

Public (1897) Department.

ORDINARY MS.

G.O., No. 194

Dated 1- 3- 97

INDEXED.

[Despatch Abstract.]

Regarding the explanation of Dr. King
in regard to the use of the expression
a morally wrong: in a memorandum
relative to the reorganization of the
Senate Assembly.

BACK PAPERS.

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

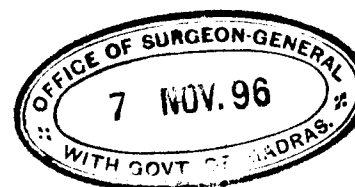
FURTHER PAPERS.

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

Judicial (1896) Department.

CURRENT No. 4560

CHIEF SECRETARY
19 OCT. 1896
GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS



From

The Sanitary Commissions
for Madras.

No. 1924
8

Order

Endowment No. 2273

Referred to the Surgeon-General

for his remarks as he

may desire to offer.

Dated 16 October 1896

(By order) Received 19

Registered 20

Francis.

Enclosures Four 3

H. Under Secretary Spare copies

MA.

St. George.
6 November 1896

TO BE RETURNED
WITH REPLY.

SUBJECT.

Explains as called for in para 8 of
G.O. No. 1217 Judicial dated 25-7-96 the
meaning of the expression "morally unfit"
used in his a Memorandum addressed
to the Surgeon General in connection
with the proposed reorganization of
the Lunatic Asylums.

The Surgeon-General
with papers in reply
When noted

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.
	1217	Jud	23. 7. 96
	983/4	"	8. 6. 96
	532	"	13. 3. 96
	R 156	"	8. 2. 96
	R 1318	"	5. 12. 95
	1949	"	17. 9. 95
	1511	"	17. 7. 95
	1292	"	26. 6. 95
	✓ 1650		4. 7. 94

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

Back papers - Contd.

✓ 1415	Jud	11. 6. 94
✓ 1040	"	2. 5. 94

No. 1924
S

OFFICE OF SANITARY COMMISSIONER,
Fort St. George, 16 October 1896

From

SURGEON LIEUT.-COL. W. G. KING, M.B., C.M., D.P.H.,

SANITARY COMMISSIONER FOR MADRAS,

To

THE

Chief Secretary to Government
Judicial Department.

Enclosure.

SIR,

With reference to G.O. dated 23rd July 1896 No. 1217, para 8, I have the honour to invite the attention of Government to the full para, of which the phrase quoted by it is but a portion. This runs thus:-

Para 10. "As regards the existing buildings in the Madras Lunatic Asylum, I consider that in many respects they are unfit for their purpose, and that the patients are in consequence subjected to conditions which seriously influence the total mortality. I do not, however, think that the expenditure necessary to place matters in correct order would be such as to be regarded as very heavy or prohibitive by Government."

"I."

"In my humble opinion, it is -
"morally wrong to conduct an
"Asylum with the defective arrange-
"ments now existing, and I con-
"sider, therefore, Surgeon Lt Col
"Wardens Criticism as well de-
"served on this point."

2. I have to state that the Memo-
randum from which this has
been extracted was written by me
in response to an invitation from
the Surgeon General to afford my
opinion on certain professional
points raised by Surgeon General
Rice; that is to say, I was ig-
norant of any intention on the
part of this Office to communicate
my remarks to Government, and,
consequently, I understood I was
giving a professional opinion to
a professional Officer only, hence,
my statement as to the denouement
of moral wrong had reference
to a standard of professional not
conventional ethics.

3. When a Medical man under-
takes the treatment of a patient,
an unwritten contract is entered
into

into that the utmost of his available
skill will be at the patient's dis-
posal; if the complaint be sur-
gical, it is further assumed that
all apparatus used shall be such
as is suitable to the case in ques-
tion. Similarly, in receiving a
patient into a Lunatic Asylum,
it is understood that even when
poverty demands that no luxury
shall be forthcoming, no condition
shall exist liable to be a cause
of risk to health of the patient
at least, impede the natural
process of recovery - even if the
extraneous aid possible be very
limited. Any error on either side
would be a moral wrong com-
mitted against the patient
whose welfare has, by his con-
act or that of his guardian,
been placed in the hands of the
Medical Adviser

4. If these conditions be granted
I might content myself by re-
ferring to the defective nature of
hospital accommodation and
nursing arrangements, and the
unsuitability of the untrained
attendants

attendants responsible for care of the lunatics on the date of my writing. But the paragraph of my Memorandum under reference confines attention to the state of the buildings. If, therefore, I am able to show that (1) the condition of the buildings is such as to conduce to mortality in the slightest degree or (2) impede the return of mental soundness, Government will, I trust, allow that I was justified in using the expression I did.

