

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Indial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	2092	Press
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Dated	18-12-19	1867

Not to be folded or roughly handled

7/8

2092

No. 239. Read the following letter from the Inspector General of Jails, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Vellore, 9th December 1867, No. 140.

In forwarding the enclosed letter from the Commissioner of Police, reporting favorably upon the scales of diet introduced into the Penitentiary at Madras on the 1st April 1867, and recommending the continuance of the experiment for a further period, I have the honor to state that I concur in the opinions expressed by that Officer.

From Major C. S. HEARN, Commissioner of Police, Madras, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Madras, 16th November 1867, No. 118.

I have the honor to forward the reports prescribed in paragraph 2 of Order of Government, No. 388, dated 9th March 1867, Judicial Department, with reference to the diet scales sanctioned experimentally in the Madras Penitentiary.

2. During the six months ending 30th September 1867, no less than three Medical Officers were successively in charge of the Penitentiary, viz., Doctors Miller, Wilson, and King—the latter, however, only assumed charge on the 10th September.

3. It will be observed that Doctors Miller and Wilson approve of the mixed diet, the former gentleman having superintended the experiment at the critical period of its sudden introduction amongst a large body of convicts, when certain defects were observed in the mode of preparation, which were immediately remedied. The Inspector General, Indian Medical Department, is also in favor of a further trial. Dr. King alone records an unfavorable opinion.

4. Under these circumstances, Government will probably feel disposed to sanction a continuance of the experimental diet scales under consideration; but I would beg to submit a short account of the results of the experiment so far as it has gone, and to offer a few remarks on some of Dr. King's objections.

5. Table A shows a daily average strength of 399½ convicts in Jail for the six months from 1st April to 30th September 1866, while the daily average of sick was 15½. In the corresponding months of 1867 (the period under review with reference to new diet) the average daily strength rose to 436½, while the average sick fell to 14½. It is true that the general health of the country has been much better in 1867, which fact disturbs the comparison, but the small proportion of sick to Jail population would seem under any circumstances to argue a sound and wholesome diet. The total number of patients treated in Hospital for Diarrhœa during these six months in 1866 was 32 and in the corresponding period of 1867, 48 cases were admitted, or 3·39 per cent. of the total number of persons in Jail during that time. Fourteen days after the introduction of the new diet there were 10 cases of Diarrhœa in Hospital. On the 28th day there were two cases. During the three weeks to which Dr. King refers in paragraph 4 of his report, there were but a mean number of 15 sick in all, one case only being Diarrhœa. Other convicts besides these suffered slightly from Diarrhœa, but not sufficiently to need treatment in Hospital, which shows how easily the tendency to these symptoms was checked. The careful sifting of the raggy produced an immediate effect.

6. Table B shows that amongst 80 long-sentenced convicts weighed in December 1866, the average increase of weight on the 3rd October 1867 was 2½lbs. This would have been a more satisfactory test had the convicts been weighed immediately before the introduction of the new dietary. It will be also observed that there was increase of weight subsequent to admission into Jail under the former diet. But it seems clear from this table that the results of the new diet are not otherwise than healthy and weight producing.

7. *Table C shows the number of deaths in 1867 up to 30th September. The total is 14 (excluding one European), of whom five died of Diarrhœa. Of these, two cases were admitted into

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department,
18th December 1867.*

Hospital before the new dietary was introduced, and the other deaths reported since have not been attributed to that cause. The ratio of the mortality to daily average strength during nine months was 32 per mille. In 1866 (certainly a most unhealthy year, and in which the Jail was much overcrowded after the grain riots) the ratio of mortality stood thus :

Exclusive of cholera, 49 per mille.

Inclusive of cholera, 89 per mille.

The comparison is favorable.

8. It seems to be admitted that the change to a composite diet of rice and raggy has tendency to produce slight Diarrhoea, which, however, is easily checked, and has not been found to develop into actual disease ; while the careful preparation of the raggy reduces this tendency to a minimum. The experiment of slightly reducing the ration of raggy and dholl will be tried in communication with the Medical officer in charge of the Penitentiary. From inquiry in other Jails, I believe that two ounces of dholl per diem is as much as an ordinary man can digest. There can be no doubt as to the highly nutritive qualities of the raggy diet compared with rice. Dr. vanSomeren bears the strongest testimony to the wonderful improvement in health and strength amongst the paupers of the Monagar Choultry since the introduction of a mixed diet of rice and raggy, and Mr. Rohde's report on Salem Jail, dated 31st July 1862, shows the highly beneficial results of the raggy diet in that institution. The Zillah Surgeon of Salem has minutely described the nutritious qualities of raggy in the appendix to this report.

