

A LITERATURE OF SCHOOL BOOKS

A Study of the Burmese books approved for use in schools by the
Education Department in 1885, and ^{of} their place in the
developing Educational System in British Burma

by L.E. Bagshawe, B.A. (Oxon)

Submitted for the Degree of Master of Philosophy

School of Oriental and African Studies.

"The creation of a literature, even though it be but a literature
of school-books, is a work of many years....."

Hunter Commission Report 1882.



ProQuest Number: 10672855

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 10672855

Published by ProQuest LLC (2017). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

A LITERATURE OF SCHOOL BOOKS

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to consider the Burmese language text books approved for use in schools and listed in the Burma Education's Handbook of 1885, and to demonstrate their place in the system that had been developed up to that year which marks the end of the early formative stage of Western education in Burma under British administration.

First, in order to understand how government policy towards education evolved in Burma, the rationale of British involvement in the education of Eastern peoples, leading to the Dispatches of 1854 and 1859, is examined. Secondly some account is given of the major government decisions concerning education taken during the 1860s; that which determined, following the 1854 Dispatch, that education should be modern in content and, so far as possible, in the Burmese language, was of great importance, giving rise to a constantly appearing strain between the desire of the Burmese for an English education and the official concept of the government's duty. Thirdly the three types of school already existing in the country are discussed, namely the government's own schools, the mission schools, and the 'indigenous' schools, comprising monastic schools and lay ('house') schools, which together it was hoped would serve as the basis of a new integrated system, and also the problems involved in this integration.

The second part of the thesis (Chapter IV onward) contains an examination of the way in which the system developed and how the government assumed increasing responsibility for education by the establishment of institutions such as the Teachers' Training School, Committees of Public Instruction, Cess Schools, the Rangoon High School and the Educational Syndicate.

Chapter V deals with the Vernacular Committee, which in 1879 became the Text Book Committee and its mode of operation; the difficulties of producing 'modern' text books in Burmese; authors and their backgrounds and the expansion of book publishing. Finally in Chapters VI and VII a detailed examination of the list of approved books shows that by 1885 the government had not found it possible to integrate the three different educational systems into a coherent whole.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter I	Introduction	page 1
Chapter II	Backgrounds - Burmese and English	page 6
Chapter III	The Beginnings of an Educational System	page 33
Chapter IV	The System in Action, 1870-1885	page 59
Chapter V	Text Books - Their Authors and Publishers	page 94
Chapter VI	Text Books on the Approved List	page 119
Chapter VII	Conclusions	page 183
	Bibliography	page 201
	Glossary	page 213
Appendix A	Three versions of a section from the Hitaw-padetha	page 214
Appendix B	Three versions of the 'Cock and Jewel' in 'Aesop's Fables' (Phaedrus III, 12)	page 216

Chapter I - Introduction.

What has been written about the development of an educational system in Burma under British administration generally seems to assume that the local officials developed their plans almost in a vacuum, under no constraint to consider anything but what they thought to be in the interests of their administration. In fact, they were under a tight control from the government of India at all times - slightly less tight perhaps than the control exercised in more accessible provinces, but distance would be counterbalanced by the greater difficulty which a mere Chief Commissioner would find in arguing with a Governor General than would a Presidency Governor who had no career in India to consider. The government of India, in their turn, were coming under ever-tightening control from the British government; what happened in Burma was the result of policies settled in London. In England the nineteenth century, and particularly its second half, was a period when all aspects of education attracted enormous interest, its principles and purposes were endlessly argued over, and great changes were brought about. In 1858 the 'Christian Observer' wrote, "Education is the fever of our times. Even good men speak of it as though it were the long-wanted panacea for all our ills." In 1904, looking back over fifty years, A.V. Dicey of the Working Man's College wrote of the changes that had taken place

In 1854 reformers laid unlimited stress upon the virtue of self-help... in 1904 the tendency of opinion is to lay immense, some may think excessive, emphasis upon the duty of the state to help its individual members.¹

At the beginning of this period the literacy rate in England was very probably no higher than it was in Burma; in 1841, 33% of the men and 49% of women signed the marriage registers with a mark (including some school-teachers) and in 1871 the proportion was still 19% of men and 27% of women. By 1880 elementary education had become compulsory for all, but it is not until nearly the end of the century that the scene begins to look familiar to us. Writers who belittle what was done for education in Burma during the 1870s tend to look at the activity from the point of view of what is considered normal today, without considering that today's norms developed out of battles fought out during the period described. It is hardly fair to judge actions by moral norms not yet established, even if they have come to seem self-evident to the judge.

¹ Quoted by J. Llewellyn Davis - "The Working Men's College 1854-1904" - from Lawson & Silber "A Social History of Education in England" p 357

Naturally education in Burma was strongly affected by this avalanche of change in progress in England, not least because the influence of those whose work earlier in the century had set off the avalanche was very strong on many of those concerned with education in the East. Macaulay, whose action did much to determine the general course of educational policy, was the son of a father who had been a close associate of Wilberforce, the chief mover in the very first legislation touching on education in India - the Act of 1813; Macaulay's mother had been a favourite pupil of Hannah More. Thomas Arnold's son was Director of Public Instruction in the Panjab, and his pupil Woodrow in East Bengal; Bishop Cotton of Calcutta was Arnold's associate at Rugby and a protege of Vaughan's at Harrow. Peter Hordern, Burma's first effective Director of Public Instruction, was Cotton's relation and pupil. Aside from the evangelical tradition, the Mills were a power at the India Office - James, the associate of Brougham and Bentham, until his death in 1838, and his son John Stuart until 1858. All this added up to a tradition in which education was a matter to be taken very seriously indeed.

Apart from this rather general influence, changes in England led directly to changes in the East. The revised code of 1862 which set up a system of payment by results as the main basis for government support of schools was followed closely by similar codes in India and Burma. Again, when in 1872 Ashley Eden reckoned it right to encourage local Committees of Public Instruction to 'stir up the pongyis', he must have been thinking of the school boards set up by the Education Act of 1870 to compete with and to put on their mettle the voluntary religious societies. The parallel between the school boards and the Local Committees must be kept in mind as an indication of the way it was hoped that the Committees would develop. The problem was how to persuade the Sangha to behave a little more like the National Society.

In the middle of a period of vigorous change, heated discussion and violent disagreement in the educational world in England, it could not be expected that the English would immediately set up an immaculate system in their Eastern Empire. Everything would be at least as experimental and as provisional as similar arrangements in England; this was clearly recognised in Burma at the time - when the acting Director of Public Instruction, Ferrars, used his annual report to launch a vigorous

attack on all that was being done in the educational field, in 1878, the Chief Commissioner replied:

While on the one hand there are and must be many shortcomings, the failures that have occurred hitherto are such as were to be expected in a new and untried field of operations, and afford no good ground for discouragement or for sudden and radical changes.

No one claimed to be perfect.

In some respects, in fact, in the East ideas on education were closer to our current notions than to those of the time at home. For instance in Burma it was settled policy at least from 1875 that there should be a steady progression fortified with scholarships from primary school through middle school to high school and perhaps university. Such a 'ladder' from one grade of school to another was talked about in England during the 1870s, but it was not much before 1900 that there was any regular movement from the elementary school - the preserve of the 'workers' - to grammar school. Disraeli's 'two nations' were still much in evidence. It was in fact decided in 1899 in a hard fought test case that local authorities were acting ultra vires under the existing legislation if they used the rates to provide for more than elementary education.

The purpose of this essay is to examine the system as it was set up in Burma during the vital twenty years from 1865 when the government of India at last decided that something must be done, up to 1885, the date of the second edition of the Burma Education Manual, which set the system for some years to come and the publication of which was the last important development before Horder's retirement in 1888. It will devote particular attention to the peculiar problems arising from the attempt to supply a western style of education to a people of a wholly alien culture, tradition and language, which resulted in the necessity to provide a whole new literature of school books.

The sources employed are, for Burma the many reports which were issued, including the annual Public Instruction Reports, published in each case with a government resolution commenting upon them, the annual Administration Reports, the annual statements laid before Parliament on

¹ Government Resolution on Public Instruction Report 1877-78 - p.7

'the Moral and Material Progress of India', and the quinquennial survey of education in India. Each one of these of course tends to epitomise the one previously mentioned. In addition the British Burma Gazettes from 1875 give an immense mass of detail, down to the names and schools of winners of district prizes in each year. There are also a number of books of reminiscences by authors who were directly involved, which rank as primary sources, notably Fytche's, Nesbit's, and Mrs. Cotton's Memoir of her husband. Secondary sources are a good deal less valuable, since they have tended to be written with polemics in view: reading the accounts of official dealings with the monastic schools in, say, U Htin Aung's preface to 'Burmese Monks' Tales', in Furnivall's writings and in the contemporary reports, it is hard to recognise the three as all relating to the same situation. U Kaung's survey published in the J.B.R.S. XLVI, ii, Dec 1963 is an exception, but he has little to say on the vital period - his paper was never completed. Modern Burmese writers seem over-concerned to use available figures to demonstrate that the British administration discouraged education in Burma except ^s to far as it fell in with their economic plans.

In fact, what occurred was a good deal of a two way process, and the Education Department spent time fighting losing battles for their theoretical principles against what their pupils and their parents wanted. In a major matter, for instance, they were compelled much against their will to give a far larger place to English than they thought right, because of 'the disinclination of parents and pupils to be guided' by the official intention that English should be learned optionally as a classic and that all other subjects should be taught through the language of the country.¹ On a smaller matter, it was noted of the Government Girls' School in Rangoon -

Needlework is taught but unfortunately it has been found necessary to give way, as is the case in all Burmese girls' schools, to the craving which the Burmese have for fancy work.²

In England too education authorities had trouble with parents:³ before education became compulsory, the customer had to be considered. As Macaulay had written, though not quite as he meant it, the state of the market was the decisive test.

1 See Government Resolution on P.I.R. 1877-78 - Gazette 1879 suppt.p.248

2 Admin. Rep. 1873-74

3 "Parents who pay 6d. a week for the instruction of their children are apt to criticise nicely, though not always judiciously, the institution where

that instruction is given. They desire this and that for their child, and they object to this and that and being often not very reasonable persons, they greatly embarrass a teacher."

Matthew Arnold - Report for 1852. This was an argument in favour of low fees.

Chapter II
Backgrounds : Burmese and English

"The formative force of a traditional civilisation is a kind of compulsion neurosis shared by all the members of the implicated domain and the leading practical function of religious (i.e. mythological) education therefore is to infect the young with the madness of their elders - or in sociological terms to communicate to its individuals the 'system of sentiments'¹ on which the group depends for its survival as a unit."

In addition however to the communicable compulsion neurosis, the mythology, on which a society depends for its cohesion and its will to survive, there is another necessity for practical survival, the communication of skills. Both are essential; no amount of skill or knowledge will ensure survival without the will to make use of them - nor can the mere will to survive go far without some skill and knowledge. Both in the East and in the West there has always been some separation between the two very different things, which are confusingly lumped together as 'education' - between, in nineteenth century England, the 'public schools', which taught Latin, leadership and the ways of the Church of England, and the Working Men's College which taught civil engineering - and generally the influence of the state or church has only concerned itself with the part of education which involves the cohesion of the community - anything else was left to transmission within the family or by apprenticeships. English kings founded grammar schools and Burmese kings monasteries: in 1529 the Canterbury convocation ordered 'all those having cures, rectors, vicars and chantry priests' to employ themselves outside the time of divine service 'in teaching boys the alphabet, reading, singing or grammar,' and approximately the same curriculum had been customary in Burmese monasteries from time out of mind, where pupils had learned 'swich manner doctrine as men used there/ This is to seyn, to singen and to rede/ As smale children doon in hir childhede' - just as in Chaucer's England

Nevertheless, the authorities of both countries found it desirable to make arrangements for the teaching of practical skills, so far as they required them for their own servants. Edward II and Edward III of England established King Hall at Oxford for training members of their households, and similar arrangements continued through succeeding

¹ Joseph Campbell - 'Masks of God' - p.47

reigns as required: Charles II made special arrangements for navigators. Burmese skills were less highly developed, and as the Burmese came into contact with westerners they found that they were meeting people whose skills in many respects exceeded their own. The kings recognised the value of these skills, particularly in military affairs. Portuguese prisoners and their descendants were maintained for generations as gunners and gunnery instructors: in 1723 Father Calchi, the Catholic missionary, was writing to Rome:

The Kingdom is full of mines of gold and silver and precious stones, of tin, copper, lead, chemicals and every gift of God, but they are like hidden treasures, since the people do not know how to use them for their profit. For this reason also the King desires Europeans and missionaries who understand these things to direct his people for their advancement ... Please send us some of your subjects who are good, well-disciplined, chaste, mild, and abundant supplies of books, pictures both sacred and profane, of architectural designs.....¹

He thus showed an early example of the idea of using the 'skill' side of the quality of education to secure a foothold in the other, the total attitude of society, which later missionaries were to exploit.

Particularly during the reign of Bodaw-paya there was a short-lived spurt of a wider intellectual curiosity, including an interest in less specialised western knowledge. This must have been directly due to the king's own disposition: Rogers, an English seaman who ran to Ava from a murder charge, and lived there from 1782 to 1826, told Gouger -

The old king was by turns a bigot and a heretic; at one time slaying his subjects because they were not orthodox Buddhists; at another unfrocking their priests and confiscating their monasteries with as little remorse as our own 'bluff King Hal', his subjects also following his lead with obsequious ease. At one time when the heretical mood was in the ascendant His Majesty was troubled in mind while in search of the true Religion which he had the sagacity to see that Buddhism was not.....

As he aged however the king decided that he must be a Buddhist monarch and must suppress the desire for worldly things: one of his sons, the crippled Mek-haya Prince, carried the tradition forward and in the next reign Burney found him at work on a Burmese translation of Rees's Encyclopedia and on a dictionary in collaboration with an English resident of Ava: the Prince was also anxious to learn algebra.

1. quoted by Vincent Ba - 'The Beginnings of Western Education in Burma - The Catholic Effort' J.B.R.S. XLVII ii Dec.1964 p.290

2 Henry Gouger - A Personal Narrative of Two Years' Imprisonment in Burma p.91

According to Gouger, the king hoped that Burney could be induced to translate the encyclopedia himself. Bagyidaw had in fact in 1826 offered a post at Court to Dr. Price, the American missionary, who had shared Judson's imprisonment. Price accepted, holding the view that -

It was his duty to live and die in the capital city, and he proposed to open a school for teaching several branches of useful learning such as geography, astronomy, chemistry, etc. And he thought that in a few years, perhaps twenty, the whole system of Burmese religion, founded as it was on false astronomy and geography, would be completely undermined and subverted.¹

Apparently his work went well, since by 1828 he was to conduct a party of pupils to Calcutta to complete their education, when he died. We may speculate about what might have happened if he had lived a little longer: by 1850 some at least of his pupils with foreign experience might well have reached positions of influence, and the later wars, and the collapse of the kingdom, might have been avoided. After his death no one, it seems, managed to get the project moving again, although the British resident - presumably Burney - tried.² The Court however continued to take a rather vaguely benevolent interest in visitors who seemed likely to impart useful information, and from time to time schools were started in the capital by missionaries - Carey, Abbona, and others. The interest remained desultory however until after the second war, and the reign of King Mindon.

Mindon had very definite views on the subject: the kingdom had suffered a disgraceful set-back, which Dalhousie had converted into a personal affront by annexing the king's personal appanage. He had no choice but to acquiesce in the loss of the old Pegu kingdom, but not even the bait of the restoration of the Mindon district could induce him to sign a treaty to convert the de facto transfer of authority to a de jure one. He was prepared to do almost anything short of that to stabilise the situation, even to the extent of officially allowing the British to hold Pegu as security for an enormous indemnity which he could never, and, it would be understood, would never, pay. Nothing less than a full de jure transfer however would satisfy Dalhousie. He was in a strong position, caring nothing for a treaty himself, except to make London happy.³

¹ Edward Judson - Life of Dr. Judson - P.283

² Howard Malcom - Travels in South-East Asia

³ see Hall - The Dalhousie/Phayre Correspondence. p.xxvii

In this situation King Mindon saw that his country's only salvation lay in using what time was still left to bring about a position in which the Burmese would be able to deal with the British from a position of greater strength. This meant developing a mutual awareness in and of the world beyond Burma and India, and developing the skills in practical matters, mining, medicine, surgery, artillery, engineering, trade and navigation to which he conceived the British owed their easy superiority. For the first end he arranged a succession of embassies and study missions abroad, and for the second he persistently tried to encourage westerners who might be able to give training to settle in his capital. In 1855 two American missionaries, Dr. Kincaid and Dr. Dawson, came to Ava and saw the king. He gave them every encouragement to move to Ava permanently and to set up a school - perhaps rather to their surprise. But not on any terms: the king did not wish to see the teaching of skills used to attack the ethos of his society. He and his advisers knew very well what they wanted from western education and what they did not: They drew the very valid distinction between the practical, commercial aspects of education and the cultural, between information and instruction. The king hoped to lay western skills upon a foundation of Burmese Buddhist tradition, though this was a less simple matter than he probably believed. The missionaries were on no account to proselytise or to issue tracts.¹ It seems likely that Mindon's quick protest - "I am King" - to Dr. Marks's suggestion that his Society would be glad to contribute to the school to be opened in Mandalay² was less a protest at being expected to share the merit of the action than at sharing control. He knew quite well that, given any chance, the missionaries would introduce that side of their system of education that he did not want. In 1859 the king was discussing the opening of a school with Bishop Bigandet: this discussion resulted in the end in the school which opened in 1867 under Father Lecomte. Shortly afterwards - perhaps as a balancer - Marks was induced to open his.

On the other side of the fence, matters for the British were less simple. Attitudes had been changing very fast in the first half of the nineteenth century. At the beginning, although the idea that the state should interest itself in education had been kicked

¹ Hall - op.cit.

² Marks - Forty Years in Burma

around by writers of Utopias ever since the days of Plato, it had never become a part of English policy. Kings and other great men had set up educational foundations, but these were purely the individual noble's private charity except so far as they were provision of practical instruction for his own servants. Generally education was the personal or family matter of hiring teachers for oneself or for one's children. The ancient problem of whether the teacher is the paid employee of the pupil or his 'master' still shows its ambiguities. Apart from the training of a few officers of great households, education of the public in general only became a subject for states to take an interest in when, during the wars of the eighteenth century, the French and Prussian governments found that they needed a supply of young men capable of becoming gunners and engineers in their armies. These needs led to the founding in the course of one year, 1808, of the Université de France and of the Prussian Directorate of Public Instruction. Primary education was still however only a matter for concern so far as it was necessary to ensure that the institutions of higher education had adequate sources of entrants to keep the country's services sufficiently supplied. It was still left to private individuals, societies and other unofficial bodies to provide it. They were encouraged to do so by grants of funds, which in turn called for a bureaucracy to ensure their proper use, until with the general expansion of electorates in the 1830s, the whole machinery could be turned to the now generally accepted end of establishing an educated electorate, which would provide, it was hoped, a less volatile body of voters. The English, with their tradition of mistrust of government machinery, and perhaps even more of suspicion between religious sects, were slowest of all. Although a Committee of the Privy Council on Education had been established with a distinguished secretary, Dr. Kay-Shuttleworth, and an inspectorate to control the distribution of grants, as early as 1839, the Education Act of 1870 was really the British government's first formal acceptance of responsibility. As late as 1861, a powerful minority of the Newcastle Commission still went on record as of the opinion that "Government has, ordinarily speaking, no educational duties."¹

¹ see 'English Historical Documents' Vol, XII (1) 1833-1874 p.894

In India for one reason and another things had taken a rather faster course. In the first place the East India Company had themselves been running their own colleges at Addiscombe and Haileybury since 1809: the idea of having responsibility for an educational institution was not so strange to the Court of Directors as it was to the government. In India itself the Company had been operating a school for young writers since 1800: so far as the native population were concerned, the Company had taken over the very personal rule of Indian princes and had thereby inherited their private charities, including schools - though these were at first a form of patronage for the learned rather than institutions meant for the benefit of the people at large. It was in this tradition that Warren Hastings had at his own expense personally established the Calcutta Madrasseh as an academy for higher studies in Islamic literature. Soon after, in 1792, followed Jonathan Duncan's Sanskrit College at Banaras. Both these were to quite a large extent practical institutions, not purely academic. Arabic was the language of Muslim law, Sanskrit that of Hindu law, and Persian still the official language of the government: all three were still living languages in eighteenth century India. As late as 1823 the General Committee of Public Instruction felt that a Professor of Experimental Philosophy appointed to the Company's Hindu College in Calcutta would have to learn Sanskrit so that he could lecture in that language. The tradition of the personal responsibility of the ruler for the education of at least some of the ruled lived on. On the death of J.E.D. Bethune in 1851 it was said that he had spent £10,000 of his own money on the girls' school that he founded; Dalhousie personally took over the responsibility. It also seems that in many districts the Deputy Commissioner or the Collector ran the local school as his private hobby, at his private expense.

Apart from this paternalistic tradition, it was written into the India Act of 1813 at Wilberforce's instance, that it should be lawful for the Governor-General to spend not less than one lac of rupees for the purpose of reviving native learning and of introducing western standards of education. There can hardly be any more ambiguous clause in any major Act of Parliament - on the face of it, it seems that the Governor-General was under no obligation to spend anything on the purpose, and that he could spend any amount that he pleased so

After the middle of the century the view was swinging back again, and the expenditure of tax money, raised from an overwhelmingly non-Christian people, on institutions whose prime purpose was the spread of Christianity, began to be questioned. For a long period however in the middle of the century the government was prepared to leave to the missionaries whatever responsibilities they would accept. Missionary views on how far these responsibilities should be undertaken varied to some extent. Judson, for instance, -

did not propose to spend his time in teaching the arts and sciences of the western world or in imparting more correct astronomical, geographical and geological conceptions in order little by little to prepare the mind of the Burman to accept his religious ideas he would not allow himself to shrivel into a mere school teacher or school book maker.¹

He wanted nothing but to preach the Gospel: he had been both a school teacher and a school book maker, as a matter of fact, before he became a missionary. The views of his associate, Price, we have seen above. Marks in his time 'took the position that the Burmese could only be influenced by Christianity through educational work.'² Both attitudes persisted. Early in the 1860s Bishop Cotton wrote -

There is a tendency now certainly in the committee of the Church Missionary Society at home and some missionaries out here to deprecate schools in comparison with preaching.³

Generally however the missionaries took on whatever responsibilities they could: their basic object was to spread Christianity and did not necessarily coincide with the official intentions of the government - although it might be more in agreement with the personal wishes and hopes of at least the more evangelically minded officials.

Another sphere of change which impinged heavily on education was financial practice. Early in the British period it was quite unsophisticated. As it was originally organised, the East India Company was a purely trading concern, keeping commercial accounts of profit and loss - at first casting up a separate profit figure for each separate voyage. Although the Company had long grown past this

¹ Edward Judson - Life of Judson p.82

² Marks - Forty Years in Burma - p.25

³ Mrs. Cotton - Memoir of Bishop Cotton - p.140

function, its accounting methods still showed traces of the past. Early in the nineteenth century the revenues were collected mainly in silver coin, whose face value was pretty close to its value as bullion. This actual cash was what was available to spend, and if as happened in the early years of the Tenasserim province, it became necessary to bring in new money to meet expenses, it was a matter for the gravest concern. It was under serious consideration whether Tenasserim should not be handed back to the Burmese as valueless.¹ As time went on methods became more sophisticated however, and much greater flexibility was possible in budgeting for objects recognised as of prime importance. Modern style deficit financing remained, probably mercifully, unknown however, and it was always necessary to fit expenditure within a revenue that had little elasticity: even late in the 19th century frequent complaints were made that local bodies opened and closed schools and upgraded or downgraded teachers simply on the basis of how the revenue was coming in.² In the early days of the department, the main financial difficulty lay in spending the funds that were allocated to education. As the scheme got under way, however, grants expanded far more slowly than the requirement and through most of our period money was always short. So far as blame can be laid for this situation, it can only be laid on the modesty of the tax demands of a government that believed that they had a duty to keep their expenditure to a minimum. An argument was to be raised later that the land revenue should be raised to the full rental value of the land, so as to remove agricultural indebtedness by destroying the land's value as a security. The resulting revenue would be spent on the welfare of the villagers who produced it - mainly on education and roads.³ It can be imagined how such a policy would have been received.

Through all changes of attitude, however, the general line of policy on education remained very consistent throughout India.

1

Gouger calls it 'these depopulated and worthless possessions' op.cit. p.327

2

'Every year salaries are reduced and masters are dismissed... deterring good men from adopting the teaching profession.'
Quinquennial - 1888-92 p.49

3

see for instance Grant-Browne 'Burma as I Saw It'

In Burma however at the time of the Yandabo Treaty of 1826, when the Company acquired Tenasserim and Arakan, education was not seen as a matter of high priority. Even in Calcutta the Committee of Public Instruction was only three years old. Further, for several years the affairs of the two British provinces were in a fluid state: Arakan was controlled from Calcutta and Tenasserim from Penang, and there was considerable doubt whether the Company's tenure of Tenasserim would be permanent. They could think of little use for it: even if it were not to be abandoned, it might perhaps be used as a bargaining point in the negotiations which Burney had initiated in Bangkok - it had been Thai territory up to 1763. Neither province had a regular headquarters at first. The Company were trying to establish new towns on virgin sites for the purpose: for Arakan at Akyab - a version of the name of a pagoda outside the small fishing village of Sit-twe - and at Amherst, named for the Governor-General, for Tenasserim. Akyab had a good harbour and quickly flourished. Amherst proved difficult to approach and short of shelter during the south west monsoon period, and the administration quickly followed the army and trade to the superior harbour of Moulmein, in spite of its at times uncomfortable proximity to the Burmese vice-royalty of Martaban.

However the missionaries were quick to take advantage of the new situation and schools had been opened in the Tavoy area by 1830. After some doubt they were given financial assistance by the British authorities, and quickly spread through the British-held territory. The original schools opened by Mrs. Boardman, of the American Baptist Mission, at Tavoy were regarded as the model: financial aid was given on condition that schools were to be conducted on the plan of Mrs. Boardman's schools. The chief point seems to have been that "All should be received who present themselves, without any stipulation as to their becoming members of the Christian faith". The missionaries on the other hand refused to be bound not to give Christian instruction, and so consciences on both sides were saved. It is not clear how far these arrangements had the blessing of Calcutta. Apart from this the British administration involved themselves directly to the extent of opening their own schools, at Moulmein in 1835, at Kyauk-hpyu in 1837, and at Akyab in 1844. According to

Fytche, the government schools were intended 'for the children of Europeans and those of mixed parentage', while the mission schools were 'more or less connected with missionary purposes', but that to them 'Burmans, Karens, and children indeed of every race in Burma have gladly resorted.'¹ There is little information available about these schools in the early days: both government and mission schools were run on whatever lines whoever was in charge thought best. Government schools existed primarily for the benefit of the Company's servants and army, and seem to have been run by the chaplain if there were one in the station, or by anyone else who might seem suitable and willing. Apart from the much more tightly organised American mission schools, the mission schools worked in the same haphazard manner. In his first year in Burma, Hordern found one mission school run, in the absence of the regular master, by two soldiers in their spare time, and another by an ex-member of the lighthouse service - he was said to teach 'with energy'.² In Tenasserim at any rate, the authorities came to rely very much on the American Baptists, developing the original arrangement between Maingy and Mrs. Boardman. When at length the Company's school was opened in Moulmein, the only suitable people to take charge were the Rev. Cephas Bennett and his wife, who were duly taken on to the Company's books. There was as yet no chaplain appointed from the Company's establishment. The school did not meet with much success, and closed three years later, to be re-opened under Hough, who had originally come to Burma to work with Judson in 1819, and whose son eventually became briefly the first Director of Public Instruction for British Burma.

In the early days at any rate, the Company's schools were of very slight importance, and the history of western-style education in Burma does not really begin until after the annexation of Pegu in December 1852. When the important Dispatch on education was issued eighteen months later, there had been no opportunity to take any action on the subject in the new territory. In fact the only small reference to education in Dalhousie's correspondence with Phayre is a suggestion that a present to Father Abbona for his school in Mandalay would be politic.³ In the Indian educational report series, the first mention of Burma is in 1859 with a brief comment that the territory had been acquired too recently for any action to be taken. It was clearly

1. Administration Report 1869-70 p.114

2. P.I.R. 1868-69 p.32

3. D.G.E. Hall - Dalhousie/Phayre Correspondence, letter of 31 July 1855

thought that any action that had been taken in the older divisions was negligible and that a new start would have to be made.

There was therefore no past to be forgotten, and the whole system could be based entirely on the 1854 and 1859 dispatches. These were of course drawn up with India in view alone. Before they are considered therefore it is useful to consider just what the men who were devising an educational system for India thought that they were trying to achieve. There is no lack of evidence on this point: almost every document on the subject finds it necessary to explain why education was required - naturally enough, since in England this was still not a subject for governments to interest themselves in, and justification was constantly needed. In the early days it was stated with a splendidly confident simplicity - "for the moral and intellectual improvement of the people". With slight variations, this cliché appears over and over again throughout the records. As time went on - and as, perhaps, confidence waned - it was found necessary to elaborate the statement until by 1904 it was enunciated in a Government Resolution -

The 1854 dispatch regarded it as a sacred duty to confer upon the natives of India those vast moral and material blessings which flow from the general diffusion of useful knowledge. They hoped by means of education to extend the influence which Government was exerting for the suppression of demoralising practices by enlisting in its favour the general sympathy of the native mind.

More resonant language, but not much more content.

The fact was that by the end of the 18th century the British found themselves genuinely shocked by India. While they had been merely foreign traders in the country, the customs of the country were no great concern of theirs. Having assumed the paramount government of the country, however, they felt that they must accept responsibility for what went on in it, and this included infant marriage, condemnation of widows - who might well still be children - to death as sati or to lifelong drudgery or prostitution; it included infanticide, temple prostitution, the vagaries of Kali worship, human sacrifice and thagi, and of the left-hand tantra and Shakti worship; it included all

¹ G.R. Home Dept dt. 11/iii/1904 - quoted in Alleyne Ireland

the despair and desperation of the collapse of society in the wars and raiding in which the Delhi empire finally broke down. Rather remarkably perhaps, when Grant wrote his 'Report on the State of Society in Asia' in 1797¹ among the reasons for which he felt that "they are a people exceedingly depraved", that which he seems to feel most forcibly is that "they want truth, faith and honesty in an extreme". Presumably this was what the European in Calcutta noticed most.² Warren Hastings, with his immense knowledge of India, protested against this sort of view, saying in evidence during the framing of the 1813 Act -

Great pains have been taken to inculcate into the public mind an opinion that the native Indians are in a state of complete moral turpitude and live in the constant and unrestrained commission of every vice and crime which can disgrace human nature ... this description is untrue and wholly unfounded ... Gross as their modes of worship are, the precepts of their religion are wonderfully fitted to promote the best ends of society.³

He was not believed: the times were against him, not to mention Wilberforce, who twenty years earlier, in 1793, had written -

It is the peculiar and bounden duty of the British legislature to promote by all just and prudent means the interest and happiness of the inhabitants of the British dominions in India, and for these ends such measures ought to be adopted as may tend to their advancement in useful knowledge, and to their religious and moral improvement.⁴

Missions for the conversion of the heathen were now becoming a Protestant as well as a Catholic interest, and no doubt any missionary, appealing for support, found that the blacker the darkness from which he had to rescue his flock was painted, the firmer the response that he received.

The Government therefore found themselves expected, and indeed desirous, to reform Indian society. Forcible legal means could be used to stamp out some objectionable practices, but a complete reformation of Indian society could only be carried out by education. Grant had written in his Report -

The true cure for darkness is the introduction of Light.

¹ Quoted in Appendix I of the Minutes of Evidence given to the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company 1832

² cf. Christian Observer Jan 1858 'How is an universal habit of falsehood to be extinguished?'

³ English Historical Documents 1783-1832 p.840

⁴ Selections from Educational Records, vol.I, 1731-1839, p.17

The Hindoos err because they are ignorant and their errors have never been laid before them. The communication of our light and knowledge would prove the best remedy for their disorders.

It was therefore education as the cement of society which was called for, not instruction in skills. Little doubt was entertained that India needed a moral reformation, that the introduction of western culture would effect this, and that the East India Company were the proper body to carry out the introduction.

The years before 1854 were spent in tentative experiments on methods, and were marked by the lacerating argument between the Orientalists and the Anglicisers, which came to a crisis in 1835. On the Orientalists' side, the argument was that the introduction should be made by continuing, extending and improving the Persian/Arabic studies of the Calcutta Madrassah and the Sanskrit work of the Banaras College, by translating European books into the learned languages of India for study in such institutions. The Anglicisers felt that this was a hopeless task, and that a new start must be made. Macaulay wrote with a certain arrogance -

I can by no means admit that when a nation of high intellectual attainments undertakes to superintend the education of a nation comparatively ignorant, the learners are absolutely to prescribe which (course) is to be taken by the teachers... the state of the market is the decisive test... It is impossible for us with our limited means to attempt to educate the body of the people. We must do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern - a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinion, in morals and in intellect.

The advantages of this course were obvious, but the difficulties were very great. In the first place, the class of 'interpreters' must not be so far Anglicised that they could no longer communicate with the mass of their countrymen: they had therefore ideally to bear the burden of a double culture - vernacular studies as well as English. In the second, it was necessary, and difficult, to find people who were willing to accept the burden. Earlier, in 1824, just after their first appointment, the General Committee for Education had written

¹ Selections from Educational Records, vol.I 1781-1839 p.81 and Select Committee Report 1833 App.I

² Minute of 1835 - Selections from Educational Records, vol.I 1781-1839 p.112.

to Lord Amherst as Governor-General -

In proposing the improvement of men's minds it is first necessary to secure their conviction that such improvement is desirable.... A knowledge of English for the purpose of gaining a livelihood is to a certain extent a popular attainment.... (but) popular feeling is still an impediment to any general introduction of western literature or science The prejudices of the Natives (and) against European interference in any shape... We know not by what means we could at once introduce the improvements.... We must teach the teachers and provide the books and by whom are the business of tuition and the task of translation to be accomplished? ¹

Things had not changed much in ten years, but Bentinck, Governor General in 1835, came down firmly on Macaulay's side, and the pattern of education in India was set for the next hundred years, with English as the language of higher education. Before 1854 there was little education of a lower standard provided, other than by private initiative.

In fact the difficulty of 'securing conviction' was less than had been expected. In 1823 Ram Mohan Roy was already memorialising the Government with demands for the introduction of

mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry and other useful sciences, which the Nations of Europe have carried to a degree of perfection which has raised them above the other parts of the world. ²

English, 'for the purpose of gaining a livelihood', did the rest. It is however already possible to see a fundamental split between what the East hoped to gain from western education and what the West thought that they were providing.

It has often been said that the purpose of the introduction of western education into India was the provision of English-speaking clerks for the Company's work. This is not so: it was in fact the availability of English-speaking clerks that created the need. Early in the 19th century practically all business was conducted in Persian or in a vernacular: English only became the official language of the Company in India in 1837. Up to the end of British rule all district offices were organised in two sections, the English office for correspondence with government departments (English having replaced

¹ Selected Educational Records vol.I 1781-1839 p.96

² ibid p.99

Persian), and the vernacular office for correspondence with the public. The method of recruitment of clerks, derived from Mogul and older practice, was by a sort of apprenticeship. The young man who wished to enter the service of the government obtained an introduction from someone - probably a relative - already working in the office of his choice. He worked alongside his sponsor as a 'volunteer', making himself generally useful, until a post became vacant which he might be offered. This could take five years, and at the end of this time he might be expected to have acquired any English that he might need. The system lasted a long time: rules for its regulation were still being drawn up in the 1890s. On the contrary the government used the general desire for government service as a means of applying pressure to encourage the spread of education. In 1826, in Madras, Sir Thomas Monro wrote -

The main causes of the low state of education are the little encouragement that it receives from there being but little demand for it and the poverty of the people.... (These) may be removed by the endowment of schools by government, and the want of encouragement... by good education being rendered more general and easy, and by the preference that will naturally be given to well educated men in all public offices.¹

In 1839 again Auckland minuted -

The practical value of superior English acquirements is very underrated... (they are) so directly useful as (not to speak of the recommendations of an improved moral character) to ensure a preference for the most lucrative employments.²

The same theme is repeated over and over again - in Burma as lately as 1878 -

The effect of the educational scheme would be 'entirely neutralised unless a government certificate were made the condition of employment (in public offices) and the passport to a successful career in life'. In this matter the Education Department must rely on the co-operation of heads of departments and public offices, without which all its plans must fall to the ground.³

It was useless to try to extend the benefits of education among the people if the government were prepared to accept into their service people who had not enjoyed these benefits. Therefore no one was to be engaged in posts worth more than Rs 6 per month who

¹ Selected Indian Educational Records I p.74

² ibid p.159

³ P.I.R. 1877-78, p.13, quoting Nesfield's report for 1873

could not produce a certificate of education. The production of English-speaking clerks may have been the result of the policy, with an accompanying decline in the language knowledge of the Company's English servants, but it was not its purpose. Over and over again it was laid down that education merely for the purpose of acquiring 'a smattering of English' must be discouraged. It was recognised early of course that it would be to the Company's advantage to develop a class among the native people who could be employed in positions of trust: they would be cheaper than Europeans. In a dispatch of 29th September 1830 the Court of Directors had written -

Our anxious desire is to have at our disposal a body of natives qualified... to take a larger share and occupy higher situations in the civil administration of the country.

This of course only echoed John Malcolm's minute of 1828 -

One of the chief objects I expect from diffusing education among the natives of India is our increased power of associating them in every part of our administration. This I deem essential on grounds of economy, of improvement and of security... Employment in such duties of trust and responsibility... (is) the only mode in which we can promote their improvement; I must deem the instruction we are giving them dangerous unless the road is opened wide to honest ambition and honourable distinction.²

It is apparent that it is more than the supply of clerks that was in contemplation: it is something much more like Macaulay's 'Indians in blood, English in morals and intellect'. To discourage the mere superficial learning of English, it was always laid down that no English must be taught without a firm grounding in the vernaculars. In this, however, policy was fighting against economics. Generally the people had no interest in western education except as a means to an office job with its opportunities, prestige and power, and any short cuts were welcome. Learning English early provided a short cut, and there was a constant pressure to extend this. It remained settled policy however for many years that education must be in the vernacular up to the fourth standard at least.

The mutual reinforcement of these two angles of viewing the subject is clearly shown in Paragraph 77 of the 1854 Dispatch -

¹ Selected Indian Educational Records vol.I Dispatch of 29.ix.1830

² ibid p.144

³ See also 1854 - 'Education in Bengal' p.213 ff.

The spread of education... enabling you to obtain the services of intelligent and trustworthy persons; on the other hand ... numerous vacancies... may afford a great stimulus to education.

The prime purpose was however always to 'uproot demoralising practices and even crimes of a deeper dye which had for ages prevailed among the natives of India'. The results of efforts to do so

must in order to be permanent possess the further sanction of a general sympathy in the native mind which the advance of education alone can secure.

There are signs that this prime purpose was lost sight of in some quarters as time went on, but never in the Departments of Public Instruction. In Burma an anonymous official complained in 1904 -

I have been told that the policy of the Education Department is to discourage boys from becoming government clerks.¹

He thought it wrong.

