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# MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

## Government of Madras.

*Public Works* DEPARTMENT.

|                 |       |
|-----------------|-------|
| G.O. No. 2437   | Press |
| 513-514         | Mis.  |
| Dated 22-8-1865 |       |

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,*  
*22nd August 1865.*

No. 513. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the  
Military Department:—

Communicating to the Commander-in-  
Chief and Principal Inspector General  
Medical Department, Proceedings of  
the Government of India, with a view  
to Reports being submitted as to the  
extent of temporary Hospital accommo-  
dation necessary to provide the allotted  
minimum space of 100 superficial feet,  
at the specified rate of 12 per cent.  
sick on the strength of each Regiment  
or Detachment.

(Here enter 12th Aug. 1865, No. 2,983.)

No. 514. ORDER THEREON, 22nd August 1865, No. 2,437.

MILITARY WORKS, No. 42.

Communicated to the Superintending  
Engineers.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) CHARLES A. ORR, Colonel, R. E.,  
*Secretary to Government.*

To the Superintending Engineers.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

MILITARY DEPARTMENT.  
PROCEEDINGS OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following papers:—

Proceedings of the Governor General of India in Council, Public Works Department, Simla, 23rd June 1865, Circular No. 59.

Military Works.

*Over-crowding in Hospitals.*

Read again the following papers:—

Public Works Department Circular, No. 14, dated 15th February 1865, on the subject of obviating the over-crowding of Barracks and sleeping apartments of British Soldiers.

Memorandum dated 25th August 1864, by Lieutenant-Colonel Crommelin, upon some of the principles which should be attended to in designing Hospitals of European Troops in India.

From J. STRACHEY, Esq., President of the Sanitary Commission for Bengal, Calcutta, 30th March 1865, No. 152; to the Secretary to the Government, of India, Public Works Department.

The Commission has received a copy of the Resolution of the Government of India, Public Works Department, No. <sup>963 M</sup> 5904, dated 10th December 1864, on the subject of over-crowding of Soldiers' Barracks. These orders provide that when the full allowance of space, viz., 90 superficial feet per man, has not already been supplied, temporary accommodation shall at once be afforded at every Station to the full extent necessary, whatever may be the cost; that it is the first duty of Officers Commanding Stations to see that the full amount of space is given for all the Soldiers in their sleeping apartments, before provision is made for any subsidiary wants; and that whatever inconvenience be caused by giving up, when necessary, for temporary occupation by the men, rooms now appropriated for auxiliary purposes, it must be faced rather than that the sleeping rooms should be over-crowded.

2. The Commission is not aware how far these orders have been already acted upon, but ventures to express the hope that no delay may be allowed to take place on the part of the authorities whose duty it is to carry them out. We believe that, at least in a great measure, they might be enforced in the present year before the unhealthy season commences. It is hardly too much to say of these orders that nothing could have been done by the Government so likely to produce an immediate diminution of sickness and mortality in the Army, and we cannot over-state our conviction of the importance that they should be fully carried out.

3. The orders of Government refer only to Barracks. We beg to represent that it might be desirable to issue similar orders regarding the over-crowding of the Hospitals of the European Troops. We have reason for believing that, during the unhealthy months of the year, it not unfrequently happens that many more patients are sent into a Hospital than it can properly contain. Under all circumstances, over-crowding of this kind is most dangerous, and we believe that it can never be really necessary. If the Hospital accommodation provided for the European Troops at any station be plainly insufficient, the rule already laid down by the Government, with respect to the provisions of temporary Barrack accommodation, would be equally suitable to the case of Hospitals. Hospital accommodation should, we think, be considered insufficient when it does not provide for 12 per cent. of the

average strength of the Troops, at the rate of 130 superficial feet\* per patient. Even when Hospital accommodation is provided at this rate, it may sometimes

\* This is the standard rate recommended by Colonel Crommelin, and by the Sanitary Commission.

happen, during especially sickly seasons, that it is insufficient. Such cases can only be provided for when they occur, and we believe that there can seldom be any difficulty in meeting them. The principle should, we think, be acted upon which has already been laid down by the Government, on the recommendation of the Cholera Commission, for the prevention of over-crowding in Hospitals during the prevalence of cholera. If temporary Hospital accommodation cannot be given, all important cases, the treatment of which in Hospital is not essential, should be discharged. The following extract from the report of the Cholera Commission\*

*Part III, Section 500.*

is applicable to all exceptional occasions on which the number of sick is so large that the whole cannot be accommodated in the Hospital:—"Trifling cases of ordinary disease ought, at such times, to be considered of very little importance. They should receive a palliative treatment in Barracks or in Camp. It is far better that they should receive no treatment at all, than that they should be admitted into Hospital." We beg to recommend to the Government that orders to the above effect be issued.

