

FURTHER PAPER, No.

OF 189

29TH NOVEMBER 1894, No. 848, REVENUE.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

READ—again G.O., dated 10th October 1893, Nos. 891-2, Revenue.

ABSTRACT.—Addressing the Government of India on the subject of the memorial of certain Fishermen in the South Canara district appealing against an order of the Madras Government prohibiting the use of salt-earth for fish-curing purposes.

READ—again the following G.O., dated 27th April 1894, Mis. No. 1681, Revenue :—

Read—the following letter from J. E. O'CONOR, Esq., Assistant Secretary to the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department (Separate Revenue -Salt), to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, Revenue Department, dated Simla, the 9th April 1894, No. 1739-S.R. :—

Referring to the correspondence ending with your letter No. 892, dated the 10th October 1893, on the subject of the memorial from certain members of the fishermen community in the South Canara district praying for permission to use salt-earth for fish-curing purposes, I am directed to forward, for the consideration of the Government of Madras, copy of a despatch from the Secretary of State, No. 11 (Revenue), dated the 1st February 1894.

2. It will be observed that His Lordship, while agreeing that the prohibition against the use of salt-earth for fish-curing cannot consistently be withdrawn, suggests the practicability of taking some other steps to promote the convenience of the coast fishermen, and to safeguard their important industry. I am to request that the Government of India may be favoured with any remarks or suggestions which the Government of Madras may have to make on the subject.

3. In this connection I am to invite attention to the fact that the fish-curers of South Canara are distinctly under disadvantages as compared with those in the adjoining district of North Canara in the Bombay Presidency in so far as—

- (a) fish-curing yards are more numerous in North than in South Canara ;
- (b) the price charged by Government for salt issued to curing yards in North Canara varies from 6 to 8 annas, whereas in the yards in South Canara it is 12 annas and one rupee per maund ;
- (c) in North Canara licenses to use salt-earth are freely issued at all places that are not within ten miles of a curing yard, while in South Canara the use of salt-earth is altogether prohibited.

The existence side by side of these differences in practice in two contiguous districts is partly the cause of the complaints of the fishermen of South Canara, and I am to enquire whether the system, so far as regards the Canara Coasts, cannot be assimilated in its working to the system in force in Bombay.

4. I am to enclose, for the information of the Government of Madras, copy of the reply addressed to the fishermen whose petition was received with your letter No. 449, dated the 2nd February 1893.

STATEMENT WITH DITTO.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT A A

LETTER OF GOVERNMENT.

STATEMENT WITH DITTO

PAPERS NOT FILED UP, BEING MEANT FOR DESPATCH
(ORIGINAL not paged)

N.B.

- A = Copy in full.
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READ AGAIN ORDER OF GOVERNMENT, DATED
189 , No. MISCELLANEOUS.

1074

STATEMENT WITH DITTO.

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The existence side by side of these differences in practice in two contiguous districts is partly the cause of the complaints of the fishermen of South Canara, and I am to enquire whether the system, so far as regards the Canara Coasts, cannot be assimilated in its working to the system in force in Bombay.

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ENCLOSURE No. 1.

Despatch from the Right Honorable LORD KIMBERLEY, Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, to His Excellency the Right Honorable the Governor-General of India in Council, dated India Office, London, 1st February 1894, No. 11 (Revenue).

Salt-earth for fish-curing.

- * No. 12, dated the 8th June 1893, with enclosure.
 † Bombay, No. 30, dated 1st September 1893.
 Madras, No. 14, dated 5th December 1893.

In connection with my despatch noted in margin, * I have considered letters † from the Governments of Bombay and Madras, with enclosures, concerning the use of salt-earth by fishermen in curing fish.

2. The Governments of Bombay and Madras show grounds for not departing from the decision (taken in 1882 for Madras and in 1890 for Bombay) that the free use of earth-salt cannot be allowed to any class of people in those Provinces. The decision is embodied in the salt laws of both Madras and Bombay; and I gather from papers in the Financial Proceedings of your Government for July 1893 that similar legislation is proposed regarding salt-earth in Orissa. If these provisions are necessary for the protection of the salt revenue, it will be impossible to abrogate them at the request of the fishing population on the coast.

