

A Study on the Government Publications under the British Colonial Period

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Abstract

Government publications are one of the most often used information sources. They are valuable documents which provide different accounts of the government and its branches. This paper studies government publications under the British colonial period. It aims to identify these publications as highly valuable documents embodying early records and accounts. This paper finds out the information about various aspects provided in these publications. This study is conducted through analytical study. Qualitative approach is used when analyzing these publications. It is found that these publications are useful and authoritative work about Myanmar and its people. As these publications provide various aspects of such information, they are valuable for researchers in the field of history, geography and socio-economics. Finally, it can be seen that the librarians and archivists should not discard these old editions of publications because their value for historical information will continue to be significant for many research questions.

Key words: government publications, information sources, early records

Introduction

From the earliest times, men used to record their life experiences and their environments in different ways as possible as they can. It was found that in the Stone Age, prehistoric people created symbols on the cave-walls as their records. When writing evolved, men recorded their experiences, events and problems on stone, papyrus, parchment, palm-leaves and parabike (blackened hand-made paper), etc. In the reign of Myanmarkings, records were created on stone, palm-leaves and parabike. These records were about business transactions, government activities, customs, family affairs, religious belief, etc. Later, with the advent of printing, records were created in printed form. In any country, the government produced records for its activities. During the British colonial period, various kinds of records were created in Myanmar. When townships and village tracts were founded, the records on these townships and village tracts were created. Similarly, records on several facets such as administration, military, politics, economics, history, etc. were also compiled.

Records are all books, papers, maps, photographs, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by any public or private institution in pursuance of its legal obligations or in connection with the transaction of its proper business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by that institution or its legitimate successor as evidence of its functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities or because of the informational value of the data contained therein.¹

Generally, records are documents or other items containing recorded information, which are produced or received as part of a business activity. They are an organization's

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¹T.R.Schellenber, *Modern Archives : Principles and Techniques* (London : University of Chicago Press, 1975), 16. (Hereafter cited as Schellenber.)

most important information resources. They provide evidence of an organization's activities and conduct. The organizations need records, and the information they contain, to provide day by day. Most planning is done on the basis of previous experience. Therefore, they need them to learn from the past, to support their current work and to plan for the future. Records meet accountably requirements and other needs of an organization.

Modern records are large in volume, complex in origins, and frequently haphazard in their development.² They may come in various formats like letters, memoranda, reports, and minutes of meeting, project files, database files, e-mail messages, video tapes, photographs, maps or other documentary materials. They are produced mainly as by-product in the performance of work and the rate of their production is usually increased by an expansion of activity. This results in tremendous increases in records. They contain information useful for research in other social sciences such as economics, sociology, and public administration, etc. Therefore, they are useful for research in a variety of subject-matter fields.

Among the various types of records, the value of public records produced in a country is determined by the way its government agencies use records in their business. Therefore, the value of records can be judged in terms of their ultimate usefulness to the people and to the government, using whatever professional assistance they can obtain either from public officials or from scholars.³

Government information also includes information of a more administrative nature, such as the annual report of the separate departments. In the course of carrying out their responsibilities, government agencies often produce statistical and economic data, such as reports from the Census of Population and Housing, the Statistical Abstracts of the United States, and Economy at a Glance.⁴

Their growth in volume corresponds fairly and closely to the increase in government activities. In general, as government activities are expanded, they become more highly specialized and as they become specialized, the records pertaining to them become complex.

In Myanmar, different types of public publications have grown tremendously in volume since British colonial period. These may be available in multiple formats such as annual reports, departmental reports, reports on various fields (such as Report on Trade and Navigation, Settlement Reports, etc.), enquiry reports (such as Frontier Enquiry Reports), Acts, regulations, handbooks and manuals, legislative council proceedings, congress proceedings, circulars, notifications, speeches, etc. They are valuable sources for administrators, research workers, historians, and scholars until now.

Aim and Objectives

The main aim in undertaking this research is to identify the government publications as highly valuable documents embodying early records and accounts.

The objectives which are pivotal to the main aim of this research are as follows:

- (i) to find out the research value provided in these publications.

² T.R.Schellenber, *Modern Archives : Principles and Techniques* (London : University of Chicago Press, 1975), 14. (Hereafter cited as Schellenber.)