RESOLUTION.—In the letter No. 152 above read, the Sanitary Commission for Bengal recommends that orders for prevention of over-crowding of Hospitals, by the immediate provision of a sufficient amount of temporary accommodation, should be issued similar to those laid down in Public Works Department Circular No. 14 of 1865, in regard to Barracks.

2. The Commission considers that Hospital accommodation is insufficient "when it does not provide for 12 per cent. of the average strength of the Troops, at the rate of 130 superficial feet per patient;" this percentage and space being recommended in the Memorandum by Lieutenant-Colonel Crommelin on Hospitals for European Troops, and approved by the Commission.

3. The Governor General in Council observes that whilst it is very desirable that Hospital accommodation for the European Troops should be provided to such an extent as to prevent over-crowding, it is at the same time important, before arriving at a final conclusion on any general measure such as that proposed by the Sanitary Commission, to consider whether it is absolutely necessary to authorise the full extent of space now recommended.

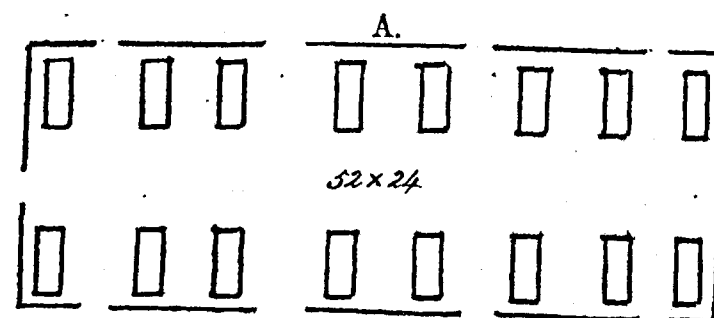
4. From an analysis of the Return for February 1865, of the sick in the Hospitals of the various arms of the service, it is observed that the general average of patients is about 5 per cent. But the month of February being one of the healthiest months, and some of the Corps having in that month 7, 8 and even 9 per cent. as an average daily ratio of sick in Hospital, the Governor General in Council does not consider 12 per cent. too high a ratio to assume, with reference to that which it is advisable to prepare for during the more sickly months of the year.

5. With regard to the space to be allowed to each patient, the Governor General in Council observes that this must, in a great measure, be regulated by the nature and extent of accommodation available in the wards of existing Hospitals. In all new Hospitals that may hereafter be constructed, it will of course be easy to arrange that each patient shall have the space now recommended, (viz., 130 superficial feet), should it be eventually decided that such space ought to be given; but the adoption, at the out set, of this full allowance, with reference to existing accommodation, would, from the peculiar construction of present Hospitals, not only entail the immediate necessity of constructing a vast amount of temporary accommodation, but would deprive many patients of good shelter, for though the full allowance may be desirable, still it can hardly be said to be absolutely necessary.

