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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Financial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	21	Press
		Mis.
Dated	6-1-	18 76.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Financial Department,
6th January 1876.*

Local Funds—Medical.

No. 31. Read the following letter from H. S. THOMAS, Esq., District Magistrate of Tanjore, to the Hon. W. HUDLESTON, Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Tanjore, 22nd December 1875, No. 5700 :—

I have the honor to address the Government on the subject of dead-houses in Municipalities.

2. In Combaconum there having been no separate building for the dissection of corpses sent for medico-legal examination, a small room measuring ten feet by fifteen feet, attached to the hospital and dispensary, was being used as a dead-house; but this room proved very distasteful to the female patients, owing to its close proximity to the female ward, and was also found objectionable on sanitary grounds by the Inspectors of Hospitals. Although the Commissioners appear to have repeatedly brought to notice this sad state of things, and been strongly urging the removal of the dead-house by moving Government to provide a separate building for the purpose at their own cost, nothing has been done.

3. In his tour of inspection, in February 1873, the Deputy Inspector-General of Hospitals recommended the removal of the dead-house without any further delay, and recorded his reasons, in strong terms, in his annual report (extract enclosed). The Commissioners then resolved upon the demolition of the dead-house, considering that, as the building had originally been built out of local subscriptions, they might deal with it as they liked without reference to Government, leaving the Police and Magistracy to use the back room of the old Municipal office as a dead-house *pro tem*. This site was also found objectionable, being near the Munsif's and Small Cause Court houses. As moreover it was required for the office of the Range Officer, it had to be vacated. Hence the necessity for constructing a separate building for conducting *post-mortem* examinations.

4. In G.O., dated the 4th September 1873, No. 2205-A, the grant made by the Public Works Department for the purpose was disallowed, but the Commissioners have ever since been persistently objecting, and I think with reason, to bear the cost of dead-houses. The Commissioners were however good enough, at the instance of the then District Magistrate, to erect a temporary shed which unfortunately fell down in April last. Ever since the *post mortems* are being conducted in the open air.

5. In G.O., No. 88, dated the 16th January last, Judicial Department, the Government have again ruled that Local Fund Boards should provide for dead-houses in their respective circles at their own expense. On receipt of this order, the Commissioners of the several Municipalities in the district were asked if they are prepared to pay wholly or contribute towards the cost of such structures, but they all urge that the cost of such buildings, solely required for Police and Magisterial purposes, is an item of expenditure which should be met from Provincial Funds. I may mention here that the Local Fund Boards are also of the same opinion. In this view I fully concur.

6. First of all, dead-houses should always be well apart from dispensary and hospital compounds, as their location in them tends only to ruin and injure the work of dispensaries and hospitals; for a dead-house, when near dispensaries,

strikes horror and aversion in the minds of the unfortunate people forced by poverty to seek relief in them, not to speak of the sanitary objections to the close proximity of the sick and wounded to the decomposition of dead bodies, and as to the incidence of the cost, the case seems stronger still. In the dead-houses within Municipalities corpses are brought for dissection, not only from within their limits, but also from a great distance without them, and as they are examined only in the interests of the criminal administration of the country, at the instance of the Police or Magistracy, dead-houses can in no way be connected with Municipal Dispensaries, the object of which is to heal, not to bring home, crime. Furthermore, the principle here advocated seems to have been already admitted by Government in themselves paying the examination-fees to Medical officers other than those paid by Government (*vide* G.O., No. 1447, dated 8th October 1873, Financial Department), thereby admitting that the said Municipal officers are, in their dead-house examinations, doing the Government work, and not Municipal work.

7. The above question is put mainly as concerns Municipalities, but I would submit that the same ruling should govern Local Fund Boards also, as those bodies are in no way concerned in the criminal administration of the country.

8. Apart from dead-houses both Local Fund Boards and Municipalities lend considerable aid even to the criminal administration by admitting wounded men, certifying whether their wounds are grievous or not, and when a man dies of a wound making it legally clear that he died of the wound itself, and not from subsequent wrong treatment, for which the accused is not responsible. These bodies are therefore the more entitled to consideration in the matter of dead-houses.

