

SANITATION.

JUNE.

File S. $\frac{2-S}{6}$.

Nos. 14-16.

Insanitary condition of the Jherria Coal-fields.

बिहार सरकार
मंत्रिमंडल सचिवालय विभाग
(बिहार राज्य अभिलेखागार निदेशालय)

LIST OF PAPERS.

- 14-15. Memorandum by the Commissioner of the Chota Nagpur Division, No. 157L.F., dated the 29th May 1908, submitting for orders copies of the proceedings of meetings held by the Jherria Sanitation Committee, held on the 22nd and 25th April 1908.
16. To the Commissioner of the Chota Nagpur Division, No. 400T.—San., dated the 12th June 1908, conveying Government orders on the above letter.

2

INSANITARY CONDITION OF THE JHERRIA COAL-FIELDS.

[Nos. 14-15.]

[FILE S. $\frac{2-S}{6}$ 20.]

No. 157L.F., dated Ranchi, the 29th May 1908.

Memo.--By the Commissioner of the Chota Nagpur Division.

COPY of the following letter with its enclosures submitted to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Municipal Department, with reference to the correspondence ending with his memorandum No. 1286San., dated the 18th December 1907.

No. 360Cr., dated Purulia, the 23rd May 1908.

From--H. COUPLAND, Esq., I.C.S., Deputy Commissioner of Manbhum,
To--The Commissioner of the Chota Nagpur Division.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a copy of the proceedings of a meeting of the Jherria Sanitation Committee, held on the 22nd ultimo. The Committee request that Government may again be moved to consider the feasibility of legislation on the lines of the model rules which were submitted by Mr. Streatfeild, with this office No. 1268Cr., dated the 11th November 1906. The meeting seems to have ignored the definite orders of Government contained in the Government letter No. 1285San., dated the 18th December 1907, to the address of the Secretary, Mining Association, copy of which was received with your memorandum No. 727L.F., dated the 3rd January 1908, in which it was pointed out that the proposed amendment of the Local Self-Government Act would probably provide the necessary extended powers, which cannot otherwise be given other than by special legislation.

So far as I am aware, nothing has yet been done by the Mining Association or by any individual mine-owners to proceed with the suggestion made in the fourth paragraph of the Government letter, in regard to the preparation of a definite water-supply scheme; though the recent outbreak of cholera in the coal-fields must now have brought home very forcibly the necessity for providing their labour force with comparatively pure water, as well as with improved sanitary arrangements generally.

I take this opportunity of forwarding also, for your information, a copy of the proceedings of a subsequent meeting, and of a circular letter which, as a result of that meeting, I addressed to all Mine-owners and Managers on the subject of disposal of the dead. The arrangements therein proposed have been given effect to, and the Civil Surgeon, who has recently spent a week in the colliery area, now reports that bodies are generally being disposed of properly. In the earlier stages of the epidemic this was undoubtedly not the case, mainly because of the absence of any concerned action on the part of the colliery managers themselves. It will be seen from the proceedings of this meeting how difficult it is to get them to help themselves in matters like these, and what obstacles they place in the way of anyone else helping them--the majority do not even appear to realise that ordinary decency and humanity demand that they should do something to improve the sanitary conditions under which the enormous cooly population they have brought together in a comparatively small area live, and to arrange for decent disposal of their bodies when they die. The number of coolies employed just before the present outbreak of cholera was probably not much less than 75,000 in an area certainly not exceeding 75 square miles, which before the coal industry extended there probably had not a population of more than 200 or 300 to the square mile. This number is now reduced temporarily by about two-thirds, but the numbers will rapidly increase as soon as the cholera and its attendant scare abate. In a number of cases I have no doubt the lesson of the recent epidemic will not be lost, and attempts will be made to improve the conditions under which the coolies have to live; but in a still larger number I fear that very little will be done, until pressure can be put upon the managers and owners, and penalties imposed for failure to comply with a few comparatively simple sanitary regulations.

Proceedings of the Meeting of the Jherria Sanitation Committee, held on the 22nd April 1908.

PRESENT :

A. E. Seroope, Esq., I.C.S., Subdivisional Officer.

J. J. Turnbull, Esq., Honorary Secretary.

Dr. Lunn.

Captain Coppinger, I.M.S.

R. M. Bathgate, Esq.

Attended by invitation--

Professor Haffkine.

Dr. Johnstone.

