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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Financial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 759 Press Mis.

78-79

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Dated 6-4- 18 78

617

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Municipal—Medical.

No. 78. Read the following letter from Surgeon-General E. G. BALFOUR, Surgeon-General, Indian Medical Department, to the Honorable W. HUDLESTON, Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Fort St. George, 12th March 1875, No. 128:—

I have the honor to bring to the notice of Government the need for improved hospital accommodation at Tritrapundi and Manargudi, and the necessity of a dead-house at each place for magisterial purposes. In my letter, No. 226, dated 15th July 1872, I submitted to Government the impropriety of the outside dead being carried to Civil Hospitals, and G.O., No. 1081, dated 9th August 1872, commanded the erection of town dead-houses. The Deputy Surgeon-General, Southern Districts, Malabar and Canara, inspected at Tritrapundi on the 26th January, and reports that "the work of this dispensary still continues to be conducted in the old squalid, mud-walled structure described in the inspection reports submitted on the 25th January 1873 and 13th March 1874, respectively; and were it not that attention has been so often drawn, in like reports, to the reasons which, in my view, render it inexpedient to use such inappropriate buildings for such a purpose, I would enlarge on this subject here. Let me trust that attention may soon be aroused to the necessity of giving to this station a building for a dispensary worthy of the beneficent objects which those institutions are designed to accomplish. On reaching the hospital on this date, about 3 o'clock P.M., many of the inhabitants were gathered around it and were some of them lookers on what was being then enacted in an open shed in the narrow patch of ground in rear of the hospital; *viz.*, the evisceration of the body of a young Hindu woman, which had been found by the Police and brought thither for inspection. But it is not to describe the ghastly spectacle on which those people were gazing, but to illustrate a subject and a procedure against which I have, for the last five years, raised my voice, by so telling an example, and to urge upon the authorities the claims of the inhabitants of this and other towns endowed with dispensaries to have them protected against being converted by the Police authorities into so many *morgues*. Apart from the indecency of such a procedure there is this to be urged against it, that it is abhorrent to the prejudices and superstitious fears of the inhabitants, who, many of them, rather suffer their ills and worse, perhaps those inflicted on them by their native doctors, than have recourse to a hospital where such things are possible. Only Governmental interference will check this evil, so as to restrain the Police authorities from perpetuating it here and elsewhere."

2. Reporting on the Manargudi Civil Dispensary, the Deputy Surgeon-General says: "The structural condition of the various buildings which make up this hospital is far from satisfactory and requires looking after. The roofing, especially parts of the male ward, needs repair; and since during the rains the wards are said to be wet, owing to roof imperfections in all the other buildings, the repairs should be made general and as complete as possible. The flooring of all the hospital buildings is always an eyesore. It is of brick and worn in numerous places into concavities, which give lodgment to dust and refuse matter. The dead-house is said and, indeed looks, to be in a tumble-down condition. And

here is the proper place to call attention to an abuse which, for a long time, has been tolerated in this dispensary as once it used to be in other like institutions in my circle, till its recognition led to its suppression—a result which it is to be hoped may be attained here, I mean in this dead-house being resorted to by the Police authorities to conduct medico-legal autopsies. Apart from the irregularity of thus using, for imperial purposes, municipal property—an irregularity which one may be assured Government is unaware of—there is this all-powerful objection to be urged against it, that there is positively nothing so much opposed to the successful working of such institutions from the superstitious dread it imparts than is the practice of the bringing in of dead bodies, some of them in an advanced state of decomposition, within the precincts of the dispensary, for *post mortem* examinations, which, in this case, are conducted in a dead-house in the close vicinage of the wards. I would, therefore, suggest that so objectionable a procedure should at once be caused to cease, and the Police, who have now a hospital for themselves at a convenient distance from the dispensary, be instructed to provide a dead-house within the hospital compound. The compound is tolerably clean. In it, not many paces from the female ward, there is a deep well, wholly unprotected by a wall or indeed anything to indicate to the unwary how often in the midst of life we are in death."