9. I fail to discover the principle of Dr. King's reasoning with regard to the enforcement of a raggy diet on rice-eating convicts being "penal" and an "addition to sentence" (vide paragraphs 6 and 7 of Dr. King's report). Restriction on any approach to luxury of diet forms one out of many points of Jail discipline which find no place in the terms of the sentence pronounced by Law. Similar objections might be urged against giving water gruel (commonly called "skilly") to a loaf-eating burglar in Millbank. It seems to me that the mere fact of convicts disliking a diet is *per se* a strong argument in its favor, provided that it is nutritive and wholesome. The ultimate object of penal sentences will be best attained by making Jail life as disagreeable as possible, consistently with humane treatment, careful sanitation, and the utmost practicable improvement of mind and body. The more convicts can be made to hate Jail, the less likely they are to return to it. Any approach to undue indulgence and pampering cannot be too carefully guarded against.

10. The question raised about Brahmins is beyond the scope of the present inquiry ; but there is no reason why they should not also be fed with the mixed diet, and this will be done. The rule was adopted from Bangalore Jail, where also it seems to have been altered.

11. With reference to paragraph 9 of Dr. King's report, prisoners under trial do no work ; consequently, their ration is reduced. Prisoners entering Jail (the small proportion of wealthy persons excepted) obtain, as a rule, more food than they do at home, and I believe I am supported by the authority of the late Sanitary Commissioner and of the Inspector General of Jails in saying that a reduced dietary during the first period of confinement has been found advisable to prevent the evils arising from imperfect digestion. I am also supported in this view by the experience of the Medical Officer in charge of Bangalore Jail. The large percentage of deaths during the first year of incarceration may, and probably does, arise from other causes than (what Dr. King terms) an inferior dietary. Sickly and sensitive people soon succumb to the general conditions of prison life. Those that remain are probably of hardier constitution in mind and body.

12. The look and physique of the convicts in the Penitentiary will bear comparison with other Jails, while the work done by them is also much on a par with intramural labor elsewhere, though it is certainly not so severe as the laterite stone-cutting to which Dr. King probably refers.

13. I feel the strongest conviction that a mixture of rice and dry grain is better adapted in all respects for a Jail diet than rice alone ; and I trust that the Government will think fit to direct the continuance of the present experiment for a further period.

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18th December 1867.*

A.

Daily average number of convicts in Penitentiary.	Daily average of sick.	Total number of patients treated for Diarrhoea during six months.
From 1st April to 30th September 1866...399.58	15.64	32
From 1st April to 30th September 1867...436.62	14.32	48

(Signed) C. S. HEARN,
Commissioner of Police.

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18th December 1867.