1. The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed,
2. It was resolved that, in view of the present outbreak of cholera in the Jherria Coal-fields, the Deputy Commissioner of Manbhum be requested to again impress on Government the necessity of introducing some form of legislation by which sanitation in this area may be enforced, and means of dealing with outbreaks such as the present be provided. The Committee would again refer to the consideration of Government the feasibility of legislation on the lines of the model rules framed in 1906 by this Committee under the Epidemic Diseases Act, and suggest that if the Epidemic Diseases Act does not contemplate delegation of powers to Committees such as this Committee, legislation be framed to meet this difficulty.
3. As regards the measures dealing with the present outbreak, it was considered that the most important measure at present to be considered is the disposal of the dead bodies. It was resolved to ask the Deputy Commissioner of Manbhum to import 25 Domes from Bihar.
4. It was resolved that Mr. Watson of Bhowrah be elected in place of Mr. Brown as a member of the Sanitary Committee, and Mr. Mackie of Jamadoba be elected as an additional member.

GOBINDPUR,
The 25th April 1908. }

A. E. SCROOPE,

Subdivisional Officer, Gobindpur.

No. 26Cr., dated Gobindpur, the 25th April 1908.

Memo.—By the Subdivisional Officer, Gobindpur.

COPY of the above proceedings forwarded to the Deputy Commissioner, Manbhum, for information.

Proceedings of a Meeting held at the Jherria Club on the 25th April 1908.

PRESENT:

H. Coupland, Esq., I.C.S., Deputy Commissioner.
J. R. Berrington, Esq., Superintendent of Police.
A. E. Scroope, Esq., I.C.S., Subdivisional Officer, Gobindpur.
J. J. Turnbull, Esq., East Indian Coal. Co.
J. A. Savi, Esq.
C. Nairne, Esq., Equitable Coal Company.
S. Millar, Esq., ditto ditto.
Professor Haffkine.
Angelo Smith, Esq., Manager, Jherria Raj.
H. Chambers, Esq., Lodna Colliery.
H. Mulroney, Esq., Engineer.
C. Creedy, Esq., District Engineer, Bengal-Nagpur Railway.

The proceedings were opened by the Deputy Commissioner, who apologised for the short notice given, and explained that his object in calling the meeting was to ascertain exactly how things stood in regard to the cholera outbreak, and to decide what, if any, special measures were required.

At the outset he asked for actual figures for their own collieries from the Managers present, from which it appeared that Lodna was the only colliery represented where the outbreak had been anything out of the ordinary so far.

He enquired from Mr. Turnbull, as Secretary of the Sanitation Committee, whether he was receiving outbreak and daily reports from the Medical Officer. It was understood that weekly reports were being received, but the Secretary was not in a position to say whether collieries were regularly reporting to the Medical Officer or not. It was understood that the two Sanitary Inspectors still working under that officer were supposed to go about and report to him.

Enquiry was also made as to the conservancy staff employed on the collieries in ordinary times, and from the figures given by one or two gentlemen present, it was inferred that in ordinary circumstances the regular staff employed was sufficient. The Deputy Commissioner then enquired why it was that with a number of Domes and Haris employed on each colliery it was not possible to arrange through them for disposal of corpses even during the course of an epidemic. The reply to this was, that in some cases the conservancy staff was weakened by death or desertion; but generally the reason given for the demands made on the police for assistance in disposing of the dead was that bodies were brought on to colliery premises from the villages or from other collieries, and that the colliery staff absolutely declined to burn or bury any but those who belonged to their own particular colliery. Mr. A. Smith said that it was an almost general practice for the Domes of one colliery to take their dead bodies and chuck them out on to another colliery, but Mr. Turnbull denied this so far as any rate as the East Indian Company Collieries were concerned. It was admitted, however, that most people objected to bodies being burnt on their own premises, and that except in a few places, such as Jherria Khas, Loyabad, and Barrakotta, there are no regular public burning or burial grounds. The East Indian and Lodna Companies representatives, Messrs. Turnbull and Chambers, said, that regular places were set apart on their collieries, and it was also said that the Damuda bed was the regular place for villages and collieries in its immediate neighbourhood. From

what Mr. Turnbull said it was to be inferred that tanks and *nullas* now within colliery limits were formerly the village burial grounds; and as the villagers are not now allowed to burn or bury openly at these places, they frequently bring their dead there surreptitiously and leave them partially cremated or buried in a few inches of earth. The general impression gained was that burning or burial whether done by the colliery Domes or by the villagers is even in ordinary times a very perfunctory business, and that much of the difficulty arises from the fact that no one wants bodies burnt or buried anywhere in their own immediate neighbourhood.

A proposal was then put forward by the Deputy Commissioner, that if a staff of Domes was arranged for at the thana, it would be advisable to have three or four places set aside for cremation of bodies, where an ample supply of fuel could be arranged, and if necessary a fire be kept going continuously; this would ensure proper and complete disposal of bodies and the work of the Domes could be supervised. Objections were raised to this from all sides; it was said that the sites would have to be acquired under the Act, presumably because no one would give or even lend any part of their own land for such purposes; it was further stated that it would involve carrying bodies along the public roads or through colliery premises, and the result would be that coolies on healthy collieries would be frightened away.

