

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Under date the 4th Apr^l. 1871.Read the following ~~letter~~ Proceedings

of the Board of Revenue.

Submitting letter from collector,
forwarding copy of a report from
Deputy Collector, Canner, regarding
recent outbreak of Cholera in Ponany
District.

(H. E. 8th March 1871 No. 1018.)

The collector will
inform ~~the~~ Deputy collector
Canner, Hospital Assistant
Dawood Beg and Dresser Dora-
~~Lawrence~~ Pillay, that the
Government highly approve

their

conduct on this occasion.

14. *Letter of Rev. Dept 5*

Copy to P. Insp: Genl. Indian Med.

1. Sanitary Commissioner

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
4th April 1871.*

No. 40. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 8th March 1871, No. 1,018:—

Read the following letter from the Collector of Malabar, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Calicut, 26th January 1871, No. 12.

I HAVE the honour to forward copy of a communication received from the Acting Deputy-Collector, Southern Division, regarding the recent outbreak of cholera in the Ponany Taluq.

2. It will be seen that the disease first made its appearance on the 11th November last in the Kadikad Amshom, and subsequently found its way into the neighbouring village of Punnayur. It seems to have now subsided; 171 deaths are reported to have occurred.

3. The Hospital Assistant located at Ponany and the Huzur Dresser, who was deputed to the infected localities as soon as information reached me of the breaking out of the epidemic, are reported to have rendered much aid in checking the spread of the contagion and in allaying the fears of the people. Credit is due to the Deputy-Magistrate who exerted himself to stop the progress of the disease, and remained at the scene of the outbreak during the Christmas holidays.

4. I have published an order prohibiting the manufacture of fish-oil by putrefaction in open boats, but permitting its extraction by boiling.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From O. CANNEN, Acting Deputy-Collector and Magistrate, to the Collector and Magistrate of Malabar, dated Betutpudiangady, 19th January 1871, No. 10.

In continuation of my letter of the 21st ultimo, No. 176, I have the honour to report that cholera first broke out on the 11th November last in Kadikad, and on the 26th in Punnayur, two neighbouring villages near Chowghat, and that so many as 171 souls collapsed to the scourge. The disease, however, may now be said to have subsided.

It will be seen from the enclosed statements that the first outbreak was in a Cheruman's hut containing a family of ten souls of whom three became victims, and that few were the cases in which the whole family was swept away by the epidemic.

2. On receiving intelligence of the outbreak of cholera I immediately deputed the Hospital Assistant in charge of Ponany Dispensary to the spot with a supply of medicines, as I thought it injudicious to wait till the services of a Dresser from Calicut are placed at my disposal. Davood Beg has, however, been relieved by Dresser Dorasami Pillay, sent by you.

3. Seeing that the disease was progressing, I forthwith repaired to the spot. Having on my way heard that two persons were attacked with cholera, I gave them a few doses of chlorodyne as the Dresser was then at a distance from me, and these two recovered. The attention of the people having thus been drawn to the efficacy of English medicines, many of them soon began to resort to me, and, with the advice of the Dresser, I placed some chlorodyne and cholera mixture in the hands of a few intelligent and principal men of the place for distribution, with instructions how to use them. This appeared to me the best way of making the people appreciate the advantages of the English mode of treatment, to which they are through ignorance opposed, as they would more readily adhere to the advice of their neighbours than attend to the instructions of a public official in matters of this nature. Several useful sanitary instructions were also given to the villagers by me in company with the Dresser and village officials, of which they have largely and willingly availed themselves; in fact, this may be

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considered to have afforded an opportunity of infusing in the minds of the public an idea of English medical treatment and sanitation. It was in the heat of the prevalence of the disease that we reached the place, and the free distribution of the medicine and introduction of sanitary arrangements have greatly tended to arrest its progress.

4. The severity of the disease had disheartened the people much, and our presence among them greatly encouraged them.

5. I personally examined a few cases to ascertain the cause of the disease, and found that the excessive use of "Mathi Meen" (Sardine) with a little conjee was the last food they took previous to the attack, and that the infected houses in most cases had many inmates of whom only a few were attacked.

