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GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.

The Colonial Surgeon's Report, with Returns on the Sanitary Condition of the Colony for the past year, is published for general information.

By Order,

W. H. ALEXANDER,
Acting Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 2nd March, 1863.

VICTORIA, HONGKONG, 6th February, 1863.

It is my pleasing duty, in drawing up my fourth annual Report on the health of this Colony, to record several important sanitary improvements which have been inaugurated during the past year, and to present statistical information of the most satisfactory character. So satisfactory indeed has the health of the Colony been during the past year, that but for the fact of the occurrence of a similar state of matters during each of the three years immediately preceding, it might well be considered exceptional in its character; it is to be hoped that a permanent improvement in the sanitary condition of Hongkong has been the result of the many sanitary reforms that have taken place.

Situated on the very edge of the Tropics it is not to be expected that its sanitary condition can ever be equal to that of a well regulated European town, added to which the continual intercourse with the mainland of China and neighbouring countries where no attention is paid to sanitary regulations, must expose it to epidemics of contagious disease. It is not therefore remarkable to find cases of Small-pox occurring both in Spring and Autumn, more especially when it is remembered that the Chinese are in the habit of employing inoculation in a most reckless manner and which indeed they prefer to the safer and milder practice of vaccination. Small-pox became a perfect scourge in the North of China last Spring, and at the same time Cholera was reported as raging at Singapore, Saigon and Manila—in a short time it appeared in Shanghai, and in the towns further North, where it produced great havoc, and ultimately visited Japan. For a time our Colony continued quite free from the disease, although cases were reported as occurring as near us as Macao and Whampoa.

The Government most judiciously appointed a Health Officer to board every vessel arriving in the harbor and at the same time erected a quarantine station on the small island adjoining Green Island. To this station three vessels infected with Small-pox were ordered.

At most two or three isolated cases of Cholera occurred in the Colony, of which two proved fatal in the Seaman's Hospital. But one of our Institutions, viz: the Gaol, proved an exception to the general immunity, for there an epidemic of the disease in its most malignant form broke out on the 17th of October, continuing for three weeks, during which time 25 cases occurred of which 13 terminated fatally. Singularly enough this epidemic was entirely limited to the Chinese prisoners and occurred principally among the long sentence men. The European prisoners, who were then occupying the new buildings, suffered at the same time from an epidemic of acute Dysentery, which fortunately in no case had a fatal result. Every preparation was made for meeting the disease in an efficient manner had it appeared in an epidemic form in the Town, but there is great reason for thankfulness that no such disastrous result followed, and possibly the great care with which the prevalence of the disease in Gaol was kept a secret beyond its walls had something to do with this result.

It only remains for me, before entering into details in reference to the various institutions which come officially under my cognizance, to record the appointment of a Committee for sanitary purposes; to the result of its labors and the report it may forward to Government, those interested in the health of this Colony may safely look with confidence.

I. THE POLICE.

This body is remarkable for its extreme healthiness as the following tables will illustrate:

Table I. shews the admissions into and the deaths in the Hospital of Members of the Police Force during every month of 1862.

Table II. shews the rate per cent of sickness and mortality of the Force during the same year.

It will be noted that the mortality is slightly in excess of 1861, but not to such a degree as to call for comment.

It is important to record that a second year's experience of the system of monthly examination for the detection of venereal disease has continued to be crowned with success. The numbers so affected being palpably less and more easily treated than was the case in years preceding the adoption of the system.

The Force does not appear to be peculiarly liable to any special class of disease, but the number of men taken into Hospital either for observation or for feigned diseases is considerable, and it is not always possible to detect the imposture without submitting the men to a day's observation.

II. THE GOVERNMENT CIVIL HOSPITAL.

Tables III. and VI. give the classification and result of treatment of the various patients admitted into this Hospital, with the per centage of mortality during the last four years.

