

Public Works (1898) Department.

RAILWAY BRANCH.

G.O., No. 283 R
284

DATED 21st February

[Despatch Abstract.]

Bubonic Plague.— Proceedings, Local and Municipal Department, ordering the issue of notification making an addition to No 17 of the medical regulations under the Epidemic Diseases Act in view to prevent passengers from the Bombay Presidency escaping detection by relooking at intermediate stations, Communicated to the Railway administrations concerned and copy of the Proceedings forwarded to the Government of Bombay.

BACK PAPERS.

FURTHER PAPERS.

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Government {1898} of Madras.
LOCAL AND MUNICIPAL.

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G.O., &c., Nos. 10, 10-A P., 8th February 1898.

FEBRUARY.

Bubonic Plague.

Ordering the issue of a notification making an addition to No. 17 of the mufassal regulations under the Epidemic Diseases Act, in view to prevent passengers from the Bombay Presidency escaping detection by re-booking at intermediate stations and stating that the Inspector-General of Police will be requested in the Judicial Department to submit proposals for carrying out the subsidiary suggestions made by the Government of India in the matter.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

LOCAL AND MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following papers:—

From J. P. HEWETT, Esq., C.I.E., Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department (Sanitary), to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, Local and Municipal Department, dated Calcutta, the 5th January 1898, No. 47.

I am directed to forward, for the information of the Government of Madras, a copy of a report submitted by a committee appointed to consider the subject of preventing passengers from the Bombay Presidency escaping detection by re-booking at intermediate stations. It has been reported to the Government of India that the practice of re-booking to evade detection had become so common as to interfere greatly with the efficient working of the rules for the inspection of passengers at railway stations and their surveillance on arriving at their destination, and the Government of India consider it necessary that means should be devised to check the practice.

2. The following are the main suggestions made by the committee:—

(1) The tickets of all passengers leaving the infected area should be punch-marked so that there may be no difficulty in recognizing them even by a dim light.

(2) When a passenger with a marked ticket alights, his name and address should be taken by the Railway Police, and arrangements should be made by the District Police that any case of sickness occurring within ten days in the house of the newly arrived traveller should be reported.

(3) The officials who take the name and address of passengers should endeavour to identify passengers who re-book within 48 hours. The number of the fresh ticket obtained by such passengers should be telegraphed down the line, and on alighting he should be treated as a traveller coming from an infected area.

3. With regard to the first suggestion, the committee represent that the names of all stations in the Bombay Presidency are not known to the police and station officials further east, and they consider that there should be some easy mode of recognizing the fact that a ticket was issued within the Presidency. The Government of India have accepted this view and orders are being issued for the punching of tickets on the borders of the Bombay Presidency in the manner suggested by the committee.

4. In most provinces rules have been issued prescribing a procedure similar to that recommended in the second and third of the committee's suggestions, and the Government of India consider that it is desirable that they should be adopted on all routes along which travellers from the Bombay Presidency are in the habit of passing. The committee also make practical suggestions for rendering the procedure more efficient, which the Government of India consider should be adopted. They recommend that the arrangements should be carried out through the agency of the Railway Police, and that an official should be posted at every station to take down names and addresses and to detect and report re-booking. This official would either be a member of the Railway Police or a person specially appointed for the purpose, and enlisted, the committee suggest, under Act XXIV of 1859, so that the necessary discipline and

obedience may be enforced by law. At important stations where the amount of traffic and the neighbourhood of a populous place make evasion easier a larger staff under the superintendence of a responsible and intelligent officer may be necessary.

5. The committee lay great stress on the importance of cordial co-operation between the Railway Police of the different provinces. The Government of India agree that such co-operation is essential to make the working of the protective arrangements successful, and I am to suggest that you should enter into communication with the Government of Bengal and the other Local Governments and Administrations concerned as to the manner in which the police should co-operate when a case of re-booking is detected. A similar suggestion has been made to the Government of Bengal and other Local Governments and Administrations.

6. In paragraph 10 of their report the committee state that it is very desirable, if not essential, for the due working of the rules that a small inspecting staff should be appointed to travel along the line and see that the regulations are carried out and that abuses do not occur. It appears to the Government of India to be desirable that effect should be given to this proposal.

