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INDEXED *MS*

Local & Munl. (1897) Department.

MISCELLANEOUS.

G.O., No. 154 *Ms.*

DATED 4-2-97

DESPATCHED

[Despatch Abstract.]

Rabonic plague

Receiving letter from the St. Munl. Commⁿ Madras
stating that he is in communication with the Surgeon-
General, as to accommodation &c for the plague patients
and that the soundness of segregation, proposed cannot
be questioned.

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BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

Local & Munl. (1897) Department.

CURRENT No. 321/M

From

THE PRESIDENT,
Municipal Commission,
Madras.

Order No. 154 9miv. 4-2-97.

Recorded.

G. No. 703

Dated 26 January 1897
Received 27-1-97
Registered 27-1-97
Enclosures 2.
Spare copies

SUBJECT.

Stating that he is in communication with the Surgeon General as to accommodation and the soundness of separation with the Royapuram lines Women's and Children's Hospital Cholera Shed at Kustarampet and the temporary shed at Perambur and Carimode cannot be questioned and forwarding a copy of a Telegram showing the urgency for special legislation in connection with the plague.

Copy to the Sanitary Commissioner.

4/2/97

4/2/97

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

Genl. Dept.
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G. No. 703

Urgent

MUNICIPALITY OF MADRAS.

General Department,

Madras, 26 January 1897.

From

LIEUT.-COL. G. M. J. MOORE, C. I. E.,

President, Municipal Commission.

LOCAL & MUNICIPAL DEPT.
CURRENT No. 321M

To

The Secretary to Government,

Local and Municipal Department,

Fort Saint George.

SIR,

Enclosures
2

With reference to G.O. No. 90 M.Mis., dated 25" January 1897, I have the honor to state that I am in ---- communication with the Surgeon General as to accommodation equipment and personnel.

2. I do not think that the soundness of segregation in the Royapuram lines, Women's and Children's Hospital and Kistnampet cholera shed or the temporary sheds at ---- Perambore and Cassimode can be questioned.

3. I forward for the information of Government a copy of a statement I made at the General Meeting held --- yesterday-the 25th.

4. I also forward a copy of a telegram just received from the owner of the house at Perambore, which shows the urgency ~~of~~ for special legislation.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

G. M. J. Moore

Lt. Col.

President, Munl. Commn.

MUNICIPALITY OF MADRAS.

A GENERAL MEETING of the Municipal Commissioners for the City of Madras was held at the Municipal Office, yesterday, at 5 P.M. Present: Col. G. M. J. Moore, C. I. E., (President); Mr. J. DeCaster, Dr. V. Varadappah Naidu, Mr. H. Ormerod, Mr. E. H. Elliot, Mr. R. F. Grant, Mr. C. Thirumalaya, Mr. W. S. Venkatramanjulu Naidu, Mr. M. Venkataramiah Chetty, Mr. V. C. Desika Chariar, Mr. P. Theagaraya Chetty, Mr. M. Varadarajulu Chetty, Mr. M. Ramakrishna Pantulu, Mr. R. Balakistnama Chetty, Mr. R. N. Pragasa Mudaliar, Rai Bahadur C. Kallanasundrum Chettiar, Mr. Cowasjee Eduljee, Mr. Badsha Sahib, Rao Bahadur V. Krishnamachariar, Mr. S. Gurusawmi Chetty, Mr. P. V. Kistnasawmi Chetty, Mr. N. Subramaniam, Mr. P. Subramania Aiyar, and Surg.-Lt.-Col. G. L. Walker.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

The PRESIDENT said that he had to answer some questions put by Dr. Walker on

THE BUBONIC PLAGUE.

Q.—Will the President be good enough to state what preventive measures are being carried out to protect the City of Madras from the plague which is devastating Bombay, and has now extended to Karachi and Poona?

What measures are proposed to be adopted in the event of the epidemic attacking this city?

Is it proposed to construct isolation hospitals for plague-stricken persons? If so is everything ready to erect and efficiently equip such hospitals at short notice?

Is the President aware of the resolutions in connection with plague prevention, which were adopted by the Calcutta Municipal Commission at a recent meeting? If so does he approve of them, and will he take steps toward the adoption of similar measures in this city?

A.—As these questions all bear on the one subject and are somewhat difficult to answer categorically, I propose to make a statement of what has been done and is being done.

So far back as October last a system of inspection was instituted at certain Railway Stations along the line from which information is communicated to our special Sanitary Staff at Perambore, where all passengers by the N.-W. trains are inspected and their addresses registered. These passengers are kept under supervision for 10 days after arrival. In addition to this Chetpet and Washermanpetta are also being watched.

All passengers and crews arriving from the affected locality by sea are inspected by the Port and Marine Surgeon, and information given to the Municipality.

Every attention is being paid to the sanitation of the city generally.

Temporary isolation sheds have been constructed at Perambore and Cassimode. A house has also been engaged at Perambore for hospital purposes, and a special cart meets the trains at Perambore to convey infected passengers to the Station Hospitals and more are to be engaged if necessary.