Table IV., kindly furnished to me by the Resident Surgeon, Mr. Enscoe, gives similar information in regard to the Seaman's Hospital. The high relative rate of mortality in this Institution cannot but attract attention; it is simple justice to the Surgeon to note that there are many causes bearing greatly against his successful treatment. The principal of these consist in the very inferior character of the building and its appliances as a Hospital, in the reluctance of some Captains to send their men out of the ship until disease has made too great progress, and in some degree to the severity of the accidents occurring on board ship.

In the Civil Hospital the result of treatment, as shewn in the tables, has been eminently successful, this success appearing to follow in proportion as the establishment has year by year been made better adapted to the purpose for which it is maintained. I have great pleasure in recording that the infectious ward and the room for insane patients are rapidly reaching completion, and that water has been brought within the inclosure, and will, I understand, in a very few weeks be introduced into the building itself. There are no points of special interest to be noted in the character of the cases treated; the number is slightly in excess of that of 1861, although the reception of Merchant Seamen belonging to vessels in Harbor has ceased.

III. THE GAOL.

Table V. shews the rate of Sickness and Mortality in this establishment. It will be noted that the death rate was as high as 4.65 per cent. to the average number of prisoners, the highest rate since 1858. But if we remember that of the 26 deaths recorded 13 or exactly one-half resulted from Malignant Cholera, the ordinary death rate is at once reduced to 2.32 per cent., a rate much below the average. The appearance of Cholera in the Gaol was inexplicable: that it did not attack the prisoners more generally and that it proved so amenable to treatment in the crowded state of the buildings (which allowed less than 250 cubic feet of air to each prisoner,) is very satisfactory.

IV. THE LOCK HOSPITAL.

The results of the Working of Ordinance No. 12 of 1857, by which this Institution was established, are of the most satisfactory character, and already much good has been effected, as I shall endeavour to point out in the following remarks:—

Table VII. is of the most instructive description.

I must be permitted to hazard the statement, (the data for arriving at which I have given in former Reports) that of the total sick, in all Hospitals in the East, fully 25 per cent. are afflicted with Venereal disease. It must therefore be a matter of great importance to those who have the care of large bodies of disciplined men, to reduce that per centage to its lowest limit, and to make that class of patients as amenable to treatment as possible—which the Ordinance and periodical examination has enabled us to effect to a great extent in reference to the Police. The severity of the disease will *ceteris paribus* be as the source from which it has been contracted. The Table conveys the following important information: that during the five years the Ordinance has been in force 1,574 infected women have been segregated from the localities in which they could convey infection and that during a total of 42,270 days, or, to repeat the argument I have several times previously adduced, supposing that every infected woman would only convey the disease to one man during each day she was diseased, we have at least 42,270 cases of disease prevented,—or at all events 42,270 opportunities of conveying disease have been prevented. What can be more satisfactory as a measure of Sanitary Police? The table shews further that the average number of days in which these diseased women have been under treatment has steadily decreased, until in 1862 it was 22.0 only a fraction above the half of 43.8 in 1858, almost the minimum we can expect—which proves that the disease is milder in type and is arrested in its earlier stages.

So completely satisfied am I of the incalculable benefit that has resulted to the Colony from the Ordinance under discussion that I shall be glad to see its provisions extended to both the so called purely Chinese houses, and to that still more fertile source of infection, the boat population.

Both Military and Naval Medical Officers concur with me in estimating very highly the advantages of the Ordinance as affecting the health of their men—of which I have received numerous proofs. I shall limit myself in this instance to recording the evidence of only three of those gentlemen.

Dr. Home, the present Deputy Inspector and principal Military Medical Officer, who had experience of the Colony prior to the introduction of the Ordinance, writes:

“On behalf of the Army Medical Officers stationed here I have pleasure in expressing to you the great advantage we have derived from the excellent Sanitary arrangements in force in regard to Prostitution.

“Venereal disease from being but a few years ago one of the most common causes of unfitness for duty here has now become of comparatively rare occurrence.”