³ Ibid., 32.

⁴ Richard E. Bopp, Unda C. Smith, eds., *Reference and Information Services: An Introduction*. 3d ed. (Englewood, Colorado: Libraries Unlimited, 2001), 537. (Hereafter cited as Bopp.)

- (ii) to explicit the historical information from these old publications
- (iii) to refer the extracted information of these publications which are valuable sources for scholars and researchers.
- (iv) to indicate the trend of administrative and socio-economic conditions that took place in the British colonial period.

Scope of the Study

This study attempts to find out tremendous amount of information about various aspects provided in the government publications. It covers 24 volumes of publications which provide administration and socio-economic history of the country during the colonial period.

Method of the Study

This research is conducted through an analytical study. Analytical study is an important process to the interpretation of the data. It is a study using a logical method of thinking about something in order to understand it, especially by looking at all the parts separately.⁵

Moreover, documentary approach is also used when these publications are analysed. Therefore, these publications are used to examine past events by means of analysis of available information contained in pertinent records and evidence. They can also facilitate our understanding of when, how, and why past events occurred and the significance of these events.⁶

In addition, the required data are collected through documentary sources such as government records, books, periodicals, etc.

Government Publications under the British Colonial Period

Public records are generally government documents officially defined as informational matter which is published as an individual document at government expense, or as required by law.⁷ They are authoritative, comprehensive, and inexpensive. Basic government information sources include laws and official records of government entities.

William A. Katz defined "a government document as any publication that is printed at government expense or published by authority of a government body. Documents may be considered in terms of issuing agencies: the congressional, judiciary, and executive branches, which include many departments. In terms of use, they may be classified as (1) records of government administration; (2) research documents for specialists, including a considerable number of statistics and data of value to science and business; and (3) popular sources of information. The physical form may be a book, pamphlet, magazine, report, monograph, or microform."⁸

⁵ A.S. Hornby, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, edited by Sally Wehmeyer, 6th ed. (Oxford: Oxford university press, 2000),39.

⁶ Charles H. Busha and Stephen P. Harter, *Research methods in Librarianship: techniques and interpretation* (New York: Academic Press, 1980), 202.

⁷ Bopp, 537.

⁸ William A. Katz, *Introduction to Reference Work. Volume II: Reference Services and Reference Process*, 2d ed. (New York : McGraw-Hill, 1974), 317-318.

Governments collect and analyse much statistical data in the course of satisfying in the missions of their various agencies and branches. They operate in nearly every discipline that is of importance or interest to their people. Government documents also contain a wealth of historical and current information about the country and its citizens. Many of these documents are among the most important primary sources in various fields. These sources are used by the general public, by statisticians, social workers, scientists, students, teachers, politicians, parents – in short, by anyone who has a need for information.

However, Myanmar fell under the yoke of servitude after three aggressive wars by colonialists in 1824, 1852, and 1885. After the First Anglo-Myanmar War in 1824, Myanmar had to give up Rakhine, Tanintharyi, Assam and Manipura; after the Second Anglo-Myanmar War in 1852, Lower Myanmar including Hanthawady, and Bago; and after the Third Anglo-Myanmar War in 1885, Upper Myanmar including Mandalay Yadanabon to the colonialists. Then, the nation lost sovereignty completely and the days of monarchial rule were sealed and closed. Therefore, the period under the British Rule was colonial period.

After the incorporation of Upper Myanmar into the British Empire, the British introduced a provisional administration in Myanmar. They probed various ways and means to govern it effectively and economically. In establishing law and order, a number of public works were carried out by the British authorities. They recorded the working and results of government operations from various departments systematically. This is for the sake of the practical need of improving governmental efficiency. Throughout the colonial period, the British created public records as an integral part of the government structure and as part of their normal functioning. Hence, during this period, public records grew tremendously in volume.

With the advent of printing, the British printed not only books but also records widely. They aimed to distribute knowledge to everyone. At the beginning, printed records were distributed to government officials. Later, they were published to the public. The British published not only public rules and regulations but also departmental reports. As they served as the official records of a matter, the British distributed them systematically. Thus, printed public records appeared in Myanmar.