5. Owing to the defective nature of the staff employed combined with the unsuitability of the buildings, certain very undesirable methods of retaining patients under "observation" have to be resorted to. These are fully described in the accompanying abstract from Memorandum relating to Surgeon General's No. 4187 dated 6th July 1893 written by me, then holding the appointment of Acting Superintendent of the Lunatic Asylum (vide exhibit A). I maintain whether the men subjected to the treatment described

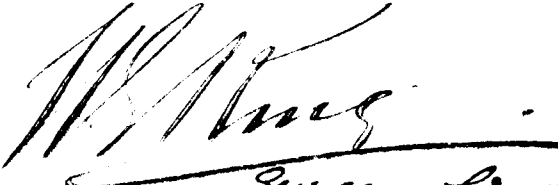
described be thoroughly healthy individuals or the emaciated and exhausted human wrecks that reach the Asylum, such treatment cannot fail to have a most evil influence upon their general health and conduce to mortality. That I do not stand alone in this opinion, I quote the enclosed extract (Exhibit B) from letter No. 126 dated 22nd February 1896 to the Surgeon General with the Government of Madras by the present Superintendent of the Lunatic Asylum, Surgeon Capt Path. b. I trust that no confusion will arise as to the facts and my suggested remedy, namely, if Government cannot afford that the staff and buildings be brought up to a pitch at which observation can be maintained without recourse to the questionable methods described, that warmed rooms should be used. New ideas are apt by some to be regarded as the offspring of faddism.

I have however suggested this as a reasonable means to secure a certain end only. The facts to be remedied are those on which I rely. Others may suggest more suitable remedies.

7. As to the second point I think I was fully justified at the time of my writing. The accompanying extract from correspondence (Exhibit C) will show that, as a result of my representations ^{certain buildings} ~~these~~ were remodelled and completed by November 1895; but the remarks referred to by Government were made by me whilst they were still in existence, namely, in June 1895. Were it intended that far from recovery being aimed at, the best endeavours should be to render lunacy more complete, I can hardly conceive any better arrangement than found in the now abolished "sixteen rooms". These consisted of two rows of cells open-barred and directly opposite each other. The intervening passage was so small that a hand stretched out of the bars and across the passage could very nearly touch that of the inhabitant of the cell opposite. No light was obtainable except through the extreme end of this passage, which also afforded the only means of ventilation. Into these cells the patients were placed naked. Now, if there be one necessity greater than another in the treatment of violent patients, it is that they

they should be soothed, and that neither the noise or gestures of others should annoy them. Yet, in these rooms this was absolutely impossible. On the opposite every shout, every word of abuse, every scream of fear or rage at imaginary enemies was heard by fellow patients, and the result was that to enter this place was to realise everything repulsive to the sense of hearing, sight, and smell that could be imagined. The excitement of one patient reacted upon another, till in reality the popular idea of Bedlam was fully realised - and this was supposed to be medical treatment! In my opinion, it was morally wrong that the medical officer should be obliged to use such buildings.

8. As a small matter conducing to want of reasonable aid in bringing about recovery, I would point to the absence of accommodation for the convalescent. No such important department exists.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your most Obedient Servant,

Sanitary Surgeon Lieut. Col.
Commissioner of Prisons

Extract of Memorandum in reply to
Surgeon General's N^o 4187 dated 6th July
1893 by Surgeon Major King, Acting
Superintendent, Lunatic Asylum.