9. I have the honor, therefore, to request that Government will be pleased to reconsider the matter, and sanction the erection of dead-houses at its own cost, and on its own sites.

No. 32. ORDER THEREON, 6th January 1876, No. 21.

The District Magistrate has misapprehended the position taken by Government.

2. Dead-houses required for Police purposes are a Provincial charge. The requirements of the Tanjore District in this respect should be reported by the Magistrate.

3. It is the erection of dead-houses connected with Local or Municipal Hospitals which is held to be a charge on Local or Municipal Funds.

(True Extract.)

Chief Secretary.

To the District Magistrate of Tanjore.

Exd. J. Wright.

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Extract from the annual Inspection
Report on the Combaionum Civil Dis-
pensary by the Deputy Inspector General
of Hospitals Southern District and
Malabar and Canara.

+ + +

Para 19 + + + "To the earnest appeals
that have been, heretofore, made for the
removal of this dead house from a sight
so objectionable - almost fronting the
female Hospital and only a little over
50 paces from it, a deaf ear has been
turned and this object of aversion - honor
almost to the native apprehension, is still
here - a green Memento Mori, continually
staring in the faces of the unfortunate
women forced by poverty to seek relief
in this Hospital. Altogether objectionable
in such a site as a dead house, even
when solely set apart for dispensary uses,
it is simply a dangerous nuisance.

irrespective

Obt. of 1876: 31st Dec.

To FINANCIAL.

The DISTRICT MAGISTRATE,
Tanjore.

Dated January, 6th.

Issued

Recd.

G.O., 6th January 1876, No. 21.

JANUARY.
Nos. 31-32.

Local Funds—Medical.—The Magistrate of
Tanjore informed that dead-houses required for
Police purposes are a Provincial charge, but those
connected with Local or Municipal Hospitals are
a charge on Local or Municipal Funds.

irrespective of the objections now urged
and which are styled by some of stern moral
sentimental, when dead bodies, the subjects
of judicial investigation are brought
to it from a distance some of them swelling
terribly of mortality. From my point
of view, at least, I see in the dead house
this nuisance and in its continued
toleration on the part of the Municipality,
under whose sole control is this Dispensary,
the necessity of submitting the matter to
the consideration of Government. It is
most necessary that definite orders should
be issued prohibiting recourse by the
Police authorities to Dispensary dead
houses for autopsies in
judicial cases - of the many cases (and
there are many) which operate injuriously
on the working of Dispensaries this of
turning

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turning the dead bodies into mongers,
is the most powerful."

(True Extract)

(Signed) E Balfour

Inspector General

(True Copy)

M. Turner.

District Magistrate.

Compd At

Tanjore District Magistrate's Office

No. 5700

Tanjore 22nd December 1875

From. A. S. Thomas Esquire
District Magistrate of Tanjore

To The Honorable W. Huddleston
Chief Secretary to Government
Madras

Sir,

I have the honor to address
the Government on the subject of Dead
houses in municipalities -

2 In Combaconum there having
been no separate building for the
dissection of Corpses sent for medico-
legal Examination, a small room
measuring 10" x 15" attached to the Hos-
pital and Dispensary was being used
as a dead house; but this room proved
very

In a letter

From

The District Magi

- to the, Tanjore

The Chief Secretary

to Government

Madras

Dated 22nd December

1875

No 5700

Extract from the
Annual Report -
on the
Combaconum Dist
Dispensary

In File of No 3011 of 75

very distasteful to the female patients
owing to its close proximity to the female
ward and was also found objectionable
on sanitary grounds by the Inspectors
of Hospitals. Although the Commissioners
appear to have repeatedly brought to
notice this sad state of things and
been strongly urging the removal of
the dead-house by moving the
Government to provide a separate
building for the purpose at their own
cost, nothing has been done.

3. In his tour of inspection in
February 1873, the Deputy Inspector
General of Hospitals recommended
the removal of the dead-house without
any further delay and recorded his
reasons in strong terms in his
annual

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Annual report (Extract enclosed).
The Commissioners then resolved upon
the demolition of the dead house,
Considering that, as the building had
originally been built out of local
Subscriptions, they might deal with
it as they liked without reference to Govern-
ment leaving the Police and magistracy
to use the backroom of the old Muni-
cipal Office as a dead house pro tem.

