

The Paradox of Plenty: The Transformation of Berar

Swati Prakash

Centre for Economic Studies and Planning, JNU

“Berar was for many years considered to be specially favoured by nature; so lately as in 1893 it was officially reported that no programme of relief works was required as the province was immune from famine.”ⁱ

Introduction

The Berar Province, also known as the Hyderabad Assigned Districts, was a province of the Nizam of Hyderabad, but administered by the British. By a mix of political intrigue, persuasion and threat, the Nizam had been coerced into leasing Berar to the British under the treaty of 1853.ⁱⁱ Under this treaty, the British were to maintain a Hyderabad army contingent paid for by the Nizam, for use to quell a revolt or during an invasion. As a consequence, a few districts, i.e., the Hyderabad Assigned Districts, were handed over to the British East India Company whose revenues would pay for the army contingent. In 1860, by a new treaty, it was agreed that Berar would be held in trust by the British Crown government for the purposes as laid out in the treaty of 1853.ⁱⁱⁱ

The arrangement that Berar was to be administered on behalf of the British by the Resident at Hyderabad underwent a fundamental change in 1902. In a fresh treaty with the Nizam of Hyderabad, Berar, instead of being indefinitely assigned, was now leased in perpetuity at an annual rental of Rs. 25 lakhs to the Government of India. Consequently, the Hyderabad contingent ceased to be a separate force in March 1903 and was reorganized as a part of the Indian Army. Berar was amalgamated with the Central Provinces in October 1903 which were now called Central Provinces and Berar. At this time, the rent of Rs 25 lakhs was annually debited of Rs.10 lakhs for the repayment of loans that the colonial government had made to the Nizam for famine expenditure in Hyderabad state. The Nizam would receive the full amount only upon the repayment of the said amounts.^{iv} The rich subah of Berar remained a cherished territory for the state of Hyderabad as can be gauged from the Nizam and his heirs' lifelong unsuccessful bids to get it back from the British.^v

Berar had always been a coveted jewel because of its rich soil, and wealth of natural resources.^{vi} “Berar under the Mughal rule was well cultivated and populous, and in the mid-17th century was considered to be amongst the wealthiest provinces of the Mughal empire.”^{vii} The British proved no different from the earlier sovereigns who had prized Berar for its fertile black soil.^{viii} Colonial rule marked a critical era in the history of Berar. Starting in 1853, Berar was administered by the British and its socio-economic setup rapidly changed and witnessed fundamental changes in the land settlement systems and the property rights over land.^{ix}

This paper aims to provide a bird's eye view of Berar's transformation from being famine immune to becoming famine prone. Section 2 outlines how the British need for alternative sources of cotton other than from America served to provide a major impetus to Berar. The concomitant push to railways, the development of a cash crop economy, and the opening of the Suez Canal brought in a commercial revolution that brought in long-term changes and fortunes to Berar. Section 3 discusses the fact that Berar seemingly possessed all virtues of a rich society and the famines that struck Berar in 1896-97 and 1899-1900 were an anomaly. A rich region that had not witnessed any major famine for at least sixty-five years, if not more, was suddenly engulfed in famine misery. Section 4 outlines the role that the commercial revolution and railways played in increasing Berar's vulnerability to famines. It discusses the impact of these developments on Berar's cropping patterns, grain self-sufficiency and how high grain prices served to check access to food by the poor. Section 5 uses data collected from a poor labouring family to argue that Berar's prosperity may have been a mirage for a large number of landless labourers and marginal cultivators. We conclude that the famines that occurred in Berar may, therefore, not have been an anomaly, but rather a disaster waiting to happen.

II. Colonial Rule and the Transformation of Berar

This section discusses the impact that colonial rule had on transforming Berar's fortunes. The cotton economy and railways ushered a new era for Berar's society and economy marking a fundamental departure from the previous times. The extension of railways and telegraph brought in untold prosperity for a few sections of the society, but also spelt disaster for others.

II.1. The Cotton Impetus

In the case of the British, the acquisition of Berar was highly compelling given the fact that the Manchester cotton lobby had identified Berar as a prime location for specialized cotton monoculture. Berar had traditionally been an important cotton growing area, but cotton had been grown more for subsistence than for the market.^x In the face of impending danger to continued supplies from the Americas, the development of alternate sources was vital for the Cotton Supply Association in England. The primary reason that this Association wanted to promote cotton cultivation in Berar was to essentially serve as a backup against fluctuations in the supply of cotton from America. "British Industry wanted Indian raw cotton as a sort of permanent twelfth man, always ready in the pavilion but only occasionally brought to the field of play. This role hardly produced the consistency of demand necessary to promote a more extensive commercial agriculture."^{xi} Consequently, there was an upheaval in the socio-economic practices known and practised before.^{xii}

Lobbies such as the Cotton Supply Association were powerful and wielded immense clout in the power corridors of England and consequently the colonial policies in India after the takeover by the Crown post the 1857 events. As Davis caustically remarks "Indeed, to ordinary Indians trying to decipher codes of power within the Raj, it sometimes seemed as if their real sovereigns ruled from Manchester's Guildhall rather than Buckingham Palace."^{xiii} In the case of Berar, the Association promoted the administrative re-engineering of the Berari society from within by initiating long-term changes and substantial land revenues.

The Civil War in America gave immense stimulus to the cotton trade. The area under cotton acreage began to increase almost immediately after the British had taken over. Hostilities in the American civil war during 1861-65 effectively meant the stoppage of American cotton exports and other items. The bid to secure a supply of these items from elsewhere stimulated many parts of India but "positively electrified Berar."^{xiv} Before the American war, cotton had been one of many crops grown in Berar. "It now became the prevailing, absorbing and predominating product. Much of the other sorts of culture was displaced to make room for it."^{xv}

One of the key demands to foster cotton cultivation in Berar was an improvement in the means of communication. Not only was there a demand for faster transportation, but also a cheaper one. Canal irrigation would satisfy both these requirements, but needed perennial water supply for making navigation possible year-round. Given the topography of the region, consequently, railways were deemed to be more suitable. The primary push for initial railway penetration in Berar was from a variety of powerful commercial pressure groups based in Manchester, Lancashire and Liverpool that used their political interests to coerce the Parliament. Even in subsequent years, great pressure continued to be exerted on the Indian Government and the India Office in London to further accelerate the pace of railway extension in India. "Manchester cotton spinners, Liverpool ship-owners, London capitalists and Middlesborough iron masters are vigorously urging the India Office authorities to stimulate the foreign trade of India by the more rapid construction of railways."^{xvi}

II.2. Commercial Revolution and Railways

Between 1861 and 1892, the Central Provinces as well as Berar witnessed an almost "unbroken record of progressive prosperity, checked only by an occasional famine and bad season and unmarked by any salient events."^{xvii}

The rationale for railway expansion essentially straddled the arena of increased commerce and the consequent material and moral development of India. In the popular 'civilising the heathen' narrative of the colonial state, means of communication such as roads and railways were deemed essential to develop parts of Central Provinces termed as the 'darkest India.' The opening up of communications as an aftermath of a vigorous road policy initiated in 1863, subsequently supplemented by the rapid development of railway communications helmed the transformation of this erstwhile isolated track. By 1892, a line of railway traversed through the heart of the province, providing a direct connecting link between the ports of Bombay and Calcutta and, by extension, the towns in Northern India.

