PROCEEDINGS OF THE PLAGUE COMMISSIONER.

(1898)

MISCELLANEOUS.

No. 795

Dated 24/11/98

Despatched 24-11-98

[Despatch Abstract.]

Inspection notes of the Sanitary Commr

forwarding with remarks

~~on~~ the — of Guntakal Village

BACK PAPERS.

No.	Date.	No.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

No.	Date.	No.	Date.
Cir 3299/9			

PLAGUE COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE.

(1898)

CURRENT No. 1603

From The Sanitary Commissioner Madras

(ords See within)

~~**Order**~~ No. 795 d Dec/11/98

No. 2819/S

Dated 22-11-1898

Received 23-11-1898

Registered

Enclosures

Spare copies

SUBJECT.

Forwarding his notes of inspection on the village of Guntakal.

BACK PAPERS.

No.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

No.	Date.

C No 1603

[2,000—18-2-98.]

No. 2819/S

OFFICE OF SANITARY COMMISSIONER,
Madras ~~Fort St. George~~, 22 Novr. 1898.

From

~~Surgeon~~-Lieut.-Col. W. G. KING, M.B., C.M., D.P.H.,
Sanitary Commissioner for Madras,

To

The Plague Commissioner
Madras.

Type copy
Very soon with my
order & send
to [illegible]
23/11

Enclosure.

Sir,

With reference to my inspection of the village of Guntakal on the 12th and 14th instant, I have the honor to state that as you on the 12th November, had the opportunity of observing the conditions present, it is not necessary for me to dilate on the subject. The sanitary indication certainly is the rapid completion of the evacuation of the village within the infected areas at least. How far this is feasible is a matter of policy with which you solely are concerned. I am fully aware of the no slight difficulties which beset the question.

Register numbers despatch above. Should note this for his fortnightly report.

C.M. ordered 15th [illegible] at once [illegible]

2. In regard to measures actually adopted, I would point out that perchloride of mercury solution is in my opinion too sparingly used. It should be used so as to flood the floors direct from Chatties. If rats have anything to do with the spread of infection in this village, it cannot be hoped that infection will be eradicated unless the roofs are dealt with as effectually as the floors. It is a well known fact, in reference to the flat roofs of the Ceded Districts, that more rats are found in the roofs than in the floors. I would suggest that destruction of flat earthen roofs with the attached bamboo matting by fire leaving at ~~destruction~~ discretion the solid beams to be ~~to~~ soused ~~used~~ with perchloride and exposed to sun, would ~~seem~~ seem a reasonable enough corollary of the present eager mode of pursuing the "Kiln method" in respect to floors only. In regard to this, you are aware

I held that provided money is paid promptly no serious objection would be expected from the people of the poorer classes: the money should be paid publicly and on the spot. As this opinion has been overruled, I do not press the subject beyond pointing out that disinfection, as at present practised, is likely to be incomplete. In regard to disinfection of walls by the use of the Chinese pumps, it was stated the pattern supplied was useless: but, on examination, I found no fault with the pump in question. The operators did not understand the fixing of the nozzle, it having been placed upside down. In ventilating houses, the opening in the roof seems to have been universally adopted. Openings in the side walls serving the functions of temporary windows would frequently be of much service, in cases where it is not feared the walls are too feeble to stand the operation.

3. Several of the villagers have left the village and are encamped in their own fields. Amongst them attacks have occurred since they left the village, and, for all that is known to the contrary, "contacts" may have wandered thence to neighbouring villages. As no system of control over the movements of the population in the village of Guntakul has at any time been exercised, it is presumed that the inhabitants proceed where they chose. In the case of those encamped in the fields, the system has certain sanitary advantages, but I think, in future, such instances should be maintained under observation. The District Medical and Sanitary Officer states that the full ten days of segregation has passed in the case of those who have left; hence, no action would seem necessary. It would however seem desirable in future, should similar emigration occur, to organize a complete system of inspection, so as to at least maintain observation of contacts and prevent them running off to neighbouring villages. The difficulty identifying the encampment amongst the cholum fields could easily be overcome, by the use of red flags and consultation of the village list of lands.

4 The Village Caste Hospitals. The sanitary care of these is left entirely to the villagers; I think at least this much should be in the hands of the local authorities, care being taken to interfere in no other way.

5 The sepoys used for disinfectors. These men have not been paid any "plague duty batta", either whilst employed at Chippigiri or at Guntakul. This, I suggest, should be attended to without delay. They have not been provided with extra clothing, but are using their own. Two suits of white drill should be provided with boots. Compensation for clothing at the rate sanctioned in letter from the Government of India No 673, dated 26 June 1897, which was communicated to the Government of [illegible]

should also be promised them. No arrangement is made for the men bathing before taking their meals. This should be arranged for.

They already do so at Chittapur

6 The Government Hospital. The flooring of the main ward which was supposed to have been formed of concrete cement-plastered is badly in want of repair. A special space for disinfection of clothing with dhobies and incinerators should be set apart. The pattern shown in the plan circulated with Plague Commissioner's Proceedings No 2204 dated 18th October 1898 for Caste Hospitals should be adopted.

