

PROCEEDINGS OF THE PLAGUE COMMISSIONER.

(1899)

MISCELLANEOUS.

No. 230

Dated 25-1-99

Despatched 25/1/99

[Despatch Abstract.]

Diary

Submitting to Govt. for 22 to 24

Jan'y '99

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N^o 230 8/25-1-89
22-1-99 Sunday

I left Madras by the morning train & reached Vellore about mid-day; there I met Mr. Patten and was able to discuss the situation there. The sepoy have been of but little use since their arrival as they had to be inoculated before they could commence their work. They are comfortably camped on the ~~glacis~~ There had been no houses newly attacked since 14th & no seizure had been discovered since 19th. The seizures between the 14th & 19th had taken place in houses previously infected. In the afternoon I met Mr. French & Mr. Edwards. We went first to inspect the new camp which is being built ~~out of~~ ^{from} the ~~Yard~~. I should have preferred any other place as a site for this camp than this, but no suitable site is available anywhere.

within a reasonable distance. The camp is being put up sufficiently for the present requirements and can be extended at will. There are 10 sheds for contacts & 2 sheds for patients each to ~~be~~ take 5. They are not yet completed, but will be in a few days. There is no body in the camp except a sick boy and his family. They refuse all European treatment; and the boy is being prescribed ^{by} a native doctor, who by the way refuses to come anywhere near the camp. From the camp we went to the ^{Saidapet} ~~Sepoy~~ ward which is the infected quarter of the town. There was but little to do, to-day being Sunday.

The infected houses are all in the neighbourhood of the infected houses I had already seen, while going round the quarter we heard two deaths had occurred in ^{an} other portion of the town during the day. We went off to make

to the R.C. corner, ^{my} the ~~from~~

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 enquiries, but although they ^{people} had been undoubtedly hasty in the disposal of the corpses there was no reason to believe that the ^{people} had died of plague. During the day Captain Abdul ^{Hamid} Khan, Sirdar Bahadur, a pensioned officer came to see us & we were able to discuss matters. He is a man of very considerable influence and with his aid and the aid of other pensioned officers committees of ^{or} muhammadans already to make house to house visitation every day to discover any deaths. Hindus are more backward. They profess to be unwilling to act positively as long as they are not publicly appointed, but the majority of them are not anxious to appear publicly as they appear to fear the odium they will incur. It is hoped, however, that Hindu Committee will

be ready to act in a few days.

As it appears that the state of things in Arcot is worse than in Vellore I arranged with Mr. Leonard who is in command of the sepoy to send 200 sepoys by cart this night to Arcot for disinfection purposes.

23. 1-99. Monday.

Mr. Batten & I started in the morning to inspect the quarters that have been provided for the two lady nurses who are to be sent to Vellore for inoculation purposes. Quarters would suit very well. Mrs. Lancaster wife of the Asst Medical & Sanitary officer had very kindly provided necessaries for their use on first arrival. As soon as I heard on

Today last that nurses were to go to Vellore, I immediately went & purchased the necessaries for them & had it despatched on Saturday morning. The bill may be a heavy one, but I had no time to ^{spend in picking} be choosing & I had to take what I could get.

The influence of Lt. Abbott this morning is - I feared from the fact that when we went to make inquiries about the 2 deaths above referred to, we had some little difficulty with the people, till the Captain arrived. As soon as the people knew, although they are high class Hindus, they said "we will do what the Captain tells us". This gentleman refers find employment, but gives much useful help. These gentlemen have been appointed on the plague staff.

I had the Mr. moved up from the lower

Then we went on to Saidayset man & saw the sepoys at work in disinfecting one of the infected houses. There was some difficulty in opening holes in the roofs as the bamboo reapers were placed close together horizontally across the ^{rafters} ~~roofs~~ so close indeed that when the tiles are taken off the ^{practically} whole light was not emitted. It had been attempted to make openings in the roofs by taking off lines of tiles from top to bottom. It was decided to take off rows of tiles from along the ridge off of the roof to about a foot on each side of the ridge & then to remove the reapers. This should enable the sun to penetrate from side to side of the room in the course of the day. There was only one Chinese pump, available, two having been sent off to Arcot; but I am glad to say that the one which was reserved works

very efficiently. no fresh cases were reported. In the afternoon the Collector & I left by train for Arcot & were able to visit the village shortly after 5. We found there Col. Lancaster the M. D. & S. O. and we met the Sub-Collector. No cases have been reported during the day. The 10 sepoy who had been sent off from Vellore previous evening had arrived in the morning & had been able to disinfect the houses. They will proceed with disinfection work of other houses as far as possible; As it grew dark we returned to Ranipet at night.

24-1-99 Tuesday.

Mr. Batten & I went to Arcot again early in the morning. We saw sepoys disinfecting the houses & were able to put them in the right way of their working. The pumps ^{are} not working very satisfactorily as ^{the} nozzles ^{are} being broken, arrangements being made for new nozzles being made by the local firm. News was received of the death

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of a woman, the alleged cause being Cholera. We went to the house with Col. Lancaster, Hospital Asst & midwife. The midwife examined the body & found ^{no} ^{in the front} swelling. None were visible ^{on the arms}, more was the general symptoms of plague. The case was treated as one of Cholera. No other deaths were reported. It was decided to divide the town into wards & to appoint ^{circle} (Sanitary) Inspectors for each ward. It was considered desirable that these circle Inspectors should be local men of influence, pensioned sepoys etc. There can be little doubt that Sanitary Inspectors would be of little use. What we want - are men who are able to obtain the earliest information as to sickness in a house, and local men would certainly

be better able to ^{do} find this.
 Arrangements were also commenced
 for forming committees of native
 gentlemen to make daily visits
 to the town to assist in the working
 of discovering sickness. The camp
 was inspected & with a few alterations
 found sufficient for the present
 requirement. Quarters are
 available for a medical officer
 if sent & a site has been prepared
 for the sepoy ^{who} ~~that~~ has been asked
 for. Mr. Duff is in camp at
 Arcot & will look after matters.
 Col Lancaster is at Ramipet
 & will make daily visits
 to Arcot ~~from~~ ^{from} next week or
 so. As far as I can see
 nothing ~~more~~ ^{else} should be done
 at present.

25/11

Govt has ~~been~~ been
 asked to send a medical
 officer & sepoy.

recd 25/11/88
 A.S.

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