Similarly, another trunk line connecting Berar, Nagpur and Chhattisgarh with the sea ports of Bombay and Calcutta and a cross-line ran that ran from Chhattisgarh to the Narmada valley was constructed. The arrival of the railway marked a significant milestone in the history of these areas affecting the fortunes of the people more than any other government measure. The hitherto inaccessible parts that largely grew produce for self-consumption now gained markets for its products. The cash value of Berar's produce increased substantially.

Amalendu Guha has shown that Berar's share in the pan-India cotton acreage increased from an estimated eight per cent in 1850-51 to approximately eleven per cent in 1867-71, which further increased to around seventeen per cent by 1897-1901. During this period Berar's share in incremental acreage was forty-two per cent and was the highest in India.^{xviii}

For Berar, the railway was the backbone of the cotton trade and the new improved traffic arrangements gave the promise of a long and vigorous life to the upcountry business. With better roads and the opening of

the Suez Canal, railways provided new markets in more prosperous regions that paid well for India's produce.^{xix}

The railway from Bombay to Nagpur passed through the populous districts of Nagpur, Berar, and Khandesh. "Its staple products for export, cotton and linseed, are sold for ready money before they are grown; and on either hand the character of the country defines and limits and prescribes the line of traffic to- wards Bombay."^{xx} Cotton required much manual toil in weeding, picking, ginning and packing. Hence "a great and urgent demand for rural labour"^{xxi} was generated, which caused the wages to rise. Berar started to export cotton to Bombay in substantial amounts. "The importation of foreign produce was far from proportionate; consequently, much of the return for this cotton consisted of cash and bullion."^{xxii} The increased cash availability made money cheap and raised the prices of all things. Consequently, for a brief period, prosperity ensued for the Berari agriculturists "At the same time, the construction of railway works throughout the whole length of the province was in full swing, causing the employment of all labour, skilled and unskilled that could be got on the spot, but also introducing a foreign element which settle temporarily at least in the province. Thus, the value of labour and the rates of prices generally were still further enhanced."^{xxiii}

The colonial narrative, not surprisingly, heralded the British administration of Berar as being responsible for its good fortunes. A C Lyall proudly declared that "until within the last few years the cultivator of this part of India was a somewhat miserable and depressed creature. He was deeply in debt. Three circumstances combined to lift the ryot from the depth to which he had sunk. These were the Land Revenue Settlement, the American Civil War, and the opening up of the country by railway communication with Bombay."^{xxiv}

III. Famines in Berar – An Anomaly

The colonial machinery's induced metamorphosis had a significant impact on the socio-economic superstructure of Berar. On the one hand, it marked the onset of untold affluence due to the cotton trade and on the other, it was also the harbinger of Berar's darkest period - the devastating famines that struck Berar in 1896-97^{xxv} and then again in 1899-1900.^{xxvi}

The famines that ravaged Berar were an anomaly, to say the least. Berar did not fit in the colonial narrative of chronic poverty and hunger and backwardness. Rather, it was perhaps the poster child of where a famine should not have occurred. "Up to the end of September 1896, Berar enjoyed almost entire immunity from famine for a period of nearly 64 years, though occasionally it suffered from temporary distress owing to scanty rainfall or rise in the prices of food grains."^{xxvii}

Berar fulfilled possessing most of the key colonial parameters which prevent scarcities turning into large-scale starvation and distress. It boasted of a well-connected modern communications and transport network. It possessed a commercial outlook and the agricultural incomes from cotton had seemingly changed the face of Berar. The practice of storing grain in pits prevailed almost everywhere in Berar.

Despite all of the above, by "1877 and again in the late 1890s, Berar ...witnessed the starvation of tens of thousands of cultivators, as cotton prices fell while food grain prices rose, putting food out of reach of many cotton producers."^{xxviii}

The colonial state's stance while cognizant of the distress in Berar's society put the blame squarely on the native habits of wasteful expenditure and India's propensity to subsistence crises.^{xxix} The official explanation regarding the vexed question of the frequency of famines largely considered them to be intrinsic and endemic to India. Famines were blamed on India's capricious climate, her unpredictable monsoons, rain dependant agriculture, her teeming millions, her poverty and the Oriental fatalist disposition towards crises.^{xxx} Thus, the colonial approach reflected the 'inevitability' of famines in India; famines could at best be managed, but could never be prevented. In Berar's case, the resurgence in its prosperity was largely attributed to the sagaciousness of the British empire.

In Berar, almost seventy-five percent of the population was mainly dependent on agriculture. By 1899, more than one-third of Berar's population consisted of landless field labourers. The proportion of cultivating occupants and tenants was also about a third of the population with many being only a little better off than labourers.^{xxxi} The jungle and hill tribes were found mostly in the Melghat district and numbered more than 200,000.^{xxxii} The Kunbis, Mahars and Malis were the prominent castes in Berar and were chiefly occupied in the cultivation of grains and cotton, the most valuable crop. Jowari was the staple food of the labouring classes. The towns were small and chiefly devoted to the cotton trade. The cotton industry was the chief feature of the province, depending as it did on the cultivation of cotton.

