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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Medical DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 1065	Press / Mis.
122-123	
Dated 17-2-	18 75.

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Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Financial Department,
17th May 1875.

Local Funds—Sanitary.

No. 122. Read the following letter from Surgeon-General E. G. BALFOUR, Surgeon-General, Indian Medical Department, to the Honorable D. F. CARMICHAEL, Officiating Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Fort St. George, 11th May 1875, No. 258:—

The Deputy Surgeon-General, Southern Districts, and of Malabar and Canara, in his Annual Inspection Reports for 1872-73 and 1873-74 on Ponany, described its insanitary condition in such terms that I deemed it necessary to send on his remarks to the President of the Local Fund Board and to the Revenue Board.

2. I regret to mention that his report for the year 1874-75 is still more unfavorable, and this year it is desirable that Government should be acquainted with the state of that small town. I give below extracts from the reports of the last two years, and it will be seen from that of 1874-75 that small-pox persistently continues to recur, causing a great mortality, not only from the great numbers attacked, but also the severity of the disease, last year one dying out of every 4·08 who fell ill.

3. I have directed the attention of the Inspector of Vaccination to this.

EXTRACTS.

Report, dated 10th December 1872.

Paragraph 8. *Conservancy of Neighborhood, &c.*—"The population of the town of Ponany, which a recent Census returns at 8,006 souls, consists almost entirely of Moplahs—a race of Musselmans whose narrow bigotry apparently renders them impervious to every effort that has hitherto been made to lead them to identify themselves with that upward movement towards intellectual light which they must see is everywhere going on around them. With them the Drill Serjeant's words "As you were" has all the force of a divine precept, which leads them to oppose any effort to apply to this their town even the most elementary principles of sanitation; and, therefore, it is that within it are to be found, in their most concentrated form, conditions, the known sources of disease and of the physical degeneration of a people exposed to them. Of drains there are none, the soil and sun being the dispersers of the town sewage and monsoon rains; and the same is true of latrines, of which not one exists. To the Moplah they are foolishness, and the result is to be perceived in the air of the place, heavy with the disgusting stench of human ordure thickly deposited in the highways, lanes, and neighboring fields. No less than forty-five graveyards receive the dead of this town and neighborhood for miles around. The quality of the water used by the inhabitants of this town may be inferred from its source; numerous wells sunk in the sand and which tap the *subsoil* water at depths varying, according to season, from two and-a-half to five or six feet.

"Recently four scavengers have been employed under the direction of one Inspector for conservative purposes—a strength wholly unequal to the work of cleansing this most filthy, neglected town."

Report, dated 29th January 1874.

Paragraph 8. *Conservancy of Neighborhood, &c.*—"The sanitary condition of this town continues much the same as it was on the 10th December 1872 when the last Inspection Report was submitted, and there is little to record on the present occasion of means resorted to, during the interval, to place matters on a more satisfactory footing. Of the little that has been effected it is satisfactory to record the formation of two well-constructed masonry drains in the main street of the town which may be taken as an earnest of what yet will be done; and this is the more likely to occur should the present Vice-President of the Local Fund Board, Malabar, Mr. Cannaren, continue to represent the sanitary interests of the inhabitants, which he now does so wisely and so well. And an uphill work of it he has amongst a people, such as are the Moplahs, who so greatly prepon-

derate in this town, and whose bigotry belongs almost to Saracenic times ; men who sullenly reject instruction and who refuse to identify themselves with that educational movement which now so remarkably characterizes their Hindu fellow-subjects. Thus in the local schools, which are thronged by the youth of the latter, not one Moplah (I speak on the authority of the Vice-President of the Local Fund Board) is to be seen, although the language in which instruction is conveyed is the vernacular of both. Hence to such a people it seems a mockery to tell them that their ten grave-yards, within the crowded and narrow area of their town, in which generation of their dead are rotting, are in reality so many centres of disease, polluting the air they breathe and the water they drink, drawn as it is from wells often not more than a few yards from these charnel *cumuli*. And so, too, when you tell them that the small-pox and fevers which are never absent from their midst, that the cholera outbreaks which from time to time have fallen on them with such terrible force, have their certain sources in those polluted centres, they regard you with that expression of self-sufficiency which is the natural language of ignorance, and against which it would be idle to contend. And in respect of town conservancy matters are just as bad. The air poisoned by the disgusting fœtor of human ordure, tells of the use to which the ground surface of the town and suburbs is turned by, at least, the male inhabitants, whilst, in the narrow-walled spaces enclosing every house, each has a pit into which is thrown the ordure of the female part of the establishment, where it remains to accumulate undisturbed, unless when at times a mixture of lime and common salt is thrown on the surface of the rotting mass. Refuse matter of every kind litters the smaller streets and lanes, for the four scavengers employed are wholly unequal to the work of cleansing, and confine their labor to the main streets of the town. It is from numerous wells, sunk in the subsoil, that the people derive their water-supply, and what its quality must be, percolating through a ground surface so polluted, may be well imagined. Such are some of the more prominent sanitary evils which oppress the inhabitants of this ill-conditioned Moplah town, but while the greater oppression of bigotry and ignorance is opposed to their removal, as it equally is to the reception of education and knowledge which would let in light and with it healing, one may well despair of seeing anything done."

