

GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 115.

The following correspondence relative to the Immunity of the Chinese in Cape Colony from Infection of Plague was laid before the Legislative Council at a meeting held yesterday, and is published.

By Command,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART,
Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 28th February, 1902.

No. 1862.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 30th July, 1901.

SIR,—I am directed by the Governor to inform you that His Excellency has observed a statement in the English papers to the effect that in Cape Colony the Chinese population has enjoyed immunity from infection during the late outbreak of plague.

2. His Excellency would be glad to know to what cause this immunity, if it exists, has been attributed.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART,
Colonial Secretary.

THE SECRETARY TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER,
Cape Colony.

P.S.
No. 808.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
CAPE TOWN, 6th November, 1901.

SIR,—With reference to your letter, No. 1862 of the 30th July last, addressed to the Secretary to the High Commissioner, regarding the alleged immunity from infection enjoyed by the Chinese population in Cape Colony, during the outbreak of plague, which was referred to this Office on the 25th September last, I am desired by the Governor to transmit, herewith, a copy of a report he has received from the Medical Officer of Health for the Colony and Director of Plague Administration, on the subject.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

H. W. B. ROBINSON,
Private Secretary.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY,
Hongkong.

(Enclosure.)

Copy.

OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR THE COLONY,
33, PARLIAMENT STREET, CAPE TOWN,
November, 1901.

MEMORANDUM.

ALLEGED IMMUNITY OF CHINESE FROM PLAGUE INFECTION.

(1.) With reference to the statement in the English papers to the effect that in Cape Colony the Chinese population has enjoyed immunity from infection of Plague during the present outbreak of the disease, and to the request of His

Excellency the Governor of Hongkong to be informed as to the cause of this alleged immunity, if it exists, I beg to state that :—

(2.) There are not at my disposal accurate data upon which to base a calculation as to the relative number of Chinese at present residing in Cape Colony as compared with the rest of the population. The last Census of the population of the Colony was taken as far back as the year 1891, and according to these returns there were only two hundred and fifteen Chinese males (no females) residing in Cape Colony, but it is certain that this number has largely increased ; exactly to what extent, however, it is impossible to say.

(3.) The number of cases of Plague which have been discovered up to the present among Chinese during the outbreak is only ten, all of whom were males, namely :—

One at Cape Town,
Eight at Port Elizabeth, and
One at Uitenhage.

Of which number, seven have died, namely :—

Six at Port Elizabeth, and
One at Uitenhage.

Of the remainder—

One at Cape Town, and
One at Port Elizabeth, have been discharged cured ; and
One at Port Elizabeth is still under treatment.

(4.) A round enumeration of the Chinese, Asiatics (Indians) and Aboriginal Natives at Port Elizabeth, made during the last few days, has resulted in the discovery of 390 Chinese, three hundred and eighty-four being males and six females. Of 707 Indians, four hundred and ninety-one being males and two hundred and sixteen females ; and of eight thousand eight hundred and thirty Aboriginal Natives. This enumeration of Aboriginal Natives is more likely, however, to be inaccurate than that of Chinese and Asiatics.

(5.) Although these figures are quite insufficient for the purpose of arriving at a final conclusion, yet a rough indication of the relative incidence of the disease among Chinese, as compared with other races, and especially Indians, may be obtained. They give, in the case of Port Elizabeth, for the Chinese population a case incidence of over two per cent. of the community and a mortality (so far) of over one and a half per cent. ; and a case mortality (so far) of seventy-five per cent. of total known attacks.

These rates may be compared with the incidence on Indians living in the same place, among whom four cases of Plague, all of whom have died, have been discovered, which give a case incidence and mortality of 0.57 per cent. of the Indian community, and a case mortality of 100 per cent. of the attacks. They may also be compared with the rates for Aboriginal Natives living in Port Elizabeth, among whom forty-four cases of Plague have been discovered, of which number, twenty have died, fourteen have been discharged cured, and ten still remain under treatment ; giving a case incidence of a little less than a half per cent. of the Aboriginal Native population.

As the final result of so many of the cases among natives at Port Elizabeth is not yet known, no useful rates of mortality can at present be obtained for these Natives, but it is of interest to compare the case mortality in different races among

all cases of Plague which have so far occurred throughout the Colony (including Port Elizabeth). This has amounted—

among Europeans to 34.1 per cent. on a total of two hundred and fourteen cases ;

among Aboriginal Natives to 42.7 per cent. on a total of one hundred and ninety-two cases ; and

among Coloured persons, chiefly consisting of half-castes and Malays, to 56.7 per cent. on a total of four hundred and thirty-six cases.

(6.) So far, therefore, as we can judge from the above figures both the incidence of the disease and the mortality, when attacked, is greater among Chinese than among other races.

(7.) It is impracticable to say how far these results have been influenced by inoculation with "Haffkine's Prophylactic," as, apart from the fact that our records do not in every case state the race of the person inoculated, there are so many sources of fallacy in the application of inoculation figures that no reliable deduction can be made. Moreover the number of persons inoculated is so small compared with the size of the communities living in infected areas that, I think, under any circumstances but little effect can be attributed to the inoculation on the course of the epidemic as a whole. Perhaps an exception to this statement may be made in regard to the inoculation of the large body of Natives (between six and seven thousand) who were removed from Cape Town at the beginning of the outbreak and placed in a new Location at Uitvlugt in the vicinity of the city.

The total of inoculations to date, a large number of which, however, have been performed on Natives and Asiatics living in uninfected portions of the Colony, amount to twenty-nine thousand seven hundred and eighty-one, of whom six thousand three hundred and fifty-five were Europeans, and twenty-three thousand four hundred and twenty-six were Coloured, Asiatics, and Aboriginal Natives.

(Signed) A. JOHN GREGORY,
*Medical Officer of Health for the Colony
and Director of Plague Administration.*

GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 116.

The following Bye-laws made by the Sanitary Board on the 18th February, 1902, and approved by the Legislative Council on the 27th idem, are published.

By Command,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART,
Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 28th February, 1902.

BYE-LAWS

Made by the Sanitary Board under Section 13 of the Public Health Ordinance, No. 13 of 1901.

Bye-laws 6 and 7, under the heading "Disinfection of Infected premises," contained in schedule B of the Public Health Ordinance No. 13 of 1901 together with the sub-heading thereto, and Bye-laws 8 and 9, published in the *Gazette* as Government Notification No. 555 of 1901 and also Bye-laws