B.
STATEMENT showing the weight of prisoners on their admission into Jail, together with their present weight.

Number.	Names.	Date of admission.	Weight on admission.	Weight on the 7th December 1866.	Weight on the 3rd October 1867.
1	Narrainjee Davy...	1866. November... 5th	lbs. 115	lbs. 115	lbs. 115
2	Madoora Davy...	" " "	103	103	115
3	Paupiah Butten...	" " "	113	115	120
4	Viziaragavooloo Naidoo	" " "	105	109	106
5	Cooppadoo...	October... 31st	83	83	91
6	Pooblyah...	" " "	85	86	106
7	Veerasawmy alias Moonean...	" " "	90	96	96
8	Soobben...	" " "	90	94	95
9	Anthony...	" " "	113	112	110
10	Narrainsawmy...	" " "	108	103	108
11	Canagasabapathy alias Chockalingum...	" " "	97	100	110
12	Soobroyen...	" " "	110	111	112
13	Meeran Saib...	" " "	120	127	125
14	Govinda Row...	" " "	106	111	118
15	Ramasawmy...	" " "	100	111	105
16	Moonecan...	" " "	108	108	101
17	Chengadoo...	" " "	113	119	132
18	Mooniau alias Nundakaran...	" " "	105	108	109
19	Chinnasawmy...	September... 29th	95	89	99
20	Narrainen...	" " "	110	115	119
21	Armoogum...	" " "	123	122	130
22	Cunneappen...	" " "	93	98	95
23	Moonecan...	" " "	96	98	111
24	Yettian...	" " "	98	91	95
25	Sufder Hoossain...	" " "	101	100	104
26	Joseph...	" " "	91	97	97
27	Veerasawmy...	" " "	97	99	101
28	Soobroya Butten...	" " "	122	118	113
29	Mooneesawmy...	" " "	117	116	130
30	Masalamony...	" " "	94	96	93
31	Nuthegan...	" " "	85	97	100
32	Iyooloo...	" " "	105	105	90
33	Gijigadoo...	" " "	102	105	115
34	Ragaven...	" " "	118	130	133
35	Soobroyloo...	" " "	94	97	105
36	Teroovengadam...	" " "	112	113	125
37	Moonian...	" " "	100	107	115
38	Yellapah...	" " "	113	116	112
39	Veerasawmy...	" " "	94	100	103
40	Moonecan...	" " "	85	90	106
41	Veerasawmy...	" " "	118	128	115
42	Vadamalay...	" " "	137	140	145
43	Gooroosawmy...	" " "	110	107	105
44	Abboyee...	" " "	94	100	95
45	Narrainen...	" " "	93	98	90
46	Ramasawmy...	" " "	118	110	133
47	Moottialoo...	" " "	116	110	110
48	Ragavacharry...	" " "	90	87	90
49	Abboyee...	" " "	111	114	115
50	Ramasawmy Chetty...	" " "	98	101	76
51	Veerasawmy...	" " "	88	85	95
52	Parea Chellappen...	" " "	95	97	100
53	Ramasawmy...	" " "	110	110	114
54	Ayeram...	" " "	97	96	100
55	Condoosawmy...	" " "	87	91	89

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Statement showing the weight of prisoners on their admission into Jail, &c.—(Continued).

Number.	Names.	Date of admission.	Weight on admission.	Weight on the 7th December 1866.	Weight on the 3rd October 1867.
56	Nangen...	1866. September... 17th	lbs. 106	lbs. 116	lbs. 115
57	Ragavoodoo...	" " "	107	100	105
58	Durmaroyen...	" " "	87	87	100
59	Yellappen...	" " "	104	100	110
60	Paroomall...	" " 12th	114	131	128
61	Chinnasawmy...	" " "	98	112	118
62	Veerun...	" " 11th	104	119	106
63	Sarai Mohdeen...	" " "	90	94	95
64	Kornel alias Soondrum...	August... 24th	104	115	111
65	Moonecan...	" " "	94	103	103
66	Narrainsawmy Pillay...	" " 1st	122	137	131
67	Chaboo Meyah...	" " "	105	101	109
68	Parthasarthi...	" " "	124	115	115
69	Cunnee...	" " "	98	108	109
70	Vencatasa Pillay...	" " "	110	109	120
71	Canagasabapathy Pillay...	" " "	94	104	119
72	Abdool Razac...	" " "	101	101	106
73	Latchmiah...	" " "	99	104	97
74	Vencataramanjum Chetty...	" " "	110	110	110
75	Cunnee...	" " "	104	113	115
76	Goolam Rassool...	" " "	115	121	120
77	Abdool Cawder...	1865. " "	95	84	111
78	Soobramaniam Moodelly...	1864. November... 1st	86	81	83
79	Camatchee (Female)...	1863. November... 3rd	100	99	100
80	Thoyce (do.)...	April... 8th	98	105	103
Total...			8,250	8,453	8,676

(Signed) C. S. HEARN,
Commissioner of Police.

C.
STATEMENT showing the number of convicts that have died since January 1867.

Name of Disease.	No.	Remarks.
Diarrhoea...	5	
Asthenia...	3	
Cholera...	1	
Atrophy...	1	
Senectus...	1	
Apoplexy...	1	
Pneumonia...	1	
Phthisis Pulmonalis...	1	European.
Anæmia...	1	
Total...	15	

MADRAS POLICE COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE,
October 1867.

(Signed) C. S. HEARN,
Commissioner of Police.

REPORT on the Diet Scales in use in the Madras Penitentiary since April 1st, 1867.

The following remarks on this subject have been left on record by Surgeon J. Miller, M.D., who was in medical charge of the Penitentiary during the first two months of the period to which this report refers :—

"The Jail has returned to its normal state of healthiness, from which there had been a departure during the early months of the year, in consequence of temporary overcrowding with Mofussil prisoners. The average daily number of sick for April was 22½, and for May 19½. The most prevalent disease has, as usual, been Diarrhoea, which caused the death of three men in April. There were other two deaths in that month, one from Pneumonia, and one from Phthisis; but there was no death in May."

