

(1) Number of pages 4
 (2) Date of repair 5/88
 (3) Initials of the Referencer WMS

TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	3186	Press.
B.P. No.		Mis.
Dated	8.6.1877	197.

AT

Not to be folded or roughly handled

3186
1

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.
PUBLIC DEPARTMENT.

23rd May 1877, No. 714.

Sanitary.

Read the following paper:—

No. 77. *From Surgeon-Major W. R. CORNISH, F.R.C.S., Sanitary Commissioner for Madras, to the Officiating Chief Secretary to Government, dated Madras, 17th May 1877, No. 519.*

I have the honor to submit, for the information of His Grace in Council, the abstract returns of births and deaths registered throughout the Presidency for the month of February. The delay in the submission of this return is due to the non-receipt of the returns from South Canara, which only came to hand this morning.

2. *Births.*—In the whole Presidency only 33,363 births were recorded, or in the annual ratio of 13·8 per mille of population. The birth-rate to population was low in all the famine districts, and, although the birth-rate in the town of Madras was 29·6 per mille, it must be remembered that the famine has caused an enormous influx of population into the Presidency town and that the ratio is calculated only on the Census returns of 1871. The registered births have been fewer than usual in all the districts, and probably the high prices of food and scarcity more or less for many months past have been the chief factors in checking the increase of population.

3. *Deaths.*—The number of deaths registered was 105,175, and the ratio of deaths to population is 43·3 per mille. But a glance at the return will show that it was in the famine tracts only that the mortality was inordinately high. Thus, in Nellore the ratio of deaths was 64·1 per mille, in Madras 132·6, Chingleput 55·7, Kurnool 65·6, Cuddapah 101·5, Bellary 93·3, North Arcot 74·2, and Salem 63·5. The mean ratio of mortality for these districts in February was 81·3, while in the remaining thirteen districts it was only 23·9 per 1000.

4. Facts like these may be allowed to tell their *own* tale as to the influence of bad and insufficient food in the production of mortality, and in estimating the effects of the scarcity on the condition of the people they cannot be put aside as of no value.

5. Nearly one-half of the total mortality (51,103 deaths) is registered under the head of "Cholera." How much of this was due to cholera, and how much to bowel disorders connected with starvation, is not known; but it is significant that the eight famine districts account for 38,585 of the 51,103 deaths, stated to be due to cholera, and the inference is plain that, if cholera caused all these deaths, want and privation must be very powerful predisposing influences in preparing the way for epidemic cholera.

6. Small-pox caused 6829 deaths. The proportion of mortality to population was highest in the town of Madras and in South Canara, but the epidemic prevailed in every district, except Vizagapatam.

7. There were many deaths registered from "bowel-complaints" in the town of Madras and Chingleput (2405); but in the other famine districts I believe deaths of this kind, due to privation, have been entered under the head of "Cholera" as the whole nineteen districts show only 2591.

8. There is again apparently a defective registration of female deaths, the numbers being males 58,649, females 40,526.

9. In the beginning of February the rate of wages to the bulk of agricultural laborers out of employ, and temporarily thrown on famine relief works, was generally lowered by 25 per cent. The impolicy of this measure, as affecting the health and vitality of the people, formed the subject of a special protest on my part; but the policy having been generally approved of, and ordered to be adopted by the Government of India, and having with certain minor exceptions been continued up to the present time, we must look to the death registers of succeeding months to determine whether the State measures adopted for the sustenance of the people have been effectual, or otherwise. I need not say that the figures bearing on this subject (incomplete as they are from omissions) will be carefully considered, and that it will be my duty to lay them before Government with such deductions as the facts appear to warrant, so that the record may be available for the guidance of those who may hereafter have to deal with famine on a large scale.

No. 78. ORDER THEREON, 23rd May 1877, No. 714.

Ordered that the abstract of the Vital Statistics for the month of February 1877 be published in the *Fort St. George Gazette*.

2. The Sanitary Commissioner's letter will be communicated to the Revenue (Famine) Department.

3. The Government desire to impress on District Officers the import of expediting the transmission of these returns and of great attention to their accuracy.

(True Extract.)



Offg. Chief Secretary.

To the Revenue (Famine) Department.

- „ Board of Revenue.
- „ Surgeon-General, Indian Medical Department.
- „ Sanitary Commissioner.

Encl. A. S. Rodgers.

572

3186

3786

(2)

Nov. 1877 Sept
Feb. 4/85

Govt. of 1877 Madras.

PUBLIC.

THE REVENUE (FARMING)

DEPARTMENT.

Rs.

As.

Ps.

Printed May, 29th.

Issued

31

Printed 4/6/77

G.O., 23rd May 1877, No. 714.

MAY. —

Nos. 77-78.

4-3/86

6-9/85

18 June 77
Said to be based on letter from Secretary Commission reporting on the mortality in the Madras Presidency during February 1877.