Arriving in Burma, westerners found it much harder to be shocked. They felt that the unsewn htamein which Burmese ladies wore at that time showed an improper amount of leg when they walked, and that marriage and divorce in Burmese society were unduly easy, but there was little else to carp at except the behaviour of the King's officials: there were those who had no complaints there either - Gouger for one reckoned that they were easier to deal with than their counterparts in Europe. Even the religion of the country seemed perfectly respectable, though somewhat Popish with its images and monasteries. Howard Malcom when he first visited the Shwe Dagon wrote "What terrible grandeur; what sickening magnificence!"²

It might be un-Christian, but it was impressive. The worst that could be said, after many years of consideration, was -

Buddhism is thus simply the religious philosophy of pure selfishness. In this respect it forms the very antithesis of the altruism which is the living spirit of Christianity.. Whatever he (the Buddhist) may perchance do in the way of alleviating suffering by bestowing alms is not done in order to relieve the wants of others, but solely to gain religious merit for himself.³

In contrast, Ferrars, a very intelligent forest officer who also put in some time in the Education Department and acted as D.P.I., at almost the same time quoted Herbert Spencer about the country -

¹ Buddhism 1904 - 'Education in Burma' p.393 ff.

² Howard Malcom - Travels in South East Asia

³ Nisbet - 'Burma Under British Rule'

Usually they contrived to reconcile their inconsistencies by distinguishing between the people at large - all very pleasant - and their government - horns and tail - without pausing to consider how these same pleasant people could suddenly become unmitigatedly evil as soon as they took up office. The point is nicely made by a casual visitor to Rangoon in 1846 -

Individually I like nearly all that I have seen of them. There is a simplicity, good humour, frankness, independence and intelligence about them which is very pleasing to English notions. They are honest too in their ordinary dealings - and highly spoken of by those who know them far better than I can possibly do; but no sooner do they acquire office under the government and become 'linked in Office' with government officials, than that weakness in their character which the subjects of an arbitrary, tyrannic and barbarous government generally display - weakness which almost converts the tame submission of the coward (or the cowed) into the cruelty of the tyrant when in power - appears to exhibit itself. They become corrupt in the extreme and, strangers to the real attributes of greatness or the right ends of power, exhibit the first only in a severity of countenance and deportment that awes by its pomposity, and use the latter merely to the advancement of their own self-interest.¹

Ferrars tried to explain it on religious lines -

The religious aversion to be the cause of suffering and death, and the discredit reflected on officialdom by its methods lead the best elements of the population to shun office as touching pitch.²

But this is simply not true. In fact the role of an official included traditional attitudes, manners and forms of speech, and if the person who had to deal with the official could play along and give the traditional responses, the matter could reach a quick and easy conclusion along traditional lines. If however the person did not know or would not play his traditional part, then everything was thrown out of gear, and the official would have to intensify his attitude to try to force the play back on to the proper lines. In spite of what he wrote above, the 1846 traveller, who, in a time of great tension, found himself arrested and brought before the Myo'-wun on a charge of sketching the defences of Rangoon - which was perfectly true - in the end bemusedly found himself involved in a happy party making drawings for the Myo'-wun's ladies, and a small present settled the matter. He had no official position to inhibit him from playing a suitable role. Compare also Fielding Hall's account of his dealings with the post-commander at Me-haw, when as an employee of the BBTCL

¹ A Trip to Rangoon in 1846 - anon (Colesworthy Grant)

² Ferrars - Burma

he was leaving Upper Burma on the eve of the third war.¹

When Pegu was annexed therefore, there seemed to be no urgent need to take any steps about education for the time being, and even after the issue of the 1854 Dispatch, it seemed more urgent to see the new province settled than to worry unduly about a matter which the Burmese seemed to be managing quite well for themselves. In the two older divisions things went on very much as before, with government schools in Akyab, Kyauk-hpyu and Moulmein; the school at Mergui closed when it proved impossible to find a suitable school master in 1853. Another government school was opened at Rangoon but closed again in 1861. There was a fluctuating number of mission schools operating in these and other centres also, usually with government support. It is difficult to say exactly who, or what, was taught in these schools: their titles do not tell us much. In 1868 the Chief Commissioner minuted -

The designation assumed by the founders or superintendants of many of the schools is so arbitrary as to lead to mis-²conception regarding the standard of education imparted.

For instance, the 'Pegu High School' was a missionary establishment for Karens in Wemmendine. In particular a school was classified only by the highest standard taught in it: thus a school which had most of its pupils in grades I to IV would be called a Middle or High School if it had, or even hoped one day to have, small classes at a higher level. Most or all Middle or High schools in fact had a substantial primary section. Confusion was compounded by the custom of the time in referring to 'upper class', 'middle class; and 'lower class' schools. This terminology originally referred to social classes and by the 1870s was dying - it was still capable of creating misunderstandings, not only among strangers. Segregation of the sexes too was never as firmly enforced as a school's title might imply. Somewhat later it was reported -

In Lower Burma 85% and in Upper Burma 78% of the total number of girls under instruction are found in boys' schools and most of the schools returned as girls' schools contain a large number of boys, boys being even more numerous than³ girls in the primary girls' schools of Lower Burma.

There is little reason to suppose that things were less chaotic at the earlier date. Probably there is little point in trying to sort

¹ A People at School - Fielding Hall p.27

² P.I.R. 1867-68

³ Quinquennial Report 1888-92 - p.296

them out.

This continued for some years after the issue of the 1854 Dispatch, which was not immediately applied to Burma. The Dispatch had however laid down the policy to be applied when the province was judged to be ready. Its hundred paragraphs may be summarised as follows:-

1. The purposes of government's encouragement of education in India are -
 - a. the intellectual and moral improvement of the people
 - b. the supply of government servants 'whose probity you can trust'. (Not, note, necessarily, their English).
 - c. the expansion of trade resulting from abbroadening of ideas.
2. The type of education, 'which we desire to see extended in India is that which has for its object the diffusion of improved arts, science, philosophy and literature of Europe: in short, of European knowledge.'
3. English should be taught where there is a demand for it, but such instruction should always be combined with a study of vernaculars. The need was for masters who knew enough English to learn in that language and at the same time be able to teach in the vernaculars.
4. Hitherto the policy adopted had been to concentrate on higher education in the hope that something would trickle down to the lower strata of society, as being the most economical mode of operation. In future much more attention must be devoted, at considerably greater cost, to 'conveying of useful and practical knowledge to the mass of the people'.
5. The schools system must therefore be revised. Universities should be established as examining bodies, on the lines of London University, for affiliated colleges. Below these colleges there should be High Schools giving an education up to the level of University entrance. Below these again there were to be middle and primary schools. The examining bodies would lay down suitable standards for these.
6. All these schools and colleges should, so far as practible, be provided and managed by private bodies, according to English pradice. While recognising that 'it would probably be necessary for some years to allow for the establishment, temporary support and management by government

of some places of education' the Court of Directors 'look forward to the time when any general system of education entirely provided by government may be discontinued'.

7. Private bodies would be encouraged to provide schools by a system of grants-in-aid, again on the English pattern. 'Aid will be given... to all schools which impart a good secular education, provided that they are under adequate local management... and that their managers consent that they should be inspected'. Limited funds could be spread further in this manner. At the same time the system insulated the government to some extent from accusations of proselytising.

8. Grants were to be made subject to strict conditions, one of the chief being that they were only to go to schools which found adequate local support, both from donations or Town Funds and also from fees. Exceptions were made in the cases of girls' and teachers' training schools, where encouragement was regarded as particularly necessary. The point was less to stretch funds still further than that 'gratuitous education is valued far less than one for which some payment, however small, is made.' This again was in line with English practice. It was up to the people who wanted education to get it for themselves: the government's role was confined to establishing conditions in which it would be possible for them to get it.

9. An essential requirement would be the provision of vernacular school books to provide European information to be the object of study in the lower classes of schools. Presidency governments might have to arrange competitions for producing them. The purpose should be 'not to translate European works into the words and idioms of the native languages, but so to combine the substance of European knowledge with native forms of thought and sentiment as to render the school books useful and attractive.'

10. In charge of all this work Departments of Public Instruction were to be set up in each province under a Director with Inspectors. It was to be made clear that these posts were regarded as of the highest importance

and with this in mind they might be filled in the first instance by senior members of the Company's Civil Service. It must be remembered incidentally that at this period in England an inspectorship of schools was a very prestigious post: Matthew Arnold held one. Inspectors were not employees of a Board of Education or any other subsidiary authority, but directly responsible to a committee of the cabinet.

After 1857 the new measures met with a good deal of uninstructed criticism. All this education had unsettled the people and caused the Mutiny. It was therefore found necessary, after the British Government had assumed direct control of the government of India, to reaffirm the policy and this was done in the 1859 Dispatch. This adds little to the original, except to add further emphasis to the policy that in education the government must separate itself entirely from all questions of religion.

It was not until the early 1860s that much of this touched Burma. From 1852 onwards pacification was the first consideration: then the mutiny in India drove everything else into the background. Its effects persisted for several years: the financial results had been disastrous and from August 1858 'peremptory orders' were in force 'prohibiting all increase in expenditure for educational purposes'. The three separate British provinces were amalgamated into a single Chief Commissioner's province in January 1861, eight years after the annexation of Pegu, but it was another three years before there was any movement in the educational field. The first sign of an interest being taken is when the Secretary of State wrote to the Government of India -

I concur in the opinion of the Chief Commissioner that it is essential to the full efficiency of the government and aided schools of British Burma that they should be periodically examined by an officer accustomed to the work of school inspection, and I hope that the Lieut. Governor of Bengal will be able to make arrangements for annually¹ deputing an officer of the Educational Department....

This was the start of much activity in 1864. In that year there were opened at Bishop Cotton's instance both the Diocesan Schools as part of

¹ Educational Dispatch No. 8 dated 25 August 1863

the official Church establishment, intended for children of European parentage, and also St. John's School in Rangoon founded by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, in the person of Dr. Marks at Sir Arthur Phayre's suggestion, intended as an Anglo-Vernacular school for all comers. On the government side things got off to a less happy start. The government school in Rangoon had quickly failed. Next, presumably as a result of the Secretary of State's remarks quoted above, Major W.F.B. Lawrie was appointed to be Inspector of Schools in the Port towns. He seems to have been a complete disaster, even though he says he was a school-fellow of Fytche's and specially selected for the post by Phayre.¹ Even Taw Sein Ko, the mildest of critics, can find nothing kind to say of him -

A certain Artillery Officer who has written a big thick book on Burma which nobody cares to read. Once he came to visit Dr. Marks' school. He saw some sums in simple subtraction being shown to a class of boys when with a grunt he exclaimed, 'Hum, hum, are the young Burmans so far advanced in mathematics?' He put his eyeglass into his pocket and went away.²

This seems to have been one of Marks' own stories: it must have been hate at first sight. Lawrie however reported -

I found everything to be in a most satisfactory condition forming remarkable aid to the causes of Education and Philanthropy.³

Mercifully he did not last long. In 1865 he was transferred to Madras to be Inspector of Military Schools, where there was probably less scope for harm. The train of misfortune continued however: after much pressure and argument by Phayre it was eventually decided to set up a proper Department of Public Instruction, and in 1866 Mr. G. Hough, was appointed to be Director. Taw Sein Ko says "Mr. Hough, the venerable head master at Moulmein, was the first Director"⁴ seeming to identify him with the Hough who joined Judson at Moulmein in 1816 and in 1826 took service with the Company, but he must be wrong. This Hough was born in 1787 and was now 81. Already in 1861 he was reported to be in failing health: he had been compelled to retire from his Moulmein school in 1862. Another G. Hough, most probably his son, was a member of the Burma Commission and held the post of Registrar of the Small Causes Court in the middle 1860s - he was the translator of the Indian Penal Code into Burmese. Taw Sein Ko must have confused them. Whichever it was, he had been connected

¹ Papers on Burma - W.F.B. Lawrie
² Taw Sein Ko - Burmese Sketches I p.235
³ Select Educational Records Vol.I 1859-71 p.221
⁴ Taw Sein Ko - ibid

with education in Burma all his life and was specially selected for the post, but he died almost at once, in the spring of 1867. As Fytche minuted in 1868 -

scarcely had an officer been appointed to the duty of supervising the educational system of this province than he ceased from all earthly labours - his place was filled by an officer who, though able, had no particular predilection for the occupation.¹

This was a Captain Street, who had a long career subsequently with the Commission. He managed to get out of the appointment, and in December 1867 Peter Hordern arrived from Calcutta, where he had been Assistant Professor of English at the Presidency College since 1862. He was an old pupil of Cotton's at Marlborough and related to him - if he is the 'Peter' referred to in the Bishop's letter to his daughter dated 21st July 1864,² He must have been very much a member of the family. Perhaps it was through Cotton's lingering influence that he obtained the post. He held it for the next twenty years.

¹ Public Instruction Report 1867-68 p.5

² Memoir p.435

Chapter III
The Beginnings of an Educational System

The new Director's remit when he arrived was to set up a system of education for Burma in accordance with the directives of 1854 and 1859. The exact form that this should take had been discussed since 1862 between the government of India and Sir Arthur Phayre, Chief Commissioner up to 1867.¹ At that time there were, as U Kaung says, numerous schools but no system. There were in fact Government schools at Kyauk-hpyu, Akyab and Moulmein, with a new one just opened at Prome, and about 150 private schools receiving help from government, most of them elementary schools run by missionaries for Karens, who were judged to offer the most promising field for missionary work, but fifteen were rated as middle schools including two English schools for European children in Moulmein and Rangoon. Only three of these middle schools were not mission run: the Town school at Moulmein, run by a local committee for European children, and the Town school at Ramree, unique at this date in being entirely a Burmese enterprise, founded by an old pupil of the Government school at Akyab, and run with the help of a committee of the town. The third was the school for prisoners in the Rangoon gaol, who were reported to be very anxious to learn English.

However these middle schools no longer had a high priority: the 1854 Dispatch had ordered that the government were no longer to carry on in the pious hope that what educational benefits might diffuse from the middle classes (both educational and social) down to the lower classes would meet the needs of the situation: they were to take positive action to ensure that some sort of education was available to the people at large and to encourage them to make use of it. How to do this was a difficult problem. Funds were limited and even if they had not been, people who could communicate on sufficiently even terms with either culture were very scarce. Macaulay's 'class of interpreters' had hardly come into being in India - in Burma there was everything to do. In the end, after some

¹ see Governor General's Dispatches of 14 May 1862 and 15 August 1863

hesitation, Phayre made the recommendation that the system should be based on the monastic schools which already existed in Burma.¹ These provided a nearly universal system of elementary education for boys in the thousands of monasteries throughout the country, where children learned to read and write, received a grounding in the scriptures, and perhaps a little arithmetic and other subjects according to the predelictions of the monks of their own particular monastery, and above all, were integrated into their society, drilled in the roles which custom would call on them to play during their lives.

From soon after his retirement in 1867, it was usual to write as though this recommendation were a unique and profound result of Phayre's own genius. Taw Sein Ko wrote of the 'schemes of reform which his (Hough's) worthy chief, Colonel Phayre, had fully worked out'. At much greater length Macmahon explained -

With the generous sympathy felt by the late Sir Arthur Phayre in all that concerned Burma and the Burmese, that able administrator hesitated long before he meddled in any way with a fabric (kyaung schools) which had so successfully stood the test of time... but at last he was constrained to admit that the exigencies of the case brooked no further delay, for he could no longer blind himself to the fact that the Burman, living in a fool's paradise, must be engulfed or carried away in the rapidly advancing tide of Western civilisation unless... a life buoy (were) thrown out to him.

With a breadth of view and statesmanlike conception truly admirable, Sir Arthur elected to preserve intact as best he could the venerable institution..... guided by a true interpretation of the rules of political economy and imbued with a happy instinct as to what constitutes the legitimate goal of a sympathetic government... he resolved to support the existing educational machinery, and utilise it as a means of introducing by degrees Western habits of thought and methods of instruction.

He accordingly took the most influential monks and lay teachers into his confidence: and the genuine frankness with which they responded to his appeal showed a wide tolerance and enlightened spirit which was truly admirable. Their attitude was abundantly justified so long as this officer controlled the destinies of Burma. In the course of time however Sir Arthur Phayre was no longer at the helm of the educational bark, while his successors who had won their

¹ letters to Govt. of India Home Dept of 26 December 1864 and 30 May 1865 quoted by U Kaung in JERS XLVI ii December 1963 p.83 ff.

spurs in other provinces took command. Though loyally adopting the system of navigation favoured by the first commander they endeavoured to improve upon it... They applied to Burma the system which guided them in Bengal, the weakness of which is that it ignores the basis of Hindu and Mahomedan society and in its schools and colleges confines itself to secular education.¹

All this was very much in accordance with the myth that was adopted at an early date - possibly from the need to father on the departed Chief Commissioner alone a policy whose execution caused least trouble, but whose outcome was extremely doubtful. Macmahon, having come to Burma in 1866, was in a position to know the facts, but, in fact, there is surprisingly little in the above which is true.

In the first place, the basing of mass elementary education on an indigenous system of essentially religious schools was by no means peculiar to Burma among the Indian provinces.² At this time education in Bengal villages was firmly based, as it had been for centuries, on a system of 'patshalas' - reading schools - which were now receiving government encouragement. In her memoir of Bishop Cotton his widow wrote -

The patshalas are the original and indigenous village schools of India, reaching back into unknown antiquity; and when left only in the hands of the gurus or teachers, they are miserably neglected or mistaught, the scholars sometimes being unable even to read. In some places Government, in others the Vernacular Education Society, takes them in hand, places a circle of them under the charge of an Inspector (in the latter case a native Christian superintended by a missionary) and establishes at once the system of payment to the guru 'by results'... The schools proved on examination to be quite as good as an average English village school, were thoroughly native in idea and appearance, and yet had received a most successful infusion of a Western and Christian element.³

This refers to a visit made in 1866. Earlier, in 1862, the Bishop himself had written to an unnamed Director of Public Instruction:

Surely by training the gurus we shall almost force them by the laws of nature to improve the instruction which they give, for no one who possesses a right knowledge of facts would (without some strong personal motive) deliberately impart a false view of them.⁴

¹ Far Cathay and Farther India - Macmahon pp.101-103

² cf. Educational dispatch no.17 dated 23 July 1864 - from Calcutta. 'The improvement of the existing village schools was the most likely means of extending to the people generally the opportunity of receiving an Education suited to their station and circumstances.'

³ Memoir of Bishop Cotton p.524

⁴ ibid p.271

Making use of indigenous schools was therefore a very live issue in Bengal at this time. The patshalas were of course much closer to the Burmese lay schools than to the monastic schools, which were closely bound by the strict rules of the Sangha. It does not do however to make too much of the difference between them at this time¹ - both, along with the patchshalas, were based on a religious motivation; the division came later, as their differing reactions to pressure from the government took them apart. The lay schools could respond to economic incentives where the monasteries could not.

In the second place, we have no reason to believe that Phayre initiated action at this stage because he had decided that the time was now ripe for it: the initiative came from the government of India, who believed that it was now time that their orders were carried out.² The course which he recommended was not one that he had had for long in contemplation either; in his Administration Report for 1861-62, his first as Chief Commissioner, Phayre had written -

There are no existing means of carrying out a general plan of vernacular education by direct government agency, and the best substitute for such a plan will be that of supporting the village schools already established by missionaries, in which a sound elementary education is imparted.³

In the previous year however Fytche had remarked in his report from Moulmein -

The Buddhist priests frequently visit the (S.P.G.) school and express their entire approbation of the instruction therein inculcated. They evince not the slightest jealousy or distrust: quite recently a valuable present was made to the school by a leading and influential member of the Buddhist priesthood.⁴

This seems to contain at least the germ of the idea of linking the Sangha with modern education. It is possible that the push in this direction came from Fytche and the Houghs in Moulmein. Phayre did not even remain convinced for very long. Ashley Eden says⁵ that by 1869 he was writing that he now felt that lay schools would make a more satisfactory basis for an elementary education system.

¹ cf. P.I.R. 1871-72 p.65. Nesfield, acting D.P.I. reckoned that at this date there was no fundamental difference.

² Educational Dispatch No.8 of 15 August 1863. 'The Chief Commissioner only deals with Rangoon, Moulmein, Kyaukpyu and Akyab; as stated in my dispatch of 14 May 1862, the more comprehensive question of promoting education throughout the province should be taken into consideration, and I request that a report may be called for.'

³ Moral and Material Progress 1861-62 p.731

⁴ Moral and Material Progress 1860-61 p.331

⁵ Admin. Report 1871-72 p.164

Finally Phayre never had an opportunity of trying to make the system work. Hough had only started work for two months on an experimental basis in a few monasteries in Rangoon and Moulmein when he had to take sick leave that ended in his death. Phayre himself retired only three months after this. Nothing could be done until Hordern arrived, after Phayre's departure, owing to the attitude of Street, the interim Director, who was convinced that the proposal must fail.

Whatever the origin of the policy, however, the proposals formally put forward by Phayre in answer to the government's request were that elementary education for the Burmese people should be left with the monasteries as far as possible. It was a policy with much to commend it: it was in accordance with the directives of the 1854 Dispatch, that non-governmental bodies should be persuaded to carry out the work: it made use of the man-power and buildings of the Sangha: and, it was hoped, it would avoid a possible clash of interest with the most powerful remaining native institutions. Above all, it would enable limited resources to be spread as widely as possible. Perhaps not least in the eyes of officials may have been the fact that it was the course which involved the least possible action - possibly it should have been viewed with a little suspicion as the easy way out. However it was only intended to try to influence the direction of monastic teaching in the very long term, away from the Pali classics towards a more modern and practical curriculum. Text books were to be offered to monasteries which agreed to accept them, and the services of circuit teachers were to be made available to help with the new subjects. At the same time the other, missionary, schools were to continue to receive their grants-in-aid.

There were of course immense difficulties, not least the opposition of missionaries, who felt that their vested rights in education were being infringed. Bishop Cotton's note on his visit to Burma at the end of 1861 is symptomatic of the jealousy felt -

But as to the character of the (monastic) education I could not obtain anything like an unanimous opinion. Government officers generally, with some exceptions, said that every male in Burma can read, write, and do a simple sum. Missionaries universally affirm that they often read very

badly... and do not themselves understand what they are reading.¹

Apart from this was the difficulty of influencing an old, powerful and conservative institution into a completely new channel. Indigenous education, both monastic and lay, was to be regarded as a basis for the attainment of enlightenment. Burmese kings, on the other hand, had been prepared to arrange for the training of their servants in practical skills, when they needed such skills. The idea of something in between, of a generalised non-religious education which should be directed towards 'moral and intellectual improvement' was totally foreign, and was likely to be hard to put across to the Sangha. The Victorians perhaps failed to appreciate how very local, and even temporary, were their ideas on the values of intellectual curiosity and hard work for their own sakes. There were two other, less central, difficulties: the Sangha barred all females from the monastery precincts - what was to be done about the education of girls? Monks were prohibited from handling money - would it be possible to provide a sufficient motivation on a non-economic basis? What books could be provided which would, in the Burmese language, give the Burmese the information and the respect for Western values which were required? Earlier in the century educationalists in England had found that one of their hardest tasks was to find a reason why the great mass of the people should want to get educated, and how without desire or compulsion it was possible to get them educated. The problem was no less in Burma, particularly since the general tendency of the Education Departments was to play down the material advantages to be got by education in a school recognised by the government. Hordern, for instance, wrote in his annual report -

Those who take books and study are not permanent monks, but will return to the world for a job. Those who really learn do so entirely with a view to obtain employment under government.

Fytche, as Chief Commissioner, rejoined -

The Director seems to think it a reproach that Burmese youths should be desirous of learning merely for the sake of advancing their material interest, but it can scarcely be said that this is any disadvantage.³

This particular tug-of-war continued - and probably still does. It is far from unknown elsewhere.

1 Memoir - p.230

2 P.I.R. 1867-68 p.59

3 ibid p.9

Perhaps the worst difficulty, however, arose from the great delay that had been allowed to occur. When action was finally taken to modernise education in British Burma, with the appointment of a Director of Public Instruction, no less than fourteen years had gone by since the annexation of Pegu. In that time it seems that there had been a great decline in the power, prestige and discipline of the Sangha. It was no longer what it had been in the time of the kings. It was on the defensive, and one of the first effects of this on such an organisation is to drive it into a rigid and unadventurous

conservatism. We do not have to accept the assertions of U Htin Aung that there had been a large exodus of monks from British territory after the annexation: they must have known too well the Company's tendency to panic at the smallest suggestion that they were interfering with religious matters to fear persecution. The large difference in density of monasteries between Upper and Lower Burma shown in the census of 1891 which is quoted in support of such assertions (10,448 monasteries to 10,981 villages in Upper Burma, against 4,883 monasteries to 10,805 villages in Lower Burma) is surely far more likely to have been occasioned by the fact that in 1852 the Pegu Division was largely depopulated as a result of the wars, rebellions and suppression of the Mons after Alaunghpaya's conquest.¹ There seems to have been a similar reign of terror directed at the Mons after 1826 also: Gouger relates how he saw six Mons beheaded for going armed - with fishing spears. This depopulation is a constant theme of travellers throughout the first half of the century.² Furnivall found another explanation -

In Burmese times monasteries had been crowded with people anxious to be secure from public labours and government exactions. But under Mr. Maingy's "more mild administration" the people could enjoy ease and quiet and earn a livelihood

¹ 'The great scantiness of people in one of the finest regions of the earth is chiefly due to... government. About 20 years ago it was unusually severe under the viceroyship of Daing-woon who was engaged in repelling the Samese.' Malcom - Travels in South East Asia.

² See for instange Gouger 'A Prisoner in Burma' p.17. 'The country seemed hopelessly abandoned to a state of nature... Either bank was covered to the water's edge with thick reed and bush jungle... Of course such a wilderness was almost destitute of inhabitants, though here and there a few wretched huts were seen.'

Also *ibid* p.309. 'A village on the banks of the Panlong river about 30 miles above Rangoon where the country was so thinly populated and so little cultivated that for many miles together nothing could be seen except a tangled jungle on both banks almost impervious to a human being.'

with very little labour. "Hence" he writes, "the monasteries are deserted, the Priests held in less reverence, and the contributions for their maintenance... are scantily bestowed."¹

However Fytche estimated the total population of the Pegu Division at about 500,000 at the time of the annexation. This must be rather too low - the population of Pegu and Martaban together was more carefully estimated at 829,000 in 1855 - but not by very much, and this kind of population density is not likely to have supported very many monks. Of the 17,000 villages of 1891 a large number must have been quite new - and in 1871 still either non-existent or else tiny, and people engaged in clearing and establishing themselves in virgin land would not usually be ready to think about founding a monastery. Nevertheless, it is true that the monasteries were in a state of decline. They had been accustomed under the Burmese kingdom to being a very highly respected Estate of the realm, under a Head who automatically had direct access to the King and his ministers. They were the leaders of the nation in the struggle for enlightenment: the King's function could be said to be only to provide the material basis without which the mental fight could not be carried on. The British however tended to regard the Order as an irrelevance. Their object was the economic development of the territory, and their policy, enforced even against the objections of their own clergy, was, in all official matters to separate themselves from all religious considerations. They would therefore disregard the Order, and give no recognition to any Head of the Order in their territory who might enforce the disciplinary rules. The monasteries therefore were in danger of losing their function and their self-respect. Savage's detailed reports on the monastic schools of Arakan show a very enfeebled type of institution -

These priests have very little sway over the villagers or their pupils: the former treat them with very little respect as these priests are entirely dependent on the villagers for a living and in many cases they are obliged nolens volens to make their exit from one village to another from sheer starvation.... In some villages half the elders give food to the priests, and half refuse to do so. It is only when a priest has from the time of his novitiate been stationary in one village that he has any sway over his villagers and pupils, otherwise the pupils behave just² as they like and consequently attendance is very irregular.

In addition, they were to some extent cut off from their roots in the kingdom of Burma. From the British side there were no particular

¹ Furnivall - 'The Fashioning of Leviathan'. J.B.R.S. XXIX i 1939

² P.I.R. 1870-71 - Report of 19 May 1871. See also the special Report of Progress in Arakan 1876 passim.

discouragements to travel between Upper and Lower Burma, but the King's government were sufficiently worried about the loss of (tax-paying) population by emigration to the developing rice lands of the Delta to impose official restrictions on movement. No doubt the restrictions were easily enough bypassed, particularly since the British were anxious to increase the population of their territory, so that the rice trade could be developed as fast as possible, but there was still a frontier to be crossed, guards to be passed, and customs posts to be dealt with or dodged. It was no longer a simple matter. There was a matter of jurisdiction too: the Thathana-baing had no means of enforcing his decisions in British Burma, and this was a time when, partly at least as a result of the general disturbance and discouragement which the annexation had caused, even in the Kingdom, the Order was troubled by heresies and schisms. Even King Mindon had felt himself bound to execute - spectacularly, by ploughing him into the ground with a heavy iron plough - a distinguished religious teacher, Maung Po.¹ His crime was heresy, which lay fundamentally in an attack on the Order.

It is conceivable that if the British authorities had not been bound by a policy, drawn up for the very different circumstances of India, of strict religious neutrality, and had been able to come to an accommodation with, or to give some sort of official recognition of the Order from the beginning - even more if it had been possible to make an effort to start on the modernisation of monastic education much earlier, before the deterioration caused by the loss of position and function - the scheme would have had a better chance of success. Fytche recognised the difficulties caused by the breakdown of monastic rule to the hopes of modernising popular education, but, it seems, could think of nothing to do about it, except to carry on and hope for the best.

The present disorganised state of monastic rule in British Burma, and the best method of bringing some controlling influence to bear upon the advancement of monastic education is emphatically the question which has to be solved and which is fraught with difficulties. It is not difficult to understand how the substitution of British rule, which disconnects itself with all matters relating to the religion of the people in the place of a Native rule, under which the Sovereign was practically the head of the ecclesiastical

¹ U Htin Aung - Burmese Monks' Tales - Introduction p.18. cf. also Purser, Christian Missions in Burma, p.73

hierarchy should have been followed by a decay of ecclesiastical discipline. Absence of a controlling head naturally tends to insubordination and self-assertion and to a laxity and indifference in the performance of ecclesiastical duties.

It has been suggested that... the Local Government should take steps to restore the lost power of the monks by appointing in each District a District Supervisor... There are obvious and fatal objections to this course which must rule it out of the question.

If however the monks could be induced to elect a superior amongst themselves, there would possibly be no objection to the recognition between the Deputy Commissioner and the Monastic schools... Even this course would be dangerous.¹

Probably in fact, by 1869 there was nothing to be done about it: if the monastic schools were to be integrated into a modern educational system as a basic part of it, the monasteries had to be accepted in their current condition, and gradually induced to accommodate themselves to their position. Nothing could be forced upon them. But it may be that an opportunity had been missed during the 1850s.

Hordern therefore arrived, late in 1867, to handle - with the help of one clerk only - a difficult task, for which six years as Assistant Professor of English in Calcutta had not fitted him particularly well. He does not seem to have felt any particularly strong call to educational work, and at this time was perhaps still shaken by the sudden death of his mentor, Bishop Cotton, a year before. He could undoubtedly organise the expansion of the government and mission Anglo-vernacular schools on approved lines, but his most important and most worrying task was to carry on and to expand the experiment which had been taken in hand eighteen months earlier, of persuading monks to accept text books and the assistance of auxiliary teachers for introducing non-canonical subjects into their schools. From the start this had been recognised as a matter of considerable delicacy, which Hough, born and bred in Moulmein, and apparently accustomed along with his father to making conversation with *hpòn-gyis*, which should be at least polite, had been regarded as particularly suited to handle.

Mr. G. Hough was an officer eminently fitted to conciliate and encourage both pupils and teachers... By his death the Burmese youth have lost a true friend and the services of a valuable officer.²

He mixed with the *pongyis* and gained their love and confidence.³

¹ Administration Report 1869-70 p.148

² Administration Report 1866-67

³ Taw Sein Ko - Burmese Sketches I

Even he however had not found it easy going -

Notwithstanding some opposition... in the towns of Rangoon and Moulmein, the Buddhist monks of 45 monasteries have allowed the books on arithmetic and land-measurement and in some instances geography and a small book on anatomy to be taught. The monks themselves will not teach these books partly from a feeling of pride which will not allow them to teach foreign books and partly from an ecclesiastical prejudice, peculiar to Buddhist ascetics, that the only true knowledge is contained in the Beedagat, and that worldly knowledge is a waste of time. Still, they allow the books to be taught.¹

Hordern had none of his qualifications. Probably he had never even seen a yellow robe before he came to Rangoon, and he can have known little of the language. In addition, he found that the policy that he was supposed to develop was already a matter of acute controversy in the province. It is not surprising that he found his first year very discouraging. There were 31 monasteries involved in the pilot scheme, 23 of them in Rangoon and 8 in Moulmein, with a total of 91 pupils. To cope with them, he had found 'circuit teachers', two in each town, on salaries of Rs 30 per month - quite a respectable figure at the time. They were Burmans, 'unacquainted with English but proficient in Arithmetic, Geography, and Land-measuring'² who were required to visit each monastery as often as possible. The teacher, however, might spend hours going to a monastery only to find that the pupil whom he proposed to see had not turned up that day. "The waste of time and labour is immense"³ owing to the absence of any kind of discipline. In addition, he reported, -- and this may well have been not the least of his troubles - "I have hardly found one person who has not condemned the plan as impracticable: Captain Street was of the same opinion."⁴ For instance, the Commissioner for Tenasserim, Col. D. Brown, had reported -

I am persuaded that the scheme of introducing secular education through the Buddhist priesthood will not answer. It should however be well tried. If it fails, then I believe that our success with education will depend chiefly on the appointment of good secular teachers under government inspection.⁵

This attitude is hardly one calculated to ensure success. Hordern himself came to the conclusion -

On the whole, from my short experience in the country, I

1 Selections from Educational Records 1900 Vol.I p.211 - Phayre reporting.
 2 P.I.R. 1868-69 p.53
 3 ibid p.54
 4 ibid p.55
 5 ibid Appendix p.xxxv

think that in village schools such as these (lay schools which he believed to exist in almost any town of any size) under a proper system of supervision will be found the best foundation for a general system of education in the vernacular.¹

The difficulties in the way of basing it on the existing 4000 monasteries with their 50,000 pupils were not any jealousy or opposition on the part of the monks - on the contrary they "gladly receive our books and express a wish for them" - but that the monastic was not and never had been a school for secular education: as an example of the monks' attitude he quoted what a distinguished sadaw had said to him: "Our instruction is religious, but if our pupils like to study secular subjects there is no objection"² The Education Department's main interests were side interests to the monasteries, mere frivolities but permissible if you could spare the time, which a serious monk could not.

Fytche, by now Chief Commissioner, however felt that they must not give up too soon: it was essentially a long-term project, which Hough's death had necessarily made even longer-term -

As regards Sir Arthur Phayre's system of gradually making the monasteries available as a medium for imparting European secular knowledge, it should be borne in mind that associated with it was a man eminently fitted for the work and this, though no fault, was perhaps the weak point of the scheme, for his loss is for the time being irreparable....

He inspired an awakening interest among the younger members that was all that was hoped for as a commencement: the rest it was anticipated would follow when these youths themselves became monks and the instructors of another generation.³

He was compelled to agree however that time was what they did not have: too much of it had been wasted already.

Arakan has been under British rule for more than 40 years, Tenasserim for the same period, Pegu for 15 years, and in those periods but five incomplete roads give evidence of our possession of the country... Beyond the mere fact of our Military possession of the country, beyond the existence of the Police, most inadequately paid, there is hardly anything in the length and breadth of the province to testify to the presence of a rule superior to the one from which it has been wrested. As for public works in the true sense of the term they are only now being slowly called into existence. Of barracks, of gaols, of court-houses we have not a few. But their connection with the prosperity of the country is of quite secondary consideration.⁴

¹ P.I.R. 1868-69 p.51

² P.I.R. 1867-68

³ G.R. on P.I.R. 1867-68

⁴ Admin. Report 1868-69 pp.vi - ix

The almost desperate uncertainty of what was the best thing to do about vernacular elementary education seems to have led to a sort of paralysis. All the most important people concerned changed their minds at least once. According to Eden, as we have seen, by 1869 Phayre himself thought that it would have been better not to try to use the monasteries. In his own book a little later Fytche wrote -

I must confess that I have always been favourable to this scheme (the use of the monastic schools) and am still anxious that every effort should be made... At the same time increased knowledge of these schools... has opened my eyes to difficulties which do not appear to have presented themselves to Sir Arthur Phayre.¹

Not least among them was the fact that

The Chief Commissioner does not believe that these difficulties are insurmountable, but he fears that the Educational Department is scarcely in a position to grapple with them.²

Hordern on the other hand seems to have changed his mind in the other direction. At the time of his first report he regarded the monastic schools as an impossible basis to work upon: in 1877 however, in a published article, he wrote -

The Department was unhopeful... (we) could have hardly anticipated the genuine liberality which has thrown open the doors of the monastery to the Government Inspector of Schools, and welcomed without jealousy the graft of western scholarship and science.³

In the end, a course was adopted which was perhaps the best available: All possible methods were allowed to survive. Text books and assistant masters were made available to all monasteries which were prepared to accept them: the same facilities were offered to lay schools. The missionary village schools, unimportant except to Karens, continued to receive their grants-in-aid.

On the establishment of the Education Department, there were thus three separate systems of education in force in British Burma, each dealing with separate classes of people. This might have been expected to cause no particular concern to British administrators, since it was a situation to which they were well accustomed in their own

1 Fytche - 'Burma, Past and Present' vol II p 331

2 Admin. Report 1869-70 p.146

3 Fraser's Magazine November 1877

country.¹ The Taunton Commission's report in 1868 had expressly recognised three types of schooling, one for the upper classes which would take its beneficiaries up to the Universities at 18: one for the middle classes up to 16, which gave 'knowledge which can be turned to practical use in business': and one elementary, giving the working classes a knowledge of reading, writing, and figures. These systems were quite separate: one did not start at the elementary school and go on to the middle school. Even the teaching profession was divided - a division still perpetuated in the egalitarian world of modern unions - between schoolmasters, with university degrees and often also clerical orders but not necessarily professional training, and mere schoolteachers, who had come from an elementary school through an apprenticeship as a pupil-teacher attached to an experienced teacher and in a training college. These of course normally served in elementary schools themselves.

It is perhaps somewhat surprising that, in spite of what must have seemed to be the natural course of things, in India and Burma a decision was made that the different systems must be worked into a single coherent system as was implied in the 1854 dispatch. The effort to carry out this decision in Burma occupied most of Hordern's tenure of office - though not altogether consistently, e.g. -

The instruction given in the schools of each grade is intended to meet the wants of a class which will not necessarily aspire to anything higher. The National Schools of England do not fail of their object because they do not feed the Public Schools, nor do many schools of a higher grade fail because they do not supply recruits to the Universities.²

Before the course of events through these years can be surveyed it is necessary to describe the different types of school that existed in 1869 in some detail.

The most conspicuous, and probably of the smallest importance to the country as a whole, were the government schools. From an early date the East India Company had maintained schools, perhaps originally

¹ 'The code of 1860 defined the object of grants as "to promote the education of children belonging to the class who support themselves by manual labour"... Working and middle-class education in the 19th century had clear identities. They were separated by different curricula, length of school life, attendance rates and cultural and social objectives.' Social History of Education in England, p.270

² P.I.R. 1872-73

for the children of their servants, but at all events extended to the children of all who were in contact with the Company, who wished them to have a western-style education and were willing to pay the fees required. There were obvious advantages: In a dispatch of 16 February 1787 the Directors expressly approved of

institutions calculated to establish mutual good faith, to enlighten the minds of the Natives and to impress them with sentiments of esteem and respect for the British nation by making them acquainted with the leading features of our government, so favourable to the rights and happiness of mankind.