The Deputy Commissioner said he would not press this proposal against what was apparently an objection very strongly held by the mining community; though to him it appeared an unreasonable and short-sighted one. He then announced that he had arranged for a staff of 16 Domes who would be kept at the thana while the epidemic lasted, but that he must impress on Managers that the responsibility for disposal and proper, not perfunctory, disposal of all dead bodies of persons dying on their premises, as well as bodies placed surreptitiously thereon from outside must rest with themselves in the first instance. As they would not have central burning grounds, they must arrange to burn such bodies on their own premises, and so far as possible with their own staff of conservancy coolies. If this was impossible, they might requisition the aid of the reserve at the thana, but of course must pay for their services and must arrange for the supervision of their work.

Mr. Turnbull said that the Sanitary Committee would pay these reserve Domes a fixed wage of Rs. 6 per mensem for local men and Rs. 8 per mensem for the men from Purulia; and it was agreed that the collieries should pay at the rate of Rs. 2 per body disposed of to the Domes before sending them back to the thana.

The Deputy Commissioner also pointed out that the Colliery Managers must personally or through their superior or medical staff see that clothes and bedding of dead are destroyed, and that the place of death and its surroundings are disinfected. It was agreed that where, as in most cases, the colliery employs a native doctor or compounder this is regularly done. It was pointed out by the Deputy Commissioner that this was one of the purposes for which the Inspectors under the Sanitation Committee were appointed.

Professor Haffkine was then asked whether he could offer any advice to the gentlemen present as to any further steps to be taken by the mining community to prevent the spread of, or mitigate the severity of, the present outbreak. In reply, the Professor gave a very clear exposition of the possible sources of the disease, but said he could not give any advice without knowing which of these sources was mainly or entirely responsible, and he sketched the lines on which a proper bacteriological examination of all the various sources of the water-supply should be conducted in order to ascertain this.

As Professor Haffkine stated he was already in communication with the Sanitary Commissioner, Colonel Clarkson, on the subject of the Jherria outbreak, the Deputy Commissioner suggested that he should put the case before him unofficially as he had described it to the meeting, and he agreed to do so. The Deputy Commissioner also promised to write to Colonel Clarkson.

The meeting then terminated.

GOBINDPUR,

The 27th April 1903.

H. COUPLAND,

Deputy Commissioner.

FIGURES GIVEN AT THE MEETING.

Cases and Deaths.

Jealgora (East Indian Company)	1 case, 1 death, in February.
Ditto ditto	24 cases, 8 deaths, in March and April.
Kendwadih ditto	4 „ 2 „ in same period.
Hariladih (Equitable)	... 27 „ 8 „
Belguria (Ditto)	... 8 „ 4 „
Kendwadih (Ditto)	... 1 case, 1 death.
Bagdigi	... 1 „
Lodna	... 3 or 4 cases and deaths daily for last fortnight.
Jherria Bazar	... 8 cases, 8 deaths.

Regular Conservancy Staff.

East Indian Company	...	12 men throughout the year.
Ditto ditto	...	5 „ permanently.
Lodna	...	4 or 5 women daily.
Do.	...	1 conservancy cart.
Hariladih	...	9 men permanently.

H. COUPLAND,
Deputy Commissioner.

No. 35C.R., dated Gobindpur, the 26th April 1908.

From—H. COUPLAND, Esq., Deputy Commissioner of Manbhum,
To—All Colliery Managers, Jherria Coal-field.

At an informal meeting held at the Jherria Club on the morning of the 25th instant, the existing difficulties in the matter of proper disposal of dead bodies of coolies and others dying on or near colliery premises were discussed. I was unfortunately unable to give any general notice of this meeting, but a number of Managers were present, as well as the Superintendent of Police, the Subdivisional Officer of Gobindpur, Professor Haffkine, and Mr. Mulronev.

