

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Judicial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	1011	Press ~~Mis~~
Dated	24 6 - 19 1887	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department,
24th June 1867.

Read the following papers :—

No. 236. From the Honorable R. S. ELLIS, c. B., Sanitary Commissioner, Madras, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Madras, 27th May, 1867, No. 131.

I have the honor to report that, on the 21st May, I visited the Central Jail at Salem, and beg to submit the following observations for the consideration of Government.

2. The Jail is still over-crowded by more than one hundred prisoners, and has, I believe, been still more over-crowded during the past year. I think this is much to be regretted, as likely, from time to time, as has happened formerly, to lead to sickness and mortality, and to give a wrong impression as to the salubrity of this Central Jail, which, if not over-crowded, would, from its isolated position and construction, be a healthy place of confinement.

3. The cells on the ground floor are each of the following dimensions :—

84 superficial square feet, and
950 feet cubical.

This capacity is not quite sufficient for two prisoners as regards cubical space, but allows ample superficial area.

4. At present, two male prisoners are confined in each of these cells. I need hardly say that it is very objectionable to locate male prisoners in pairs in a cell.

5. I would, therefore, recommend that the suggestion of throwing three of these cells into one ward be carried into effect with the least possible delay.

If this is done, these cells, converted into wards, will contain in each ward five prisoners, making a total of 240 to be thus accommodated. The Jail at Salem would then hold, without over-crowding, 512 prisoners.

6. I would suggest that advantage should be taken of the buildings available at Arcot to accommodate prisoners in excess of this number, who have hitherto been placed in the Jail at Salem, until the other Central Jails are built. Arcot has the advantage of being on the line of railway, and of being also a military station.

7. I observed that the plan of using earthen chatties in the wards, as night privies, continues both in the cells and wards. I would recommend the adoption of the stone troughs which have been found successful in the Bangalore Central and other Jails.

This system should be at once introduced into the wards on the upper story, and into the lower story, as soon as the single cells have been converted into wards.

8. It may perhaps be convenient to keep a few of the cells for prisoners under observation, or sentenced to solitary confinement.

9. I beg also to point out that the bars of the doors of the cells are placed horizontally, instead of perpendicularly. This is objectionable, as facilitating suicide by hanging.

The top bar of the door should also fit closely to the door frame, to prevent a cloth or rope being passed over it for the same purpose.

10. I would beg also to suggest the completion of the female wards, and especially of the hospital. These works seem to have been stopped.

11. The cells at present used as a hospital are entirely unsuited to the purpose, and, in case of anything like general sickness, great inconvenience would result.

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12. The house of the Jail Superintendent, which had been commenced, is left in an unfinished state, pending the preparation of detailed plans and estimates for the sanction of Government.

13. I would also beg to call attention to the prevalence of *Dracunculus*, or Guinea-worm, among the prisoners in this Jail. This disease is generally attributed to the quality of the water used, and it may be desirable to investigate, by an analysis of the water used both for drinking and bathing, the cause of the prevalence of this disease.

14. There is no privy provided, of a permanent nature, within the Jail enclosures. I conclude that this will be supplied.

15. The prisoners are, I observe, principally engaged in out-door labor, away from the Jail premises, which prevents any effectual classification of criminals, such as was intended in the Central Jails.

Referred to the Inspector General of Jails, for report.

FORT SAINT GEORGE,
29th May 1867.

(Signed) A. J. ARBUTHNOT,

Chief Secretary.

No. 237. From the Inspector General of Jails, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Madras, 7th June 1867, No. 40.

I have the honor to return the Report of the Sanitary Commissioner upon the Jail at Salem, dated 27th ultimo.

2. The accommodation consists of 48 wards and 144 cells. Each ward contains 276 feet of superficial area and 3450 feet of cubical space; and each cell 84 feet of superficial area and 945 feet of cubical space. At the rate of six persons per ward, and two per cell, there is room for 576 prisoners, with an allowance of 46 feet of superficial area and 575 of cubical space to each person in the former, and of 42 feet of superficial area and 742 feet of cubical space in the latter. Both wards and cells are thoroughly ventilated, and, although the amount of cubical space is less than the present standard allowance, the superficial area is ample. On the day that Mr. Ellis visited the Jail, the number of prisoners amounted to 615, of whom 555 were confined in the wards and cells, six in the debtors' ward with an allowance of 99 feet of superficial area and 1214 of cubical space to each, and 21 in the ward and cells used as a hospital, eight of whom had 73 feet of superficial area and 920 of cubical space each, and thirteen 49 feet of superficial area and 610 feet of cubical space each. The remaining 33 were in three tents. Sixty-one men have since been transferred to the Jails on the Neilgherry Hills.