3. In the 1873-74 Inspection Report, the unfavorable condition of the Tritrapundi Hospital was noticed by the Deputy Surgeon-General, and extract from his report was duly sent by me to the Board of Revenue on the 11th April 1874, but this year the report shows no improvement; and the 1873-74 Report on the Manargudi Civil Dispensary was so little satisfactory, that I ordered the Medical Officer to submit quarterly reports on its condition. The above extracts from the 1874-75 Reports show so little improvement that I beg to submit it for the orders of the Right Honorable the Governor in Council.

No. 79. ORDER THEREON, 6th April 1875, No. 759.

Communicated to the President of the Municipal and Local Fund Boards, Tanjore District.

2. It is observed that an allotment of Rupees 2,100 was made in the Manargudi Municipal Budget for 1874-75 for the repair of the hospital building in that town.

(True Extract.)

Chief Secretary.

To the President of the Municipal Commissions, Tanjore.
" President of the Local Fund Boards, Tanjore.
" Surgeon-General, Indian Medical Department.

Exd. J. Wright.

Govt. of {1875} Madras.

FINANCIAL.

To THE PRESIDENT OF THE MUNICIPAL COMMISSIONS, *Tanjore*, &c., &c., &c.

Dated April 6th.

Issued

Read.

G.O., 6th April 1875, No. 759.

APRIL.
Nos. 78-79.

Municipal and Local Fund Boards, Tanjore District.—Letter from the Surgeon-General, Indian Medical Department, forwarding report on the Civil Dispensaries at Tritrapundi and Manargudi, communicated to the President.

No. 128

OFFICE OF SURGEON-GENERAL, I. M. D.,
Fort Saint George, 12 March 1875.

From

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

To

The Chief Secretary to Government
Judicial Department
Fort Saint George.

SIR,

I have the honor to bring to the notice of Government, the need for improved Hospital accommodation at Tetrapoondy and Manargoody, and the necessity of a Dead House at each place for Magisterial purposes. In my letter, No. 226 dated 15 July 1872, I submitted to Government the impropriety of the outside dead being carried to Civil hospitals, and G.O. No. 1081 dated 9th August 1872, commanded the erection of town dead houses. The Deputy Surgeon General, Southern Districts, Malabar and Canara, inspected at Tretrapoondy on the 26th January, and reports that "the "work of this Dispensary still continues to be conducted "in the old Spatial mud walled structure described "in the Inspection Reports submitted on the 25th January "1873 and 13th March 1874 respectively; and were it not "that attention has been so often drawn, in like reports "to the reasons which in my view, render it inexpedient "to use such inappropriate buildings for such a pur-"pose, I would enlarge on this subject here. Let me "trust that attention may soon be aroused to the

"necessity of giving to this station a building for a Dis-
"pensary worthy of the beneficent objects which those
"Institutions are designed to accomplish. On reaching
"the Hospital on this date, about 3 o'clock P.M., many
"of the inhabitants were gathered around it and were
"some of them lookers on what was being then enacted
"in an open shed in the narrow patch of ground in
"rear of the Hospital - namely, the evisceration of the
"body of a young Hindoo woman which had been
"found by the Police and brought thither for inspection.
"But it is not to describe the ghastly spectacle on which
"those people were gazing, but to illustrate a subject and
"a procedure against which I have, for the last 5 years,
"raised my voice, by so telling an example, and to urge
"upon the authorities the claims of the inhabitants of
"this and other towns endowed with Dispensaries, to
"have them protected against being converted by the Police
"authorities into so many morgues. Apart from the in-
-decency of such a procedure, there is this to be urged
"against it, that it is abhorrent to the prejudices and
"superstitious fears of the inhabitants who, many of them,
"rather suffer their ills and worse, perhaps those in-
-flicted on them by their Native Doctors, than have
"recourse to a Hospital where such things are possible.
"Only Governmental interference will check this evil, so
"as to restrain the Police authorities from perpetuating
"it - here and elsewhere."