3. But I should be glad if you would consider, in communication with the Local Governments, whether some other steps could not be taken to promote the convenience of the coast fishermen and to safeguard their important industry. The memorial of the North Canara fishermen to the Bombay Government states the grievances of which they complain. And there is another risk to the Indian trade in salt-fish, namely, that the local article, if heavily weighted by the salt excise laws, may not be able to compete with imported salt-fish. This danger occurred in Burma, and Lord Lansdowne's Government met the difficulty by imposing an import duty on salt-fish imported into Burma, under Act IX of 1893. On the West Coast both producers and consumers of salt-fish are in poorer circumstances than their fellow-subjects in Burma, and it may be desirable to grant them relief in some other form.

4. Fish cured with salt is probably, as the local authorities urge, far more wholesome and more valuable than fish cured with earth-salt. But it may be questioned whether bonded curing yards can be opened in sufficient numbers to meet the requirements of fishermen plying on tropical and storm-beaten coasts. On the North Canara coasts licenses to use earth-salt are grantable to fish-curers. It might be possible to carry the license system further and to issue cheap salt for curing purposes to licensed fish-curers under safeguards that the salt would not be used to the detriment of the ordinary salt revenue. If in this, or in any other reasonable way, the fish-curers on the Indian coasts could be relieved from their disabilities, an important national industry would be benefited, and a valuable source of food-supply for the littoral and southern districts might be improved.

ENCLOSURE No. 2.

Resolution from the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department (Separate Revenue—Salt), dated Simla, the 9th April 1894, No. 1738-S.R.

Read—Petition, dated the 17th October 1892, from Themappa Rama and others, members of the fishermen community of South Canara, representing the grievances caused to them by the orders of the Madras Government prohibiting the use of salt-earth for fish-curing purposes, and praying that the prohibition be withdrawn.

Order.—Ordered that the petitioners be informed that enquiries are being made on the subject of their allegations and into the means of remedying their grievances. The enquiries made up to this time, however, show that there has not been a general abandonment of the fish-curing trade as alleged by the petitioners, but that, on the contrary, the trade is prosperous and flourishing. To enable further enquiries to be made on the point, and measures to be taken to remove as far as possible the grounds of complaint, the petitioners are requested to state in each case the village in South Canara to which they belong.

Order—dated 27th April 1894, Mis. No. 1681, Revenue.

Referred to the Board of Revenue for remarks.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) E. GIBSON,
 Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue (Separate Revenue), with two enclosures.

Read—also the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Separate Revenue), dated 14th September 1894, Mis. No. 3923:—

Read—letter from the Deputy Commissioner, Southern Division, dated 20th August 1894, No. 167-C.

ABSTRACT.—Replying to the communication from the Government of India regarding the prohibition against the use of salt-earth for fish-curing purposes in the South Canara district and submitting proposals for promoting the curing industry on the Canara coast.

Read—also letter from the Collector of South Canara, dated 30th August 1894, No. 3114.

ABSTRACT.—Submitting proposals for promoting the fish-curing industry in South Canara district.

Read—also letter from the Deputy Commissioner, Southern Division, dated 1st September 1894, No. 172-C.

ABSTRACT.—Stating that his letter read above was already despatched on the 27th August 1894.

Resolution—dated 14th September 1894, Mis. No. 3923.

The Board begs to submit its reply to G.O., Mis. No. 1681, dated 27th April 1894.

2. In his despatch to the Government of India, dated 1st February 1894, No. 11 (Revenue), the Secretary of State suggested for consideration the question of whether some steps other than allowing the free use of earth-salt could not be taken to promote the convenience of the coast fishermen and to safeguard their industry. While recognizing the force of the contention of the local authorities that fish cured with salt is far more wholesome and valuable than fish cured with earth-salt (? salt-earth), His Lordship questions whether bonded curing yards can be opened in sufficient numbers to meet the requirements of fishermen plying on tropical and storm-beaten coasts, and observes that the system in vogue on the North Canara coast of granting to fish-curers licenses to use earth-salt might possibly be extended and cheap salt issued for curing purposes under safeguards that it would not be used to the detriment of the ordinary salt revenue. In communicating this despatch to the Madras Government, the Government of India, Commerce and Finance Department, in its letter, dated 9th April 1894, No. 1739, Separate Revenue, invited attention to the fact that the fishermen of South Canara are under disadvantages as compared with those in the adjoining district of North Canara in the Bombay Presidency in so far as:—

- (a) fish-curing yards are more numerous in North than in South Canara;
- (b) the price charged by Government for salt issued to fish-curing yards in North Canara varies from 6 to 8 annas, whereas in the yards in South Canara it is 12 annas and one rupee per maund; and
- (c) in North Canara, licenses to use salt-earth are freely issued at all places that are not within ten miles of a curing yard, while in South Canara the use of salt-earth is altogether prohibited.

