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THE FIFTY-FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
SANITARY COMMISSIONER,

THE TWENTY-NINTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
SANITARY ENGINEER

AND

THE TWENTY-THIRD ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
SANITARY BOARD,

MADRAS,

1918.

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THE
FIFTY-FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
SANITARY COMMISSIONER WITH THE GOVERNMENT
OF MADRAS,
1918.

SECTION V.

GENERAL POPULATION.

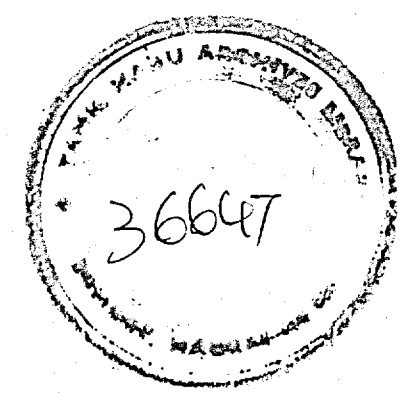
RAINFALL.

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THE total registered rainfall of the Presidency during 1918 amounted to 1,020.42 inches against 1,246.03 in 1917, giving a district average of 40.82 inches. This was less than the district average of the preceding year by 9.02 inches. The distribution of the district average among the several monsoons during the year under report was as follows:—

	INCHES.
Inter-monsoon period (January to May)	9.47
South-west monsoon (June to September)	14.92
North-east monsoon (October to December)	16.43
Total	40.82



2. The average district rainfall of the year in all the monsoons was less than the district average for forty-five years ending with 1914 by 3.25 inches. Compared with 1917, all but five districts (Chingleput, Madras, South Arcot, Tanjore and Tinnevely) showed a decreased rainfall, South Kanara (— 35.14 inches) heading the list followed by Gōdāvari (— 30.99), Kistna (— 26.96) and Ganjām (— 25.29). The increased rainfall was marked in Madras (+ 23.80). As compared with the average, only six districts (Chingleput, Madras, Madura, Nellore, Rāmnād and Tinnevely) showed an increased rainfall. Here also the increase was prominent in Madras (+ 26.15) and the decrease in South Kanara (— 24.36).

3. Judged with reference to the monsoons, the inter-monsoon period was favourable throughout the Presidency as a whole, the total registered rainfall of the season being 236.70 inches against 149.93 inches in 1917 and 132.27, the average of forty-five years ending with 1914. Fourteen districts contributed to the increased rainfall during this season; of these South Kanara and Malabar had the highest increases of 30.49 and 22.39 inches, respectively, over the figures of 1917 and 27.66 and 19.03 inches, respectively, over the average.

4. The south-west monsoon was a thorough failure during 1918, the total rainfall recorded during the season being 372.96 inches which is 344.45 inches less than that of the previous year and 229.82 inches less than that of the average. The decrease occurred in every district of the Presidency without a single exception. South Kanara and Malabar which depend chiefly on this monsoon suffered

23. Compared with the previous year, death-rates in 153 towns showed an increase and in 41 towns a decrease; the rates in the remaining two towns (Tenkāsi and Melasevval) were the same in both years. Increases were noteworthy in Kalyāndrug (+ 92·8), Rayadrug (+ 34·8), Harpanahalli (+ 78·4), Tanurnagaram (+ 50·0), Kōsgi (+ 41·3), Abiramam and Srungavarapukota (+ 38·6 each) and Dharmavaram (+ 37·0). Of the towns which showed a falling off, Gudūr (— 33·9) headed the list followed by Kāvali (— 28·3), Kandukūr (— 25·0), Kanigiri (— 23·5) and Aiyabad (— 21·2).

DEATHS IN MUNICIPALITIES.

24. The total number of deaths registered in the 73 municipal towns of the Presidency during 1918 was 140,020 against 102,478 (including the deaths returned by Tiruppūr and Udamalpet) in 1917, representing annual ratios of 50·6 and 37·0 per mille, respectively, against the quinquennial average of 34·0. Tiruppattūr and Nandyal returned the highest death-rates of 118·4 and 109·8 per mille, respectively. Other towns where comparatively higher death-rates obtained were Coimbatore (73·9), Tiruvannāmalai (72·7), Bellary (68·2), Bezwada (67·6) and Dindigul (67·1). The rates varied from 65 to 60 per mille in nine towns, from 60 to 50 in seventeen, from 50 to 40 in twenty-five and from 40 to 30 in fifteen. Cannanore returned the lowest rate of 32·0 per mille. In contrast with the results of the previous year, the death-rate showed an increase in 63 towns and a decrease in ten. Increases were prominent in Tiruppattūr (+ 68·8), Nandyal (+ 65·6), Udamalpet (+ 39·0), Bodinayakkanur (+ 32·2), Coonoor (+ 30·8) and Ootacamund (+ 30·2) and decreases in Adōni (— 28·0), Hōspet (— 23·5) and Bellary (— 9·2).

In Adōni, Hōspet and Bellary, all in the same district Bellary, a district always subject to plague, there was a great decline in the death-rate registered under plague, the ratios being 0·1, 1·2 and 1·5 per mille in 1918 against 41·2, 39·5 and 30·6 in 1917, respectively, and this accounted for the general fall in the death-rates recorded therein. Judged with reference to the quinquennial average all the towns with the exception of Adōni, where there was a decrease of 1·6 per mille, showed an increased death-rate. Here also the increase was marked in Nandyal (+ 77·0) and Tiruppattūr (+ 58·6).

25. The total infantile mortality in municipalities during 1918 averaged 282·1 per mille of the registered births against 246·4 in 1917 and against the quinquennial average of 243·4 per mille. Considered with reference to sex, the mortality among male infants was 292·2 and among female 271·4 or in every 100 deaths there were 53·4 males and 46·6 females. The rate of mortality was largest in Udamalpet (419·0), followed by Coimbatore (416·1), Bezwada (408·1), Guntūr (390·0) and Madras (360·7). The rates varied from 300 to 350 per mille in 18 towns, from 250 to 300 in 22 towns, from 200 to 250 in 17 towns, and from 150 to 200 in ten towns. The infantile death-rate was lowest in Cannanore (135·7). Comparing the year's figures with those of 1917, there was an increase in 57 towns and a decrease in 14, the newly formed Municipalities of Tiruppūr and Udamalpet for which figures were not available being excluded. Compared with the quinquennial average, increased mortality among infants occurred in 56 towns and a decreased mortality in 15. Increases were over 100 per mille in Narasaraopet (124·6), Anakapalle (124·0), Coimbatore (119·2), Tirupati (115·9), Vizianagram (109·5), Mannārgudi (105·9) and Karur (100·1). In 16 other towns the increase was over 70 per mille and below 100. The towns which showed noticeable decreases were Hospet (— 110·8), Bellary (— 82·0) and Parlākimedi (— 35·5). These heavy mortality rates among infants are, as is too well known, due to the following causes:—

(a) Women in labour attended by ignorant village "Dais" (barber women).

(b) Tetanus caused by cutting the umbilical cord with dirty knives or scissors and application of any rubbish at hand to the cut end to prevent bleeding.

(c) Women in labour not taking advantage of the services of trained midwives when available.

(d) Drugging the new born infants with crude mercurial preparations and other injudicious methods of treatment.

Additional factors which brought about this result particularly during the year under report were the severe scarcity and famine conditions prevailing during the year and the general unhealthiness of the Presidency, as a whole, due to influenza.

