the Local Government and the Board.—Under these circumstances it was needful to meet force with force, and accordingly the police were