The Government of India further remarked that the existence side by side of these differences in practice in two contiguous districts was partly the cause of the complaints of the fishermen of South Canara, and inquired whether the system, so far as the Canara coast in this Presidency is concerned, could not be assimilated to that obtaining in Bombay.

3. That communication was referred to the Board, for remarks, with G.O., Mis. No. 1681, dated 27th April 1894, and was immediately forwarded to the Collector of South Canara and the Deputy Commissioner, Southern Division, for report. The letters read above are the replies of these officers to the reference.

4. The Deputy Commissioner, Southern Division, reports that he and the local officers (the Inspector of the Udupi Circle, and the Assistant Commissioner of the Calicut Sub-division) are not in favour of granting licenses for the use of salt-earth,

inasmuch as the change would benefit only a few fishermen living ten miles beyond (i) the northern limit of the Gangolli fish-curing yard, and (ii) the southern limits of the Dariabahadurghur (Malpe) and Hosdrug yards (*vide* southern section of the map given in the Salt Administration report for 1893-94), and because it would necessitate an increase in the strength of the preventive establishment to guard against the abuse of the privilege. Moreover, from the

* Copy enclosed.

Resolution,* dated 9th June 1892 of the

Bombay Government, it would appear that that Government does not commend the free license system, but is, on the contrary, desirous of proceeding upon the method adopted by the Madras Government and opening more yards. In the memorandum of the Commissioner of Customs, Salt, Opium and Abkari, read in the Resolution quoted above, it is stated:—

“As regards fish-curing in view of the unsatisfactory state of affairs described in the Collector's report, dated 5th March last, and the fact that the books of the salt vendors show that salt is bought by very few people indeed in the coast districts of Canara, undersigned is inclined to think it might be better to provide additional fish-curing yards when required, and to grant no licenses for the removal of salt-earth for fish-curing after the yards have been established. He proposes, therefore, subject to the approval of Government, to instruct the Collector to grant no licenses for this purpose in the villages served by the existing fish-curing yard at Gangolli, and to ascertain and report at what points on the coast of Canara similar yards should be opened. From the last Administration report of the Madras Salt Department, it appears that a large number of such yards have been established in South Canara and Malabar, and that they are extensively used by fish curers, while a profit remains to Government after defraying the expenditure on buildings and management. In the villages, which as yet are not within reach of yards, the Collector should grant licenses as may be necessary to persons actually engaged in fish-curing.” The Bombay Government approved of these instructions. The Board concurs with the local officers in considering that it is unnecessary and inexpedient to extend the free license system to South Canara. Applications for the opening of more yards are at present not forthcoming from curers, to any considerable number, but the Board expects that when the curers become acquainted with the privileges proposed to be granted to them and dealt with below, they will apply for the opening of additional fish-curing yards.

5. As to the assistance to be afforded to the curers, the local officers recommend (i) the erection and repair of all curing yards at Government expense as formerly, and (ii) the reduction of the price of salt issued to the curers. In regard to (i), until lately Government opened fish-curing yards at its own expense and constructed and repaired the necessary buildings. In November 1891, however, the Deputy Commissioner, Southern Division, brought to notice that a diversity of practice existed in the several yards of the South Canara and Malabar districts in regard to the execution of works, these being in some cases executed by Government and in others by the curers. He accordingly recommended that, in consideration of the extensive scale on which the fish-curing industry was conducted and the profitable character which it had assumed, the policy in future should be that the curers or other persons wishing to open a yard should provide the site and erect the necessary buildings. In regard to repairs it was considered that they should be executed by the curers themselves, and only in case of their default by Government. The cost in the latter case was to be recovered subsequently by the levy of a cess on each maund of salt issued. These recommendations were approved in G.Os., No. 428, Revenue, dated 29th April 1892, Mis. No. 2877, Revenue, dated 17th June 1892, and Mis. No. 3869, Revenue, dated 30th August 1892. The local officers now recommend a relaxation of these rules and a reversion to the former practice so far as South Canara is concerned. The Board fully approves of this proposal, and considers that its adoption will materially further the interests of the industry. Where the curers are few in number and in poor circumstances, it appears to be the only condition under which *new* curing yards are likely to be opened.

