

Public (1896) Department.

ORDINARY MS.

G.O., No. / 3

Dated 7th Jan: 1896.

INDEXED.

[Despatch Abstract.]

STATUS OF ASSISTANT SURGEONS IN THE
MAHARAJA PRESIDENCY.

Referring to the Surgeon-General that the Government of
India has been addressed as to the----

BACK PAPERS.

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

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.
✓	Com 2768/98						

No. 771.

FROM

J. P. HEWETT, Esq., C.I.E.,
Offg. Secretary to the Government of India,

TO

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL,
MUNICIPAL (MEDICAL) DEPARTMENT.

Home Department.
Medical.

Simla, the 4th September 1895.

SIR,

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Bourdillon's letter No. 773 (Medical), dated the 27th February 1895, and your subsequent reminder No. 3435 (Medical), dated the 24th August 1895, relating to the report on the pay, position and prospects of Civil Assistant Surgeons in Bengal, submitted by the Committee originally appointed by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor to consider the pay, etc., of Civil Hospital Assistants.

2. Mr. Bourdillon's letter deals with the several proposals made by the Committee for improving the status of Assistant Surgeons but only asks for the orders of the Government of India on the first and fifth of those proposals. The Government of India are, however, as indicated by the reference to previous correspondence contained in the second paragraph of Mr. Bourdillon's letter under reply, interested in all of the recommendations of the Committee and I am accordingly to convey the following observations upon them.

3. The Committee's recommendations are seven, viz. :—

I.—That unemployed pay should be abolished, and that third grade Assistant Surgeons should be allowed their grade pay from the date of admission into the service.

II.—That transfers on promotion should cease, Government paying the difference in pay resulting from the promotion in cases where the Municipality cannot or will not do so.

III.—That in certain specified appointments grade pay and allowances should be consolidated so as to carry pensionary rights.

IV.—That a further increase of Rs. 50 per mensem should be granted at the end of 21 years' service, subject to the usual professional examination; successful candidates to be graded as Senior Assistant Surgeons.

V.—That a few of the smaller civil stations should be reserved for Assistant Surgeons with a charge allowance of Rs. 150 carrying pensionary rights.

VI.—That no bond should be exacted from students of the Medical College.

VII.—That the present system of scholarships should be maintained.

4. The Government of India concur in the views expressed by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor on proposals III, VI and VII. It appears to the Governor General in Council that the grievance which suggestion I is designed to remove would not have arisen in Bengal, if care had been taken in the recruitment of Assistant Surgeons, and so far as His Excellency in Council is aware, it does not exist, except to a very slight degree, in other Provinces. Under the orders contained in the letter from this Office No. 591, dated the 21st September 1891, paragraph 3, unemployed pay is now given to Assistant Surgeons only when they have no temporary or permanent charges and are merely attached to Hospitals or on similar duty. The number of Assistant Surgeons on unemployed pay would, if the service were carefully recruited, be very small and it will be necessary, if the proposal to abolish unemployed pay altogether except as a punishment is sanctioned, that greater care should be exercised in the matter of recruitment. Before passing final orders on this question the Government of India would be glad to be informed of the actual extra cost which will be involved by this proposal after making allowance for the consideration above stated. Other Local Governments will also be consulted on the subject and asked for a similar estimate.

5. The second proposal relates to the transfer on promotion of Assistant Surgeons employed under Municipalities in consequence of the refusal or inability of such bodies to meet the increased rate of pay that falls due to an Assistant Surgeon on promotion to a higher grade. The remarks of the Committee on this question are contained in paragraphs 10 to 14 of their report. In paragraph 10 reference is made to the fact that not long ago 13 Assistant Surgeons of the first grade and 11 of the second grade were without permanent appointments, owing apparently to the refusal of local bodies to grant them the higher rates of pay, while in paragraph 11 an instance is given of an Assistant Surgeon who had to forego his increase of pay in order to remain in his original appointment. In paragraph 5 of Mr. Bourdillon's letter it is observed that the necessity of providing against the transfer of Medical officers in charge of local fund dispensaries has been recognized by the Local Government and that to this end effect has been given to a policy of meeting from Provincial revenues the increased pay to which an Assistant Surgeon in charge of a local fund dispensary becomes entitled on promotion to a higher grade in cases where the local body is really unable to meet it through financial pressure and not through perversity. The circumstances stated above seem to the Government of India to indicate that this rule is not likely to work smoothly in all cases, especially in those in which a municipality or local body may be opposed to the retention of the services of a particular Assistant Surgeon. In paragraphs 12 and 14 of the Committee's report two alternative solutions of this difficulty are suggested. The first plan is that all Municipalities requiring such officers should contribute to Government the average pay of an Assistant Surgeon, the Government undertaking in return to provide them with an Assistant Surgeon and to pay him his grade pay whatever it may be. The second alternative is that Municipalities should make their own arrangements for Medical officers in the same manner as District Boards arrange for teachers when Zilla schools are made over to them. The latter suggestion is open to objection from several points of view of which the principal are that it is believed that the best men do not offer themselves for employment under local bodies; that when so employed they have no incentive to work and may be supported by the members of a local Committee even though their work may not be satisfactory; that they are not under any form of control or discipline, and are not available to fill vacancies occasioned by the employment of commissioned officers required for field service. The Government of India understand that the extent to which local bodies already entertain medical subordinates not in Government service constitutes one of the main difficulties of medical administration in Lower Bengal and has helped, as much as anything, to make the working of dispensaries in that Province less satisfactory than in other Provinces. The first plan referred to above has already been approved in paragraph 5 of the letter from this Office No. 678 of the 31st October 1894, and it appears to His Excellency in Council to be both practical and expedient. I am to request that, with the permission of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, steps may be taken to give effect to it in Lower Bengal.