2 Reporting on the Manargoody Civil Dispensary, the Deputy Surgeon General says "the structural condition of
"the various buildings which make up this Hospital is far
"from satisfactory and requires looking after. The roofing,
"especially parts of the male ward, needs repair; and
"since during the rains, the wards are said to be wet
"owing to roof imperfections in all the other buildings, the
"repairs should be made general and as complete as

"possible. The flooring of all the Hospital buildings is also
"an eye-sore. It is of brick and worn in numerous
"places into concavities, which give lodgment to dust and
"refuse matter. The dead-house is said and indeed looks
"to be in a tumble-down condition. And here is the proper
"place to call attention to an abuse which, for a long time,
"has been tolerated in this Dispensary as once it used
"to be in other like Institutions in my Circle, till its
"recognition led to its suppression - a result which it
"is to be hoped may be attained here. I mean in this
"dead house being reported to by the Police Authorities to
"conduct medico-legal autopsies. Apart from the irre-
-gularity of thus using, for Imperial purposes, Munic-
-ipal property - an irregularity which one may be
"assured, Government is unaware of, there is this all
"powerful objection to be urged against it, that there is
"positively nothing so much opposed to the successful
"working of such Institutions from the superstitious
"dread it imparts than is the practice of the bringing in
"of dead bodies, some of them in an advanced state of
"decomposition within the precincts of the Dispensary, for
"post mortem examinations, which, in this case, are con-
-ducted in a dead house in the close vicinage of the
"wards. I would therefore suggest that so objectionable a
"procedure should at once be caused to cease, and the Police,
"who have now a Hospital for themselves at a convenient
"distance from the Dispensary, be instructed to provide a
"Dead House within the Hospital Compound. The compound is
"tolerably clean. But it not many paces from the female
"ward, there is a deep well, wholly unprotected by a wall or
"indeed any thing to indicate to the unwary, how often
"in the midst of life, we are in death."

3 In the 1873-74 Inspection Report, the unfavorable con-
-dition of the Triplicane Hospital was noticed by the Deputy
Surgeon General, and extract from his Report was duly sent by

me to the Board of Revenue on the 11 April 1874, but this year the report shows no improvement. And the 1873-74 Report on the Munnargoody Civil Dispensary was so little satisfactory that I ordered the Medical Officer to submit quarterly reports on its condition. The above extract from the 1874-75 Report shows so little improvement that I beg to submit it for the orders of the Right Honourable the Governor in Council.

I have the honor to be
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,
[signature]
Surgeon General
Surgeon General
Indian Medical Dept.

Fin and 1875. Department

From (Municipal - Medical)
Surgeon-General E. Balfour,
Surgeon-General,
Indian Medical Department,
Fort Saint George,

To
The Chief Secretary to Govt.
Dept.
Fort St George

Dated 12 March
Despatched
Received 13
No. 128
No 620

Subject.

Forwards Extracts from the Dy Surg Genl's Annual Inspection Reports, on the Civil Dispensaries at Trevapoondy and Munnargoody

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Pr'd to M. C. Tanjore 6 }
Do. L. F. B. Tanjore 6 } Desp 16/4
S. G. I. M. Dept 6 }

30/6/40

Communicated to the President of the Municipal and Local Fund Boards Tanjore District.

It is observed that an allotment of Rs 2,100 was made for the Munnargoody Municipal budget for 1874-75 for the repair of the hospital building in that town.

The attendance at the Munnargoody hospital in 1873-74 was 328 in-patients and 13,571 out-patients.

Order 15 Ap. No. 258

Govt. of {187 } Madras.

Rec'd

G. O. 6 April, 1875 - No. 759.

Nos. 78 9.

Transmitting Letter from the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, forwarding Report on the Civil Dispensaries at Tretraipoondy and Manargudi, Communicated to the Board.