6. As regards the other recommendation, namely, the reduction of the price of salt, it will be observed that in paragraph 9 of its Proceedings, No. 3829, Mis., dated 23rd September 1893, the Board remarked that it was not possible to reduce the price

if the encouragement of the fish-curing industry was not to cause loss to Government. That remark is true, taking the receipts and expenditure on account of fish-curing yards in the South Canara district separately; but as it is now represented that the fish-curing industry in that district is being repressed by the high price, the Board would recommend that until the industry is more fully developed the price be reduced to 10 annas a maund leaving the loss, if any, to be recouped by any surplus that may be left in the receipts from other yards in the Presidency. It is anticipated, however, that that price will suffice to meet the recurrent charges, *i.e.*, the charges other than fixed expenditure on new works.

7. The Board is of opinion that the reduction in the price of salt now proposed coupled with the concession recommended in paragraph 5, *viz.*, that Government should construct and maintain the yards and buildings, will afford all the relief that is necessary for the encouragement and development of the fish-curing industry in South Canara.

8. The views of the Collector of South Canara on the subject are that salt should be issued to fish-curers at the lowest possible rate and that they should not be treated more favorably in North Canara than in South Canara. He is of opinion, however, that it would be a retrograde measure to legalize the use of salt-earth, but that it cannot justly be prohibited unless the number of fish-curing yards is very largely increased. He reports that the Collector of North Canara, whom he has consulted and with whom he concurs, thinks that fish-curers should not have to go farther than four miles to fish-curing yards. As an additional concession the Collector recommends that when fish-curing yards are situated within the limits of a port, the curers should not be charged any rent for their sheds under G.O., No. 250, Marine, dated 21st July 1893. With regard to these observations, the reduction of the price of salt has already been dealt with. As to the opening of new yards within four miles of one another, the Board is not prepared to fix any limit as to distance but will favorably consider any requests for the opening of new yards when there is a reasonable prospect of a fair amount of business being done. The recommendation to relieve the curers of having to pay rent on sheds within port limits is approved and may be sanctioned. This matter was about to be brought to the notice of Government separately.

9. The delay in the submission of this report is due to the causes explained in Board's Proceedings, Mis. No. 3709, dated 31st August 1894, and to the reply to the reference made to the Collector having been received only on the 4th instant.

(True Copies and Extract.)

(Signed) EDMUND MILLETT,
Assistant Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department,
with two original enclosures returned.
„ Deputy Commissioner, Southern Division.
„ Collector of South Canara.

ENCLOSURE.

SALT license for the removal and possession of salt-earth for agricultural and other purposes,
No. 4826.

Proceedings of the Bombay Government, dated Bombay Castle, 9th June 1892, Revenue.

Memorandum from the Commissioner of Customs, Salt, Opium and Abkari, No. 3887, dated 4th August 1891, submitting the following letter No. 3545, dated 22nd July 1891, from the Collector of Salt Revenue, Bombay:—

“I have the honour to submit the accompanying notification for publication under section 14 of the Bombay Salt Act, II of 1890.”

2. “The rule explains itself.” It has been framed to enable the agricultural inhabitants of the tracts named to use salt-earth as manure for cocoanut trees, &c.

“It is undesirable to allow people to possess and store salt-earth in their houses, for they could then, in secret, manufacture salt therefrom. The notification has accordingly been framed so as to allow possession, &c., in open only” and stating as follows:—

“The undersigned considers it would be well to specify more distinctly the uses allowed, namely, agricultural purposes, washing and skin curing. As arrangements have been made for a fish-curing yard, it does not seem necessary to include fish-curing.”

Memorandum from the Commissioner of Customs, Salt, Opium and Abkari, No. 4229, dated 17th August 1891.

Memorandum from the Remembrancer of Legal Affairs, No. 1465, dated 4th September 1891.