Here might be a fore-shadowing of the British Council. Not quite all-comers were welcomed however: although in a Dispatch of 31 March 1756 the Directors had recommended to the Bombay Government 'setting up and establishing charity schools wherein the children of soldiers, mariners, topasses and others might be educated as well as the subordinates of Bombay', they felt it necessary to stipulate that bastards and the children of slaves on one side should only be admitted if the other children did not object to mixing with them. In the early days

the charge devolved principally on the Company's chaplains. To excite them to a diligent performance of this branch of their duties the local governments occasionally granted them gratuities for special services.¹

This continued to be the case when Burma became part of the Company's territory. As late as 1854 in Moulmein, the school in the cantonment was regarded as subject to the chaplain's supervision, and even in 1860 Dr. Marks had to secure the chaplain's agreement to his accepting European boys in his new mission school. Possibly it was the fact that the principal was the Rev. G. Hough that gave the Moulmein government school an especially ecclesiastical tone. Generally clerks in orders were by now barred from educational posts under government.

In Burma at any rate it never seems to have been the practice that the chaplain should actually teach, and when the first government school was opened at Moulmein in 1835, an outsider, the Rev. Cephas Bennett, was appointed to be headmaster. He was a member of the American

¹ Fisher Memorandum - App. II to Report of the Select Committee on the East India Company's Affairs 1832/33

² Selected Cases

Baptist Mission and maintained this connection in spite of being employed by the government. The arrangement did not work well, and the school closed again before long, in 1837, until Hough could be appointed. He also had belonged to the Baptist Mission, having originally come to Burma as Judson's printer. The relationship had been severed and Hough seems to have been employed as a government interpreter since 1826. When the other early government schools were opened, at Kyauk-hpyu in 1837 and at Akyab in 1844, their headmasters were lay and specially recruited. Another school at Mergui could not be maintained on account of the difficulty of staffing it, and it was finally closed in 1853. By the late 1860s recruitment was carried out partly in England - or perhaps even more in Scotland - and partly in Burma and India. A further government school was opened at Rangoon in 1859 but did not last long. The new school opened at Proma in 1865 was more successful.

Details of the curricula of some of these schools are given in the Education Report for 1868-69. Moulmein had ten classes. The text books used were -

McCulloch's Course of Reading
 Lennie's English Grammar
 Stewart's Geography
 Carpenter's Spelling Assistant
 Chamber's Arithmetic
 Mavor's Spelling Book
 'Lessons on Common Things'

The last was used for English - Burmese translation. Books were obtained through the Calcutta School Book Society, but the Headmaster, Thompson, felt that they 'might be better adapted for the grand object of conveying information through their language.' It is not clear whether 'their' refers to the books or to the Burmese.

In Akyab books mentioned are -
 English Prose Reader 1 - 4
 English Poetic Reader 1 - 2
 Historical Sketches of Greece, Rome, England and British India
 Burmese Ancient History
 Aesop's Fables
 History of Bengal
 Anglo-Burmese Phrases
 Win Thoon Lash - the Child's Book of the Soul in Burmese.

Arithmitic, Algebra, and Geography were taught, but the text books are not named. There were seven classes of average ages 8.3, 9.1, 11.5, 12.1, 13.2, 13.7, and 14.6 years, covering 110 pupils paying Rs 1 each plus 65 paying Rs 0/S per month.

In Prome there were only six classes, using the Eastern Primer I and II, the Thinbongyi (on which see Chapter 6), English Spelling I and II, and the Anglo-Burmese Reader. These were all officially Anglo-vernacular schools. Both English and Burmese were taught, and either might be used according to convenience. As was stated a little later -

the object and proper limit of the operations of (English) schools is to provide the means of higher education, especially as regards the introduction of western science which as experience has shown cannot be inculcated through an Oriental language.¹

As will be seen however, the text books in use before 1870 were mainly in English. The Burmese books which Phayre thought would be suitable for the monasteries were not in fact in use when he wrote, as far as can be seen.

In spite of their long standing and influential position, the government schools were in a somewhat unhappy position. In the first place they were now under an indefinitely suspended sentence of death. English practice at the time still disapproved of State involvement in education, beyond what was strictly necessary to ensure that some kind of education was available to all who wanted it - and there were some who denied even that. An hundred years earlier Priestly had written "Education is a branch of Civil Liberty which ought by no means to be surrendered into the hands of the Magistrate." This feeling, derived from a healthy distrust of governments, still persisted, though coming under increasingly severe pressure as a result of the economic success of more dirigiste practice on the Continent. It had found expression in the 1854 Dispatch -

We desire to see local management under government inspection and assisted by grants-in-aid taken advantage of wherever possible... but... it will probably be necessary for some years for government to undertake temporary support and management of places of education in (some) districts... We look forward to the time when any general system of education entirely provided by government may be discontinued....

¹ Admin. Report 1876-77

No one would have accepted employment as a schoolmaster with the Indian government with any illusion that he was entering upon a guaranteed career.

Apart from this, in England the same policy had resulted in nearly all popular education being brought into the hands of the two main religious education bodies, the National Society and the British and Foreign Schools Society. This gave the profession as a whole the cachet of a connection with religion. Schoolmasters were very often clergymen themselves, and even schoolteachers felt their status improved by the fact that their employer was a religious society. In the East, government-employed teachers now lacked this backing, since it had become settled policy that the British as rulers of India could afford to give no countenance whatever to any proselytising activity, and clergymen were barred from government educational posts.¹ There were endless arguments whether government school buildings might be used for voluntary bible classes out of school hours: in 1858 there was a notable clash between William Arnold - D.P.I. in the Panjab and Matthew Arnold's brother - and Sir John Lawrence on this subject. Arnold held that it was not permissible. In the next year, Bishop Cotton found himself banned from arranging a series of lectures in the theatre of the Calcutta Medical College on such non-committal subjects as "Lessons suggested by the Early History of India", "The Institutes of Menu", "Education", "St. Augustine of Hippo", "The Emperor Julian", and "Dr. Arnold".² The chaplains' role in education had disappeared, and government teachers were deprived of the official connection with the Church. They depended for status only on a government, whose declared policy was to get rid of them as soon as possible. An irritable, carping note is quite conspicuous in the government Resolutions commenting on the Public Instruction Reports year by year: Education was not thought well of by the other Departments. Later on a retired Lieut. Governor could write in his memoirs -

The Education Department.... never merited the cynical censure implied in a government resolution... (which) in removing an incorrigible drunkard, remarked that he might obtain employment in the Education Department.³

¹ 'The Government of India's rule of 1860 precludes ministers of religion from holding educational appointments in India.' Education Dispatch No.4 of 29 April 1869

² Memoir of Bishop Cotton p.91

³ White - 'A Civil Servant in Burma' (1913) p. 34

On 3 March 1864 the D.P.I. Bengal wrote to the Secretary to Government -

Men who have of late years joined the Department, more especially since the opening of the civil service, have keenly felt the inferiority of their social position as compared with their school and college contemporaries who have joined the regular services.

But the situation niggled on: in 1868 the Government of India were writing -

We feel convinced that a settlement of the question of social rank and precedence which is under our consideration will go far towards allaying the discontent in the Education Department...

But the Department did not appear in the Civil Lists until 1877 and then only at the end - after the Marine Department and before the Medical. From 1884, however, it was given a much higher placing - between Political and Ecclesiastical and ahead of the Police. It is not surprising that during much of this period morale in the Education Department should be low. Hordern himself in Calcutta as an assistant professor at the Presidency College -

tried to exchange my service for the army, but it was rather in my wish to escape from distasteful work than from any passion for soldiering.

He made at least two attempts to escape after he went to Burma also.

The second type of school consisted of those giving a more or less Western style of education, but not connected with the government otherwise than by, perhaps, a grant towards expenses. It had been laid down in the 1854 Dispatch that grants might be given to all schools which gave a good secular education under adequate local management - which was interpreted as meaning 'having a reasonable prospect of continuity' - and open to inspection by government officials. In Burma all such institutions were mission-run, except for the Town School at Moulmein - which, however, succumbed quite soon after Ashley Eden enticed Gilbert, its very able headmaster, away to his new Rangoon High School in 1873 - and the Ramree School, run uniquely by a Burman committee, which however collapsed in 1875. In 1867-68, of the mission schools, 150 were counted as 'elementary' and were schools for small children in Karen villages teaching reading, writing, a little arithmetic and Christianity. They only received grants

-
- 1 Dispatches 1864 p.314
 - 2 Abstracts of Letters 1868 p.176
 - 3 Peter Hordern - 'To My Son' - unpublished MS

totalling Rs 7140 for their 3167 pupils, and this was discontinued in the following year, when it was ruled that mission schools were disqualified from aid out of Cess funds. Considerably more attention was paid to the 'middle class' schools. Run mainly by the missionary societies, they were to some extent compromised by a duality of purpose. Those who worked in and for them saw them as instruments for the maintenance and spread of Christianity, though it was still disputed whether they were the best and the most effective instruments. The government however provided a considerable part of their funds so that they should contribute to the 'moral and intellectual progress' of Burmese society generally. At this time there was also a particular problem to which they were expected to contribute at least part of a solution. Bishop Cotton became closely involved in it and wrote -

The point which... causes most anxiety to (India's) well wishers just now is the result of the constantly increasing influx of European settlers.¹

and

Europeans of the non-official class whom railroads and other commercial enterprise drew to the country in increasing numbers shortly after the suppression of the Mutiny... If there could be one thing subversive of our Indian empire it was the spectacle of a generation of Natives highly educated and trained in missionary and government schools side by side with an² increasing number of ignorant and degraded Europeans.

The end of the East India Company's restrictions on the entrance of outsiders to their territories had given rise to a short-lived feeling that the East might provide a field for European colonisation comparable with Australia and the American West. When India proved disappointing there was a tendency to move on to Burma. W.H. Marshall, who edited the first English newspaper in Rangoon, wrote that after his Madras job collapsed

(I) had no work to do... (and) resolved to move. The question arose, whither? It was soon answered - Burmah!.... Numbers of people³ were emigrating to our newly acquired possessions....

and

Immediately after the annexation of Pegu to our dominions hundreds of persons emigrated to the new settlements from all quarters of India... The government establishments were enlarged and there arrived consequently a number of additional clerks, craftsmen and labourers. Many... were aborigines of India but a very large⁴ proportion of Europeans and Eurasians made their way there.

The nineteenth century was prepared to recognise that a change of

¹ Memoir p.163

² ibid p.206

³ Marshall - 'Four Years in Burma' p.66-67

⁴ ibid p.266

success involved a chance of failure too, and that this immigration meant the near-certainty of the growth of a 'poor white' class. Special attention to the education of their children would, it was hoped, ensure that it would not become a 'white trash' class. Cotton played some part with the foundation of the purely English Diocesan Schools in Rangoon and Moulmein, but all schools were expected to contribute, particularly the mission schools. The matter was dealt with at length in government Resolution no. 231 General Department of 24 March 1876. At this time it was estimated that 650 children of European descent in Burma received no schooling at all.

This diversity of purpose might have been expected to detract from the effectiveness of the mission schools: the stated purpose of spreading Christianity to discourage good Buddhists otherwise open to 'moral and intellectual improvement': the necessity of teaching European and Eurasian children to detract from them as missionary institutions - but the purposes seem to have been satisfactorily reconciled, largely because of the enthusiasm with which some at least of the Burmese welcomed English education. When the S.P.G. school was opened in Moulmein in 1859

children were only admitted on the distinct understanding that they were to be instructed in the Christian religion. No parents or pupils ever raised any objection.¹

It is hard to say whether this was due to tolerance based on a faith in the irrefutability of the truths of Buddhism, or to a firm eye to the main chance. In India it was said -

There is not a Hindoo to be found who would not make his son read the Bible from beginning to end, and learn it by heart if it were possible, if he could in any way advance his worldly interest thereby.²

It is at least true that Buddhism was not seriously reacting to the attack.

In 1867-68, of the missionary middle schools, 13 were for 1102 boys, 5 for 298 girls, and 7 for teacher training with 268 students. These training schools were mainly intended for producing teachers to staff the village primary schools mentioned earlier.

¹ Marks - 'Forty Years in Burma' p.55

² Christian Observer, 1859 p.214 "Public Affairs" - March 1859

Between them these schools collected a total of Rs 37,000 in grants, a rate of Rs 22 per head, a little more than half the cost in government schools. These figures, from the Public Instruction Report, and repeated in the Report on Moral and Material Progress for the year, differ from those in the Administration Report to some extent: this gives 1423 boys, 408 girls, and 398 trainees. Neither set is of course beyond question, but the numbers are small either way.

Bishop Cotton gives some idea of the curriculum. He found that at the Karen school at Kemmendine -

about fifty Karen youths... answered remarkably well to a somewhat stiff examination in scripture. Their other studies are the grammar of their own language, arithmetic and geography.¹

At the S.P.G. school at Moulmein

they were examined for about two and a half hours in the Bible, geography, English and Burmese reading, and arithmetic... the curriculum is lower than a good Bengal school.²

This was hardly surprising since the school was only two years old and most of its 270 pupils were Burmese. It is true that Marks had organised things so that 'the Commissioner... the Colonel... the leading Barrister and other residents sent their sons, paying Rs 6 per month instead of Rs 1.'³ Welding 'about 300 boys of all nationalities, English, Eurasian, Armenian Jews, Hindoos and Madrassis, while the majority were Burmese Talaings, Chinese, Shans and Karens'⁴ into any sort of school must have been quite a feat. No statement seems to be available on the text books in use in the middle schools, but from the fact that the Baptist Mission Press had been printing Burmese versions of text books for many years, it seems a legitimate inference that more use was made of the vernacular in mission than in government schools. The first edition of Stilson's book on Trigonometry in Burmese 'for vernacular schools' was printed in 1845. Both the government and most of the non-government middle schools were regarded as 'anglo-vernacular'. Teaching in the higher stages was in English, since it seemed impossible as yet to teach these stages in the vernacular. The medium in the lower stages was mainly the vernacular, and of course English was learned for future use.

1 Memoir p.225

2 ibid p.230

3 Marks - 'Forty Years in Burma' p.63

4 ibid p.69: this was in 1860

The third great class of school was the one which affected the vast majority of people living in the country, in a way in which the exotic growths noted above could not. These were the purely indigenous schools which normally taught only reading and writing in Burmese, with perhaps a little arithmetic, leading on in a minority of cases to the study of the Pali scriptures. They were of two types, the most important - or at least the most conspicuous - being the monastery schools: the other, the 'house-schools' or 'lay-schools' where much the same teaching was offered voluntarily by devout ladies and gentlemen in their own houses, as a work of merit or in hope of occasional presents from parents. The monastery schools had been noticed by European visitors for many years: San Germano had written -

the monasteries are the schools, indeed the only schools in the Empire, as the task of education is entirely committed to the talapoins.¹

If he is right, the 'house-schools' did not exist in his day, and there is in fact no mention of them as regular institutions until Hordern wrote of them in 1869 as existing in most of the larger villages. San Germano may well have been wrong however: in January 1821 Judson noted -

Ma Men-la (one of his earliest converts) has of her own accord proposed to open a school in the precincts of her house to teach the boys and girls of the village to read: in consequence the latter will not be under the necessity of going to the Burman Priests for education as usual... We told her that some of the Christian females in America would doubtless defray the expenses of the undertaking and would make some compensation to the instructress.²

He does not record her reaction to the offer of help, but it does not look as though Ma Myint Hla was embarking on an enterprise totally foreign to the tradition of the country. It is also notable that girls as well as boys were expected to go to school, and they would never have been taught in a monastery. At about the same time Trant noted -

(the monks') principal occupation is to instruct the children in reading and writing... Instruction being thus diffused gratis, it is very rare to find a Murmah who cannot read and write. What is still more singular in the East is that girls likewise participate in the benefits of education.³

In this connection, Taw Sein Ko, writing about 1900, remarks

The Lay School presided over by a secular Manager or Manageress was intended primarily for the education of

1 San Germano - 'The Burmese Empire'. p.55
 2 Life of Judson - Edward Judson p.185
 3 Two Years in Ava - Trant p.259
 4

girls. The fact that education was resorted to in the latter class of schools and that a small proportion of boys was admitted was due to the convenience of a particular locality...

Presumably, if girls were taught, there were house-schools to teach them.

It looks very much as though by the 1820s at least house-schools were widespread. The lack of mention is easily explained. Small groups of a dozen or so children collecting in a house for their lessons would not have been conspicuous to visitors. Few in any case would have troubled to distinguish between monastery schools and house-schools: both operated primarily as religious institutions, and apart from their location and the presence of girls there would have been little to distinguish them. Both taught reading and writing primarily as a means to the study of the scriptures, so that all might be charitably helped on their way to enlightenment. In both, once the rudiments of reading and writing were mastered they would be used for the purpose of reading and memorising texts in Pali with their Burmese translations and explanations. The first of these was always the Mangala Sutta (Bur. Mingalā-thok), which was taken so much for granted that, although to recite from it was part of the first standard test laid down in 1881, it is not even mentioned directly in the list of school books approved by the Department in 1883. Other studies which entered into the curriculum of such schools, such as astrology, mathematics or medicine, were introduced as the personal interests of individual teachers or students.

In fact there was a distinction between the monastery schools and the house-schools, which though of little importance in earlier times grew to be of major importance with the development of British rule. Hordern sensed it though he never formulated it: "though modelled on the monastic school, the house-school is distinct from it in character." It was of course that the house-schools being, some of them, to some extent, economically motivated, could be changed by economic pressure in a way in which the monasteries could not be. The monastery school was frozen into a set pattern: the house-school had a potentiality, as yet unshown, for change in response to changing circumstances.

¹ Burmese Sketches II - Taw Sein Ko p.149

It was on the basis of these variegated educational systems that a unified system had to be built in accordance with the 1854 and 1859 Dispatches. With the benefit of hindsight it could be written in the Report on Moral and Material Progress for 1881-82 -

The endeavour of government is to create an unbroken chain of education extending from the primary schools with their simple, elementary instruction, to the complicated curriculum of the Universities: in no case however does it recognise any obligation to create educational institutions to the discouragement of private enterprise, but only to afford facilities for the improvement and elevation of existing institutions. In the absence of such institutions, however, government takes the initiative... The results of the examinations for entrance into each school is therefore a test of the efficiency of the school immediately below it.¹

But a decade earlier the objective was not nearly so clear. It was by no means obvious that the destiny of each child was to enter a vernacular primary school at an early age; to take a passing out examination after four years, which might qualify him to enter a separate middle school; that after a further three years he might emerge qualified to enter a high school, from which he might finally matriculate into a university. At the start it seemed far more in accordance with the natural law that the village child should enter the village school where he could learn what little reading, writing and arithmetic he would need during his life as a peasant cultivator, while the middle-class town child entered a middle-class school where, over a longer period, he acquired the more complicated skills and attitudes that he would need to qualify him for his place in society.

The change to a fully integrated system called for a major change in attitude which is a little hard to realise, and which took many years to complete. It is to some extent concealed by confusions, such as that between 'middle school' as a school for the middle class and as a school intermediate between elementary and high schools. The Statement on Moral and Material Progress for 1872-73 for instance, claims that the Indian schools form part of one homogenous scheme including

- a) Primary schools - village schools for the poorer classes
- b) Middle-class schools - which give a somewhat higher education
- c) High Schools - which prepare for university entrance.

¹ Moral and Material Progress 1881-82 p.145

A
 remaining
 comparison
 with
 thinking

The nomenclature gives a false impression of a smooth progression, which is belied by the phrase 'middle-class schools' and the description of primary schools. As late as 1882 the Hunter Commission in their report wrote of the 'modern distinction of primary from secondary education', but it was still felt that

Primary education should be regarded as the instruction of the masses through the vernacular in such subjects as will best fit them for their position in life and not necessarily as a portion of instruction leading up to the university.

It could be regarded as 'complete in itself'. For Burma, Aitchison as Chief Commissioner, provoked by Ferrars' Report on Public Instruction, finally laid down in 1879 in the Resolution on the Report that the different levels must be separated and must pursue fixed courses of study: no pupil would be admitted to any grade unless he had qualified himself to start. Pupils would therefore be admitted to the middle schools because they had passed the examinations prescribed in the primary schools, not because of their social position. In this year there were actually five schools described as 'High Schools'. By far the most part of their pupils were in the primary and middle sections, and only 42 between the five were actually at high school standard. A school might be called a 'High School' simply because its managers hoped that one day it might be able to present a candidate for the Calcutta University Entrance examination. This of course makes pretty fair nonsense of the statistics.

¹ Moral and Material Progress 1881-82 p.;45

Chapter IV - The System in Action, 1870 - 1875

The first step in devising a unified system in which a child would progress through primary and secondary schools to a university, if his ability, and his parents' purse, took him that far, was of course to establish a system of elementary education from which children could emerge qualified for higher things. It had been decided at length that, in preference to trying to set up a system of government schools or mission schools, an attempt would be made to develop the indigenous elementary schools provided by the monasteries and by lay voluntary teachers, to give an adequate basic education. A beginning had already been made under Hough with the 31 monasteries in Rangoon and Moulmein, which were visited by Burmese teachers in government employ, two for each town, armed with such text books as could be provided. In spite of Phayre's optimism about the availability of suitable text books -

We have already some excellent School books. They are as follows -

1. Geography by the Rev. G.H. Hough
2. Treatise of Land-measuring and Triangulation
3. Stilson's Arithmetic - an admirable work
4. "The House I Live in" - a translation of an interesting little work on human anatomy.
5. Sketch of Ancient History by the Rev. E.A. Stevens.
6. Hengedris' Geometry (sic - read Legendre's)

If there were only a work on Elementary Astronomy, we really have every book required to commence the work now proposed.¹

It had only proved possible to work on arithmetic, geography and land-measuring for lack of other books. The work had also proved much more taxing than Phayre had expected when he wrote

To carry out the plan I am of the opinion that we should do nothing more than induce the monks in the small monasteries to accept certain books for the instruction of their pupils.²

It was found that the circuit teachers, instead of merely making visits to advise and help, were expected in fact to do all, or most of the teaching of the non-monastic subjects themselves, and that generally the pupils interested were scattered in twos and threes through the monasteries.

When they (the government teachers) attend a monastery school it is not to assist a master or to give lessons to classes, but only to give instruction to two or three older

¹ Letter no.947 to G. of I. Home Dept, dated 26 Dec 1864 - quoted by U Kaung JBRS, XLVI, ii, Dec. 1963 p.85

² ibid:it.

was this
 Govt
 advised,
 (X)
 the
 of
 to
 the

boys, who do not belong to the school, but who are anxious to qualify themselves for lucrative employment.¹

Generally, as might be expected, the monks themselves were not greatly interested. Hordern felt bound to comment -

It is a school for the education of the character, not the intellect: the principle of the superiority of the moral to the intellectual pushed ² to the extreme of denying the value of wisdom at all.

This attitude, interestingly, was not peculiar to Buddhist monks. Cotton mentions meeting the doctrine 'that secular knowledge must hinder the entrance of spiritual light into the soul' among his own clergy. Some Buddhist monks were more enthusiastic, and a few made a genuine effort. There were one or two who left the monastery for a teacher's training course before returning, but they were rare.³

After Hough's death in 1868 no development occurred for nearly two years. No one else was very enthusiastic about the scheme and it was considered doubtful that it would continue. It was not until 1870, shortly before his retirement as Chief Commissioner, that Fytche somewhat dubiously decided to carry on. The 'old Burma hands', Phayre and Fytche, in fact achieved very little in the educational field, whether because of the lethargy with which Burma noboriously afflicted Europeans, or simply owing to the length of time which it took to get things going again after the disaster of Hough's death, or again to an involvement with the country which left them unwilling to interfere in a stable society for which they had some respect and love. In his 1877 article Hordern wrote -

The sight of the simple village life of the country is calculated to raise in the mind of the most ardent lover of progress grave doubts whether when we have secured to the people the peaceful enjoyment of life, we can add anything to it by the further revolution which must follow in the train of the education and laws, of the arts and sciences of the West.⁴

It is possible that some such feeling inhibited both Phayre and Fytche from more effective action, and that the British administration's fault was not a lack of sympathy with the native culture but an

¹ Admin. Report 1869-70 p.149

² P.I.R. 1867-68. Not entirely true, but what he meant by 'wisdom' was rather different to the monk's meaning

³ Pope, Hordern's successor, mentions a few in his report for 1890-91

⁴ Buddhist Schools in Burma - Fraser's Magazine Nov 1877

excess of tenderness so that they spent time and resources on cherishing the classics when it was engineering, science and modern languages that were wanted. But this is a dilemma which is probably insoluble.

Whatever the reason for their lack of achievement, Fytche's successor found no impediment to action. The Honorable Ashley Eden was comparatively young, with a distinguished Indian career behind and ahead of him: aristocratic, the son of a bishop who was also a peer, the nephew of an ex-Governor General of India, Lord Auckland, and of his authoress sisters Emily and Frances Eden, he was above all energetic. He had served as envoy and Resident in Sikkim and in Bhutan, and therefore had a personal acquaintance with the Buddhist countries beyond India. His first administration report, that for 1871-72, reveals his near horror at the situation which he found himself left with -

Neither during the past nor in previous years has education made any great progress. Fortunately the people have a system of primary education...

Of 2056 children educated directly by or with the aid or supervision of Government, no less than 1682 are children of the two towns of Rangoon and Moulmein...

The assignment from general revenues was Rs 106,130 or 0.83% of revenue - 8 pies per head....

The total assignment was not spent... there was not so much a backwardness on the part of the State to contribute what is right for the education of the people, as an incapacity on the part of the Education Department to devise up to the present time any means of developing schemes of education...

The 1% educational cess on land revenue collections have not been spent and large balances have accumulated... (In 1871-72 the collection on this head amounted to Rs 38,822 of which only Rs 15,382 were spent)

Of the five so-called high schools none is really so. Only the S.P.G. school at Rangoon has presented for matriculation, and all three of them failed....

The sixteen government and aided 'middle' schools are really very second-rate Anglo-vernacular schools of which the worst are, as usual, the government schools....

The present Chief Commissioner has all along been of the opinion that we have been endeavouring to upset the present excellent system of monastic education, instead of conserving it, and that our object should be to revive these schools

and to preserve them from further deterioration rather than to continue with our fruitless attempts to adapt them to a standard unsuitable to the people of the country and practically unattainable.¹

It is not very clear just what Eden wanted to do with the monastic schools, but it was apparent that changes were coming. It is true however that most of the shortcomings picked out by Eden had already been recognised in Fytche's last year - perhaps Eden had given him his views in advance - and some action initiated to deal with them. The accumulated surplus on the Cess fund account was to be devoted to financing a training school for 10 middle school and 100 primary school teachers, and this was opened in 1870: also for paying for four deputy inspectors of schools, whose appointment had also been sanctioned in 1870, to make possible the expansion of the Education Department's work. In the same year again it had been decided that the Karen village schools run by the missionaries did not really fit in with the official plans, and the small grant to them was discontinued. Plans were also made for reviving the - perhaps rather sinister-sounding - Local Committees of Public Instruction. These committees in fact had had a fairly long history in India. When the 1813 Act had provided that the Indian revenues should make an allocation for education, a General Committee of Public Instruction was set up to administer the fund. The intention was that a network of subordinate Local Committees should provide a link between the central authority and local needs. Their existence in Burma however seems to have been desultory. The English-Burmese dictionary that Hough published in 1845 bears on its title-page the inscription "For Schools - Under Sanction of the Local Committee of Public Instruction for Tenasserim", but references are very rare. In 1869 the Commissioner of Tenasserim could write -

I intend to propose local committees to administer the educational part of the Cess Fund.²

In the 25 years since Hough's dictionary had been published, the existence of such committees had, it seems, been forgotten. It was now thought that a local committee of officials and influential Burmese in each district would form a centre for the exchange of ideas, and would be able to exercise a steady pressure on the monasteries to improve their teaching. None of this of course could have had any noticeable effect by the time of Fytche's departure.

¹ Admin Report 1871-72 - passim

² P.I.R. 1868-69

Eden agreed that the local committees should be able to 'stir up the Pongyis', and they were formalised under rules finally published in 1873. In dealing with the indigenous schools he directed that the Deputy Inspectors now taking up office should make no attempt to interfere with their running. Their function was confined, in dealing with them, to acting as 'public examiners', to examining the pupils of such schools, monastic and lay, as applied to be examined against a set standard in language and figures, and to making cash rewards to pupils and teachers for those who passed the standard.¹ Monks, who were not permitted to handle money, would, it was hoped, find a motive for effort if the awards took the form of books or other presents. Where the monastery had lay trustees, of course cash rewards could be paid to them. In addition it was directed that government would supply and pay for, on request but subject to availability, a trained teacher for arithmetic, surveying, and drawing, to any indigenous school. The scheme for supplying teachers met with a more enthusiastic response than had been expected, and the numbers available never met the demand. The first teachers who passed out from the training school, by what seems to have been a miscalculation, were diverted to the new Cess schools in the major towns² and in spite of the theoretical outturn of 100 teachers a year from the Rangoon training school, only 27 had been supplied by 1874-75, and this could only be increased to 32 in the next year. The wastage in the training school was in fact tremendous: anyone qualified from there was worth much more to commerce than the Rs 20 per month which he could earn as a salaried teacher. Five years later it was still true that

the number of sufficiently educated natives is at present so small and the appointments open to them so numerous,³ that it is difficult to attract competent men to teaching.

It is interesting that in 1840 Kay-Shuttleworth at the Committee of Council in England had had exactly the same difficulty and "one of the

¹ The first standard prescribed, in Circular 8 of 14.ii.1871, was -
 First - age 6-10 years: reading an easy narrative, copying a line of print, numbers to 100 and multiplication to 12 times. Reward Rs 1
 Second - age under 12: an elementary reading book, writing to slow dictation, and arithmetic up to short division. Reward Rs 2
 Third - age under 15: reading matter of 'ordinary difficulty', writing to slow dictation, and arithmetic up to full division. Reward Rs 3
 Fourth - age under 18: reading from a newspaper, writing a letter and arithmetic to the rule of Three. Reward Rs 4.

² see p.81 below

³ Admin Report 1878-79

complaints of the early colleges was that many of their qualified teachers were tempted away by higher salaries into administrative work in commerce or industry."¹

This policy had the natural effect of increasing the difference between the monastery schools and the lay or 'house' schools, since they reacted differently. The lay school teachers quickly came to realise that by arranging to be examined regularly and by pushing as many pupils as possible through the examination, they could earn for themselves quite a comfortable income. This was of no interest to monks. Similarly, a lay school principal saw an assistant teacher provided free by the government as a means of increasing his output of examination passers and hence his income. Monks on the other hand saw in such a teacher a potential threat to their prestige: he was skilled in matters of which they were ignorant. Consequently they were far less ready, and normally would accept only a teacher who was one of their own pupils. Being a member of the community himself, he was no threat to the community. The results showed up quickly. By 1877 the number of monastic schools was dwindling, while that of the lay schools was growing fast. Of the primary vernacular scholarships awarded in that year, four went to monastery pupils while twenty-eight went to lay school pupils. In the same year, 18.1% of lay school pupils won awards under examination, against 4% of monastery pupils.²

In some areas, notably Amherst and Akyab, the areas of longest occupation, the monasteries were definitely unco-operative. Regarding Amherst, the monks were said to have had a reputation for considering that they had no functions beyond 'occupying the exceptionally luxurious monasteries that the Talaings found'.³ It seems that in fact a little later, in 1887, there was a definite compact between certain monasteries that they would have nothing to do with the system of accepting government teachers in their schools.⁴ On the newly won districts of the Pegu division, on the other hand, particularly in Rangoon, Henzada and Prome 'the most cordial approval was expressed'.⁵

¹ Quoted by Musgrave in 'Society and Education in England since 1800'

² G.R. on P.I.R. 1876-77

³ *ibid*

⁴ Taw Sein Ko - Burmese Sketches I p 263

⁵ G.R. on P.I.R. 1876-77

However this attitude was far from universal even in these areas. U Htin Aung reports a conversation between H.S. Olcott, the American advocate of Buddhism who visited Burma in 1885, and the Thin-gazar Sayadaw, in which Olcott remarked that the monks

have as a body discarded their role as teachers of religion and morality to the people, and have become mere civil servants in the pay of the British government. Accepting stipends from the new government, they now spend their time teaching elementary mathematics and surveying to their pupils in the monasteries.

The Saya-daw agreed that it was regrettable but could do nothing to withstand the catastrophic tide of change.¹ While it is not easy to recognise the position alleged by Olcott in the records, this was a point of view that existed, and the scheme itself must have contributed considerably to the divisions in the Sangha.

Another major shift of policy was the establishment of government schools of a primary standard. This was just what it had been sought to avoid in Phayre's time. Fytche was however considering doing it in 1870, so that the indigenous schools would have some competition and a standard to measure themselves against, but it was Eden who actually issued orders that a scheme should be prepared for establishing coeducational schools in the major towns. The stated intention was that these schools should stimulate the monasteries and that in future years monasteries which contained monks educated in such schools would naturally tend to turn in their direction. It was not, apparently, expected, though it might have seemed an obvious danger, that these schools would set the indigenous schools a further step away from the route to a higher education; that their existence rendered it by so much less likely that a monastery pupil would proceed to middle and high schools instead of remaining a peasant in his village. It would seem prima facie probable that the higher schools would draw their intake from these schools rather than from the indigenous schools. Eden's last remarks quoted above (p.61) could almost bear the interpretation that this was what was intended. The idea, however, seems to have been something of a panic measure, which went into force when it was suddenly realised that the first class of teachers were about to graduate from the Rangoon Training School and that it might well be

¹ see Htin Aung - Burmese Monks' Tales - Columbia University Press 1966
p.144

that they would be unacceptable to the monasteries. They had been guaranteed a post, and to make sure of it these schools were hurriedly founded. The Training School was closed also, to be opened after a gap of a year as part of the Rangoon High School - a gap which caused much trouble later.

However by 1874 there were 14 government primary schools: by 1880 the number had risen to 16. They did not in fact have the effect that might have been expected, and if there were any undeclared intention of relegating the indigenous schools into the background through them it came to nothing. The reason was simply their very poor success. There were two causes of this. The first was the fact that though the teachers placed in charge of them were fully certificated products of the training school, they were necessarily very young men in their first posts - experienced teachers with training did not at this stage exist. These young teachers found it extremely difficult to establish themselves as acceptably trustworthy in the eyes of the parents of their pupils - Burma being a country where only age brings prestige. The second reason was that right from the start they became involved in the complicated question of the position of English in the curriculum.

This question was of course a bone of contention for many years, though the positions adopted were not always what one would expect from reading modern nationalist accounts of the period. At this stage the local peoples were pressing hard to be taught English, while the English educationalists were concerned to maintain the position of the vernacular languages. It was not quite the same clash as the orientalist/modernist argument of the 1830s, though in that too the same inversion of positions is visible: the most rigid orientalists were English - Wilson, Tytler and Prinsep - while few English modernists ventured to state their case so uncompromisingly as Ram Mohan Roy. That dispute had been settled in favour of an English style of education to be conducted not necessarily in the English language - Western style history, geography, mathematics and science, rather than classical Arabic with Quranic law, classical Persian with Persian literature and Sanskrit with the Vedas and Brahmanas. It had been an argument comparable with contemporary arguments in Europe over the comparative

value of a classical education in Latin and Greek literature against modern science and history. Many Sanskrit pandits would no doubt have been happy to take seriously Gaisford's squib -

The advantages of a classical education are twofold - it enables us to look down with contempt on those who have not shared its advantages, and also fits us for places of emolument not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.

The solution had been easier in Europe however since the edges were more blurred: some at least of the eighteenth century philosophers and scientists could, and did, still write in Latin and at the same time the vernaculars had been developed to a high literary stage. In the East the points at issue could not be blurred. The 1854 Dispatch made the position absolutely clear -

The education which we desire to see extended in India is that which has for its object the diffusion of improved arts, science, philosophy and literature of Europe: in short, of European knowledge.

A Roman administrator in first-century Britain might have said "Mediterranean knowledge, rather than Celtic bards' songs and epics." It was as a matter of fact very much in accordance with the wishes of the people who were to be subjected to the education.

Once the decision was made however, it became apparent that the provision of European knowledge entailed also the provision of English language studies also. The vernacular languages, either in India or in Burma, were not thought to be adequate to handle the concepts and ideas involved, even if people had been available well enough versed in both the languages and the concepts. Sanskrit and Pali might have been adequate, but the Calcutta Public Instruction Committee's idea of having an English scientist taught Sanskrit so that he could lecture in that language seems to have been sufficiently daunting to make sure that no one would take it further. For the higher stages of education English was a necessity and would remain one, at least for many years. From the start however it was regarded as settled policy that the vernaculars should not be disregarded, but used to the greatest possible extent -

In any general system of education, the English should be taught where there is a demand for it: but such instruction should always be combined with... study of the vernacular of the district and with such general instruction as can be conveyed through that language... (by) the instrumentality of masters who may... knowing English... impart to their fellow countrymen the information which they have obtained... It is our desire to see them cultivated together in all

¹ Dispatch 1854: Selections from Educational Records vol.II 1840-1859 p.366

Schools in India of a sufficiently high class to maintain a schoolmaster possessing the necessary qualifications.¹

It was felt very strongly that if western-style education were allowed to become too markedly English, an unbridgeable gulf would be opened between the educated and the uneducated people, all hope of a seepage of culture from one section of the population to the other would disappear, and the vernaculars would become mere peasant dialects instead of being developed into viable modern languages.

The practicalities were debated for years: generally, however, the Education Departments remained on the defensive in maintaining the position of the vernaculars, while on the whole their most vigorous attackers were the educated people of the country. To teach and to be taught English was at this time 'progressive'; to discourage its study was 'retrograde and reactionary' in the best educated view.² The question was, as usual, one of where the line should be drawn - at what stage English would have to become the medium of instruction, and consequently at which lower stage its serious study would have to begin. In this tug-of-war the Education Departments were generally trying to raise the level at which English studies should start, against a steady pressure from the people concerned to lower it, while higher authority from time to time put in a capricious oar, with unpredictable results.

In Burma, the principle was defined at the start -

The middle schools would be Vernacular with English classes attached. The study of English would be optional. There are two great principles in these schools, first, that all who desire a sound education may obtain it in their mother tongue; second, that those who elect to learn English shall study it as a classic, and that a considerable part of the instruction that they receive in the several subjects of the middle course shall be imparted to them in the vernacular.³

But it had been compromised long before 1873, when this was written.

As early as 1860 Fytche wrote -

Every enterprising and intelligent Burman covets the acquisition of English, not out of mere vanity, not to have an excuse for free-thinking and free-living or to curry favour with his conquerors... not from the small ambition of becoming a copyist in a public office, but

¹ Dispatch 1854 para 14 op. cit. p.367

² On this whole subject the documents included in the Government of India's Selections from Educational Records Vol.II 1963 are of much interest.