The British Government printed the records on Myanmar after the annexation of Rakhine and Tanintharyi coastlines. At the beginning, the British administered the country as a province of India. Therefore, it is found that earlier records were printed in Calcutta according to the source of printing found in most of the records.

After the annexation of the Upper Myanmar, some records were printed and published in Myanmar. Moreover, it is found that records on trade, reports on the administration of revenue department, reports on public instruction, and reports on police administration published since 1824, Census published in 1872, 1881 and 1891 and reports on the Department of Home Affairs published from 1871 to 1899 were again copied from London.⁹ Later, these reports were published by the Government Printing in Yangon.

These records were assembled from many sources. They contained evidence of financial and legal commitments that must be preserved to protect the government. They embodied the great fund of official experience that the government needed to give continuity and consistency to its actions, to make policy determinations, and to handle

⁹ *Thamaing tan gun*, vol. I, no. 1 (1960), 97.

social and economic as well as organizational and procedural problems. In short, they were the foundation upon which the British Government structure was built. The British aimed these records for future reference. It can be thought that all the government departments acquired the printed records as possible as they can.

Nowadays, government publications throughout the colonial period were maintained by the Department of National Archives and the Department of Historical Research in Myanmar as valuable historical records. The Department of National Archives identified that these public records can be divided into 40 kinds depending on their characteristics. They are¹⁰:

1. Manuals
2. Acts
3. Rules
4. Regulations
5. Bye-Laws
6. Codes
7. Laws
8. Statutes
9. Ordinances
10. Constitutions
11. Rulings
12. Digest & Law Reports
13. Proceedings
14. Gazetteers & District Memoirs
15. Gazettes
16. Orders & Notifications
17. Instructions, Directive & Handbooks (Including Indexes, Guide, Catalogues, Calendars, etc.)
18. Circulars
19. Political Records
20. Diaries & Notes
21. Committee and Commission Reports
22. Agreements, Contracts & Deeds (Including Treaties & Tenders)
23. Departmental Reports
24. Accounts & Budgets
25. Service Records

¹⁰ Ma Aye Aye Myint, *koloni kit myanmar naing ngan asoya hmattaryya thamoing (1886-1922)*. (DLS Thesis, University of Yangon, 1981), gagyi-sa. (Hereafter cited as Aye Aye Myint.)

26. Meeting Minutes (Including Seminar & Conference Papers)
27. Planning Documents
28. Statistics
29. Research Documents (Including Surveys)
30. Training & Examination Records
31. Journals, Bulletins & Periodicals (Including Reviews, News, etc.)
32. Exhibitions & Games
33. Speeches
34. Classical Literature and Sermons
35. Plans & Designs
36. Maps & Graphs
37. Charts, Schedules, Tables
38. Pictures, Sketches, Architectural Drawings, Diagrams
39. Films (motion, micro), Tapes, Discs
40. Other Documents

Generally, all these kinds of records can be divided into two. The first one was compiled intentionally for organizational functions. These include notes, drafts, reports, invoice vouchers, etc. The second appeared haphazardly and these include office letters communicated for a certain matter. Moreover, these records can be divided into three types according to their usability as follows:

- (1) Records for current use
- (2) Old records for occasional use
- (3) Old records not for current use¹¹

Although the style of records was different depending on the period, they were compiled as documents for facts and figures. Generally, these records are not necessary for current use. They, even the older ones, are needed by the government for its work. They reflect the origins and growth of the government and are the main sources of information on all its activities. They constitute the basic administration tools by means of which the work of a government is accomplished. Moreover, it can be known that which policy was laid down, how to operate it, how much developed and which results were achieved only when records were prepared.

These records were compiled in printed forms as well as handwritten copies. Today, almost all of the ministries were based on the departments founded in the colonial period. Some were reformed and reorganized. In this colonial period, every department collected files and printed records of their functioning. But, the records appeared in early British colonial period are not available in Myanmar. They are only available in the India Office Library and National Archives in New Delhi. Hence, these records were

¹¹Aye Aye Myint, sa.

microfilmed and maintained in the Department of Historical Research, Department of National Archives.

