

government was undoubtedly caught unprepared. The fault lies chiefly at the door of Sir Cecil Beadon, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, and his Council, who gave the most positive assurances that there was no real danger of scarcity. But Lawrence himself acknowledged, 'I might, and perhaps ought to have overruled them and insisted on prompt action; and I blame myself for not doing so'. The famine was followed by devastating floods, which inflicted terrible misery and privations upon the inhabitants of the low-lying lands of Orissa; 'that which the drought spared', wrote Lawrence, 'the floods drowned'. In the second famine in 1868-9, which affected Bundelkhand and Rajputana, remedial measures were taken earlier, and the principle was definitely laid down for the first time that the officers of the government were bound to take every available means to prevent deaths by starvation. The years 1862-6 were notable for Richard Temple's administration of the Central Provinces and the land settlement he carried out there for a term of thirty years.

The finances of India under Sir John Lawrence were in an unfavourable condition, but he had many difficulties with which to contend. In 1866 a great commercial crisis was brought about by special circumstances. The American civil war had caused an almost total cessation of the export of raw cotton owing to the blockade of the Southern ports by the fleet of the Northern states. As a result, the demand of Lancashire for the raw material required by her looms turned to India; so that the production of the Indian cotton districts in Berar, Nagpur, and the southern Maratha country was immensely stimulated. Fortunes were rapidly made. The value of land rose, and, as a settlement at that time happened to be in progress, the government in many districts increased the assessment. There was a glut of capital-seeking investment, an era of inflation, of reckless speculation—and then the inevitable crash. The sudden