

PROCEEDINGS OF THE PLAGUE COMMISSIONER.

(1899)

PRINTED.

No. 245
16

DATED 26. 1. 99
Despt in M.S. to S.I.R. 27/1/99.
Despatched to all with L.C. 7/2/99

[Despatch Abstract.]

When plague convalescents cease to be a source of infection
Retention in Isolation Hospital

Communicating to the Agent, S. I. Ry.
and all Collectors the opinion of the Saney. Comm.
regarding the length of time a plague patient
should be ~~retained~~ retained in isolation hospital as
to _____

BACK PAPERS.

No.	Date.	No.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

No.	Date.	No.	Date.

Proceedings of the Plague Commissioner, MADRAS-1899.

Proof for approval

Please correct and state

*Done
3/2/89*

Recd.

Enclosures

Regd.

1899.

Spare copies

Proceedings, No. ²⁴⁵/₁₆, 26th January 1899.

JANUARY.

When plague convalescent, may be a source of infection

Retention in Isolation Hospital.

Communicating to the Agent, South Indian Railway, and all Collectors the opinion of the Sanitary Commissioner regarding the length of time a plague patient should be retained in isolation hospital.

*Had.
3-2-99*

PROCEEDINGS OF THE PLAGUE COMMISSIONER.

Read—the following papers:—

From the Agent, South Indian Railway, to the Plague Commissioner, Madras, dated Trichinopoly, 7th December 1898, R. No. 1563/43-4035.

I have the honour to forward a copy of letter No. 561-A. from this Company's Superintending Physician and to request that you will kindly favour me with your opinion as to the period which should elapse after recovery from plague before a patient can be considered free of infection. From Dr. Oliver's remarks it would appear desirable that some restrictions be placed upon plague convalescents in regard to their mixing with the general public.

Ref. on C. No. 2047.

Forwarded to the Sanitary Commissioner for opinion. The remarks of Captain Thomson, quoted on page 21, Volume I, Nathan, are to the effect that convalescents are not a source of infection when once their temperature has become normal.

(Signed) L. E. BUCKLEY,
Plague Commissioner.

12th December 1898.

From Lieut.-Colonel W. G. KING, M.B., C.M., D.P.H., I.M.S., Sanitary Commissioner for Madras, to the Plague Commissioner, Madras, dated Bellary, 12th January 1899, No. 125-S.

[Reference—Your reference on C. No. 2047, dated 14th December 1898.]

I have the honour to state that I consider putting trust in the statement referred to in actual practice would be premature. It is necessary, at all times, to receive the statements of bacteriologists with caution. The science is young, and methods of working are still far from perfect. Positive evidence by a bacteriologist is doubtless of great value, but negative evidence need by no means be so regarded. The dicta of Captain Thomson, I.M.S., may be absolutely correct, but they demand extension before they can be trusted by the sanitarian. For example, it would be necessary to select cases which have been so ill as to show by bacteriological examination that the bacilli have passed into the blood (usually a fatal result ensues) and have appeared, as shown by Dr. Srinivasa Rao, the Mysore bacteriologist, in the urine and faeces, and then prove their disappearance *synchronously* with the return to normal temperature. Further, it being granted, as apparently it is by recognition of the "catarrhal dysenteric or choleraic" form, that infection can occur by ingestion, it would be necessary to ascertain whether did auto-infection occur, the bacilli would pass through the intestines of a convalescent causing a recurring attack or could pass through without producing an attack in an infective or non-infective condition.*

* Klein showed that after subcutaneous injection, the bacilli lived and thrived in the intestines. It took many years to ascertain that an apparently healthy person who has resided in an infected locality may convey choleraic bacilli in his intestines, and that the intestinal discharges of convalescents contained them up to ten days, and that the urine

of typhoid patients was infective. Captain Thomson's statement that "no instance of spread of the disease from convalescents to patients near them under observation or suffering from other disease was met with", may mean much, or nothing. The evidence is of a negative nature and, in a well conducted hospital, would be probably as true of patients passing through the acute stages as of convalescents. The *absoluteness* with which the disappearance of plague bacilli is stated to occur with a fall of temperature must, I think, especially be received with caution, in the absence of very extended clinical and bacteriological examination.

