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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Rudra DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	<i>216</i>	Press Mis.
Dated	<i>20-2</i>	<i>1968</i>

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
20th February 1868.*

Read the following papers:—

No. 144. From P. GRANT Esq., Collector of Coimbatore, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Coimbatore, 18th January 1868, No. 9.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the Proceedings of Government and their Order thereon, dated 31st ultimo, No. 1625.

2. I consider the preservation of wild elephants in this Presidency a subject of no small importance. Elephants are becoming scarce every year. The jungles through which these useful animals have been in the habit of roaming have, within the last twenty years, in many parts of the country, been very much circumscribed. The Planters' axe has done its duty only too well I fear. The result, so far as the elephants are concerned, is that they are much more limited as to space than in years gone by, and are, consequently, more easily found by sportsmen and professional Shikarries. Indeed, were it not that sportsmen are restrained by fear of contracting fever, the elephants in this part of the country would speedily be exterminated. Sportsmen, good and true, go out to shoot Tuskers, but the Tuskers keep out of their way, and but few of them can help *en passant* having a shot at a female, just to see how the new breech-loader shoots.

3. For the last ten years, during which period I have served in the Malabar and Coimbatore Districts, I have only, I think, paid a reward for one elephant, and that was in the case of an animal which took possession of the crops of a village in Collegal Taluq and refused to move off. She was eventually shot by an Inspector of Police, whose services were enlisted by the villagers for the purpose. By putting a stop to rewards for elephants, many animals have been saved. When I came to this District six years ago, several persons had taken to elephant shooting as a means of livelihood, but they gave up the sport at once on finding that it would not pay. I mention these circumstances to show that I have for years discouraged the destruction of these animals. The elephants of Southern India are, for the purposes of dragging timber in the Forests, far superior to the Ceylon animals. I have known an Adigherry in Malabar, on Rupees 7 per mensem, pay over Rupees 2000 for a good elephant caught in the Jungles of Southern India.

4. In view to the preservation of elephants for the future, it will be necessary to legislate, and to declare that any one proved to have shot or destroyed, or attempted to shoot or destroy, an elephant, will render himself liable to a fine not exceeding Rupees 1000. On private lands people should be allowed to capture elephants and sell them to the best advantage. Elephants injuring crops or proving troublesome to travellers, which will seldom happen, should, in either case, be allowed to be shot by any one.

5. All Government servants, Civil and Military, should at once be prohibited from shooting elephants, and Collectors should be directed to report any infringement of this prohibition.

No. 145. From W. LOGAN, Esq., Sub-Collector of Malabar, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Cannanore, 25th January 1868, No. 18.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Government Proceedings, No. 1625, dated 31st December 1867, regarding means for preventing the indiscriminate destruction of elephants.

2. I presume that there is an increasing demand for elephants for the Public Service, which in proportion it is found difficult to meet.

3. It is a well known fact that tame elephants will not breed in confinement. Attempts are sometimes made in this district to breed elephants by leaving males and females together for considerable periods in distant and unfrequented parts of the jungles when there is no work for them to do, but I do not know of any well authenticated instance of their having bred under such circumstances; though it is not unusual for the herds of tame female elephants to be visited by wild males when let out into the jungles to feed, and young elephants are not unfrequently the produce of this occasional intercourse.

4. But, after all, the main resource for keeping up the supply of elephants is by catching them when in a wild state.

5. There are many portions of the Presidency in which wild elephants are still to be found; but, with the gradual spread of cultivation, the opening out of roads, and other signs of advancing civilization, these parts are diminishing in size every year. Some years ago, the Wallear jungle, on the boundary between this District and Coimbatore, used to be much frequented by wild elephants. Many were killed by sportsmen, but they never actually ceased to frequent the place until the Railway was opened; since which time I know of no instance of their crossing, as they used formerly to do in large numbers, from the Hills north of Palghat to the Cochin Hills on the south. The opening of the Railroad was, of course, the cause of this; but the same effect is produced on a smaller and more gradual scale, no doubt by the opening of roads and the clearing of lands for cultivation.

