MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Judicial DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. 1165 Press Misc.

13/14

Dated 11—5— 1785

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 13. Read the following letter from J. ROHDE, Esq., Inspector of Prisons; to T. MALTBY, Esq., Acting Chief Secretary to Government of Fort Saint George, dated Ootacamund, the 26th August 1857, No. 261.

SIR,

In reference to Extract from the Minutes of Consultation, 778 (6th July) and 961 (5th August) the former communicating letters from Mr. Glass the Session Judge, and Mr. Palmer the Engineer, at Chicacole, relative to the Jail hospital, the latter communicating my comments on those letters, and requiring me to state what can be done for the improvement in the Jail hospital, I have the honor to state that I have consulted Doctor Rogers the Medical Officer, for upwards of nine years, of the Zillah and Jail, from his statement and the returns of the Session Judge, I find that he was in daily attendance at the hospital, that during the very period at which Mr. Glass states one inch and afterwards one foot of water stood on the floors, the hospital was in use as such, that no such flooding of the floors, as Mr. Glass relates, ever took place, that the damp was entirely owing to a very objectionable dam thrown across the nullah, which formed a small reservoir above the level of the hospital floor, that on this dam being removed, no further inconvenience was experienced. Doctor Rogers also informs me that since the removal of the dam, he never had occasion to remove the patients, though they slept on the ground; though till the dam was removed, he did, for a short time, re-occupy the old hospital.

2. I have a certainty in Doctor Rogers' statements and from Mr. Glass' silence on the subject of the floods when I was at Chicacole, I am induced to believe that he writes from something he has *heard* subsequent to *my* visit.

3. The floods of 1854 were extraordinary over the whole Northern Division, and Doctor Rogers informs me that at Chicacole they were regarded as the highest in memory. I find that Mr. Glass, in a demi-official note, copy of which is annexed, approved the site selected, which I may remark he must, for ten years, have passed almost daily, on his way to and from Court, and consequently it is not likely to have been so objectionable as his letter would shew. Doctor Rogers also, had, at the time the site was selected, been daily in attendance at the Jail for about 7 years. Mr. Knox was well acquainted with the locality. Mr. Rendall had for sometime been engaged in investigating the rise and fall and force of current in the river, with the view to the erection of a bridge.

4. I must express my belief that the plan I originally proposed and to which Mr. Glass and Mr. Palmer object is the preferable one and that if as Doctor Rogers suggests a boarded floor be laid in the hospital, the Jail will be rendered as complete as imposition and construction allow.

5. I leave it to the Engineer Department (Ib. P. W.) to forward the answer to the 3rd para. of the order of Government relative to the blame cast by Mr. Glass and Mr. Palmer on the selection of the site and construction of the building.

6. I enclose a copy of a letter I have addressed to Mr. Glass and on receipt of his answer will forward it to you, but it cannot affect any opinion founded on the information of Doctor Rogers, my personal acquaintance of the site, and the deductions I drew from the letters themselves.

(Signed) J. ROHDE,
Inspector of Prisons.

From J. ROHDE Esq., Inspector of Prisons; to E. B. GLASS, Esq., Sessions Judge of Chicacole, dated Ootacamund, 26th August 1857, No. 257.

SIR,

With reference to your letter to Government of the 20th June 1857, I have the honor to request that you will furnish me with exact information on the following points :—

1st. On what evidence do you state that after the hospital was built, on the first fall of rain, upwards of an inch of water was found over the floors?

Sixthly. Evidence on which you state that after the alterations, on the monsoon coming down, the outlet filled and formed, as it does every year, a sheet of water, from the road passing the Jail across to the hospital, overflowing the hospital, covering the floor to the extent of upwards of a foot of water?

Seventhly. Was Mr. Palmer not in Chicacole in 1854, at the time of the heavy floods you refer to?

8th. What is the difference in level between the floor of the hospital and floors of the Jail entrance?

9th. Was not the hospital occupied as such during the whole of the monsoon of 1855, and did not the patients lie on mats on the floor. Was the attendance of the Medical Officer regular, and did he ever notice either the flood of 1 inch or that of 1 foot over the floors?

2. In your letter of the 21st February 1855, to the Civil Engineer and in your letter to the Secretary Board of Revenue, D. P. W., 27th March 1855, no allusion is made to the flooding of the hospital, and I observe that neither in Dr. Rogers' note to you of the 8th December 1855, nor in your reply to the same, is any allusion made to the flooding of the floors; I also observe by your note to Dr. Rogers of the 2nd April (1855?) when the site was determined on, that you approved the selection: you had been then about ten years at Chicacole and the site selected was by the side and within view of the road by which you must have passed to and from Court, under these circumstances it does no appear that you ever noticed the facts which you now state. The floods of 1854, were in the memory of every resident of the Northern Division, the highest on record, and I am informed that they were so considered at the time at Chicacole.

(Signed) J. ROHDE,
Inspector of Prisons.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) J. ROHDE,

From Surgeon M. ROGERS; to J. ROHDE, Esq., Inspector of Prisons, dated Outcammund, 25th August 1857.

