

Public (1895) Department.

ORDINARY PRINTED.

G.O., No. 224

DATED 28th March 1896

INDEXED.

[Despatch Abstract.]

POST-MORTEM EXAMINATIONS OF ANIMALS.

Declining to agree to the Surgeon-General's proposal that requisitions for---should be signed only by Superintendents or Assistant Superintendents of Police, and requesting the Inspector-General of Police that all members of his department may be instructed that the mere fact of an animal being found dead is not a sufficient reason for requiring a post mortem examination by a Medical Officer.

BACK PAPERS.

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Gobt. of {1895} Madras.
PUBLIC.

Issued

Recd.

Encl.

G.O., 28th March 1895, No. 224.

MARCH.

Post-mortem Examinations of Animals.

Declining to agree to the Surgeon-General's proposal that requisitions for — should be signed only by Superintendents or Assistant Superintendents of Police, and requesting the Inspector-General of Police that all members of his department may be instructed that the mere fact of an animal being found dead is not a sufficient reason for requiring a post-mortem examination by a medical officer.

28TH MARCH 1895, No. 224, PUBLIC.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

PUBLIC DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following paper:—

From Surgeon-Major-General C. SIBTHORPE, F.R.C.P.I., Surgeon-General with the Government of Madras, to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated Madras, 5th March 1895, No. 227.

With reference to G.O., No. 297, Public, dated the 20th March 1888, I have the honour to forward for the information of Government the accompanying letter, No. 1011, dated the 22nd February 1895, with its enclosure, from the Civil Surgeon, Ootacamund.

2. I consider the whole procedure of asking a medical officer to perform such duties most objectionable, but should Government desire it to be done, such examination should only be supervised in the interests of justice on the requisition of a Superintendent or an Assistant Superintendent of Police.

ENCLOSURE.

From Surgeon-Major G. L. WALKER, M.D., Civil Surgeon, Ootacamund, to the Secretary to the Surgeon-General with the Government of Madras, dated Ootacamund, 22nd February 1895, No. 1011.

I have the honour to submit herewith Tamil letter from the Station-house officer, Kandal, Ootacamund, No. 1, dated 20th February 1895, together with its English translation, calling upon me to hold a *post-mortem* examination on the body of a dog, the property of Mr. E. Hadfield, that was found dead in its godown on the morning of the 20th instant. I superintended the autopsy and found that death resulted from natural causes.

G.O., No. 297, dated 20th March 1888, Public, republished in quarterly sheets 1st quarter 1888, directs that medical officers must supervise *post-mortem* examinations of *cattle* when called upon. I request the favour of information, *firstly*, whether "*cattle*" is to be considered, in this connection, to include dogs, cats, asses, and in fact all animals? and, *secondly*, who is the competent authority to call upon the civil surgeon or district medical and sanitary officer to conduct such autopsies?

At present, any police constable or third-grade head constable, who happens to be the station-house officer, appears to be authorised to direct a commissioned medical officer to perform the questionable duty of holding *post-mortems* on animals (questionable from a professional point of view). A person communicates with the station-house officer, saying "My dog (cat, monkey, bird, &c.) is dead, I think it may have been poisoned"; the station-house officer at once directs the civil surgeon to hold a *post-mortem* examination, without the existence of any evidence pointing to foul play. About two weeks ago two calves that died from natural causes were similarly sent to me for *post-mortem* examination by the same station-house officer. I cannot resist the conviction that such work is alien to the profession of a medical man; but, if it must be done, I think the request for its performance should emanate from a police officer of the standing of the District Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent of Police (who would probably make the request only in cases in which a probability of poisoning existed), and not from an ignorant station-house officer who makes the demand at the request of the owner of the dead animal—an easy way out of his difficulty. Apart from the natural repulsion connected with the performance of autopsies on the bodies of animals (often in a state of decomposition) is the fact that such work takes up a medical officer's time frequently, as events show, quite unnecessarily.

Subd to 802 of 95-
No. 1/20.2.95.

From

Station House Officer
Mandab.

To,

The Medical Officer
Cotacamund.

Sir,

A dog named "Bondo" worth
about Rs 60/- belonging to Mr.
Edward Hadfield was brought till
5 o'clock in the evening of the 14th
instant, and afterwards was fed
with the other dogs and was locked
up in a godown by dog boy Subby.
Early in the morning at 7 o'clock
when the dog boy opened the door
found this dog alone to be dead.

As the owner of this dog suspects
that this should have been poisoned
by somebody and as he requests us
to send this to you for post mortem
examination, I have sent this
dog through constable No. 677
and request that a post mortem
examination may be held and a
Certificate granted to that
effect.

I have &c.

(Sd) J. H. Ramasamy

Station House Officer

CURRENT NO 747

OFFICE OF SURGEON-GENERAL

No. 227

Encl.

WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS,

Madras, 5th March 1895.

