Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
19th January 1872.

No. 233. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 4th January 1872, No. 11 :—

Read the following letters:—

From Surgeon J. SHORTT, M. D., Superintendent-General of Vaccination, Madras Presidency, to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 11th October 1871, No. 1044 :—

WITH reference to the Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, dated 22nd September 1871, and your Miscellaneous No. 3,482 of the 3rd instant, I have the honour to submit, herewith, a list of the Poisonous snakes therein called for, and in doing so, I think it my duty to communicate such facts as relate to snakes that have come under my notice from time to time, during the past five years, for the information of Government.

2. Poisonous snakes abound in every district in this Presidency, and the wonder is that more deaths from snake-bite do not occur than the number reported. In Madras they are to be met with, not only in the scattered suburbs, but in the densest inhabited parts of Madras. Young *Cobras* and *Bungarus* of the season's brood have been captured and brought to me from Pereamatoo, Egmore, Poonamallee road, Vepery, Porasawalkum, Royapoorum, etc.

3. Snakes lay from 11 to 15 eggs, and as a rule, all these perfect, but allowing for destruction by man, animals, and birds, I calculate that six out of every snake brood attain some size, if not maturity itself, sufficient to destroy life by their bite, and notwithstanding the few that are destroyed, they are very plentiful indeed in every part of Southern India.

4. To ascertain the number of snakes likely to be found about Madras, I sent to the Commissioner of Police, Madras, the sum of 50 Rupees in 1869 to be given as rewards for the destruction of poisonous snakes, and limited the destruction to two particular kinds of snake, the *Cobra* and *Russels Viper*, and for the sum of 40 Rupees 2 Annas, 117 Cobras, and 25 Russels Vipers were destroyed. I have not heard of the number since killed from the small balance that remained with the Commissioner of Police. I beg to submit, herewith, copies of the correspondence on the subject for perusal, from which it will be seen that the then Commissioner of Police gave 4 Annas for the destruction of each small, and 8 Annas for every large snake, brought in dead or alive, and the Commissioner was of opinion that a "more liberal reward would soon exhaust the amount, while the number of snakes destroyed would be but small" I was also of the same opinion as the Commissioner of Police at the time.

5. I regret to observe that the reward offered by Government is far too small to produce the desired destruction, as it would not tempt any native to hunt for snakes for the reward's sake, although it is possible a few snakes accidentally or otherwise killed may be brought in; at the same time considering their rapid propagation, I fear the destruction will not decrease their numbers to any great extent, and the money so spent will only be thrown away without any commensurate result.

6. Under these circumstances, I think nothing under a *rupee* for each full grown snake of the three chief poisonous kinds named in the list, and a smaller sum for others, will induce people to search out and bring them in—a systematic extermination is the only course open for their destruction, and the money so laid out will be well spent in the destruction of these noxious reptiles.

7. Large sums of money are given for the destruction of wild beasts, and yet the deaths caused by them are trifling when compared by snake bite, the former being as one to seven caused by the latter. Wild beasts afford sport to the *shikaree*, and are sought out with that view, while a snake is a mean reptile that nobody cares to destroy, and it is allowed to roam unmolested to a certain extent: whilst a great noise is made when a single individual is carried away by a Tiger, but any number of individuals may be killed by a snake, and nothing is said about them, nor any steps taken to hunt up the reptile that destroyed a human being.

8. As regards the two districts for the experiment to be tried, I would beg to suggest the Madras and Tanjore Collectorates, and I would again respectfully urge, that unless the reward be increased, much good will not result from the experiment. If it had been possible, I should have suggested a small reward being given for snakes eggs, but as the eggs of the poisonous and non-poisonous snakes, are so much alike, it will lead not only to the unnecessary destruction of harmless snakes, but also to imposition in passing one for the other.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.—Correspondence.

ENCLOSURE No. 2.—List.

From W. R. CORNISH, Esq., F. R. C. S., Sanitary Commissioner for Madras, to the Chief Secretary to the Government, Public Department, Fort Saint George, dated 12th October 1871, No. 1,503:—

No. 4,202, dated 11th September 1871.

I HAVE the honour, with advertance to Order of Government of India, as per margin, to furnish, for the information of Government, a Tabular Statement, shewing the deaths reported from snake bite in this Presidency during five years ending 1870.

2. From this table it would appear that the largest proportion of the fatal accidents of this nature have occurred in Tanjore, South Arcot, Trichinopoly, Madura, and Malabar; in the three last named districts the proportion of deaths has been exactly equal.