The following arrangements were eventually decided upon:—

- (1) Every Colliery Manager must, in his own interests, as well as under the law, be held responsible in the first instance for the proper disposal of dead bodies found on his own colliery, whether the corpse is that of one of his own coolies or brought in surreptitiously or otherwise from outside.
- (2) So far as possible, the Colliery Manager should arrange for the burning of the dead bodies by his own staff of sweepers, but if outside assistance is required, he should send a written requisition to the Sub-Inspector of Police at Jherria, where arrangements have been made for a reserve of 16 Domes. These Domes will receive a regular monthly pay from the Jherria Sanitation Committee, and the Colliery Manager must pay them Rs. 2 per body disposed of.
- (3) As numerous objections were raised to the proposal that three or four regular burning ghâts should be established at convenient places in the coal-field, it was decided that bodies should be disposed of on the colliery on which they are found; and if proper arrangements are made and sufficient fuel provided, there can be little if anything objectionable about such an arrangement.
- (4) It was agreed that it is essential that disposal of bodies should be carried out in a thorough and not a perfunctory manner, and it is hoped that in their own interests, Colliery Managers will see that this is done.
- (5) Complete destruction of clothes, bedding, charpoy, etc., of the dead, and thorough disinfection of the surrounding are obviously essential; and it is understood that this is regularly done by the colliery staff of sweepers under the direction of the medical or other supervising staff employed on the collieries.
- (6) If found to be necessary, similar arrangements for a reserve of Domes will be made at Katras.

[No. 16.]

[FILE S. $\frac{2-S}{6}$ 21.]

No. 400T.—San., dated Darjeeling, the 12th June 1908.

From—C. E. A. W. OLDHAM, Esq., I.C.S., Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal, Munpl. Dept.,
To—The Commissioner of the Chota Nagpur Division.

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your memorandum No. 157L.F., dated the 29th May 1908, with which you forward a copy of a letter from the Deputy Commissioner of Manbhum, enclosing copies of the proceedings of meetings held by the Jherria Sanitation Committee on the 22nd and 25th April last, at which the question of the recent outbreak of cholera in the coal-fields and the measures necessary for dealing with it were discussed. In view of the severity of the outbreak, the Committee desire to impress on Government the necessity of introducing some form of legislation by which sanitation in the coal-field area may be enforced, and means of dealing with such epidemics be provided.

2. In reply, I am to invite your attention to Government order No. 285San., dated the 18th December 1907, a copy of which was forwarded to you with endorsement No. 1286San. of the same date, in which the position as regards the framing of rules for the sanitation of the coal-fields was explained, and to say that, as soon as the Bill to amend the Local Self-

Government Act, which is now before the Legislative Council, is passed into law, measures for controlling the sanitation of the coal-field area will be taken. In the meanwhile, I am to refer to paragraph 4 of the Government order cited above, in which the necessity for providing a good system of water-supply for the coal-field area was emphasized, and to request that the attention of the Mining Association and the Local Sanitation Committee may again be drawn to the matter.

बिहार सरकार
मंत्रिमंडल सचिवालय विभाग
(बिहार राज्य अभिलेखागार निदेशालय)

Gobt. of {1908} Bengal.

MUNICIPAL DEPT.

SANITATION. *File S. $\frac{2-S}{6}$*

K.-W.—A PROGS. FOR JUNE 1908, Nos. 14—16.

SUBJECT—

*Insanitary condition of the Jherria Coal-fields.**Notes and Orders.*

*From the Commissioner of the Chota Nagpur
Division, No. 157 L.F., dated the 29th May
1908.*

IN view of the recent outbreak of cholera in the Jherria Coal-fields, the Jherria Sanitation Committee desire to impress on Government the necessity of introducing some form of legislation by which sanitation in this area may be enforced, and means of dealing with epidemics be provided.

Our letter No. 1285 San., dated the 18th December 1907, addressed to the Indian Mining Association, explained the position as regards the framing of rules for the sanitation of the coal-field area. Until the Local Self-Government Act is amended and extended powers are given to Union Committees nothing effective can be done to control the sanitation of that area; but the most pressing need is a good water-supply system, and this the Local Committee and the Mining Association have not dealt with, though it was urged upon them in paragraph 4 of our letter of the 18th December last.

We may draw their attention again to this and say that as soon as the Bill to amend the Local Self-Government Act, which is now before the Legislative Council, is passed into law, measures for controlling the sanitation of the coal-field area will be taken.

E. H. P.—6-6-1908.

SECRETARY—As proposed.

S. N. MITRA—6-6-1908.

HIS HONOUR—As proposed.

C. A. OLDHAM—6-6-1908.

A. H. L. F[ASER].—7-6-1908.

DRAFT submitted.

E. H. P.—10-6-1908.

SECRETARY.

S. N. MITRA—10-6-1908.

C. A. OLDHAM—10-6-1908.

*To the Commissioner of the Chota Nagpur
Division, No. 400 T.—San., dated the 12th
June 1908.*

8

REFERENCE TO FORMER CASES.

FILE S. $\frac{2-S}{6}$, A PROGS. FOR JANUARY 1908, Nos. 1-22.

9

REFERENCE TO LATER CASES.

255 H Dec 31-27-36
(बिहार राज्य अभिलेखागार निदेशालय)

KEEP-WITH.

Office notes (printed).

7