

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
22nd September 1871.*

No. 293. Read the following endorsement of the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George:—

Read the following Extract from the Proceedings of the Government of India in the Home Department, (Public,) under date Simla, the 11th September 1871. No. 4,202.

Read again the under-mentioned correspondence on the general question as to the best means of securing the destruction of noxious animals and poisonous snakes, and on the present practice of disposing of the skins of such animals:—

From Foreign Department, No. 1,958, dated 30th September 1869.

From „ „ „ 2,291, „ 25th November „

From „ „ „ 2,380, „ 6th December „

To „ „ „ 5,576, „ 16th „ „

From „ „ „ 29G., „ 6th January 1870.

From Financial Department, No. 4,137, dated 18th October 1869.

From Captain B. Rogers of the Bengal Staff Corps, dated 9th August 1869, submitting a scheme for the destruction of noxious animals.

Home Department Circular No. 636—47, dated 2nd February 1870, directing the discontinuance of rewards for killing poisonous snakes pending the issue of final orders on the general question.

Home Department Circular No. 600—609, dated 29th January 1870, calling for information on the loss of human life, cattle and crops from the several kinds of wild animals and venomous snakes for the past three years and the number of such animals and snakes killed during the same period, and the cost entailed thereby on the State; and requesting Local Governments and Administrations to give their opinion on the scheme submitted by Captain Rogers, and on the system that should be adopted for attaining the object in view, and to state the result of the withdrawal of rewards for killing snakes.

Reply from Madras, No. 137, dated 21st January 1871.

„ „ Bombay, No. 2,760, dated 14th November 1870.

„ „ Bengal, Nos. 5,512 and 1,031, dated 17th December 1870, and 8th March 1871.

„ „ North-Western Provinces, Nos. 174 and 3,621, dated 27th May and 18th August 1871.

„ „ Punjab, No. 234, dated 3rd February 1871.

„ „ Oudh, No. 4,213, dated 24th August 1870.

„ „ Central Provinces, No. 1,259—136, dated 19th May 1870.

„ „ British Burmah, No. 80—38 dated 7th March 1871.

„ „ Mysore and Coorg, No. 2,320, dated 23rd July 1870.

„ „ Hyderabad, No. 41, dated 5th July 1870.

Demi-official Note from Captain Rogers to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy, dated the 25th July 1870, with a letter from Mr. Rowland of Jubbulpore, inquiring whether he could obtain a monopoly for the purchase of the skins of all wild beasts killed throughout India on the terms described in that letter.

Home Department Circular No. 3,835—44, dated 19th August 1870, requesting information whether, under the existing system of granting rewards for the destruction of wild animals, the skins of the animals killed become in any case the property of the Government; and, if so, how they are disposed of.

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Reply from Madras, No. 137, dated 21st January 1871 (paragraph 8 of Board's Report,)
 „ „ Bombay No. 2787 dated 18th „

„ „ Bombay, No. 2,787, dated 16th November 1870.

" „ Bengal, No. 5,518, dated 17th December 1870.

" " North-Western Provinces, No. 1,543, dated 30th November 1870.

„ „ Punjab, No. 430, dated 25th February 1871.

" „ Oudh, No. 4,877, dated 30th September 1870.

" " Coorg, No. 383-43, dated 20th _____

Coorg, No. 383—43, dated 29th August 1870.

Hyderabad, No. 73, dated 11th November 1870.

RESOLUTION.

THE papers now before the Government of India conclusively establish the fact that the evil under consideration is a very serious one. The loss of life, though probably not quite accurately reported, is certainly enormous. Nowhere is the destruction of life by wild beasts so great as in the Lower Provinces of Bengal. In other Provinces, as cultivation and civilization have advanced, wild beasts have diminished in number. In the Punjab and in most parts of the Bombay Presidency, the presence of the more dangerous species is now stated to have become exceedingly rare.

2. In the opinion of the Governor-General in Council this serious mortality could be very largely reduced by the extirpation of those animals in the neighbourhood of human habitations. This should be first attempted and every reasonable means taken to secure their destruction near towns or villages. The system of rewards hitherto in force in all Provinces seems to be the most effective means by which the Government can accelerate the work, and local Governments and Administrations are empowered to increase, within the limits of their respective budget allotments, the rate of the authorized rewards, whenever such a measure is considered desirable; but rewards should only be given for killing destructive and not merely wild animals.

