

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	1215	Press
		~~Mis.~~
Dated	31-8-1869	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

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Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
31st August 1869.

No. 203. Read the following letter from the Inspector General of the Indian Medical Department, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Fort Saint George, 18th August 1869, No. 313.

I have the honour to enclose a letter from Mr. Cornish on the subject of Proceedings of Government, No. 1072, of 3rd August 1869, in which he proposes, for reasons stated, to investigate the points mentioned in Section 5 of the "Instructions" at Palaveram, Honore, Bellary, Ghooty or Kurnool, Trichinopoly or Salem, and Paumbem and neighbourhood, as a preliminary measure to a more extended inquiry, should Government think right to order it.

2. I approve generally of the selection of localities, and perhaps Government will be good enough to say whether all the stations named in the Ceded Districts are to be examined, or Trichinopoly or Salem, or both.

As Honore is now under the jurisdiction of the Bombay Government, it will be necessary, I apprehend, to solicit the aid of that Government in affording Mr. Cornish facilities for his inquiries. I would suggest, also, a public Notification to all officials in this Presidency, requesting their cooperation and assistance.

3. The work on which Mr. Cornish is now engaged (compilation of new Code of Regulations) will take a few months longer to complete. The first volume, however, containing the most important sections, is nearly ready, and the completion need not delay the commencement of the proposed inquiry.

4. Government will, perhaps, be pleased to pass orders on the subject of the terms on which Mr. Cornish is to undertake this special duty. I would suggest that in addition to compensation for the salary of his substantive office, and as Secretary to the Medical Fund, a deputation allowance of ten rupees per diem, and actual travelling expenses, be granted for the time Government may see fit to require his services in this investigation.

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From Surgeon W. R. CORNISH, F.R.C.S., to the Inspector General of the Indian Medical Department, Fort Saint George; dated Madras, 18th August 1869.

Referring to paragraph 4 of the Proceedings of Madras Government marginally named, I have the honour to state that "Section 5 of the instructions for conducting an inquiry into cholera in India" contemplates special investigations being made in places.

- (a). Where cholera never breaks out.
- (b). Where cholera is endemic.
- (c). Where cholera prevails epidemically.

2. With regard to the first set of localities they are, I believe, by no means numerous. Mr. Balfour's list, published many years ago, gives, it is true, a long list of villages which had not been attacked by epidemic cholera, but it was shown that the great majority of such villages were situated either in hill-tracts, or away from the main streams of human intercourse, or the villages were comparatively small and insignificant.

3. Still, some interesting and important facts were deduced in the inquiry conducted by Mr. Balfour. It was shown, for instance, that the town of Honore, in North Canara, had never experienced an epidemic visitation of cholera. So long as North Canara remained under the Madras

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31st August 1869.*

Government, our records prove that this immunity was maintained. What has been the case since the transfer of the district to Bombay, I do not know ; but I am inclined to name Honore as one of the most important stations for a special investigation, because the facts for a long series of years, as regards its immunity from cholera, are thoroughly reliable. There are other places on the Western Coast, especially Cannanore, Quilon, and Malliaporam, where cholera has been a rare disease, and the features of these stations might, perhaps, be investigated also ; but if the inquiry is to be limited to a single station on the western side of the Ghauts, then I am of opinion that Honore should be the station selected.

4. Another station quite close to Madras is alluded to by Mr. Balfour as one in which cholera had never prevailed. It is the more remarkable because it is situated on the high road from the south to Madras, and hundreds of bandies and travellers pass through it daily to and from the town of Madras, where the disease is so often epidemic.

This is the Military Cantonment of Palaveram. Since the date of Mr. Balfour's report, a few cases of cholera have occurred in the Cantonment, but in all, or nearly all the cases, there was a clear history of importation. The special circumstances of this Cantonment and of the surrounding villages in which cholera is common, should, I think, come within the scope of the proposed inquiry.

5. Some of the hill ranges might also be examined in regard to this question of exempted places. Cholera, according to the best of my knowledge, does not prevail epidemically on the Shevaroy Hills, or the Neilgherries. In regard to the latter it is often carried up the Coonoor Ghaut, and has been known to prevail in Coffee Estates on the Ghaut. It is not infrequent at Metapolium. The conditions of the town at the foot of the Ghaut, and of Coonoor and Otacamund might be compared. Mere elevation does not appear to influence cholera epidemics, as, at Simla and Mus-sourie in the Himalayas, cholera has been quite recently very severe.