The followings are some of the public records published during the British colonial period. In the colonial period, the British Government published various kinds of reports compiled by each government department. They were mostly published annually. They give clear functions and operations of a certain department. Most of them were published by the Government Printing in Yangon.

i. Report on the Administration of the Province of Pegu, for the Year 1855-1856¹²

The British Government had created and published varieties of reports to record their government operations since annexation of Lower Myanmar. Among them, Reports on the Administration of Burma (RAB) were the most useful due to their historical value. They were first published under the title "Report on the Administration of the Province of Pegu, for the Year 1855-56". They had been published annually by the Office of the Superintendent, Government Printing in Yangon since 1856. Their publications ceased in 1936.

ii. Report on the Police Administration of Lower Burma, for the year 1885-1886¹³

In 1886, this report was published by the Government Printing in Yangon. It was an annual report which mainly describes decisions of the Chief Commissioner, reports of the Inspector-General of Police and crimes occurred in the year reported.

iii. Report on the Prison Administration of British Burma for the year 1885¹⁴

Like reports on the police administration, it had been published annually since 1886. It also describes the decisions of the Chief Commissioner, the jurisdiction, religious affairs and general matters reported by the Inspector-General of the prison.

iv. Report on Violent Crime in Lower Burma, during the First Quarter of 1886¹⁵

The Government published quarterly violent crime report. It was compiled by the Inspector-General of Police with the order of the Chief Commissioner. This report was quarterly published for the year 1886 such as second quarter, third quarter, and fourth quarter. It presents how various crimes were handled by the police during this period providing statistical tables.

v. Report on the Registration in Lower Burma, for the year 1885-1886¹⁶

The British Government systematically carried out registration work in Myanmar, establishing registration offices in every township. Hence, the government recorded the functioning of the Registration Department and published the reports in 1886. It was an annual report which provides list of towns in which there were registration offices and

¹² Report on the Administration of the Province of Pegu for the year 1855-56 (Rangoon : Office of the Superintendent, Government Printing, 1856).

¹³ Report on the Police Administration of Lower Burma, for the year 1885-86. (Rangoon : Office of the Superintendent, Government Printing, 1886).

¹⁴ Report on the Prison Administration of the British Burma, for the year 1885 (Rangoon : Office of the Superintendent, Government Printing, 1886).

¹⁵ Report on Violent Crime in Lower Burma, during the First Quarter of 1886 (Rangoon : Office of the Superintendent, Government Printing, 1886).

¹⁶ Report on the Registration in Lower Burma, for the year 1885-1886 (Rangoon : Office of the Superintendent, Government Printing, 1886).

sub-registration offices. In addition, it reveals the registration of unmovable and movable materials and provides appendix tables.

vi. Progress Report of Forest Administration in Burma, for the year 1885-1886¹⁷

In 1887, it was annually published in Calcutta. It was issued in combination with two records for Tanintharyi circle and Bago circle. The forest administration of Tanintharyi circle was reported by Forest Commissioner, Col W.A. Seaton and E. P. Popert reported for Bago circle. These reports deal with area of forest reserves, cultivation of forests, protection of forest, forest fires, pastures, exploitation of timber, communication and finance, etc. They have been valuable historical records for the Department of Forest until now.

vii. Report on the Municipal Administration in Lower Burma, during the year 1886-1887¹⁸

The British Government organized municipalities after the annexation of Lower Myanmar. Therefore, reports on municipal administration were compiled and published. This report provides a brief compass of the fundamental fact of municipal growth in Lower Myanmar in the late nineteenth century. As the population of some regions was offered in this report, it could provide to collect census.¹⁹ It reveals the nature of the regional committees at this time. Moreover, it is found that 13 municipalities had been organized in Lower Myanmar in the year reported.

viii. Report on the Light-House off the Coast of Burma, for 1887-1888²⁰

The British built light-houses off the coast of Myanmar for easy traffic of watercrafts. Therefore, the reports regarding light-houses had appeared annually since 1888. In this report, going to the light-houses, inspection of the buildings of light-houses and light machines, repair of light-ships, the health of light-keepers and crews of the light-vessels, finance, and administration, etc. are presented. As most of the light-houses established by the British have been used until now, these reports are still reliable public records.

ix. Proceedings of the Sub-Committee, Public Service Commission²¹

One of the forty kinds of public records identified by the Department of National Archives is proceedings. The British Government used to publish annual reports and yearbooks to record their government operations during this period. Among the report publications, this book was published by the Government Press in Simla in 1887. It was compiled by Burma Commission. In this book, notes on Department of Meteorology, Department of Geology, Department of Archaeology, oral documents and printed documents are revealed.