3. I would venture to suggest that the Districts of Tanjore and South Arcot, as showing the largest mortality from snake-bite, should be chosen for the trial of the new system of rewards for killing poisonous snakes.

4. The new forms of Death Register, ordered by the Government of India, do not distinguish "snake bite" casualties from deaths by "wild beasts." In the districts experimented upon, it would be well to have these causes of death in future separately reported, to enable Government to judge of the efficacy of the system of rewards for killing poisonous snakes.

REFERRED to the Board of Revenue, with reference to Government Order, No. 1,654, dated 22nd September 1871.

17th October 1871. (Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Secretary to Government.

ENCLOSURE No. 1—Return.

THE Draft Notification called for in paragraph 2 of the above quoted Government Order is forwarded herewith for the approval of Government.

2. The Sanitary Commissioner suggests South Arcot as the 2nd District to be selected for the experiment; but his own return does not bear out his assertion that the mortality is greater there than in any other District except Tanjore, and he has omitted the Madras Collectorate altogether. The Board are of opinion that it is desirable for obvious reasons that Madras should be one of the Districts selected as Dr. Shortt suggests.

3. They agree with Dr. Shortt that the proposed reward is probably too low to have any appreciable effect; but as the rate has been prescribed by the Government of India it should be tried for a time at any rate. Dr. Shortt's own experience has proved that 1 Rupee is unnecessarily high.

4. Dr. Cornish's suggestion in paragraph 4 to the effect that deaths from snake-bites should be distinguished from those caused by wild beasts should be attended to by the Collectors concerned.

5. The success of the experiment will depend on the readiness with which payments are made, and the Board have therefore proposed to entrust Village Munsiffs with the duty of making them. If Government think this unadvisable, it will be necessary to confine the experiment to villages where there are Tahsildars and a Resident Treasury Officer.

DRAFT NOTIFICATION.

In the Districts of Tanjore and Madras only, a reward of 2 Annas will be given by every Village Munsiff for each snake killed of the kinds entered in the following list, the head and skin of the snake being forwarded as a voucher to the Tahsildar of the taluq on payment of the reward.

A list of Poisonous Snakes for whose destruction a reward is offered by Government.

Number.	Order.	Sub-order.	Family.	Genera.	Scientific Name.	English Name	Tamil.	Telugu.	Hindustani.	Remarks.
1	Ophidia.	Venomous Colubrine Snakes.	Elapidæ ...	Naga ...	Naga Tripeidians...	Cobra ...	நாகம் - அல்லது நீலப்பாம்பு.	పాంబుపాము. నాగుపాము.	ناگ سانپ
2	Do.	Do.	Do.	Bungarus	Bungrus Arcuatus ..	Bungarus, or white arched Bungrus	வாலை வரியன் அல்லது கட்டுவிரியன்.	కాటుక రేకులపాము.	کریت
3	Do.	3rd Viperine Snakes.	II Veperidæ	Daboia...	Daboia Elegans.* ...	Russels Viper, Chain Viper ...	கண்ணாடி விரியன் அல்லது கூன் விரியன்.		الورا - جسور سانپ
4	Do.	Do.	Do.	Echis. ...	Echis Carinata ...	The Carpet Viper ...	கூகுட்டைப்பாம்பு.	గుడుపుపాము.	انچی

* The Cobra *Manilla* of the Portuguese and *Tegolinga* of Ceylon.

(True Copies and Extract.)

(Signed) J. B. PENNINGTON,
Sub-Secretary.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) J. T. MAYNE,
First Assistant.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
19th January 1872.

No. 234. ORDER THEREON, 19th January 1872, No. 119.

Miscellaneous.

THE Board's proposals are sanctioned experimentally for a period of two years, at the end of which time the results will be reported. The notice, as slightly altered, may be published in the districts in question, and the Collectors will take every means to ensure the widest publicity for it.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
,, the Accountant-General

No. 1503 OFFICE OF SANITARY COMMISSIONER,

Madras, 12th October 1871.

From

The Sanitary Commissioner for Madras,

To The Chief Secretary to Government
Public Department
Fort St. George.

Sir,

I have the honor with adverteence to order No. 4202 dated 11 Sep. 1871. of Government of India, as per margin, to furnish, for the information of Government, a tabular statement showing the deaths reported from snake bite in this Presidency during the five years ending 1870.

2. From this table it would appear, that the largest proportion of fatal accidents of this nature have occurred in Tanjore, South Arcot, Trichinopoly, Madura, and Malabar; in the three last named districts the proportion of deaths has been exactly equal.

3 I would venture to suggest, that the districts of Tanjore and South Arcot, as showing the largest mortality from snake-bite, should be chosen for the trial of the new system of rewards for killing poisonous snakes.