Dr. Sexton, Assistant Surgeon of H. M.'s 5th Bombay Light Infantry made the following statement last May:

“Among 427 men, the total strength of the detachment at present quartered at Hongkong, only 4 cases of Venereal disease have occurred during the months of March and April, 1862; that is to say at the rate of two cases or 0.5 per cent per month.

“No less remarkable is the mild form under which the disease presents itself: that it has become extremely amenable to treatment is best evidenced by the fact that the average number of days under treatment of each case only amounted to 8.5: a result almost unprecedented in the statistical history of this disease.”

Dr. Dixon who was Surgeon of H. M.'s S. *Chesapeake* when carrying the Flag of Admiral Sir James Hope, and who had many opportunities of judging of the Working of the Ordinance, more than confirmed the above Statements, as far as his own men were concerned.

Table VIII. gives fuller details as to the character of the diseases and their average duration during every month of the year 1862.

Table IX. is an approximative estimate of the Mortality among Foreign Residents in Hongkong during the last five years. The number of Residents is furnished to me by the Registrar General and the deaths are estimated by the number of burials in the two Cemeteries, excluding in both cases Military, and Naval and Merchant Seamen, as well as burials from the Hospitals.* If the data are correct Hongkong may boast of a better climate than it has credit for—but it must not be forgotten that the majority of Foreigners do not remain in Hongkong to die, but leave as soon as any serious disease attacks them, if their condition will at all permit of them doing so.

Table X. gives the usual information as to the work performed by the Inspector of Nuisances attached to this Department.

Table XI. shews the Annual Mean state of the Atmosphere during the year 1862 as recorded at the Government Civil Hospital.

J. I. MURRAY, M.D.,
Colonial Surgeon.

* Note.—The Military and Seaman's Hospital are necessarily excluded—the Civil Hospital has also been excluded in the calculation as very few of its patients come under the designation of Residents.

1.—THE POLICE.

TABLE showing the Admissions into Hospital and Deaths during the Year 1862.

MONTH.	EUROPEANS.		COLOURED.		CHINESE.		TOTAL.	TOTAL.
	Admissions.	Deaths.	Admissions.	Deaths.	Admissions.	Deaths.	Admissions.	Deaths.
January,	12	..	38	2	2	..	52	2
February,	20	..	13	1	..	..	33	1
March,	12	..	7	1	6	..	25	1
April,	18	..	18	..	3	..	39	..
May,	23	..	16	1	2	..	41	1
June,	10	..	27	1	3	..	40	1
July,	16	..	38	1	5	..	59	1
August,	13	1	30	..	1	..	44	1
September,	15	1	39	..	3	..	57	1
October,	11	..	28	..	3	..	42	..
November,	13	..	34	1	..	..	47	1
December,	14	1	18	..	..	..	32	1
Total,	177	3	306	8	28	..	511	11

2.—TABLE showing the RATE of SICKNESS and MORTALITY in the POLICE FORCE during the Year 1862.

AVERAGE STRENGTH.				TOTAL SICK.	TOTAL DEATHS.	RATE OF SICKNESS.	RATE OF MORTALITY.
Europeans.	Coloured.	Chinese.	Total.				
41	235	90	416	511	11	122.59 per cent.	2.64 per cent.

3.—TABLE showing the RATE of MORTALITY in the Government Civil Hospital during the Year 1862.

RATE TO TOTAL NO. OF ADMISSIONS.					RATE TO NO. OF EUROPEAN ADMISSIONS.				RATE TO NO. OF COLORED PERSONS ADMITTED.				RATE TO NO. OF CHINESE ADMISSIONS.			
1858.	1859.	1860.	1861.	1862.	1859.	1860.	1861.	1862.	1859.	1860.	1861.	1862.	1859.	1860.	1861.	1862.
17.88 per cent.	8.62 per cent.	6.90 per cent.	6.47 per cent.	5.41 per cent.	6.09 per cent.	9.31 per cent.	9.16 per cent.	5.41 per cent.	6.44 per cent.	3.43 per cent.	2.01 per cent.	2.70 per cent.	28.98 per cent.	8.23 per cent.	11.65 per cent.	12.78 per cent.

