

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 2348

Press
Mis.

138.139

Dated 7-10-1867.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
7th October 1867.*

No. 138. Read the following Despatch from the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for India, (Public Works,) to His Excellency the Right Honorable the Governor in Council, Fort St. George, dated India Office, London, 23rd August 1867, No. 25:—

1. I herewith transmit a copy of a letter from Colonel Haly, together with its enclosure from Sir Arthur Cotton, on the subject of the destruction of fisheries in Indian rivers, caused by the anicuts constructed near their mouths.

2. Colonel Haly urges the necessity of taking immediate steps to enable the fish to pass these rivers and return to their spawning grounds, after having been carried down by the monsoon floods, by the formation of ladders, similar to the Salmon ladders in Europe.

3. I am of opinion that the subject is of sufficient importance to be deserving of the attention of your Government; and Dr. Day, who took out the fish for the Neilgherry streams, might probably be consulted with advantage.

From Colonel G. T. HALY, to the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for India, dated 12, St. Stephen's Road, Hammersmith, 31st July 1867.

1. The accompanying copy of a letter from Sir Arthur Cotton is so fully corroborative of all that I have advanced regarding the destruction of the fisheries of India by a want of foresight in carrying out works of irrigation in that country, that I do myself the honor to venture to draw particular attention to it.

2. The necessity that immediate steps should be taken on this important subject is so evident, that I shall refrain from commenting on it, further than to remark on the fact that every day's delay may be the destruction of millions of fish as they are now migrating and being carried down over the weirs, &c., by the swollen state of the rivers, streams, &c., caused by the monsoon now prevailing; therefore unless measures are at once taken and carried out with vigour, their return is for ever prevented.

3. I am not fully prepared to say what is the exact spawning season, or the period at which the fish commence their upward course for that purpose, but I am under a strong impression that it is about the end of the year, and should I be correct in this, there still remain from five to six months for operations, during which much might be done by creating even temporary fish-ladders, &c., to facilitate the onward course of fish to their spawning haunts.

4. I shall only further at present add that if my services, consequent on the interest I take in this subject and the knowledge I have of it, can be thought of any avail in furthering so important a matter as furthering the conservancy of the fisheries of India, they have only to be commanded, and that if I were authorized, I would at once proceed to India further to prosecute my enquiries, &c., and which I would be willing to do by simply having my expenses paid.

Copy of a letter from Sir ARTHUR COTTON, K. C. S. I., to Colonel G. T. HALY, having reference to the destruction of the Fisheries of India by works of Irrigation as now carried out.

1. With reference to our correspondence about the effect of the irrigation works in India upon the fisheries, I beg to state that, in my opinion, it is a matter of considerable importance that this matter should be attended to.

2. In 1835 we built a weir in Tanjore, called the Coleroon Anicut, about thirty miles from the sea, where that river is about 1,100 yards broad in two channels. In the following year a prodigious quantity of fish were stopped by it as soon as the freshes came down, and immense quantities were annually taken at it, of course generally full of roe.

3. I have not heard of the weir for nearly thirty years, so that I cannot say whether the fish continued to try to ascend the river, and in 1850 we constructed another weir across the Godavery,

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about forty miles from the sea, where it is 4,000 yards broad in four channels. The weir is now 14 to 16 feet high, and the water passes over it to the depth of 14 to 16 feet in a full fresh. In the following years the quantities of fish assembled at it as soon as the first water of the monsoon reached the sea was prodigious, and many tons used to be killed in a day, some of them five or six feet long.

4. I have not heard how the case is for many years. I should suppose that the injury to the coast fisheries must be very great, now that seven of the principal rivers on the East Coast, viz., the Coleroon or Cauvery, the Penna in South Arcot, the Pallaur, the Penna in Nellore, the Kistna, the Godavery, and the Mahanuddy are thus barred. It seems to me that this matter must be well worthy of the attention of Government.

P. S.—I should mention that there is a long interval between the arrival of the monsoon water and the time when there is sufficient passing over the weir to allow of the fish going over it. July 26th 1867.

Transferred to the Revenue Department, with reference to the Orders in that Department of the 11th September 1867, No. 2,140.

(Signed) J. H. M. SHAW STEWART, Major, R. E.,
Under Secretary to Government.

1st October 1867.

No. 139. ORDER THEREON, 7th October 1867, No. 2,348.

Miscellaneous.

1. Communicated to the Board of Revenue and to the Collectors of the Godavery, Kistna, and Tanjore Districts, in continuation of G. O. dated 11th September 1867, No. 2,140.

2. The former and present papers will also be communicated to the Collectors of Nellore and South Arcot, for report on the points specified in the first order if the state of things described exists at the anicuts in their districts.

3. The papers will also be sent to Dr. Day for any remarks he may wish to offer.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.

„ the Collector of Godavery.

„ the do. of Kistna.

„ the do. of Tanjore.

„ the do. of Nellore.

„ the do. of South Arcot.

To Surgeon F. Day, M. D.

„ The Collector of Tanjore.

Edw. S. T. Augustin.

India Office
London 23rd August, 1867

Public Works

No. 25 of 1867

My Lord,

I herewith transmit

a copy of a letter from Colonel Haly, together with its enclosure from Sir Arthur Cotton, on the subject of the destruction of fisheries in Indian rivers, caused by the anicuts constructed near their mouths.

2. Colonel Haly urges the necessity of taking immediate steps to enable the fish to pass these rivers and return to their spawning grounds, after having been carried down by the monsoon floods.

His Excellency
The Right Honorable
The Governor in Council
Fort St. George

10th October 1867

Transferred to the Revenue Department with reference to the orders in that Dept of the 11th September 1867. No 2140 -

Wm Stewart
Major - R.E.
Under Secy to Govt

28th August 1867

The
Letter to Lord St. George,
No 25.

23rd Aug 1867

1st October 1867 -
No 2348.

Commr of the R.E.
to the Secy to Govt
in reference to the
orders of the 11th Sept 67
No 2140.

The Secy to Govt & the
Under Secy to Govt
in reference to the
orders of the 11th Sept 67
No 2140.

The Secy to Govt & the
Under Secy to Govt
in reference to the
orders of the 11th Sept 67
No 2140.

Comme.

Communicating
reponse regarding the
destruction of fisheries in
Indian rivers, caused by the
damns constructed near
their mouths, and
concerning the subject of the
attraction of this Govt.

No 2348. 7 Oct

Transferred