"On the 1st April, a very important change was instituted in the ordinary Jail diet. The new dietary sanctioned and enjoined in G. O., No. 388, of 9th March 1867, was begun on that day. The chief point in which it differed from the former dietary was the introduction of one daily meal of raggy. The immediate consequence of the change was that in a day or two a great many cases of Diarrhoea presented themselves, in which it was evident, from the presence of the coarsely ground grain in the stools, that the raggy was the cause. No doubt the Diarrhoea was induced in some degree by the newness of the diet merely, but it was found that the more influential cause was insufficiency of grinding and cooking the grain. When the preparation of food in these particulars was improved, the Diarrhoea, as an epidemic, completely ceased, and it is now rare to find a case of Diarrhoea attributed to that cause."

"Altogether, 75 cases of Diarrhoea were traced to the use of raggy; but the great proportion of these were very slight and easily remedied. So far as I can judge, from the comparatively short period during which the new diet has been in operation, I am of opinion that it is a judicious and suitable diet, and that it conduces to the good health of the convicts."

2. Dr. Miller, therefore, approved of the dietary now in use; but it is to be observed that the improved healthiness of the establishment is by him expressly attributed to relief from overcrowding, and, also, that Diarrhoea was "the most prevalent disease;" that 75 cases of Diarrhoea in two months were traced to raggy; and that special care must be taken in the preparation of this grain for food, in order to prevent its exerting a distinctly injurious influence upon the prisoners' health.

3. Surgeon Wilson also expresses an opinion favorable to the experimental dietary. He says :—

"As the health of the prisoners has been so good during these months, which are generally sickly ones, and as diseases of the stomach and bowels have been so few in number and trifling in character, I think there can be no doubt that the diet of the prisoners is suitable, especially as the physique of all of them, both Europeans and Natives, as well as of Malays and Chinese, is as good as can be expected to be found in persons suffering under the restraints of imprisonment. I would, therefore, recommend that the present scale of diet should be continued. The prisoners complain of the raggy, and say that it causes Diarrhoea; this, however, I do not believe, their sole objection to it arising, I think, from its not being so palatable as rice or other food."

4. My own experience has extended over three weeks only, so far as the Madras Penitentiary is concerned. During that short period, however, cases of Diarrhoea have occurred, which I believe to have been due to unsuitability of the diet.

5. Although the G. O. of 9th March merely directs that the Medical Officer in charge of the Penitentiary should report upon the results of six months' experimental use of the new dietary, I trust I shall be pardoned if I express opinions on some items of the new diets which appear to me objectionable.

6. That the nutritive value of raggy is, weight for weight, higher than that of rice is of course undeniable. This fact is not, however, I venture to suggest, a sufficient reason for its substitution instead of rice in the dietary of rice-eating convicts. Raggy is notoriously less digestible than rice, less easily assimilated by digestive organs accustomed to rice, and not more nutritive than rice in proportion to its superior amount of nitrogen. This last fact seems to be recognized in the diet scales in question, where 13 ounces of raggy seem to correspond in the

diet of Indian prisoners to 14 ounces of rice in that of Malays and Chinese. Thirteen ounces of raggy are considerably more valuable for nutritive purposes than 14 ounces of rice, supposing both grains to be fully digested; but allowance has (apparently) been made for the fact that the Indian prisoners are unable to extract the full nutritive benefit of the dry grain. The result is, not only waste of nutritive material, but derangement of the digestive organs. I may add that enforcing a raggy diet on rice-eating prisoners is distinctly penal, and only justifiable if the preservation of their health demand it. That this is not the case, in the present instance, appears to me abundantly clear.

7. Should it be decided that the use of raggy shall continue to be enforced upon Indian prisoners, I am unable to see any ground for the exemption of Brahmins from this addition to their sentence.

8. The amount of dholl allowed, especially to Indian prisoners, I venture to suggest, is in excess, not only of the quantity which they would consume in a state of freedom, but also of that which they are able to assimilate. I have reason to know that some cases of Diarrhoea are assignable to this cause. This excess exists in Mr. Cornish's dietary for rice-eating prisoners also, which I believe to be in other respects unexceptionable.