Report, dated 24th March 1875.

Paragraph 8. *Conservancy of Neighborhood, &c.*—"Under this paragraph in the Inspection Report submitted on the 29th January 1874 and 10th December 1872, respectively, I have enlarged on the insanitary conditions which exist in this town in a very concentrated form ; conditions which still obtain, and this may, to a considerable extent, account for the low-health condition of the inhabitants and the persistent prevalence of variola which is said to be of the very worst type. In the words of the Hospital Assistant in charge of the Dispensary : "I never saw such a dangerous disease which I have observed this last three years. If 100 persons were taken ill, it is very hard to recover ten," and he supports this statement with the following table :—

Months.	Taken ill.	Recovered.	Died.
January	254	15	89
February	239	85	73
March	436	100	184
April	397	104	99
May	643	118	214
June	262	72	55
July	195	54	73
August	307	96	84
September	518	115	107
October	167	36	21
November	333	53	59
December	768	64	62
Total ...	4,571	912	1,120

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Financial Department,
17*th May* 1875.

No. 123. ORDER THEREON, 17th May 1875, No. 1065.

The President of the Local Fund Board, Calicut Circle, will report, for the information of Government, what is the present sanitary condition of Ponany, and the steps taken for the efficient conservancy of the town.

(True Extract.)

D. F. CARMICHAEL,
Officiating Chief Secretary.

To the President of the Local Fund Board, Calicut.
,, Board of Revenue.
,, Sanitary Commissioner.

Exd. J. Wright.

Cobt. of {1875} Madras.

FINANCIAL.

To

THE PRESIDENT OF THE
LOCAL FUND BOARD,
&c., &c., Calicut, &c.

Dated May, 17th.

Issued

Recd.

&c.

G.O, 17th *May* 1875, No. 1065.

MAY.
Nos. 122-123.

Local Fund, Sanitary.—Letter from Surgeon-General, Indian Medical Department, forwarding report on the insanitary condition of the town of Ponany, communicated to the President, Calicut Circle, for report.

No. 258

OFFICE OF SURGEON-GENERAL, I. M. D.,
Fort Saint George, 17th *May* 1875.

From

SURGEON-GENERAL EDWARD BALFOUR,
Surgeon-General,
Indian Medical Department,
Fort Saint George.

To

The Chief Secretary to Government
Financial Department

SIR,

The Deputy Surgeon General Southern Districts, and of Malabar and Canara, in his annual inspection reports for 1872-3 and 1873-4 on Ponany, described its insanitary condition in such terms, that I deemed it necessary to send an extract to the President Local Fund Board and to the Revenue Board.

2. I regret to mention that his report for the year 1874-5 is still more unfavourable and this year it is desirable that Government should be acquainted with the state of that small town. I give below extracts from the reports of the last two years, and it will be seen from that of 1874-5, that small pox persistently continues to

to recur, causing a great mortality, not only from the great numbers attacked but also the severity of the disease, last year one dying out of every 4·08 who fell ill.

3. I have directed the attention of the Inspector of Vaccination to this.

I have the honor to be
Sir
Your most Obed.t Servt.

Surgeon General
Surgeon General Comd.g

Extracts.

Report dated 10th Decr 1872.

Conservancy of Neighbourhood &c

Para 8. "The population of the town of Lonavli which, a recent census returns at 8006 souls, consists, almost entirely, of Mopplahs - a race of Mussulmans whose narrow bigotry, apparently, renders them impervious to every effort that has, hitherto, been made to lead them to identify themselves with that upward movement towards intellectual light which they must see is, everywhere, going on around them. With them the drill Serjeants word "as you were" has all the force of a divine precept, which leads them to oppose any effort to apply to this, their town, even the most elementary principles of sanitation. And therefore, it is that, within it are to be found in their most concentrated form, conditions the known sources of disease and of the physical degeneration of a people exposed to them. Of drains there are none - the soil and sun being the dispersers of the town sewage and monsoon rains. And the same is true of Latrines, of which not one exists. To the Mopplah, they are foolish - -ness, and the result is to be perceived in the air of the place, heavy with the disgusting stench of human ordure thickly deposited in the highways, lanes and neighbouring fields. Not less than 4 or 5 grave yards receive the dead of this town & neighbourhood for miles around. The quality of the water used by the inhabitants of this town may be inferred from its source. numerous wells sunk in the sand and which tap the subsoil water

water at depths varying, according to season, from 2½ to 5 or 6 feet.