Sir,

With reference to your letter No. 544 of the 19th Instant, and its enclosure concerning the Jail hospital at Chicacole, I have the honor, in reply, to inform you that a few months after the hospital was completed, during the very heavy rains which fell that season, the floor became damp, so that I deemed it necessary to apply to Mr. Glass for permission to remove the patients temporarily into the old sick ward within the Jail. In order fully to explain the cause of the damp on that occasion, it is necessary to mention that on the western side, at a short distance from the hospital, there was a slight hollow through which the waste water escaped from the paddy fields above towards the river, and across this a dam was thrown up to retain a portion of the waste water for the convenience of the Hindoos chiefly, and also the prisoners made use of it for their morning ablutions; at the time referred to of the damp in the hospital, the embankment had been raised so high, that, on the heavy fall of rain filling it, the water rose so as to be nearly, if not quite, on a level with the basement of the hospital, and it was then that my attention was called to it. I accordingly immediately acquainted Mr. Glass with the circumstance, when he kindly directed the Jailor to have a trench cut at once to carry off the surplus water, which had the desired effect of preventing any further damp in the hospital, and after the floor had dried, on that occasion, I never saw any damp in either of the wards of the hospital during the remainder of the time, I held the Medical charge of the Zillah of Chicacole,* and it will be seen on a reference to the diary, that I visited the hospital daily. Most certain, I never saw any water whatever on its floor at any time, beyond the damp above stated, except for the purpose of cleaning any part that may have been soiled by a patient and never heard of their having been any thing of the kind until Dr. Cooper, Superintending Surgeon Northern Division, on his tour of inspection in the end of 1855 informed me that Mr. Glass had told him of the Jail hospital having been flooded. I then explained the whole of the circumstances above detailed to Dr. Cooper, and at the same time pointed out the desirableness of the embankment in question being taken away, and a ditch being cut through the hollow, to carry off the waste water from the paddy fields, a few hundred yards lower down towards the river, where a tank might be dug for the convenience of the Hindoos, &c., and thus effectually prevent any risk whatever to the hospital from damp in future; and I am glad to state that before I left, the ditch was cut, and the embankment had been thrown into the hollow to fill it up, so as to prevent any quantity of water collecting there again; the tank, also was nearly, if not quite, finished. Lieutenant Harington, who took the level, &c., for the new tank, informed me (as far as my recollection now serves) that the highest water in the new tank would be upwards of 4 feet below the basement of the hospital, which corresponds with the levels taken by Mr. Palmer.

This note seems small and may be erased.

2. With respect to the statement that Mr. Palmer had never seen a heavy fall of rain or monsoon, I have only to observe that as, I believe, Mr. Palmer was a resident of Chicacole, during the monsoon season of 1854, I would beg to refer to the rain table kept at the Civil Dispensary for the amount registered that year, which I think will be found to have been unusually heavy. I also well remember that there were a succession of floods as high or higher than any I ever saw there during my long residence of upwards of nine years at that station. One of these floods I have no doubt Captain Randall will recollect from the difficulty he had in crossing the river in going from my house to Rindipetam on or about the 13th or 14th September to be present at Captain Wright's wedding, therefore as Mr. Palmer had the superintendence of the building of the bridge across the river, it is probable he took advantage of those opportunities to ascertain the highest water mark.

3. To the best of my recollection, having no records connected with it by me, the site for the hospital was selected by Mr. W. Knox, Acting Collector of Ganjam, Captain F. H. Randall the Civil Engineer of the District and myself, being, in our opinion, the most eligible spot available in every respect, being open and admitting of free ventilation, and on as high ground as very eligible in every respect, being open and admitting of free ventilation, and on as high ground as very sufficiently large for the building, being at the same time near enough to the Jail, besides the soakings of the soil for some depth is advantageous from its preventing water standing on the surface for any time. The only objection that appeared to us was its being too far from the Jail, but this could not be avoided without pitching it on lower ground, and also too near to the water course which runs between the Jail and hospital, the only other spot available, was the open space between the Jail and Court House, which appeared to us to be too confined; the basement of the hospital and that of the Jail are to the best of my belief as nearly as possible on the same level, so that if the hospital was flooded, to the extent stated by Mr. Glass, it seems reasonable that the Jail should have escaped. I need not mention that the whole of the country surrounding the Jail for some distance is very flat and low, still, even in the highest floods, I never saw the water come completely up to the Jail, and certainly never on the spot occupied by the hospital.

4. At this distance of time I am not positively certain whether Mr. Glass was present at the selection of the site, but think he was not, however to show that it met with his entire approval, I beg to annex an Extract from a note he sent me on the subject, from which it may be proved, that he did not at that time apprehend any risk of its being swamped.

5. From having no records at hand, I regret that I am unable to give that precise information as to dates, distances, &c., which I should wish to have done, and am sorry from the same cause I cannot give the amount of sickness and mortality, which I trust would have been found to afford satisfactory proof of its general healthiness during the period I had the honor to be in medical charge of the Zillah.

6. In conclusion I beg respectfully to be allowed to state that from my long experience of the climate of Chicacole, and considering how cold the weather is during the months of November, December, and January, I am of opinion it would be a great improvement to the comfort of the hospital if the floor was boarded, as the charcoal during the cold season is very chilly for a sick man to lie upon with the amount of bedding supplied to prisoners.

(Signed) M. ROGERS,
Surgeon 21st Regiment N. I.

A true Extract from a note dated 2nd April and signed E. B. Glass.

"My dear Rogers,

I am perfectly satisfied with the site if it pleases you, and you are of course a better judge of what is best for an hospital than I can be, so if you please yourself I shall be quite satisfied, and as the ground is Circa waste alias Bunge you can do as you like in putting it further back or otherwise as may appear to you best."

(True Extract and Copy.)

(Signed) J. ROHDE,
Inspector of Prisons.

No. 14. Order thereon, No. 1168; dated 11th September 1857.

To lie over, pending the receipt of the explanation the Inspector has desired Mr. Glass to furnish.

(Signed) E. MALTBY,
Acting Chief Secretary.

S. P. 1168

To lie over pending the receipt of the explanation the Inspector has desired Mr. Glass to furnish.

Fort St George
11th September 1857

the plan originally proposed and to which Mr Hope
and Mr Palmer objected is the preferable one and that
if as Dr Rogers suggests a wooden floor be laid over
the hospital the pit will be rendered as complete as
the position and construction allow.

5. Mem. to the Engineer Department