4.—THE SEAMAN'S HOSPITAL.

TABLE showing the Number of Admissions and MORTALITY during the Year 1862.

DISEASE.	DEATHS.	NO. OF CASES.	DISEASE.	DEATHS.	NO. OF CASES.
			<i>Brought forward,</i>	36	245
Delirium Tremens, .....	..	1	Splenitis, .....	..	1
Gun shot wounds, .....	..	3	Stricture, .....	..	3
Dysentery,	21	44	Hypertrophy of Heart, .....	..	1
Pleuritis, .....	..	4	Hernia, .....	..	2
Burns, .....	..	3	2nd Syphilis, .....	..	6
Frost Bite,	1	3	Hæmatemesis, .....	..	4
Rheumatism, .....	..	22	Phthisis,	3	7
Variola,	2	21	Hydrocele, .....	..	1
Enteritis, .....	..	3	Abcess, .....	..	1
Iritis, .....	..	3	Concussion of Brain,	2	2
Syphilis,	1	32	Pneumonia, .....	..	3
Necrosis, .....	..	6	Gastritis, .....	..	4
Hepatitis,	2	12	Epilepsia, .....	..	1
Continued Fever,	5	26	Malignant Cholera,	2	2
Intermittent Fever,	1	9	Jaundice, .....	..	1
Hæmorrhoids, .....	..	5	Paralysis, .....	..	1
Ulcers, .....	..	4	Sympathetic Bubo, .....	..	2
Asthma,	1	2	Brain Fever, .....	..	1
Fractures, .....	..	5	Tonsilitis, .....	..	1
Scurvy, .....	..	4	Spinal Inflammation, .....	..	1
Lacerated wounds, .....	..	9	Dislocation of Shoulder, .....	..	1
Gonorrhœa, .....	..	2	Aneurism, .....	..	4
Constipation, .....	..	5	Bronchitis, .....	..	1
Diarrhœa,	1	15	Inflammation of Knee Joint, .....	..	1
Scalds,	1	2	Itch, .....	..	1
<i>Carried forward,</i>	36	245	TOTAL,	43	298

Rate of Deaths to Number of Admissions,

14.42 per cent.

7.—TABLE showing the ADMISSIONS into the GOVERNMENT LOCK HOSPITAL during the Five Years of its existence, with the Number of Diets issued and the Average Length of Treatment.

ADMISSIONS.						NO. OF DIETS ISSUED.						AVERAGE NO. OF DAYS TREATED.				
1858.	1859.	1860.	1861.	1862.	Total.	1858.	1859.	1860.	1861.	1862.	Total.	1858.	1859.	1860.	1861.	1862.
124	162	361	442	485	1,574	4,798	5,389	9,107	10,778	12,198	42,270	43.8	30.8	23.7	23.4	22.0

8.—TABLE showing the Monthly Admissions, Classification of Diseases, and Average Duration of Treatment of each in the GOVERNMENT LOCK HOSPITAL during the Year 1862.

MONTHS.	CHANCRES.	AVERAGE DAYS.	GONORRHOEA.	AVERAGE DAYS.	ULCERS OF UTERUS.	AVERAGE DAYS.	TOTAL CASES.
January,	15	34 $\frac{1}{2}$	18	25 $\frac{5}{8}$	1	5	34
February,	10	44 $\frac{7}{10}$	28	11	....	....	38
March,	9	53 $\frac{1}{2}$	43	13 $\frac{1}{2}$	....	....	52
April,	8	39 $\frac{1}{2}$	27	34	1	91	36
May,	11	33	34	24	1	63	46
June,	6	26 $\frac{5}{8}$	45	19	4	41	55
July,	1	10	23	27	7	50 $\frac{3}{4}$	31
August,	6	8	20	25 $\frac{7}{10}$	15	25	41
September,	2	20 $\frac{1}{2}$	17	21 $\frac{3}{4}$	12	25 $\frac{3}{4}$	31
October,	5	20 $\frac{1}{2}$	16	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	19	32	40
November,	2	25	2	33	22	18	26
December,	4	13 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	20	23	12	28
TOTAL,	79	....	274	....	105	....	458

9.—TABLE showing the Rate of MORTALITY among the FOREIGN RESIDENTS in HONGKONG during the last Five Years.