Government has rendered most valuable assistance in placing the vacant Regimental Hospital and lines at Royapuram and the late Women's and Children's Hospital at the disposal of the Municipality for the same purpose.

It is proposed to utilise the lately constructed cholera sheds at Kistnampett if necessary.

Should this accommodation prove insufficient further will have to be provided.

Arrangements are being made for equipping these several places with hospital necessities and the Surgeon-General with Government has promised to supply the necessary subordinate staff so far as lies in his power, and to place them under the general superintendence of the District Surgeons.

I have addressed Government on the question of special legislation on the lines of the resolutions referred to by the Interpellator. These resolutions were passed under a special section in the Calcutta Act to which there is no corresponding section in the Madras Act.

The Government of Madras has telegraphed to the Government of India on the subject, and I have reason to believe that they are prepared to legislate so as to give the Commissioners every power that may be necessary to grapple with the emergency.

So far I think we may say that all human endeavours have been taken.

I have hitherto adopted a policy which may be summed up in the following words, which I wrote to the Chief Secretary to Government so far back as the 14th October last, "Everything is being done as quietly as possible so as not to alarm the public unnecessarily." I take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to the Commissioners for the confidence they have reposed in the Executive.

The PRESIDENT read the following papers connected with the subject of the plague, and submitted by him to Government:—

To
The Secretary to Government,
Local and Municipal Department,
Fort Saint George.

SIR,

In forwarding the accompanying copy of Draft Regulations under Section 334 of Calcutta Municipal Consolidated Act, 1888, and suggestions by the Health Officer, I have the honour to point out that there is no Section in Act I. of 1884 corresponding to Section 334 of Calcutta Act.

2. The powers of the Commissioners are practically limited to those vested in them by Sections 368 to 377 inclusive.

3. It would be well if powers such as suggested were given to the Commissioners to be exercised if necessary.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
G. M. J. MOORE, Lieut.-Col.
President, Municipal Commission.

Draft Regulations revised by the Medical Board.

Under Section 334 of the Calcutta Municipal Consolidated Act, 1888.

Whereas it is expedient to adopt special measures for preventing, checking, or mitigating an outbreak of the bubonic plague in Calcutta and to pass special regulations to give effect thereto, the Commissioners in meeting, with the sanction of the Local Government, prescribe the following regulations under Section 334 of the Calcutta Municipal Consolidation Act, 1888:—

1. These resolutions shall come into force from the date on which they may be published in the *Calcutta Gazette*, and shall remain in operation until such time as they may be countermanded by notification in the *Calcutta Gazette*.

2. Every householder who becomes cognisant of any case of the bubonic plague or of fever with glandular swellings in his house or in any other private dwelling within the Municipal limits of Calcutta, shall be bound to give information of the same to the Health Officer of the Corporation with the least practicable delay.

3. The Commissioners may, when they consider necessary, enter upon any premises at any time during daylight, and summarily execute any work required under Section 318 of the Calcutta Municipal Consolidation Act, 1888, or with a view to abate any or all of the nuisances indicated in clauses (a), (b), (c), (d), (f), and (g) of Section 385 of the said Act.

4. When a dwelling is so overcrowded as, in the opinion of the Health Officer of the Corporation, to make the inmates there of specially liable to an attack of the bubonic plague, and such opinion is endorsed by a Medical Officer deputed by the Medical Board, the Commissioners may, by a notice posted on some conspicuous part of the dwelling, require the owner or the occupier, if actually residing in the dwelling, or the tenants, or the actual inmates thereof, to abate the overcrowding within twenty-four hours by reducing the number of lodgers, tenants, or other inmates of the said dwelling as prescribed in the notice; and in default of compliance with the requisition in the said notice, may summarily eject all the inmates, or reduce the number of inmates in such manner and to such extent as may appear necessary; and the owner or the occupier or the tenants or the actual inmates of such dwelling shall not be entitled as of right to claim any compensation on account of such ejection.

5. When a dwelling has, in the opinion of the Health Officer of the Corporation, been so infected with the plague as to render its further occupation a source of danger to the inmates thereof, and such opinion is endorsed by a Medical Officer deputed by the Medical Board, the Commissioners may summarily cause such dwelling to be vacated and thoroughly cleansed and disinfected, and the dwelling shall not be re-occupied until in the opinion of the Health Officer and the Medical Board, it is safe to be re-occupied; and the owner or the occupier or the tenants or actual inmates thereof shall not be entitled as of right to claim any compensation on this account.

6. If, in the opinion of the Health Officer, the destruction of any hut or shed is necessary to prevent the spread of the plague, and such opinion is endorsed by a Medical Officer deputed by the Medical Board, the Commissioners may summarily take measures for the destruction of such hut or shed and of the materials of which it is constructed; and no person shall be entitled as a right to claim compensation for any loss or damage sustained by him by reason of the destruction of any hut or shed under the powers conferred by this regulation.

7. No rag-picking shall be permitted in the streets or elsewhere, and the Commissioners may, in their discretion, disinfect at their own cost or destroy any collection of rags in rag-pickers' houses and rag-stores without being required to pay any compensation whatsoever.