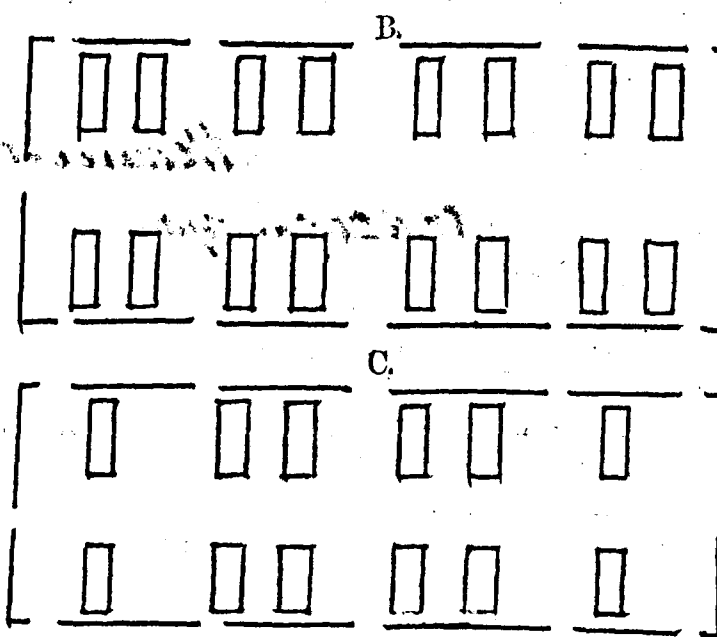
6. In illustration of the foregoing remark, the Governor General in Council observes that, in Colonel Crommelin's Memorandum on Hospitals, reasons are given to show that the wards should be 26 feet wide, that the wall space between two doors should be 15 feet, and the doors 5 feet wide. These dimensions give to each patient 10 running feet and 13 feet in width of the ward, or 130 superficial feet. In existing Hospitals, however, the wall space will rarely be found to exceed 10 feet, and will often be as little as 8 feet; the width of ward will, as a rule, be 24 feet. Thus the allowance for each patient will vary from  $7\frac{1}{2}$  to  $6\frac{1}{2}$  running feet, and from 90 to 78 superficial feet.

7. The Governor General in Council considers, on the whole, that a space of 100 superficial feet per patient will be sufficient to meet the present exigency, and desires that some arrangement may be adopted for regulating the complement of patients for existing Hospitals, so that the total space in each ward may, in every possible case, afford this allowance as a minimum. Temporary accommodation should then be provided for the difference between the number of patients for whom there is space according to this allowance, and the number requiring accommodation at the rate of 12 per cent. on the actual strength of each Regiment or Detachment.

8. The two following methods are instanced to show how the arrangement of the proper complement of patients in existing over-crowded Hospital wards may be managed:—



1st.—Diagram A represents a ward of a Hospital, according to existing Standard Plan. The dimensions of this ward are 52 feet x 24 feet = 1,248 superficial feet, which gives an allowance of 78 superficial feet per patient. If the corner beds are removed, the allowance for the remaining patients would be rather more than 100 superficial feet per bed.



2nd.—Another arrangement of the beds in a ward is shown in Diagram B. The necessary reduction might be made by placing only one instead of two beds in each of the four end wall spaces, as shown in Diagram C.

9. In conclusion, the Governor General in Council desires that special attention may be directed to that portion of the Sanitary Commission's communication which inculcates the advisability of not admitting slight cases into Hospital in times of great sickness.

Ordered that the foregoing observations, together with copy of the letter from the Sanitary Commission, be forwarded to the Local Governments and Administrations and Heads of Departments noted in the margin, for information and guidance, and with instructions that early Reports may be submitted to the Government of India of the measures proposed to be adopted in view to the carrying out of the present orders at each Military Cantonment.

Governments of Madras, Bombay, Bengal,  
North Western Provinces and Punjab.  
Chief Commissioners Oudh, Central Pro-  
vinces and British Burmah.  
Governor, Straits Settlements.  
Resident Hyderabad.  
Agents Governor General Central India  
and Rajpootana.  
Military Department.  
Adjutant General.  
Quarter Master General.  
Sanitary Commission for Bengal.

(Signed) C. H. DICKENS, Lieut.-Colonel, R. A.  
Secy. to the Govt. of India, P. W. D.

Referred to the Military Department, with a view to the issue of the necessary orders.

28th July 1865.

(Signed) C. A. ORR, Colonel, R. E.,  
Secretary to Government, P. W. D.

ORDER, No. 2983, 12th August 1865.

Communicated to the Commander-in-Chief and Principal Inspector General Medical Department, with a request that the Reports required under paragraph 7 of the Resolution of the Governor General, as to the extent of temporary Hospital accommodation necessary to provide the allotted minimum space of 100 superficial feet at the specified rate of 12 per cent sick on the actual strength of each Regiment or Detachment, may be submitted with as little delay as possible.

(True Extract.)

*Manuella Hobbs*  
Deputy Secretary to Government.

To the Public Works Department. *With 20 spare Copies.*  
„ Quarter Master General.  
„ Principal Inspector General Medical Department.  
„ President Sanitary Commission, } for information.  
„ Adjutant General,.....

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