3. As regards snakes, it seems to be overlooked by many officers that there is a deep-rooted prejudice among most natives against killing a snake—a prejudice which nothing but the offer of a reward will overcome. And as deaths from snake-bite are extremely numerous the Governor-General in Council has no doubt that the recent prohibition against the grant of rewards for killing snakes should be partially withdrawn, and that rewards not exceeding two Annas a head, as a general rule, should, at the discretion of the local Governments and Administrations, be offered for snakes known to be deadly, that is, the cobra and some other species to be expressly named. But such rewards should not be offered throughout a whole Province or for an unlimited period, but in selected districts, where the mortality from snake-bite is greatest, and for a period not exceeding two years. At the end of this period the result of the experiment should be reported to the Government of India, in order that, if successful, the propriety of extending it may be considered; and it is clear from the correspondence that care should be taken that no reward be given without the snake, when killed, being seen by the officer who grants the reward, and that the head of every such snake should be cut off and destroyed as soon as the reward is given.

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4. Although it is not desirable to grant a monopoly for the purchase of the skins of the wild animals killed for rewards, or in any way to commence a traffic in them, yet it is proper for the district officers to exercise an effectual check on the disbursement of rewards by subordinate officials, where the work is entrusted to such officials. Whenever shikarees are allowed to appropriate the skins of animals, precautions should be taken to prevent fraud. The correspondence shows the necessity of care in this respect, especially in the case of animals for which the lower rates of reward are offered.

5. As to Captain Rogers's scheme it has been generally considered as impracticable; but he deserves thanks for the interest he has taken in the matter.

No. 4,203.

ORDER.—Ordered that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the several local Governments and Administrations for information and guidance.

Ordered that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Financial and Foreign Departments.

Ordered also that the above Resolution be forwarded to Captain Rogers, with reference to his letter dated the 9th August 1869.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) E. C. R

TRANSFERRED to the Revenue Department.

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

No. 294.

ORDER THEREON, 22nd September 1871, No. 1,654.

Miscellaneous.

COMMUNICATED to the Board of Revenue,
who will request Dr. Short to furnish
them with a nominal list (in English

and the Vernaculars) of the species of snakes, for killing which, as to venomous beasts, rewards should be offered, and will select the districts in which the two year's trial, sanctioned by the Government of India, can best be made.

2. They will submit a Draft Notification showing the species of snake and the districts in which rewards may be given for the approval of Government before publication.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

No. 4202.

Extract from the Proceedings of the Government of India in the Home Department,
(Public),—under date Simla, the 11 September 1871.

READ again the under-mentioned correspondence on the general question as to the best means of securing the destruction of noxious animals and poisonous snakes, and on the present practice of disposing of the skins of such animals:

From Foreign Department, No. 1938, dated 30th September 1869.

From " " " 2291, " 25th November "

From " " " 2380, " 6th December "

To " " " 5376, " 16th "

From " " " 290, " 6th January 1870.

From Financial Department, No. 4137, dated 18th October 1869.

From Captain B. Rogers of the Bengal Staff Corps, dated 9th August 1869, submitting a scheme for the destruction of noxious animals.

Home Department Circular, No. 636—47, dated 2nd February 1870, directing the discontinuance of rewards for killing poisonous snakes pending the issue of final orders on the general question.

Home Department Circular, No. 600—609, dated 29th January 1870, calling for reports upon the loss of human life, cattle, and crops from the several kinds of wild animals and venomous snakes for the past three years, and the number of such animals and snakes killed during the same period, and the cost entailed thereby on the State; and requesting Local Governments and Administrations to give their opinion on the scheme submitted by Captain Rogers, and on the system that should be adopted for attaining the object in view, and to state the result of the withdrawal of rewards for killing snakes.

Reply from Madras, No. 137, dated 21st January 1871.

" " Bombay, No. 2760, dated 14th November 1870.

" " Bengal, Nos. 5512 and 1031, dated 17th December 1870, and 8th March 1871.

" " North-Western Provinces, Nos. 174 and 3621, dated 27th May and 18th August 1870.

" " Punjab, No. 234, dated 3rd February 1871.

" " Oudh, No. 4213, dated 24th August 1870.

" " Central Provinces, No. 1259—136, dated 19th May 1870.

" " British Burmah, No. 80—38, dated 7th March 1871.

" " Mysore and Coorg, No. 2320, dated 23rd July 1870.

" " Hyderabad, No. 41, dated 5th July 1870.

Demi-official Note from Captain Rogers, to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy, dated the 25th July 1870, with a letter from Mr. Rowland of Jubbulpore, enquiring whether he could obtain a monopoly for the purchase of the skins of all wild beasts killed throughout India on the terms described in that letter.