From

SURGEON-MAJOR-GENERAL C. SIBTHORPE, F.R.C.P.J.,

SURGEON-GENERAL WITH THE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS,

Madras,

To

THE Honorable the Chief Secretary to Government
Public Department

SIR,

With reference to G. O. No. 297 Public dated
the 20th March 1888, I have the honor to forward for
the information of Government the accompanying letter
No. 1011 dated the 22nd February 1895 with its enclosure
from the Civil Surgeon Cotacamund.

2. I consider the whole procedure of asking a
Medical Officer to perform such duties most objectionable,
but should Government desire it to be done, such
examination should only be supervised in the interests
of justice on the requisition of a Superintendent or
an Assistant Superintendent of Police.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

Chinchaud

Surgn.-Major-Genl.,

Surgeon-General with the Govt. of Madras,

Public (189) DEPARTMENT.

747

From

SURGEON-MAJOR-GENL. C. SIBTHORPE, F.R.C.P.I.,

SURGEON-GENERAL WITH THE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS,

Madras,

To

No. 227
ENCLOSURE. 2.

Dated

Received

5th March 1895.

No.

SUBJECT.

Forwarding with remarks the accompanying letter No. 1011 dated the 22nd February 1895 with its enclosures from the Civil Surgeon Cochinamund regarding the requisition from station house officer for a post mortem examination of a dog.

Public DEPARTMENT.

No. 747

From

The Surgeon General.

Dated

189 .

FOR ORDERS.

Surgeon Major Walker takes exception to having been called upon by the Station House Officer of Madras to hold post mortem examination on the body of a dog. The evidence showed that the dog appeared to be in its usual health in the evening and was found dead next morning. There was no reason to suppose that the dog had been poisoned and the autopsy showed that it died from natural causes.

The Surgeon General considers the whole procedure of asking medical officers to perform such duties to be most objectionable, but if necessary such examination should only be performed in the interest of justice on the requisition of the Superintendent or Asst. Superintendent of Police.

It is submitted that it would be unsafe to lay down any such rule as in many cases it would be quite impossible to obtain the signature of Superintendent or Asst. Superintendent to the requisition. It would seem to be safer to direct medical officers to comply with all such requisitions in all cases.

water by whom they are signed.
and to bring to notice cases in
which they have reason to believe
that they were referred to on in-
sufficient grounds.

It is submitted that the
present case may be handed over
to the Inspector General of Police
for disposal as this is not the first
occasion on which the particular
Station House officer has unnecessarily
troubled the Medical Officers.

The opportunity might well
be taken to direct that "cattle"
includes asses, valuable dogs, and
such like, but not cats, monkeys,
birds &c. Owners should make
their own arrangements for
Examinations in such cases.

As for directing that "cattle" includes
valuable dogs and such like
is out of the question. The order
was passed in view of assisting
the detection of a particular form of
crime and not to assist in running
the petty shop or other business.
Besides "cattle" has a specific and
distinct meaning.

The Chief Medical Officer of a District
need not himself perform or
superintend P.M.'s on animals
as will be quite sufficient for
him to deputise a subordinate to over-
look operations of this nature. If
unusually large numbers are made on
him he can report them to
the S.O. He has no objection to
both from the police or
legislature from Dept. of Agric.
Dept. of Police would be un-
workable. 12/3/96

And Police officers should
be instructed that the mere
fact that an animal is found
dead is not sufficient reason
for making the doctor make
a P.M. W

Public Department.

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Order 28th March 1895, No. 221
The Government cannot
agree to the Surgeon General's
proposal ^{that} ~~the~~ requisition
for post-mortem Examination
of animals should be
signed only by Superin-
tendents or Assistant Super-
intendents of Police. A rule
to that effect would be
unworkable. On the other
hand, it is not necessary
for the Chief Medical
Officer of a district to
himself perform or
superintend such examination
of animals other than
It will be sufficient if he
deputises a subordinate to
overlook operations of the
kind. If unusually
frequent calls are made
for such examinations he
can report the matter to
the

28/3/96

the Surgeon General.
 2. The case which has
 given rise to the present
 reference will be brought
 to the notice of the Inspector
 General of Police with the
 request that all members
 of the Police department
 may be instructed that
 the mere fact of an
 animal being found
 dead is not a sufficient
 reason for requiring a
post mortem Examination
by a Medical officer.
from orders.

35B.
 18.3.95.

25/3/95

The Surgeon General.
 Inspector General of Police.
 - Inspected 4/4/95
 6/4/95

First copy sent to Press.

Returned for signature.

Despatched in print.

NUMBER OF COPIES REQUIRED. { Order complete. 50
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 Order complete with Letter

READ AGAIN G. O., No.
 189

DATE

CURRENT No.

ENCLOSURE TO G. No.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT

LETTER OF GOVERNMENT

STATEMENT WITH DUTY

PAPER NOTED FOR BEING MEANT FOR DEPARTMENT
 IN ORIGINAL

N.B. -

A = Print in full.
 B = No. to be printed.
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