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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Revenue DEPARTMENT

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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

PUBLIC DEPARTMENT.

11th August 1877, No. 1069.

Vital Statistics.

Read the following papers:—

No. 32. *From Surgeon-Major W. R. CORNISH, F.R.C.S., Sanitary Commissioner for Madras, to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated Madras, 1st August 1877, No. 1071.*

I have the honor to forward for publication in the *Fort St. George Gazette*, the abstract return of births and deaths in this Presidency for the month of May. The return for the Nilgiri Hills has not yet been received.

2. *Births.*—The total number of births registered during the month was 44,415, of which number 22,937 were males and 21,478 were females. The births registered were 6,805 in excess of the number for April, and the ratio of births to population was 18.4 per mille. The birth ratios however were very low in the famine districts; Nellore 7.9 per mille, Chingleput 14.1, Karnool 15.1, Cuddapah 13.1, Bellary 16.8, North Arcot 16.5, Salem 17.2, and Coimbatore 13.7.

3. *Deaths.*—The total number of deaths registered in May was 103,946. I am afraid the village registration does not include the mortality in many of the famine relief-camps. In some I have ascertained that the camp mortality is not included in district returns. The attention of district authorities however has been called to this point, so that I hope in future the figures will bear a truer relation to the real mortality.

In April only 89,411 deaths were registered, and it will be observed that the May mortality was 14,535 in excess of the previous month. In ordinary years the months of April, May, and June have the lowest mortality, but in the present season it has not been so. Of the 103,946 deaths 57,426 were males and 46,518 females.

The disproportion between the number of male and female deaths is an indication of defective registration, and in consequence of former representations on this point, district authorities have recently called the attention of village officials to the necessity of registering deaths among females.

4. *Causes of Death.*—The deaths due to cholera were 36,814 (males 20,817, females 3,287), Small-pox 6,726 (males 3,287, females 3,287), Fevers 25,275 (males 13,990, females 11,285), Bowel complaints 5,375 (males 3,045, females 2,330), Injuries 1,213 (males 712, females 501), all other causes 28,543 (males 15,425, females 13,118).

5. There were several severe outbreaks of cholera during the month, and especially in Cuddapah, Bellary, and Salem. In the Adoni Taluq, Mr. Oldham, B.C.S., describes one of his roads on which relief labor was employed as resembling "a battle field" in the numbers of dead and dying, scattered over the roadsides.

The aggregation of laborers in localities where water is scarce and of indifferent quality has undoubtedly lead to much pollution of ordinary sources of supply, and the numerous and repeated outbreaks of cholera along certain roads have, I do not doubt, been influenced by the bad quality of the supply. At the same time it must be borne in mind that many of the deaths given to "cholera" are in reality deaths from famine diseases, and that a large number of both kinds are never reported at all by the village authorities.

6. The mortality from small-pox is somewhat less in May than in April, and the epidemic is now slowly subsiding.

7. The increase in May of deaths under "Bowel complaints" and "other causes" means that famine diseases have been more fatal in that month and are likely to be more and more fatal, as larger numbers of the population begin to feel the effects of a chronic insufficiency of food.

8. The ratio of mortality in the famine districts is shown specially in the margin. The registration in Nellore has been very defective, and the Collector informs me that it is due to the non-receipt of returns from the Zemindaries and to the inclusion of the whole population of the district against death returns for only a portion of the area. Judging from the district returns no one could imagine that Nellore was a famine district, but the more accurate registration in the Municipal town shows a death-rate of 93.0 per mille.

Districts.	Ratio.
Nellore	23.02
Madras	121.9
Chingleput	46.3
Madura	47.5
Kurnool	67.6
Cuddapah	69.8
Bellary	73.8
North Arcot	51.5
Salem	93.1
Coimbatore	89.6

9. The month of May was characterized by a cyclonic storm in the Bay of Bengal and heavy rain along the Carnatic coast, and a general rain over many of the districts in the interior. In the neighbourhood of Madras more than 20 inches of rain were registered in the space of three days, but this excessive fall was not noticed a few miles to the north and south of Madras.

The rain extended over some parts of Mysore and Salem, but none fell in Bellary or Kurnool, and in Cuddapah District the gale was irregular and local.

In the districts where the rain fell copiously, as in Chingleput and Nellore, the water-supply (then falling short) was immensely improved.

No. 33.

No. 34. ORDER THEREON, 11th August 1877, No. 1069.

The returns submitted with this letter will be published in the *Fort St. George Gazette*.

2. Copy of the letter will be communicated to the Revenue (Famine) Department, to the Board of Revenue, and to the Surgeon-General, Indian Medical Department.

(True Extract.)

Chief Secretary.

To the Revenue (Famine) Department.

" Board of Revenue.

" Surgeon-General, Indian Medical Department.

Exd. J. W. Fischer.

17.8.77 22 August 1877

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Nov. 1877
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To THE REVENUE (FAMINE)
DEPARTMENT,

Secy, Secy, Secy.

Dated August, 11th.

Issued - 17

Recd. 18/3/77

Encl.

G.O., 11th August 1877, No. 1060.

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AUGUST.
Nos. 32-34.

With care

Print Statistics.—Returns of births and deaths in the Madras Presidency for May 1877, ordered to be published in the *Fort St. George Gazette*; and copy of the Sanitary Commissioner's letter, forwarding the return, communicated to the Surgeon-General, Indian Medical Department, and to the Departments concerned.

Recd. Dr.
Encl. 17