A macro view of the famines that occurred in Berar during 1896-97 and 1899-1900 reveals that the nature of these famines had fundamentally undergone a change from the previous ones, witnessed before 1880. A major departure from the earlier famines was that the famines now affected multiple regions simultaneously. What had previously been largely localized famines, now started affecting much greater areas. The famines of

1896-97 as well as that of 1899-1900 changed this aspect. These regions instead of being the land of plenty, that they had so far been known as witnessed the maximum distress in many aspects. The famine of 1896-7 spread over almost all of India - Bengal, Bombay Deccan, Central Provinces, the North Western Provinces and Oudh. A basic comparison of the last three serious droughts of the nineteenth century in the years 1876-78, 1896-98, and 1899-1901, reveals that not only was there an increase in the area affected by famines, but the intensity of the crisis also increased.^{xxxiii}

The Central Provinces and Berar had been “the dark spot of the famine of 1896-97, but the intensity and extent of the drought in 1899 were greater.”^{xxxiv} “In Central India, even fertile Malwa, which has always been an asylum for famine-stricken wanderers from other parts, has itself been stripped bare.”^{xxxv} Till 1896, Berar had been largely spared by famine or even severe agricultural depression. The province of Berar enjoyed a period of unexampled prosperity, especially after the 1860s. Even during the 1876-77 famine that affected south India with unprecedented severity did not impact Berar much other than localised scarcities in a few districts. Consequently, the 1878 Famine Commission had pronounced the Hyderabad Assigned Districts “to be one of the parts of India particularly free from apprehension of the calamity of drought and famine was unknown there under British rule till the year 1896.”^{xxxvi} The British belief in the invincibility of Berar is seconded by many Gazetteers regularly referring it to be ‘immune’ from famines. Even as late as 1893, the local official, Col. Mackenzie considered it safe to report that “a programme of relief works was not required for Berar, because the country was not subject to famine, and might be held to be exempt from the ordinary rules to meet such a contingency.”^{xxxvii}

Lord Curzon summed up the famines thus “It was not merely a crop failure, but a fodder famine on an enormous scale, followed in many parts by positive devastation of cattle—both plough cattle, buffaloes, and milch kiln. In other words, it affected, and may almost be said to have annihilated, the working capital of the agricultural classes. It struck some of them when they were still down from the effects of the recent shock. It struck others, who had never before known what calamity was, and who were crushed and shattered by the suddenness and directness of the blow.”^{xxxviii}

“It laid its hand upon primitive hillmen, unused to discipline or restraint, impulsive, improvident, lazy, living in an almost barbarous state in wild and inaccessible jungles. It sharpened the lurking nomadic instinct of wandering tribes and sent them aimlessly drifting about the country, a terror to the famine officer, and an incubus to the camps. For a year it never left hold of its victims, and one-half of the year had not elapsed before famine had brought its familiar attendant Furies in its train, and cholera, dysentery, and fever had fallen upon an already exhausted, enfeebled population. This is the picture of suffering that India has presented during the past year.”^{xxxix}

The sequence of events as narrated above is puzzling. According to the remedies laid out by the Famine Commission of 1880, Berar fulfilled possessing most of the key parameters that prevented scarcities from turning into large-scale starvation and distress. Despite that, it witnessed an approximate 4.9 per cent fall in its population by 1901. Being a rich cotton economy did not prevent “the starvation of tens of thousands of cultivators, as cotton prices fell while food grain prices rose, putting food out of reach of many cotton producers.”^{xl}

III. Commercial Revolution’s Aftermath: Increased Famine Vulnerability

The argument that by selling their produce, the people would have the means to buy food implicitly assumed that access to markets necessarily means greater prosperity for all classes, and the means to acquire food must necessarily follow. However, if grain prices could only be bought at astronomical prices, the argument lost its relevance. A very small proportion of the profits of an export trade remained with the growers of the produce. The markets were glutted at the time when the taxes were due, forcing down the prices of the produce. Even with lower prices, wheat remained unaffordable for the poor sections. Concurrently, with the railways having brought the world market within the reach of the cultivators, the state adduced the promised riches as the reason why the land assessments were raised.

The colonial approach towards land settlement, forced sedentarization, forest and common property enclosures, commercialization and Berar’s integration into the world economy were at the core of Berar’s transformation into a cotton economy and the consequent flow of wealth. Ironically enough, these forces also severely compromised the traditional coping capacity of Berar’s society.^{xli}

As a consequence, they may also have been instrumental in significantly increasing its vulnerability to climatic uncertainties, droughts and subsistence crises. In a nutshell, affluence did not ensure the absence of famines. What it may have ensured was that not all sections of society bore the brunt of the famines equally. The poor, the landless, the tribals, and the other marginalized sections of Berar paid a very hefty price for Berar’s re-engineering.

Laxman Satya’s seminal work has been instrumental in outlining the role of colonial policy in making

Berar more vulnerable to famines. With deep insights and a macro-overview, he painstakingly recounts how Berar's society was fundamentally altered given the colonial policies and the impetus of cotton cultivation, the impact of colonial land policies and the interplay between the two. Even other studies point to the dismal state of affairs: "Of all the cotton grown in Berar, only a very small proportion was consumed within the province. Estimates for the 1870s and 1880s show that no more than 6-13 per cent of gross produce was consumed within Berar, the rest being exported."^{xlii}

For the world, Berar may have been celebrated for its rich cotton but "most Berari children went naked, most Berari men were half-clad, and a majority of the Berari women clothed themselves in rags."^{xliii} According to Davis, local food security was eroded by the advance not only of cotton production but of grain exports as well. During the famine of 1899-1900, when 143,000 Beraris died directly from starvation, the province exported not only tens of thousands of bales of cotton but an incredible 747,000 bushels of grain."^{xliv}

IV.1. Cropping Pattern changed

The commercial revolution laid the foundation of a new economic set-up that was based on the market and the workings of Adam Smith's invisible hand. The revolution brought a significant change in the food situation of the country.^{xlv} Cultivation of cash crops increased as a desperate measure by farmers to maintain their exchange entitlements. The best lands available were applied towards their cultivation, while food grains were relegated to inferior lands, the yields of which then went down.^{xlvi} It has been argued that it was actually "the process of integrating India into the world market that spelt disaster."^{xlvii}

The cotton plant in Berar was an annual product and a rotation of crops was essential to its culture. It was well known that if cotton was grown for two consecutive years, the crop would suffer significantly.^{xlviii} The most suitable best alternate crop was jowari. Coarse, and drought-resistant, jowari was the staple food for farmers and its stalk was the preferred fodder for the cattle.^{xlix} So well suited was the native system of crop rotation, that even without artificial irrigation, the combination crops yielded good crops. "The development of an intricate root system that captured moisture at various depths across the soil profile, becoming dormant during prolonged dry spells by reducing transpiration."^l Jowari was also cheap and yielded good amounts. It was a staple diet of the people of the region. "In all ordinary seasons, both wheat and jowaree are plentiful and to spare in Berar."^{li} Berar is a land of milk and honey—a garden of fertility, which grows more than it can consume.^{lii}