Memorandum from the Commissioner of Customs, Salt, Opium and Abkari, No. 5410, dated 14th October 1891.

Memorandum from the Collector of Salt Revenue, No. 1543, dated 5th March 1892.

Memorandum from the Commissioner of Customs, Salt, Opium and Abkari, No. 1371, dated 4th March 1892.

Memorandum from the Remembrancer of Legal Affairs, No. 425, dated 16th March 1892. Submitted to Government, in the Revenue Department, with reference to Government Memorandum No. 7651 of 7th November 1891.

2. The form and conditions of the proposed license have to be prescribed under section 13 of the Bombay Salt Act, 1890, by the Commissioner, subject to the directions of the Government.

3. The form and conditions suggested do not appear to be open to any legal objection except that clause (c) of section 13 (1) has not been attended to, which requires that the license shall specify the place where the salt-earth is to be stored. This omission has been supplied by the undersigned in red ink.

Memorandum from the Commissioner of Customs, Salt, Opium and Abkari, No. 2364, dated 16th May 1892.

Undersigned sees no objection to the form of the license as amended by the Honorable Mr. Naylor and would only suggest the addition to it of the words.

"This license will remain in force from the to the ."
The currency allowed would be for very short period in the case of licenses, for removal of salt-earth for agricultural purposes and for the fish-curing season in the case of removals for fish-curing.

2. Experience at Goa and Daman where salt discolored by an admixture of tar was issued at one anna per maund for agricultural purposes during the treaty-period shows that the quantity of salt really required for manuring palm trees is insignificant.

				Goa.			Daman.		
				MDS.	s.	T.	MDS.	s.	T.
From 1st April to 31st March 1884-85	Do.	do.	1885-86	...	70	0	0	...	...
	Do.	do.	1886-87	...	149	37	0	...	...
	Do.	do.	1887-88	...	6	0	0	...	...
	Do.	do.	1888-89	...	800	0	0	...	...
	Do.	do.	1889-90	...	240	0	0	...	...
	Do.	do.	1890-91	...	234	0	0	...	...
From 1891 to 14th January 1892	...	...	...	...	275	0	0	...	...
	...	...	...	...	280	0	0	...	...
	Total	...	...	...	2,054	37	0	...	...

The quantities issued in Portuguese India from 1884-85 to 1891-92 are given in the margin. Undersigned thinks, therefore, that it will not be necessary to issue many licenses for the removal of salt-earth for use as manure and that they should be very sparingly granted.

As regards fish-curing in view of the unsatisfactory state of affairs described in the Collector's report of 5th March last and the fact that the books of the salt vendors show that salt is bought by very few people indeed in the coast districts of Canara, undersigned is inclined to think it might be better to provide additional fish-curing yards where required and to grant no licenses for the removal of salt-earth for fish-curing after the yards have been established.

He proposes, therefore, subject to the approval of Government, to instruct the Collector to grant no licenses for this purpose in the villages served by the existing fish-curing yards at Gangolli and to ascertain and report at what other points on the coast of Canara similar yards

should be opened. From the last Administration report of the Madras Salt Department it appears that a large number of such yards have been established in South Canara and Malabar and that they are extensively used by fish curers, while a profit remained to Government after defraying the expenditure on buildings and managements. In the villages, which as yet are not within reach of yard, the Collector should grant licenses as may be necessary to persons actually engaged in fish-curing.

Resolution.—The form of the license, as amended by the Remembrancer of Legal Affairs, with the addition suggested by the Commissioner of Customs, Salt, Opium and Abkari, in paragraph 108 of his Memorandum No. 2364, dated 16th May 1892, is approved.

2. Government approve of the instructions which the Commissioner proposed to issue to the Collector of Salt Revenue as mentioned in paragraph 3 of Mr. Cary's memorandum quoted above.

(A true Extract.)

(Signed) W. L. HARVEY,
Under Secretary to Government.

ORDER—dated 29th November 1894, No. 848, Revenue.

Separate Revenue No. 107.

The papers read above relate to a memorial from certain members of the fishermen community in the South Canara district

praying for permission to use salt-earth for fish-curing purposes.