7. With reference to the remarks in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the committee's report, I am to explain that the Government of India do not propose any change in the existing orders under which persons deemed suspicious are detained under observation at inspection stations or at the end of their journey.

8. With reference to the remarks of the conference regarding the examination for plague symptoms, I am directed to say that the Government of India are advised that in the absence of any symptoms showing a passenger to be suffering from fever it is unnecessary to examine his person for the purpose of finding out whether buboes are present, and to request that this practice, if it is at present enforced anywhere, may be discontinued.

ENCLOSURE.

PROCEEDINGS of a Conference held at Calcutta on Friday, 17th December 1897, on the subject of the re-booking of passengers travelling by railway from an area infected with plague.

The Government of India have decided that the whole of the Bombay Presidency must be considered to be an infected area. There is not at present any other infected area in India which need be considered.

2. It is understood that no system of land quarantine will be sanctioned, and that it is not possible to establish isolation camps on the border of the Bombay Presidency, in which all travellers from the infected area could be detained for a prescribed period, after which they would be allowed to travel without let or hindrance.

3. All travellers from the Bombay Presidency must therefore be allowed to proceed direct to their destination, and the question for consideration is what measures can be adopted to prevent such travellers from concealing the fact that they have come from a place infected with plague.

4. The rules framed by the different Local Governments generally provide—

(1) that at places of inspection if the medical officer sees reason to suspect that a passenger is infected with plague, he may arrange for the detention and treatment of such passenger for so long as he considers necessary.

(2) that travellers from the infected area shall, on arrival at other stations, be required to give their names and addresses so that their movements may be watched until, owing to the expiry of the period of incubation, the danger of infection has ceased. (Government of India, Public Works Department, letter No. 224 R. T., dated 6th March 1897);

(3) that in the event of a traveller from an infected area alighting at an intermediate station with the object of obtaining a fresh ticket so as to conceal the fact that he comes from an infected area, the Railway Police shall take down his name and the number of the fresh ticket issued, and send information down the line so that he may on alighting be placed under observation. (Bengal Rule 14, Notification No. I, dated 10th November 1897.)

5. These rules are believed by the conference to indicate the best method of ensuring that, should a case of plague occur among travellers arriving or newly arrived from an infected area, it shall be at once detected and dealt with. The effective administration of these rules and of any supplementary orders issued by Provincial Governments must depend on the energy and vigilance of the executive staff employed. There are, however, certain general considerations regarding which we desire to offer the following suggestions.

6. The rules of the Railway coaching tariffs permit a passenger, who has obtained a ticket for a distance exceeding 100 miles, to break journey, and to alight at any intermediate station. It has been proposed that this privilege should be withdrawn from all persons travelling from infected areas. The proposal does not commend itself to this conference. If the existing privilege were denied, passengers would be compelled to resort to re-booking and the difficulty of ascertaining the persons who had come from the infected area would be largely increased. It is eminently desirable that travellers from the Bombay Presidency should take through tickets to their final destination.

7. We are of opinion that it is essential to the effective working of the rules we recommend for adoption, that these through tickets should have a distinctive mark. There are difficulties in the issue of tickets of a distinctive colour. But the names of all Bombay stations are not known to the Police and station officials further east, and there should be some easy mode of recognizing the fact that a ticket was issued within the Bombay Presidency. We suggest therefore that the tickets of all passengers leaving the boundary of the infected area should be punched with an indelible mark such as a square hole. Tickets should be punched at places where a railway passes out of the Presidency. On the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, the punching should be so done that passengers from the Central Provinces passing through Bhusawal should not be confounded with those from Bombay. The tickets taken at Bhusawal itself should be punched at the time of issue.

8. Persons coming from infected areas who alight do so with the object either of proceeding direct to their homes or of re-booking. In either case their names and residences will be recorded by the Railway Police or other officials appointed for that purpose, and the information conveyed to the District Police, who must arrange that the occurrence within ten days of sickness at the houses where such persons take up their residence is duly reported.