Dr Voelcker pointed out the mix cropping pattern was designed to ensure that not only was a healthy balance of basic nutrients maintained within a field, but it also helped in moisture retention.^{liii} "Coordination was not only above the ground, but also underneath, as deep-rooted plants were matched with shallower ones tapping moisture at different depths."^{liv}

In a bid to satisfy the astronomical cotton demand, during the American civil war, the "raiyaats began to import their supply of food grains so that all available land might be devoted to the cultivation of the profitable cotton crop."^{lv} Food grains were now imported from Nagpur in order that more land could be devoted to the more remunerative cotton crop. A settlement report of 1870 summed up the situation thus - "... the ryots are doing their utmost to satisfy the cry from Manchester for more cotton, totally disregarding even their own simple rules of cultivation in their anxiety to bring to the market as much as they can extract from the land. Such a neglect of all system in the culture of land cannot but have a bad effect upon the soil cultivated as well as the crops produced."^{lvi}

Areas that earlier grew only food grains started preferring crops for cash such as oilseeds, cotton, and jute meant for the European markets. Over time, the cultivator preferred to grow cash crops such as indigo, cotton, opium, and the like, instead of grain crops. Even within food grains, preference was now given to the finer instead of the coarser grain varieties such as wheat over millet. "It was the keen desire of Manchester to get hold of the cotton market in the interior that in 1853 increased the outcry for Indian railways. All that is now urged about the wheat trade was then urged about the cotton trade."^{lvii}

District officers in Berar were aware of the importance of improving the quality of the wheat crop and instituted several experiments with the said objective in mind. "The Deputy Commissioner, Ellichpur, obtained from the Nerbudda Valley as seed some of the best quality of wheat from there but found that it utterly failed in Berar."^{lviii} The Berari cultivators, while keen to exploit the new opportunities that the export market in wheat afforded, "still preferred to grow mixed crops with a view to secure a better outturn, and at the same time to guard against the risk of failure to which they would be liable by growing an unmixed crop."^{lix} By growing a double crop, the cultivators sought to ensure that even if the wheat failed, he would have some outturn at least.

The wheat mixed with other grains was deemed as dirty wheat and fetched lower prices in the market from the European buyers who preferred and offered higher prices for one quality of wheat over the other. In 1883 "a circular was issued advising cultivators to take care to sow nothing in the same field with wheat."^{lx} The mixture of other grains, with "wheat has been put a stop to as much as possible, but those cultivators who

have only a field or two find it very difficult, owing to insufficiency of land for other minor produce.”^{lxii} The constant fluctuations and the relatively lower price of wheat in comparison to linseed made the latter a much more favourite crop in this district.^{lxiii} By 1885, the railway returns for Berar, even in comparison to the primarily wheat-growing regions of the Central Provinces, showed that Berar was only a little behind in its exports of wheat. The Deputy Commissioner of the Buldana district sent the news of the happy tidings “we are doing very well and only require high rates in Bombay to again export wheat in almost limitless quantities.”^{lxiii}

However, to infer that the spoils of the increased trade and commerce percolated down to the agriculturist would be a mistake. “The profits of the cotton trade have merely been transferred from the pockets of Hindoos to those of Englishmen.”^{lxiv} Moreover the fluctuation inherent in market economies also hit the populace hard. The following excerpt from the Mehkar Settlement Report of 1868 sums up the colonial position: “The fall and fluctuations in the price of cotton have told rather seriously upon some of the smaller farmers. Many of the cultivators who had become very independent during the high prices, appear to have fallen back into the money-lenders' clutches... For this, however, they have only to thank their own improvidence. The way in which they squandered their money, when they had more than they knew what to do with, was perfectly unpardonable...and some of them could find no better outlet for their wealth than the replacement of their iron ploughshare and cartwheel tires by shares and tires of silver.”^{lxv}

IV.2. Grain Self-Sufficiency Compromised

There is no doubt that there was a brisk trade in food grains with 25,000 miles of railway in place. Food could be moved rapidly and the earlier instances of isolated tracks being a hindrance to the availability of food were addressed. However, the same railways also exported the grains in the first place. The opinion of majority of the natives strongly favoured checking the export of food grain beyond the seas in times of severe famines and extreme dearth. They protested “the wisdom of allowing a crore and a half rupee's worth of grain to be exported, from Bombay when people are dying in the Dekkhan by hundreds and thousands for a handful of grain, and when the astute King of Siam had sent back the ships which had gone to bring rice from Bangkok, telling that his people were in greater want of food than the foreigners.”^{lxvi}

The age-old practice of storing grains in the underground pits also suffered because now the peasants wanted to store money than grains. The stored pit represented the additional revenues that could have been earned, without considering the food security that it offered. Previously, even in times of scarcity, there was still abundance, buried in large pits called peos, enough to feed the inhabitants. While it was true that the railways brought grain to the famine-stricken areas, yet it is important to note that the railways had also been instrumental in carrying the grain for export purposes earlier. Grain during the famines was transported by the railways at high freight rates, effectively increasing the grain prices manifold. Connell noted that “since the introduction of railways there were strong reasons to believe that the ryot, tempted by immediate gain, or forced by taxation to sell his grain, is beginning to store rupees instead of food; but, as he cannot eat his rupees or jewellery, and cannot buy fuel so as to keep the manure for the land, and has, according to the Famine Commissioners, to give in famine times a quadrupled price for his food, it is very doubtful whether he gains in the long run. Anyhow, the landless labourer, who has no produce to exchange for rupees, finds the market price in time of scarcity utterly beyond his means.”^{lxvii}

IV.3. High and Uniform Grain Prices

In instances when the scarcity of grains covered a wide area as was the case in the famines of 1896-98 and 1899-1901, the enormous distances over which foodgrains had to be carried, increased the costs and subsequently the prices at which the grains were sold in the scarcity region. Also, it is critical to evaluate the situation in terms of the few sea ports that could accommodate large vessels in India at the time. Burma was the largest source of food grains that the state could look towards for supplying grains in the event of a subsistence crisis. The Central Provinces and Berar imported most of their grain supplies from Burma and other regions that were at least 500 miles away.^{lxviii}

Moreover, with the improvement in communications and transportation, a phenomenon of uniform prices was witnessed, which effectively meant that even in regions of no local scarcity, the pressure of high prices was felt. The local prices were no longer a function of the local grain supply and demand exclusively. Making grains available in one place had an opportunity cost in terms of foregone profits in areas with higher prices. Thus, by the basic principle of demand and supply, prices were bound to be equalized. In the famine of 1897, the fact that Seoni district was “at a distance from the railway, prices were naturally lower than those ruling elsewhere and the consequent tendency to the export of grain led to a small grain riot in Seoni town and some dacoities in the Lakhnadon tahsil.”^{lxix}

“The promptitude with which grain has been moved from one part of the country to another in response to local fluctuations of prices, and the practical uniformity of rates which consequently prevails over the whole

of Northern and Central India, the rates current in the most severely distressed tracts differing but little from those prevailing in neighbouring districts where no failure of crops has taken place.^{lxx}

T. W Holderness, in his report on famines in the Central Provinces and Berar, observed that there was a general tendency for increased food prices even in non-famine years.^{lxxi} Thus, when food was being imported at prices that were anyway high and to that the cost of transportation and the profit margins of the dealers were to be added, it is hardly surprising that the grain prices would be very high.