6. The outbreak of the epidemic is by some attributed to the excessive use of "Mathi Meen," which this season abundantly produces, and to the indiscriminate extraction of its oil. This may, to a certain extent, be true, as at present the fish is very oily, and partaking too freely of it (as the poor classes evidently seem to do, the fish being got very cheap) may cause disorder in the stomach. When oil is extracted from the fish, the refuse thereof is thrown about, from which arises a stench very shocking to the sense, and which is calculated greatly to taint the atmosphere.

It is supposed that a change of weather always brings with it several epidemic diseases. Now that winter has run out and summer takes its turn, a change will be wrought in every system. This, coupled with the unwholesome food noticed above, may fairly be considered to have given rise to the epidemic.

7. I have prevented the sale of such fish at the infected parts for the present, and desired the people to abstain from eating it until the disease shall wholly subside.

Orders have been issued to the Sub-Magistracy and Police in my division to prevent the sale or exposure for sale of all decomposed or unwholesome meat or fish, and the manufacture of fish-oil injurious to human health at thickly populated parts, as also to turn up fresh earth where fish-oil has already been manufactured, and to bury the refuse wherever it may be found.

8. The poor class of people were for the most part the most infected, and I understand that a few of them (especially Moplabs) did not destroy the clothes, etc., used by the afflicted persons, but merely washed and reserved them for further use. This was solely due to the indigent circumstances of these persons, who could not afford to purchase new clothing; but this was afterwards put a stop to, and the houses have been caused to be cleansed.

9. The locality is a dry place, and six miles east to the sea, and there is a large lake very near it with paddy crops on its banks, and the water therein is now beginning to dry up.

10. The services of the Medical Officers Davood Beg, 1st Class Hospital Assistant, and Dorasami Pillay, Huzur Dresser, were very useful. Their facing the epidemic daringly when raging violently, and their perseverance to save the lives of the affected persons, do them great credit. They took great pains by readily attending individual cases of cholera in spite of great fatigue they had to undergo, as the houses were distant and detached.

11. I take this opportunity to observe that fish-oil being a valuable article it would be injurious to the interests of those concerned in its trade were its manufacture to be discontinued. I would therefore without detriment to trade propose its manufacture on the following restrictions:—

That a few sequestered places may, as circumstances admit, be selected and allotted in each locality, and persons manufacturing the oil be held responsible for the careful burying of all the refuses, etc., without allowing them to be exposed on any account.

That the oil must be manufactured by boiling or by any other recognized process least obnoxious to public health, and the practice of extracting the oil by allowing the fish to come of itself to a state of decomposition, should be peremptorily interdicted.

That any person desirous of undertaking the manufacture should appear before a Magistrate and bind himself for the due fulfilment of the conditions of the rules proposed for the purpose, any infringement of them being made criminal under the Penal Code.

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12. I am aware that the oil after its extraction does not injure public health, but that it is from the exposure of the refuse that nuisance is created. If therefore due care is taken of the manufacture, the evil would be remedied.

13. The refuse of the manufacture being considered a wholesome manure to cocoanut trees, it may be converted into manure by burying them for some time and thus depriving them of their offensive element.

SUBMITTED for the information of Government.

2. The greatest credit is due to Deputy-Collector O. Cannen for the energetic and judicious measures which he instituted on the spot. The Board also appreciate the courage and perseverance of Davood Beg, 1st Class Hospital Assistant, and Dorasami Pillay, Huzur Dresser.

No. 41. ORDER THEREON, 4th April 1871, No. 624.

Miscellaneous.

THE Collector will inform Deputy-Collector Cannen, Hospital Assistant Davood Beg, and Dresser Dorasami

Pillay, that the Government highly approve their conduct on this occasion.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue. o
„ the Principal Inspector-General, Indian Medical Department.
„ the Sanitary Commissioner.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.