¹⁷ *Progress Report of Forest Administration in Burma, for 1885-86* (Calcutta: Govt. Printing 1887).

¹⁸ *Report on the Municipal Administration in Lower Burma, during the year 1886-1887* (Rangoon: Govt. Printing, 1887).

¹⁹ *Report on the Municipal Administration in Lower Burma, during the year 1886-1887* (Rangoon: Govt. Printing, 1887), 12.

²⁰ *Report on the Light-House off the Coast of Burma, for 1887-1888* (Rangoon: Govt. Printing, 1888).

²¹ *Proceedings of the Sub-Committee, Public Service Commission* (Simla: Government Press, 1887).

x. Proceedings of the Chief Commissioner, Burma (Finance & Commerce Department), for January to June, 1886²²

In the year 1888, this book appeared among the annual reports. Moreover, the book on the proceedings for next six months, July to December, was also separately published in the year 1888. Both were printed in Government Printing, Yangon. In these books, the cost of living allowance, travel allowance, matters on opium, stamps, post offices, and miscellaneous are provided. Sometimes, as these books also reveal the production of coins and paper currency, the conditions of finance in that period can be studied.

xi. The Lower Burma Courts Act, 1889²³

This Act was published by the Government of India, Central Printing Office in 1889. In this book, introduction, laws, courts and their rights are described. It can be known how the courts were organized under the British Rule.

xii. The Burma Law List (1872)²⁴

One kind of public records is compilation of lists. This record appeared when the Burma Law List was published by the Government Printing in 1892. This book provides the lists of statutes, Acts, rules, regulations and notifications. It is known that the British Government laid down the various laws upon Myanmar.

xiii. Circular of the Local Administration, for 1888-1893²⁵

Under the British administration, there were circulars, one of the different kinds of public records. They are directions proclaimed to circulate among the government departments. When these circulars were published as a book, it became invaluable document. It is an essential record to be referred for the government functioning.

xiv. Lower Burma Village Manual²⁶

The Lower Burma Village Acts published in 1889 was amended in April, 1896 and published as Lower Burma Village Manual. It is apparent that the British Government mainly based on the village administration at that time.

xv. First Quinquennial Report on Public Instruction in Burma, for 1892-1893 to 1896-97²⁷

On 1 May 1897, Chief Commissioner was promoted as Lieutenant Governor and Myanmar was changed as the province which was governed by the Lieutenant-Governor under the legislative council.²⁸ Hence, every department had presented the reports to the Lieutenant-Governors since 1897. The earliest report was published in 1897. This report is a reliable reference source on education in Myanmar. It describes the condition of university education in Myanmar during the year 1892-1897. It provides the average

²²Proceedings of the Chief Commissioner, Burma (Finance & Commerce Department), for January to June, 1886 (Rangoon: Govt. Printing, 1888).

²³Lower Burma Courts Act, 1889 (Govt. of India: Central Printing Office, 1889).

²⁴The Burma Law List (Rangoon: Govt. Printing, 1892).

²⁵Circular of the Local Administration, for 1888-1893 (Rangoon: Govt. Printing, 1893).

²⁶Lower Burma Village Manual (Rangoon: Govt. Printing, 1896).

²⁷First Quinquennial Report on Public Instruction in Burma, for 1892-93 to 1896-97 (Rangoon: Govt. Printing, 1897).