* * * *

I ascribe the high mortality in this
Asylum firstly, to the bad condition of
health in which lunatics largely recruited
from Tamil town populations are received,
Secondly, the deficiency of nitrogen in
the diet hitherto used (see my letter
N^o 309 dated 2nd April 1893) but above
all, the bad hygienic conditions to
which the population generally and
especially the weakly first arrivals
are subjected, on account of the want
of suitable accommodation owing to
radical errors in the buildings.

A large proportion of patients admission
certificates bear the statement that they
are dangerous to themselves or others. It
is therefore essential that they be kept
under observation for at least a month
in single rooms; as it would be unsafe
to put persons liable to fits of homicidal
or suicidal mania along with the
patients in the common cottages. They
tear up all their clothing and bedding.

S. M. C.

smear their faces and urine over their cells,
 dash their heads against the walls, attempt
 to tear out their tongues, their eyes &c.
 What is the result? At the end of fits
 of excitement, or overpowered by drugs, they
 sleep naked on the bare and filthy
 floors. It may be impossible to correctly
 clothe such patients for one or two months
 on end. These conditions would be had
 in correctly ventilated cells; but matters
 are rendered worse by the fact that the
 cells at disposal are absolutely unfit for
 the purpose, as they afford only 494 cubic
 feet each, and are insusceptible of
 ventilation. The result of such a combina-
 tion of evil conditions is indescribably
 horrible. Fed with a diet insufficient
 in nitrogen and often relying only upon
 horrible feeding for nutrition, whilst the
 nervous system is worked day and night
 up to the highest pitch of excitement,
 or being exposed to cold and filth,
 what else can be expected than the
 anaemia, bowel complaints, and tubercular
 pneumonia & the forerunners of phthisis
 should occur. The remedy for this condition
 of affairs obviously is, that a block
 containing single well ventilated cells
 the proportion of about 10 p.c. of the
 strength

8 Cells in European
 asylums utilized for
 violent patients -
 usually afford -
 2000 C. ft.

+ This is not now
 the case - W. King
 13/10/96

Para 344
 923 June 1896

T. In New East
 Review of this
 Asylum Report
 Govt. wanted
 to know why
 Phthisis was
 common.
 W. King
 13/10/96

strength of the population should be
 built; so as to be capable of being
 artificially maintained at a definite
 temperature. This could be managed
 economically by using a hot water
 (circulation) system of pipe in
 communication with the boilers either
 over the kitchen stove, or in the
 laundry. But having passed the
 ideal above referred to, patients
 may next find themselves in the
 hospital. The Hospital accommodation
 is inadequate and inappropriate,
 and, at present, in the only available
 wards for male natives, at least double
 the number of sick that should be
 allowed must be accommodated.
 Further, when in hospital, these patients
 cannot be attended to correctly. The
 nursing is performed by native
 attendants who are of the poor class,
 and they constantly perform acts in
 good faith, or in carelessness, that lead
 to disastrous results. More intelligence in
 the nursing of the sick is essential, if the
 expenditure upon the staff and extras
 is to be of the slightest benefit. I have
 therefore in my letter N: 606 dated 3 August
 93 advised the entertainment of two men

of the class of compounders, who could be employed on night and day duty nursing.

* * * *

Again in the matter of unsuitable accommodation, there is the question of the want of day sheds. In rainy days, either the patients have to be huddled together in verandahs or locked up in their own rooms. As these rooms in the morning are always filthy and must be flushed down, there is no choice but to clean them whilst the patients remain in them in the midst of wet and filth. A day shed for each enclosure is an absolute necessity.

Under the influence of the reasonable diet ordered in G.O. N:1292 dated 26th June 1893, artificially heated single rooms, and a well built hospital with a suitable nursing staff, I am convinced the mortality in this Asylum would soon fall to a normal amount. The introduction of a filtered water-supply, correct sewage, and surface drainage would undoubtedly be of value to the same end, but they are not the primary points.

Extract from Official Visitors book, Lunatic Asylum.

Remarks by Surgeon Lieut Col. W. G. King,
Sanitary Commissioner for Madras, dated 13th Dec. 1898

* * *

Knowing, as I do, that each doubtful patient on admission passes through a period of probation by being placed naked in a cell exposed to the open air, and holding in view the low vitality of lunatics in general and the unsatisfactory condition in which they are received, I maintain that a vital point as to the health of the lunatics admitted is that artificially heated rooms should be available.

