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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Rev. DEPARTMENT

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No. 51. Read the following letter from Surgeon W. R. CORNISH, F.R.C.S., Sanitary Commissioner for Madras, to the Hon. W. HUDLESTON, Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Madras, 25th March 1873, No. 601:—

In forwarding the accompanying abstract of deaths registered in the Madras Presidency during the fourth quarter of 1872, I have the honour to remark that the number of deaths registered throughout the Presidency in this period of 1872 was 134,572, and that there was an excess of mortality over the corresponding period of 1871 of 14,343. The excess is partly due to the gradual improvements in registration, and partly to a greater prevalence of fever and small-pox in the last quarter of 1872.

2. CHOLERA.—This disease happily had no general prevalence during the quarter. It was confined to the Districts of Ganjam, Vizagapatam, Godavery, Kistna, Nellore, Kurnool, South Arcot, and Trichinopoly. The total deaths were only 528 against 1518 in the fourth quarter of 1871. The whole of the Southern Districts have enjoyed a very remarkable immunity from cholera throughout the year 1872. The mortality was mainly confined to districts north of the Kistna, but the epidemic up to the present time is making no progress to the south, and at present it seems to have died out altogether in the north.

3. SMALL-POX.—This disease has been generally prevalent and more so in the Southern than the Northern Districts. We are now passing through the period of greatest intensity of an epidemic cycle of small-pox, and in the fourth quarter of 1872, the deaths from this cause rose to 9824, and during the whole of the year 38,193 deaths were registered under this head. The mortality for the first quarter of 1873 will be in excess of that of the quarter just ended, but after May or June of the present year, the epidemic (if it follows the course usually observed in former outbreaks) will decline somewhat suddenly. The great mortality from small-pox shows but too clearly how imperfect is the practice of vaccination in this part of India, and how much needs to be done before the population can be said to enjoy a fair degree of protection.

4. FEVERS.—The unusually copious monsoon rains have perhaps been in some degree the cause of an increased mortality from fevers, but the fourth quarter of the year is always a period of considerable fever mortality.

The deaths were 62,658 against 52,582 in the corresponding months of 1871, and the increase of mortality was particularly noticeable in the Northern Districts of Ganjam, Vizagapatam, Godavery, Kistna, Nellore, Kurnool, and North Arcot. The deaths from fever constitute by far the heaviest item in our mortality returns.

In the Southern Districts, the great epidemic of fever noticed in my last year's report was declining in 1872. Dengue fever had extended its ravages during the quarter to places in Kurnool, Bellary, Coimbatore, Salem, and Ganjam Districts.

5. BOWEL-COMPLAINTS.—The deaths registered under this head are below the number registered in the corresponding quarter of 1871. They were 9916 against 10,627 in 1871.

6. INJURIES.—The total mortality from violence was 3612 against 3916 in the fourth quarter of 1871.

ANNUAL RETURN of Deaths in the Fourth Quarter of 1872, compared with the Fourth Quarter of 1871.

