

MADRAS RECORD C.

Government of Madras.

DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	Press Mis.
Dated	18

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department.
13th August 1869.

No. 93. Read the following letter from the Sanitary Commissioner for Madras, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George ; dated Madras, 2nd August 1869, No. 2721.

I have the honour to enclose, for the information of Government, copy of a letter addressed to the President of the Municipal Commission and his reply thereto upon the subject of disinfection on a large scale with the view to avert the spread of cholera, which has shown a tendency within the last few days to assume the proportions of a spreading epidemic and to cling to certain localities.

2. I adopted the course of direct communication with the Municipal Commissioners to save time.

From the Sanitary Commissioner for Madras, to the President of the Madras Municipal Commission ; dated Madras, 30th July 1869, No. 2715.

The disposition which cholera has shown within the last few days to spread, and such extension viewed with the light of experience afforded by the year 1860, when, with very similar meteorological conditions, a virulent epidemic prevailed causing no less than 2580 deaths, induces me to address you, and to suggest certain additional precautionary measures that may tend to avert a similar catastrophe this year.

2. I write *additional* because every precaution has, I am aware, been taken, except possibly the one I now suggest, and that is disinfection on a large scale of the localities and houses to which the disease appears disposed to cling.

3. The question of disinfection on a large scale was discussed in the report of deaths in Madras for 1860, but it was considered that none of the known disinfectants were available in daily life or for general use amongst the native population from their great cost.

4. But it may not, and, I trust, will not, be found beyond the means of the Municipality to enter upon disinfection of all affected localities upon a large scale, and through a definite and distinct agency organized for the purpose. The cheapest disinfectant, and one that is, I believe, obtainable in the market at Madras in considerable quantities, is "MacDougall's Disinfecting Powder," a mixture of the carbolates and sulphites of lime and magnesia.

5. Last year, Mr. Ottoway, giving his address, 45, 2nd Line Beach, wrote to me to say that he had the powder in casks, holding 200lbs. each, at Rupees 15 per cask, with tin dredgers for sprinkling it.

6. The free use of the disinfectant in the drains, both of streets and houses, in the backyards of houses, and to all foul spots in the localities in which the disease prevails, and a supply to each house in which cases of cholera may be reported in view to the disinfection of the evacuations and soiled clothing, and general disinfection of the house, might prove a means of staying the plague.

7. You are doubtless aware that the propagation of the disease is mainly, if not entirely, by the discharges cast off from the body by purging and vomiting. These discharges, unless precautions be taken, find their way into drains and into the soil and water, where the infecting germs multiply a thousand-fold.

8. Thorough disinfection, therefore, of the evacuation, of the clothing, of the houses, and premises, tend to avert the spread of the disease.

I am aware that disinfection of houses and premises has been adopted by your Inspectors in all houses in which cholera *deaths* have occurred ; but, what I would now advise is, general disinfection of all affected localities through an agency created for the purpose acting under Sanitary Inspectors.

10. I would also caution against any disturbance of existing dung and rubbish heaps, or interference with the drains till they have been first disinfected. Attempts to remove sweltering heaps of decomposing filth, or to clean out drains and cesspits *after* epidemic disease has made its appearance, is apt to be attended with disastrous effects.

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
13th August 1869.*

11. The localities in which disinfection should be at first carried out are Poodoopettah and Chintadrepettah, to which the disease appears to cling; but, on the occurrence of a single case in any other locality, I would advise that the disinfection should be at once proceeded with.

From the President of the Madras Municipal Commission, to the Sanitary Commissioner; dated Madras, 31st July 1869, No. 1618.

I have to acknowledge with thanks receipt of your letter, No. 2715, of yesterday, suggesting additional precautionary measures in consequence of the prevalence of cholera in certain localities in this city after our conversation yesterday on this subject. I had already authorized the Sanitary Inspector to purchase a large supply of MacDougall's disinfecting Powder, (I have been using carbolic acid and Condy's fluid freely in all cases where cholera has been known to exist,) and have also authorized the entertainment of such additional conservancy staff as he may consider requisite, in order to carry out, as far as possible, your suggestions.

2. With reference to paragraph 10 of your letter, I had, in my endorsement on yesterday's Mortuary Report, cautioned as to the disturbance of drains at present, as being more likely to disseminate the choleraic matter. I am in great hopes that the heavy rain of last night may have had a beneficial effect.

3. The Medical Department yesterday on my requisition supplied me with 3000 cholera pills and six ounces of chlorodyne, which will be given in charge of the District Sanitary Inspectors and Overseers, and, at the suggestion of Dr. Bidie, I have directed the Sanitary Inspector to furnish each Inspector with a soda-water bottle full of brandy, mixed with a little camphor and chilly powder, which will prevent it being used except as a medicine, and may be the means of preserving life until the patient reaches hospital.

No. 94.

ORDER THEREON, 13th August 1869, No. 1138.

To be recorded.

(True Extract).

R. S. ELLIS,
Chief Secretary.

No. 2721

OFFICE OF SANITARY COMMISSIONER.

Madras, 2nd. August 1869

From

The Sanitary Commissioner for Madras,

To

The Chief Secretary to Government
Public Department.

Sir,

Enclosure 2

I have the honor to enclose for the information of Government copy of a letter addressed to the President of the Municipal Commission and his reply thereto upon the subject of disinfection on a large scale with the view to avert the spread of Cholera, which has shown a tendency within the last few days to assume the proportions of a spreading epidemic and to cling to certain localities.

2. I adopted the course of direct communication with the Municipal Commissioners to same time.

I have the honor to be

Sir,

Your most obedient servant.

A. Hunter

Sanitary Commissioner for Madras

Enc 2, 512

PUBLIC.

Copy of Letter to the Chief Secretary to Government.

Printed by the Government Press, Madras.

Printed by the Government Press, Madras.

1869/08/02.

Received by the Sanitary Commissioner for Madras, 2nd August 1869.

Public Bg Sept

From

The Sanitary Commissioner

for Madras.

To

The Chief Secretary
to Government
Fort St. George.

Dated 2nd.

Despatched.

Received 2

} August 1869.

No 1811

No. 2721

Enclosures. 2 ✓

Encloses correspondence regard-
ing the disinfection on a large
scale of all localities within the
Municipal limits of Madras
in which cholera may have
broken out, and in which it
shows a disposition to spread.

With order on the enclosure

c4/s
29/8.

Cont. of 1869: 2nd
Public

Aug. 13.

G. O. 13 Aug. 1. 1869. No. 1132.

Aug. 13. 74.

Recording letter from the
Sanitary Commission forwarding
copy of the correspondence
between himself and the
Municipality
concerning the precautions
measures to be adopted
in consequence of the progress
of Cholera in certain localities