6. The fourth proposal of the Committee is that an increase of Rs. 50 per mensem should be granted to Assistant Surgeons at the end of 21 years' service after a successful examination and that such men should at the same time be graded as Senior Assistant Surgeons. The Governor General in Council is, I am to say, anxious, if this can be effected without prohibitive cost, to improve the prospects of Assistant Surgeons so as to render their appointments more likely than at present to attract the best men available. His Excellency in Council recognises that Assistant Surgeons are as a body useful and zealous public servants, for an improvement in whose position good cause has been shown. While the Committee's proposal would in a measure ameliorate the prospects of Assistant Surgeons as a class it seems to the Government of India to be imperfect, and they are inclined to think that, a scheme on the following lines would be more likely to afford the additional attractions which appear to be necessary in order to place the service on a satisfactory footing. The scheme which has been suggested provides for the division of Assistant Surgeons into four grades on Rs. 100, 150, 200 and 300 a month respectively. If unemployed pay is abolished the pay of Rs. 100 would be drawn continuously from the date on which an Assistant Surgeon enters the service. Promotion to the grade of Rs. 150 would be made after seven years' service subject to the usual examination. After 14 years' service there would be a second examination, to which only those considered by the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals fit for promotion would be admitted, while promotion from the grade on Rs. 200 to that on Rs. 300 would be made entirely by selection and without any further examination, but subject to a minimum of seven years' service in the lower grade. The subsequent advancement of an Assistant Surgeon to the Uncovenanted Medical Service would depend as at present on exceptional qualifications and ability. In order to meet as far as practicable the expenditure involved in this proposal, without incurring additional expense, it would apparently be necessary to impose some limit on promotions from the first grade to the senior grade and it has to be remembered that to meet the additional charge involved in one promotion from the grade on Rs. 200 to the proposed senior grade on Rs. 300 two promotions from the grade on Rs. 150 to Rs. 200 would have to be suppressed. I am to request that the Government of India may be favoured with the views of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor on the scheme above referred to, together with an approximate estimate of the cost of inaugurating it, as compared with that of the present establishment of Assistant Surgeons in Bengal.

7. In their fifth proposal the Committee recommended that a few of the smaller civil stations in Bengal should be reserved for Assistant Surgeons on a consolidated salary of Rs. 350 a month and the Government of Bengal ask for sanction to the appointment of Assistant Surgeons to five such stations. While the Governor General in Council is unable to admit that the Government can be charged, as appears to have been stated by the Committee, with not having carried out any promises held out to Assistant Surgeons in this respect in the past, His Excellency in Council sees no objection to the proposal of the Committee, that a certain number of Assistant Surgeons should be admitted to the Uncovenanted Medical Service, if this can be arranged with special regard to the necessity for reserving the majority of these appointments for Commissioned Medical Officers and Military Assistant Surgeons. That Assistant Surgeons have been frequently appointed to hold temporary charge of civil stations is exemplified by the statement made in the letter from the Government of Bengal, No. 901, dated the 1st May 1891, to the effect that, owing to the short supply of Commissioned and Uncovenanted Officers, so many as ten civil stations were officered by Assistant Surgeons. The reserve of Assistant Surgeons was also increased from 15 to 20 per cent. to provide a sufficient number of such officers to take up independent charges during the leave season. It has been the policy of the Government of India, in accordance with the rules circulated with Home Department letter Nos. 1-77-84, dated the 17th March 1885, to exercise great care in the selection of Assistant Surgeons for appointment to the Uncovenanted Medical Service. The Government of India do not think it would be advisable, even if it be possible, to fix any particular station or stations as charges to be held by Assistant Surgeons