YEARS.	NO. OF EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN RESIDENTS.	BURIALS OF RESIDENTS IN PROTESTANT AND ROMAN CATHOLIC CEMETERIES.	PERCENTAGE OF DEATHS TO NO. OF RESIDENTS.
1858,	1,462	110	7.52
1859,	1,031	70	6.66
1860,	1,592	51	3.20
1861,	1,557	101	6.47
1862,	1,557, about.	46	2.95
TOTAL,	7,199	378	5.25

10.—TABLE showing the Work performed by the INSPECTOR of NUISANCES during the Year 1862.

NO. OF SUMMONSES ISSUED.	NO. OF PERSONS FINED.	NO. OF PERSONS DISCHARGED.	NO. OF NOTICES ISSUED.	FOR DEFECTIVE DRAINAGE.	FOR ACCUMULATION OF FILTH.	AMOUNT OF FINES.		
						In Dollars.	In Sterling.	Total.
1,403	1,317	86	5,671	3,206	2,465	1,297.00	Nil.	£ s.d. 270.6.8

11.—TABLE showing the ANNUAL MEAN STATE of the ATMOSPHERE during the Year 1862 as recorded at the CIVIL HOSPITAL.

1862.	BAROMETER.			FAHRENHEIT THERMOMETER.				HYGROMETER.				Rain in Inches during the Month.	STATE OF THE WEATHER.	
	Standard.		Aneroid.	Self registering in Shade.		Detached.		Dry Bulb.		Wet Bulb.				
	During the Month.		During the Month.		In Sun.		In Water.		In Shade.		In Shade.			
	9 A.M.	3 P.M.	9 A.M.	3 P.M.	9 A.M.	3 P.M.	9 A.M.	3 P.M.	9 A.M.	3 P.M.	9 A.M.	3 P.M.	In Inches.	
MONTH.				Max.	Min.									
January,	30.41	30.33	30.11	30.00	61	54	67½	53½	58	51½	52	...	Fine, overcast, drizzling rains, and misty.	
February,	30.41	30.29	29.89	30.15	60½	50	73½	54½	58½	40	40	...	Fine and clear.	
March,	30.31	30.25	30.03	29.96	64	58	72	59	62½	53	57½	0.55	Fine, overcast, cloudy, and misty.	
April,	30.16	30.10	29.87	29.79	75½	64	87	70½	73½	67	67	0.68	Fine and clear, misty and hazy.	
May,	30.30	30.01	29.77	29.71	81	74	85	73½	78½	73	73	9.73	Do. do. rain and misty.	
June,	29.94	29.94	29.14	29.09	85	77½	91	80½	81	75½	78	11.63	Do. do. overcast and rain.	
July,	29.96	29.85	29.58	29.51	86	78	90½	81	80	78	79½	30.89	Rain overcast and gloomy.	
August,	29.96	29.90	29.58	29.50	86	78	89½	81	81	78	77	23.04	Fine and clear, rain, overcast and misty.	
September,	30.10	30.00	29.74	29.31	84½	79	95	80½	82	76	76	6.09	Fine and clear with occasional showers.	
October,	30.25	30.13	29.91	29.79	79	75½	81	73	79½	68	70	2.85	Fine and clear.	
November,	30.20	30.08	29.84	29.76	74	68	80	70	71	68	60	5.55	Do. do.	
December,	30.00	30.04	29.65	29.70	75	68	82	71	70	75	60	...	Fine cloudy and misty.	
Annual Mean,	30.16	30.32	29.75	29.65	75	68	82	70	72	72	65	91.01		