The consequent rise in the prices of agricultural produce was unprecedented. A general price rise took place throughout India from the 1860's. "There was also a large influx of precious metals."^{lxxii} "Between 1864 and 1873, the amount of cotton that a peasant had to produce to buy a given quantity of Berar's most important food grain—jowar—doubled and it doubled once more by 1878. Perhaps even more significant, the relative price of food grains to cotton changed dramatically from year to year (changes of 20 per cent or even 40 per cent were not exceptional), introducing a new degree of uncertainty into rural producers' precarious lives."^{lxxiii}

To make matters worse, the rise in prices was not accompanied by a parallel increase in wages, especially in the rural areas. Historian Hans Medick observed "Marginal subsistence producers, ... did not benefit from the market under these circumstances; they were devoured by it."^{lxxiv} Berar found itself enmeshed in the classic trap of stagnant or falling wages while the prices of food grains were increasing significantly.^{lxxv} The Imperial Gazetteer of India also mentions the fact that the wage revision if any was actually to depress them further at least for the skilled labour, rather than record an increase.^{lxxvi}

Moreover, another consequence of the growing cash economy was the dismantling of traditional social structures. Previously, "the village servants who performed various services for the cultivators according to their different vocations were supported by contributions of grain made to them by the cultivators, and by presents given to them at seed-time and harvest. Before the introduction of a metal currency must have been the method of remuneration for all the village industries."^{lxxvii}

AK Connell summed up the joint results of railways and free trade thus. "India used to clothe itself, now England sends clothes, and Indian weavers have lost an enormous source of income, with the gain to the country of the difference in price between English and Indian goods. But to pay for these goods India has to export vast quantities of food, and those who sell this food make larger profits than before. Therefore, a certain portion of the community gained from cheaper cotton goods and higher grain prices. The Indian Government is now doing its best to stimulate the export of wheat to lessen its loss by the exchange but this will only result in higher food prices in India."^{lxxviii}

V. A Mirage of Prosperity

In 1888, the imperial government sought opinions from all the provincial governments on the critical question of sufficiency or otherwise of food for the Indian masses. In the context of insufficiency of food, the most important classes were those who were completely dependent on their labour as the sole means to earn a livelihood. The labouring classes, in effect, were the most vulnerable to any systemic or climatic shocks that affected their capacity to labour for earning the means to purchase food. To draft his response to the imperial government's query concerning Berar, Leslie S. Saunders, the Commissioner of Berar, arranged two sets of interviews. One set was with the local officials – the Patels, the Patwaris, the Deshmukhs, and the Deshpandas in the Malkapore Taluk. The other set was with the different classes of agricultural and other labourers to verify the facts given by the first set of interviewees. Saunders submitted his report, dated April 4 1888, to the Resident at Berar.^{lxxix} The actual conditions of Berar's poor as determined by Saunders are discussed below. The table below shows a year's expenses for what they considered would be sufficient food, a labouring family of two earning members and one dependent. It is important to remember, that the expenditure outlined below was considering not the actual expenditure, but rather the most optimal scenario. Something that the labouring class had never commanded in fact. The outlay was more like aspirational living for the labour class and more reflective of the scale of the class immediately above them - the cultivators.

The units used in the table are as follows: One seer/ser was roughly equal to 2 lbs. One tola was 10 grams. The Indian currency system was divided as 1 rupee = 16 annas, 1 anna = 12 pies. Pounds, shillings and pence were the basic currency of Britain until 1971. 1 Pound £ = 20 shillings (s.). 1s. = 12 pennies. (d.). 1d. = 2 two halfpennies, or four farthings. For instance, £12 10s. 6d. stood for twelve pounds, ten shillings and sixpence.

Table 7.1: Total expenditure.

Particulars	Outlay
Jowari: At the rate of one seer per day for the adults and half a seer for the child, for a year as 912 ½ seers. Average jowari prices of 20 seers per rupee.	£ s. d. 3 0 0
Toor Dal: For the whole family seers 91¼ at ¼ seer a day. The dal was priced at 1 ½ annas a seer.	0 15 1
Chilli: For the whole family 16 seers, at 3 ½ tolas per day. The average price of chilli was 1 ½ annas a seer.	0 15 1
Oil for cooking purposes. — For the whole family 11 ½ seers, at 2 ½ tolas per day, at 6 annas a seer.	0 5 9
For petty expenses. — For the whole family, at 1 ½ pies a day for the year.	0 3 10
Kerosine oil for lamps. — At one anna for eight days, the value of the year's oil.	0 3 10
Annual total outlay on basic food.	£5 10 7
Annual outlay on clothes, holidays, guests and expenses on festivals etc.	£1 9 4
Total annual outlay	£6 19 11

Table 7.2: Total Earnings of the family

Particulars	Earnings
At the rate of man's wages = two annas a day	£ s. d.
Wife's earnings = one anna a day.	
Earnings for the year	4£ 11s. 7d.
Deduct - 0£ 11s. 3d	
No wages for 45 days	
Add harvest season earnings	+ 0£ 15s. 0d
60 days @ 2 annas a day husband	
1 anna a day for the wife	
	£4 15 4

The comparison of the earnings and expenses from tables 7.1 and 7.2, clearly shows that the labouring family earned £4 15s. 4d, a year. Its expenses on an optimal and adequate supply of food and clothing among other things would amount to £6 19s. 11d. The class of cultivators, other than cultivating their small holdings also hired out their labour to others in a bid to supplement their paltry earnings. If one were to reflect the actual expenditure of the labouring class, by deducting £2 0s. 9d. from their yearly expenditure, their earnings barely managed the outlay on the necessities, leaving no margin for anything else.