Districts.	Cholera.		Small-pox.		Fevers.		All Causes.		Injuries.		Bowel-complaints.	
	1871.	1872.	1871.	1872.	1871.	1872.	1871.	1872.	1871.	1872.	1871.	1872.
Ganjam	18	74	81	70	2,204	2,324	3,173	4,373	73	76	161	141
Vizagapatam	.....	153	18	294	3,682	6,995	4,699	9,053	155	299	116	146
Godavery	.....	12	319	569	4,431	5,655	7,196	9,314	170	181	247	219
Kistna	2	35	273	384	2,665	3,706	5,752	6,199	211	233	155	117
Nellore	170	61	284	258	2,439	2,810	4,809	5,377	197	209	224	250
Madras	17	.....	49	83	530	754	3,055	3,602	45	89	518	495
Chingleput	11	.....	235	423	1,189	1,513	4,257	4,991	188	223	524	454
South Arcot	13	.....	653	671	3,437	3,103	2,313	6,847	209	219	561	437
Trichinopoly	51	38	162	353	2,668	2,469	5,706	5,595	156	181	514	414
Tanjore	34	26	556	565	1,913	1,447	11,569	10,316	375	252	622	577
Madura	53	.....	433	640	1,881	1,931	4,216	4,256	154	120	402	400
Tinnevelly	85	.....	1,126	1,140	1,640	1,945	7,478	8,085	158	172	1,909	2,030
Kurnool	90	.....	124	218	2,372	3,523	3,276	4,733	128	118	95	192
Cuddapah	.....	126	139	187	4,395	3,282	5,837	4,729	162	179	192	176
Bellary	13	.....	172	375	1,868	2,083	5,516	6,956	160	142	345	456
North Arcot	41	.....	613	1,029	3,945	5,664	10,510	11,417	400	370	823	589
Salem	589	.....	93	1,695	4,329	5,826	8,352	11,523	226	232	481	512
Coimbatore	239	1	65	391	3,334	2,753	6,518	5,163	210	160	883	706
Neilgherry Hills	20	.....	.....	5	128	99	184	195	1	3	21	18
South Canara	.....	.....	54	104	1,355	981	4,301	3,515	169	124	956	719
Malabar	121	.....	87	389	2,187	2,702	6,392	7,325	255	209	813	838
Total...	1,518	528	5,511	9,824	52,582	62,658	1,20,229	1,34,572	3,916	3,612	10,027	9,916

(Signed) W. R. CORNISH, Surgeon, F.R.C.S.,
Sanitary Commissioner for Madras.

No. 52. ORDER THEREON, 14th May 1873, No. 496.

Ordered that the foregoing report and return be communicated to the Board of Revenue, the Presidents of all Local-Fund Boards and Municipalities, and the Inspectors-General of the British and Indian Medical Departments.

2. The Governor in Council notes with much regret the marked increase in mortality from small-pox, and that the present tendency is still upwards. It is much to be regretted that the people at large have but an inadequate conception of the advantages of vaccination as modifying the ravages of this disease, but these will never be brought home to them unless those locally entrusted with the supervision of the working of the Vaccine Establishment take energetic measures to this end.

3. The Local-Fund Board of the Chittoor Circle has recently made a move in this direction, and it is to the various Local-Fund Boards and Municipalities that the Governor in Council looks in this matter, and he would draw their serious attention to the responsibilities resting on them as regards the health of the people whom they represent.

Procs., Finl. Dept., 19th March 1873, No. 366.

4. The attention of the Presidents of the Municipalities and Local-Fund Boards, in the Districts noted in the margin, is more particularly requested to the heavy bill of mortality from this cause in their districts.

Salem.
Tinnevelly.
North Arcot.

5. Fever has been more prevalent and more deadly than in the corresponding quarter of last year. It is noted as more prevalent in high lands than in low lands, but in the latter it may probably be mitigated by improved drainage. The subject should be carefully borne in mind by the members of the Department of Public Works entrusted with the construction or charge of works, which by interfering with natural drainage channels, or by purposely irrigating the country may lead to the stagnation of water.

6. Some types of the disease yield readily to European treatment. Among 1370 cases treated by Dr. Wright and his Assistants in one season in the Godavery District there were but five casualties (*vide* G. O., 30th December 1872, No. 1413).

7. The Board of Revenue should call the attention of all Collectors to the instructions embodied in G. O., No. 1066, dated 15th July 1871. On the outbreak of fever these should be widely circulated, and the Local-Fund Boards be moved to provide the cost of the medicines requred as well as of some special agency for their distribution which to be useful must be intelligent.

(True Extract.)

Acting Under Secretary,
for *Chief Secretary.*

To the Sanitary Commissioner.
" Board of Revenue.
" Revenue Department.
" Military Department.
" Public Works Department.
" Inspector-General, British Medical Service.
" Inspector-General, Indian Medical Department.
To all Presidents of Local Fund Boards.
" do. Municipalities.

Exd. J. Wright.

June 1893 recd

No. 11490

Stat. of U.S. 53rd Congress

PUBLIC.

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