M.R.O. 14-5450—22-10-25.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 994 Press / Mis.

Dated 27. 4- 1866

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 27th April 1866.

No. 440. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 13th April 1866, No. 2,551.

Read the following letter from the Collector of Coimbatore, to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Suttimungalum, 22nd March 1866, No. 81½ :—

1. During the floods which took place on the 23rd October and 5th December 1865, at Coonoor, when so much damage was done to the new and old ghauts, and when several bandies were swept from the Coonoor Bandy Stand, down the Coonoor nullah, the Bhowany river rose considerably, and, curious to say, vast numbers of fish, large and small, died, and were washed up on the banks. The dead fish were so numerous, and the stench arising from them on putrefaction so great, that at one time, the villagers living near the river, anticipated an outbreak of disease.

2. By many people the death of the fish is attributed to the quantities of mud and sand brought down by the water; but I agree with an old man, who mentioned the circumstance to me, that the mortality amongst the fish is due to a large quantity of unslaked chunam or lime having been washed down the river by the freshes. Nothing I know, from personal knowledge, is more prejudicial to fish than the introduction of lime into the water inhabited by them; in a very few minutes they come to the surface, to die or be caught, as the case may be. The Bhowany river, as a rule, abounds with fish; some of them I should say from the size of the scales I have seen on its banks, ranging from sixteen to twenty, and even thirty lbs. weight. In appearance these large fish resemble the Maha Seer of Northern India. About eight days ago, when riding to this part of the country, I met a number of men laden with fish, which they had caught in the Bhowany on their way to a local market. The fish were covered with green branches, so that I did not see them well; but some of them ranged from two to three feet in length.

3. The Bhowany is now very low, and offers great facilities for catching the fish; in fact, all the fishermen in the country are now gathered on its banks trying to catch every fish in the water. Under ordinary circumstances, no one would find fault with them; but when it is borne in mind that the fish are soon to spawn, the damage done must be very great, especially when it is considered that this practice is going on, along the length of the Cavery and Bhowany rivers, and I believe every stream in the country. The preservation and culture of fish have engaged the attention of most civilized countries, and Government have lately shewn their appreciation of the subject by going to the expense of introducing Trout ova from England. But surely it is an anomaly that, whilst they go to so much expense to stock the waters on the Neilgherries, they should at the same time permit the exterminating system above alluded to, to be carried on in the rivers flowing along the base of these hills. The subject is an important one, and one on which action, I think, should be taken in view to legislation. A simple Act declaring the use of net, line, rod, or other means of catching fish illegal on any rivers, tanks, &c., at such time as the Collector or other authority under the orders of Government might proclaim, would suffice. A provision against the introduction into the water of any substance prejudicial to fish should also be introduced.

4. Under the influence of an Act of this kind, I doubt not the Bhowany would soon be stocked with fish in as great, if not greater, abundance than ever, and afford a supply of food in excess of what it has done for years.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
27th April 1866.

1. Submitted for the consideration of Government.

2. The Board see no objection to the Government taking powers to declare a "close time" for fishing during the breeding season.

No. 441. ORDER THEREON, 27th April 1866, No. 991.

Miscellaneous.

The Government are not prepared to legislate on this subject at present.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) J. D. SIM,
Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.

Exd. S. T. Augustin

For Orders.

Before proceeding to legislate on this head the Govt. wish the Board to consult the Collrs. of other Districts on the question of protection.

I. D. S.

Mr. Govt. seem to me to consider and report upon the question of Govt.

The two kinds of fish spawn at the same season and in different rivers the same kind of fish spawn within different periods owing to elevation temperatures and a variety of local causes. any legislation enforcing close time in regard to fishing must be based on careful and accurate enquiry as to data which we do not now possess. It would be rash to

Rev. Dept.
Proc. of Govt. for April 1866.

No. 1103.
PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE,

Dated 13th April 1866.
Read 17th
Rec. 18th

No. 2,551.

Submitting for favorable consideration letter from Collector of Coimbatore suggesting introduction of an Act prohibiting the catching of fish on rivers, tanks, &c., during the breeding season.

G.O. No. 1924-25 Apl.
Issue Order.

give the Collectors an unlimited discretion during the fishing of the rivers.

N.

The Collector's proposal seems to me very premature. He is able to show that the practice of fishing rivers out were to have obtained this sentence, has not existed for years past. Does he know any thing of the habits of the fish in the rivers of Bombay - does any one know any thing? I have not the fishermen on the rivers banks certainly right - handed down to them from generations how without the penalty of prosecution we have to enforce - I do not think anyone that any one has suffered from any depression Could Apm. get him a Report? I would x

27th Apl 1866

The fish are not prepared to legislate on this subject at present.

or

The fish are not possessed of sufficient information to admit of their legislating on this subject.

Different kinds of fish spawn at different seasons - and even the same kinds spawn at different periods in different years owing to differences of temperature, elements and a variety of local causes - Little

indeed is known
of the different
varieties of fish
which frequent the
streams & tanks
of the Presidency -
their relative qualities
seasons, localities
&c. &c. It would re-
-dound greatly to the
information of
and especially on
the essential point
which kind of ker-
-anik keeps Cutcha
the increasing
deficiency in the
supply of fish con-
-sequent on much
of the tackle being
the breeding season
it would be prema-
-ture for the Govt of

act on the recom-
-mendations of
the Collector & the
Bd. ~~...~~ however
The subject is
one of great im-
-portance, for a
large number of
the poorer classes
depend on the
fisheries of rivers
& tanks for a portion
of their subsistence.
The Govt would therefore
wish the Bd to
instruct the Collrs
of Districts to Mans
as full & reliable
information as
they can on the
subject. ~~...~~ The
Govt wish also com-

Instr^d Capt^n Mitchell
the Lt Gov^r of the
first Division, to
stop and detain
the persons who
have given their
attendance to Privi-
ledge.

The first Question
to be considered
is what has been done in
respect to the
Grant of Fisheries
and the Vessels
transferred to
Local Funds by
the Supreme Govt.

[illegible]

Colonial

Secretary's Board of Revenue 27th April

Revenue 1866 Despatch
Pro of Govt for April

No 994

Pro of the Madras
Government 27
27 April 1866.

Stating that Govt
are not prepared to le-
gislate on the subject
of an act against fishing
in Rivers for Coimbatore
District —

N: 440-441.

1