³ D.P.I.'s circular no.83-38 of 29 Jan 1873 para 5 sect 1.

because he regards it as the key to all knowledge.¹

The situation had only changed when the government primary schools were opened in 1873 in that the pressure for the learning of English was increasing all the time. It proved a tremendous disappointment when it was found that these new government institutions did not propose to teach English. These schools charged a fee, in accordance with the principle that what was not paid for was not valued. It was only 8 annas a month, it is true, but the monastery and lay schools were free, and the people could see no reason why they should pay anything for an education that did not include English. It was after all natural: English was the key to the world of the cash nexus - why should cash enter into anything else? Cash money was after all quite a recent introduction into Burma by the English. Almost at once

They said that if English was taught they would gladly avail themselves of the advantages... the feeling was so strong and the desire to obtain English teachers was so clearly evinced by the readiness with which they employed at their own cost any available... teacher... (that it was) determined with some reluctance to depart from the object which was held in view when the schools were first proposed, and now whenever possible an English class has been added.²

In the following year -

It has been found impossible to maintain the proposed status of the schools and at the same time to secure their popularity. The people crave for an English education, however imparted, at the expense of the vernacular. To this general desire it has been found necessary to yield and the schools are now of an Anglo-vernacular class. At the same time as proposed by Mr. Hordern it is absolutely necessary to frame stringent rules under which a pupil is permitted to study English in them. These conditions should insist on a sustained improvement in the vernacular as a necessary preliminary....³

However, through the years there seems to have been constant pressure from parents upon the young schoolmasters to teach as much English as they could at the expense of anything else. There are regular complaints about parents' attempts to interfere with the curriculum - Matthew Arnold regarded it as a defect in fee-paying schools that parents thought they had a right to interfere - and at the same time there were complaints about the difficulty of enforcing attendance. Later in the decade the authorities came to fall in with the popular

¹ Admin Report on Tenasserim 1859-60

² Admin Report 1873-74

³ Admin. Report 1874-75

view and to regard these schools as a bridge between the indigenous schools and the middle schools, not as parallel to the former. They seem to have tended to become the institutions where children learned their English as a preparation for the middle school. Thus the middle school became more of an English institution than had ever been intended, and the imparting of the 'several subjects of the middle course.. in the vernacular' was greatly narrowed. Eden's direct involving of the government in primary education was a mistake.

Children were expected to start in a monastery or lay school, and to move on after an examination to one of the Government Cess Schools, as they came to be called -

The vernacular admittance test was set up to weed out candidates so that they would have to work hard to get into the Cess school to learn English. The results have been disappointing. It is an open question whether the tests could be strictly enforced without endangering the schools' existence, but they must be enforced at any cost. Those that failed to survive could well be spared.

The children who used these schools were, of course, in the main the children of the town in which the school was situated, and this provided a further bone of contention. The schools were financed out of the 5% cess surcharged on the land revenue and other government levies for the purpose of providing local amenities, which was therefore paid mainly by the people of the small villages, not by the people of the larger towns. It was soon realised therefore that in practice the outlying villages were subsidising the education of the generally richer inhabitants of the towns. The villages do not seem to have raised any objections: presumably they regarded it as money collected by the government for its own inscrutable purposes, and they did not expect to get anything in particular for it. According to the Rajaniti, customary dues flow in to the King as rivers do to the sea - and who asks where one particular brook's water goes? But the British government officials did,² and after 1877 the arrangement was increasingly questioned -

Those (schools) that fail may without regret be closed especially when it is borne in mind that they are for the benefit of the town children, while paid for from taxes levied on the rural population.³

1. G.R. on P.I.R. 1877-78 para.14

2 This was a problem in India too: cf. 'In my Dispatch of 8 April 1861 I pointed out that the 1% fund was applicable to Rural schools for the agricultural classes, not for the Tehsil schools.'

3 Admin. Report 1877-78

In Rangoon rewards are paid from the Education Cess, of which nearly half is thus absorbed: the practice is clearly unjust and must be discontinued.¹

It is an abuse to spend the Cess Fund on Town Schools.²

There is no sufficient reason why the people of the towns who pay no educational cess should not pay such fees as are requisite... especially in schools where English is taught.³

Pressure was therefore brought to bear on the towns to increase their contributions -

The small provision made by municipalities for primary education cannot be favourably regarded.⁴

This met with vigorous resistance from the municipalities, led by Rangoon, by far the largest.

Though the provision of funds for primary education was undoubtedly one of the duties which the supreme government in creating municipalities intended to place in their hands... the opinion which prevailed was there were more urgent requirements... and no funds could be spared.⁵

It was pointed out to the Rangoon Municipality that their headquarters establishment and secretary's office cost more than half as much as the government's own secretariat, and that education was at least as important as road watering which cost Rs 28,648. The Toungoo municipality resolved to close their school and to pay a grant to the mission and lay schools instead, since the deficit on their 'government' school equalled 10% of municipal revenue. The threat does not seem to have been carried out: the school was still in existence in the following year. It is perhaps worth remarking that the leading members of these refractory municipal bodies were all government servants appointed ex officio at this time. The fact did not make them subservient. In the end the government were compelled to point out that Rs 229,298 of the Rangoon municipal revenues came from sources assigned to them by the government: the continuance of the assignment might depend on compliance. The other municipalities were in a similar situation, and resistance collapsed.⁶

1 G.R. on P.I.R. 1876-77

2 G.R. on P.I.R. 1877-78

3 *loc. cit.*

4 G.R. on P.I.R. 1876-77

5 Rangoon Municipality Proceedings - Gazette 1879

6 In the current year the Chief Commissioner has been compelled to make the annual grants to each municipality from the provincial revenues conditional on a proper provision being made towards the support of the town dispensary and school. - G.R. on Municipalities Report 1878-79. Gazette 1880 suppt p.75

In this atmosphere of controversy and uncertainty, it is not very surprising that young and inexperienced masters did not make much headway. The situation was not given a firm basis until 1882, when under new legislation all duties and powers of the government in relation to schools was transferred to the municipalities. Substantial grants to municipal funds to cover the cost however continued to be necessary, on a basis called temporary, but which promised to go on for ever. In 1883-84 the amount of the government grant was Rs 174,000 out of a total municipal expenditure of Rs 215,800. In 1885-86, it was reported that of the total educational expenditure, 28.82% was met by provincial funds and 23.82% by municipal funds: this looks like a rapid change in the situation, but in fact the municipal funds largely derived from government grants, so that in fact the change was only on paper. It did not prove so easy as had been hoped to separate the government's responsibility from the municipalities'.

Higher levels of education, apart from the Rangoon High School, received less concentrated attention during this decade. It had been laid down that elementary education was the matter of the first importance, on which the money was to be spent. It was still presumed that those interested in a secondary education would be the wealthier and

the resources of the State ought to be so applied as to assist those who cannot be expected to help themselves, and the richer classes of the people should gradually be induced to provide for their own education.¹

This policy applied to Burma also -

The observations made by the Chief Commissioner on the subject of expenditure scarcely seem to have received the attention to which they were entitled. The main items of increased cost total Rs 40,202, and of this at least half was devoted to fostering non-indigenous schools. The main object is not to impart a high degree of scholarship to a few, but to improve the instruction given throughout the country at large....

The expansion of education must be from the primary schools through the middle² class and district schools to the High School in Rangoon.

Obviously any proposal for the expansion of secondary education at this time called for nerve.

Probably there was another reason for the lack of attention to

¹ Secretary of State - Dispatch 13 of 25 Apr 1864

² G.R. on P.I. Report 1878-79

the secondary schools. Up to 1874, there was no Inspector of Schools, only Deputy Inspectors. Now it had been expected that these Deputies would inspect secondary schools as well as primary, but this was ruled out by the government of India who felt that the deputies must confine themselves to the lower schools. Consequently there was no one to inspect the middle schools except the D.P.I. in person: he can rarely have had time. Therefore, until Unwin's appointment as Inspector in 1874, these schools had less direct personal access to the Education Department than the lower schools.

The middle schools also became involved in the same language troubles as the government cess schools. In the middle schools

the intention was that English should be learned as a classic, and that all other subjects should be taught in the language of the country. This intention was frustrated by the disinclination of the parents and pupils to be guided by it. This is not to be wondered at; before middle class education can be given in the vernacular there must first be a good supply of suitable text-books in the vernacular, and second good normal schools for the training¹ of native teachers. As yet neither can be said to exist.

In fact however, at this stage there can not really have been much expectation that much instruction would be given in Burmese in secondary schools, and, as has been noted above, the existence of the cess schools made it rather less likely. The non-government schools must always have been conducted quite largely in English. However the difficulties persisted. In 1881 it was still true that -

as yet we have few Burmese or Karen teachers who can teach English, mathematics or history. The masters in middle and high schools are chiefly English or Indian who cannot make Burmese the medium of instruction,² and so the boys do not really grasp what they are taught.

It is interesting to note that a language problem was nothing new in British education, and was not always handled so tenderly.

In 1852 Matthew Arnold wrote in his official report -

(in Welsh schools) their drawback is that they have to acquire the medium of information as well as the information itself, while the English children possess the medium at the outset. There can, I think, be no question but that the acquirement of the English language should be more and more insisted upon by your Lordships in your relations with these schools as the one main object for which your aid is granted. Whatever encouragement individuals may think it desirable to give to the preservation of the Welsh language

¹ G.R. on P.I. Report 1877-78

² Admin. Report 1880-81

on grounds of philological or antiquarian interest, it must always be the desire of a government to render its dominions, as far as possible, homogenous and to break down barriers to the freest intercourse between the different parts of them... and they are not the true friends of the Welsh people who, from a romantic interest in their manners and traditions, would impede an event which is socially and politically so desirable for them.¹

No one ever seems to have proposed the abolition of Burmese.

Excluding this radical solution, the dilemma is plain. Unless a class of children were selected for intensive instruction in English from an early age so as to be completely bilingual, it would take a very long time to build up a capacity for teaching unfamiliar subjects to children whose English was less than perfect. If on the other hand an attempt were made to establish such a class of linguists, in the mood of the time English would become their preferred language for ordinary purposes, and the gulf between educated and uneducated would be emphasised, contrary to the established policy that vernacular education should be fostered 'in such a way that Burmese shall become the spoken vernacular of all the indigenous races'. In the end the problem was really left to solve itself: the popular desire and economic pressure to learn English ensured that English standards improved, while the Education Department's steady emphasis on Burmese ensured that this was not forgotten, until in the end the two sides met and a reasonable competence in both was achieved.

In spite of the difficulties there was some growth. At the time of the establishment of the Education Department there was a total of 29 secondary schools - government and aided, boys' and girls', including normal schools, which were often treated as a mere subdivision of middle schools - and this increased somewhat irregularly to a total of 43 in 1882. It seems to be impossible to derive satisfactory comparative figures of the actual growth in numbers from year to year of the comparative numbers of pupils, owing to constant changes in definitions, and consequently the basis on which numbers were reported. The 43 schools of 1882, for instance, were stated to have a total of 1474 pupils in that year: in the next the 43 are shown as having 6063 pupils. Presumably the latter figure includes at least some

¹ taken from 'Arnold on Education' - ed. Gillian Sutherland p 23

lower-standard pupils from some of the institutions.

Included with the government secondary schools, but always regarded as something apart from the rest, was the Rangoon High School. It was the growing point upon which effort and resources were concentrated, and in the end was the most, perhaps the only, really successful government initiative in education. It was always the Education Department's own field of action, and was expressly excluded from the hand-over to municipal control in 1882. It was established in 1873 on the initiative of Ashley Eden as a result of his dissatisfaction with the state of affairs which he found on his appointment -

At present, Government has no school of its own at the capital of the Province... It is obviously very undesirable that the only provision made for the people of the province at the Headquarters of the Administration should be through institutions over which it has no direct and detailed control. And although the people of this country have not the same prejudice against sending their children to missionary schools that the people of India have, I hardly think it right that they should be compelled to send them to schools¹ of this character or to send them to no school at all.

The new school opened in the following year under Gilbert, taken from the Moulmein Town School, which did not long survive his loss, and it grew rapidly in importance. Initially, Eden's intention was that it should be aimed at training Burmese for employment in departments of government, to take the place of Indians brought from Calcutta, and that it should be directed towards a final examination different from and better adapted to local conditions than the Calcutta University matriculation -

The remedy is to establish a local standard which embraces such subjects as are really likely to be useful to the young of the province in after life. We have a distinct demand for men in all departments of government who shall be possessed of a certain quality of education. Why should we neglect to give them this particular class of education because in a neighbouring province, very differently situated, a standard has been fixed which involves cramming a great deal of useless knowledge... while all² the time taken in preparing for this test is lost....?

In fact however no work seems to have been done on any other standards: Calcutta University was always the guiding light and the idea of using the new school as a training ground for government service went

¹ Chief Commissioner's minute of 28 Sept 1872 - quoted by U Kaung op.cit. p.111

² ibid p.110

no further. The Rangoon High School's first two candidates matriculated in 1876. These were the first from the whole of Burma, though in 1871 three candidates from the Diocesan school had tried and failed. From this time the school was the leading secondary school in Burma - even though in the next year all its five candidates failed. None passed from any other government school till 1881 - private schools were later still.¹ By 1878 its staffing was completed on a very expensive scale, with graduates from English and Scottish universities, and the Pali scholar, Forchhammer, from Germany. In the high school department each pupil cost the government £90.11s.9d. in that year, but in spite of the emphasis laid on concentrating expenditure on elementary education, no question seems to have been raised on the principle of this. The Rangoon High School was the permanent exception. In its middle school section the cost per pupil was Rs 120 in 1878, against an average of all government middle schools of Rs 75 in 1882. It continued to develop rapidly. In 1879 a 'College Department' was set up and affiliated to Calcutta University, with four students reading for the First Year Arts examination. This was of course even more expensive: on this the comment was made however -

No doubt the £87l. 12s. spent on teaching the four or five students in the College Department would have gone much further in endowing scholarships tenable by Burmese boys at Calcutta colleges and perhaps boys sent to Calcutta would have obtained a better education than they can do here. Still it is expedient to persevere.²

It must have been a difficult decision, but the principle was surely correct. A B.A. class was opened in 1883 and the College Department became the Rangoon College of Calcutta University in 1884: Rangoon obtained its first B.A. degree in the same year. There were of course a number of Burmese graduates already: the missions had sent boys abroad for education for many years and in 1873 the first Burmese had been sent abroad for education by their own families.³ The first results of these pioneering examples were beginning to work through.

The Rangoon High School in turning so completely to Calcutta did not fulfil Eden's hopes that it would provide a training in more technical subjects, and these remained a problem. Furnivall's

¹ Examination results are given in detail in the Gazettes of the period.

² Admin. Report 1880-81

³ Moral and Material Progress 1873-74

assertion however that nothing was done in this direction for the reason that it was easier and cheaper to bring in Indians than to train Burmese is simply not true.¹ In 1872 Eden remarked that 'the Madrasses and Bengalees now in charge of our hospitals and dispensaries... are not only dissatisfied and troublesome, but do not in any way acquire the confidence of the people of the country'.² He also knew that they were more expensive than Burmese would be. In fact they were paid a 50% bonus for service in Burma: it was considered preferable to train and employ Burmans, even if they had to be paid level with the Indians. Already in 1867 a recommendation had been made for the establishment of a medical school in Burma: in 1869 the Government of India had agreed in principle, but they had not yet found it possible to provide funds for it. This was in fact remarkably prudent, since it would at this stage certainly have failed miserably. A few years later, in 1874, an experiment was made with a series of medical and legal lecture courses: the Civil Surgeons of Rangoon, Moulmein, Bassein and Proma were required to give free lectures on medical subjects to anyone interested. Initially, it seems, they had good audiences, but they dwindled away, unable to follow what was said. The old trouble had arisen: the doctors could not lecture in Burmese and few Burmese knew enough English to benefit:

The experiment had failed, as the law class failed last year, to show that the Burmese were prepared as yet to prosecute₃ any study requiring a mastery of the English language.³

In the following year the experiment was abandoned -

The mere knowledge of English such as is sufficient to enable a learner to understand lectures commands a far higher rate of remuneration than could be got by any knowledge of medicine short of a diploma. In time... some may be found willing to qualify for the medical profession in the (Calcutta) Medical College.⁴

However

Until middle education can be diffused much more extensively than at present, the expediency of devoting much attention to any higher studies is more than doubtful,⁵

It is apparent that it was not the availability of Indian staff that, at this time, 'reacted prejudicially on education in Burma', but the sheer impracticability of teaching running before walking: later,

¹ Colonial Policy and Practice p.54

² Minute of 28 Sept 1872

³ Admin. Report 1875-76

⁴ Admin Report 1876-77

⁵ ibid

vested interests came to exist and positions congealed. It was not long however before more was attempted. In 1879 arrangements were made for medical training in Calcutta and Madras. In 1881-82 a system of scholarships was inaugurated to be held by Burmese in India. From this year two scholarships were offered, open to Burmese and Indo-Burmese only. They were to be held at the Calcutta Engineering College and the Calcutta Medical College: they were worth Rs 50 per month each plus Rs 10 for books for five years and included free passages and a guarantee of employment with the government on satisfactory completion.¹ Similar scholarships were also offered to be held at the Forest College at Dehra Dun. It will be recalled that this was the year in which Rangoon obtained the first FYA success: professional education was not very far behind the Arts.

A point which is worthy of note however is that from about 1879 a veterinary school was run very successfully in Rangoon by Dr. Frost, the government veterinarian. It seems to have operated with the minimum of fuss, turning out 10 to 15 reasonably qualified vets each year, but rarely rating more than a few lines in the reports. There seem to have been no difficulties of comprehension: Dr. Frost must have been a remarkable man, and, given a few of his teaching ability on the medical side, things might have gone better.

A field of technical instruction in which the government was always intensely interested was land-measurement, and constant attempts were made from early days to ensure an adequate outturn of surveyors. As early as 1845 Stilson had produced a text-book of the subject for the Baptist schools. In addition to the need for survey clerks in government offices, it was felt to be essential that village thagyls also should have survey training so that they would be able to make reasonably accurate reports on land occupation. The importance of the subject to the government is stressed by the salaries paid: in 1877 for instance the Deputy Commissioner, Thon-kwa, was advertising for a surveyor, who 'must speak Burmese fluently' and 'must understand surveying and levelling thoroughly, also plan drawing and the preparation of estimates'. These qualifications were worth Rs 200 per month - double the salary of a Deputy Inspector of schools or a head judicial clerk, and ten times that of a low grade teacher. The urgency was

¹ Notification No.59 of 16 Dec. 1880

of course dictated by the transition in British Burma to a cash economy: as land becomes worth money, it became essential to define holdings precisely. Government's efforts in this direction were not initially aimed at producing the kind of qualifications just described: the classes which opened were designed 'not so much for the improvement in new methods but for greater accuracy in the old.'¹ Students should be able to measure areas, not necessarily draw maps: a distinction was drawn between land measuring and land surveying. Nevertheless, even in this strictly limited aim, success was slow to come. From some time in the 1860s special land measurement schools had existed. They do not seem to have made much headway, and in 1872 they were abolished, and the subject was taught in the government schools.² In 1875, 'special rules to encourage the learning of land-measuring in (government cess) schools have lately been sanctioned in view of the requirements of the public service,'³ and in the revised rules for Local Committees of Public Instruction published on 28 October 1876 one item mentioned as to be budgeted for from the Cess Funds was 'fees for examiners in land-measurement'. The pressure for results arising from the decision to start on a cadastral survey of British Burma in 1879, and the desirability of having Burmese able to work on it, caused a special survey class to be set up at Pegu in 1877-78: this again was a failure since 'candidates could not be found with enough arithmetic.'⁴ Only five passed out of a class of 126. The school was closed, and its remains became a special class under the Rangoon High School. A new attempt was made in 1879-80, when special classes were started, both in Burmese and in English, in the three chief government schools, Rangoon, Akyab and Moulmein, but these too failed for similar reasons - four candidates passed out of 63. It was decided that a practical course in the field gave a better chance of success, and consequently, while the Akyab and Moulmein classes were continued, more importance was given to three new classes which were formed, one attached to each of the three cadastral survey parties now at work. These classes were open to all applicants who could pass a test of literacy in Burmese, in simple arithmetic, and in knowledge of English letters and figures.⁵

1 Government Resolution dated 13 Nov 1880

2 Admin, Report 1871-72

3 Government Resolution no. 51 of 1875

4 Government Resolution on P.I. Report 1878-79

5 Gazette 1881, supp. p.473

Examinations were to be held half-yearly, open to any candidate from a government school or any other on a recommendation from the D.P.I. or an Inspector of Schools, and qualified for a 'School Pass Certificate',¹ which seems to have been regarded as an 'easy' form of qualification.² Twentyfive scholarships worth Rs 10 per month were offered for attendance at these classes, mainly intended for thu-gyis and members of their families who might be associated with them in their work. Better results were now obtained, and when the scheme was revised again in 1885, there were six classes, and eighty scholarships on offer.³

Another type of institution in which the government found a direct interest was the teachers' training school or 'normal' school. These had existed in the missions for many years, but there was in fact little to distinguish them from regular middle schools. Under the 'monitorial' system of organising schools which Bell had introduced in Madras, instruction was given to the junior pupils by the senior: even outside such a formalised system a boy might become a 'pupil-teacher' at a very low age, and once he had finished with the middle school he was considered perfectly adequate to teach an elementary class~~all~~ that they were expected to learn in the way of reading, writing and arithmetic. As often as not schools looked among their own pupils for their future teachers, and engaged them as soon as they were thought able to cope with the lowest forms. In 1869 the Rev. C. Warren of the S.P.G. school reported -

Another drawback is the lack of efficient teachers... We in general train our own and, I am happy to say, we have two or three as good as could be wished: still the supply is so limited, or rather the inducement is so small, that we are obliged to employ lads who are more fit to be pupils than teachers.⁴

Whilst the Baptist mission were rapidly expanding their village schools, they needed a more rapid increase in numbers than could be formed in this way, and they consequently established several schools expressly to produce teachers. They should not however be regarded as much more than regular middle schools with a slight slant. They finally disappeared

¹ Notification of 22 Nov 1881 - Revised Survey Class Scheme

² See anonymous article 'Education in Burma' in 'Buddhism' 1904
 'Parents of sons attending vernacular schools very naturally inferred that these schools were intended to train boys for government service. They slowly came to understand that even if he passed vernacular VII standard the boy had little chance of employment as a clerk unless he had some knowledge of English. Then there was a rush to the survey schools from the vernacular schools.'⁴

³ Education Manual 1885 p.60

⁴ P.I.R. 1868-69 App. p.xv

from the records, if not from existence, in 1879 -

The training of teachers continues to form such a small and incidental part of the work of these schools, which are now more and more adapting their system to that of the Department... that I have now classed them among schools for general education.¹

The government became involved in the matter of teachers' training on account of the decision to offer to supply assistant teachers to indigenous schools which asked for them. Funds were available in the cess funds balances, and in 1871 a teachers' training school was opened under W.S. Sandys, an English-educated Burman who had returned to Burma to open his own school.² He described his training school, perhaps revealingly, as 'The government school established for the instruction of young men who wish to work in Rangoon-Hanthawadi as teachers of science, land-measurement etcetera.'³ The school was intended to handle 100 primary school teachers and 10 middle school teachers, but started with 59 only, carefully picked by Sandys. The intention was that the trainees should go out into the existing monastery schools to instruct with more modern methods and in more practical disciplines than the ancient Pali literary tradition. The government panicked on reports that it was going to be difficult to place these new teachers, who had been guaranteed posts, in the monasteries: the results were disappointing too - Sandys was a less than inspired teacher, and out of the first 29 trainees only 12 succeeded in obtaining a better mark than 50% on final examination in July 1873. The P.I.R. for 1873-74 stated flatly -

When the time was drawing near to sending them out as teachers it was not considered advisable to send them out to the monastic schools but to open government primary schools, and place them under the management of these young men.⁴

This hurried and ill-considered measure was taken at once:⁵ the Training School was closed in 1874, while the Department thought again.

It took until 1876, and then a new Normal School was opened

1 P.I.R. 1878-79 p.11.

2 Sandys was an important figure at this time: see p.102 below

3 မဟာသင်တန်း ဂုဏ်ထူး ဖြစ်၍ လောကဓါတ် မဟာသင်တန်း ဖြစ်၍ လူမိတ်၊ အဝဂ္ဂ၊ သင်္ဂဟ၊ ဝိသုဒ္ဓိ၊ နိကာယ၊ အရာ၊ နှစ်လှိုင်၊ သောလူ၊ ပျံ၊ တို့ အား၊ သင်ကြား ပေး၍ ဝိသုဒ္ဓိ၊ သောလူ၊ အစိုးရ ကျောင်း၊ တော်

4 P.I.R. 1873-74

5 see also p.66 ff. These 'cess schools' remained a much-abused embarrassment to the Department until 1882, when they finally managed to lose the responsibility for them to the municipalities.

Burmese Reader I - Title page

with 26 trainees as part of the Rangoon High School. These trainees were given free board and tuition plus an allowance of Rs 2 per month as pocket money. In addition to training new teachers, the school had the function of offering refresher courses for teachers in service. By now the unreason of the panic of 1874 was manifest, and it was not long before the loss of two years' production of vernacular teachers was keenly regretted. Some at least of the monasteries were reconciled to accepting government-trained assistants, and were now prepared to put forward their own novices for training: there had been a great response to the encouragement given to the lay schools - new ones were opening all the time, and teachers passing out of training were given help in opening their own schools in new places as an alternative to working as assistants. In 1879 the scheme was extended to the extent of opening normal classes in the Akyab and Moulmein high schools, and by 1882 they were producing 50 to 70 trained teachers each year, most of whom were assigned to the best of the indigenous schools.¹ The demand now greatly exceeded the supply - especially in a year like 1884 when only 34 candidates out of 91 managed to gain their certificates.

At this point however the whole system suffered an abrupt check. The total number of teachers in service was rising by a steady 30 or 40 each year. In 1885-86 the crisis came when the number hit the ceiling at 216. The department suddenly found that they could find no funds for paying any more. In that year, 84 new certificates were issued to trainees from the government schools, and there was no money to pay them: worse - 192 more were still under training and a further 55 were presented independently, of whom 16 were from the indigenous schools, exactly the people who were wanted for the monasteries. The Department were being swamped by their own success. A warning was sounded -

It may be observed here that whereas hitherto it has been difficult to supply the demand for trained vernacular masters, the supply has increased so rapidly of late that the present difficulty is rather to find funds for the payment of certified teachers seeking employment. There is abundant need of their services throughout the province but both local and municipal funds are now strained to meet existing calls for educational expenditure and our trained teachers will be more and more under pressure to establish independent schools, a course which is much to be desired and which is encouraged by the liberal aid offered under the existing rules to schools so conducted.²

¹ P.I.R. 1881-82

² P.I.R. 1885-86 p.21

In the following year the number of certified assistants provided had had to come down to 214.

The difficulty of meeting the demand for salary grants to certified teachers has seriously threatened the progress of the work of improving the indigenous schools. At present 73 certificated teachers are awaiting employment. Efforts to induce them to open schools has little success - unduly liberal aid has been given in some localities to selected indigenous schools which have become independent of fee income.

In 1887-88 it was decided that to meet the situation drastic steps must be taken. To release funds in order to employ more trained teachers, which was seen as the work of the highest priority in elementary education, a number of grants were withdrawn, including the district prizes, primary scholarships, and the building and furniture grants. It was also decided that for the time being the normal class in Rangoon would be closed, and those at Moulmein and Akyab restricted.²

Throughout these fifteen years, it is manifest that the Department never really managed to plan properly for the supply of elementary teachers. The basic trouble was that the sort of standard of education that they thought required cost more than the people of the province could, or would, pay for themselves, and the government never managed to bring themselves to enforce a level of taxation which would cover it - probably the Government of India would have been frightened to let them try even if they had wanted to.

These 'normal schools' of course were mainly concerned with the supply of teachers for vernacular primary schools, Higher grade teachers still came largely from India or even from Europe, though a few were beginning to be developed in the country from among the Burmese and Eurasians.

As will be seen from the account above, only a small minority of the schools in Burma were directly under the control of the Education Department, and after 1882 only the Rangoon High School remained so: even this in 1885 was transferred to the control of the Educational Syndicate so that the Department had no remaining direct responsibility. This was strictly in accordance with the principles laid down in

¹ P.I.R. 1886-87

² P.I.R. 1887-88

England, where it had been prescribed in 1840 that the purpose of the inspectorate was not to control schools, but to advise and assist only. The voluntary societies in England however, were in a position to be much less amenable than the Public Instruction Committees in Burma could afford to be. The D.P.I., the Inspector of Schools, and the local Deputy Inspector were all ex officio members of the Committees, and the Deputy Commissioners were their Chairmen. Municipalities became Public Instruction Committees for educational purposes after they took over the government schools in their areas. but the Deputy Commissioner always had a seat upon them, usually as President. It was moreover constantly emphasised that the district officer was responsible for the well-being of education in his district, as he was for everything else. The Education Department, like the Public Works Department, was only there to provide him with the technical assistance necessary for the carrying out of his responsibility. The administrative structure of British Burma simply did not allow for unofficial action to the same extent as in England, though it was sought to set up the systems on parallel lines.

A further control was exercised through finance. So far as the Cess schools were concerned, the local committees were required by the 1873 rules to allocate the receipts of cess and fees each year between stated heads of expenditure, and to submit this budget to the D.P.I. for his approval: he had power to reallocate in any way he pleased if he saw fit. In the municipalities as has been seen,¹ most of the available funds came from grants or assignments from the government, and were conditional upon their being spent as required.

For the non-government schools, control was less open and depended upon the grant-in-aid system. Government aid had been given to private schools, particularly mission schools, from an early date - Maingy was giving funds to Mrs. Boardman's schools in Tavoy from 1826 - but the grants were haphazard and on a very small scale. They are given for 1867-68, at the start of the Education Department, as -

to 13 boys' middle schools	Rs 25.800	
5 girls' middle schools	5.800	
150 boys' lower Schools	7.140	
7 boys' normal schools	5,400	
.	Total	44.140 ²

¹ see p.71 above

² Admin. Report 1867-68

These schools covered a total of 4835 pupils. A large part of the largest item in this list went to the Diocesan school in Rangoon.

As the Department began to systematise education in Burma, it was inevitable that expenditure should increase, and also that rules should be made to regulate the payments. This stage had been reached a little earlier in England, where in 1862 the code of standards for the first time introduced the idea that payments should be made to schools strictly on the basis of the number of their pupils who could meet the appropriate standard at an annual inspection. It was not an ideal system, giving rise to a terrible rigidity, and immediately met with vigorous opposition both from teachers and from inspectors. It was tedious and time-consuming for the inspectors in Burma. The complaint was later made -

"The inspections of some of the larger aided schools occupy not less than a week or ten days, owing to the necessity of detailed oral examination of the pupils." This was one of Matthew Arnold's points against the system in England. However, as Robert Lowe, its author, told the House of Commons, if it proved inefficient, it would necessarily be cheap: if not cheap, it would necessarily be efficient. The system, modified in 1867, 1882, and 1890, lasted nearly to the end of the century. It was this system that was introduced to Burma. Initially as an experimental measure the Public Instruction Committees were directed to concentrate on 'a limited number of schools in each district for supervision and yearly examination and that these examinations should be conducted by a person deputed by the local committee and paid a special fee'.¹ Later, when first four (in 1871) and then two more (in 1872) Burmese officers were appointed for the purpose, the examination system began in earnest. These were appointed in the first instance to be 'deputy Inspectors

as regards indigenous schools directly aided; merely public examiners with regard to monastic schools indirectly aided,'²

but this distinction, designed to disavow any intention of trying to force the religious schools into a government mould, does not seem to have been maintained very strongly for very long.

The system really started working in 1873. At last there was

¹ Admin. Report 1870-71 p.136

² Admin. Report 1871-72

a full Inspector of Schools - Unwin - and the middle schools could therefore be brought in too. Eden wrote optimistically -

All that has been attempted has been to bring under organised and systematic control the primary education of the masses who have hitherto picked up such education as they could at home or at the Indigenous schools... The education which has hitherto been given at these institutions has been deteriorating.... One of the great problems of this administration has been to bring these schools into harmony with our educational standard¹. This problem, it is hoped, has now been really solved.

Any head of a school could apply to be examined in accordance with the standards prescribed for each year of schooling. The first set of four standards for Burma was published in Education Circular No.8 dated 14 Feb 1871, and was revised in 1873. At this stage standards were only prescribed in language and figures. This was, of course, essentially the same as the 1862 code in England, according to which grants were paid to schools on the strength of pupils' ability in reading writing and arithmetic only. Different from the English practice however, was the Burmese practice of making a matching cash reward along with a certificate to the pupil himself.² This was, of course, designed to stimulate a demand for examination from the school-children themselves and from their parents. To encourage education of girls, grants for girls were initially double those for boys. The education of girls was becoming a major preoccupation of the time, and not only in the East: in 1878 Samuel Smiles - an unerring senser of the ideas of the day - wrote: "To instruct woman is to instruct man... to enlarge her mental freedom is to extend and secure that of the whole community. For Nations are but the outcomes of Homes, and Peoples of Mothers."

In the monastery schools, the younger pupils, not yet entered into the Order, may have managed to take their rewards in cash, but the monks, in theory at least, could not. There were offered the equivalent in books - preferably the school books which the Department wished them to use. The start was reasonably promising. In 1873-74 the deputy inspectors examined 928 schools (out of an estimated 4250 indigenous schools) with 23,112 pupils, of whom 3,585 passed the standards. Of these 928 schools, 833 were in monasteries. For the next few years the

¹ Admin. Report 1873-74 p.149

² Moral and Material Progress 1873-74 p.24

number of schools inspected increased along with the size of the inspectorate, viz:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Awards made in Schools</u>			<u>Inspectors</u>	<u>Deputies</u>
	<u>Monastic</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Total</u>		
1873-74	833	95	928	-	5
1874-75	939	155	1094	1	8
1875-76	874	255	1129	1	9
1876-77	986	268	1254	1	9
1877-78	661*	216*	2537*	2	7
1878-79	467	211	3023	2	7
1879-80	507	191	3091	2	8
1880-81	529	242	3219	2	8

*The basis of the figures changes in this year: the total is now the total number of schools inspected, the other figures are the numbers of schools in each class in which rewards were given. In previous years the numbers may be the result of adding together reports on varying bases and are not to be relied upon.

Even at this stage there was a strong tendency for lay schools to increase faster than monastic schools, and at all times they produced a much higher proportion of pupils who could pass the standards. Year by year figures culled from the reports are -

<u>Year</u>	<u>Schools tested and total pupils</u>		<u>Schools winning awards and pupils passing</u>	
	<u>Monastic</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Monastic</u>	<u>Other</u>
1875-76	874/25,223	268/ 8,167	/2448	/1403
1876-77	986/29,797	268/12,120	/2762	/1765
1877-78	2295/20,445	331/ 8793	661 /2037	216 /1590
1878-79	2686/17,086	337/ 8796	467 /1254	211/ 1685
1879-80	2693/18,619	355/ 8391	507 /1441	191 /1433
1880-81	2678/19,157	473/11,021	529 /1576	242 /1583
1881-82	2703/19,881	469/12,137	502 /1535	254 /1814
1882-83	2682/23,763	515/14032	631 /2179	313 /2513
1883-84	3293/30,422	728/17,850	781 /3375	395 /3560
1884-85	3831/32,517	879/22,405	825 /3414	449 /4622

The bases of calculation in these figures obviously vary from time to time, and the standards on which rewards were given seem to have varied to some extent, according to how much the examiner had left in his budget. The figures do not exactly agree with those, taken from other sources, immediately above. The trend however is apparent - in a rapidly growing educational system the lay schools were bigger and faster growing than the monastic schools. The differential result of the economic incentive is very marked. As may be imagined however, the results of these examinations were quite highly subjective, and there was a considerable difference between one Deputy Inspector's ideas and another's. In 1876, for instance, the proportion of children examined

to those passing varied from 4.5:1 in Toungoo, to 15:1 in Amherst. A further point noticeable in the reports on examinations is the enormously high rate of wastage - this tendency was the subject of constant complaint in later years, and was still a subject for extended comment in the 1935 Education Commission's report.¹ In 1874-75 the numbers who qualified in the various standards in all subjects were in the following proportions, taking standard I as 100 -

	I	II	III	IV	V
1874-75	100	56	24	6	1
1875-76	100	66	34	12	3

Assuming that the percentage qualified in each standard was roughly constant, it looks as though one year at school was all that one third of the children got, and only another third got more than another year. This was, of course, not very different from the pattern in England at the time.

The system however was satisfactory for a start. The standards were varied from time to time. In 1873 Pali was added to Burmese and arithmetic as a qualifying subject. In 1877 it was found that the numbers qualifying for prizes were becoming embarrassingly large, so that the sums involved were outrunning the money available. Orders were therefore issued that the standards must be tightened up: the result of this is visible in the table above (p.87). Even so, the proportion qualifying ranged from 4.5:1 in Bassein to 21.2:1 in Amherst in that year. In spite of Moulmein and its schools Amherst was always bottom: its monks were unco-operative - the Hough tradition had not been continued. Finally, in 1881 new grant-in-aid rules laid down extended scales of payment -

<u>Type of school</u>	<u>Drawing</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>Burmese</u>	<u>Arith.</u>	<u>Geog.</u>	<u>Pali</u>	<u>Hist.</u>	<u>Physi ology</u>	<u>Agric ulture</u>	<u>Sanit ation</u>
Indig. boys'	-	-	4	4	4	(4	4	4	4	4)
-do- girls'	-	-	6	6	6	(6	6	6	6	6)
lower primary	-	2	4	3	1	-	-	-	-	-
upper primary	1.50	2	4	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50	-	1.50
middle school	2	7	5	5 (+2 for algebra)	2	-	-	-	-	-

The use of a cash weighting for influencing the importance given to

1 Education Report 1935 pp 149 - 153

the suitability of recognising it at all in a strictly secular system -

This language is studied by no Burman for itself, or for philological purposes, but as a medium of prayer. As such (as has been remarked) it is not a secular study, and deserves no credit as one.

Although Bigaddet was a sympathetic observer of Buddhism, his appointment seems as insensitive as placing a Muslim in charge of Hebrew studies in an English University. Presumably it, and Forchhammer's later appointment to be Professor of Pali, were part of a deliberate policy of separating the study of Pali from religious studies and to get away from the time-honoured nissaya. The Resolution quoted above goes on -

if the craving for its study is such that it must be complied with in government schools, then the instruction must be systematic and scientific. Learning by heart a string of unintelligible words in one language and their meaning in another is not the way to study a classical language whose structure is only a little less intricate than Sanskrit.¹

This method of dealing with Pali roused some resentment: the official Pali studies were quite different from what a religious-minded Buddhist would expect. The European scholars would even pronounce it differently.²

The examination system became a part of the policy of separating the stages of education. A certificate of passing out of the primary school was necessary for acceptance in a middle school, and a middle school certificate for entry to a high school. The high school's aim was always a University matriculation certificate. Prizes and scholarships too could be attached to the results.

The first public examinations were held in 1876, but the results were disappointing. The examination was for middle schools only, and offered 'a means of testing the relative merits of all institutions professing to give a middle-class education'. But 'the so-called Government Middle Class schools did badly without exception... and in a comparative sense the solitary representative of lower class education from the Paungday Cess School the best of all'. The Board persevered and by 1878 they were arranging examinations for -

1. A 'provincial certificate' to qualify for the lower grades of the provincial service.

¹ Government Resolution No.353 dated 20 Sept 1876. Gazette 1876 Supp.p.701

² see further p.179 below

2. Scholarships to be held at the Rangoon High School - maximum age 17
3. Two primary vernacular scholarships per district to be held at a government middle school - maximum age 12.¹
4. Annual district prizes in Burmese, Pali, and Arithmetic. There were three prizes in each subject worth Rs 25, 15, and 10 for each district - maximum age 20 - intended for the encouragement of the indigenous schools.¹
5. Land measurement.