6. I now come to the second subject of the proposed inquiry—the examination of localities in which the disease is endemic. If by the term endemic locality we mean place where cholera is a natural product of the locality, manifesting itself month after month, and year after year, subject to some seasonal variations, but never wholly absent, then I am afraid that I shall have to look a long time to find such a place. A few years ago, I should, with the evidence then before me, have said that the town of Madras was a place where cholera was endemic, but with the complete absence of the disease for a period of nearly two years, in 1867-68 and 1869, it can no longer be said that Madras is an endemic site.

7. In the Report of the Madras Cholera Committee I find, the only places in the whole Presidency where the disease is officially reported to be endemic are Trichinopoly and some villages in that district, and Ongole and Vencatageri in the Nellore district. The town and valley of Salem was at one time considered to be an endemic locality, but no returns are given in the Committee's table regarding the Salem Collectorate. I am of opinion that the towns of Trichinopoly and Salem should be thoroughly investigated with reference to this question of endemicity.

8. I mention these places because there is reliable evidence as to the prevalence or otherwise of cholera in our medical records of the army and public institutions of those localities for a long series of years, and should cholera be found to be endemic in the towns, the Municipalities might materially assist in one portion of the inquiry, viz., "the thorough improvement of notoriously unhealthy localities showing the effect of such improvements on public health."

9. Some other towns and villages on the banks of the Caveri might also perhaps be profitably examined.

10. There is one point in connexion with the investigation which has not been specially noted in the Code of Instructions. I allude to the influence of various winds on localities in protecting them or otherwise from cholera. I should desire to see investigated the condition as to cholera of certain islands over which sea air is continually blowing—such as the island of Paumbem, the small islands off the Malabar Coast, and perhaps hereafter the Andamans.

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11. Paumbem is said to be never visited by cholera except when pilgrims pass through to Ramasweram. Ramnad on the mainland again is stated by Mr. Nelson to be a notorious hotbed of cholera. Several very opposite conditions apparently prevail in this locality, and the field, so far as I can judge, appears to be one of some promise for minute investigation.

12. As regards the epidemic localities, I am inclined to recommend an inquiry in various parts of the country, where the climate, elevation and soil, vary a good deal.

For instance, a locality might be examined in the elevated plateau of the Mysore table-land, one or more in the black cotton soil of the Ceded Districts, and localities in the alluvial deltas of the great rivers Kistna and Godavery.

13. To carry out, single-handed, an investigation such as has been sketched out here would occupy probably many years.

It seems to me, therefore, that the best mode of initiating the inquiry will be to examine carefully a few well-contrasted localities, as a preliminary measure, and to submit reports upon them as they are examined. It may be that no new light will be thrown on the history of cholera

by such an investigation, but it may also be that the preliminary inquiry will indicate in what direction further investigations may be profitably pursued. I name, therefore, the localities in the margin, as those which I think it important to examine in the present stage of the inquiry.

Palaveram.
Honore.
Bellary, or
Ghooity, or
Kurnool.
Trichinopoly, or
Salem.
Paumbem and neighbourhood.

No. 204

ORDER THEREON, 31st August 1869, No. 1215.

With reference to the correspondence above recorded, the Government are of opinion that it is desirable to leave a considerable latitude to Mr. Cornish in respect of the places which he will bring under investigation.

2. Honore, Palaveram, and Paumbem should be examined with a view of carefully testing the immunity from cholera, with which these places are credited.

3. The causes of the exemption of hill stations—such as Ootacamund and the Shevaroy—are worthy of investigation, as well as the conditions of the towns or villages at the base of these hills.

4. As regards places where cholera is stated to be endemic and epidemic the Government concur with Mr. Cornish as to the difficulty, in the face of the health statistics of recent years, in selecting an exemplar of a place where the endemicity of cholera can be confidently asserted.

5. It will probably, at present, be sufficient thoroughly to examine Bellary, Kurnool, and Salem ; but, as before stated, the Government desire to leave Mr. Cornish, during the progress of his arduous task, entirely free to take such measures as he may consider most likely to be useful in the prosecution of his inquiry.