as proposed by the Government of Bengal, but they are prepared to approve of the proposals of the Committee that Assistant Surgeons shall be entitled to be appointed as Uncovenanted Medical Officers to the charge of a certain number of stations in Bengal if this can be arranged with due regard to the number of Civil Surgeoncies reserved for Commissioned Medical Officers and the number about to be reserved for Military Assistant Surgeons. I am to invite a reference to Mr. Risley's letter No. 639-T.M., dated the 26th September 1892, with which, in reply to the letter from this Department, No. 275 (Medical), dated the 21st May 1892, you forward a list of 19 appointments which His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor proposed might be made available for Military Assistant Surgeons. A communication on the subject of those appointments will shortly be made to the Government of Bengal, but in the meantime I am to request that, in considering the question of the number of such appointments (if any) available for Civil Assistant Surgeons, regard may be had also to the absolute necessity for reserving a certain number of these appointments for Commissioned Medical Officers.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient Servant,

J. P. HEWETT,

Offg. Secretary to the Government of India.

FROM

No. 14/102

J. P. HEWETT, Esq., C.I.E.,

Offg. Secretary to the Government of India,

TO

Home Department.
Medical.

Simla, the 20th September 1895.

SIR,

I AM directed to forward a copy of a letter from the Government of Bengal, No. 773 (Medical), dated the 27th February 1895, with a copy of the report of the Committee directed by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor to enquire into the status of Civil Assistant Surgeons in Bengal, and a copy of the orders of the Government of India on the subject.

2. I am to invite attention to paragraphs 4, 6 and 7 of the letter from the Government of India, No. 14/102, dated the 20th September 1895, which deal with the proposals of the Committee numbered I, IV and V, and which express the views of the Government of India, as at present advised, upon those questions, namely:—

- (1) the abolition of the unemployed pay of Assistant Surgeons except as a punishment;
- (2) a scheme under which it is proposed to improve the status and pay of Assistant Surgeons; and
- (3) a proposal that a certain number of class II Civil Surgeoncies should be reserved for such officers in each Province at the rates of pay allowed to Uncovenanted Medical Officers.

3. I am to request that *with reference to the proposals*

the Governor General in Council may be favoured with *the same* on the proposals referred to at (1) and (2) above, and to request that the Government of India may be furnished with estimates of the cost of the introduction of similar changes in the manner explained into *the same*

4. With regard to the proposal to reserve a certain number of class II Civil Stations for Civil Assistant Surgeons at rates of pay admissible to Uncovenanted Medical Officers, I am to explain that it is intimately connected with the proposal for a war reserve of Military Assistant Surgeons which was dealt with in the circular from this office No. 275, dated the 21st May 1892. It is proposed, without interfering with the number of appointments which must be reserved for Military Assistant Surgeons under that scheme, regarding which a communication will shortly be made, to set aside a few appointments to which deserving Civil Assistant Surgeons, selected where available in the manner explained in the letter to the Government of Bengal and referred to in the second

paragraph of this letter, may be appointed. I am to enquire whether

any objection to such appointments being reserved for Civil Assistant Surgeons and, if not, what number the Government of would be willing to reserve.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient Servant,

J. P. HEWETT,

Offg. Secretary to the Government of India.

[G.]
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Public DEPARTMENT.

Papers to be read in proceedings:—

Again G.O., dated

189 , No.

Again G.O., dated

189 , No.

Current No. 3208 of 1895, dated 2/9, from the G. of I., Home Dept.
" " 3702 " 1895, " 3/10, " " Surgeon General.
" " " 189 , " , "

ORDER.

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The Govt of India was addressed on the subject on the 21st ultimo.

2. With reference to para. 10 of his letter of the 31st October the Surgeon General will be informed that no spare copy of the correspondence is available.

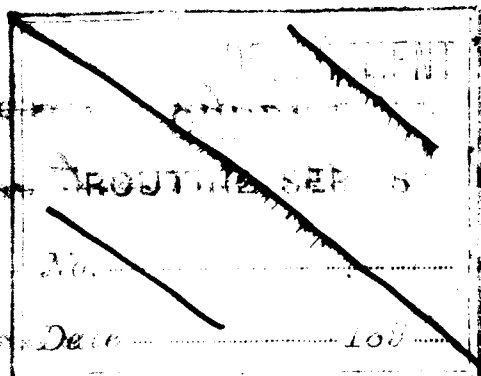
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for CS.
7/1/96

To

The Surgeon General. 7/1/96

FROM ORDERS.

C. S.



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 189

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