8. The Commissioners may select a site and erect a hospital thereon, or convert any house or other building into a hospital for the isolation of patients suffering from the plague in any locality which in the opinion of the Health Officer of the Corporation may be suitable for the purpose.

9. Any house or other building which is in the opinion of the Health Officer and a Medical Officer deputed by the Medical Board suitable and required for the purpose of an isolation hospital may be entered upon and occupied by the Commissioners (if untenanted) without any notice whatsoever; and if tenanted, after twenty-four hours' notice in writing conspicuously posted on such house or building) and converted into a hospital for plague patients; and the owners or the lessee of such house or building shall not be entitled to claim from the Commissioners anything beyond a reasonable rent for the period during which the house or building may remain in their occupation: provided always that the Commissioners shall be bound to thoroughly cleanse, disinfect, and limewash the house or building both internally and externally, before vacating it.

10. The Commissioners shall provide suitable conveyances for the free carriage of persons suffering, or suspected to be suffering, from the plague, and for the transport of any clothing, bedding, or other articles which have been exposed to infection, and it shall be lawful for them to drive such conveyances through any public and private thoroughfare.

11. When in any dwelling there is a patient suffering, or suspected to be suffering, from the bubonic plague the Commissioners may enter that dwelling and take measures for segregating and isolating the patient within such dwelling, so far as the circumstances of the case may admit to the satisfaction of the Health Officer of the Corporation, and when the patient, whether a male or female, is certified by the Health Officer and a Medical Officer deputed by the Medical Board to be without proper lodging.

(True Extract.)
(Sd.) J. NIELD COOK, D.P.H.,
Health Officer,
Madras Municipality.
(True Copy) G. M. J. MOORE Lt.-Col.
President, Muni. Commn.

Suggestions for Special Powers to Deal with the Bubonic Plague.

THE PRESIDENT.

SIR,—Section 130 of the Public Health Act (England) 1875 enables the Local Government Board to make special regulations and put them in force in times of extraordinary epidemics. The city of Madras Municipal Act makes no such provision, and as the powers conferred by it are in my opinion quite inadequate for the purpose, I think that Government might be asked to pass a small emergency Act conferring temporarily upon us the powers that we require.

1. The first requirement is compulsory notification, which is the only means by which we can get early information of cases. For this purpose I would advise the adoption of the necessary sections in the Infectious Disease Notification Act

(England) 1889 (*vide* Stevenson and Murphy Vol. III p. 176, 177, sent herewith), or clause 2 of the Draft Regulations of the Calcutta Medical Board. The penalty for non-compliance in England in ordinary times is 40 shillings. I think Rs.100 would not be too much if we are to ensure notification.

2. As we have powers of entry, the next thing is to be able to remove the patient to an isolation hospital and that any opposition to our doing so should come under the Indian Penal Code 186 (obstructing a public servant) or be otherwise met with an adequate penalty.

3. The next step is to be able to remove the other inmates of the house to some suitable camp where they can be quarantined and kept under observation. This is only necessary during the earlier part of an epidemic when there is a chance of preventing its spread, and becomes impracticable when it has assumed large proportions. It enables the house to be thoroughly disinfected and greatly lessens the danger of infection. I would suggest compensation to an amount not exceeding their pay being given to persons in subordinate appointments who were thus compulsorily quarantined and a penalty being inflicted in cases of refusal.

4. It might prove very useful if we were able to take any land, house, or other building for an isolation hospital or quarantine house, without the owners being able to claim excessive compensation, as provided in 9 of the Calcutta Draft Regulations.

5. We have no provision for the exposure of infected persons or things, (*vide* Public Health Act 1875 Section 126, page 158 Vol. III Stevenson and Murphy). The penalty in England is £5.

6. I think it desirable that we should have power to destroy any infected hut, shed, clothing or other infected matter, without being liable to any claim for compensation, which might however be given at your discretion.

7. At the last great International Sanitary Congress a resolution was passed recommending compulsory cremation in cases of epidemic disease. If this could be adopted without unduly interfering with the religious customs of any class of the people I think it would be very desirable.

(Sd.) J. NIELD COOKE, D. P. H.,
Health Officer,
19th January, 1897.

Failing cremation it might be made compulsory to bury the corpse in quick lime.

(Intld.) G. M. J. M.
(True Copy) G. M. J. MOORE, Lieut.-Col.,
President, Municipal Commission.

The PRESIDENT said that the Government was prepared to give the Commissioners the necessary power by passing legislation at the ensuing meeting of the Legislative Council; and he intended calling for a Special Meeting on Wednesday 3rd February for the purpose.

SURG.-LT.-COL. WALKER, with the permission of the President, then read paragraphs from the last issue of the *Indian Medical Gazette*, showing the importance of taking precautions to prevent importation of the plague from infected places, and to prevent lodgment of the disease by acknowledgment of the existence of the earliest cases instead of concealing them as Bombay did, and by strict segregation of such cases, whether mild or otherwise.—MADRAS TIMES, January 26, 1897.

1/2/97
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