6. The Government approve of the suggestions made by the Inspector General of the Indian Medical Department as to the terms on which Mr. Cornish should undertake this special duty, and they sanction his drawing, in addition to compensation for the salary of his substantive office and that of Secretary to the Medical Fund, a special deputation allowance of ten rupees per diem, and his actual travelling expenses.

7. These Proceedings will be communicated to the Collectors of all Districts, with a request that they will afford Mr. Cornish all the assistance in their power in the prosecution of his inquiry.

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31st August 1869.

8. A letter will also be addressed to the Government of Bombay, informing them that Mr. Cornish will visit North Canara, and requesting that the Collector of that District may be instructed to assist Mr. Cornish.

(True Extract).

R. S. ELLIS,
Chief Secretary.

To the Inspector General of the Indian Medical Department.
,, Sanitary Commissioner.
,, Military Department.
,, Accountant General.

Govt. of Madras.

PUBLIC.

To

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE
INDIAN MEDICAL DEPARTMENT,
Secy, Secy, &c.

Dated August, 31st.

Recd.

Encl.

G. O., 31st August 1869, No. 1215.

AUGUST.

Nos. 203—205.

Passing orders on certain proposals having
reference to the investigation of Cholera by Surgeon
Cornish.

Public Department.

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following letter from the
Inspector General, Indian Medical
Department.

(Here enter 18th August 1869 No 313.)

Order thereon. Ld 121507 31 Aug 69.

With reference to the correspondence above recorded the Government are of opinion that it is desirable to leave a considerable latitude to Mr. Cornish in respect of the places which he will bring under investigation.

2. Honore, Palaveram and Pambam should be examined with a view of carefully testing the immunity from cholera, with which

these

these places are credited.

3 The causes of the exemption of Hill stations, such as Ootacamund and the Shevaroy, are worthy of investigation as well as the conditions of the towns or villages at the base of these hills.

4. As regards places where Cholera is stated to be endemic and epidemic the Government Concurs with Mr. Cornish as to the difficulty, in the face of the health statistics of recent years, in selecting an exemplar of a place where the endemicity of Cholera can be ^{confidently asserted} ~~proved~~.

5 It will probably, at present, be sufficient thoroughly to examine Bellary, Kurnool and Salem, but as before stated the Government desire to leave Mr. Cornish, during the progress of his arduous task, entirely free to take such measures as he may consider most likely to be useful in the prosecution of his enquiry.

6. The Government approve

of the suggestions made by the Inspector General Indian Medical Department, as to the terms on which Mr. Cornish should undertake this special duty, and they sanction his drawing, in addition to compensation for the salary of his substantive Office and that of Secretary to the Medical Fund, a special deputation allowance of 100 Rs per diem and his actual travelling expenses.

These proceedings will be communicated to the Collectors of the all Districts with a request that they will afford Mr. Cornish all the ^{aid assistance} ~~aid assistance~~ ^{in their power} ~~in their power~~ that they can in the prosecution of his enquiry. A letter will also be addressed to the Govt of

Bombay informing them that Mr. Cornish will visit P. Canara and

Sept 4/6

to the Insp. Gen. Indian Med. Dept. Bombay
Secretary Government
Medical Dept
Govt General

Oct. of 1863 Madras.

To

Date
Recd.
Nos.
186, No.

Requesting the good
Office that the
Collector of that district
may may be instructed
to assist Mr. Cornish

deputy
to the Port of Bombay
No 1216

Sir

I am directed to inform
for the information of Mr. C.
Melgarnor enclosed the
accompanying Pro: of this
date, and with reference
to Mr. Cornish's passport
to visit Honore to ^{solicit} request
that the Collector & Magistrate
of Mr. Canara may be requested
to assist Mr. Cornish such
assistance as he may be needing
to enable ^{him} to prosecute his enquiries
as to the causes of the
alleged exemption of Honore from Cholera

W. H. G. G.
31 Oct 63

RM

Govt. of {1869} Madras.

Public

*The Sup. Court. Ind. Dist. Sept.
+ ca*

Dated Aug. 31

Recd.

Ind.

G. O. 31 Aug. 1869, No 12

Nos 203. 205

*Passing order on certain
proposals having reference
to the investigation of cholera
by Surgeon Cornish.*

61 869 Madras.

Public Works
of Bombay.

Date.

1.31

Recd.

G.

1 Aug

1869, No. 12.

Nos. 205. 205.

Respecting Prov. of the Govt.
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