* * *

/True extract/

W. G. King
Surgeon Lieut Col.
Sanitary Commissioner for Madras

3.
Receipt from letter N^o 126 dated 22-2-96 from
Surgeon Captain Palk, Superintendent, Madras
Asylum to the Secretary to the
Surgeon General with the Govt of Madras
through the Sanitary Commissioner.

Regarding your para 3 of Minute III
N^o 30 dated 8th January 1896, I have the
honor to state that from the records and
casualty reports of this Asylum during
the years 1894 & 1895, I find that in 18
cases in the former and in 9 in the latter
year the deaths may fairly be put down
to have been induced or the diseases
aggravated by chill and exposure to
cold, which would in all probability
have been avoided had we had suitable
artificially heated rooms to accommodate
them in. There have been several other
cases that would have been undoubtedly
benefited by their being accommodated
in heated rooms, but I have no records
by which I can estimate any exact
figures.

* * * *

/ True extract /

W. J. P.

Surgeon General
Sanitary Commissioner

Extract from letter N^o 465 dated 19th August
1893 from Surgeon Major W. G. King M.B., C.M., D.C.H.
Superintendent, Lunatic Asylum, Madras to
the Secretary Surgeon General with the Govern-
ment of Madras.

* * *
2. The single cells for Native Males and
Females respectively the so called Rooms N^o 16
and 16 which are of the same type, are in my
opinion absolutely unsuitable in their present
condition for the confinement of human beings.
The initial cubic space per head is about 494 ft.
only patients in high state of excitement are —
confined here, the result is that, what with ^{the} small
cubic space, the bad method of ventilation (see
diagram) and the smell of patients excretions —
which are notoriously foul in lunacy, the places
being practically a single room, insanitary condit.
result which are alike prejudicial to physician
and patient. * * *

From Surgeon Major Genl W. H. De Taberna
Surgeon Genl. with the Govt. of Madras to the Honble. the
Chief Secretary to Govt. Judicial Dept N^o 574 dated
November 1893.

I have the honor to submit the
enclosed copy of a letter from the Superintendent
Lunatic

Lunatic Asylum, Madras, dated 19th August 1893 pointing out certain defects in the construction of special wards for Europeans in the Asylum. From a personal inspection of the place I agree in all that is said by the Superintendent and consider that steps should at once be taken to remedy the defects.

2. I enclose for the information of Government a rough plan in pencil of the existing and proposed construction. As the estimated cost of the proposed alterations will exceed Rupees 500 I request that sanction may be granted for the work and the Consulting Architect instructed to prepare the necessary plan and estimate.

Extract from Memorandum No 2176 dated 7th December 1893 Judicial Department:

ms 1046
2594

* * *

5. To explain more fully the nature of the alterations to be made in the Cells; D^r King, it is observed, talks of merely opening doors to the front, but the plan submitted with the Surgeon General's letter seems to contemplate other changes.

* * *

Extract from G.O. No 1650 dated 4th May 1894 Judicial Department.

The

The plan and estimate are approved and will be transferred to the Public Works Department for execution of the work when funds are available. The Government notes that nothing is said about the defects pointed out in paragraph 1 of Surgeon Major King's letter dated the 19th August 1893 No 465 read in Public Works G.O. dated 17th May 1894 No 1215M.

/ True extract /

W. King

Surgeon Lieut Col
Sanitary Commissioner Madras

P.
Judicial (1897) Department.

CURRENT No.



From

Surgeon-Major-General C. Sibthorpe,
F.R.C.P.I.

Surgeon-General with the
Government of Madras.

No. *47*

Order

Dated *27th* January 1897.

Received *29-1-97*

Registered *29-1-97*

Enclosures ~~the~~ *4*

Spare copies

SUBJECT.

Stating that the explanation offered
by Dr. King, in regard to the meaning
of the expression "morally wrong"
used in a Memo: addressed to the
Surgeon-General in connection with
the proposed reorganisation of the
Lunatic Asylums, may be accepted.