2. You will find the subject now discussed referred to at page 47 of the minutes of proceedings of the Sanitary Commissioner for the first quarter of 1898. It being held by Kitasato (the original discoverer of the bacillus) that the microbe could be found in the patient six weeks after the attack, caused me to ask for the opinion of M. Haffkine on the subject. I at the same time ascertained the Bombay practice. The opinion held by Major Dymock, I.M.S.—a good authority—was that, before discharge from hospital, whilst one month from date of subsidence of symptoms or one week after complete healing of a bubo was actually enforced, six weeks would be preferable. M. Haffkine gave it as his opinion that one month would probably suffice in practice.

3. I hold that until further observations confirm the statements of Captain Thomson, it would be unwise to do otherwise than conform with the practice I have indicated.

4. Finding that Medical officers were inclined to discharge patients prematurely, on 21st November last, I asked the Surgeon-General with the Government of Madras to issue a standing order to all Medical officers requiring them to grant certificates when discharging patients showing that they had detained them one month from subsidence of symptoms, and one week after healing of any bubo. To this was added a certificate stating that all clothing and property of the discharged person had been disinfected under the personal superintendence of the Medical officer signing this special portion of the document.

From the Agent, South Indian Railway, dated Trichinopoly, 23rd January 1899, No. 563/43-215.

PROCEEDINGS—No. 245, dated 26th January 1899.

The Sanitary Commissioner's letter is communicated to the Agent, South Indian Railway, and all Collectors for information.

Personal Assistant,
for Plague Commissioner.

To the Agent, South Indian Railway.
" other Railway Administrations.
" all Collectors (A—L).
" the Sanitary Commissioner.
" the Surgeon-General.
" the President, Municipal Commission, Madras.
" the Deputy Adjutant-General, Madras Command.
" General Officers Commanding Districts.
" the Secretary to Government, Local and Municipal Department.

Exd. A. F. Eccleston.

No. R 1563/43 4035 South Indian Railway Co., Ltd.

AGENT'S OFFICE,

TRICHINOPOLY, 7th December 1898.

Plague

THE AGENT,

SOUTH INDIAN RAILWAY.

To

The Plague Commissioner

Madras.

Sir,

I have the honor to forward a copy of letter No. A 561 from this Company's Superintending Physician and to request that you will kindly favour me with your opinion as to the period which should elapse after recovery from plague before a patient can be considered free of infection. From Dr. Oliver's remarks it would appear — desirable that some restrictions be placed upon plague convalescents in regard to their mixing with the General — Public.

I have the honor to be

Sirs

Your most obedient servant

W. de Mesmes
for Agent

1 Enclosure.

Ref. on C. No. 2047.

Forwarded to the Sanitary Commissioner for opinion. The remarks of Captain Thomson quoted on page 21, Vol. I, Nathan, are to the effect that convalescents are not a source of infection when once their temperature has become normal.

W.D.

Encls to be ret'd into reply.

W. de Mesmes

For Plague Commissioner.

the

Original
Apothecary Trichy Fort reports to me that a boy aged 14 years was found travelling (accompanied by his family) by N^o 152 train from Erode this morning and was waiting at the Station to proceed by N^o 8 to Gudalur. The boy, according to the statement of the father, had suffered from an attack of Malar some 30 days previously. He was in a very weak and emaciated condition and had a discharging abscess in the axilla. The parent further states that he lost two other members of the family from Malar, 20 days previously that he looked to Erode and from there re-booked this morning. The parent holds certificate of disinfection from the Malar authorities at Jollarpet. The family was nevertheless removed and handed over to the Municipal Authorities here by the Apothecary.

2. There appear to be no regulations on the Subject of this letter. Some general rule for guidance is necessary.
3. No definite knowledge is arrived at yet as to the period of time during which a case should be looked on as infectious after the abatement of the febrile symptoms. I have a vague impression that I have seen somewhere some official correspondence on the Subject between the Surgeon General and the Sanitary Commissioner, But, of course, such is not available to me.
4. My own impression is that a convalescent should not be let loose

AGENT'S OFFICE,
TRICHINOPOLY,

7th December 1898.