2. Until the year 1882, there was no prohibition against the use of salt-earth for the above purpose; but in that year the Madras Salt Laws Amendment Act (I of 1882) was introduced which rendered the collection of salt-earth without a license penal. The fishermen on the west coast thereupon complained that the new law would deprive them of their means of livelihood and prayed that they might be permitted to collect salt-earth, duty free, for fish-curing purposes only. The Government, however, considered that in the interests both of the people (consumers of salt-fish) and of the public revenue it was inexpedient to grant the concession asked for, and that the best way to remove any hardship which the prohibition might cause and to properly develop the fish-curing industry was to open a large number of fish-curing yards in which the curers could obtain salt at a low price.

3. This policy has since been adhered to and the prohibition against the use of salt-earth is now maintained under the present Salt Act (IV of 1889) by the declaration, in a notification issued under section 3 (k) of the Act, that salt-earth is contraband salt in all the littoral tracts of the Presidency.

4. Against this prohibition certain fishermen of the Malabar district presented in 1884 a memorial addressed to the Secretary of State. In forwarding it (despatch to the Secretary of State, No. 2, dated 15th October 1884) this Government explained the policy mentioned above and His Lordship saw accordingly no reason to interfere with the orders of this Government (despatch from the Secretary of State, No. 40, dated 4th December 1884).

5. Subsequently in 1892, certain members of the fishermen community of the South Canara district presented a memorial addressed to the Government of India, and in forwarding it this Government reiterated the opinion it had expressed in 1882 and 1884 against the use of salt-earth and stated that under the special arrangements made for the issue of cheap salt to fish-curers, the memorialists had really no cause for grievance and that if there was, as alleged by the memorialists, any falling off in the industry, it must be due to other causes than the prohibition complained of.

6. The Government of India, however, considered that it was important to ascertain the extent to which the fish-curing industry had been affected by the orders appealed against and accordingly desired that a detailed report should be submitted furnishing information as to—

(1) the number of fishermen who had abandoned their calling since the introduction of the prohibition, their proportion to the total number then employed and the total number now employed;

- (2) the quantity of fish cured in each year since that period and the cause of the decline, if any;
- (3) the average price of salt supplied to the fish-curing yards and how it compared with the cost at which the fishers were formerly able to cure their fish; and
- (4) whether the issue price of salt could be reduced.

7. This Government replied to the above requisition in its letter, No. 892, dated 10th October 1893, in which it stated that from statistics available on the point it did not appear that South Canara had lagged behind other districts in the development of the fish-curing industry; that from 1886-87 to 1890-91 the operations in fish-curing yards were carried on on a large scale, but that in 1891-92 and 1892-93 there was a falling off owing mainly to bad fishing seasons; that the statistics of imports and exports showed that the actual amount of salt-fish cured in the district must have increased largely since the prohibition of the use of salt-earth in 1882, and that the issue price of salt, which was about 12 annas a maund, could not be reduced if the transactions were not to result in a loss to Government.

8. A copy of the above letter was also forwarded to the Secretary of State with reference to his despatch, dated 8th June 1893, No. 9, Revenue, in which he desired to know, with reference to a question put in the House of Commons concerning the use of salt-earth by fish-curers on the Canara coast, whether any special representation had been recently made to this Government or any order issued on the subject of the use of salt-earth by fish-curers.

9. On receipt of the above communication from this Government the Secretary of State addressed the Government of India * G.O., dated 27th April 1894, Mis. No. 1681, expressing general concurrence in the view taken by this Government about maintaining the prohibition against the use of salt-earth for fish-curing; but suggesting the practicability of taking some other steps to promote the convenience of the coast fishermen and to safeguard their important industry. His Lordship remarked that while recognizing the force of the argument of this Government that fish cured with salt was far more wholesome and valuable than fish cured with salt-earth, he doubted whether bonded curing yards could be opened in sufficient numbers to meet the requirements of the fishermen plying in tropical and storm-beaten coasts; and he proceeded accordingly to observe that the system obtaining on the North Canara coast of granting to fish-curers licenses to use salt-earth might possibly be extended, and cheap salt issued for curing purposes to licensed fish-curers under safeguards that the salt would not be used to the detriment of the ordinary salt revenue.