9. It is not, I think, advisable to give prisoners under trial, or even those undergoing short sentences, and still less prisoners during the first six months of long sentences, an inferior dietary. Depressing moral causes act most powerfully on the first and third of these classes, and the effects can be partially obviated by good diet. In my experience a large percentage (over 70 per cent., I think) of deaths occurred within the first year of incarceration. The distinctions to which I have ventured to object are not recognized in the new code of Jail rules.

10. I have had an opportunity of observing carefully the working of the rice dietary laid down in the rules which apply to Mofussil Jails, and I have formed a very favorable opinion of its value. Except in the amount of meat allowed to prisoners, I cannot but consider it superior to the dietary now under consideration. It may be added, moreover, that, in the case to which I refer, "hard labor" was more of a reality than it is here.

11. Feeling that I was scarcely justified in doing more than transcribing the opinions of my two able predecessors, I have been as brief as possible in the expression of my objections, and have omitted facts and arguments, which, under different circumstances, I should have felt it my duty to state fully.

(Signed) H. KING, A.B., M.B.,
Acting Surgeon, 3rd District,
In medical charge, Penitentiary.

MADRAS, 1st October 1867.

REMARKS by the Inspector General, Indian Medical Department, on the report of the Medical Officer of the Penitentiary regarding the Diet Scales in use in that Institution since the 1st April 1867.

After a careful perusal of this report, as well as personal communication with Dr. King and inspection of the prisoners, I am of opinion that the present diet scales may advantageously be continued for a further period.

2. I believe that a proportion of dry grains in Jail dietaries is, as a general rule, preferable to a diet of rice only; not alone as an economical arrangement, but as tending to prevent that deterioration of health which is so common in most Jails.

3. The Diarrhoea occasionally induced by the issue of raggy to rice-eating convicts, I believe to be mainly, if not wholly, caused by defective husking of the grain and imperfect cooking; and it is, therefore, of the utmost consequence that these points should be most carefully attended to.

4. I am informed by Dr. King that, even when every care is taken in the preparation of the raggy, he still finds, on close inspection, that a portion of it passes through undigested, though without causing any irritation. This may not improbably be owing to the quantity allowed being

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18th December 1867.

rather more than can be thoroughly assimilated, and it might be worth while to try the effect of slightly reducing the ration.

(Signed) W. MACKENZIE, M. D.,
Inspector General, Indian
Medical Department.

No. 4141.

MEMORANDUM.

Forwarded to the Commissioner of Police, with reference to his docket, No. 510, of the 11th ultimo.

FORT SAINT GEORGE,
5th November 1867.

(Signed) W. MACKENZIE, M. D.,
Insp. Genl., Indian Medl. Dept.

No. 240.

ORDER THEREON, 18th December 1867, No. 2092.

The Governor in Council concurs with the Inspector General, Indian Medical Department, and with the Commissioner of Police, that the experimental diet of mixed rice and dry grain introduced into the Penitentiary has been successful, and sanctions its continuance for a further period of six months, when a report will be submitted as to the effect of this diet on the health of the prisoners after this further trial.

2. Great care should be taken to secure proper husking of the grain, and that it is carefully cooked. The slight reduction of the ration of raggy and dholl recommended by Major Hearn is approved.

(True Extract).

Chief Secretary.

To the Inspector General of Jails.
" Inspector General, Medical Department.
" Commissioner of Police.

Exd. J. H. Burns.

Judicial Department.

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following letter from the

Inspector-General of Jails.

(Concerning the Penitentiary No. 240)

Order thereon 18 Dec. 1867 No. 2092.

*The Governor in Council
concurs with the Inspector
General, Indian Medical
Department, and with the
Commissioner of Police
that the ^{experimental} diet of mixed
rice and dry grain introduced
into the Penitentiary as
an experiment has been
successful, and sanctions
its continuance for a further
period of six months when
a report will be submitted
as to the effect of this
diet on the health of
the prisoners, after this
further trial.
2 Great care should*

Is taken to ensure proper
bunching of the grain and that it
cautally
is cooked. The slight
reduction of the ration
of Pagas and shall
be commensurate by Major
Cram is approved.

16/11

To the Superintendent of Police
" Asst. Secy. to Govt. }
" Secy. of Police }
21/12

Dec 1863. Department.

No. 2692

PROCEEDINGS OF GOVERNMENT.

Oct 10 1863.

Dated 18 December 1863.