9. Should such persons re-book within 48 hours, the officials appointed for the purpose will telegraph down the line their names and the numbers of the fresh tickets issued, with a view to their remaining under observation, and will inform the District Police within whose jurisdiction the station of re-booking is situated, so that the names of such travellers may be removed from the lists for which the District Police are responsible. It may be that a traveller will profess to break his journey, but instead of resting will proceed by road to another station and then take a fresh ticket for a distant place. There is no evidence that this is a common practice and the Conference does not consider it necessary to make any specific recommendation on the subject. It is alleged that, under arrangements made beforehand, persons coming from infected areas are met by friends from non-infected areas with return tickets who exchange tickets with them. For the detection of such evasion of rules responsibility rests upon the Railway Police or other officials entrusted with the duty of enforcing the rules.

10. It is very desirable, if not essential, for the due working of the rules, that a small inspecting staff should be appointed to travel along the line and see that the regulations are carried out and that abuses do not occur. The Railway Administrations might provide free passes for this inspecting staff.

11. Places for inspection have been established for the detection of persons actually suffering from plague or exhibiting symptoms which, in the opinion of the Medical officer, require that the patient should be kept under observation. With reference to the nature of the medical examination in force at such places, the medical authorities might be consulted whether this examination could not be simplified, so that persons not exhibiting symptoms of fever should be exempted from further examination for glandular swellings or other indications of plague.

12. We do not recommend the general adoption of Bengal rule XI which provides that a passenger will be allowed to proceed to his destination on producing a certificate that for ten days immediately preceding the date of commencing his journey he has been residing in a non-infected area. The infected areas at the present time are not so intermixed as to necessitate the adoption of this rule. We have proposed that the tickets of passengers from the infected areas should be marked, and all other travellers must be presumed to come from non-infected areas.

13. It was proposed that travellers from Bombay should be allowed to book only to the principal stations on each line, and that no passenger with a marked ticket should be permitted to alight at any wayside station to which he could not book from Bombay. We do not accept this proposal. We think it necessary that a Railway Police officer or other official should be posted at all stations and that the work of carrying out the rules under the Epidemic Diseases Act should not be imposed on station masters to the risk of their neglecting their duty in connection with the safety of the trains. If there are special officials to enforce the rules at all railway stations, the inconvenience of forbidding travellers to alight except at principal stations is, we consider, unnecessary.

14. The Conference lays great stress on the importance of cordial co-operation between the Railway Police of the different provinces. The official appointed at each station to take names and addresses should, we think, be under the control of the officer in charge of the Railway Police, and we suggest that such officials should be enlisted under Act V of 1861, so that the necessary discipline and obedience may be enforced by law.

15. To sum up—

(1) The tickets of all passengers leaving the infected area should be punch-marked, so that there would be no difficulty in recognizing them even by a dim light.

(2) When a passenger with a marked ticket alights, his name and address should be taken by the Railway Police, and arrangements should be made by the District Police that any case of sickness occurring within ten days in the house of the newly arrived traveller should be reported.

(3) The officials who take the name and address of passengers should endeavour to identify passengers who re-book within 48 hours. The number of the fresh ticket obtained by such passengers should be telegraphed down the line, and, on alighting, he should be treated as a traveller coming from an infected area.

From R. NATHAN, Esq., Under Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department (Sanitary), to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, Local and Municipal Department, dated Calcutta, 25th January 1898, No. 161.

I am directed to refer to paragraph 6 of my letter No. 47, dated the 5th instant, forwarding the report of a committee appointed to consider the subject of preventing passengers from the Bombay Presidency escaping detention by re-booking at intermediate stations. The Government of India there stated that they considered it

desirable that effect should be given to the proposal of the committee, contained in paragraph 10 of their report, that a small inspecting staff should be appointed for the purpose of travelling along the railway lines and seeing that the regulations are carried out and that abuses do not occur. The committee suggested in this connection that free passes should be provided by the Railway Administrations for the inspecting staff.

In order that this proposal may be referred for the consideration of Railway Administrations, the Government of India will be glad to receive information showing to what extent passes would be required for the itinerant inspecting staff in Madras.

ORDER—No. 10 P., dated 8th February 1898.