6. Sportsmen are merely the forerunners of the cultivation that is coming to the jungles that elephants inhabit. Sportsmen cannot exist at long distances from the places whence they procure their supplies, and hence it is that, with few exceptions, they never extend their sporting excursions far from the bazaars where the rice for their coolies and servants, the gram for their horses, and supplies generally are to be procured. Hassanur, in the Suttiamungalum Taluq of Coimbatore, is a favorite resort for sportsmen, simply because a highroad from the south to Mysore, passable throughout for carts, enables them to transport themselves, their goods and servants, into the interior of the Hills without much trouble. Take away the cart road and the ghaut up to Hassanur, and I question whether one sportsman in ten of those who have visited the place in the last few years would ever have reached it. I consider it to be a certain sign that the country is being opened up by roads for the spread of cultivation when accounts are received of a large destruction of elephants by sportsmen. The latter can only make a sustained effort, and do much execution when they discover a place, which, in addition to having the requisite supply of game, has, at the same time, great facilities for the procuring of supplies for themselves and followers.

7. I question much, therefore, the expediency of the Government taking steps to preserve the elephants in those hills through which roads are being constructed, and where, in consequence, cultivation may soon be expected to follow. That it could be done, there is no doubt, for there is no more sagacious animal on the face of the earth than the elephant, and when they have long been unhurt by the herds-men and the woodsmen, who alone visit their haunts, they exhibit the most su-

preme indifference to their presence. It is by no means unusual in some parts of the country, as many sportsmen know, to find wild elephants quietly feeding within earshot of a herdsman shouting to his cattle, and the cattle and wild elephants are not unfrequently mixed up: they have learnt by experience that no danger is to be apprehended from such causes. Let them, however, but hear the distant sound of a shot, and they turn tail and go straight off for miles.

8. The herdsman and the woodsman have no cause for enmity, and so they leave the elephants unharmed, but it is different when roads are opened up, and the country comes under cultivation. When elephants make a descent on cultivated land, as they do almost annually in some parts of this district, they do a very great deal of harm—not so much in what they eat, but in what they destroy by trampling it into the mud. Continually on the move while feeding, they pluck up a bunch of paddy here and there, but what they eat is little in comparison with what they trample down. A fair sized herd of elephants will destroy in one night pretty nearly the produce of a twenty acre patch of paddy, and no amount of shouting will drive them from the place, though they are very easily frightened away by the sound of a shot. Cultivated fields and wild elephants are quite incompatible with each other; and, of course, if Government prohibits the destruction of elephants in a country being rapidly brought under cultivation, compensation for crops destroyed must be paid: and it is as well to remember that female elephants do as much damage as males. Captain Garrow, the well known Elephant Shot, did a great service to what was then the Temalpuram Taluq of this District, by slaying indiscriminately the male and female elephants, which at that time did great damage to the paddy cultivation.

9. But, from a limited knowledge of the country, I do not think that it is necessary to take such a step as to prohibit the destroying of elephants in parts of the country which are being opened up.

10. To keep up the breed of wild elephants it is only necessary to leave them in undisturbed possession of a considerable well defined range of uncultivated country, such as a valley surrounded by hills. If they wander beyond this into cultivated parts, let them suffer at the hands of the cultivator or the sportsman, and their sagacity will very soon teach them to keep within the prescribed limits. There must be in the Presidency many tracts of country of the nature above described. One in particular I would mention, namely, the upper valley of the Vigay river in Madura. It is of very considerable extent, and is shut in by hills on all sides. It is quite uncultivated, except at the lower extremities, and it is adjacent to a very large well-watered uncultivated tract of country in Travancore and to the heavy timber forest covered mountains at the source of the Shurley or Suruliyar. It, at times, swarms with herds of female elephants, accompanied by their young; and there would be no great difficulty in capturing the latter, as the country abounds in little valleys—off-shoots from the main one—surrounded on all sides by hills too precipitous for the passage of the elephants, except by one or two well-known and easily recognized passes. With the latter well guarded, the capture of every elephant that entered the valley could be made a matter of certainty by driving them into a small kraal.

