

Bombay Fisheries

REGULAR readers of this *Journal* are no doubt familiar with the establishment, a few years ago, of a small Fisheries Section of the Department of Industries in the Presidency of Bombay with the main object of augmenting the fish supply of the town of Bombay by the use of motor launches. Under the able guidance of Dr. S. B. Setna, the Fisheries Section has made rapid progress and the scope of its working has gradually been widened. The *Annual Report* of the Department of Industries, Fisheries Section, 1937-38, recently published, shows the many-sided activities of this young department. The number of motor launches now in use for fish trade is 8, 4 belonging to the Department and the others privately owned. The bulk of the catch transported by these launches is obtained from the Karwar and Chendia which are about 270 and 290 miles respectively away from Bombay. The great utility of the launches in the fish trade will be evident from the fact that "This fish would not have come to Bombay without the launches but would have gone to the fish curing yards thereby reducing a first class edible commodity to a third rate product lacking in food value. Fish either salted or converted into manure would have fetched about five or six thousand rupees whereas in the fresh state it realised in Bombay about Rs. 60,000. This is an immense gain to the fish trade".

In the Report attention is directed to the fishing season and the quantities of fish

brought by launches, to the needs for modern fishing methods, to the lack of suitable fish landing sites and to the need for the establishment of a marine biological station and an aquarium for research in fishery problems. Progress is reported in the training of apprentices to handle and operate the launches and in the establishment of new ice factories.

In the account of the fish curing yards attention is directed to the number of the yards, to the kind of fish cured at the yards, and to other varied aspects of their management.

Several experimental measures adopted for the improvement of freshwater fisheries are enumerated, and the success or failure that attended these measures is clearly indicated. The rapid growth in the size of *Catla* and *Gourami* in the Bombay waters is very encouraging, as both the species are good for stocking tanks. The proposal to stock certain ponds with *Murrel* fry is however, full of danger, as the fish is a well-known predaceous form, and is likely to do considerable damage to the indigenous fish-fauna, if any, of these ponds.

The Fisheries Section also rendered considerable help to the Angling Association in the stocking operations at Powai Lake, and acted as the bureau of fishery information for attending to enquiries on a variety of subjects from the general public, and the Provincial and State Governments.