²⁸Report on the Administration of Burma, for 1897-98 (Rangoon: Govt. Printing, 1899), 3-4. (Hereafter cited as RAB.)

number on the rolls and the average attendance of the Baptist College and Rangoon College affiliated by the Calcutta University.²⁹

xvi. The Chin Hill Regulation, 1896, with Rules Framed There under, and Notification³⁰

The British Government proclaimed separate rules and regulations regarding the provinces left out from Myanmar. It was the record identified this point. It was published in 1897. It can be said that the British Government administered the races of which the customs are different in Myanmar with divided rules.

xvii. British Burma Gazette (1886)³¹

British Burma Gazette, one of the government publications usually relied by the historians, was published in 1886. Sometimes, these gazettes were published with supplements and special supplements. They are weekly publications. These gazettes comprise five parts. They provide notifications in Part I, the extracts from Indian Gazette in Part II, Acts by Chief Commissioner and rules in Part III, notifications of other departmental officers, commissioners of the Jurisdiction in Part IV and government notifications in Part V. The supplement deals with public health, weather conditions, production rate of crops, etc. In the special supplement, the rules proclaimed were described. Until now, these gazettes have been published in Myanmar.

xviii. Alphabetical and Analytical Index to the Burma Gazette, for 1889³²

To meet the needs of records, this index was published in 1889. It was issued to provide an easy access to the Burma Gazette published in the whole year, 1889.

xix. Handbook for British Burma (1867)³³

After the Lower Myanmar was annexed to the British Empire, the British officers reached Myanmar to administer the Province of British Burma. Therefore, it was necessary for them to know well about the British Burma (Myanmar). To fulfill this requirement, this book appeared in Mawlamyine in 1867. It was compiled by Captain G.E. Fryer. It was a good handbook to know the politics, administration, economics, etc. at that time.

xx. A Handbook for Burma (1872)³⁴

In 1872, Charles W. Law compiled "A Handbook for Burma", treated in two volumes. It was also published in Mawlamyine. Important Acts, government departments, and customs are comprehensively described. It provides physical features, climate, rivers, and streams, etc. of Myanmar. In addition to politics, administration, and economics, the distances of townships and village tracts throughout the motor car-roads and railway-lines are presented. It is a manual which covers politics, administration, economics, and social history of Myanmar in the British colonial period.

²⁹Ibid., 3.

³⁰*The Chin Hill Regulation, 1896, with rules Framed Thereunder, and Notification* (Rangoon: Govt. Printing, 1897).

³¹*British Burma Gazette* (Rangoon: Govt. Printing, 1886).

³²*Alphabetical and Analytical Index to the Burma Gazette, for 1889* (Rangoon: Govt. Printing, 1886)

³³G.E. Fryer, *Handbook for British Burma* (Moulmein: Govt. Printing, 1867).

³⁴Charles W. Law, *A Handbook for Burma* (Moulmein: Govt. Printing, 1872).

xxi. British Burma Gazetteer (1879, 1880)³⁵

In Myanmar, the history of Burma Gazetteers dated from the British period. After the British had occupied the Lower Myanmar, they tried to know about their colony. So, they compiled the "British Burma Gazetteer". It was published in two volumes by the Government Printing Press, Yangon in 1880 and 1879. Volume II was published in 1879 before volume I. It was compiled by Major Ralph Separman. Volume I includes the whole British Burma (Myanmar) ranging from location, physical geography to the politics, administration, economic and social conditions. In Volume II, the names of the cities, towns, village tracts, rivers, mountains are arranged alphabetically A to Z, describing location, history, population, professions, revenues, etc.

xxii. Report and Gazetteer of Burma, Native and British (1883)³⁶

Since 1880, the relations of the British and Myanmar had become worse. So, the British Government prepared for the Third War. As a result of this war preparation, in 1883, Major Douglas MacNeill was assigned to compile "Report and Gazetteer of Burma, Native and British". It was published by GNO Publishers in Simla. It is an important source to trace Myanmar history. It comprises three parts. Part I is history of Burma from the ancient kings of Pagan to the Second Bunnese War. Part II is about British Burma, describing less account. Part III describes maps, plans, etc. Part III is the essence of this gazetteer. This gazetteer supported the British to occupy the Upper Myanmar.