7 Inoculation. This progressed favorably until certain cases were attacked after inoculation with plague. This, of course, simply implies that inoculation cannot arrest the disease once under incubation. That persons travel immediately after inoculation (which the Plague Commissioner contended lately would not be likely to occur) and suffer from plague in the interim, was illustrated in the case of a family received by rail from Bangalore, and luckily stopped at Guntakal. Only in one case does attack after completion of the incubation period seem to have occurred. The people are now much prejudiced against the operation, but will doubtless resume their faith as soon as they understand the facts. In the meantime, it is a serious blot upon inoculation operations in this area that the District Medical and Sanitary Officer has not found it possible, in the midst of the heavy work entailed by the conditions surrounding Guntakal, to maintain a register showing details of cases inoculated. He states this could be managed if he were allowed a clerk on Rs 15. This I think, should be given at once, as well as a peon to be attached for the special purpose of attending during inoculation duty.

This sh'd be done

8 Methods of supervising the population. The observation Camp

have not been contracted to five miles diameter, as sanctioned in Plague Commissioner's Proceedings No 88 dated 7th October 1898, in the immediate neighbourhood of the indigenously affected area. I still think this is desirable. Gooty has a population of 6605 and should have an Assistant Sanitary Inspector on the spot for careful searching of dwellings of the town. The fact of its being the headquarters of the observation staff does not suffice. The railway station at Tirumencherla and at Pattikotacheru are specially observed by Assistant Sanitary Inspectors. The same precaution should be taken as to Gulapalayam, and Khadarpett. As already stated in para 3, from the outbreak of the epidemic, villagers have, with the exception of passports for the railway, been allowed to go to other villages as they choose. I consider this mode of dealing with plague at its origin in petty villages leaves much to be desired, but as it has been

This ought to be done by [illegible]

Villagers should [illegible]

adopted

adopted by Government, aft

having heard my views, I

have no wish to reopen the

subject.

I have the honor to

Sir

Your most obed Servant

W G King

Lieut Col: I.M.S.

Sanitary Commissioner

for Madras

Col King's letter is communicated to the Collr. Anantapur.

2. The Collr. by demi-official communication has been asked to immediately erect sheds for all the villagers who will leave the village & encourage the immediate evacuation of as much of the village as possible. He reports that the attitude of the villagers has improved very much & probably he will be able to effect complete evacuation now the rain has ceased. Evacuation of any large village in rainy weather is exceedingly difficult.

3 The Collr.'s attention is drawn to para 2 of Col King's letter. The Plague Commr. cannot agree at all with Col King's opinion that the people do not object to having their roofs burnt out provided they are paid compensation. Experience has shown that the people dislike the use of fire in their houses exceedingly. In Chippagiri it was found enough, except in the worst cases, to

make holes in the roof & let in light & air. The Col.r must judge in respect to each case whether the filth of the house requires anything further. The free use of liquid disinfectants sh.d be the rule as Col. King recommends.

4. In case some of the village inhabitants desert the village instead of having recourse to the Govt sheds every effort sh.d be made to hut them & the use of flags as suggested by Col. King seems advisable. But even in this matter a panic may be raised & the Col.r sh.d proceed cautiously. The Plague Comm.r doubts very much whether with the present attitude of the villagers many of the Gulathal people have been taken in in the villages.

5. The Plague Comm.r understands that the Medical officer Lewis camped at Gulathal is gradually overcoming the opposition of the villagers to his interference with their private camps & he will doubtless be able to do something to improve the sanitary care of the camps

6. The Plague Comm.r when at Gulathal had no complaints made to him about the pay of the sepoys. The Col.r is requested to find out & report definitely what it is that is claimed & not paid & how much is due & who sh.d pay it whether the civil or the military authorities. — Huts can be provided for the sepoys & boots if the Col.r will be good enough to see about it & write for the number required. The Plague Comm.r understood that the sepoys always bathed at Chippgiri when they came off work. The local medical officer sh.d enquire about this & see that proper precautions in this matter are taken.

7. The Col.r will no doubt attend to the remarks on the Gulathal Govt hospital.

8. The remark of the Sanitary Comm.r on inoculation sh.d also be attended to without delay. A clerk & peon may be given if the Collector considers it necessary.

9. The plague Commr. doubts whether one Asst Sanitary Inspector could do much good in Gooty Town. There are several objections to appointing more officers of this class than are absolutely necessary. The Collector is requested to report whether he thinks special officers are necessary at Gulapalayanam and Khadarpeth as recommended by Col. King. These officers too often have a reputation of adding illicitly to their pay to make their entertainment without much consideration advisable.

10. No doubt ~~allowing~~ the fact that villagers ~~to~~ escape to other villages when ~~a~~ cases of plague occur in ~~the~~ their own village is to be regretted. But with a large village such as Guntakal, it is very difficult to see how such a course can be prevented, except with the aid of an ~~armed~~ force much larger than any we could obtain. The fault at Guntakal, the Plague

at once having erected as large a camp as possible to assist the villagers in finding accommodation outside the village. The Com. however was compelled to be away at Hindupur for several days & the village did not get the attention it required at first. Fortunately the great ~~[illegible]~~ objection ~~of the~~ healthy villages ~~have~~ show to admitting strangers has probably ~~to~~ ~~may~~ ~~have~~ prevented many of the Guntakal villagers from finding a home away from their own village limits. The Com. is now on the spot & has been instructed to house as many villagers as possible in huts & tents outside Guntakal. He is requested to push on with the work with the utmost energy.

23rd

To
The Collector of
Anantapur

given for copying
copied
examined
signed
189 .