M.R.O. 1—39,000—16-10-17.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Judicial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 752	Press ~~Mis.~~
116-117	
Dated 18.5.1863	~~19~~ .

3/3

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 116. Read the following letter from J. ROHDE, Esq., Inspector General of Jails; to the Honorable A. J. ARBUTHNOT, Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Vizagapatam, 7th May 1863.

I have the honor to enclose a letter from the Sessions Judge of Chingleput relative to an outbreak of cholera in the Jail at that Station, but which brings to notice the conduct of the Officer in Medical charge in a manner that unless explained seems to me to demand that Officer's removal.

It does not clearly appear from this letter that when the rice of indifferent quality was served out for three days prior to the out break of cholera, the Medical Officer had notice of it; but nothing can excuse the burying the excrement from the Hospital patients, *by order of the Surgeon*, in the little yard attached to the Hospital, and this too in the immediate vicinity of a well in use by the patients. The matter, however, which I deem more immediately demanding the notice of Government, is the charge of contumacious refusal to discontinue the practice when the Sessions Judge noticed it.

I should not trouble the Government with this matter in its present stage, but that it may be most conveniently and quickly disposed of by the Government within a few miles of the Station without any further intervention of mine. Mr. Whiteside, when I visited Chingleput, brought to my notice the disregard of the same Medical Officer to the most ordinary precautions, in that he had introduced some of his own noxious processes in the arts with the Hospital building, though the Judge had since insisted on its removal. The Medical Officer I did not see, for, though warned by Mr. Whiteside that I was about to visit the Jail on that day, he had gone to Madras, and I had no opportunity of speaking to him.

From A. W. PHILLIPS, Esq., Sessions Judge of Chingleput; to J. ROHDE, Esq., Inspector General of Jails, dated Chingleput, 24th April 1863, No. 175.

I have the honor to bring to your notice that cholera broke out in the Jail at Chingleput about the 23rd ultimo, and that despite every care bestowed by the Medical Department ten Convicts fell victims to the disease which at one time assumed so virulent a character that it was deemed by the Zillah Surgeon and myself advisable to remove the prisoners into sheds, though the idea was ultimately abandoned.

The Zillah Surgeon is of opinion that the disease was brought into the Jail by a prisoner from the Taluq, who was taken ill 3 or 4 days after admission, and was the first. This may or may not be; but as the disease was not confined to any one part of the Jail, and there was not one case in the town or among the Jail Warders or Constables, I cannot but think the food served out to the prisoners had much to do with it: especially as on enquiry I learnt that the rice for some days before the breaking out of the disorder was of bad quality, though the fact was never reported by the Zillah Surgeon or brought to my notice in any way. I have also to report what appears to me a most objectionable practice, and that is the burying of the excrements of patients within the very limited enclosed yard at the back of the Hospital. It seems that this had been done by the Zillah Surgeon's directions for some little time before the epidemic broke out. And as now on my remonstrating with him on the proceeding he not only admits the fact, but declares his intention of resorting to it again, I trust you will; with as little delay as possible, give expression to your views on the subject. I would, in conclusion, mention that within a few feet of this cess-pool is a well used for drinking purposes by the Hospital patients, and it is only natural to suppose that much that is noxious must percolate through the intervening soil into it.

No. 117. ORDER THEREON, 18th May 1863, No. 752.

Ordered that the foregoing letter and its enclosure be forwarded to the Principal Inspector General Medical Department, for early report.

(Signed) A. J. ARBUTHNOT,
Chief Secretary.

Exd. T. McMootry.

No. 1752 — 18th May 1863

Ordered that the foregoing letter & its enclosure be forwarded to the Principal Inspector General, Medical Department, for his early report.

To Principal Inspr Genl
Medical Dept