Accompaniment to the Agent's letter.

No. 4035 of 7.12-1898

True copy.

True copy.
McMunnick
 for Agent.

Agent.

Loose on the public sooner than six weeks after subsidence of fever. There is good reason for such an opinion arguing from analogy to what occurs in other specific fevers. But into this subject I need not go now, beyond stating there is reason to believe that *Plague-bacilli* may be found for considerably longer periods even than 6 weeks after the abatement of fever.

5. But for purposes of Section 71 of Act IX of 1890 some period of time should be mentioned.

And, indeed, a clause should be inserted in the proposed revision of the Act whereby for all infectious disease, the disabilities as to travelling should include the whole period of infectiousness.

AGENT'S OFFICE,
TRICHINOPOLY,

7th December 1898.

Accompaniment to the Agent's letter

No. 4035 of 7.12.1898

True copy.

M. S. M. S. M. S.
Agent.

[400-15-12-98.]

No.

125
5

Office of Sanitary Commissioner,

Madras,

1899

From

Lieut.-Colonel W. G. King, M.B., C.M., D.P.H., I.M.S.,
Sanitary Commissioner for Madras,

To

The Plague Commissioner,

Madras.

Reference:- Your reference on C.NO.2047 dated 14th December 98

Enclosure.

Sir,

I have the honour to state that I consider putting trust in the statement referred to in actual practice, would be premature. It is necessary, at all times, to receive the statements of bacteriologists with caution. The science is young, and methods of working are still far from perfect. Positive evidence by a bacteriologist is doubtless of great value, but negative evidence need by no means be so regarded. The dicta of Captain Thomson, I.M.S., may be absolutely correct but they demand extension before they can be trusted by the Sanitarian. For example, it would be necessary to select cases which have been so ill as to show by bacteriological examination that the bacilli have passed into the blood (usually a fatal result ensues) and have appeared, as shown by Dr. Srinivasa Rao, the Mysore bacteriologist, in the urine and faeces, and then prove their disappearance synchronously with

the

1
an answer to 125

the return to normal temperature. Further, it being granted, as ap-

parently it is by recognition of the "catarrhal dysenteric or

choleraic" form, that infection can occur by ingestion, it would be

necessary to ^{ascertain whether} ~~show that~~ did ~~auto~~-infection occur, the bacilli would

pass through the intestines of a convalescent causing a recurring at-

^{or could pass through without producing an attack} tack in an infective or non-infective condition. It took many years

to ascertain that an apparently healthy person who has resided in an

infected locality may convey choleraic bacilli in his intestines,

and that the intestinal discharges of convalescents contained them up

to ten days, and that the urine of typhoid patients was infective.

Captain Thomson's statement, that "no instance of spread of the dis-

ease from convalescents to patients near them under observation or

suffering from other disease was met with", may mean much, or nothing.

The evidence is of a negative nature and, in a well conducted Hospital,

would be probably as true of patients passing through the acute stages

as of convalescents. The absoluteness with which the disappearance

of plague bacilli is stated to occur with a fall of temperature must,

I think, especially be received with caution, in the absence of very

extended clinical and bacteriological examination.

2. You will find the subject now discussed referred to at

page 47 of the Minutes of Proceedings of the Sanitary Commissioner for

the first quarter of 1898. It being held by Kitasato - (the original

discoverer of the bacillus) that the microbe could be found in the

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in the in-
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W. G. K.

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the Bombay practice. The opinion held by Major Dymock I.M.S.-

a good authority- was that, before discharge from Hospital,

whilst one month from date of subsidence of symptoms or one

week after complete healing of a bubo was actually enforced,

six weeks would be preferable. M. Haffkine gave it as his

opinion that one month would probably suffice in practice.

3. I hold that until further observations confirm the

statements of Captain Thomson, it would be unwise to do other-

wise than conform with the practice I have indicated.