With less than ¼ d. (pennies) a day per head, they “did not live; they eked out an existence.”^{lxxx} In effect, “the labouring classes actually lived from hand to mouth, with not even a day’s reserve of food with them.”^{lxxxii} If they failed to labour even for a single day, their only resort was to beg from neighbours and hope to be able to repay him for the day's supply of jowari, in the harvesting season. In the absence of any assets being offered as security, recourse to any loan from the local grain dealer was ruled out.

What is also notable is that unlike the popular colonial narrative of the native habit of incurring wasteful expenditure on marriages, in the scale of expenditure narrated above, Saunders made no provision for such an expenditure. In Berar, the ‘salkaroo’ tradition ensured that the marriages “were conducted with the greatest prudence and economy, and not allowed to trench upon the year's supply.”^{lxxxii}

Conclusion

The preceding analysis establishes that the colonial assertion about the overall prosperity of Berar was rather misplaced. While some sections of the populace, such as the grain traders, the moneylenders and big landlords and cotton cultivators, certainly gained, for the agricultural labourers and marginal cultivators, the prosperity was a mirage – ostensibly there but not real at the same time.

The colonial government argued that the land revenue collection did not suffer even during the famine years was proof that not only were the lands in Berar assessed at very low rates, but the distress must not have been extensive in the first place. “The cultivators were not severely affected by the distress; the high prices obtained by them for their crops enabled them to pay the land revenue with ease, 99 per cent, of the demand being paid.”^{lxxxiii} The truth, however, was that the land revenue payments were kept up simply to save the land which was the sole source of their livelihood, “from being alienated in the execution of the dreadful process which is in force for the collection of Land Revenue.”^{lxxxiv}

Towards this end, the cultivators exerted themselves to ensure timely payment of the Government dues. Even previously, during the scarcity of 1877-78, which pressed heavily on certain Berar regions, the Government dues were not, even then, left to be in arrears. Mr Jones, a previous Commissioner of Berar, openly admitted that the government dues are being promptly and regularly paid, even when the famine was devastating the country.^{lxxxv}

Simultaneously there was an increase in the number of coercive processes issued against defaulters as 14,380 writs of demand, against 13,605 in the previous year. Even though no defaulter was sent to prison, personal property was sold for arrears in 43 cases while the number of fields sold was 209.^{lxxxvi} There was a 35 per cent increase in the area of land transferred by private sale over the previous year.^{lxxxvii} Overall, 98.7 of the revenue of the province was realized in a famine year as compared to the 99.8 % that had been collected in the previous year of prosperity.^{lxxxviii}

The famines that followed in the years 1896-97 and 1898-99 may not have been a paradox after all. The colonial transformation fundamentally affected the society’s vulnerability to a systemic shock. As long as there was no major upheaval, such as a failure of rains, Berar seemed invincible. However, the first signs of an impending disaster laid open the cracks within.

End Notes

ⁱ Great Britain India Office, “Imperial Gazetteer of India, ‘Bareilly to Berasi’”, Vol. VII, Oxford, 1908, p. 396.

ⁱⁱ S. Regani, “The Cession of Berar”, Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, Vol. 20, 1957, pp. 252-59.

ⁱⁱⁱ Great Britain India Office, “Imperial Gazetteer of India, ‘Bareilly to Berasi’”, Vol. VII, Oxford, 1908, p. 372.

^{iv} A letter from the Nizam of Hyderabad addressed to the Viceroy, dated October 25, 1923, detailing the reasons why Berar should be restored to him. Available at Dhananjayarao Gadgil Library, Pune, India.

^v Ibid.

^{vi} For a full description of Berar’s topography, natural resources and socio-economic structure, see A. C. Lyall, “*Gazetteer for the Haidarabad Assigned Districts, commonly called Berar*”, Bombay, 1870; M. Taylor, “Sketch of the Topography of East and West Berar, in Reference to the Production of Cotton,” The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, 1863, Vol. 20 (1863), pp. 1-21.

^{vii} R. C Reddy, “The incidence of agricultural labourers in India: variations over time and space 1881-1981”, (Unpublished) PhD Thesis, Centre for Development Studies, JNU, 1988

^{viii} M. Taylor, “Sketch of the Topography of East and West Berar, in Reference to the Production of Cotton,” The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, 1863, Vol. 20 (1863), pp. 1-21.

^{ix} L. Satya, “Colonial Encroachment and Popular Resistance: Land Survey and Settlement Operations in Berar (Central India), 1861-1877”, Agricultural History, Vol. 72, No. 1, Winter 1998, pp. 55-76.

^x S. Leacock & D. G Mandelbaum, “A Nineteenth Century Development Project in India: The Cotton Improvement Program”, Economic Development and Cultural Change, July, 1955, Vol. 3, No. 4 (July, 1955), pp. 334-351.

^{xi} Charlesworth, quoted by Mike Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World*, 2001, p. 64.

^{xii} Laxman Satya, “*Cotton and Famine in Berar, 1850-1900*”, Tufts University, 1994.

^{xiii} Mike Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World*, 2001, p. 64.

^{xiv} Government of India, “*Report of the Administration of the Hyderabad Assigned Districts, 1901-02*”, Hyderabad, 1903, p.13.

^{xv} Ibid.

^{xvi} A. K Connell, “*Indian Pauperism, Free Trade and Railways*”, a paper read before the East India Association, March 18, 1884, p. 2.