Finally in 1880 a general system of annual examinations for all schools was in being. The first results were again found disappointing -

The results of the examinations held for the first time this year were unsatisfactory in middle and primary schools. Even large government institutions in comparatively large towns such as Henzada were unable to pass a single pupil. The failure is attributed partly to the novelty of the examinations and also to the want of vernacular teachers. The knowledge of Burmese as a language is said to be deteriorating. The survey classes on which so much pains and money have been spent failed to produce any pupils capable of qualifying.²

Even in the following year it was noted -

Examination results have been disappointing: standards have been set too high.³

Grants-in-aid were however by now firmly geared to an examination system, being based both on attendance and on results, and the initial troubles were gradually eliminated.

The Board of Examiners was in fact the original seed of a very important development. In England, the Universities had become almost exclusively examining bodies - teaching being the function of their constituent colleges, and this pattern was extended into the East. There was however no university yet in Burma: conditions in Calcutta were too different for Calcutta University to control examinations satisfactorily. To reduce the weight of officialdom in the examination system, the Board in 1881 handed over its functions to a new body, the Educational Syndicate, established -

for the purpose of directing and controlling examinations under the grant-in-aid rules, and for promoting the study of medicine, engineering, law, and the technical arts.³

¹ but see p. 83 above
² Moral and Material Progress 1880-81 p.91
³ Moral and Material Progress 1881-82
⁴ Notification No.298 dated 25 Aug 1881

This new body, although the Education Department was strongly represented on it, had a considerable majority from outside the department, including officials and non-officials, Europeans and Burmese.¹ Its responsibilities increased rapidly: by 1883 they included making arrangements for changes in the curriculum, advising on matters referred to it by the Chief Commissioner, and awarding scholarships. A little later, in 1885, the Syndicate was incorporated as a Society under the Companies Act, so that as a corporate body it could legally hold property, and the Rangoon High School, including its College Department, which in the previous year had become the Rangoon College of the Calcutta University, was handed over to it. Thus the Board of Examiners was in fact the direct ancestor of the Rangoon University. This development was foreseen for the Syndicate almost at once: Taw Sein Ko, who was a member of it, wrote in 1883 -

The recent formation of the Educational Syndicate in British Burma gives a keen stimulus to the cause of education in the province. Having now a centralising authority, more effectual work will be done, and there is no doubt that the Syndicate will blossom into a University Senate.²

The idea had existed even before. Taw Sein Ko also reports Dr. Marks as saying that in 1879 Aitchison, the Chief Commissioner, expressed the hope that the Rangoon High School 'would bud into a college and blossom into a university for the Turanian races'.³

By the middle 1880s the pattern was set. In 1879 a new system of classification of schools in conformity with the Government of India's own nomenclature had been installed - to a certain amount of confusion in the statistics. It also tended to obliterate the distinction previously maintained between 'indigenous' and other schools, but this was already disappearing. The Hunter Commission on Education reported in 1882. Things were sufficiently organised for the Burma Education Manual to be issued in 1883 and reissued in 1885. Primary education was mainly in the hands of monastic and lay vernacular schools, aided by the government by means of prizes, by direct grants, and by the

¹ Original members were:- Mr.J.Jardine, President: Bishop Bigandea, Vice-president: Mr.C.F E. Allen, Government Advocate: Maung Ba Ohn, Asst. Commr: Rev.C.Bennett, American Mission: Dr.Forchhammer, Prof.of Pali: Mr.Harris,Exec.Engineer: Mr.de Courcy Ireland, I.G.P.: Dr.Johnson, Civil Surgeon: Mr.Scott Moncrieff,Civil Engineer: Mr.Nicholls, Baptist Mission: Maung Po: Mr.Hordern, D.P.I., Maung Po Maung, Inspector: Mr. Hodson, Rangoon H.S.

² Taw Sein Ko - Burmese Sketches I p.224

³ ibid p.236

provision of assistant teachers. By this time the lay schools, though still far fewer than the monastic schools, were already figuring more prominently in the prize lists. In addition the municipalities and a few private bodies, mostly missionary, operated primary schools under the regular grant-in-aid rules. Secondary education was in schools run by private bodies, again mainly missionary, though by now a number of the original 'indigenous' schools had reached a state where they could successfully put pupils through the middle school examinations, aided under the grant-in-aid rules and in the old government schools, now under municipal management. Apart from the rest was the Rangoon High School and College (which in fact operated its own primary, middle and teachers' training schools as well) controlled by the Educational Syndicate. The Syndicate in addition to this responsibility operated the system of examinations under which pupils passed out of one grade of school and qualified themselves, with or without a scholarship, for the next. From the government side the grant-in-aid system which provided a large part of the finance required was operated by the Educational Department, which consisted of the Director of Public Instruction, two Inspectors and 17 Deputy Inspectors, working, in theory at least, as the technical assistants of the regular District Officers.

Chapter V - Text Books: Their Authors and Publishers

There remains one body connected with education in British Burma which has not yet been considered. This is the Text Book Committee. When Phayre first considered vernacular education in 1866, he took an optimistic view of the vernacular texts available; he seems to have proposed to found a system of Burmese education on about six titles. This very soon proved misguided, and the lack of suitable text-books in Burmese was a constant theme of reports for a number of years. In 1872, slightly ahead of the government of India resolution of 1873, which ordered it, a Vernacular Education Committee was established to arrange for a supply of suitable school books. This committee, on 4 November 1879, was reconstituted as the Text Book Committee, of which the D.P.I. was president, nominating all the other members. The initial membership was quite distinguished, including Bishop Bigandet, Dr. Marks, W.S. Sandys, Dr. Forchhammer, the Rev. C. Bennett, Maung Ohn C.I.E. with Maung Ba Ohn as Secretary.

The difficulties which the committee faced from the start went to the root of the difficulties with which the Education Department was entangled. Their instructions required them to graft a western-style, practical, secular education on to an existing system which was based on a sacred classical language and aimed at religious and other-worldly ends. Perhaps the difficulty is best exemplified by the fact that the monks as educators continued to refuse to allow 'object lessons': Taw Sein Ko describes this feeling as still strong in 1915.¹ The term is one which has almost disappeared from modern use, except for a figurative sense, and even in the 1870s its usage was becoming drained of precise meaning-

the phrase was used sometimes to mean simple demonstrations in science, sometimes to mean using concrete examples to convey abstractions (especially in number work) and sometimes as a process of discrimination among colours, forms, and so on. Such lessons ranged in general 'over all the utilities of life and all the processes of nature. It begins with things familiar to the pupils and enlarges the² conceptions of these' (Bain - Education as a Science)²

In fact it belonged to an European tradition that derived through

¹ Burmese Sketches I p.265

² Lawson and Silver - A Social History of Education in England p.331

Pestalozzi from Comenius' sixteenth century revolt against the excessive verbalism of mediaeval education - against formal logic which juggled propositions without any reference to facts, and against appeals to authority against the evidence of the senses. The type of education against which Comenius rebelled was almost exactly that which the monasteries of Burma provided, once basic reading and writing skills were learned, and the clash had drawn no nearer to reconciliation since his day. No doubt any monk would have explained that 'object lessons' attached too much importance to the illusions of the sansara, but this reveals a basic difference between the aims of education in a government school and in a monastery.

However the Text Book Committee were required to provide suitable text books for schools of all kinds, both in English and in Burmese. As regards Burmese books, the first difficulty was that they must either be for the most part written from the beginning or translated, and in either case there was an extreme shortage of men 'qualified to write them by the possession at once of a knowledge of the subject and a knowledge of the language'.¹ All that there were had many other calls upon their time. Those most likely to be available were Christian missionaries who tended to slant their work in a way which might be unacceptable - or even unintelligible - to those who were not already in their flock. They tended to confuse matters also by using Archbishop Usher's calculation of B.C. 4004 for the date of the creation of the world as the basis of an 'anno mundi' era for dates. Judson used it, and Sandys in his Geography of Burma of 1869 equates the 'English Year of the World 3678' with the 'Burmese Year of the Religion 218'.² One more dating system was really the last thing wanted.

So far as translation was concerned the difficulty lay in finding suitable books to translate -

English readers and other school books at present in use are very unsuitable. It was lately made the subject of complaint by an intelligent Burman that the children are taught nothing but nonsense in our schools, and instead of

¹ Admin. Report 1872-73 p.178

² အင်္ဂလိပ်စာ ကမ္ဘာ့ သက္ကရာဇ် ၃၆၇၈ ခုနှစ် ၊ မြန်မာ့ သက္ကရာဇ် ၂၁၈ ခုနှစ်

³ Admin Report 1872-73 p

reading what is useful and moral, they were made to read about things which they could not understand, and which even to young Burmese children seemed ridiculous. And this statement is quite borne out by an examination of the ^{B, 2} readers prepared by the Calcutta School Book Society.

A similar but more general criticism was made by the Hunter Commission in 1882 -

Nothing can be more fallacious than the ordinary method of adapting English elementary school books to the supposed needs of Indian boys, by changing apples into mangoes, pence into pice, or Harry into Ram. Adapted or unadapted, the books that are most suitable, because conveying the most familiar ideas, to English children are the most unsuitable to the natives of India. Though often compelled to read about such things, the Indian learner knows nothing of hedgerows, birds' nesting, hay making, being naughty and standing in the corner.

Another crucial point to which the committee had to give attention arose from the government's own policy of secularising education. Not only was Christian instruction barred from government schools, but the religions of the country also. In 1855 the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal wrote to his D.P.I. that introducing the Koran into the Calcutta Madrasah⁴ would be 'an unnecessary offence to the majority of English people interested in education'.⁵ It was however found difficult to separate 'moral' from 'religious' training, and consequently in Burma there was always a feeling that while the monastic schools taught duties and an ethos, the government schools did not,

¹ Admin. Report 1872-73 p.178

² The Calcutta School Book Society was founded on 14 July 1817 for 'the preparation, publication and cheap or gratuitous supply of books and materials useful in schools and seminaries of learning... It forms no part of the design of this institution to furnish religious books; a restriction however very far from being meant to preclude the supply of books of moral tendency, which, without interfering with the religious sentiments of any person, may be calculated to enlarge the understanding and improve the character.' Its agent in Rangoon was the American Mission Press, and in spite of the disclaimer above, it seems, not surprisingly, to have had quite close connections with the missionaries generally.

³ Hunter Commission Report

⁴ School of Islamic Studies: nothing to do with Madras

⁵ Dispatch dated 15 Sept 1855 - Dispatches p.99

and that their pupils lacked any morality.¹ There was perhaps a basis for this, since the instruction in the government schools was quite foreign to Burmese ways: their pupils did not necessarily receive any training in how Burmese society would expect them to behave in any given circumstances. The point worried the authorities: in 1888 -

the government of India while admitting that this (teaching having a direct bearing upon personal conduct) is provided for in some aided schools by religious instruction, and that even in some state schools religious instruction can, under well-recognised restrictions, be granted out of school hours, considered that this was not sufficient: and it therefore in concurrence with the Secretary of State desired that consideration should be given to the proposal of the Education Commission that an attempt should be made to prepare a² moral text book on the principles of natural religion.²

The Text Books Committee's general conference held in 1877 had already decided sensibly that -

The only lessons in morality which are likely to have a practical effect on a boy's conduct in after life are those which are taught to him at home during his childhood.³

The Government of India's desire was, it seems, quietly forgotten. Nevertheless the conference had recommended that elementary reading books should be used to instil moral standards.

Another interlocked and unresolved question was that of the position of the vernacular. It was the government's stated policy that the vernacular language should be encouraged as far as possible, and that a purely English education should be avoided. However, even in 1881 -

As yet we have few Burman or Karen teachers who can teach English, mathematics or history. The masters of middle and high schools are chiefly English or Indian who cannot make Burmese the vehicle of instruction, and so the boys do not really grasp what they are taught.⁴

The answer had to be either to produce adequate vernacular text books in middle school subjects, with which even a mediocre teacher could not fail, or to improve the pupils' grasp of English. The last was not government policy - if it was to be at the expense of their power of expressing themselves in Burmese - but it was in accordance with the

¹ See for instance U Htin Aung's preface to 'Burmese Monks' Tales'

² Quinquennial Report 1888-92 p.349

³ Report 1877, noted by Hunter Commission

⁴ P.I.R. 1881-82

wishes of pupils and of their parents, and in accordance with the realities of the situation. At this time there was little or nothing which someone who had passed out of a middle school without adequate English could do with his education but become a vernacular school teacher, leading others down the same blind alley. It was a dilemma without any short-term solution: vernacular text books nevertheless had to be provided. It was not only a matter of school books: in 1869 it had been remarked -

the whole of our judicial system is palsied by the want of books, for, with the exception of the bare codes, there have as yet been no useful books translated into the vernacular to guide the native judge.¹

There was much legislation at this time, and the situation was slow to be remedied. In 1880 the people of Moulmein represented in a petition -

the British government have dispensed justice, and in having the law translated great uprightness and mercy have been evinced. But the Civil Procedure Code has not been translated nor the law of limitation or of torts. There is as yet no one among the Burmese race who is well acquainted with English,

They requested that the work of translation should be speeded up. On this petition it was officially remarked -

it not infrequently happens that Native Magistrates have to administer, and Native Advocates to discuss, laws whose meaning is inaccessible to them.

Nothing could be done however but to strengthen the official translator's office and try to catch up with the work.²

There was much confusion, both in official circles and among the people, about what the official policy really was. Ever since it had been defined in 1835 as the provision of an 'European education', there had been an uncertainty about how far this meant 'education in an European language.' There was, of course, no necessary connection: the policy only amounted to a decision that a modern education could not be founded only on the religious classics of the country - a decision that had been faced, only half consciously, by the western world in the sixteenth century, that Aquinas and the Schoolmen must give way to Galileo and Descartes and eventually to Leibnitz and Newton. In the

¹ P.I. Report 1868-69 p.12

² Gazette 1880

East however language became involved. Schoolmasters were brought to Burma from other countries, and the more English the Burmese spoke, the less willing the outsiders were to bother with learning Burmese. In 1868 Street, as D.C. Prome, could give 'a lecture in the Burmese language on the Progress of Arts and Sciences', but in 1878 'the disinclination of the English Masters to study a new language has been so great as practically to make it a question of the abeyance of the (language) tests, or of dispensing with teachers of this class'.¹ The admission of any English as a medium of instruction in practice meant the ousting of the vernacular, and it could easily become overlooked that this was far from the intention of the policy, so that as early as 1876 the Chief Commissioner, Rivers Thompson, could call English 'by far the most important branch of study at the more ambitious educational institutions of the Province'.² His Educational Department however rarely got their priorities so wrong as that. To the Burmese on the other hand, English education does not seem to have been the cultural revelation, as which the authorities were apt to see it, but the acquisition of a set of profitable skills to be got through as quickly and as economically as possible. To find an English school wasting time on anything but these profitable skills was as disappointing as being asked to waste time on literature at a business college, when what you want is to learn book-keeping and shorthand, and to go and get a job. A reduction in attendance at the Rangoon High School in 1878-79 was ascribed in fact 'partly to dissatisfaction caused by a more strict attention to the vernacular language'.³ This had been prompted by Ferrars' stress on this point when he had been acting as D.P.I. It was a constant struggle to keep the vernacular from being swamped, and not everyone was particularly clear about which side he was on.

There was much for the Committee to do: 'The creation of a literature even though it be but a literature of school-books is a work of many years'. The method of working can be seen in the

¹ P.I.R. 1877-78 p.12

² G.R. on P.I.R. 1875-76. Gazette 1876 supp.p.696

³ P.I.R. 1878.79 p.8. The kind of attitude that produced this result appeared in England too. A grocer of Harrow, giving evidence before the Clarendon Commission, was asked whether the grammar school's formal classical syllabus was what the townspeople wanted for their children and answered "Yes. They see great statesmen and great financiers at the head of government rise out of a classical education, and they think that this is the education their sons ought to have." Eng.Hist.Docs.XII (1)

The standard
of Burmese
among
Educators
was
not
to be
kept

because of
the
...
...

Text Books
Committee

Committee's minutes published regularly in the Gazette.

Every work is examined in the first place by the Editor of Vernacular School Text Books... The report of the Editor is submitted to the Committee and if further examination is considered necessary the Director in consultation with the Committee nominates a critic.

There were two broad methods of approach. First, where the Committee found a plain need, they might encourage authors to fill it. In some cases a public offer of a reward was made for a form to be written. In 1880 for instance a prize of Rs 250 was offered for the best translation into Burmese of Cunningham's Sanitary Primer for Indian Schools, and another of Rs 200 for a 60-70 page manuscript of a First Burmese Reader. In 1882 further rewards were advertised of -

Rs 200 each for parts 2, 3, 4, and 5 of a Burmese reading series
Rs 300 for a vernacular history of Burma in 300-400 pages.
Rs 200 for a translation of Euclid Books I, II, III and IV
Rs 200 for a Burmese Grammar in about 100 pages

The rewards were not very high, though authors retained their copyright, and this method proved unsatisfactory, since potential authors were often unwilling to do the work on a winner-take-all basis. Further even the best was sometimes far from good enough -

out of eight books thrown open to public competition only two were taken up and after eighteen months the translation of one has come in so²bad that the revision by the office will take six months.

A direct approach to a suitable author with a commission for the production of a book became therefore a common method. Alternatively authors might offer a MS to the Committee: where it seemed useful, in some cases the Committee bought the copyright on behalf of the government, in others the author was merely allowed to publish with the Committee's approval noted on the title page. The list was slow to build up. In the 1885 Education Manual only a total of 40 Burmese titles are included in the list of books approved for use in schools, and of these 10 are 'Burmese classics', works admirably adapted to be guides to Buddhist morality but not works to convey 'European education' to Burma in the vernacular.

Of the 30 school-books proper, only one, 'Algebra' by

1 Quinquennial Report 1885-89

2 ibid

Maung Hpo Maung had a Burmese author with a Burmese name. The rest were almost all by writers with European names. Further, in 1876 it had been decided to adopt Judson's dictionary as the standard of orthography for all purposes. It might be expected that the Burmese language would be coming under a strong foreign influence. In fact, however, when the list of books, and more particularly their authors, is examined in greatest detail, it becomes apparent that the 'literature of school books' which was being prepared was far more of a home-grown product than it looks at first sight. A certain amount of information about the authors can be extracted from the records, and this is given below. Much must remain conjectural however.

1. Philip Ripley, born in 1858 according to Indian Army records, while his father Capt. F.W. Ripley was Deputy Commissioner Kyauk-hpyu, whose second son he was. At this date it is most likely that his mother would have been Arakanese. The year 1868 was an eventful one for the family. F.W. Ripley, now posted in the Prome district, was promoted to be Lieut. Colonel, got into serious trouble with the authorities,¹ married again - an Englishwoman, and went on leave from which he did not return to Burma. He seems to have abandoned his first family. His son, Frederick, eldest by five years, supported the rest, and in 1869 was an assistant at the Diocesan school. He soon after obtained a post in the Mandalay Residency and was the head assistant under Horace Browne. Perhaps the rest of the family went to Mandalay too, since one story has Philip as a school-fellow of the future King Thibaw at Dr. Marks' school. A note in 'Twentieth Century Impressions of Burma' (London 1910 - ed. Arnold Wright) however says that he took a post with the railway and came to Rangoon at the age of 17 - i.e. in 1875. He became assistant editor of the Educational Department's own Burmese language newspaper, the Educational Gazette (Law-ki-thutia-pyin-nya Thadin-za), whose editor, Goss, was also from Mandalay. After this closed in 1877, Ripley became curator of the government Book Depot, and, on its establishment, a member of the Text Book Committee. Another brother, Richard, became involved in publishing,

¹ See Abstracts of Letters from India 1868 p.9 (P.8 missing in copy consulted) '...Birmingham for 400 muskets, without any authority from his superiors in order to supply them on payment to the villages of the Prome district, to protect themselves against dacoits and marauders. The Government of India condemn his conduct as most extraordinary and they have prohibited the distribution of the arms and hold Col. Ripley liable for their value.'

and his name appears from time to time as the publisher of various books in the Catalogue of Printed Books. According to Wright however, Philip Ripley was already operating a small printing press in Rangoon while still a government servant, and his brother's name may have been used to cover this fact. Finally he resigned from service and devoted himself to establishing and managing the Hanthawadi Press, whose imprint begins to appear about 1884. He continued to be a successful publisher until his death in 1939.

2. A.B. Savage seems to have come from Akyab, where he was second master at the school in 1870. He is described as 'Eurasian' in the P.I.R. for 1876-77 (p.47). There exists a Savage Reef in the port approaches, and presumably his father or grandfather was a port official who settled down and married locally. Several owners of the name appear in the directories of the time in Akyab, Bassein and Rangoon. In 1883 he became Editor of Text Books in succession to Forchhammer: his transfer from this post to the Rangoon Normal School in 1885 raised vigorous protests from the Text Book Committee, who described him as 'an exceptionally good Burmese scholar' and 'irreplaceable'.

3. Maung Na Gaw, or Nga Gau - the transliteration varies - was the author of the 'pictorial Reader', although it was revised by Mrs. Stilson. It must have been written during the 1840s, and was definitely a missionary production. By his name Na Gaw must have been a Karen and Burmese would not have been his mother tongue: he must have been a member of the Baptists' Karen mission.

4. W.S. Sandys. In spite of the name that he used he was said to be a pure Burmese. He was educated in England however, and probably had been adopted and taken there by someone of the name. It has not been possible however to trace anyone serving in Burma at the appropriate time named Sandys, although a Lieut. Sandys was tried by court-martial in Moulmein in 1830. A Revd. Timothy Sandys was in Calcutta with the Church Mission Society in 1857 however, and he may have visited Burma, or else taken over responsibility for a Burmese boy brought there by someone else. W.S. Sandys showed a

terribly earnest Christianity which may well indicate a missionary background. However that may be, he returned to Rangoon in 1868 and opened his own school called the Mingalā Hpòn Kyaw Kyàung. To the Education Department he seemed like the perfect instrument for their use - the ideal bridge between the two cultures of which he was a blend. They loaded him with work. In 1869 he published, with official encouragement, a long 'Geography of Burma': in 1871 he was appointed to be the headmaster of the new Rangoon Training School¹, while his own school continued to operate as a field for practice. In this year also he published his Burmese Readers, Elementary Arithmetic, and Elementary Geography, and was also engaged on a History of Burmā and books on Land Measurement, on Algebra and on Natural Science. In 1873 he published his translation of Aesop's Fables into Burmese - and the crash came. The results at the Training School were unsatisfactory, and anyway the Department were beginning to have doubts about their ability to employ all its graduates: it was summarily closed. Sandys was offered a post at the new Rangoon High School, but refused it, and seems to have quarrelled with Nesfield, the acting D.P.I., whose judgment of the books, though largely justified, seems less than impartial.

Many other books were designed by him (Sandys) in continuation of the series, but I found it advisable to stop short at this stage... It was found on trial that the Readers prepared by Mr. Sandys were not popular... It was found too that the Elementary Geography was not by any means appreciated so much as (Hough's)... and that the books on arithmetic were not so accurate in their statements as those written long ago by Mr. Stilson. The Aesop's Fables by Mr. Sandys have not been found to be more suitable for Burmese students than those written by Mr. McKertich, especially as many of the passages in the former are almost verbatim the same as the latter.

In the previous year however he had written -

McKertich's Aesop's Fables is not in its present form adapted to the general reader as it contains English on one page and Burmese on the other and was only intended for Anglo-vernacular schools.³

Whether or not personalities were involved, Nesfield decided that the series of books prepared by Sandys were 'unsuitable for general use in schools'. Further support was refused, and Sandys ceased work on

¹ see page 81 below

² P.I.R. 1873-74

³ P.I.R. 1872-73 p.91

the books which had not been finished. In 1873 his 'History of Burma' was said to be ready for publication, but now, not surprisingly, he refused to invite further criticism and declared himself unable to complete it. Worse was to come: his own school came under fire -

Burmese was professedly a subject; the Bible is a class book for both languages... results in both English and Burmese dictation were however very low: very little seems to have been done either on slate or paper. The standard of arithmetic was far below that prescribed for a middle class school, lower than that reached by many boys in indigenous schools. The under-masters are few and inefficient.¹

He... has preferred to resign the public service and to devote his energies to the conduct of a private school, the object of which is in the first instance missionary, and naturally religious objects are paramount with the manager - he has not had much success, and gives the impression of a good horse harnessed to a load beyond its strength. Mr. Sandys admits the hopelessness of the task and contemplates resigning the charge.²

He closed the school in 1876, but remained a member of the Vernacular Education Committee, receiving a special allowance (perhaps a sort of consolation) for proof-reading and editing. In 1881 he was induced to come back to teaching as headmaster of the Normal School at Moulmein: he had no better success there however and resigned in 1885. Thereafter, except for the appearance of a very few school books, he disappears from the scene.

It is difficult to determine whether his failure was purely due to personal causes, or was necessarily involved with his situation, compelled to adapt himself to a culture to which he only half belonged. Perhaps if he had been a different sort of person he might have done better, but in his circumstances, of which we know too little, it was perhaps impossible that he should. In any case, he provided a demonstration in his own person of the difficulties in the way of Macaulay's ideal class of 'interpreters'.

5. Stephen McKertich was another writer from Burma, who is described as 'English trained and certificated'. In spite of his vaguely Scottish-sounding name, he was from an Armenian family long

¹ P.I.R. 1874-75 p.26

² P.I.R. 1875-76 p.26. Hordern had by now returned, married, from a long furlough, and made this report. That for 1874-75 was by Nesfield.

settled in Burma, and employed by the Burmese court for its contacts with foreigners. Syme knew his ancestors by the name of Mucktees: the original form of the name seems to be Mergertich. Stephen McKertich had succeeded Hough at the government school in Moulmein in 1861 as acting headmaster: he was appointed to open the new government school at Promé in 1868, but rather soon, in 1872, he left to open his own school on Ramree island. In 1875 he took over the Cess School in Cheduba, from which in 1877 he wrote 'in despair of his ability to attract more than a very small attendance'¹ It seems that he remained in this remote area. There is nothing to show what happened to cause him, for all his high qualifications, to drop out of the main stream of the Educational Department in this way - perhaps it was what was happening to Sandys. He was reported to be 'a good Burmese scholar' in 1874, but he attempted much less than Sandys. A characteristic of his school books is that most were printed in both English and Burmese, with the two texts on opposite pages.

6 and 7. Dr. A. Judson and the Revd. C. Bennett need little introduction. Both were American missionaries who came to Burma as young men and spent the whole of their lives in the country. Judson was the reluctant pioneer student of the language, and Bennett joined him as his printer after the first Burmese war. Apart from a few years as headmaster of the government school in Moulmein,² he was at the Mission Press for practically the whole of his life, and thus responsible for the printing of everything that was printed in Burmese for nearly twenty five years.

8. James Gray appears as second master at the Akyab school under H.D. Gray in 1872. Both were appointed to the school in the same year and may well have been father and son. J. Gray is referred to in the reports as 'the younger Mr. Gray' which sounds as though this were the case. No previous record of the Grays seems to be available and it is not known where they came from. In 1874 James Gray was reported to 'know little of the vernacular language', but by 1878 he was publishing a series of Pali text books, and perhaps he knew much more of the language than he was prepared to admit. In the P.I.R. of 1878-79 it is remarked that among Eurasians 'the prejudice against the study of the vernacular is unreasonably strong'. Some such feeling might

¹ P.I.R. 1876-77 p.35

² see p.48 sup. Also Selected Correspondence - Tenasserim p.137

have led him to conceal his knowledge until he found that in the Education Department it was in fact a creditable accomplishment: even so he started at the Pali end.

9. Dr. Stilson was another Baptist missionary. He published several mathematical works in Burmese during the 1840s, and of these his 'Arithmetic' both in its original form and in subsequent revisions, remained the standard for many years. A major rewriting was carried out in 1876 by James Haswell, also a Baptist missionary, who in his introduction wrote -

It is now 29 years since Dr. Stilson, who had come here from America as a missionary, translated into Burmese and published his admirable book 'Arithmetic', of methods of calculation used in western countries. While it must be said that Dr. Stilson had a natural bent for and great ingenuity in all types of calculation, he came to write this book when he had been only nine years here in Burma and was not yet very expert in the Burmese language. Not long after this Dr. Stilson was compelled to return to his own country, America, for reasons of health, and although 'Arithmetic' was often reprinted there was no opportunity of revising the work.

It was generally agreed that although the work had much merit as a text book, it had deficiencies as a piece of Burmese writing.

10. James Haswell on the other hand was much more of a linguistic scholar. In addition to Burmese, he studied Mon, and in 1874 had published a 'Peguan Grammar'. He died in Rangoon in 1877, but his family remained in Burma for many years. His daughter, Susan Haswell, lived in Moulmein until her death in 1923 at the age of 79. Another

¹ Stilson's Arithmetic, edited Haswell - 1876. Preface

အမေရိက (ပြည်ထောင်စု) မှ ရောက်လာသော အသိပညာရှင် ဆရာ ဝတ်လစ် သည်။
ဆရာဝန် ဦး ဗုဒ္ဓိ ဖွဲ့စည်း ကြည့်ရှုသော "အရိသမဝိတ်" မှာ ပုံစံ ရှင် သော
အခြေခံ တွင်း ပြင်ဆင်၍ တွက် နည်း တွက် ပုံ စာ အို၊ မြေပုံ အသိပညာ
အားဖြင့် အနက် ပြန် ဖြေ ဖြေ။ အထက် ကျော် နိဂုံး ဖြစ် နေ။ အခြေ
ပုံ နှိုင်း သတ် ဝေ နေ၏။ ဆရာ ဝတ်လစ် သည် သူ၏။ သူ၏ တွက် ဖြေ
အတတ် အပျိုး ပျိုး ဖြစ် နှင့်။ ပကတိ ဝိသုဒ္ဓါ နှင့် ဖြစ် နေ၏။ အခြေ
ပညာရှိ ဆရာ (အိုး) ဖြစ် သည် မှာ ဆို ကု၏။ သို့ ရာ တွင်။ ဆရာ သူ၏
ဖွဲ့ (မြေပုံ) ပြင် တွင် ဖြစ် သော သူ၏ ဖြေ ဖြေ။ မြေပုံ အသိပညာ ဝတ်လစ်
အား မှ သေး သည် အခါ ဖြစ် ပင်။ ၎င်း စာ အို စီ နှိုင်း ရှေး သား ရာ ဖြစ်။
၎င်း ရှေးက ဖြစ် ပြော။ ဆရာ သည် မြေပုံ ဖြစ် မှာ ဖြစ်။ မြေပုံ ရှေး
အမေရိက ပြည် သို့ ရောင်း သွား ရှိ သော မြေပုံ ဖြစ်။ ၎င်း အရိသမဝိတ်
အထက် စာ ပုံ နှိုင်း သတ် လည်း အထက် ပြင် သော အခြေ ဖြစ်
မရ အ ဖြစ် သည်။

daughter was married to Vinton, and his son also continued working in Burma.

A little while before his work on Stilson's book, Haswell had carried out a revision of 'Hough's Geography', which was published in 1874. It is not clear when the original book was first printed, though Phayre mentions it in his minute of 26 Dec 1864: probably it dates from around 1850. Hough had been in Burma nearly continuously since 1816 when he had arrived to print for Judson. He probably died in 1871 or 1872: his name appears as a pensioner living in Moulmein in the directory for 1871 but not in that of 1872. He had been headmaster of the government school in Moulmein from 1835 until he was compelled to retire in 1868. After this he may have returned to printing - at any rate a number of books from the Burma Herald Press during the 1870s bear the imprint 'Printed by Hsaya Hwat' which sounds like him. Later books must be printed perhaps by a son, but the earlier ones could be by him in person. He retained the title 'Reverend', although his connection with the Baptist mission had been broken before 1826 - it had been resolved in 1816 that his wife should not 'be addressed as sister, because she is not a professor of religion', so that the relationship can never have been a very happy one - and for most of his life he was a government servant. During his long service in Moulmein he seems to have been known for the close relationship that he maintained with the monasteries, which was a large factor in determining the appointment of his son as the first Director of Public Instruction. In his preface to the revised 'Geography', Haswell disappointingly gives no information about the author, nor on earlier editions of the book, nor on why a revision was thought necessary. Particularly in view of his recent death, it is surprising that no acknowledgement was thought to be called for. Perhaps it was felt that to say anything might revive old quarrels.

11. Nicholls is presumably the Baptist missionary of that name who became an initial member of the Educational Syndicate: beyond that, he does not appear much in the records.

12. Maung Hpo Maung was a Deputy Inspector of Schools for many years.

13. A.W. Lonsdale first appears at the Rangoon High School in 1875. He was probably from another family settled in Burma: one D.F. Lonsdale published the 'Moulmein Chronicle' in 1850 and might be his father. He was sufficiently sure of his command of Burmese to publish a 'First Steps in Burmese' in 1878, and two religious tracts in Burmese in the same year. There is no mention of his having been trained abroad and he was probably educated in Burma. He took over the Normal School at Moulmein when Sandys resigned in 1886.

14. David Aldridge was assistant to Gilbert at the Moulmein Town School in 1868, but in 1869 moved to the S.P.G. and became head master of St. John's School in 1872. His knowledge of Burmese was enough to warrant his appointment as Examiner of Indigenous Schools in 1873, although he was only described as 'a tolerable vernacular scholar' in 1878. This may indicate some such feeling as has been noted in discussing James Gray above, which would lead him to play down his facility. On completion of his career with the Rangoon High School and as Inspector of Schools, he retired to England with a post as University Teacher of Burmese at Oxford, where he was given an M.A. degree 'honoris causa' on his final retirement.

15. W.E. Mack was a product of the Rangoon High School from which he matriculated in 1878 - failing in Burmese. It must be him to whom Ferrars refers in writing -

The weakness of the system of teaching in this subject (Burmese) is exemplified by the failure of a half-Burman student of several years' standing in the school as a pupil, and a few months' as a master - with no interval - to pass the lower standard prescribed for European and East Indian officers. He was unacquainted with the ordinary vernacular terms used in school routine.¹

He took a post at the school at once, as indicated, but continued his studies and graduated from Calcutta University in 1886. He became acting Editor of Text Books in 1887.

16. Mrs. Bennett, who translated Alcott's 'The House I Live In', was the wife of the Revd. Cephas Bennett of the Baptist Mission, Hough's predecessor at the Moulmein school, mentioned above at no.7.

17. Lucretia Stilson was the wife of Dr. Stilson, mentioned above at no.9. She died at Moulmein in 1852 after 14 years in Burma.

¹ P.I.R. 1877-78 p.10

Of the seventeen authors therefore of the Burmese books authorised by the Education Department in 1885

Three were native Burmans or Karen

one was from a long-domiciled Armenian family

six seem to have been Eurasians or domiciled Europeans and educated in Burma

seven were missionaries, of whom at least five would have regarded themselves as permanently settled in and serious students of Burma: they had every intention of spending the rest of their lives in the country. As might be expected therefore most of the people concerned were from the fringes of the two societies, somewhat alien to both, but where East and West were definitely meeting. The Easternised European however, it is worth noting, did rather better than the Westernised Burman. It should be remembered that an European in the East had a view of himself rather different from that of his counterpart in, say, the 1930s. It has been difficult for the last 50 years at least to appreciate the extent to which Europeans who took service in the East, particularly a service in less than the highest grade, in the mid-nineteenth century were committing themselves to the new country as colonists and settlers not as mere visitors. The European coming to the East in 1930 regarded himself as belonging elsewhere: if asked for his permanent address, he would not have said "Rangoon." He was never a colonist, only a visitor, sent out to do a job or to earn some money, and, when that was done, about to return home, where the real meaning of his life was. Meanwhile, he might be allowed every few years to take a break from his work and readjust himself to real life at home. In 1870 an older tradition was still alive, though already dying. Travel and communications were more difficult: the chances of dying young were higher. A man might still emigrate to India or Burma in just the same way as he might to Australia or America. If he were lucky, he might prosper enough to return to England for a visit, or even permanently, but not many of the railwaymen, miners, clerks, soldiers, even schoolteachers, let alone religious, who went from Europe to the East in the mid-nineteenth century had much expectation of ever travelling the other way: they were going to settle themselves permanently in a new country. There was therefore quite a wide fringe of European society which was liable to absorption in the country of their adoption.

This in itself gave rise to a corresponding fringe in Burmese society which tended to merge with Western culture. Later, as local skills developed and the demand for skilled workers from Europe fell away, these merging fringes tended to shrink.

There are two main sources of information about the school books in use in Burma at this time, apart from the books themselves where they survive: first is the list of printed books, published quarterly in the Gazette in accordance with the Government of India's Act XXV of 1868. This law required notification to the government of the publication of a book, giving the publisher's name, place of publication, name of 'the author, editor or translator', and other information. The prime purpose of course was to ensure there should be no publication which no one was prepared to answer for: copyright was claimed by a separate registration. These lists provide a great deal of information about the publishing world of Burma. The information is not exhaustive however, since the lists only start in 1869, and a few of later date are lost: in addition it was very soon provided that books printed by order of, or for the use of government should be exempted from registration. They therefore do not appear in the lists, and the activities of the Government Printing Press are not noticed. It seems too there were some books issued which escaped registration simply because no one thought of it. The details given are often sketchy: the publisher's name is given, but often not the name of his firm. The distinction between publisher and printer also seems to have defeated the registering authority on occasion. With these reservations however, the lists of printed books are very valuable.¹ The other source of information is the list of books approved for use in schools by the Text Books Committee², which is appended to the Burma Education Manual, which was first published in 1883 and revised and reprinted in 1885. It is perhaps worth noting that the use of books from this list, and no others, was only compulsory in government schools - presumably including municipal schools: others whose grants were determined in theory only by their examination results were free to use anything which they felt might give the best results.

¹ Referred to subsequently as the 'Catalogue'

² Referred to subsequently as the Approved List

Before 1870 the American (Baptist) Mission Press had been responsible for all, or very nearly all, printing of books in Burmese, along with their offshoot the Pegu Press, which was founded when Thomas Ranney left the A.B.M. Press to work on his own. All the books with which Phayre had hoped to start an improved system of vernacular education came from the Mission Press, who were also publishers of the books which the government needed for the instruction of their officers and dependants in Burmese. The interest in printed Burmese books seems at first to have been almost entirely among European officers - apart from the regular mission literature. The earliest traceable edition of a native Burmese text is a bilingual publication of the 'Manu Wunana Damma-that', edited and translated by D. Richardson, with English and Burmese versions on facing pages, printed in 1847 by the American Baptist Mission Press, Moulmein. This was intended for the use of European judges in determining cases according to, it was hoped, Burmese law. It was followed from the same press in 1850 by a 'Selections from the Vernacular Boodhist Literature of Burmah', edited by Thomas Latter. This book includes the 'Thadamma-sayi Min-thamí Hyat-ntón' (Decisions of the Princess Sudhammacari), a Damma-pada (meaning in this case the Damma-pada Wut-thú, the Stories of the Damma-pada)¹ and a 'Puccha Pakeinaka Kyan' (Book of Miscellaneous Questions), a sort of catechism in question and answer form. From the English preface it is apparent that the compilation was produced only as a text book for government examinations in schools and offices -

The following selections from the Boodhist literature of Burmah are published in continuation of the author's previous labours in carrying out the views of government for the encouragement of the study and acquisition of the Burmese language by their officers serving in Arracan and the Tenasserim Provinces....

