

[S. 90-13-6]

Local & Munl. (1899) Department.

MISCELLANEOUS.

G.O., No. 252 P. 2nd

DATED 17.2.99

[Despatch Abstract.]

Plague convalescents.

Recording Plague Commissioner's proceedings
communicating to the Agent, South Indian Railway, and Col-
lectors the opinion of the Sanitary Commissioner as to when —
cease to be a source of infection.

BACK PAPERS.

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

FURTHER PAPERS.

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

Proceedings of the Plague Commissioner, MADRAS—1899.



c no 272P

Recd. 7 - } *Feb* } 1899.
Regd. 8 - }

Enclosures

Spare copies 6 of *Env.*

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

JANUARY.

Order No 252P dated 17/1/99

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Recorded

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14/2/99

17-20

When plague convalescents cease to be a source of infection.

Communicating to the Agent, South Indian Railway, and all Collectors the opinion of the Sanitary Commissioner as to —.

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.

12th December 1898.

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

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 12th 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.* 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

* Klein showed that after *subcutaneous* injection, the bacilli lived and thrived in the intestines.

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. 1563/43-215.

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.

M. S. Mahalingam
7/2/99
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.

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READ AGAIN G.O., No. _____, DATED
 189 .

CURRENT No. .

ENCLOSURES TO C. No.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT

A A A A A A A

LETTER OF GOVERNMENT.

STATEMENT WITH DIPO.

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 IN ORIGINAL.

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