10. In communicating the above despatch for the remarks and suggestions of this Government, the Government of India pointed to certain disadvantages under which the fish-curers of South Canara laboured as compared with those in North Canara, viz. :—

- (1) that fish-curing yards were more numerous in North than in South Canara;
- (2) that the price charged for salt in North Canara varied from 6 to 8 annas, whereas in the yards in South Canara it was 12 annas and 1 rupee per maund;
- (3) that in North Canara licenses to use salt-earth were freely issued at all places beyond ten miles of a fish-curing yard, while in South Canara the use of salt-earth was altogether prohibited;

and after observing that the existence side by side of these differences in practice in two contiguous districts was probably the cause of the complaints of the fishermen of South Canara, the Government of India enquired whether the system so far as regards the South Canara coasts could not be assimilated in its working to the system in force in Bombay.

11. The question was referred to the Board for report and its remarks and suggestions which are based on the reports of the local officers are contained in its Proceedings, No. 3923, dated 14th September 1894, read at the head of this order.

12. It will be seen from the Proceedings that the local officers are unanimously of opinion that it is both unnecessary and inexpedient to extend to South Canara the North Canara system of granting licenses to use salt-earth; unnecessary, because the number of fishermen living beyond ten miles of existing yards will be very small and their case can be met by opening additional yards in suitable localities as is now usually done; and inexpedient, because the measure would necessitate a large increase in the preventive staff to effectually guard against an abuse of the privilege. It appears also that the present policy of the Bombay Government is to assimilate its system to that prevailing on the Madras side.

13. In these circumstances His Excellency the Governor in Council concurs in the Board's view that the prohibition against the use of salt-earth should not be relaxed and that other means should be adopted for encouraging the fish-curing industry.

14. The measures recommended in this behalf by the local officers are as follow :—

- (1) that the cost of construction and maintenance of all fish-curing yards may be borne by Government;
- (2) that the issue price of salt may be reduced;
- (3) that the number of yards may be increased.

These measures will be considered *seriatim*—

(1) *Cost of construction and repair of fish-curing yards.*—Until the year 1892 the cost was borne by Government, but in that year a change was made and the fish-curers were required to pay the cost as it was represented that there was a diversity of practice in the several yards of the South Canara and Malabar districts in regard to the execution of works, these being in some cases executed by Government and in others by the curers; and as the local officers and the Board were of opinion that in consideration of the extensive scale on which the industry was being conducted on the west coast and the profitable character it had assumed, the curers might well be called upon to bear the cost. The Inspector of the Udipi Circle, which comprises the two northern taluks of the South Canara district, considers that this decision has really been at the bottom of all the grumbling that has taken place and has led to the memorial under consideration, and he recommends a reversion to the former practice so far as South Canara is concerned. This recommendation is supported by the Assistant and Deputy Commissioners and also by the Board which considers that the change will materially further the interests of the industry. The Government is pleased to sanction this recommendation.

(2) *Reduction of the price of salt.*—The Board states that although any reduction in the price may cause loss to Government so far as this district alone is concerned, still considering that the price now charged is complained of as having had a depressive effect on the industry, it would recommend that until the industry is more fully developed the price may be reduced to 10 annas a maund, leaving the loss, if any, to be recouped by any surplus that may be left in the receipts from other yards in the Presidency. At the same time, the Board anticipates that the price proposed will suffice to meet the recurrent charges, *i.e.*, the charges other than expenditure on new works.

The Board's recommendation is sanctioned.

(3) *Increasing the number of yards.*—The Collector of South Canara considers that yards should be opened within four miles of one another. The Board, however, is not prepared to fix any limit as to distance, but states that it would favorably consider any requests for the opening of new yards. The Government concurs with the Board of Revenue.

15. As an additional concession, the Collector recommends that when fish-curing yards are situated within the limits of a port, the curers should not be charged rent for the sites of their sheds, and the Board supports this recommendation.

The point will be considered in the Marine Department.

16. It is observed that neither the Board nor the local officers have referred to the remark of the Secretary of State that it might be possible to issue cheap salt to licensed fish-curers under safeguards that the salt would not be used to the detriment of the ordinary salt revenue. This is presumably because they consider that the only way in

which this concession can be worked without danger to the revenue is by requiring the curing operations to be conducted in properly guarded yards.

17. With regard to the risk noticed by the Secretary of State that the local article, if heavily weighted by the Salt Excise laws, may not be able to compete with imported salt-fish, the Inspector of Udipi Circle and the Assistant Commissioner, Calicut Sub-division, consider that the new Tariff Act has removed all apprehensions on this score.