This site was also found objectionable,
being near the muncipal and small
Cause Court Houses. As moreover it
was required for the office of the
Range Officer it had to be vacated.
Hence the necessity for constructing a separate
building for conducting Post Mortem
Examinations -

4. In Government Order dated 4th
September 1873 No 2205(a) the grant made
by

by the Public Works Department for the purpose was disallowed, but the Commissioners have ever since been persistently objecting and I think with reason to bear the cost of dead houses. The Commissioners were however good enough, at the instance of the then District Magistrate to erect a temporary shed which unfortunately fell down in April last. Ever since the post-mortems are being conducted in the open air.

5. In Government Order no 88 dated 16th January last. J. D. the Government have again ruled that Local Fund Boards should provide for dead houses in their respective Circles at their own expense. On

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On receipt of this Order the Commissioners of the several Municipalities in the District were asked if they are prepared to pay wholly or contribute towards the cost of such structures, but they all urge that the cost of such buildings, solely required for Police and Magisterial purposes, is an item of expenditure which should be met from Provincial Funds. I may mention here that the Local Fund Boards are also of the same opinion. In this view I fully concur.

6. First of all, Dead houses should always be well apart from Dispensary and Hospital Compound as their location in them tends only to ruin and injure the work of

of Dispensaries and Hospitals; for a dead house, when near Dispensaries, strikes horror and aversion in the minds of the unfortunate people forced by poverty, to seek relief in them not to speak of the sanitary objections to the close proximity of the sick and wounded to the decomposition of dead bodies - and as to the incidence of the Cost, the Case seems stronger still. In the dead houses within Municipalities Corpes are brought for dissection not only from within their limits but also from a great distance without them and as they are examined only in the interests of the Criminal administration of the Country at the instance of the Police or Magistrate, Dead houses Can in no way be Connected with Municipal Dispensaries; the object of which is to heal not to bring home Crime. Furthermore the principle here advocated

arms

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seems to have been already admitted by Government in themselves paying the Examination fees to medical Officers other than those paid by Government. (Vide G. O. No 1447, 5th October 73 F. D.). thereby admitting that the said Municipal officers are in their dead house examinations doing the Government work and not Municipal work -

7. The above question is put mainly as Concerns Municipalities, but I would submit that the same ruling should govern Local Fund Board also as those bodies are in no way Concerned in the Criminal administration of the Country.

8. Apart from dead houses both Local Fund Board and Municipalities lend Considerable aid even to the Criminal administration by admitting wounded men, Certifying whether they

wounded

wounds are grievous or not, and when a man dies of a wound making it legally clear that he died of the wound itself and not from subsequent wrong treatment for which the accused is not responsible. These bodies are therefore the more entitled to consideration in the matter of dead houses -

9. I have the honor, therefore, to request that Government will be pleased to re-Consider the matter and Sanction the erection of dead houses at its own Cost and on its own sites -

I have the honor to be,

Sir

Your trust ob^d servant

A. Kumar

District Magistrate

From and 1875/76
1875/76 Local Fund - having

From the District Magistrate
for the Chief Secretary
to Government
Madras

Dated 22 December 75
Recd 27 Jan -
Enclosure 1
Rs 5700

Requests that the erection
of dead houses in municipalities
at Govt expense
& land should be sanctioned
on reconsideration of
the order, ruling otherwise

With order

Me

6 Jan 76 No 21
The S. P. Magistrate has since approached the
Commissioner for the
Sanctioning of the
It is the erection of dead houses connected
with Local or Municipal Hospitals & Sanitation
which is a charge on Local or Municipal funds.

The requirements of the Tanjore
district in this respect should
be reported by the Magistrate

To the District Magistrate
Tanjore
dtd 13/1
No 304

16-3-76

Govt. of 1876 Madras.

Encl.

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6 June 1876, No. 21.

Nos. 31-2

H. Med. - The Agents of Mysore
informed that Deas houses, reg^d for
other purposes are a Pro^d. charge, but
those converted into local or hum^d.
Houses are a charge on local or hum^d.
funds.