

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
10th July 1873.*

No. 96. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 21st June 1873, No. 1,074 :—

Read the following letter from H. S. THOMAS, Esq., Collector of South Canara, to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Mangalore, 26th May 1873, No. 737 :—

THE Superintendent-General of Vaccination, who had visited the Laccadive

Dated 12th May 1873, No. 265.

Islands lately along with Mr. Stokes, the Assistant Collector, describes in his letter, copy of which is enclosed, the destitute condition of the inhabitants of the Islands in regard to medical assistance in case of sickness, and the serious consequences which result from bad or irregular treatment, and recommends that a 3rd Class Hospital Assistant should be appointed in lieu of the present Vaccinator to afford medical assistance to the Islanders as well as to carry on vaccine operations. I entirely concur in this recommendation.

2. The pay of the present Vaccinator, who is of the first class, is Rupees 18, in addition to which he receives a special allowance of Rupees 5 per mensem, while that of a Hospital Assistant is Rupees 24 and with an extra allowance of Rupees 10 a month. Dr. Shortt undertakes to procure the services of one, if necessary, of the Mahomedan class, to which all the inhabitants belong without an exception.

3. The proposed arrangement will cost Government an additional sum of Rupees 132 per annum, but it is a trifle when compared with the benefit that would be conferred on the inhabitants of the Islands, who, as Dr. Shortt

observes, "are shut out from the outer world for the greater part of the year" and are perfectly helpless in case of an attack of any epidemic or other disease.

4. I have, therefore, the honour to request that the Board of Revenue will be pleased to obtain the sanction of Government for employing on the Islands a 3rd Class Hospital Assistant on Rupees 24 and to grant him a special allowance of Rupees 10 per mensem.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From Surgeon J. SHORTT, M.D., Superintendent-General of Vaccination, to H. S. THOMAS, Esq., Collector of South Canara, dated Yercaud, 12th May 1873, No. 265.

I HAVE the honour to bring to your notice the prevalence of much sickness in the Laccadive Islands, as I had the opportunity, through your kindness, of visiting these Islands recently and of seeing and conversing freely with the people, and in visiting their women and children from house to house, and in doing what I could to relieve them of their present sickness.

2. I was surprised to find nearly ten per cent. of the people blind of either one or both eyes, chiefly the cause of neglect and bad treatment. The great glare both from the surrounding sea and the white coral beach subjects the eyes to very great exposure and strain—when to this is added the exposure these people undergo either in pursuing their calling as fishermen, or the women and children in preparing coir on the beach—tends materially to irritate and inflame the

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
10th July 1873.

mucous membrane of the eyes, and from neglect and the want of proper treatment it leads to various forms of eye diseases, eventually terminating in blindness.

3. Diseases of the eyes are not the only ailment; fever and other acute and chronic diseases prevail among them, and they have no means of contending with these diseases beyond resorting to every sort of quackery that any one may suggest, and thus frequently aggravate some simple ailments to formidable diseases resulting in loss of life.

4. With a view to ameliorate the sufferings of these poor Islanders, who have not even a *Huckee* among them, I would beg to suggest, for your favourable consideration, the employment of an Hospital Assistant as a Vaccinator on these Islands, so that he may be in position, not only to vaccinate, but to treat the people for their several ailments.

5. At present a 1st Class Vaccinator is employed on these Islands whose salary is 18 Rupees, and he receives a further sum of 5 Rupees as a special allowance, which gives him the salary of 23 Rupees per mensem; whereas the salary of a 3rd Class Hospital Assistant is only 24 Rupees per month, and, perhaps with a special allowance of 10 Rupees so as to increase his salary to the sum of 34 Rupees per mensem, the services of one can be readily procured. I may as well state here that from what I have seen of the people, and although the Islanders are all Mahomedans, I do not consider it necessary that the Hospital Assistant should be a Mahomedan. I think it would be an advantage to nominate a different caste man, but should you think otherwise there will be no difficulty in procuring the services of a Mahomedan Hospital Assistant.

6. The ostensible duty of the Hospital Assistant should be vaccination, and that of a medical practitioner should be made subordinate to vaccination, otherwise, as medical practice is the more agreeable and, to a certain extent, lucrative, vaccination would be neglected altogether for medical practice. I believe it would confer a great blessing on these poor Islanders, who are shut out from the outer world for the greater part of the year. Should these views meet with your approval and support, and the necessary provision be made to pay an Hospital Assistant, I shall be glad to make the necessary arrangements in connection with this department on hearing from you.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) H. S. THOMAS,
Collector.

THE Board resolve to submit the proposal to employ a 3rd Class Hospital Assistant on the Laccadive Islands for the orders of Government with their strongest support.

2. They are informed by their 2nd Member that he has himself witnessed the great relief that the simplest medical aid affords amongst the more than average sickness and suffering of these distant Islanders. He has been there three times and always found that his Dresser or Apothecary, as the case might be, had more to do than he had.

3. The additional cost is trifling. It must be remembered that the women and children never pass the shores of the Islands.

4. The Collector would no doubt be able to establish a small hospital, where sick people from other Islands might live during treatment, in Ameni, the principal Island.

No. 97.

ORDER THEREON, 10th July 1873, No. 717.

Miscellaneous.

THE Governor in Council sanctions the appointment of a 3rd-class Hospital Assistant to the Laccadive Islands in

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
10th July 1873.

lieu of the present 1st-class Vaccinator, and authorizes the grant of a special allowance of Rs. 10 per mensem, making up his salary to Rs. 34 per mensem.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) R. A. DALYELL,
Acting Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
„ the Accountant-General.
„ the Inspector-General, Indian Medical Department.

Exd. F. B. Bantleman.

21-7-76
18-1-92

21/9/80
24-9-180

Boht. of 1873 *Boht.*

REVENUE.

To

THE BOARD OF REVENUE,

Ac., Ac., Ac.

Dated July 10th.

Recd.

S.A.

G. O., 10th July 1873, No. 717.

JULY.

No. 96-97.

Hospital Assistant for Locative Islands.
Sanctioning the appointment of a 3rd class
lieu of the present 1st class Vaccinator, and
authorizing a special allowance of Rs. 10 per
ensem in addition to his salary.

