

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Judicial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	1732	Press
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186-187		
Dated	21. 6. 1862	~~19~~

Not to be folded or roughly handled

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order - 21 October 1862 no 1732
Referred to the
Principal Inspector General,
Medical Department.

JP

To the Prin. & Insp. Gen. } Recd 22nd
Med. Dep't.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department,
21st October 1862.*

No. 186. Read the following letter from *Æ. R. McDONELL, Esq.,* Magistrate of Trichinopoly; to the Honorable *T. PYCROFT, Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George,* dated 10th October 1862, No. 161.

Para. 1. I have the honor to forward, for submission to Government, a letter I have this day received from Surgeon Major Ranking at present in charge of the Civil duties at this station.

2. A man was killed in a quarrel a few days back, and the body was sent into Trichinopoly from a distance, with a view to a post-mortem examination being held, the body was at the time it arrived at Trichinopoly, in such an advanced state of decomposition that had it not been that the case in question was one in which the marks of injury were too distinct to be effaced by post-mortem changes, in all probability Doctor Ranking could not have certified as to the causes which led to deceased's death.

3. Dr. Ranking suggests that an organized system of preservation and transmission of bodies be adopted, viz., that a Coffin be kept ready at each station (where a Magistrate resides I propose) and that the body being packed in Charcoal be at once placed in the Coffin and despatched to the Dispensary—the cloth covering the corpse being saturated with any cheap disinfectant fluid.

4. These arrangements are very simple, and Dr. Ranking considers would be quite effectual in keeping the bodies in a fit state of preservation.

5. As this system would involve a small outlay, and as the Government might wish that if found to succeed, it should be carried out in all Districts, before acting upon Dr. Ranking's suggestion, I would beg to solicit the Orders of Government on the subject.

From Surgeon Major *J. L. RANKING, Acting Civil Surgeon;* to the Collector and Magistrate of Trichinopoly, dated 7th October 1862, No. 61.

In forwarding the accompanying Memo. upon the examination of a dead body sent for my inspection by the Tassildar of Conaud Taluq, I beg to direct your attention to the want of care taken in forwarding the body to me, owing to which decomposition had so far advanced as to materially invalidate the results of investigation in any, but a case like the one under reference, in which the marks of injury were too distinct to be influenced by post-mortem changes.

2. If these investigations are expected really to assist in the determination of the causes of death, an organized system of preservation and transmission of bodies must be adopted and the most strict obedience enforced upon village authorities.

3. I suggest the following regulations for your consideration.

1. That a strong Coffin be kept at the principal town of every Talook.

2. That every body, required to be submitted to Medical examination, be without a moment's unnecessary delay placed in the Coffin and transmitted with the following precautions.

3. The Coffin to have a layer of recently burnt charcoal placed at the bottom. The body to be then rolled in a clean cloth saturated with common country vinegar placed in the Coffin upon the charcoal. Charcoal to be packed by the sides of the corpse and above it also—the lid of the Coffin then to be screwed on.

4. In transit, the Coffin to be conveyed by relays of bearers without any stoppage.

Other disinfectants might be advantageously used, a supply of "Norton's disinfecting fluid" might be kept at each Cutcherry, and used instead of vinegar which is only suggested as a cheap and common substitute for more powerful preservative fluids.

The Coffin ought (and should) be painted with coal tar applied just before the corpse is put into it, packed as suggested in charcoal.

The ends of justice would be much advanced by these suggestions being acted upon.

No. 187. ORDER THEREON, 21st October 1862, No. 1,732.

Referred to the Principal Inspector General, Medical Department.

(Signed) *T. PYCROFT,*

Chief Secretary.

Exd. F. Cartledge.