11. Government, in its capacity as landlord, could, without any need of legislation, prohibit trespassers from entering these tracts, except under such conditions as might seem necessary; and in the tract of country to which I have referred a very

small establishment of watchers would suffice, as the valley becomes very narrow towards the lower end, and there is no road into it except at that point.

12. In conclusion, I would observe that, owing to the fact that elephants are sufficiently kept in check at present from making extensive inroads on cultivated lands (in this district at least), it is no longer necessary to give rewards for their destruction, and that the rules for granting rewards for their destruction might, with convenience, be cancelled. It would, of course, be always discretionary with the Collector to bring any particular instance to the notice of Government in which damage to life or property had ensued.

No. 146. From the Honorable D. ARBUTHNOTT, Collector of Madura, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Madura, 3rd February 1868, No. 180.

With reference to the Order contained in the Proceedings of Government in the Public Department, dated 31st December last, No. 1625, I have the honor to state that in this district there is but one Government Forest in which there are reported to be a large number of elephants.

2. It is situated in the village of Cumbum, in Periakolum Taluq, on the hill* to the east of that village, and is marked in the map as an unsurveyed tract "covered with impenetrable forest."

*It is called indifferently "Peria Mullay", or big hill, and Cumbum Hill.

3. In shape, the hill is an irregular triangle, with an area of about 25 or 30 square miles completely covered with dense forest.

4. There are no human inhabitants, nor is the forest resorted to even for timber.

5. The sides of the hill are steep and devoid of large trees, but covered with long coarse grass and impenetrable masses of reed bamboo.

6. The forest commences at a height of about 4000 feet above sea level, and seems to cover the whole of the top in an unbroken mass.

7. In July last, when examining the Peryar, in company with Captain Ryves, Mr. Logan, Sub-Collector of Malabar, and the Sub-Collector of Madura, I ascended this hill to a height of about 4400 feet.

8. We found the marks of Elephants and Bison in great numbers, and there appeared to be no paths except those made by these animals.

9. When at this elevation, the hill, still densely covered with forest, rose to a height of probably 1200 feet above us.

10. At its southern end, this hill joins the Travancore Hills and jungles, so that the animals have free access to the extensive jungles lying between Tinnevely and Travancore.

11. From all I can learn, the Peria Mullay appears never to have been frequented by either Native or European sportsmen, so that, probably, the forest has remained undisturbed for ages.

12. At certain seasons, the elephants descend into the Varshanad valley and into the lower ranges of the Saptur Hills.

13. The former belongs to the Zemindary of Guntapanaiknur, now under the Court of Wards; and the latter are in the Saptur Zemindary.

14. In the Travancore country elephants are sufficiently protected, ivory being a royalty, but they are occasionally shot in Guntapanaiknur and Saptur.

15. For the protection of elephants I think an enactment should be passed prohibiting the destruction of females altogether in all forests on Government land, under the penalty of a fine, except when destroyed for the protection of life or crops; and with these exceptions I would make the destruction of males also illegal without the permission of Government. The Act should not apply to Zemindaries.

No. 147. To the Commissioner for the Government of the Territories of His Highness the Maharajah of Mysore, dated Fort Saint George, 20th February 1868, No. 216.

With reference to your letter dated the 12th December last, No. 5191-30, I am

*1st January 1868, No. 9.
3rd February 1868, No. 180.
25th January 1868, No. 18.

directed to forward copies of letters* from the Collectors of Coimbatore and Madura, and from the Sub-Collector of Malabar, offering suggestions on the

subject of preventing indiscriminate destruction of elephants, and to inform you that the matter is under the consideration of this Government.

(Signed) R. S. ELLIS,
Chief Secretary.

desp 27/2

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N^o 216. Public Department.

To
The Commissioner for the Government
of the Territories of His Highness
the Maharajah of
Mysore.

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Yours
W. H. C.

1st January 1868 N^o 100
3rd February 1868 N^o 100
25 January 1868 N^o 100

W. H. C.
W. H. C.

Int. L. George
20th Feb. 1868

André Bédaride

16/10

2
The former's death took
place in the autumn of
1860. His remains were
interred at
Myrtle.

dated 20 February 1963.

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