The author cannot do better than give the following remarks on the work in question, extracted from the recommendation of Captain Phayre, Commissioner of Arracan, that it should be introduced as a class book in the government schools in his district, as also as a Text book for the examination of candidates in the Burmese language.

It was certainly not produced with any idea of a Burmese public in mind. It remained however the main set book in government language examinations, and also the standard text of these works, for Europeans

¹ See below p. 129

at least, for a number of years. Sparks used it for his translation of the 'Decisions' into English in 1851, and in 1870 it formed the basis of Rogers' translation of the Damma-pada Wutthu which was published along with Max Muller's translation from Pali of the Dhammapada verses as 'Buddhaghosa's Parables'. It was reprinted in 1866 at the 'Akyab Press' as 'The Thoodamma Tsarie and Dhammapada in Burmese, reprinted from Lieut. T. Lattar's text'.¹ Another edition is also extant, without title page but bearing a pencil note 'C. Brown, July 1877' - though it looks older than this - which seems to derive from it,² although the Damma-pada stories now appear before the 'Decisions'. The 'Miscellaneous Questions' are dropped from both these subsequent editions.

In 1854 Thomas Ranney, who had been responsible for printing these two books at the American Mission Press, seems to have left the press, and to have set up on his own in the Pegu Press. Here he continued with some Burmese publications, notable productions being editions of the We-than-daya and Za-net-ka Jatakas. It is a little difficult to guess just what kind of a public these editions were intended for when they came out in 1856. They are beautifully printed and solidly bound and are certainly not aimed at the cheap mass market which was developed in the 1870s. In the subscription list printed in the We-than-daya only 17 Burmese names appear against 58 European, with a further 100 copies ordered for the government schools. Even allowing for the probability that many of the European purchasers would have put their names on the list for the sake of appearances only, it does seem that these editions were meant for Europeans who hoped to learn about Burma, rather than for Burmese who wanted to study their own literature. The earliest printed book traceable produced by a Burmese for a Burmese audience seems to be 'Sappurisa-dhamma-dipani Kyàn' (Code of Conduct for the Virtuous) by Maung Hmyin, published by Thomas Whittam at Moulmein in 1860. Perhaps it was a failure, since it does not seem to have had immediate successors, although before 1869 our knowledge of what was published depends upon the chance of survival: after that date the Gazette records the publication of most books even if no copies of it exist. We can however be reasonably certain that the great majority of the copies of Burmese

¹ India Office Library - Bur.D 733

² -do- Bur.D 1123

1871 Ahee's name continues to figure in the Catalogue while Hpo Koo's disappears in favour of other printers, (among whom is Hsaya Hwat, who may be one of the Hough family). It must therefore be that Ahee was at least the manager of the press in its early years from 1868, and probably the author of the preface quoted above. No one would have been too certain exactly what the Indian Act XXV of 1868 meant by distinguishing between 'printer' and 'publisher'. This is the Ahee who edited the Mandalay Gazette (Yadana-pon Ne-pyi-daw Thadìn-sa) along with Hpo Wazira, when it was instituted by King Mindon in 1874. He is said¹ to have been born in Moulmein, son of a Chinese father and a Burmese mother. According to the Burmese Encyclopaedia (vol.X p.232) he was given by the King the title of Neì Myò Thíwá Thákdí and the rank of than-daw-zín or royal herald.² It would be of the greatest interest to know whether this occurred when he came to Mandalay to start the Gazette - when the rank granted might have been part of the inducement to come to Mandalay, and a sort of pun on his Rangoon paper's name - or earlier, when it might have been in consideration of services rendered to the Royal Press of Mandalay in the 1860s. In this case he would have named the paper after his own rank - the Baptists already called their own paper the 'Religious Herald' in English, though it was Damma Thadìn-sa in Burmese, and it would be a justifiable guess that he was sent to Rangoon from Mandalay to start his paper as a public relations exercise by the Kìn-wun Mìn-gyí. As has been noted above, the Encyclopaedia thinks that the founder was already a than-daw-zín when he came to Rangoon though it is mixed up over the date. Also, it seems that the King did give money to the press in 1871. 1868-70 was a period when the King was thinking about books: in 1868 he had started on the enormous task of having the Tippitake inscribed on marble for his pagoda - the Chronicles were printed in Mandalay in the 1870s and the Kìn-wun Mìn-gyí's Adda-than-hkeik Damma-that was published in 1869. This in fact was the book with which the Burma Herald Press started their book publishing programme in 1870.

1

see Û Bá Than - Shè Hkit Myanma Pyei Thadìn-sa Myà - Sa Pe Beikman 1974

2

ဂျပာဇာပုံ ရှေ့ပြောင် လေးပါး သတင်းစာကို တရုတ် မြန်မာ ကပြား ဖြစ်သော
 ဦး အယ်ဒီတာ အား တရုတ် မင်း မြတ် က 'ရှေ့ပြောင် သိဝသိဒ္ဓိ' ဆွဲ ခို
 ဆံ လေးပါး ဆို ဂျာနယ် ပေးဆပ် လျက် စီမံ ကုန် ချုပ် ဝေခဲ သည်။"

When H. Ahee went to Mandalay in 1874, his name in the Catalogue was replaced by that of H. Afoke, who sounds as though he may well have been his brother. This name also appears in connection with some of the earlier publications of the Burma Herald Press, and also particularly in connection with books from the British Burma News Press, which flourished from 1872 to 1882. They must have been related concerns. It is interesting that the title pages of books published by the British Burma News Press in 1874 gives its address as 'Yadana-~~pon~~ Thadin-za Taik, Rangoon.' It looks as though it was considered that Afoke was being left in charge of a branch of a concern whose headquarters were in Mandalay.

Apart from this, there must have been a close connection between the Herald Press and the Court in Mandalay. The first book from the press in Rangoon was the Adda-than-hkeik Damma-that: the second included the Hitaw-pada¹tha, a particular favourite of King Mindon, and the preface to the third, the Maha-yazathat-gyi, lays much stress on the fact that the series of law books had been brought to Rangoon from the King -

they have been brought from the golden presence of the Lord of life, ~~Master of the Great Law~~, who rules in the Golden Land of Mandalay.

It is noticeable too that the subscribers' lists prefixed to all these publications regularly include the names of the ministers of the Hlut-daw.

In 1878 the position changed. The press was sold to Maung Hpo O, also from Moulmein. He had a much greater taste for personal publicity, and his name appears on the title page of all books that came from the press in his time.² From the start he used the name of the press as a distinction for his own name, and always calls himself 'U' - still unusual for anyone but a monk. In this way he seems to have managed to take over Ahee's distinction for himself, and to have cultivated the erroneous idea that he was the than-daw-zin, the

¹ မရှိတလေး: ရှေ့ပြည် တော်ကြီး ဦး၊ စိုးစံ တော်မူသော၊ အလှူငွေ အထွက် မင်း ဗဟု: ကြီး ဘုရား ရှိ၊ ရှေ့ထက် တော်ကြီး က၊ ယူဆောင်ခဲ့သည်။

² အရှေ့မှာ သံတော်ဆင် ပုံနှိပ်တိုက် သံတော်ဆင် ဦးဘိုးဘိုး

founder of the press. Since it was known that he had appeared on the scene in 1878, that had to be the year of the than-daw-zin's arrival, and hence the Encyclopaedia's ten year error.

Before the start of the Herald Press's programme, no one, on the whole, printed books for the Burmese people at large: they did not much want them. The Burma Herald Press, by doing precisely that, changed the whole situation. It created its own market, and presses multiplied. The government themselves became involved: a little earlier they had started in a small and tentative way to finance the publication of text books. In 1868, for instance, they had made a grant to Dr. Mason (of the Baptist Mission, and later to be Professor of Pali at the Rangoon High School) to finance the publication of his 'Pali Grammar' and his 'Handbook of Medicine', and in 1869 they went on to an abridgement of Stilson's Arithmetic and proposed to revise Hough's Geography. This project was not in fact carried out until 1874. After the start of the Burma Herald Press's work in 1870, the government seems to have been spurred to urgent activity. The Vernacular Education Committee was instituted in 1872, and

a complete series of books adapted to the acquirements (sic) of the Province is now being prepared.¹

This must have referred to Sandys' series that turned out so unhappily.²
Further -

in order to have another important aid to the development of education in Burma, it has been determined to bring out¹ in a cheap form people's editions of the Burmese classics.

This is the first time that any thought seems to be given to the provision of reading matter for the general public, of something to read after reading had been taught, and it is possible to wonder whether the thought would have arisen without the stimulus provided by the Burma Herald Press. No very friendly feelings existed - the department claimed that

the Burma Herald Press is an actual source of corruption to the vernacular literature,³ by encouraging bad spelling and other vicious practices.

Ironically, it is possible that the government of British Burma was intentionally pricked into progressive action by the reputedly most

¹ Admin. Report 1872-73 p.178 ² see p.103 sup.

³ P.I.R. 1872-73

unprogressive government of the Burmese King.

These editions of the classics were presumably published, but it is hard to say exactly which, since they do not generally appear in the Catalogue and few existing books are identifiable as issued on government initiative during the 1870s. It seems that it was required that the earlier issues should be printed at the Government Printing Press. Their prices however, as so often seems to happen with government concerns, proved so high that the Committee found that their prices were quite uncompetitive, and they had to insist on being allowed to have their printing done by the lowest tenderer.

The Educational Gazette was another product of this burst of activity: the Burmese name was *Lawki-thutá-pjūmya Thadīn-za*. Similar papers had been published earlier in India, and there is a mention of an 'Education Gazette' in Bombay in 1861. This considerably antedates the appearance of similar publications in England - the 'School Guardian' the National Society's Newsletter, and its rival the 'School Board Chronicle', started in 1876. The Burmese Gazette was being planned in 1873 to be of interest and use to teachers, giving them the feeling of belonging to a unified profession in their scattered and sometimes lonely posts, and

to contain authentic intelligence and such matter as¹
is likely to be of real interest to the Burmese mind.

It is however oddly difficult to say exactly when publication really started. *U Bá Thàn in Shè Hkit Myanna Pyi Thadīn-za-myà* (Newspapers of Burma of the Past) says that it was first published in January 1873, but in the Administration Report for 1875-76, written about June 1876, it is said to have been in existence for 16 months, which would make the opening date in January 1875. It is probable that the opening was much delayed and that confusion arises between dates when it was hoped to start and when it actually did start. In 1874 it was reported that -

the great difficulty in the matter of the new Educational Gazette arises from the want of type. The preparation of type has formed the subject of correspondence with the Government of India for some time.²

¹ Admin. Report 1872-73

² Admin, Report 1873-74 p.160

This does not quite sound as though it was actually working when the report was made - though no one actually likes to admit it. The printing was done at the Government Printing Press, but others too seem to have had trouble with the supply of type. Calcutta seems to have had a monopoly of type-founding until Ripley set up a foundry in connection with his Hanthawadi Press after 1890. In books of the period letters can frequently be recognised as improvised from damaged type of some other letter.

The publishing business grew with great speed and throughout the 1870s the position was chaotic and competition fierce, which had great advantages for the purchaser: by 1881 for instance a 222 page edition of the *Temi Zat* could be published at 4 annas - a sixpence. Most editions were of 2,000 or 3,000 copies, and it is hard to see how anyone could make a living, let alone a fortune. The government themselves, as publishers, and, through the Government Book Depot, booksellers too, did not always appreciate the advantages. In the Public Instruction Report for 1883-84 it was remarked

the principal reason (for the decrease in sales at the Government Book Depot) assigned, I believe correctly, by the Curator, is the great impetus which has been given in recent years, mainly by the Depot itself, to the publication of vernacular literature and the glutting of the book market, which has followed the establishment of the new vernacular presses. In the competition between these presses the prices of books have been so reduced that the Government Book Depot, previously the cheapest book store in Rangoon, has been unable to attract the usual number of purchasers, and vernacular books are still being published by the Native presses at rates which are described by the Curator as ruinous.¹

Oddly, however, it was a situation in which Philip Ripley, who was presumably the Curator quoted, saw prospects of success. He was already engaged in publishing on his own account in a small way, and must have been thinking about resigning his post to work on it full-time. There was much more vitality to the publishing world than the officials could see.

¹ P.I.R. 1883-84 p.48

Chapter VI - Text Books on the Approved List

Appendix A of the Burma Education Manual of 1885, after 113 English titles of books approved for use in schools, recites the following Burmese books:-

Burmese Classics

Laukanidi
 Zeneka
 Dhammapada
 Thoodhammasari
 Mahauthata
 Hitopadesa
 Wethandaya
 Nemi Zat
 Mana Woonana Dhammathat
 Maneeyatanabone

History

Hunter's History of India (Departmental Series)

Readers and Spelling Books

Burmese First Reader (Departmental Series)
 Sandys' Readers
 -do- Aesop's Fables
 McKertich's Fables
 Pictorial Reader
 Thimbongyi
 Thatpon

Grammar

Judson's Grammatical Notes
 Gray's Grammatical Primer
 -do- -do- with Exercises
 Bennett's Vocabulary and Phrase Book.

Dictionaries

Judson's Burmese and English Dictionary
 -do- English and Burmese -do-

Arithmetic

Stilson's Arithmetic
 Nicholls' Eclectic Arithmetic

Algebra

Maung Hpo Maung's Algebra
 Lonsdale's Algebra in Burmese

Geometry

Aldridge's Euclid
 Mack's Elements of Geometry

Agriculture

Handbook (Selections from Martini's and Fuller's
 Handbook published at the Government Press)

Land Surveying

Clancey's Aid to Land-surveying
 Kelly's Handbook of Surveying, translated by Savage

Geography

Hough's Geography
 Judson's Astronomy and Geography

Physical Science

Mrs. Stilson's Natural Philosophy
 The House I Live In

Pali (see Burmese Classics)

Pali Text and Glossary (Education Dept. Series)
 Gray's Pali Primer (Provisional)
 Childers' Pali Dictionary

They amount to 40 titles in all and they will be considered by sections

1. Burmese Classics

This is in many ways a somewhat odd list, made out in an almost perfunctory manner. The titles of the books are abbreviated to a single word - e.g. 'Thoodhammasari' instead of the full title of 'Thudhamma-saṃgi Min-thamī Pyat-htōn' or else 'Decisions of the Princess

badly with ~~an e-gyin or a pyo~~^{verse}. At the same time, young men of this age, and probably much younger, would expect to make something of the dramatic pyá-zat, which were now at the height of their popularity, and whose language is at times extremely complicated.

In fact it seems that at this time two very different styles of Burmese had developed. On the one hand there was the sober, straightforward language that was intended to deliver a straightforward message, which was used ~~in sermons~~^{in some of} in U Awbatha's translations of the Jatakas, in Judson's Bible and in the 'Religious Herald' - it belonged to the serious-minded. On the other hand the, as it were, "pop-culture" of the time had its own language, conceptually perhaps almost unintelligible, but designed in a way to express feeling rather than facts. When Taw Sein Ko wrote in 1883 of the books being published, he spoke slightly of a preference among the people 'for gibberish rhyme rather than plain writing'. The rhyme in fact belonged to the Court, and even more to the mock courts of the Pyá-zat, which monks were debarred from. The plain prose belonged to the monastery. The books in this list therefore are books for the monasteries, not a comprehensive selection of classical Burmese. The monasteries may have been the 'havens of Burmese culture' which they have been called,¹ but they did not cover the whole field. Consultation was taking place at this time between the Text Book Committee and the Sangha: it was reported in 1886 for instance that

the revision of the greater zats and the Temi Wutthu was carried out in compliance with the desire of certain eminent pongyis, who had expressed approval of the similar revision of the Janaka Jataka Watthu.

It is probable therefore that this list was drawn up in consultation with monks, with monastery schools in mind, and consequently takes a somewhat limited view of Burmese classical literature.

The first name on the list too is an odd one, since the 'Laukanidi' (Pali Lokaniti) is a Pali work, not a 'Burmese classic' at all, and it is the first of the 'Pali Texts' in the departmental compilation mentioned in the Pali section of the lists. The Lokaniti

¹ for instance U Khin Zaw Win - JBRS LII ii p.83

မြန်မာနိုင်ငံ၏ အရေးကြီးပညာရပ်များကို မြှင့်တင်ပေးရန်အတွက် ဤစာအုပ်ကို ရေးသားခဲ့ခြင်း ဖြစ်ပါသည်။

² P.I.R. 1885-86 p.26

was however frequently printed on its own, usually in the normal nissaya form, with the Pali text of each verse followed with a word by word expansion and translation into Burmese. There does not seem to have been a straight Burmese translation at this time. The earliest printing noticed in the Catalogue is the 1874 edition made by the Revd. G. da Cruz, headmaster of the Catholic school in Toungoo, who was also responsible for a number of English educational books and for the translation of Clancey's 'Land-surveying'. This is shown as the third edition, so that it was probably first printed in the mid- to late 1860s.

It stands apart from the other Pali texts also since it does not derive from the Buddhist scriptures. Its origin is not altogether clear, but it obviously belongs to a tradition much more worldly than that of Buddhist monasticism. There is a constant stress on the importance of wealth for ensuring a good life: e.g.

How will the idle achieve skill?
and the unskilful wealth?
and the unwealthy friends?
and the unfriended happiness?
and the unhappy good deeds?
and how without good deeds to attain Nibban?¹

and

If you do not win learning in the first stage of life,
wealth in the second,
and religion in the third,
what will you do in the fourth?²

All this is much closer to the Hindu tradition, which gives a very positive value to the things of this world in their place appropriate to a man's stage of life, than to the Buddhist tradition of monastic withdrawal from the world. It has to be remembered however that Buddhism originated as a Hindu heresy and that there must have been much of Hindu religion that the weaker bretheren found hard to give

¹ Alasassa kuto sippan̄
Asippassa kuto dhanan̄
Adhanassa kuto mittan̄
Amittassa kuto sukhan̄
Asukhassa kuto puñan̄
Apuñassa kuto nibban̄
Lokaniti I ii

² Pataman̄ na parāzito sippan̄
Dutiyan̄ na parāzito dhanan̄
Tatiyan̄ na parāzito dhamman̄
Catuttan̄ kiñ karissāki
Lokaniti I xv

up, so that there was from the start a 'Buddhism for the ascetic and a Buddhism for the layman'.¹ It is therefore impossible to say on a priori grounds that any particular Hindu element was not there from the start and resulted from later contacts. It is however revealing how often in the nissaya explanations it has been found necessary to qualify the Pali aphorism by interpolating the words 'in this world'.²

There are in addition aspects of the Lokaniti tradition which differ from the official line of Buddhism. The advice

Carry your enemy on your shoulders until your time comes:
then when you are ready, you can break him like a pot on
a stone.³

has a realistic cynicism which seems to belong to the Artha-sastra rather than to the Sutta-piṭaka. The verse too which advises

Don't rush at learning or at making money:
don't rush at climbing the mountain:
don't rush at making love or into anger:
these five things are for taking slowly, slowly.⁴

seems to equate the values of activities between which a monk would draw sharp distinctions.

However it has always been a book with a tremendous influence on Burmese ideas: perhaps it could be called the handbook for the man who hopes to be saved - but not yet. Echoes of it constantly recur in Burmese literature. It would be pointless to multiply instances, there are so many, but as a random example we may compare the phrase from the Mani-Yadana-pon (section 2 - near end) 'The man who loses his temper may be defeated by not getting angry' with Lokaniti VI 18.⁵ It appears also in Burmese proverbs: there

¹ Htin Aung 1935 - Burmese Monks' Tales p.11.

² နေသကမ္မာ/နေသကမ္မာ နှိ e.g. I 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 21 and so on:
i.e. not a universal truth, just a temporal one.

³ vahe amittañ khandhena
hava kālañ anāgatañ
tameva āgate kēlā
sele bhinde ghaḷaṇṇa iva

Lokaniti IV 8

⁴ sinne sippan sinne dhaṇaṇṇa
sinne pabbata māru hyaṇṇa
sinne kāmassa kodhasa
ime pañca sinne sinne

Lokaniti I 8

⁵ အကုသကမ္မာကို အကုသကမ္မာ မရှိသဖြင့် ၊ ဒေသင်္ဂါရာ သာဓုဝါဒ cf Lokaniti VI 18
akodhena kodha-naṇṇa jine

seems to be a parallel between VI 14

Pass by these things without touching - fire, water, women, fools, snakes, and royalty: they'll kill you without warning,

and the famous 'five enemies', though Burma chivalrously excludes 'women' from the list. It also seems to some extent to have provided a channel for Indian Hindu ideas to influence Burmese Buddhism. For example the verse lays it down that

People who eat cows' flesh would eat their mothers' flesh. A dead cow should be given to the vultures or floated away on the water.

Most of the rest of the books in the 'Burmese Classics' list belong to the class of moralised tales, though in a wider and more serious sense than the moral fables which, whether Aesop's or Phaedrus' or La Fontaine's own, were a standard component of the 19th century school readers in Europe. In the Eastern tradition, such tales were a practical guide to action, and as such might be quoted as precedents in courts. Consequently a book such as the 'Decisions of the Princess Sudhammasari' is both a book of legal precedents, to be used as a guide for future decisions, and a book of moralised folk-stories. It becomes therefore difficult to draw distinctions between different types of literature. All these books might be elevating or entertaining, but they would be, whether a Jataka story or a secular anecdote, a serious guide to practical action, in a way in which no student of an European literature would regard his material. In describing Min Yā-zā as the ideal minister, the author of the Mani-yadana-bon says of him -

He was one who had great regard and love for the Three Jewels, and was an embodiment of all that makes ministers; he knew how to frame his speech with precedents, examples and instances.

As the book following shows, it makes no difference whether the

1 Agī āpo kitthi muḷo
sappe rājā kulanica
apeyantena ganthabbo
accekañ pāpaharani

Lokaniti VI 14

2 hesa khadani gomasañ
mātu mañsañ va khadare
matesu tesu gijjhānañ
dadeso teca vāhaye

Lokaniti VII 15

3 ရတနာ သူမ္မိ: ဝိ အာ: ၊ အသွန် ကုန် ညို ။ သေ မြတ် နှိုး ခြီး ကို လှည်း ၊ ပြု တတ်
၏ ။ အမတ် တို့ မှီ လှူ ကာ နှစ် ပြည့် ဝံ ။ ။ ထုံး ပုံ နှင်း နှာ ပုံ မြ် ။ စကား
မြ် လှည်း ။ ပြော ဆို တတ် ။

example quoted is a historical precedent from the last reign, a saying of the Buddha, or a fabulous tale. All are equally a part of the cultural inheritance out of which future action arises.

In the particulars of his conscious behaviour, the 'primitive', the archaic man, acknowledges no act which has not been previously posited and lived by someone else, some other being who was not a man. What he does has been done before. His life is a ceaseless repetition of gestures initiated by others.¹

Burmese society had moved a good way from this position by the 18th and 19th centuries, but some traces remained. It is also noted that taken as a whole the books on this list pretty well covered most of the points put forward by the Hunter Commission as to be included in all vernacular school readers, to provide an edifying background in lieu of the religious training which the government had disqualified itself from providing.² This was recognised, and when it came to preparing an official Reader for schools in Burma, it was a series of excerpts from existing literature that was called for. The moral value of monastic schooling was always treated respectfully, even when doubts were cast upon its practical use.³

The Jataka stories, the moral tales from the Sutta-pitaka which recounted the stories told, it is claimed, by the Buddha himself of his previous incarnations, have been a mine of material for popular Burmese writings, at least since U Awbatha translated eight of the ten longer stories from Pali into Burmese during the 1780s, and for court literature for centuries before. ~~When the drama began to be a popular literary form in the second half of the nineteenth century, jataka incidents were such a usual basis for a play's plot that the 'zat' syllable becomes the essential part of the Burmese terms for the drama 'pya-zat' - the Jataka demonstrated - or 'zat-pwe' - a Jataka festival.~~

Four of the long Jataka stories are included in the 1885 list, the Wei-than-daya (Vessantara), Mahaw-thata (Mahosadha), Zanetaka (Janaka) and Nela Jatakas. Printed editions of at least

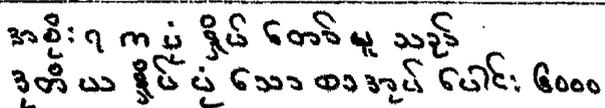
¹ Mircea Eliade - The Myth of the Eternal Return p.5

² see p. 145 below

³ see for instance Hordern's view at the top of p.60 sup

the Weì-than-daya and Zanet-ka had been available since 1856, when Ranney printed them at his Pegu Press. By 1885 there had been many editions of all the longer Jatakas, and they were appearing in other forms too. Poetical versions of the Jataka stories (pyo) had been appearing in print since at least 1872 when the Burma Herald Press had published a book containing a Zanet-ka Pyo and a Weì-than-daya Pyo by Twìn-thìn Mìn-gyì along with several of Ò Pon-nyá's metrical versions of the other Jatakas. In addition the dramatised versions were beginning to appear. The Catalogue notes a pyá-zat of the Zanet-ka Zat by Ò Hkò in 1875 and another of the Weì-than-daya Zat by Maung Koo in 1878. There is also Mahaw-thata Zat-daw-gyì published by the Burma Herald Press in 1882 on behalf of government.¹ In spite of the multiplicity of versions available however, the Text Book Committee seems to have made no attempt to prescribe any particular edition or version in their approved list. It is unlikely however that it can have been intended to indicate anything but the plain prose versions for school use.

The title 'Dhammapada' in the lists presents rather more problems. Strictly speaking, the title belongs to the set of 426 Pali gāthās of this name from the Khuddaka Nikaya. For centuries however there had existed a set of tales, illustrating and expanding these verses, attributed to Buddha-ghosa who brought the Religion from Ceylon to Burma, which should properly be called 'Dhamma-pada Wut-htú' or 'Stories of the Dhammapada', and it is often unclear whether the term 'Dhammapada' is intended to refer to the stories or to the gāthās. The stories had been translated into Burmese long before: a partial version dating from 1511 still exists in Shin Sila-vamsa's Pa-rayana Wut-htú. The earliest printed edition seems to be that in Latter's 'Selections',² which contains a good deal less than the 24 waggas of the Pali Dhamma-pada ~~Atta-saṅkhipa~~ to which it perhaps bears much the same relationship as the "Burmese Hitaw-padeṭṭha" bears to the Sanskrit of Viswa-sharma. This text, and possibly the manuscript which Latter used, appear as a collection of tales, which,

¹ Title page reads 

² see p.111 sup

apart from being ostensibly told by the Buddha himself, do not have much more direct scriptural reference than most other collections of such tales. The Pali gāthās are omitted and the book starts directly -

He who has conquered vast ignorance: who has seen Neik-ban as the end of the world: who has radiant glory: the Most Excellent Buddha has lit the lamp of his Law of Virtue. He preached this Law when he was living in the Tha-wut-hti country at the Ze-tawun monastery, and, as to whom he referred in his speaking, he spoke of the Elder, Set-ku Pa-la.¹

and goes straight into the story.

Later editions were different. The 1889 edition from the Pyei-gyi Man-daing Press prints the gāthās along with a nissaya version, and the tales are definitely presented as illustrating the verses. In the intervening period, a large number of editions had appeared with all sorts of combinations of gāthās and tales. The first departure was a little book from the American Mission Press containing a Burmese version of the gathas only: in the Catalogue it is said to be a Burmese version of a foreign translation. The book itself on its title page says -

Selected by Captain Thomas Lewin, Commissioner, Chittagong Hill Tracts, for the people of the Chittagong Hills to read, follow and understand, and translated by Ma Tu, headmistress of the Rangomati school.²

This is a little ambiguous. The word here interpreted as 'translate' usually means 'to transcribe' or 'to copy out': further, the book contains all the canonical verses, and there was therefore no question of Lewin making a selection. It makes sense however if he found a foreign version for Ma Tu - presumably an English, not a Pali, scholar - mission, not monastery, educated - to put into Burmese. In 1880 the Calcutta University appointed the 'Dhammapada Gatha' as a Burmese set book for their matriculation,³ and it may have just

¹ ကိုး ဣသော အဝိဇ္ဇာ တို့ ဖြစ် ပြေး လည်း ထသော၊ ဂေမာဏ ဇာတိ အစိုး ဖြစ် သော နိဗ္ဗာန်
ကို ဖြစ် ထသော ။ ထွန်ပ သော တန်ခိုး ဇောလည်း ဂြိုထသော ။ အကြင် ဖြစ်စွာ ကျား
သည့် သူ ကောင်း တရား ယူ သော ဆီ ဖီး ကို ထွန် ဇောလ် မှု ပြီး ။ ဣတရား ပော
ခြင်း ကို ။ သာဝတ္ထိ ဖြစ် ပေတဝန် ကျောင်း ဇောလ် ပြု ခေ ဇောလ် မှု သော အခါ ပော
ဇောလ် မှု ။ အသယ် သူ ကို အကြောင်း ပြု ဖြစ် လော ဇောလ် မှု သနည်း ယူ မှု ကိး ။
ဝဏ္ဏ ပါလ မင်္ဂလ ကို အကြောင်း ပြု ဖြစ် လော ဇောလ် မှု သနည်း ။

² စစ်တဂေါင်း ဇောလ် ဂြို ပြု ဂြိုသော သူတို့ သည့် ဘယ် ဂြို ဖြစ် ပြု သူး လည်း ဖြစ်
စေခြင်း အကျိုး ပြု ။ စစ်တဂေါင်း မိလိန္ဒ ကို အကျိုး ပြု ။ ဣတိ ဇောလ် မှု
ဂူ ဝင် သည် ဂြို ဖြစ် စေ စပ် ဖြစ် ဂြို ဂေါမထိ ကျောင်း အရာကြီး မာတု ရေး ကျိုး သနည်း ။

³ see Text Book Committee Report of 3 Nov.1880 - P.I.R. 1880-81

been this book that was intended. It would surely have been odd however to set a translation of an English translation from Pali, written in Chittagong, as a specimen of Burmese literature, though it is hard to find anything else that they might have had in mind. It might just possibly have been the 'Dhammapada Palidaw Path Nissaya' which was published by the Burma Herald Press in 1880. This contains the Pali gāthās, each with a very brief cross-reference to the appropriate tale, followed by a nissaya translation, which contains short accounts of the stories. It has the peculiarity of numbering the gāthās as a total of 302 instead of the more usual 424 or 426. In the same year the Catalogue shows another 'Dhammapada' produced by 'the Revd. Issa'. No copy is now available, but it cannot be identified with the last named version, since it is said to have had 470 pages against 259. Whatever the University intended however, the Text Book Committee seems to have taken it as referring to the gathas in Pali, since in 1881 there appears a new version of this from the government press. This is much more clearly printed, again with a single-word cross reference to an appropriate story, but no kind of Burmese translation at all. Other editions of the Dhamma-pada wut-htú appear in 1882 and 1886, and finally in 1889 there was an edition, entitled 'Dhamma-pada Wut-htú' from the Pyei-gyì Man-daing Press which contains the gathas and the stories together. Exactly what the Text Book Committee meant by using the word 'Dhammapada' in their approved list in 1885 is therefore very difficult to say. Probably they were really thinking of the stories in Latter's text and its successors, which had been the set book for Government examinations for nearly forty years, but the verses that the stories were formally built around had been separated from them, and the only book in which they appeared together was still only in English. The whole thing must have been very confusing, and no doubt the Committee were a little vague themselves.

The 'Thudama-sayì Mìn-thamì Hpyat-htòn', the 'Decisions of the Princess Sudhamma-cāri', is a much shorter work than the Dhamma-pada stories, without any ostensible religious background. It consists of a series of sixteen (or seventeen - one is sometimes divided) short tales illustrating law and custom, and had been a favourite for years. It was included in Latter's 'Selections' in 1850, and along with his

'413 years later in 1143 B.E. Shin Sandalinka compiled his work,² so that the words of wise men should not be lost'. It appears that his source believed that Sāv-kè was already on the throne when Mìn Yāzā came to court. The accepted date for his accession is in fact 730 B.E. but it may be that the historical part of the Mani-yadana-bon represents several different traditions.

The book itself has been described as one of 'aphorisms', but this is not correct: it is a book of history regarded as a guide to future action. In form it is a statement of 63 problems - very clearly stated and real problems - which faced kings of Ava from time to time and the advice submitted to the king by his minister on their solution, together with the historical and mythical precedents, 'full of wise saws and modern instances', submitted in support of that advice. Although the book starts out to cover Mìn Yāzā and his masters only, in fact only about one half of its length is devoted to them. The rest covers a series of kings and ministers, right up to the end of the Toungoo dynasty in 1752. It is a long book - 706 pages in the 1871-72 edition, and containing 637 recounted incidents, carefully distinguished in the index as either 'akyaùn' for the historical items, or 'wut-htú' for the mythological, and these vary between a brief anecdote of a few lines and a story, or chronicle, running to several pages. It is apparent that such a mass of material would have to be drawn from all possible sources, and in fact the tales come from chronicles, Jatakas, the Dhamma-pada stories, the Hítaw-padeṭha, and the Hpyat-htòns. It might be difficult to find an available source which was not drawn upon.

Apart from its length and consequent cost + the 1871-72 edition was published in three parts at a total price of Rs 9/- - it might seem eminently suitable for school use, combining historical and literary interest in a clear and readable style. The Text Book Committee however did not agree: at a meeting held in November 1880

1

အင်းဝမြို့မှာ "ဘုရင် ၃ ဆက် မြောက် " ၅၃ နှစ် ဝှိုင်၊ ပြော
ဆီ သ မှ " မင်း ရာဇာ သုဒ္ဓိ ပုံ ပြင် စကား ဂုဏ် စွဲ အိ " နှစ်
ပေါင်း ၄၁၃ နှစ် " ကောက် သော အခါ " မြန်မာ သက္ကရာဇ်
၁၁၄၃ နှစ် တွင်

it was decided that, while the book was a classic of Burmese literature, it was not suitable for schools, and it was not admitted to the Approved list. At the same meeting however, the Committee recorded the issue of a list of books approved. This list included the Mani-yadana-bon, and it continued to figure in the Education Department's lists of 1883 and 1885. It looks as though the Department were quite prepared to ignore the Committee's views on occasion. In 1881, for instance, the Committee gave approval to a 'Geography of Burma' from the St. Peter's Institute, Bassein, and to a 'History of India' in Burmese by J. Simeon, but none of these books ever got on to the lists issued by the Department. The Mani-yadana-bon therefore easily survived the Committee's disapproval, and went into a second edition in 1882-83.

The two remaining books, the Hitopadesa and the Mana Wunana Dhammathat, stand a little apart from the rest for different reasons. The Hitopadesa (Burmese - Hí-taw-padetha) is a rearrangement of the Pancatantra, and the Sanskrit text, well known to scholars in Europe, had already been edited and translated into English by Francis Johnston in 1842. There does not seem to be an old Pali version: the one which is extant was made in Ceylon in 1913, and the title page of the Burmese says 'translated from the Sanskrit'. The original Hitopadesa consists of four sections - the Making of Friendship, the Breaking of Friendship, Making War, and Making Peace. What was known in Burma under the name of Hí-taw-padetha was considerably different. It only covers - though expanding - the first section of the original, and ignores the rest. In spite of the claim to be translated from the Sanskrit, it includes ten stories which are not included in the Sanskrit canon - though some of these come from other versions of the Pancatantra - and excludes one, that of Prince Tungabala and the Merchant's Wife, which might have seemed unedifying. Only eight stories in fact are common to the Sanskrit and the Burmese. Rendering of names from the Sanskrit into Burmese script is somewhat wild: Godāvāri becomes Kolākari - Ksudrabuddhi becomes Candibuddhi - Jaladagava becomes Jalatta for instance.¹ In the later tales in particular the Burmese versions of names cease to bear very much

¹ Burmese letters given values as in Pali

relationship to the Sanskrit. The Burmese book has the further odd characteristic that in the story of the Old Tiger and the Traveller it is a golden net that the tiger uses for bait, not the more probable golden bracelet of the Sanskrit. The origin of this version is something of a mystery and was already one in 1887 when R.F. St. John published an English translation.¹ In his preface he says -

The copy which has been printed for the use of scholars gives no clue to the date or authorship of the work, and it will be rendering the students of Oriental literature some service if anyone can discover the Sanskrit version from which this has been taken, or whether there are any other portions in Burmese, or throw any other light upon it. The late Sir Arthur Phayre informed me that King Mindong was constantly quoting from it.

In fact Horace Browne says² that King Mindon gave him a copy in Mandalay when he went there to be Resident in 1859, but he does not say if it was a manuscript or print.

Not much more seems to be known about the origin of this version even now. All that can be said is that all the Hitopadesa tales in the Mani-yadana-bon come from this source, and that it was therefore current before 1781, and also that no stories directly from the parts II to IV of the Sanskrit are included - though the very brief anecdote (no.4 in part 42 - p.373)³ of the Lion, Bull and Fox may show a slight acquaintance with part II - and that it therefore seems that no more of it was available in Burma at that time. It looks as though the Burmese version was written at least in part from memory, and filled out with other favourite tales. The earliest printed edition must be the square quarto copy of 37 pages, bound up with ten pages of the jataka story 'Buridat Naga Min Wut-htu' and notes on spelling, now in the library of the Indian Institute at Oxford. Unfortunately this has lost its title page, and now has no trace of date, or publisher's or printer's name, and it has no preface. Therefore it is only possible to guess at its history and how it

² Reminiscences of the Court at Mandalay - Col. Horace Browne - p.36

¹ 'The Burmese Hitopadesa' reprinted from the 'Indian Magazine' 1887

³ ဟိမဝန္တာ တောတွင် " ပင်လ မျက် ဝေသာ ခြင်္သေ့ နှင့် " ကုဏ္ဍ မျက် ဝေသာ နှုတ် လား သည်။
 အလွန် ချစ်ကြည်ကြ သည်။ " သိင်္ဂီ သူ နှင့် မျက် ဝေသာ " မြေ နှေး သည် ခြင်္သေ့ စပ်ကြား
 နှင့် " နှုတ် စပ်ကြား တွင် " မ မျက် ဝေသာ အရာ နှင့် " နှုတ် ချော သည် ကို " အဆင် အဆင်
 မျက် " မျက် ချော ဝေသာ ကြား " ခြင်္သေ့ လည်း ပေသာ ကို " နှုတ် က လည်း ခြင်္သေ့ နှစ်ပါး
 လုံးပင် " ပျက် စီးခြင်း သို့ ကျေ က် ချော သည် "

came to be printed: by its appearance it may well have been published before 1850. It is also conceivable that it represents an edition printed for King Mindon, a copy of which he might have given to Browne. There is no evidence whatever. After this, the text appears in November 1870 along with five other companion texts from the Burma Herald Press. The five accompanying texts were Shin Kyaw Thu's Hpyat-htòn (Book of Legal Rulings), Maha Bin-nya-kyaw's Hpyat-htòn, and three of U Pon-nya's jataka stories, Chaddan-hsin Mìn Wut-htú, (the Chaddanta Elephant), Yon Mìn Wut-htú (the Hare), and Thi-wa-yit Mìn Wut-htú (King Sivaraja). The Hitaw-padeṭha was regarded as the most important part of the compilation (covering 80 pages out of 150) and a subsequent preface from the Press refers to the whole book as their 'Hitaw-padeṭha'. The same compilation of texts, with an almost identical preface, was printed again in 1881, by the American Mission Press, and in 1886 by the Hanthawadi Press.