Recently four scavengers have been employed under the direction of one Inspector for conservative purposes - a strength wholly unequal to the work of cleansing this most filthy neglected town."

Conservancy of Neighbourhood &c.

Para 8. "The Report dated 29th Jany. 1874. Sanitary condition of this Town continues much the same as it was on the 10th December 1872 when the last Inspection Report was submitted, and there is little to record on the present occasion of means resorted to, during the interval, to place matters on a more satisfactory footing. Of the little that has been effected it is satisfactory to record the formation of two well constructed masonry drains in the main street of the Town which may be taken as an earnest of what yet will be done, and this is the more likely to occur should the present Vice President of the Local Fund Board, Malabar Mr. Cannaven continue to represent the sanitary

sanitary interests of the inhabitants to, which he now does so nobly and well. And an up hill work of it he has amongst a people, such as are the Moplahs, who so greatly preponderate in this town, and whose bigotry belongs almost to saracenic times - men who sullenly reject instruction and who refuse to identify themselves with that educational movement which now so remarkably characterizes their Hindoo fellow subjects. Even in the local schools which are thronged by the youth of the latter, not one Moplah (I speak on the authority of the Vice President of the Local Fund Board) is to be seen, although the language in which instruction is conveyed is the vernacular of both. Hence to such a people it seems a mockery to tell them that their ten grave yards, within the crowded and narrow area of their town, in which generation of their dead are rotting, are, in reality, so many centres of disease, polluting the air they breathe

and

and the water they drink, drawn as it is from wells often not more than a few yards from these channels. And so too when you tell them that the small-pox and fevers which are never absent from their midst, that the cholera outbreaks which from time to time have fallen on them with such terrible force, have their certain sources in those polluted centres, they regard you with that expression of self sufficiency which is the natural language of ignorance, and against which it would be hard to contend. And in respect of Town conservancy, matters are just as bad. The air poisoned by the disgusting fetor of human ordure, cells of the rise to which the ground surface of the Town & suburbs is turned by, at least, the male inhabitants, whilst, in the narrow walled spaces enclosing every house, each has a pit into which is thrown the ordure of the female part of the Establishment, where it remains to accumulate undisturbed, unless when, at times, a mixture of lime and common salt is thrown on the surface of the rotting mass. Refuse matter of every kind litters the smaller streets and lanes, for the few scavengers employed are wholly unequal to the work of cleansing and confine their labor to the main streets of the town. It is found numerous wells sunk in the subsoil, that the people derive their water supply, and what its quality must be, percolating through a ground surface so polluted, may be well imagined. Such are some of the more prominent sanitary evils which oppress the inhabitants of this ill conditioned Moplah Town, but while the greater oppression of bigotry and ignorance is opposed to their removal, as it equally is to the reception of education and knowledge which would let in light and with it healing, one may well despair of seeing any thing done."

"Report.

Conservancy of Weigh Bridge &c.

Report dated 24th March 1875

Para 8. "Under this head on the Inspection Report submitted on the 29th January 1874 and 10th December 1872 respectively, I have enlarged on the insanitary conditions which exist in this Town in a very concentrated form - conditions which still obtain and thus may, to a considerable extent, account for the low health condition of the inhabitants and the persistent prevalence of Variola which is said to be of the very worst type. In the words of the Hospital Assistant in charge of the Dispensary - "I never saw such a dangerous disease which I have observed this last three years. If 100 persons were taken ill, it is very hard to recover 10" and he supports this statement with the following tatule

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April	397	104	99	
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June	262	72	55	
July	196	54	78	
August	307	96	84	
September	518	175	107	
October	167	56	21	
November	223	53	59	
December	268	64	62	
Total	4571	912	1120	

Send

15

(Typed extracts)

Dawson from Surgeon General

Surgeon General Executive

Acknowledged. 17 May 1875. No. 1065.

The President of the Local Govt Board
Calcutt Circle with ~~reference~~ report for-
the information of Govt. the present Sanitary
Condition of Bombay, & the Steps taking for
the Efficient conservancy of the town.
The President of the Local Govt Board.

3 Sheets 29/5

The President of the Local Govt Board
&c &c &c
Board of Revenue.

From

Surgeon-General E. Balfour,
Surgeon-General,
Indian Medical Department,
Fort Saint George.

To

The Chief Secty to Govt
Fort St George

Dated 11th May
Despatched
Received
No. 258

Subject.

Forwards Report
from Surgeon Peile
by the Dy Surgeon Genl
Presy South Drain
on the unsanitary
condition of the town
of Bombay.

Q Bombay.
Dept 29/5/75

...obt. of {1875} Madras.

Finl 2

To
The Presdt. of the
L. F. Board
Calicut

G.O. 17 Jany. 1875 No. 105.

Nos. 122-123.

Local Fund Sanitary - Letter
from Surgeon General D.M.
forwarding report on the
insanitary condition of
the town of Ponani, comd.
to the President, Calicut
Circle, for report.