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

[1]

CURRIUM No. 17

No. 47

OFFICE OF SURGEON-GENERAL
WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS,
Madras, January 1897. 189

From

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

SURGEON-GENERAL WITH THE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS,

To

THE HON'BLE THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT,

Judicial DEPARTMENT.

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your endorsement No. 2273, dated the 3rd November 1896, referring for remark letter from Surgeon-Lieut. Colonel W.G. King, explaining the meaning of an expression used by him in a memo: on the Madras Lunatic Asylum.

2. In reply, I consider that the explanation offered by Dr. King in para 2 of his letter under reference may be accepted.

3. As regards the various features of unsatisfactory administration of the Asylum pointed out by this officer, they have already engaged attention, but we can only hope to effect improvements in accordance with our experience, which has been unique, and as funds become available.

4. The correspondence is herewith returned as requested

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

C. Sibthorpe

Surgeon-Major-General,

Surgeon-General with the

Government of Madras.

C. Sibthorpe

[G.]
[26]

500-23-11-96.

b. No. 374

~~H. E. THE GOVERNOR.~~

THE HON'BLE MR. BLISS, C.I.E. & C.O.

~~THE HON'BLE MR. GROSE, C.I.E.~~

SUBJECT.

*Dr King's explanation of
his expression "morally
wrong".*FOR ORDERS:*Dr. K. is not always
consistent in his remarks,
as I point out.**I consider that he
should be warned against
his habit of using unnecessary
strong language.**Please see also notes
at C**There were no 20. that
his explanation as to why
was not.**They are quoted in the report. The
kind of remarks made in the
report are not of the same
described case in the case. They have since
been deleted. They are not in the case
where I saw the report and they are*

In para. 10 of his memorandum regarding the Madras Lunatic Asylum printed at page 29 of G.O. No. 1217 Judicial, dated 23rd July 1896 Surgeon Lieut. Col. W.G. King wrote as follows:-

"In my humble opinion it is
"morally wrong to conduct an asylum
"with the defective arrangements now
"existing"

On this to this the Hon. Member noted

"He should be called upon to ex-
"plain this"

This was done in para 2 of the
G.O.

In his letter of the 16th October last Dr. King submits his explanation and justifies his use of the words "morally wrong" although he was under the impression that his remarks would not go beyond the Surgeon-General.

The

Public DEPARTMENT.

Papers to be read in proceedings:—

Again G.O., dated 189 , No.

Again G.O., dated 189 , No.

Current No. 4560 of 189 6, dated 16th Oct from the Sanitary Commr for Madras
 " " 374 " 1897, " 27 Jan " the Surgeon-General.
 " " " 189 , " , "

ORDER.

As dissenting member.

N^o 194 of 1-3-97.
 Recorded.

(from orders)

22/2/97

I think H.C. is in error
 in thinking that the "dormitory
 rooms" have been abolished. My
 recollection is that they still
 exist, though remodelled

23/2/97

To the Sanitary Commr } 4560-h
 " Surgeon-General } 374-g + order.

Submitted to the Gov. with reference to
 the Am of the Board. in Blue
 above. 26/2/97

Remodelling may actually be equivalent
 to abolition. But the Sanitary Commr
 has not said so. It may be
 a question of fact.

The Surgeon-General had Dr.
 King's letter from the 6th November
 last to 26th January and not states
 that the explanation offered in para. 2
 may be accepted. In para. 3 of his
 letter Dr. Sibthorne states that the
 necessary improvements to the asylum have been
 effected and others which experience
 may show are called for will be carried
 out as funds become available.

75B. 9/2/97. MR.
 Dr. King's expression was ill-
 chosen but from a perusal
 of the papers sent up it
 would appear that it was not
 altogether unwarranted.
 He submitted that his explanation may
 be accepted without comment.
 12/2/97.

When given for copying 1/5
When copied 2/13
When examined 3/13
When signed 1897

AGAIN G.O., No. DATED
189

CURRENT No.

ENCLOSURE TO G. No.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT A A A A A A A

LETTER OF GOVERNMENT.

STATEMENT WITH DITTO.

PAPERS NOT FILED UP, BEING MEANT FOR DESPATCH
IN ORIGINAL.

N.B.—
A = Copy in full.
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