4. The nine forms of death Register, ordered

Return showing deaths from Snake bite in the districts of the Madras Presidency for five years ending 1870.

Name of Districts	Population for which returns were present	Deaths from snake bite					Total	Average of 5 years	Ratio per 1000 of Population					
		1866	1867	1868	1869	1870			1866	1867	1868	1869	1870	Average 5 years
Ganjam	970317	35	45	56	40	84	260	52	0·03	0·04	0·05	0·04	0·08	0·05
Vizagapatam	1293934	41	57	72	76	109	355	71	0·03	0·04	0·05	0·05	0·08	0·05
Godavery	1427472	81	68	106	125	110	490	98	0·05	0·04	0·07	0·08	0·07	0·06
Kistna	1202483	63	75	74	96	76	384	77	0·05	0·06	0·06	0·07	0·06	0·06
Nellore	1017765	106	91	115	103	93	508	102	0·10	0·08	0·11	0·10	0·09	0·09
Cuddapah	1144759	92	93	84	65	108	442	88	0·08	0·08	0·07	0·05	0·09	0·07
Bellary	1232023	49	56	49	64	72	290	58	0·03	0·04	0·03	0·05	0·05	0·04
Kurnool	770857	49	37	44	59	60	249	50	0·06	0·04	0·05	0·07	0·07	0·06
Chingleput	772067	56	70	67	60	53	306	61	0·07	0·09	0·08	0·07	0·06	0·07
North Arcot	1747646	100	56	135	132	100	523	104	0·05	0·03	0·07	0·07	0·05	0·05
South Arcot	1261846	147	162	180	170	190	849	170	0·11	0·12	0·14	0·13	0·15	0·13
Tanjore	1717260	252	251	362	386	403	1654	331	0·14	0·14	0·21	0·22	0·23	0·19
Trichinopoly	914236	116	120	132	90	120	578	115	0·12	0·13	0·14	0·09	0·13	0·12
Madura	1147955	159	124	177	157	136	753	151	0·14	0·10	0·15	0·13	0·11	0·12
Tinnevelly	1310117	71	47	92	71	78	359	73	0·05	0·03	0·07	0·05	0·05	0·05
Coimbatore	1393582	110	77	117	126	162	592	118	0·07	0·05	0·08	0·09	0·11	0·08
Salem	1619233	109	96	109	134	213	661	132	0·06	0·05	0·06	0·08	0·13	0·08
South Canara	836019	73	65	61	107	91	397	79	0·08	0·07	0·07	0·12	0·10	0·09
Malabar	1049805	181	220	312	255	258	1226	245	0·09	0·11	0·16	0·13	0·13	0·12
Neilgherries	38142	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	0·26	-	-
Total	23675526	1890	1010	2344	2317	2516	10877	2175	0·07	0·07	0·09	0·09	0·10	0·08

Public Department
Fort St. George
October 1871.

No. 1503

Enclosures: 1

From
The Sanitary Commissioner
for Madras.

To
The Chief Secretary to Govt.

Dated 12th
Despatched "
Received 16th

Sir,

I have the honour to submit a tabular statement showing the deaths from snake bite in this Presidency during the five years ending 1870.

I have &c.
(Signed) [illegible]
Sanitary Commissioner
for Madras.

Fort St. George
17th October 1871.

Public Department
Fort St. George
October 1871.

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The Sanitary Commissioner
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for Madras.

Fort St. George
17th October 1871.

Rw. 3297/1

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Govt. of {1872} Madras.

REVENUE.

To

THE BOARD OF REVENUE,

&c., &c., &c.

Dated January 19th.

Recd. Encl.

G. O., 19th January 1872, No. 119.

JANUARY.

Nos. 233-234.

Rewards for destruction of Snakes.—Board's proposals on this subject sanctioned experimentally for a period of two years. Notification relating to it ordered to be published as altered.

G. O. 22 September 71 No 293 294

Rev. 1872. Depart

Board of Revenue,

MADRAS. No. 164

PROCEEDINGS, 4TH JANUARY 1872, No. 11.

Dep.t 15 Jan.y 72.

Encl.

Received. 16th.

JANUARY.

No. 11.

Reward for destruction of snakes.—Draft Notification offering a reward of 2 annas for each snake of certain kinds that may be destroyed in Tanjore and Madras Districts, forwarded to Government, for approval.—Suggestion of Sanitary Commissioner that deaths from snake-bites should be distinguished from those caused by wild beasts, in Mortuary Returns, approved.

No 19 - 19 Jan.y 72