By this time however there was another version available. This was printed in 1876 at the Government Press and seems to have been issued serially along with the Educational Gazette.¹ Since the Gazette was intended to assist teachers, this version of the Hitaw-padeṭha must have been intended to be used in the schools. It is very much closer to the original Sanskrit, and could in fact have been made from Johnston's English translation. It did not meet with much approval however. A copy in the India Office Library² bears a pencilled note which must be of the time -

Printed in an Educational paper that comes out in parts, but it is not stated whether this is a translation made by someone from the usual (?) version or an old one existing in the province. The style is modern and poor.

It had, it seems, been intended to publish all four parts which are in the Sanskrit, but the project never went beyond the first three. The Educational Gazette was discontinued in 1877, and presumably the criticism that the new version of the Hitaw-padeṭha was receiving did not justify offering it separately. It is interesting that Ripley and Savage's Reader of 1882 includes the tale of the fate of the turtle who could not keep his mouth shut - even when he was using it to hold on to a stick which two birds were carrying high in the air. This comes from part IV of the Hitopadesa, and it is

¹ see p.117 sup.

² Bur B 622 in India Office Library

possible that Ripley or Savage did translate the whole and used some of the unpublished material in the Reader. The story does not seem to occur elsewhere in Burmese at this time, although Û Htin Aung gives it as a folk-tale in his book 'Burmese Folk Stories' in 1930. It might well have come into circulation from the Reader: it had had fifty years to gain currency.

However the Department again never made it clear to which version their approval was given, and schoolmasters would no doubt have taken it as applying to whichever they preferred. The 1881 edition of the 'Burmese' version that was printed at the American Mission Press however is credited to 'Maung Bwa' as editor in the Catalogue. Now a Maung Bwa had been a deputy inspector of schools for a good many years¹, and it could be that encouraging him to put his name to it was a tactful and tacit way of indicating approval for this version rather than for the more 'authentic' text that had been put out in the Department's own paper. His name was not used in connection with the 1872 or the 1886 editions of the same text. In 1886 the position promised further complications, since W.S. Sandys started publishing his own translation in this year. It appears to be an attempt to make a compromise between the Educational Gazette's version and the traditional Burmese. The stories which are given and their order are those of the established Sanskrit text, but the language is more like that of the 'Burmese Hitaw-padeitha' and further from the baldness of the Educational Gazette version: in the 'Old Tiger' story Sandys used the 'golden net' text, not the 'Golden bangle'. It had no success however, and he never went beyond part I, and although only 500 copies of this were printed, no reprint was called for. The old Burmese version, whatever its deficiencies, was much too deeply entrenched. Examples from each of these three versions are given in parallel in Appendix A for comparison.

The last book on the list, the Manu Wunana Dhammathat is even further away from the rest. It is one of the 32 Dhammathats then current. These were recensions, prepared at different times and under orders from different kings, of the originally Hindu law

¹ Maung Bwa was unusual among the deputy inspectors: he had been educated abroad, and he had also spent many years in a monastery as a novice. See P.I.R. 1877-78

derived from the Laws of Manu in attempts to modify and to codify it for use in the different circumstances and different custom of Burma. No Dhammathat or any concensus of them however had the absolute authority that the legal codes had, that had been imposed by the British in India: they were only guides to reaching a decision, not necessarily of much greater weight than any other precedent which might be quoted. A principle of Burmese law that is quoted by Burgess (Legal Commissioner, Upper Burma) in his preface to the Kìn Wun Mìn-gyì's compendium of Burmese law published in 1898 is -

The King's decision overrules a Dammathat, but a private agreement takes precedence over the King's decision.

The Dhammathat's were also to some extent regarded as foreign importations. Burgess also quotes Taw Sein Ko as saying -

The rulings in the Dhammathats which were not issued as law by sovereign authority are in the main a foreign importation, an Aryan source representing an ideal state of society which has developed under Brahmanical and Buddhistical influences, and they are but a veneer on the Mongoloid people of Burma. A compromise has therefore been effected in which the ethnic element of the borrowing community is the predominant factor.¹

Furnivall went further -

As Dr. Forchhammer has shown, the Dhammathats do not represent Burman customary law. Originally importations from Buddhist India, although for some time they tended at each recension to become more imbued with Burman ideas, this process had not altered them in certain details, while from 1750 onwards, under the influence of court Brahmans, they began to reflect a Hindu bias. Thus they have never reflected Burmese custom, and have borne to Burmese life a relation not dissimilar from that of Canon law to English life in the days of the early² chancellors, or the Roman law among a later generation.

Doubts have been cast upon this view, which may be overstated, but even if the Dhammathats moulded Burmese customs, and Burmese customs reshaped the Dhammathats, they were never more than a guide - never an absolute authority.

In fact, to the Burmese the law - the law of society, not the unavoidable and immutable Law of Karma - was nothing but a body of custom which might well change from time to time, and in changing circumstances. In any dispute, if the arbitrators could find a solution satisfactory to all by persuading the parties to accept

¹ Digest of the Burmese Buddhist Law by Û Gàung (ex Kìn Wun Mìn-gyì)

² Furnivall - JERS vol.I 1910 'Matriarchy in Burma'

a bending of custom - well, that was a satisfactory solution. The process of persuading the parties that a suggested compromise was fair would depend very much upon sentiment in the community, and this in turn would be influenced by precedent, represented, where the memory of elders did not cover the point, by whatever Dhammathats and Hpyat-htons might be available. This attitude was found distressing by the British administrators, who were used to the concept of a fixed and precise body of law, which could not, in any circumstances, be varied by private agreement. They felt it impossible to carry out their work, unless any lawsuit were seen as a determination between Right and Wrong - or at least between right and superior right - not as an attempt to find agreement. Burgess found -

The inveterate habit of compromise prevalent among the people increases the confusion, and casts a haze of indistinctness and indefiniteness over everything.

Much earlier Burney had noted -

In Tavoy almost every dispute... (over) lands which was referred to the provincial officers, they used to decide by recommending that the ground... be divided equally between the litigants, and I could never convince these officers of the absurdity of such a decision, and show them that the land either belonged or did not belong to one of the parties.

He might have seen a Biblical parallel. However the first two tales in 'Thu-dama-sayi' carefully distinguish between cases which can - a fish - and cases which cannot - a child - be dealt with by dividing the disputed property.

Jardine, the Judicial Commissioner, was it seems prepared to go along with this situation, to some extent at least. He once wrote -

These causes combined have doubtless led the Burmese to substitute special contracts and compromises arranged before elderly persons for the strict rules of law about inheritance and partition, divorce and other matters. The system of compromise based on consent and acquiescence almost supersedes custom and makes a reference to written law unnecessary in a vast number of cases.

-
- 1 Preface to U Gaung's Digest of Burmese Buddhist Law p.vii
 - 2 Journal - quoted by W.S. Desai - History of the British Residency in Burma 1826-1840 p.103 fn
 - 3 Jardine - Notes on Buddhist Law III Marriage and Divorce. Preface p.i.

But the British officials felt that a country could not be properly run without a solid and indisputable framework of law, and they were concerned to make sure that there was one, to provide standards of right and wrong, not merely acceptable solutions. In Burma there was nothing to go upon except the Dhammathats. About 1847 D. Richardson had prepared an edition of the Manu Wunana Dammathat in Burmese and English, with the two languages on facing pages, which must have been intended to assist English justices to decide their cases in accordance with the Law of Burma. It does not seem to have found a great deal of use in its early days, since there was no call for a second printing until 1876. A second edition appeared in that year, perhaps as a belated response to the activities of the Burma Herald Press, which had opened its book-publishing programme with the Kìn-wun Mìn-gyì's Addá-thán-hkeik Dammathat, and followed it immediately with the Kaing Sà's Yasxathat-kyì 'called Manu Yaza Shauk-htòn', both in 1870. At about the same time, de Courcy Ireland, then Commissioner of Arakan, was preparing a digest of Dammathats, which was published in 1874 under the title 'Samuhadda Vicchedani' (misprinted in the Catalogue as 'Thamuhada Waitasdani', i.e. Thamú-hada Weik-hsa-dani'). It is interesting that Ahee managed to hold the copyright of even this book: presumably Ireland sold it to him outright. Early in the decade the Burma Herald Press made most of the running, but later on the legal department of the government took a hand. Jardine from about 1876 was making a long series of notes for the subordinate courts on difficult points of Burmese law, which have been referred to above. By the 1880s he felt strongly enough on the subject to make a public offer personally of a prize of Rs 1000 for a condensation of Burmese law. The offer appeared in the Gazette on 22 January 1882, and was won by Forchhammer, the Pali scholar, not by any exponent of practical law. As part of the same campaign to standardise and codify, he encouraged the preparation of a new series of editions of the Dammathats. These were prepared by Maung Tet To, an Extra Assistant Commissioner. The first of this series to be published was the Manu Wunana Dammathat which appeared in 1878, and is perhaps what the Committee had in their minds when the title was placed on the Approved list. Jardine himself did much work on education as Chairman of the Educational Syndicate, and presumably the appearance of this on the list reflects his other preoccupations.

It is rather an odd book to find on a list of school books - one does not expect to find Blackstone in an English primary school library.¹ It is said to have been compiled in 1773 by Hsin-byu-shin's chief minister -

with the assistance of three learned men, Tsanda-pagnya, Tezaw Thara, and Gnyana-tha-Damma from the Manu Dhammathat, the Dhamma Wielatha, the Manoo Thara, the Atieta, the Dhammathat Kyaw, the Manoo Thicka, and the fourteen Hpyat-Htoon-gyis of Great Judgments, and was called Wonnana because it was an explanation or commentary on these works.²

It cannot in fact have been found of much use in schools except as a text book for fairly advanced Pali; Tet To's edition is in Pali and Burmese, not in Nissaya form, but giving each paragraph in Pali followed by the Burmese translation.

There was a very wide field of Burmese literature which is not touched upon in this list, which is only representative of U Kaung's 'religious and moral portion of Burmese literature'.³ It is the literature of the monastic school, taught primarily as an exemplar of moral attitudes, and as a precedent-providing guide to action, not as pure literature - though the Victorians found it difficult to separate this from morality.⁴ Pure literature belonged to the Court, and though the King and Court had a more or less close relationship with the monastery, they also had a more or less close

¹ But it might have been found perhaps at about this time: Matthew Arnold wrote in 'The Twice-Revised Code' -

It can hardly have been by the deliberate judgment of men of taste that another meritorious work 'Warren's Extracts from Blackstone's Commentaries' was selected, for the astonishment of Quintilians yet unborn, to be the authorised text book for readers, the chosen field in which the student of elocution should exhibit his powers.

Arnold on Education - ed. Sutherland - p.47

² Horace Browne - Introduction to Tet To's edition.

³ U Kaung - JERS, XLVI, ii, Dec 1963. p.28

⁴ e.g. M. Arnold, Report for 1880, op.cit p.60. 'Good poetry does undoubtedly tend to form the soul and character: it tends to beget a love of beauty and of truth in alliance together: it suggests, however indirectly, high and noble principles of action and it inspires the emotions so helpful in making principles operative.'

relationship with the opposite world of music and song, drama and poetry. The attempt to base vernacular education on the monastery schools therefore meant that when the Court collapsed, the other side of Burmese literature had no firm basis and rapidly collapsed too - in fact from over-inflation, for lack of a standard of reference, in the popular drama.

2. History

The section of the list devoted to history is notable only for its almost complete deficiency, since it contains only one title, which is Savage's translation of part of Sir William Hunter's 'History of India', and it is not clear why it should ever have been thought that this might be of any great interest to Burma. Calcutta may have brought some pressure to bear, with some idea of bringing the rather anomalous Burma province into line with the rest. Hunter was the first author of the Imperial Gazetteer of India, and his history betrays this. It falls into two nearly equal parts, only the first of which is translated. This is devoted mainly to the geography and ethnology of India, with a somewhat disproportionate attention to the languages and customs of obscure forest tribes, which have always fascinated anthropologists. It has little to say about the emperor Asoka, whom the Burmese would have felt to be interesting to them, and nothing about the strong South Indian connection with South East Asia from the 6th century A.D. onward, which culminated in what could almost be called the Chola kingdom's overseas empire, and which had such a profound effect upon the cultures of the area - not least the introduction of Buddhism to the Mon kingdom. There is a short chapter on the origin of Buddhism, but even here it puts forward views which the translator has felt it tactful to suppress. The second part goes into more detailed history, starting with the Muslim invasions of the 13th century. This part, if translated, never seems to have been published: presumably Savage saw that the whole thing bore little relevance to Burma and gave up the project.

This deficiency was not for lack of effort. It had been recognised for years that a history of Burma for schools was a prime need, but no one had succeeded in producing a satisfactory one. The first effort seems to have been made by Talboys Wheeler, who was

Secretary to Government under Phayre: this may perhaps be the 'General Summary of the History of Burma' which was printed anonymously by J.W. Baynes in Rangoon in 1871. It was in English, but in 1876 was still 'the present text book of our schools'.¹ In 1872 Sandys was working on a Burmese school history. This may have been based on some of Phayre's work - it was intended at any rate that it should be sent to him for criticism before publication.² The project came to nothing however since, although Sandys had claimed in 1873 that the MS was practically ready, in the next year, after the quarrel with Nesfield, he said that he was unable to complete it, and presumably whatever had been finished was destroyed.³

The next attempt came in 1876 from J. Simeon, who at this time was headmaster of the government school at Bassein. He was a product of the missionary Krishnagar Collegiate School of Bengal, and never seems to have felt sure enough of his Burmese to write in the language. His very numerous publications are all in English,⁴ though obviously intended for Burmese children, since they are printed with footnotes in Burmese explaining English phrases which might give trouble. All are books of no great value - hardly more than pamphlets, and only one ever appeared on the Approved list and this was quietly forgotten when the departmental manual was compiled. Nevertheless they were used: the 'Outline of the History of Burma' went into six editions between 1876 and 1885: the government Book Depot bought 1000 copies from Simeon in 1876, along with 333 copies of his Geography.⁵ The History was admittedly based on Talboys Wheeler's book -

The original intention of the compiler of this little work was to make a few notes on the 'History of Burma' by Mr. Talboys Wheeler.

Other works however, by Phayre, Horace Browne, Burney and Major Lloyd - but no native sources - had led him to an attempt at rewriting. One passage in his book seems to give a clue to the basic difficulty in the way of producing a school history -

¹ Simeon 'Outline of the History of Burma' Bassein 1876 - preface.

² P.I.R. 1873-74

³ P.I.R. 1874-75 p.85

⁴ except possibly the 'Easy Vernacular Course in Land Measuring for use in Burma' - Bassein 1878, which is bilingual, but anonymous.

⁵ P.I.R. 1876-77 p.95

I have not attempted to give here the date of the death of Tabin-shoay-tee or that of the accession of Byeen-noung or Branginoco as all historians seem to differ. Colonel Horace Browne says that Tabin-shoay-tee reigned from 1530 to 1559 and was murdered in May of that year and succeeded by Byeen-noung who reigned until 1581. Sir Arthur P. Phayre says that he reigned for 30 years, or from 1551 to 1581. The same writer says that Tabin-shoay-tee reigned from 1540 to 1550 and was succeeded by Ximi of Zatan who reigned three months: Ximi was succeeded by Xemindo who reigned one year and after him Branginoco ascended the throne in 1551. From Sir A.P. Phayre's work it would seem that Mr. Wheeler actually gave the reign of Tabin-shoay-tee under the heading of Branginoco. Major Lloyd gives from 1561 to 1593 as the period of Byeen-noung's reign and Mr. Talboys Wheeler gives him only ten years namely from 1540 to 1550.

In fact at this time Burmese history was still mainly a hobby of some senior British officials, who tried to reconcile the discrepancies of the early Portuguese and British records. The whole thing was too fluid and contentious for the calm certainties of a school history, while the Burmese Chronicles were not printed until 1873.

Other attempts were made. Another Bassein schoolmaster, T. Sunderland, published a brief 'Sketch of the History of Burma' - only 20 pages - in English in 1880. In 1881 the Text Book Committee decided to offer a reward of Rs 300 for a 300 to 400 page vernacular history of Burma, but, it seems, to no effect, although it may have been in response to this that the first Burmese effort was made. Maung Tun Win published a History of Burma at about this time: the first edition seems to have escaped registration and cannot be found in the Catalogue, but the second edition was published in 1883. It does not however seem to have met the Committee's standards, is not included in the Approved list, and is now nowhere available.

Finally in 1883 Phayre, who already had ten years earlier published a 'History of Pegu' covering the Mon kingdom in Lower Burma, produced his 'History of Burma', and this was immediately accepted as the standard work on the subject. It is the only history of Burma in either the English or the Burmese sections of the Approved list. Although it must have been too long and too expensive for general school use, no adaptation in the way of abridgement or translation seems to have been made at the time. In addition, the Committee recorded without comment the receipt of a printed book on Burmese

history from Stephen McKertich¹ and two other MSS in 1881-82. They also bought for Rs 250 in 1881 an unfinished MS of Burmese history written by a Captain Forbes who had died. It was published by the department in a small edition in 1882, but sales were small. It was not included in the 1885 Approved list. Also published about this time was a 'Catechism of the History of Burma' by L. Stapley translated by Maung Hpo Hman whose second edition appeared in 1887.

As can be seen, a very considerable effort to produce a satisfactory school history of Burma was made between 1870 and 1885, but for some reason which is unrecorded, none of the results were acceptable to the Text Book Committee. It is however remarkable that all this effort should have been made. Throughout much of the period, history was not an elementary school subject in England, and in 1864 Phayre himself had thought that the 'Sketch of Ancient History' by the Revd. E.A. Stevens² was all that was needed for a useful start. Elementary education was still firmly based on reading, writing and arithmetic, and in England, since after the Revised Code of 1862 payments to schools depended entirely on inspection results in these subjects, nothing else was taught, though no doubt some scraps of history came into the reading classes from the Readers in use. It was not until 1871 that history was recognised as one of the 'specific subjects' for which a payment might be made for pupils above standard IV. In Burma rewards became available for history in the 'indigenous schools' in 1881.³ They had been available in government schools somewhat earlier, but only in the 'upper primary' grades. It was not yet a subject for the primary vernacular scholarships in the 1878 scheme, which offered scholarships only on the basis of reading in Burmese, Pali, arithmetic, and dictation. In the District prize tests these were the only recognised subjects also. One would hardly expect therefore that

¹ This book is shown in the Catalogue as published in April 1882 and is said to be abridged from the Mahayazawin. It seems to have disappeared completely

² Two volumes of 'Elements of General History' - I Ancient and II Modern, were translated by Stevens from vol.VII of 'The Instructor' and published by the American Baptist Mission Press in 1850 and 1853 respectively. Copies are in the Indian Institute library, Oxford.

³ P.I.R. 1881-82 p.30

such an effort would be made to provide a vernacular book on a subject to which little importance seemed to be given.

3. Readers and Spelling Books

The third class of books on the list is perhaps the most interesting of all. The skill of reading is not one which it is possible to practise without a wider reference, and consequently, however strictly it might be intended to confine elementary education to the 'three Rs' - and in England up to the 1890s and even later there was a very strong opposition to spending public money on anything else - the impossibility of teaching reading without giving the pupils something to read opened the way to instruction in almost any other subject. The Hunter Commission on education recognised this, and recommended that -

- every series of vernacular readers for primary instruction should contain lessons on
- a) Respect for God, parents, teachers, rulers and the aged.
 - b) The duties of a good citizen and the universally admitted principles of morality and prudence
 - c) Cleanliness of habits, politeness of speech and kindness of conduct
 - d) The dignity and usefulness of labour, the importance of agriculture, commerce, trades, professions and crafts
 - e) The properties of plants and the uses of minerals and metals
 - f) The habits of animals, the characteristics of different races, common natural phenomena, fables and historical and biographical episodes, chiefly from Oriental sources.

It is hard to think of anything else which might have been included: All, or almost all, the topics listed could in any case be given widely different priorities and widely different slants of opinion. Many of the Hunter Commission's points were in fact well covered in the 'Burmese Classics' list above, and this was recognised when the Text Book Committee called for compilations from existing literature for a vernacular Reader. An interesting point is that this recommendation seems to differentiate between vernacular readers and English readers, since the next recommendation was that English readers should be designed to be entertaining rather than instructive.

Readers therefore could be controversial in a way in which no other class of school book could be, and this is to some extent

demonstrated in the Burmese Readers list, which shows rather clearly the gradual loss of ground by the mission schools, which sought to influence the cultural development of the country in their own direction, to the ideas of the Education Department which aimed at a gradual and natural accommodation to western ideas and methods rather than a conversion.

The earliest book in the list is the 'Burmese Pictorial Reader' by the Karen Christian convert Nga Gaw. This was revised and prepared for the press by Lucretia Stilson who died in 1851. The book was therefore probably written sometime in the 1840s. It is a small, very elementary book of 84 pages - in the fifth edition at least. Each section, consisting of six to ten separately written and numbered sentences, is headed with a small woodcut, the blocks for which may well have been brought from America - the 'Steamboat' in its section looks very like a Mississippi river boat and is certainly wearing the Stars and Stripes - and the text describes and comments on the picture. The subjects range from animals - sheep - deer - hare - etc., by way of 'Missionary' to 'Our Lord Jesus Christ', but the general tendency is to pass on the missionary message. Presumably the book was in use chiefly - perhaps only - in mission primary schools. Government schools up to 1868 were presumed to be for English-speaking children, and worked on English readers supplied by the Calcutta School-Book Society, and there were no others except for the Monastic and 'house' schools, which could never have considered it. They had their own books and methods. For more than twenty years therefore it seems to have been the only 'Burmese Reader' available. No doubt the mission schools found it useful enough to start their pupils upon, until they could graduate to Judson's Bible. Demand was not very large: in the twenty-five years to 1875 there were only five editions. It held its own however: the fifth edition was of 5,000 copies - as many as the total of the previous four. It was the only book in its particular field.

Through the 1850s and 1860s in fact no particular attention was paid to vernacular readers. No book is mentioned as such in Phayre's list of books available for his scheme for improving the monastic schools, and he gives no sign of recognising the need for

anything of the sort

If there were only a work on Elementary Astronomy, we really have every book required to start the work now proposed.¹

He felt no doubt that pupils would learn their reading from the Thin-bôn-gyì as always, and would graduate directly from that to the 'house I Live In' and Hough's 'Geography', instead of to the classical texts which the monasteries normally used. The production of books specifically for the purpose of giving children practice in reading began towards the end of 1872, when, as the result of his immense, if ill-directed, energy, Sandys' first Burmese Reader was published. His 46 sections are designed to be instructive and edifying, but contrive to be very boring. They are largely concerned with the 'descriptions of natural phenomena' interspersed with some fables and historical tales, but are too long and elaborate to be really effective. Sandys was, it seems, a man who could never resist a fact, and some of the pieces are heavily overloaded with facts. No. 31 for instance, 'On determining the ages of trees', instead of giving the principles involved in ring-counting, which might have been made interesting, devotes pages to reciting figures obtained in counts carried out in California and elsewhere, which must have been quite meaningless to Burmese village children. He has also a terrible tendency to verbose phrases, which may be good classical Burmese, but are not really suitable for children who have just learned their alphabet. At the same time, he drags in Christian phraseology that can have had little meaning to Burmese who were not mission-trained, such as -

Health is the highest and greatest of the blessings which the Lord confers upon us.²

To the Burmese Buddhist nothing is higher than the Buddha, and the blessing conferred by Him is the knowledge of the Way to escape from the vicious circle of the Than-thaya: health good or bad is part of one's Kamma and nothing to do with Him - though of course nats may interfere with it. Bringing a 'Hpayà Tha-hkin' who does deal with such matters in to a book not primarily intended for a Christian audience must have caused confusion at least. Sandys was however a

1 Minute of 26 Dec 1864

2 ကျင့်: မာခြင်း သာဓကံ၊ သူ့ကား သာဓကံ နေ: သာဓကား တေဒ် မှ သော
ကောင်း ခြီး: ထံ နှ့် အခြင်း အခြင်း ဆုံး ဖြစ် ပေ စွ။"

devout Christian and liked to regard his educational work as part of a Christian mission.¹ It proved difficult to reconcile this with work for a government department whose policy was to exclude religion from the education with which they concerned themselves. Other fixed opinions too which Sandys held - e.g.

Mr. Sandys does not admit Eurasians to his school. He objects to the mixture of races on the grounds that each learns the vices of the other

must have made it hard to use him. Nesfield, who was acting as Director of Public Instruction during Hordern's absence on leave from May 1872 to February 1874 seems to have taken exception to the Reader at once. The grounds of his objection are not made clear: in his P.I.R. for 1871-72 he merely notes the appearance of the Reader, but in the Government Resolution on the Report Eden found it necessary to say: 'the Chief Commissioner does not clearly understand Mr. Nesfield's objection to Mr. Sandys' Reader'. His views must have been immediately expressed and widely known, since the G.R. was published only a matter of eight months after the Reader.

Two years later, on the verge of his departure, Nesfield was prepared to be more specific. In the P.I.R. for 1873-74 he reported -

It was found on trial that the Readers prepared by Mr. Sandys were not popular, and that the students in every school preferred their own literature to any modern 'Readers' that we could give them.³

As Hodson's report of twelve years later shows,⁴ the position did not change much, even when the 'Reader' offered was compiled entirely from Burmese sources. Burmese conservatism still preferred the old texts in 1886 as in 1874, and nothing could have ousted them. It was not necessarily therefore on account of any quality of Sandys' Readers that they proved unacceptable. In fact however, they were such that their chance of being accepted in Burmese schools was made unnecessarily poor. Apart from the over-elaborate language, the tedious recital of dull facts and the Christianised phrases, it looks as though Sandys never really knew what audience he was writing

¹ see for instance P.I.R. 1875-76 p.26

² P.I.R. 1870-71

³ This report was presented by Hordern, but he was away for ten months of the year, and acknowledged that Nesfield was responsible for most of it.

⁴ see p. 153 below

for. Sometimes he seems to feel that the pieces will be used for reading practice by the children, sometimes that the book will remain in the teacher's hands. He had no precedents to go on, apart from Nga Gaw's elementary little book, and his own position while he was preparing the book, as headmaster both of his own private school and of the government Training school, so that his pupils were in part teachers in training and in part regular pupils on whom the trainees practised, can have done nothing to clarify his mind. In spite of their faults however, the Readers did find a market, though this seems to have been mainly in the mission schools. They sold a few hundred copies a year through the 1870s: the Pali texts of the Chauk-saung-dwe¹, which were the texts used in the monastery schools, however sold in thousands.

The need for something on which to practise reading was satisfied to some extent by Sandy's own translation of Aesop's Fables which followed the First Reader in May 1873. This proved popular: the stories are from the same tradition as the Jataka and other stories of Burmese tradition - in fact, many direct parallels can be found through the Panca-tantra. A second edition of 2,000 copies was printed immediately, though a third was not called for until 1880. It is a straightforward version in simple language. On his title-page Sandys claimed to have made the translation from the Greek directly², but this seems unlikely to be true, if only because his very first Fable, 'The Cock and the Jewel', is from Phaedrus III, 12, and does not seem to be in any of the Greek collections - it reads like a Phaedrus original, and he gave it quite a different moral - 'This is for those who do not appreciate me' - from the nineteenth century utilitarian 'Only the useful should be valued', which tends to emerge from the school versions. In Phaedrus the Cock protagonist is unappreciative, not an example of respect for the proper priorities. In spite of his claim, it seems that Sandys most probably translated from an English version. The fact that he felt he had to claim to have worked from a Greek original however says something about his own lack of confidence.

¹ see Hodson's report again and p.178 below

² သရာ စန္ဒီ ခြင်္သေ့ ပါဠိ မှ မြန်မာ ဘာသာ အားဖြင့် အရှက်
ဖြင့် ထား သည်။

He is often reputed to have been the first in the field of putting Aesop into Burmese, but it seems that another version by Stephen McKertich was probably earlier. This is also in the 1885 list of approved books, but no copy is now available - though there are a few Fables in his '99 Stories' which may be taken from the book. It does not appear in the Catalogue, and may therefore date from before 1868. It cannot at any rate be anything but a month or two later than Sandys' book, since Nesfield mentions it in his P.I.R. for 1872-73¹. His note covers the period ending March 1873, and must have been written before July 1873, while Sandys' version appeared in May. In addition it is implied that McKertich was the earlier in the P.I.R. for 1873-74, where Nesfield only just stops short of accusing Sandys of plagiarism¹. It disappeared early, since it does not figure in the list of books handled by the Government Book Depot in 1882.

Aesop remained a favourite field for the translator: in 1887 yet another version was produced by the A.B.M. Press. This book itself bears no translator's name, but it must be the version mentioned in the Catalogue as by 'Asan' (elsewhere Asu). It is notable for a set of extremely good woodcuts, which may well have been imported, and for a great prudery of language. The translator does not care to mention the 'dung-hill' in the Cock and Jewel story, and in the tale about the Mountain giving birth to a mouse cannot bring himself to mention child-birth, which makes the whole thing very confusing. For purposes of comparison, parallel versions of the 'Cock and Jewel' from each of these three texts are given in Appendix B. The McKertich version is taken from his 'Ninety Nine Anglo-Burmese Stories' in the absence of his 'Aesop'.

The government had done a certain amount in the way of financing publication of text books during the 1870s -

It is of paramount importance that a complete series of text books for primary schools should be completed, and Rs 4180 have been provided in the Budget for this purpose,² but after the collapse of Sandys' project, such funds seem to have been provided in a pretty haphazard manner. By 1880 however the

¹ see page 103 above

² P.I.R. 1871-72

Text Book Committee had formed a reasonably clear idea of the main gaps in the availability of books in Burmese, and at a meeting held on 3 November 1880 it was decided to offer rewards for the best efforts that could be produced for a series of five Readers, a history and a geography of Burma, books on surveying and on geometry, a Zanet-ka Jataka and a Burmese grammar. The highest priority was given to the Readers, and the reward for the First Reader was offered in advance of all the rest. It was called for in a very great hurry. The D.P.I.'s notification of 22 November 1880 offering a reward of Rs 200 for the best compilation, set a closing date of 28 February 1881. This left only three months, which was not much for putting it together, even though it had been decided that the 'vernacular literature already existing contains sufficient material for vernacular readers', and that no new writing was required.¹ However twenty-nine entries were received: that submitted jointly by P.H. Ripley and A.B. Savage was judged to be the most suitable, though the adjudication took some time. The result was not in fact announced until November 1881.² Entries by Maung Po Saw, W.S. Sandys, and by Maung Poke Ni were commended, but since only one of the entries was to be taken up, this was not much recompense for their work. It was soon recognised that this fact made this method of obtaining texts an unsatisfactory one. Potential authors were unwilling to devote their time to producing text books with perhaps only a 1 in 30 chance of the work being used at all. Other methods became favoured: sometimes a direct commission to produce a needed book,³ and sometimes the outright purchase of a manuscript volunteered by its author.⁴ The old method was however used for the remaining Readers. The advertisement for these was issued in February 1882, still at Rs 200 for each volume.⁵

Ripley and Savage's First Burmese Reader was duly published

-
- 1 Gazette 1881 p.402
- 2 D.P.I.'s notification 38 of 1 November 1881
- 3 e.g. in 1881 Savage was commissioned to produce a translation of Kelly's 'Surveying' for Rs 250 - Gazette 1881 supp. p.139
- 4 e.g. on 27 October 1881 the Committee decided to buy a MS, in English, of Burmese History by a Capt. Forbes. This was published in 1882 but found little demand. See Gazette 1881 - supp. p.515
- 5 Gazette 1881 - supp. p.139

in May 1882, only six months after it had been finally selected, in an edition of 10,000 copies, which was followed by further editions of 11,000 and 10,000 in 1884 and 1885. The Second Reader, also by Ripley and Savage, was dealt with in a much more leisurely fashion: its first edition was not published until 1886. The First Reader does in places show signs of haste. It is however, as specified, drawn from existing sources, mostly easily identifiable. Many sections are taken from the 'Burmese Hitaw-padetha': they are not, definitely, from the version that was published in 1876 with the Educational Gazette¹, except that section 13, the 'Talkative Turtle' might be from the unpublished fourth part.² Its sections are much shorter than those in Sandys' Reader - the 65 pages contain 45 sections, while Sandys' 46 sections are spread out over pages.

It is not easy to find a principle of selection. The General Conference's list of points to be covered does not seem to have been particularly attended to.³ In fact, the stipulation that the book should consist of extracts from existing vernacular literature must have served to rule out several of them, particularly since the stipulation seems to have been interpreted as meaning native vernacular literature: there is no attempt to bring in any missionary writings or translations from the European languages, even the Aesop translations. There are of course several stories similar to Aesop's, but these are undoubtedly parallels not derivative. One of the closest which occurs in the Reader is the Jataka story of the woodpecker which took the bone out of the lion's throat: the same story is no.8 in Sandys' Aesop, except that they are a wolf and a crane. The Reader is in fact very much a selection of tales drawn from works which a monastery pupil might well come across in the course of his reading anyway, and the choice described by Hodson⁴ between the Department's Readers and the Chauk-saung-dwè is rather one between a Burmese and a Pali bias than between a 'modern' and a 'traditional' education.

¹ see page 135 sup.

² ibid

³ see p.145 above

⁴ see below p.153

The First Reader undoubtedly met a need. At a price of three annas it provided a very general access to at least scraps of Burmese literature, which until recently had only been available, if at all, in treasured manuscripts in monastery and palace libraries. There were at this time fewer than 3000 pupils in primary schools directly controlled by the government and so bound to use the Departmental Reader; it is obvious that the 31,000 copies printed between 1882 and 1885 must have circulated widely outside these schools. It is possible that it may have given new currency to some stories: the tale of the talkative turtle (Reader I no.13) is given by U Htin Aung as a folk tale current in 1935, but there does not seem to be a Burmese version of it earlier than this Reader, coming as it does from part IV of the Hitopadesa. If this is so, and if the conjecture is correct that this section of the Reader is taken from an unpublished fourth part of the version that the Educational Gazette started, this of course forms an exception to the statement that the Reader is drawn entirely from native Burmese literature.

The remaining two items on this list are given as 'Thin-bòn-gyì' and 'That-pon'. These are generic terms rather than titles of any particular books. The thin-bòn ('learning board') was the blackened board used in traditional Burmese schools as a slate, on which pupils copied down their letters and syllables as part of the process of learning to read and write, while the Thin-bòn-gyì was the master book prepared by the teacher for his own use, which gave all the possible letter combinations and their pronunciation, from which he set the lessons for his classes. Hodson, senior Inspector in 1886, described the process -

The Indian practice of writing in sand (he had served in Oudh before his posting to Burma) is unknown in Burmese village schools. Every little boy is expected to come provided with a thin-bon - a board blackened with a mixture of powdered charcoal and rice-water - on which he can write with a pointed bit of soft pot-stone. On this board the teacher or one of the senior pupils writes the portion of the alphabet that forms that day's lesson and the pupil, in concert with the others at the same stage with himself, traces letters and shouts their names until repetition has fixed their form and sound in his memory. Graduated lessons are set from the Thinbongyi, on completion of which the pupil has been made familiar with every combination of letters and has mastered the mechanical part of reading.

At this stage of his progress, a boy can advantageously take up the Burmese Reader I, but as a matter of fact this is rarely done except in schools where there is a certified assistant teacher to recommend the innovation. public opinion is in favour of one of the six Pali books known as the Chauksaungdwe generally. The Mingalathok is selected as a beginning. Printed copies of the Chauksaungdwe can be obtained for 8 annas and Burmese parents do not begrudge the price, but small boys are destructive and paper books do not last long in their hands. Sometimes the wooden thin-bon is changed for an English slate and slate-pencil, and the pupil is supplied daily with an extract from the Mingalathok to read and commit to memory.¹

No doubt each teacher would originally have prepared his own Thin-bon-gyi, but by 1880 many had been published for use by both masters and pupils, and this would perhaps have cut out to some extent the traditional thin-bon. The process seems to have been slow to start. A Thin-bon-gyi is mentioned in the appendix to the 1868-69 P.I. Report, as in use in the government school at Prome, when McKertich was headmaster, but the earliest still available seems to be that issued by the Catholic Mission at the St. Peter's Institute in Bassein: this had reached its fifth edition by 1878. It seems to have sold alongside another anonymous 'Burmese Spelling Book' from the American Mission Press, which was in a fourth edition in 1879. Both sold for eight annas, though St. Peter's provided 60 pages against only 40 from its rival.

In 1880 it seems to have been realised that there was a wider need for such books, and between 1880 and 1882 no fewer than five new Thin-bon-gyis were produced, by Maung Po, Maung Tun Tha, Maung Thein, McKertich and Ingalls (the Baptist missionary at Thonze). These all followed the previous patterns - 30 to 60 pages, selling at eight annas in editions of 1000 or so - except for Ingalls version which had only 18 pages and sold for four annas. In the next four years however came the explosion: U Hpo O at the Burma Herald Press seems to have decided that this was a good market to break in to, and did it with characteristic vigour. He took over Maung Po's Thin-bon-gyi and put it into a second and a third edition in 1883 and 1884 of 10,000 copies each, each copy selling for one anna only. In 1884 he also printed two other versions by Saya Hlwa and by Ma Sein Nyo,

¹ Quoted in P.I. R. 1886-87 p.3

of which he acquired the copyright, also at one anna and in editions of 10,000 copies. The market must have been stunned: none at all were printed in 1885. In 1886 two new versions were attempted: W.S. Sandys and Maung Hla Aung each printed an edition of 1000 to sell at five and four annas respectively, but they did not really stand a chance against Hpò O, who in this year printed another 10,000 copies of yet another version in the name of Ko Peh. It is apparent that the 50,000-odd copies printed in these few years must have effected something like a revolution in teaching methods. There must have been a rapid movement in the Burmese schools from the traditional oral learning to learning from the book. Hodson's description of a Burmese school must have been made when the picture given was of an institution whose end was in sight.

As the length of the Thin-bòn-gyìs in the Catalogue indicates, they were by no means only devoted to the alphabet, but included all sorts of miscellaneous information useful for reference. The St. Peter's Thin-bòn-gyì includes, for instance, eleven pages of mnemonic verses, lists of standard abbreviations, tables of length, time, capacity, and weight, both in Burmese and in English units, lists of the names of the months, and also addition, subtraction and multiplication tables. Other versions printed short Pali texts with Burmese translations and explanations. It became normal to include at least the Mingalā-thok (Mangala-sutta) and Payeik-kyì (Maha-paritta) texts. By including 'Thinbongyi' in its approved list, the Text Book Committee were being much less than precise. By 1885 the term included a large number of books which differed from one another to a greater or less extent.