3. The advisability of throwing several cells into one has already been discussed by the Superintendent and myself, and I think may be carried out with advantage, but something will be gained in space if a larger number than three is chosen, and there will be fewer doors to open. The small blocks contain 21 cells each. I would retain one cell in each block, and convert the remaining 20 into two wards of an equal size. The larger blocks contain 27 cells each. I would convert 20 into two wards as in the small blocks, and the remaining six into two equally sized wards of smaller dimensions, retaining one single cell in each block.

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4. I recently returned the plans of the Hospital and Barrack for females to the Superintending Engineer, together with the estimates, and they will probably be laid before Government shortly; but the conversion of the cells into wards, if approved of, might be proceeded with at once, as most of the work can be done by the convicts, and the cost will be moderate, having been roughly estimated by the Executive Engineer at about two and half Rupees for each opening.

5. I have been in correspondence with the Superintendent regarding stone troughs for night conservancy purposes, and find there is a difficulty in procuring proper stone at Salem. I beg to suggest that the Superintending Engineer may be instructed to provide the material.

6. The doors are iron swing doors, revolving on the centre. They were made to the special order of my predecessor, and cannot be altered. Those recommended for the new Jails open like an ordinary door, and the bars are perpendicular. When the new Barracks were built at the Coimbatore Central Jail, revolving doors were put in, because, as I understand, there were a number in store; but it would be well to discontinue their further use.

7. A latrine has already been sanctioned by Government, and orders issued for the preparation of an estimate.

8. Guinea-worm has, I am informed, been very prevalent this year throughout the Salem District, and an unusual number of cases from out-stations have been received into the Police Hospital at Salem. Captain Gordon has been requested to send samples both of the drinking and bathing water to Madras for analysis.

9. With respect to labor, 191 convicts were working inside on the day of Mr. Ellis' visit. The remaining 351 were employed as follows:—

Levelling and cleaning Jail compound	188
Repairing road to Shervaroy Hills	52
" " Salem	52
Removing privy soil	39
In Jail garden	20

There are at present only two Workshops. When the remaining four, which have been sanctioned, are built, the number of convicts working outside can be diminished.

No. 238. ORDER THEREON, 24th June 1867, No. 1011.

Ordered that a copy of the letter from the Inspector General of Jails on the accommodation, &c., at the Central Jail at Salem be furnished to the Sanitary Commissioner.

2. It is observed that the accommodation available at the Jail is sufficient for 576 prisoners, with an allowance of 46 feet of superficial area, and 575 of cubical space, to each prisoner. When Mr. Ellis visited the Jail, it contained 615 prisoners, of whom 61 have been since transferred to the Neilgherry Hills. Under the circumstances, there appears to be no necessity at present for removing any of the prisoners to Arcot.

3. The Governor in Council approves of the conversion of the cells into wards, in the manner suggested by the Inspector General of Jails in paragraph 3 of his letter. The work will be carried out at once with the aid of convicts.

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4. Orders will be issued in the Public Works Department for the early completion of the hospital, female wards, workshops, and latrine, and for the provision of the stone necessary for troughs for night conservancy purposes.
 5. The Inspector General of Jails will submit to Government a copy of the report of the analysis on the drinking and bathing water at Salem, on its receipt.
- (True Extract).

Acting Chief Secretary.

To the Sanitary Commissioner, Madras.
Inspector General of Jails.
Public Works Department.

Exd. J. H. Burns.

Judicial Department.

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

*Read the following papers -
from the Sanitary Commissioner } Dated 27th May 1867 No. 131.
Madras. }
Inspector General of Jails --- 7th June --- 140.*

Order thereon 24 June 1867 No. 1011.

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N.

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To the Sanitary Commr. Madras
- Inspr Genl of Jails
- Public Works Departt //

Letter (containing)

②

Circular 1867. Department.

No. 1011

PROCEEDINGS OF GOVERNMENT.

1866/67

Dated 24 June 1867

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15 June 1867