Home Department Circular No. 3835—44, dated 19th August 1870, requesting information whether, under the existing system of granting rewards for the destruction of wild animals, the skins of the animals killed become in any case the property of the Government; and, if so, how they are disposed of.

Reply from Madras, No. 137, dated 21st January 1871 (paragraph 8 of Board's Report).

" " Bombay, No. 2787, dated 16th November 1870.

" " Bengal, No. 5518, dated 17th December 1870.

" " North-Western Provinces, No. 1513, dated 30th November 1870.

" " Punjab, No. 430, dated 25th February 1871.

" " Oudh, No. 4877, dated 30th September 1870.

" " Central Provinces, No. 2909—310, dated 11th November 1870.

" " British Burmah, No. 80—9, dated 4th November 1870.

" " Coorg, No. 383—43, dated 29th August 1870.

" " Hyderabad, No. 73, dated 11th November 1870.

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is the destruction of life by wild beasts so great as in the Lower Provinces of Bengal. In other Provinces, as cultivation and civilization have advanced, wild beasts have diminished in number. In the Punjab and in most parts of the Bombay Presidency, the presence of the more dangerous species is now stated to have become exceedingly rare.

2. In the opinion of the Governor General in Council this serious mortality could be very largely reduced by the extirpation of those animals in the neighbourhood of human habitations. This should be first attempted and every reasonable means taken to secure their destruction whenever they make their appearance near towns or villages. The system of rewards hitherto in force in all Provinces seems to be the most effective means by which the Government can accelerate the work, and local Governments and Administrations are empowered to increase, within the limits of their respective budget allotments, the rate of the authorized rewards, whenever such a measure is considered desirable; but rewards should only be given for killing destructive and not merely wild animals.

3. As regards snakes, it seems to be overlooked by many officers that there is a deep-rooted prejudice among most natives against killing a snake—a prejudice which nothing but the offer of a reward will overcome. And as deaths from snake-bite are extremely numerous, the Governor General in Council has no doubt that the recent prohibition against the grant of rewards for killing snakes should be partially withdrawn, and that rewards not exceeding two annas a head as a general rule should, at the discretion of the local Governments and Administrations, be offered for snakes known to be deadly, that is, the cobra and some other species to be expressly named. But such rewards should not be offered throughout a whole Province or for an unlimited period, but in selected Districts, where the mortality from snake-bite is greatest, and for a period not exceeding two years. At the end of this period the result of the experiment should be reported to the Government of India, in order that, if successful, the propriety of extending it may be considered; and it is clear from the correspondence that care should be taken that no reward be given without the snake, when killed, being seen by the officer who grants the reward, and that the head of every such snake should be cut off and destroyed as soon as the reward is given.

4. Although it is not desirable to grant a monopoly for the purchase of the skins of the wild animals killed for rewards, or in any way to commence a traffic in them, yet it is proper for the district officers to exercise an effectual check on the disbursement of rewards by subordinate officials, where the work is entrusted to such officials. Whenever shikarees are allowed to appropriate the skins of animals, precautions should be taken to prevent the same skins being shewn twice. The correspondence shows the necessity of care in this respect to prevent fraud, especially in the case of animals for which the lower rates of reward are offered.

5. As to Captain Rogers' scheme, it has been generally considered as impracticable; but he deserves thanks for the interest he has taken in the matter.

ORDER.—Ordered, that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the several Local Governments and Administrations for information and guidance.

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Ordered also, that the above Resolution be forwarded to Captain Rogers, with reference to his letter, dated the 9th August 1869.

(True Extract.)

Edw. M. L.

Secretary to the Govt. of India.

No 1654.

Communicated to the Hon.
of Sec. Govt. of India
Shd be permitted to the
Hon. Secy. of the Govt. of India
to be offered
with the districts in
the 2 years trial conducted
by the Govt. of India can be
made. My bill submit
a draft to the Hon. Secy. of India
species of snake. The districts
in the rewards may be given
for the approval of Govt.
before publication. L.D.

The Hon. Secy. of India

22nd Sept/71

Albany 1871
Indian Department
Am No 3045
to Government
of India
Dated 11th September
Recd 21st September
No 4203

Y. S. No 1794

Communicating
Resolution on the sub-
ject of rewards for the
destruction of noxious
animals & poisonous
snakes.

N. 1654 - 22 September 1871

transferred

No 293-274