xxiii. Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States (1900)³⁷

In 1900, J. G. Scott and J. P. Hardiman compiled "Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States". It was published in 5 volumes: Part I, Volume I & II and Part II, Volume I to III by the Superintendent Government Printing in Yangon. Part I, Volume I describes the history of Upper Myanmar from the reigns of King Mindon and King Thibaw up to the year 1900. It also includes the Shan States and the Tai, the Kachin Hills and the Chingpaw, the Chin Hills and the Chin Tribes. In Part I, Volume II, palace customs and Burma under Native rule are expressed. The government and administration under the Myanmar Kings can be studied in this volume. In Part II, Volume I to III, the names of the towns, village tracts, rivers, streams, etc. of the whole Upper Myanmar are arranged alphabetically A to Z.

xxiv. District Gazetteers³⁸

After the British had occupied the whole country of Myanmar, District Gazetteers were compiled in the year 1912. The year 1912 was the year most published Burna Gazetteers for various districts. They were mostly published in two volumes, Volume A and Volume B. In 1924, B Volumes were published to fulfill the requirement of A Volumes. But, B Volumes of some district gazetteers were not published and as well A Volumes. There were about 42 district gazetteers. They were compiled in harmony with the uniform pattern. According to this pattern, A Volumes mostly consist of 13 chapters relating to topography, geology, flora, fauna, climate, history, archaeology, people

³⁵Major Ralph Separman, *British Burma Gazetteer* (Rangoon: Govt. Printing, 1879), 2v.

³⁶ Major Douglas MacNeill, *Report and Gazetteer of Burma, Native and British* (Simla: GNO Publishers, 1883).

³⁷ J. G. Scott and J. P., Hardiman, *Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States* (Rangoon: Govt. Printing, 1900).

³⁸ *Burma Gazetteer: Kyaukse District, Volume A* (Rangoon: Govt. Printing, 1925).

(language, culture, religion, social life, etc.), agriculture and irrigation, industries, trade and commerce, communications, economic trend, general and revenue administration, local selfgovernment, law and order and justice, education, health, minor articles and places of interests besides many other vital matters. B Volumes provides statistical data, including town and village census tables, administrative subdivisions, distribution of urban population, police strength and distribution, agricultural statistics, crop outturns, trade, roads, etc. These district gazetteers were rare reference sources before the year 1962 after the postwar. During the year 1959-1963, A Volumes were reprinted by the Government printing.

Conclusion

Thus, all these publications give a clear picture of the British operations. The statements which accompany public records are accurate and reliable. This is because they are produced by the government and they are peculiarly its resources. They deal with organizational, procedural, and policy matter, and with social and economic sphere. They are preserved as the sources and the evidence of the past' obviously for research use.

The British prepared these voluminous works for their benefits not for Myanmar. Although the British Rules were not effective to Myanmar, these public records have been very useful due to their historical value. It can be said that such records reflect not only the growth and functioning of a government, but also the development of a nation.³⁹

They are mirrors of society in its past and present and projection of its future. In short, they are storehouses of valuable and worth-knowing information relating to Myanmar and its government. Indeed, they are highly dependable sources of primary information embodying early records and accounts.

These old series of publications were compiled by the British primarily. They contain evidence of the development of the government and the nation – that is valuable for historical research. In addition, information contained in them is useful for research in a variety of subject-matter fields such as economics, sociology, public administration, etc. In spite of being old editions, until now they play a significant role in various fields of research as the sources and the evidence of the past. They are the most indispensable government documents.

In this way, these publications are worth to be exploring due to their historical, social and cultural value. Anyone doing research in such fields as economics, labor, industry, or education, etc. will inevitably need a number of these publications.

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³⁹Schleifer, 9.

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- ဗြိုင်း မှူး (၁၉၆၂): ယခိုင်ကျော်မွန်ရဟန်လုပ်ဆောင်ရွက်သွေးစွဲများ ရရှိကြရှိ စေပေါ်စာနှင့်
လျှော်စာ မှူး (၁၉၇၁): ရွှေရှိနေဂိုင် ပြုစာမျက်နှာအတွက် အမြတ်များသို့: (၁၃၁၃-၁၃၅၇), အကြည့်ဝိုက်ပေါ်မာတော်း
ရရှိကြရှိစွဲများ၏။
- သရိုင်းတွေ့ (၁၉၆၀): အပွဲ့၊ အဖွဲ့၏ ရရှိကြရှိ တွေ့ဗုံးလုပ်ပို့စိုး၊ ၁၁၁
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ရရှိကြရှိစွဲများ၏။