- ^{xvii} A.D Chinoy, "Report of the Census of India 1901", Vol.8 (Berar), Part 1, 1902, para 77, p. 32.
- ^{xviii} Amalendu Guha "Growth of Acreage under Raw Cotton in India, 1851-1901 - A Quantitative Account", *Artha Vijnana*, March 1973.
- ^{xix} Harry Rivett-Carnac, Cotton Commissioner, Central Provinces and Berars, "*Report on the Operations of the Cotton Department for the year 1867*", 1868, p. 46
- ^{xx} Fraser's Magazine, Vol. 66, July to December 1862, London, 1862, p. 90.
- ^{xxi} Ibid.
- ^{xxii} Ibid.
- ^{xxiii} Government of India, "*Report of the Administration of the Hyderabad Assigned Districts, 1901-02*", Hyderabad, 1903, p. 14.
- ^{xxiv} A C Lyall cited by A. E Nelson, (ed.), "*Buldhana District Gazetteer*", Nagpur, 1910, para 241.
- ^{xxv} For details see F.S Bullock, "*Narrative of the Famine in the Hyderabad Assigned Districts during the year 1896-97*", Hyderabad, 1898.
- ^{xxvi} For details on 1899-1900 famine in Berar, see J. A. Crawford, *Report on the famine in the Hyderabad Assigned Districts during 1899 and 1900*, Vol. I and II, Nagpur, 1901.
- ^{xxvii} It was not that Berar had never had a famine visitation, but the available records indicate that at most they were local scarcities that did not deteriorate to a full-blown subsistence crisis. According to the census report of 1881, previously Berar had witnessed a famine in 1781, where the local queen Ahilya Bai Holkar had sent a pair of oxen to each cultivator. Subsequently, there was a scarcity in 1802 and 1832-33. In May 1868, the Wun district suffered from jowari failure, while in 1871, Buldhana witnessed a high mortality of plough cattle and a severe shortage of drinking water. No relief was found to be necessary and only 6.8% of the land revenue demand was unrealized at the end of year and the arrears collected the following year. See W. C Plowden, "*Report on the Census of British India taken on the 17th February 1881*," London, 1883, p. 225.
- ^{xxviii} Sven Beckert, "Emancipation and Empire: Reconstructing in Worldwide Web of Cotton Production in the Age of the American Civil War", *American Historical Review*, 109(5), 2001, pp. 1405-1438.
- ^{xxix} Government of India, "*Report of the Indian Famine Commission*", Part 1, London, 1880, para 32, p. 7.
- ^{xxx} "A main trait in Oriental character is proneness to succumb to difficulties and to accept them as inevitable..." Government of India, "*Report of the Indian Famine Commission, Calcutta*", 1901, para 30, p. 11.
- ^{xxxi} Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund, "Report of the Central Executive Committee", 1901.
- ^{xxxii} Ibid.
- ^{xxxiii} In 1876 the area affected was 205,000 square miles and the affected population numbered 36 million. In 1896 the area affected was 275,000 square miles and a population of 52 million was affected. The famine of 1899-1901, however, beat these statistics again. It affected 420,000 square miles and 62 million people. The intensity and duration of the drought within that area were greater than in preceding droughts. The number of people on relief works in 1896-98 famine on 1st January was 636,000. In 1900, on 1st January the number was 2,750,000. Comparing the same statistics in the middle of the famine, i.e., on 14 July 1897, the number in receipt of relief was 3,300,000; the number at the same time, in 1900 was 6,100,000. See T. W Holderness, "The Indian Famine of 1899 and the Measures Taken to Meet It" *The Journal of the Society of Arts*, April 4, 1902, Vol. 50, No. 2576 (April 4, 1902), pp. 441-460.
- ^{xxxiv} S C Sinha, "*Indian speeches of Lord Curzon*". Vol. II, Calcutta, 1900, p. 96.
- ^{xxxv} Lovat Fraser, "India under Curzon and After", London, 1911, p. 283.
- ^{xxxvi} A.D Chinoy, "Report of the Census of India 1901", Vol.8 (Berar), Part 1, 1902, para 73, p. 30.
- ^{xxxvii} F.S Bullock, "*Narrative of the Famine in the Hyderabad Assigned Districts during the year 1896-97*", Hyderabad, 1898, p. 2.
- ^{xxxviii} Lovat Fraser, "India under Curzon and After", London, 1911, p. 283.
- ^{xxxix} Ibid.
- ^{xl} Sven Beckert, "Emancipation and Empire: Reconstructing in Worldwide Web of Cotton Production in the Age of the American Civil War", *American Historical Review* 109(5), 2001, pp. 1405-1438.
- ^{xli} Another dimension of the famines which has been actively discussed is a study of environmental changes. Vinita Damodaran, for example, argues that a knowledge of the ecological basis of different peasant economies is crucial to an understanding of the capacity of certain communities to withstand drought and other famine related hazards. It has been contented that the change in laws governing the forests and nomadic pastoral tribes may have had a fundamental causal role to play in the famines in British India in the second half of the nineteenth century. See some important studies - Laxman Satya, *Cotton and Famine in Berar, 1850-1900*, Tufts University, 1994; Laxman Satya, "Colonial Encroachment and Popular Resistance: Land Survey and Settlement Operations in Berar (Central India), 1861-1877" *Agricultural History* Vol. 72, No. 1, Winter 1998, pp. 55-76; Laxman Satya, "The Political Economy of Famines in 19th Century A Case of Berar Deccan in a Comprehensive Perspective", *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, Vol. 77 (2016), pp. 461-477; Mike Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World*, 2001; Mahesh Rangarajan, *Fencing the Forest: Conservation and Ecological Change in India's Central Provinces, 1860-1914*, Delhi, 1996; Ramachandra Guha, "The Prehistory of Community Forestry in India." *Environmental History* 6, Apr 2001 pp. 213-238; Vinita Damodaran, "Famine in a Forest Tract: Ecological Change and the Causes of the 1897 Famine in Chota Nagpur – North India." In Richard Grove, et al eds. *Nature and the Orient. The Environmental History*

of South and Southeast Asia, Delhi, 1998.

^{xlii} Peter Harnetty, "Cotton Exports and Indian Agriculture:1861-1870" *Economic History Review*, 2nd series xxiv, 1971.

^{xliii} Laxman Satya, *Cotton and Famine in Berar, 1850-1900*, Tufts University, 1994, p. 197.

^{xliv} Ibid.

^{xlv} The peasant's lack of market power compared to the grain merchants and moneylenders was worsened by their wares' falling international purchasing power. The end result was a situation where overall acreage under food crops was declining in favour of cash crops without a simultaneous increase in incomes which would have given a boost to the purchasing power over food. See Mike Davis, "How famine was created". Available at <http://infochangeindia.org>.

^{xlvi} Ibid.

^{xlvii} Mike Davis, "*Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World*", 2001.

^{xlviii} Amraoti Taluka Settlement Report No, 444, 1870, p. 6.

^{xlix} A. Tozzi, S. Bouzarovski & C. Henry, "Colonizing the rains: Disentangling more-than-human technopolitics of drought protection" in the archive, *Geoforum*, Volume 135, 2022, Pages 12-24.

^l Ibid.

^{li} Fraser's Magazine, Vol. 66, July to December 1862, London, 1862, p. 89.

^{lii} Ibid.

^{liii} A. Volcker, quoted by A. Tozzi, S. Bouzarovski & C. Henry, "Colonizing the rains: Disentangling more-than-human technopolitics of drought protection" in the archive, *Geoforum*, Volume 135, 2022, Pages 12-24.

