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**CURRENT SCIENCE—50 YEARS AGO**


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**RAINS OF FISHES IN INDIA, WITH A NOTE  
ON THEIR METEOROLOGICAL ASPECTS.**

**T**HE following is a summary of an interesting paper read by Dr. S. L. Hora before the ordinary monthly meeting of the Asiatic Society of Bengal held on the 14th December.

In the *Statesman* of the 14th of September, 'Kim' published a short note on three rains of fishes in the Muzaffarpore District. The information was supplied to him by an eye witness, Mr. G. T. Gill of the Bhicanpur Factory. Kim's note was followed up by the author with the result that a great deal of valuable information has been collected through Kim's numerous correspondents, some of whom supplied information direct to the author. Since the 15th of September the *Statesman* has been publishing accounts of rains of fishes from time to time and it would seem that the phenomenon is still regarded by the general public with scepticism and that any explanation showing fish falling from the sky is considered a myth.

The first two records of rains of fishes in India were published in 1833 in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society*

of Bengal by James Prinsep, the celebrated Secretary of the Society, and upto the present time 10 instances had been recorded, the last being in 1852 at Poona. It is undoubtedly true that every fall of fishes that occurs is not recorded, but the phenomenon is sufficiently unusual and striking to have attracted the attention of a number of people. Kim's column in the *Statesman* has unearthed several such records which would have passed unnoticed otherwise. The author gives particulars of the Rains of Fishes hitherto recorded from India, including those that fell during this year, and mentions the species of fish known to have fallen with rains in India. The kinds of fishes that rained in Muzaffarpore in July and August last will be exhibited and attention will be directed to their mode of life, etc.

Five explanations of the rains of fishes have been advanced, namely; (i) hatching out of the eggs after heavy rainfall; (ii) fishes wrongly supposed to have fallen with rain might have been migrating overland from one stream or pond to another; (iii) fishes might have been left behind by overflows after heavy floods; (iv) fishes may have aestivating and have been awakened by the coming the rain; and lastly (v) the rains of fishes are due to the action of heavy winds, whirlwinds, and waterspouts. All these explanations are discussed by the author and it is indicated that the only explanation tenable is that of whirlwinds and waterspouts. The popular belief of the people of northern Behar regarding waterspouts is given, and in his note Dr. S. N. Sen, Meteorologist at the Alipore Observatory, has shown how waterspouts may be formed in India and by analyzing the meteorological conditions on the two days of occurrence of the rains of fishes in the Muzaffarpore District has shown that during those days the weather conditions were most favourable for the formations of waterspouts over that area. Several other meteorological problems regarding the falls of fishes in India are also discussed.

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