4. Finding that Medical Officers were inclined to dis-

charge patients prematurely, on 21st November last, I asked the

Surgeon-General with the Government of Madras to issue a

Standing Order to all Medical Officers requiring them to

grant certificates when discharging patients showing that

they had detained them one month from subsidence of symptoms,

and one week after healing of any bubo. To this was added a

certificate stating that all clothing and property of the dis-

charged person had been disinfected under the personal su-

perintendence of the Medical Officer signing this special

portion of the document.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your Most Obedient Servant,

W. G. K.

Lieut-Colonel, I.M.S.

Sanitary Commissioner for Madras.

PLAGUE COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE. (1898)

CURRENT No. 2047
17/9-12/98

W/
S/M/W

Order Ref No 2047

From The Agent
S.S. Railway
Trichinopoly

No R. 15-63 / $\frac{43}{4035}$

Forwarded to
the Sanitary Commission
for opinion. The remarks
of Cap Thomson quoted on
page 2, Vol I, Nathan show
that Convalescents are not
a source of infection when
once their temperature has
become normal.

Dated 7-12-1898
Received 8-12-1898
Registered 8-12-1898
Enclosures 1 sent to P.A. on 3-2-99
Spare copies $\frac{H.P.}{9-2-99}$

SUBJECT.

Forwarding copy of
letter from Railway Company's
Superintending Physician
and requesting to be favoured
with the opinion as to the
period which should
elapse after recovery
from plague before a
patient can be considered
free of infection.

Long
9/2/98

Desp. 14/12/98

Ks

BACK PAPERS.

No.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

No.	Date.

Cho 2047

The same Carrer
is requested to expedite
his reply to def on Cho 2047
of 12 Dec 1898 regarding
the period which shd elapse
after recovery from plague,
before a patient can
be considered free of
infection.

Dec 20 1899

1/20/99

PLAGUE COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE.

(1899)

CURRENT No. 1012

From

The Agent S. I. R.
Trichinopoly

Order

No. 563 $\frac{43}{215}$

Dated 23-1-1899

Received 24-1-1899

Registered 24-1-1899

Enclosures

Spare copies

SUBJECT.

Requesting the favour of
an early reply to his
letter regarding the
conveyance by train
of convalescent

BACK PAPERS.

No.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

No.	Date.

Plague
No. R1563/43
215

South Indian Railway Co., Ltd.

AGENT'S OFFICE,

TRICHINOPOLY, 23rd January 1899.

From

THE AGENT,

SOUTH INDIAN RAILWAY.

To

The Plague Commissioner
Madras

Sir,

21/2047

I have the honor to invite your early attention to my letter N^o R1563/43 dated 7th December 1898, regarding the conveyance by train of convalescent Plague patients, and to request the favour of an early reply thereto.

I have the honor to be
Sir

Your most obedient servant

M. S. Meunier
for Agent

M. S. Meunier

Plague Commissioner's Office. Local & Muni. (1899) Department.

Telephone message to S.E. CURRENT No. 196

Please return the original papers forwarded with my def on Chs 204) d/12-12-98.

From The Sanitary Commr for Madras.
Order no 245/16 d/26-1-99

The Sanitary Commissioner is Communicated to the Agent S. I. Ry and all colls for information.

Dated 12 January 1899.
Received 17-1-1899
Registered 17-1-1899
Enclosures 1
Spare copies.

To Agent S. I. Ry
President M. C. Madras
S. A. S. Madras Commr
General Officer Commanding
S. I. Ry

Despatched 7/2/99
J.A.

SUBJECT.

Offering his opinion with reference to his No 2047 dated 14 December 1898, on the Subject of length of time a plague patient should be retained in Isolation Hospital.

South Indian Railway Co. Ltd.
AGENTS OFFICE
TRICHINPOLY 237

YAWJIAR WAGHI HTUOS

The Plague Commissioner
Madras

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1553/43 dated 14 December 1898, regarding the correspondence in connection with the plague patient and to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the Agent S. I. Ry for his consideration.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
J. A. S.

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

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Returned for signature.

Despatched in print.

READ AGAIN No. 163

CURRENT No.

2047 — A
 enclosure — B
 def Therean — A
 696 — A
 1012 — Q.

ENCLOSURES TO G. No.

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 3.2.99

then,

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H.S.
 3.2.99

A = Print in full.
 B = Not to be printed.
 P = Print abstract only.
 Q = Print heading only.