^{liv} A. Tozzi, S. Bouzarovski & C. Henry, "Colonizing the rains: Disentangling more-than-human technopolitics of drought protection" in the archive, *Geoforum*, Volume 135, 2022, Pages 12-24.

^{lv} Anon., "Central Provinces and Berar, 1921-1922, A Review of the Administration of the Province", Vol. II, Nagpur, 1923, p. 44.

^{lvi} Amraoti Taluka Settlement Report No, 444, 1870, p. 6.

^{lvii} A. K Connell, "*Indian Pauperism, Free Trade and Railways*", a paper read before the East India Association, March 18, 1884, p. 2.

^{lviii} Commissioner Hyderabad Assigned Districts, to Resident, Hyderabad, No. 5913, dated 22nd November 1886.

^{lix} Despatch No. 391, dated 7 July 1886, from the Director, Department of Land Records and Agriculture, to the Government of Bengal.

^{lx} Despatch No, 3045, dated 31 October 1885, from the Deputy Commissioner, Basim District, to the Commissioner, Hyderabad Assigned Districts.

^{lxi} Despatch No, 3045, dated 31 October 1885, from the Deputy Commissioner, Basim District, to the Commissioner, Hyderabad Assigned Districts.

^{lxii} Ibid.

^{lxiii} Despatch No. 1,611, dated 25 June 1885, from the Deputy Commissioner of Buldhana District to the Commissioner of the Hyderabad Assigned Districts.

^{lxiv} Captain H. Wilberforce Clarke, "*Report on the Railway Famine - Traffic in the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay and the province of Maisur in 1876-78*", Calcutta, 1880, p. 9.

^{lxv} An excerpt from A. E Nelson, (ed.), "*Buldhana District Gazetteer*", Nagpur, 1910. Available at https://gazetteers.maharashtra.gov.in/cultural.maharashtra.gov.in/english/gazetteer/Buldhana%20District/lpwmctc_loans.html#.

^{lxvi} Great Britain India Office, "*East India Financial Statement, for 1881-82*", p. 105.

^{lxvii} A.K Connell, "*Economic Revolution of India and the Public works in India*", London, 1883, p. 57.

^{lxviii} T. W Holderness, "*Narrative of the Famine in India in 1896-97*", Simla, 1897, p. 12.

^{lxix} R. V Russell, "*Central Provinces District Gazetteers, Seoni District*", Vol. A, Allahabad, 1907, p.133.

^{lxx} Despatch, No. 33 (Famine), dated 18 May 1897, from the Government of India to the Secretary of State of India, in Great Britain India Office, "*Paper regarding the famine and the relief operations in India 1896-97*", Part III, p. 213.

^{lxxi} T. W Holderness, "*Narrative of the Famine in India in 1896-97*", Simla, 1897, p. 10.

^{lxxii} A. E Nelson, (ed.), "*Buldhana District Gazetteer*", Nagpur, 1910. Available at https://cultural.maharashtra.gov.in/english/gazetteer/BULDHANA/eco_price_trend.html

^{lxxiii} "For the small farmers, rising agrarian prices did not necessarily mean increasing incomes, rather in many cases they tended to be a source of indebtedness." See Sven Beckert, "Emancipation and Empire: Reconstructing in Worldwide Web of Cotton Production in the Age of the American Civil War", *American Historical Review*, 109(5), 2001, pp. 1405-1438. See Sven Beckert, "Emancipation and Empire: Reconstructing in Worldwide Web of Cotton Production in the Age of the American Civil War", *American Historical Review*, 109(5), 2001, pp. 1405-1438.

^{lxxiv} Hans Medick quoted by Mike Davis, "*Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World*", 2001, pp. 44-45.

^{lxxv} "A comparison of wages and prices in Berar Deccan suggests that on average, the standard cash wage rate remained stagnant at 3.5 annas per diem while the price of staple grain jawari increased by 33.5% from 27.7 seers per rupee to 18.4 between 1870 and 1903." See Laxman Satya, "The Political Economy of Famines in 19th Century A Case of Berar Deccan in a Comprehensive Perspective", *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, Vol. 77 (2016), pp. 461-477.

^{lxxvi} “Though wages have from time to time fluctuated during the past thirty years, they have, on the whole, varied so little that it cannot be said that they have been affected ... The railway has, however, reduced wages for skilled labour, which could always command Rs 1 per diem before the railway, by facilitating communication, brought the rate down to that which prevailed in other Provinces. See Great Britain India Office, “Imperial Gazetteer of India, ‘*Bareilly to Berasi*’”, Vol. VII, Oxford, 1908, p. 389.

^{lxxvii} R.V. Russell, “*The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India*”, Vol. I, London, 1916, p. 52.

^{lxxviii} A.K Connell, “*Economic Revolution of India and the Public works in India*”, London, 1883, p. 53.

^{lxxix} W. Digby quoted Saunders’ report in full. See W. Digby, “*Prosperous British India, A Revelation from Official Records*”, London, 1901, p. 483-87.

^{lxxx} W. Digby quoted Saunders’ report in full. See W. Digby, “*Prosperous British India, A Revelation from Official Records*”, London, 1901, p. 483-87.

^{lxxxi} Ibid.

^{lxxxii} According to Saunders, “a girl's marriage costs almost nothing to her parents. The bridegroom himself incurs the whole of the expenses, which again are kept quite within his means. If a boy is to be married, he is engaged by the year (salkaroo) in the service of a farmer who undertakes to supply him with his food and clothing for the year, and makes him also an advance of about Rs.20, the year's salary. This sum is spent on the marriage. The demand for 'salkaroo' is also in excess of the supply.” See W. Digby, “*Prosperous India*”, p. 486.

^{lxxxiii} Presidential Address, “*Report of the Thirteenth Indian National Congress held at Amraoti*”, Berar, 1897, p.11.

^{lxxxiv} Ibid.

^{lxxxv} Pandurang Bapuji, “*Report of the Thirteenth Indian National Congress held at Amraoti*”, Berar, 1897, p.59.

^{lxxxvi} East India (Progress and Condition), “*Statement Exhibiting the Moral and Material Progress and Condition of India during the Year 1896-97*”, Number 33, London 1898, p. 96.

^{lxxxvii} Ibid.

^{lxxxviii} F.S Bullock, “*Narrative of the Famine in the Hyderabad Assigned Districts during the year 1896-97*”, Hyderabad, 1898, p. 12.