18. Ordered that the following letter be despatched to the Government of India.

(True Extract.)

L. J. J. J.
Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue (Separate Revenue).
,, the Marine Department.

Exd C. M. Brisson.

56 Copies.

Marine Department

1074

Govt. of {1894} Madras.
REVENUE.

Issued

Recd. 20/12/94 CHIEF SECRETARY Encl.
Ref 21/12

G.O., 29th November 1894, No. 848.

NOVEMBER.

Passing orders on the report of the Board of Revenue submitted with reference to the requisition of the Government of India regarding the prohibition against the use of salt-earth for fish-curing purposes, and sanctioning the recommendations of the Board of Revenue for promoting the fishing industry in the Canara coast.

Indo 2557 d/22-12-94
5723
Referred to the Presi-
dency Port Officer
for report with adver-
tence to para: 15
of the order.

by order.

W Francis

agass Secy

25B.
22/12

No. 9569
8

Heading.

From Commander W Powell, R.S.M.,
PRESIDENCY PORT OFFICER,

MADRAS,

To

THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT,

MARINE DEPARTMENT,

FORT ST GEORGE.

SIR,

In reply to Marine Department
Endorsement No. 2557, dated 22nd
December 1894, on Current No. 1074,
(herewith returned) I have the honor
to state that there is no objection
to fish curers being exempted
paying ground rent for the
sites of their sheds.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedt. servant,

Walter Powell

Commander, R.S.M.,

Presidency Port Office

mmx

Mar. 25 1895

Marine (1894) DEPARTMENT.

CURRENT NO. 32

From

THE PRESIDENCY PORT OFFICER,

Madras,

To

THE CHIEF SECY. TO GOVERNMENT,

MARINE DEPARTMENT,

Fort St. George.

No. 956
8 4

Dated 15 } January 1895
Received 16 }

Regd. 17

Encl. mar. c. no
No. 1074.



Subject.

Stating that there is no
objection to fish curers
being exempted from
ground rent for the
sites of their sheds.

Marine Currents

1074 and 32.

Order. 22 January 1895, No. 32.

Fish curers will
be exempted from
the payment of rent
for the sites of their
sheds when situated
within port limits -
and within reasonable
limits ^{regards} to the space
occupied.

956
18/1

The Marine & Salt Dept. take
note of this -
llh

Rev. Secy }
Cof. 22/1 P. O. Offrs. }
Acct. Genl. }

DISPATCHED

25 JAN 95

IN M.S.

20
24/1

Mar. 25 1895

Marine (1894) DEPARTMENT.

CURRENT No. 32

From

THE PRESIDENCY PORT OFFICER,

Madras,

To

THE CHIEF SECY. TO GOVERNMENT,

MARINE DEPARTMENT,

Fort St. George.

No. 956
8 4

Dated 15 } January 1895
Received 16 }

Recd. 17

encl. mar. c. no.
No. 1674.

CHIEF SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS
18 JAN 1895

Subject.

Stating that there is no
objection to fish curers
being exempted from
ground rent for the
sites of their sheds.

Marine Currents

1074 and 32.

Order. 22 January 1895, No. 32.

Fish curers will

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the payment of rent
for the sites of their
sheds when situated
within port limits -
and within reasonable
limits ^{regards} the space
occupied.

956
18/1

The Marine & Salt Dept. will
see to this -
llh

Rev. Secy.
A. P. Offrs.
Acct. Genl.

DESPATCHED
25 JAN 95
IN M.S.

Mar. 25, 1934

Marine (1894) DEPARTMENT.

CURRENT No. 32

From

THE PRESIDENCY PORT OFFICER,

Madras,

To

THE CHIEF SECY. TO GOVERNMENT,

MARINE DEPARTMENT,

Fort St. George.

No. 956
8 4

Dated 15 } January 1894
Received 16 }

Recd. 17

Encl. mar. c. no
No. 1674.



Subject.

Stating that there is no objection to fish curers being exempted from paying ground rent for the sites of their sheds.

[Faint, mostly illegible handwritten text in English, possibly a draft or a second copy of the letter.]

Fish curing yard

H.E. the Governor

[Faint, mostly illegible handwritten text in English, possibly a second copy or a related document.]

C. 19/1