With reference to the second and third of the main suggestions made by the committee and approved by the Government of India, the Government considers that it will be sufficient to make an addition to No. 17 of the Mufassal Regulations under the Epidemic Diseases Act. The following notification will accordingly be published in the *Fort St. George Gazette*:—

NOTIFICATION.

Under the provisions of the Epidemic Diseases Act III of 1897, His Excellency the Governor in Council is pleased to make the following addition to the second paragraph of No. 17 of the regulations under the said Act for district municipalities and towns and villages published under G.O., No. 2830 M., dated 17th December 1897:—

"Any case of sickness occurring within ten days in the house of the newly arrived traveller shall be forthwith reported by the municipal Chairman or the headman of the village, as the case may be, to the Collector of the district. In case such passengers re-book within 48 hours of their alighting, the police officer, station master or ticket collector, as the case may be, shall telegraph to the station master of the station to which such re-booking is made, the number of the fresh ticket obtained by such passenger and, on alighting, he shall be treated as a traveller coming from an infected area."

It will be observed that information regarding the re-booking of passengers is to be telegraphed to the station master in every case, because as matters stand at present, no police officer is present on the platform of the minor stations and, in the opinion of Government, it is right that the responsibility in the matter should be thrown on the railway staff, as station masters are persons of much more education and authority than platform orderlies.

2. The Translators to Government will furnish the necessary translation of the notification to the Superintendent, Government Press, who will print the required number of copies in English and in the vernaculars and forward them to the Collectors concerned for publication in the District Gazettes.

3. The Inspector-General of Police will be requested in the Judicial Department to submit proposals for carrying out the subsidiary suggestions made by the Government of India in paragraphs 4 and 6 of its first letter read above, namely (1) that an official belonging to the Railway Police or one specially appointed for the purpose and enlisted under the Madras Police Act XXIV of 1859, should be posted at every railway station to take down names and addresses and to detect and report re-booking and that at important stations where the amount of traffic makes evasion easier, a larger staff under the superintendence of a responsible and intelligent officer should be provided; and (2) that a small inspection staff should be appointed to travel along the railway line and see that the regulations are carried out and that abuses do not occur. The Inspector-General is also requested to state how far the incomplete state of the Railway Police in this Presidency will prevent these plans being carried out in an effective way, and to report, with reference to the second letter from the Government of India read above, the extent to which free passes will be required for the itinerant inspecting staff which may be entertained in this Presidency.

4. Paragraph 8 of the first letter from the Government of India will be communicated to all Medical officers in charge of plague inspection stations for information and guidance.

5. With reference to the suggestion made by the Government of India in paragraph 5 of its first letter, the following letter will be addressed to the Government of Bengal and the other Local Governments and Administrations concerned:—

[Here enter letter No. 11 P., dated 8th February 1898.]

(True Extract.)

A. J. Hannay

Ag. Secretary to Government.

To all Collectors
 " all Presidents of District Boards.
 " all Chairmen of Municipal Councils.
 " the President, Municipal Commission, Madras.
 " the Public Department.
 " the Public Works Department (Railway Branch).
 " the Marine Department.
 " the Judicial Department.
 " the Inspector-General of Police.
 " the Surgeon-General.
 " the Sanitary Commissioner.
 " the Superintendent, Government Press.
 " Translators to Government.
 Gazette.



ENDORSEMENT—No. 10-A P., dated 8th February 1898.

Copy to the Government of India, Home Department.

H. TREMENHEERE,
Ag. Secretary to Government.

Sp. 283. Dy. dated 21/2/98.
 PROCEEDINGS OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following

*Proceedings of the Local
 and Municipal Dept.*

Nº 10, 10A2, dt 8.2.98

*Communicated
 to Railway administration
 for information & guidance
 in continuation of S.O. no
 49 R dt 10.1.98.*

*2. A copy of these
 Proceedings will be forwarded
 to the Govt of Bombay for
 information.*

*The Agent Madras Rly
 S.I. Rly
 Mysore Rly
 Nilgiri Rly
 Manager C.R.
 Cons Insp for Rly.*

Nº 284. Rly dated 21/2/98.

Forwarded.

Y.M. 17/2/98

S.R.

Despatched on *22/2/98*

17/2/98