A similar failure to be specific with regard to the That-pons might perhaps have been more serious. These were books in which attempts had been made to lay down standards of spelling in Burmese. These standards were particularly necessary because the modification of the -r- sound in Burmese into a -y- means that either one of two letters can be used for the -y- sound, and because the non-pronunciation (in effect) of final consonants means that words ending in -t and -p or -n, -m and a nasalised vowel have the same pronunciation. Such

homophones can however have different meanings, and it is therefore important to establish a convention to determine which spelling is to represent which meaning. So far as the Text Book Committee were concerned however, all That-pons were superseded by Judson's Dictionary which they had decided in 1876 should be the standard of reference. This was less arbitrary than it might seem: Judson had taken a great deal of care, being aware of the problem, in investigating the orthography of the language, for the purposes of his Dictionary. He found the That-pons which were available to him very inconsistent -

he found that the compilers of these vocabularies had no settled principles: that they frequently contradicted one another; that even the same compiler would be found to contradict himself in the same work, and in circumstances which precluded the possibility of ascribing the discrepancy to a mistake of the copyist.¹

Consequently he relied on the pronunciation of Arakan, where the -r-sound has not been lost, to determine the usage of the letters -r- and -y-. For the determination of the final consonants he -

followed the That-pons and That-nyoons, when they agreed with one another, and with general usage: and in other cases he has endeavoured to balance conflicting authorities, giving considerable weight to² the most prevailing practice of copyists on the palm-leaf.

So far as the Committee were concerned therefore the Burmese That-pons had no longer any authority, and to approve them in general, without specifying which, is therefore so meaningless as to amount to no more than a pious gesture in the general direction of Burmese culture.

4. Grammar

The next section is devoted to 'Grammar', and it was one which proved difficult to fill up. European schoolmasters, brought up in the traditions of a classical education in highly inflected languages, felt that the study of a language involved the study of its grammar: what they thought of as grammar - a matter of declensions and conjugations, moods, tenses and cases - was not easy to find in Burmese. Fitting a monosyllabic, uninflected language into the

¹ A. Judson - Burmese/English Dictionary (1849) - preface p.vi

² *ibid.* p.vii

categories of Quintilian or Priscian presented difficulties. They found however that the conceptions involved were mercifully less strange to some, at least, of the Burmese than they might have been, owing to the Pali tradition that was still alive, Pali being a language even more inflected than Latin. Western educators therefore found it possible to put a special value on Pali studies as a means of familiarising Burmese students with the structure of the more complicated languages. Forchhammer believed that -

to an individual whose mother tongue is monosyllabic it is an almost insurmountable difficulty to conceive the nature of grammatical categories.¹

He felt that the study of Pali must therefore be encouraged, since in the view of all western educators grammar was a study with an absolute value of its own. When Matthew Arnold remarked, in comparing French and English education, that 'French grammar... is a better instrument of instruction for boys than English grammar', he was thinking of grammar as a subject whose complexities were to be studied for themselves. This is of course a perfectly valid attitude. Arnold also wrote -

I attach such great importance to grammar as leading the children to reflect or reason, as a very simple sort of logic, more effective than arithmetic as a logical training because it operates with concretes or words instead of with abstracts or figures.²

Its chief validity lies in the introspective study of one's own speech as a study of meaning, not to the grammar of a foreign language as a study of how to speak it. In Burma no one seems to have appreciated the difference: the grammars that came to mind were written in English for the use of foreigners who wished to learn Burmese. Grammar written by Burmese writers was in the Pali tradition and had little reference to the structure of the practical spoken language, only to that of the literary language which Pali studies and nissaya translations had forced in a direction somewhat foreign to the people in general. Formal Burmese grammar must have seemed pretty irrelevant to village children in a monastery school - if anyone tried to teach it to them.

One of the books included in the list, James Gray's 'Grammatical Primer', demonstrates this: Gray was primarily a

¹ Quoted in P.I.R. 1879-80 - p.41

² 'Arnold on Education' p.66

Pali scholar, and this is very manifest when he wrote on Burmese. In 1885 he even published a 'Notes on Burmese and Pali Grammar', almost as though they formed a single subject. None of them is in fact satisfactory, chiefly because of the failure to note the difference between a grammar of one's own language and one of a foreign language. The other two books on the list are also in English for English schools. Judson's was of course by now very old, but there was nothing else. In 1874 it had been remarked -

Dr. Judson's grammar is very meagre and uninteresting: Captain Latter's grammar is a learned and philosophical production, but it is not adapted to school use.¹

The third book on the list, Bennett's Vocabulary and Phrase Book, was obviously intended for Angle-vernacular schools.

Nevertheless during the 1870s a number of pertinent books had been published by Burmese authors, and strangely none of them appears on the approved list even though at least one of them was published on the authority of the Text Book Committee itself. This appears in the catalogue of 1874 as 'Thada-biw-ha', described as an elementary Burmese grammar. This is Thadda-~~biw~~-ha written by the Taung-dwin Sayadaw, and on the title page of its second edition (the first has not been seen) it is stated to have been 'printed by government for the sake of spreading education'². It is a work almost purely of Pali scholarship.³ At almost the same time there was published, according to the catalogue, 'Qwa-la-ya-la, or Mode of Burmese Composition' by H. Afoke, who was Ahee's successor at the

1 P.I.R. 1873-74

2 ပညာ အိုး မိုး ၆၀ ခြင်း ၎ှိ အစိုး ၇ က ပုံ နှိမ် တော် မူ သည့် စာ

3 Two paragraphs at random:-

၁၃၅ အာယံ ခြေခင်း ကရိုက်: မည့် သနည်း: ဟူ မူ ကာ၊ ကရိယာတိ
အရေဒုသတိ ကရကံ၊ အရေဒု ကရကေဒု၊ ဤ ကရက ဖြင့်၊ ကရိယာတိ၊
ဗြူ အပ် ဖြစ်၊ အူ ဟိ သန္တိ ဟိ သို့ ဗြူ ခြေခင်း: ဖြစ် သော သတ္တိ ခြေခင်း၊
ကရကံ၊ ကရိုက်: မည့် ဖြစ်။

၁၃၆ အား ဟူ ချ် ခင်း၊ ၎ှိ ဟူ ချ် ခင်း ပေး အပ် သော၊ ခံ တတ် သော
ပဋိဂ္ဂ ဟာဏ သတ္တိ သည့်၊ သမ္မုဒါနံ မည့် ဖြစ်၊ ပုံ ကါး၊ သိက္ခယ သာ
ဒေတိ စိဝဂံ၊ သိက္ခယ သာ၊ ၇ ဟာနံ အား၊ စိဝဂံ၊ သင်္ကန်း နှိ၊ ဒေတိ၊
ပေး ဖြစ်။ ဤ ဗြူ သင်္ကန်း ဟူ သော ဝတ္ထု ကိ ခံ တတ် သော ၇ ဟာနံ
ခြေ ဖြစ်၊ ပဋိဂ္ဂ ဟာဏ သတ္တိ သည့်၊ သမ္မုဒါနံ မည့် ဖြစ်။

Burma Herald Press. No copy of the book is traceable, and even just what the transliteration of its name represents can only be conjectured. Others followed quite quickly, a Burmese Grammar (Thadakyān) by Shwe Bwin appears in the Catalogue in April 1875. Ko Shwe Byin is said to have been for many years a master at the Baptist Mission School in Moulmein. His book, though somewhat long and elaborate, is probably the best of the lot, though it was not taken up by the department of Education, and went into a second edition in 1882 and a third in 1885. Apart from this one book, none of the others seems to have found much demand: when the Text Book Committee considered the re-issue of 'Thada byu-ha' which was made in 1882, it was noted that there was no demand for it. Goss tried his hand also, and in 1878-79 published a Burmese Grammatical Primer, but this too had no success. The Committee felt that nothing which was available was really what was needed, and in 1881 offered a reward for a Burmese grammar. This offer brought in a manuscript from the Pali Instructor at the Rangoon High School, which seemed to be a satisfactory basis, but it needed revision. This was not finished until 1885. The Gazette seems to have got the author's name wrong, since it gives it as Maung Kyi. The book however must be the one which was published by the Hanthawadi Press written by Maung Hpye as Hman-pyá That-pon hnín Kāraka-let-hkana Kyan.¹ The situation remained unsatisfactory. Burmese grammar, even more than English, lacked the subtleties that fascinated the academic. It could not, without dragging in unreal Pali parallels, be made anything but a mere means of learning to speak and write the language. The Burmese must have found it hard to take an interest.

When A.W. Lonsdale came to write his grammar at the end of the century, he commented on his predecessors -

With regard to grammatical treatises by native writers, it is no exaggeration to say that there is not one which can properly be called a Burmese grammar. These writers, not content with merely borrowing the grammatical nomenclature of the Pali language, also attempted to assimilate the grammatical principles of the uninflected Burmese to those of the inflected Pali, so that they produced not

¹ ရန်ကုန် မြို့ အစိုးရ ကျောင်း ပါဠိ ဆရာ မောင် ဇေယျာ ခင် သိမ်း ဝေသာ အမျိုး သား ဝန် အလွယ် တကူ ကြည့် ပြု သင် ကြား ရန် ပုံ နှိပ် ထား အပ် ဝေသာ မြန် မြ သက်ပုံ နှင့် ကိရုဏ လက္ခဏာ ကျမ်း ။

Burmese grammars but modified Pali grammars in Burmese dress.

This is a justifiable comment.

5. Dictionaries

The dictionary section of the list is unremarkable, since it includes only Judson's Burmese/English and English/Burmese Dictionaries. Since their first publication, there had never been a real alternative to either, and since 1876 the Burmese/English Dictionary had provided the official standard of spelling for the Text Book Committee. It is worth noting that this is not the Judson's Dictionary familiar today, which is a considerably bigger book, having been revised and enlarged in 1893 by Stevenson, and again in 1918 by Eveleth. The current edition also uses a spelling which differs in some respects from Judson's original, which was revised again by the Committee in the 1930s.

6. Arithmetic

This, and the next two sections, deal with mathematical books, and these perhaps come closer to traditional Burmese interests. It seems that some monasteries had always been accustomed to giving their pupils some instruction in Arithmetic - enough at least to check the market seller's account. In other quarters the subject tended to be regarded with some suspicion: the proper end of a monastic schooling was the study of the scriptures. Arithmetic was too worldly a subject for a good monk to handle, and it was liable to lead on to such things as astrology, which was only fit for the non-Buddhist Brahmans, who, as Pon-nas ~~the Burmanisation of the style 'pandit'~~ had established a very profitable monopoly of such matters. Savage repeatedly reported finding this attitude in his account of his tour of the Arakan monasteries in 1872, e.g. -

They are ignorant of arithmetic. There are some who understand Badin, but Badin is connected with astrology, which is forbidden by the ethics of Gotama.¹

Phayre himself reported -

The monks themselves will not teach these books (an arithmetic and a land-measurement book, which had been supplied by the government) partly from a feeling of pride, which will

¹ P.I.R. 1871-72

not allow them to teach foreign books, and partly from an ecclesiastical prejudice.¹

This attitude persisted for some years. In 1875 it was observed -

In the monastic schools the great difficulty seems to be, with rare exceptions, the difficulty of overcoming the prejudice of the Pongyis to teaching or allowing to be taught numeration or arithmetic of any description.²

It was not an universal attitude however. During Bòdaw-hpayà's less orthodox periods another type of monastery had come into being, whose monks had indulged in all sorts of secular studies and practices. These 'Pwe-kyàungs' taught astronomy and astrology, medicine, massage, divination, horsemanship, archery, arts and crafts, boxing and wrestling, music and dancing. At a palace entertainment in 1812, fourteen novices were matched against as many lay boys and won eleven of the matches".³ This might have developed into something more like the Japanese tradition of monasticism had the king not changed his mind. That there was always an unsatisfied demand for this kind of practical instruction is shown by the eagerness with which the schools opened by the early Christian missionaries were accepted. San Germano particularly mentions Nerini's teaching of "Geography, Arithmetic and Navigation and such arts as might be useful to them". It is worth noting however that such instruction had to be obtained from the Christian missionaries: it must have been at least difficult to find in the normal course from the monasteries. U Kaung's statement that

the chief educational organ was the Tipitaka in Pali, with their Burmese translations: to this must be added first the more secular arts of arithmetic, astronomy and Burmese medicine, and, secondly, the religious and moral portion of Burmese literature,⁴

was not universally true, particularly about the middle of the 19th century. His 'additions' were firmly ruled out at least as often as not. It is however true that there was at all times a partly

¹ Selections from Educational Records 1859-71 vol.I p.211

² G.R. (No.51 of 1875) on P.I.R. for 1874-75

⁴ U Kaung - op. cit. p.28

³ J.A. Stewart - Buddhism in Burma

suppressed tradition of such secular studies, and this tradition in the early days of the educational department caused a somewhat unexpected further difficulty over arithmetical teaching.¹ This was that the Burmese traditional method of setting out calculations differed of course from that customary in the west, and to some unimaginative westerners it was not the proper way of doing things. In the early days of examinations it was doubted whether the results of calculations could be accepted as correct, however right they were, if they were set out in the Burmese style, not in the western style. It was not until 1873 that it was officially ruled that both styles were to be accepted as equally valid, and it seems to have taken longer to enforce the ruling.

This clash meant that the books favoured by the department had, until it was resolved, little chance of acceptance in the monastic schools, although, no doubt, the lay schools would be eager to accept them. However, as long ago as 1847 the Baptist missionary Stilson had written and published his 'Arithmetic', which, as Haswell, his later editor, says 'put into the Burmese language the western methods of calculation.'¹ This was the work which Phayre had in mind for use in bringing the monastery schools into line, and remained the standard work for schools which wished to teach western arithmetical methods in Burmese. It is a little hard to say whether there were any others at the start of the educational department's operations. On the one hand it is said in 1873 that

all the text books, even those put into the hands of the youngest children, on grammar, arithmetic, history and geography are written in English.²

On the other hand, there were in 1870 at least two books on arithmetic in Burmese in addition to Stilson's, though almost certainly derived from it. The earliest is probably that by another missionary, named Cross. This was revised and enlarged in 1870 by Mason, with government assistance, since it must be that which is referred to in 1870 -

A grant for publication of books was made last year and an abridged edition of the Guide to Arithmetic in Burmese by the Rev. L. Stilson has been brought out, and will fulfil a requirement of the elementary schools.³

¹ အနောက်တိုင်း ပြည် နှစ် ဇန် ဇွန် နှစ်: ဇွန် ပုံစာ ကို မြေဥာ စက်: ဘာသာ

² အား ဖြင့် အနက် ပြန် ဖြစ်:။
P.I.R. 1872-73

³ P.I.R. 1869-70

Mason's book of 1870 was titled 'Eclectic Arithmetic or Cross' Arithmetic Enlarged': it must therefore be that Cross brought out an extreme abridgement of Stilson's work, which Mason again expanded. His book has 292 pages: the size of Cross' book is not known, but a Karen language 'Abridged Arithmetic' by Cross in 1870 had 144 pages.

However this may be, it was generally agreed that, although Stilson's book was excellent in its way, it had many deficiencies. For example -

Stilson's Arithmetic, the book which has been circulated hitherto, abounds in literal translations and sometimes transliterations of English terms which are quite unintelligible to anyone not brought up in an Anglo-vernacular school.¹

Haswell, who re-edited the book in 1876, quite agreed with this estimation of Stilson.² Possibly the reason for the use of English books noted in 1873 was that it was easier to go to the English straight away than to wrestle with Stilson's Burmese. Other abbreviations and variations continued to be produced. An 'Arithmetic' by the Rev. C. Bennett, which was being sold by the government Book Depot in the mid-1870s was probably one of them. It is likely to be the 'Elementary Arithmetic' shown in the Catalogue as published anonymously by the American Mission Press on 1 March 1873 - the Press was in Bennett's charge at the time. This was of 96 pages and sold for 8 annas. It seems probable that the 'Eclectic Arithmetic' by Nicholls, which appears in the Approved list of 1885, was the latest of this series, in view of the similarity of its title to that of Mason's book.

Other arithmetic books were also being produced at this time. In 1872 the first part of W.S. Sandys' 'Elementary Arithmetic'³ was published 'for the Education Department'⁴ by the American Mission Press, and it was followed in the next year by the second part. The acting Director of Public Instruction, Nesfield, however regarded the books as 'not so accurate' as Stilson's⁵ and it does not seem to have been reprinted, although the government Book Depot was

¹ P.I.R. 1871072

² see p.106 sup.

³ ဂဏန်း သင်္ချာ တွက် ပုံစာ

⁴ so stated on title page

⁵ P.I.R. 1873-74 - see p.103 sup.

selling it up to 1877, when stocks seem to have run out. It is not easy to see what Nesfield's objection was - it must have been very strong to lead him to damn his own department's project, after publication. Personalities may have been involved - Sandys was not easy to deal with, and he had declined Nesfield's offer of a post at the Rangoon High School when the Training School was closed (which he must have resented). The book is compact - 120 pages in the two parts.

A somewhat similar book is the 'Abridgement of Arithmetic'¹ by Fr. Dumollard of the Catholic Mission in Bassein, who had already 'prepared several elementary school books in Burmese' by 1869.² This was printed and published in 1876 by the St. Peter's Institute, which was the mission's official organisation. It is printed in the very small type that this press tended to use, which makes it somewhat hard to read. The book is set out in question and answer form, which makes for a certain diffuseness, but might have simplified teaching.

There is an interesting reference to a book which has disappeared:

The Burmese Arithmetic termed Kyanin-thencha has been translated into English by Mr. Ripley, and Maung Hpo Maung has undertaken to bring out a revised edition.³

It would have been illuminating to see just how the traditional Burmese arithmetic was presented at this time, but no trace of the book has appeared. Later, several books of arithmetic by Burmese authors were published, such as an 'Arithmetic' by Maung Kyaw Doon (1880): Gana Gambeya by Maung Nyein (1882): Keinthe Saok by Maung Don Pru (1885): and 'Arithmetical Exercises' by Maung Po Kye (1887): but none of these are traceable either.

The multiplicity of all these books seems to show that no one was satisfied with the situation. The Text Book Committee eventually decided that the answer was to give Stilson's book a very

¹ အင်္ဂလိပ်ဘာသာဖြင့် ရေးသားခဲ့သော အင်္ဂလိပ်ဘာသာဖြင့် ရေးသားခဲ့သော ..

² P.I.R. 1868-69

³ P.I.R. 1873-74

thorough revision, to improve its Burmese and to bring it up to date. The work was entrusted to Dr. Haswell, also of the Baptist Mission, who was a considerable language scholar, and it was finally published in October 1876. Even Ferars at his most hostile conceded that one, if only one, good vernacular manual existed, and that this was it. It remained the standard school text on the subject for many years, even though with its 400 plus pages it must have been over-expensive and over-elaborate for some purposes.

7. Algebra

Unlike arithmetic, algebra has no counterpart in traditional Burmese studies, although Burney recorded in his Journal that the Mek-kara Prince, the survivor of Bodaw-hpaya's 'enlightened' period, was interested in learning about it.¹ It was therefore many years before it became a subject of any importance in Burmese schools. It was included in Sandys' proposals for a complete set of books on school subjects, but, though it was reported in 1873 that his book was already written, it was decided not to print it immediately, since there was no demand as yet for a vernacular book on the subject. There were six titles on the approved list in English, and it must have been thought that for the time being no one would be interested who had no English. It was not a subject of great interest to schools in England at this time, particularly primary schools, in any case. It was not, for instance, included in the suggestions that Matthew Arnold put forward for a school syllabus up to the age of 13 in his report of 1880.² It is remarkable therefore that the earliest book on a technical subject in the list under a Burmese author's name is an Algebra by Maung Hpo Maung. He is probably the Hpo Maung who was second master at the Prome school in 1873, and who, as has been noted above, was associated with Ripley in a project for producing a revision of a Burmese arithmetic in 1874: later again he became a Deputy Inspector of Schools. The date of the book's publication is uncertain, but it was already in print by 1880, when

¹ Quoted by Desai - op.cit. p.98

² see 'Arnold on Education' p.64. Arnold felt that 'for the children in our elementary schools, children under thirteen, there is no need or use for a provision for teaching' algebra, mechanics, mensuration and German.

it appears in the first Approved list. It was followed by another written by A.W. Lonsdale, which was given approval in 1882. Neither of these books is mentioned in the Catalogue, and so they were probably counted as departmental publications: Neither seems to have survived, at least in the libraries.

8. Geometry

Geometry was a matter of far greater interest - to the government at least, owing to their constant requirement of surveyors. In the original Burmese systems of land tenure, precise areas and locations were not particularly important. There was plenty of land which could be taken in hand by anyone who cared to work it, and land itself had no particular economic value: there was no rent to be derived from it. The British brought in a new system, derived from Indian conditions, which presumed that a given piece of land had an economic value surplus to its cost of cultivation, and that the ruler was entitled to share in this surplus, since it was the security provided by his rule that called it into existence. Obligations therefore attached to the land, not to the person or to the village collectively. However fictitious this value may have been at first, the development of the rice trade soon gave it a reality, and it rapidly became essential to demarcate land parcels and to define the obligations attaching to them. It was not only a question of providing trained surveyors for a cadastral survey, that could come later. What was immediately necessary was to establish a situation in which any village officer could be expected to provide an accurate plan and measurement of any particular field on which he was reporting. Without this, his report would be uselessly vague. For this reason, land-measurement was one subject in which the government took a very direct interest, and when special classes in the subject were opened, they were intended very particularly for the *thu-gyis* and their families. As an introduction, a certain amount of practical geometry was needed - the terms are of course at root synonymous. Mensuration was not a subject for elementary schools in England, and this is perhaps the only point on which the government's requirements determined the course of education. The subject had however been of interest for some time: a missionary from the Tavoy area is quoted as reporting about 1855 -

I have had in my theological class pupils direct from

these village schools who took hold of the exegesis of the Bible in as masterly a manner as most of the students from our learned Universities and who grappled with geometry and trigonometry with their applications to astronomy and land-surveying as if they were nursed in the lap of science.

In his letter of 26 December 1864 Phayre said that two works on these subjects were available in Burmese - a 'Treatise of Land-measuring and Triangulation' and 'Hegendris Geometry' (sic). The first of these must be an edition of Stilson's 'An Introduction to Plane Trigonometry' of 1845, which in fact deals mainly with the practical uses of trigonometry in surveying and navigation: the second is a mistake for 'Legendre's Geometry'. This work was translated by Stilson also, but the translation must have dropped quickly out of sight, since it was recorded in 1877 that 'in March last five or six copies of Legendre's Geometry translated by Stilson were found in the mission press', and that they would form the basis of future work.² This suggests that the book had been more or less forgotten for years. As with arithmetic, therefore, the basic work in geometry and surveying was Stilson's, and presumably, like the arithmetic, suffered from Stilson's imperfect Burmese. The original, 1845, edition of the Trigonometry however does not give the impression of being intended for the hands of pupils, since it has an English preface and English titles to the sections. It is a substantial book, of which only 500 copies were printed. Presumably it was intended for the use of an English-speaking teacher, who would use it to dictate from, to copy from, and to explain from. The practice was still to learn from the teacher and the blackboard: learning from a book was still to come. Using such methods, odd locutions would not matter much, since the teacher would naturally explain things as he went along. Difficulties would only occur when pupils began to have their own copies of such books. In his English preface to the Trigonometry Stilson says -

The writer of this Treatise on Plane Trigonometry has endeavoured to present the leading principles of the science in as simple a manner as the nature of the circumstances admits. He has omitted many demonstrations which in other circumstances would be required lest he perplex the learner who is supposed not to have had sufficient mental training to peruse with profit any very lengthy process of reasoning.

¹ Baillie - Rivers in the Dust - p.363

² P.I.R. 1876-77 p.74

A work of the schools are to be used with advantage in the vernacular schools at present needs to be chiefly of a practical nature.

To address one's pupils in this patronising tone would be at best tactless. The Burmese language introduction, which would be used as the basis of an address to the class, also stresses the practicalities of the subject -

By this art ships' masters can know the course to be followed in their goings upon the sea, and by it too the geographer can determine the width and length of rivers and their courses, the sizes and shapes of lands, mountains and forests. The astronomer too can watch all the planets stars and constellations of the sky, and calculate their distances, their relative sizes and their courses by this means.

However Stilson's work was not considered to be really suitable for general school use. In the early 1870s it was recorded that the government vernacular schools still required books for a geometry course and a course on measurement. The first of these needs was, it was reckoned, met by a book on Geometry by Ripley³ and the second by a book by W.S. Sandys, which was said to be ready to print. Nesfield's rejection of Sandys' work intervened however, and it never seems to have appeared. No trace seems to remain of Ripley's book either. It does not appear in the 1880 list of approvals, and the fact that the rediscovery of Stilson's twenty-five year old translation of Legendre was greeted with joy must indicate that Ripley's book cannot have been very useful. Even this was not what was wanted however, and in 1881 the Text Book Committee decided to offer a reward for a translation of Euclid I to III and VI.⁴

¹ Stilson - Trigonometry, preface.

² သဘောတူ ဖြစ် ဖို့ သည် သမုဒ္ဒရာ ပင်လယ်၌ သွားလာ သော လမ်း များ ကို ဤ အတတ် ပညာ အားဖြင့် တောင်း မှန် ဖွဲ့ သိ နိုင် သည် " ရင်းမြင် " မြေကြီး အတတ် ပညာ အားဖြင့် သိ သော အရာ သည် " မြစ် များ အယ် မြေ ကျယ် သည် " အယ် မြေ ဝှုပ် " အယ် အင်္ဂလိပ် စာ သည် ကို ရှင်း " ကြမ်း " တောင်း " တော " အယ် မြေ ကြီး သည် အယ် ပုံ သို့မဟုတ် ဤ သည် ကို ရှင်း " သိ နိုင် ဖြစ် " သတ္တိ ဖွဲ့ ဖွဲ့ အရာ သည် မြစ် ကောင်း ကင် ဖြစ် ဖြစ် " ကြယ် " မြို့ ကွဲ အိ တာ အပေါင်း ဖို့ ဖို့ မြင် ဖြင့် တလုံး နှင့် တလုံး အယ် မြေ အားဖြင့် သိ သည် ကို ရှင်း " အလုံး တစ် တလုံး အယ် မြေ ကြီး သည် ကို ရှင်း " သယ် လမ်း များ ဖြင့် သွား သည် ကို ရှင်း " ဤ ပညာ အားဖြင့် သိ နိုင် သည် "

³ This must be the elder brother Frederick, who was a schoolmaster in Moulmein for a short time before going to the Residency in Mandalay as a clerk. Philip would surely have been too young at 14.

⁴ British Burma Gazette 1881 - supp. p.139

Presumably it was this stimulus which produced the two books which did stand on the Approved list - 'Euclid's Elements of Geometry I' by D. Aldridge, which appeared from the American Mission Press in August 1883, and 'Elements of Geometry II' by W.E. Mack, which was published by R. Rpiley in November 1884.

9. Land Surveying

The triangulation and trigonometrical side of the subject seems to have been dropped, except so far as they were brought into the two books which specifically dealt with surveying which were approved. These were Clancey's 'Aid to Land-surveying' published in December 1881, and Savage's translation of Kelly's 'Handbook of Land-measuring', published at the Text Book Committee's instance, and for a reward of Rs 250, in November 1883. Clancey had been in charge of the survey school at Moulmein since 1880 at least, and was described as 'a thoroughly qualified teacher'. The reasons which prompted the Committee to pay for another book to be translated so soon after his can only be guessed, especially since Clancey's remained the standard for Burma, while Kelly seems to have disappeared. In 1895 the third edition of Clancey was issued by the Government Printing Press, described as 'The Authorised Text Book', and its use continued well into the twentieth century. Like Kelly's, Clancey's book was originally written in English and translated into Burmese, the translator being Fr. de Cruz, the Catholic priest from Toungoo, whose Burmese school books, published in Bassein, covered a very wide range, including an edition of the Nemi Zat in 1874, and perhaps the earliest printed Lawka-niti.

There may possibly be a connection between de Cruz's translation of Clancey's book and an 'East Vernacular Course in Land-measuring for Use in Burma' which was published by the St. Peter's Institute in Bassein in 1878. This is a very elementary little book, in English and Burmese on opposite pages, with many rules but little explanation. It seems to be by Simeon, though published anonymously, since on the back cover there is an advertisement for a number of Simeon's books, including a 'Land-measuring' issued at the same price as this.

10. Agriculture

The spreading of a modern, progressive knowledge of

His preface gives no information at all: it is a somewhat stereotyped discourse on Geography in general. As is all Haswell's work, this is a very competent book, but it would be interesting to know just how much of it is Haswell's own and how much Hough's.

Although these were the only works on the subject to figure in the Approved list, there were others available. The earliest in the field, apart from these two, was as usual W.S. Sandys, who in 1869 published from the Mission Press a massive Geography of Burma (*Pyin-nya Wat-Hana Kyan*) of 456 pages. This book is the earliest of Sandys series and must have been written immediately after his return to Burma or even before it - which would indicate that he did not forget his Burmese during his English education. It exhibits his usual inability to pass over a fact, and provides great quantities of information on Burma during the late 1860s. It constitutes in fact a Gazetteer rather than a text book, and it would be interesting to know his sources - and the reliability of his information. A point worth noting is that, even at this date, sixteen years after the second Burmese War, he firmly regards Burma as a single country, and the fact that the administration is divided between the British and the King makes no difference. The book is accordingly divided into four sections, each dealing with one division - 'Myan-ma', Arakan, Tenasserim and Hanthawadi,² each apparently of the same status. The separation of the three British divisions of course harks back to the position before 1862, and the book may have been planned some time before it was published. The book also provides what is perhaps the first note upon the educational system deriving from a Burmese source -

Although it is now rather more than forty years since the British assumed the administration of Tenasserim, there is only one school entirely established from the government's revenues. However, although the government have not founded and established many schools, they have by means of money grants to other teachers given their help and support; throughout the towns and villages there are many schools

¹ Of course, a diversity of rulers was no novelty in Burmese history.

² မြေဗွဒ၊ ဂဗိုဏ်၊ တာဒုဏ်သရီ၊ ဟံသဝတီ၊ ဂေးတိုဏ်း ဟို

supported in this manner.¹

At the time of publication Sandys was running just such a school himself.

Four years later, in 1872, when head of the Government Training School for teachers, he published an 'Elementary Geography Compiled for the Use of Vernacular Primary Schools in British Burma' or 'Pa-hta-wi Ka-ra-na Kyàn'. It is an exhaustive - not to say exhausting - work, and again displays its author's inability to omit a fact. For example, in listing, as he does in one section, all the British possessions in the world, he cannot mention Malta without bringing in Gozo too - not really of great importance to a primary school pupil in a Burma village. It starts with a section on the Solar System, deals with the Earth in general and its living creatures and peoples, and then works down to continents and states. The bulk of the book however takes the countries of the world one by one, reciting: 1) its position, 2) its length and breadth, 3) its area, 4) aspect of the land, 5) its climate, 6) soil fertility, 7) crops grown, 8) mineral resources, 9) exports, 10) divisions of the country, 11) ports, and 12) its revenues. Once again he carefully speaks of Burma as one country, though -

 this country is divided into two parts: of these two parts one is British Burma and the other is the territory of the Burmese King.²

British Burma has however become 'one part', no longer three. It is also recorded that in 1873 Sandys had a 'Physical Geography' almost

¹ တာရှင်ဆရာတို့၏ သဘော၊ အင်္ဂလိပ်မင်းများ အပိုင်၊ နှစ်ပေါင်း ၄၀ ကျော် ခုန့် ဗျာလောက်၊ ပို၍ သွားသော်လည်း၊ အစိုးရမင်းတို့က စရိတ်ငွေ အလုံးစုံ ပေး၍ ထားသော ကျောင်းသားတို့က ကျောင်းတန်းသားတို့လောက်ပင် သို့ရာတွင် အစိုးရမင်းတို့က များစွာ သောကျောင်းတို့ကို တည်ထောင်၍ မထားသော်လည်း၊ အခြားသော ဆရာတို့ကို ငွေအားဖြင့်၊ ကျင့်ပို့ ထောက်မပေး၍ အမြို့အမြို့ အရာအရာ အမြို့အမြို့ ထောက်မသော ကျောင်းများ သို့သော် ပို၍ ဖျားလျက် အကျိုးရှိ၏။

² ပြည်ပြည် သည်လည်း နှစ်ပိုင်းပိုင်းခြားထားရာ ဤ "ထိုနှစ်ပိုင်းပိုင်း အထက်၊ အင်္ဂလိပ်မင်း မြို့မြို့ နှစ်မြို့ မြို့ ကျောင်းမင်းကြီး ပြိုင်သော နှိုင်းတန်း။"

ready, and was engaged on a 'Geography of the Eastern Peninsula', but neither of these seems to have been published, and the two books which were published quickly dropped out of sight.

Other efforts were a 'Geography of the Eastern Peninsula' which a missionary, Croley, was said to have almost finished in 1873¹ - in fact a manuscript was not ready until 1876 and then seems to have been abandoned - and a series by J. Simeon. This consists of a bewildering number of short pamphlets, mostly recorded in the Catalogue as written in 'English and Burmese' - probably, according to this author's usual method, in English with Burmese explanations in footnotes - and of from 5 to 20 pages. One of them, a 'Geography of Burma', was taken up for sale by the Government Book Depot in 1882, but it never reached the Approved list.

Even with the Hough/Haswell book available, the Text Book Committee were not content, and in 1881 they were offering a reward of Rs 200 for a 300 page geography. This does not seem to have met with any response.

12. Physical Science

The last section of books in Burmese in the Approved list is of those on 'Physical Science': it seems that the Department were hard put to it to find anything to include. There are only two books. Both were already old, and, if we can believe what is said in the P.I.R. for 1872-73, responsible for positive damage to the project of modernising the monastic schools -

It appears to have been assumed that indigenous school books did not exist or that they contained nothing worth knowing. The efforts of the Department have consequently been directed towards the object of inducing the indigenous school masters to teach from English books written in the vernacular. The spirit in which these books have been received, more especially those relating to Geography, Natural Philosophy and Physiology, has been the very reverse of what was intended and hoped for. In the Moulmein district... the Hpongyis have been under the impression that in giving them our books we wished to proselytise

¹ P.I.R. 1872-73

them and convert them to Christianity.

Giving away free literature was in fact the mark of the missionary. The geography book referred to must be that of Sandys: Hough's had not yet been reprinted and must have been scarce. The Natural Philosophy and Physiology were however those which remained on the list in 1885: the first was 'Natural Philosophy' by Lucretia Stilson. No copy is available, but Mrs. Stilson died in 1847, so that it was about 40 years old by 1885. A third edition of 3000 copies was printed in July 1874, and after that it disappears from the press. ~~Probably~~ **it** is to be identified with the book of which the P.I.R. for 1871-72 remarks -

The book on Natural Philosophy by Miss Mary Swift.... is a Christian tract.

~~Presumably Miss Swift, revised Mrs. Stilson's book for a second edition some time about 1865, at any rate no other reference to an independent book by her has been found. It can have found little use outside the mission schools, and, although it figures in the Approved list, it does not appear among the books handled by the Government Book Depot.~~

it seems, wrote her book in English and it was put into Burmese by Mrs. Stilson

The other book on the list, 'The House I Live in', is similar, being a translation by Mrs. C. Bennett of a book by a Dr. William A. Alcott. The third edition of 1875 was of 2000 copies: it is stated that this makes a total of 4000, so that the first two were of 1000 each. The author, or at least the translator, is somewhat concerned to draw Christian lessons from scientific facts, but it is generally a straightforward account of human physiology as a study worth making on good practical grounds -

Is it not right that everyone should learn about so special a thing as the body which he has to use all life? Is it not right that we should learn to prevent the deterioration of the body which is the seat of the mind, the damage to which it is liable and how to repair it? Since our body and mind are so closely involved, if the body is out of condition, the mind will be so too. If therefore we wish

The only other attempts to provide any kind of natural science text at this time were first, as a part of Sandys' aborted project, a proposal for a 'Natural Philosophy' in two parts, one to cover 'mechanics, pneumatics, hydrostatics and acoustics, and the other chemistry, electricity, magnetism and astronomy',¹ but it must be doubted if he really started. Secondly, in 1881 the Text Book Committee approved a translation of 'Youman's Botany' (which appears in the English list) by a Mrs. Packer: this however does not appear in the Catalogue nor in the Approved list of 1885, and it may well be that the idea of publication was given up after the manuscript had been seen by the Committee.

This in fact was an area where the Education Department failed badly. The only books in Burmese which they could offer on scientific subjects were antiquated amateur efforts, tainted for a Buddhist audience by a Christian missionary origin and purpose. It is not possible to be surprised by this however, since the English 'officer class' from whom the policy makers of the administration were recruited, were crippled in this matter by their own education. The Clarendon Report of 1864 had noted that

Natural Science.... is practically excluded from the education of the higher classes in England²

They were brought up to the classics, and the sciences were on the whole outside their ken. It was a situation which was already giving rise to concern in England: even Matthew Arnold worried from time to time. In 1872 he wrote: 'It is in science that we most need to borrow from the German Universities. The French Universities have no liberty and the English Universities have no science, the German Universities have both.' Nevertheless there was still a great gulf fixed between the Department of Science and Arts in South Kensington and the Education Department in Whitehall: even though Science and Arts had now given up their allegiance to the Board of Trade and were equally responsible to the Committee of Council, the aura of the Mechanics' Institutes still hung around. It was not a failure therefore of the Burmese administration or

¹ P.I.R. 1872-73

² English Historical Documents Vol.XII (i) p.899

8.11.10
1912

even of the Indian administration - it was a part of the failure of England as a whole. The vacuum was filled to some extent by the American missionaries, but by the 1880s their drive was weakening, and they seem to have been more and more content to carry on with the texts which had served them since the 1840s. Therefore, for anything more than the 'three Rs' and the classics, the English language became essential, and the Department's own policy of up-grading the vernacular languages was frustrated.

13. Pali

The remaining books on the list belong to Pali studies. The 'Pali Texts and Glossary' mentioned are a version of a compilation of the six Pali texts which formed, and probably still do form, the essential foundation of scriptural studies in the monasteries. They consisted of -

- Lokaniti (Bur. Lawka-nidí)
- Mangala-sutta (Bur. Mingala-thok)
- Ajjhatta-jaya-mangalam (Bur. Atwin-aung-gyìn)
- Bahira-jaya-mangalam (Bur. Apyin-aung-gyìn)
- Ratana-pañjaram (Bur. Yadana-shwe-gyaing)
- Namakara.

The Lokaniti found a separate place for itself under the head of 'Burmese Classics' and has been discussed in that place (p.122). The remainder are religious texts from the Tipitaka. Collectively the six texts were known as the Chauk-saung-dwè, the Compendium of Six Writings, which has already been mentioned above (p.149). This compilation was the object of almost universal study, as Hodson indicated, and it was the fastest-selling school book of the period. Most books were printed in editions of 2,000 to 4,000, but in 1879 the Government Press edition was of 10,000. This edition was exhausted at once, and a second edition of another 10,000 had to be printed before the end of the year. The Government Book Depot's constant complaint was that the Press could not print them fast enough. Presumably in order to cash in on the prestige of the name, the title was also used for other compilations, notably the set including the Hítaw-padeṭṭha which was published by the Burma Herald Press in 1870 and by other presses later.¹

¹ see p. 133 sup.

As competition in the publishing business increased, the urge to go one better than a rival led to expansions, and in addition to the Chauk-saung-dwè, Kò- (9) and Hse-saung-dwè (10) were printed, including other texts, usually That-pons (see p. 154 above) and the Mahā-paritta (Payeik-gyī) prayers. It was a Kò-saung-dwè edition that the Government Book Depot had to buy up in 1882 in order to stay in the market when their stocks were exhausted. The reason for the tremendous demand was of course the steady demand from the country's thousands of monastic schools: this in fact was what monastic education was about. The texts were scripture, largely the very words of the Buddha Himself, and so likely to inculcate morality and religion. At the same time they provided an introduction to the Pali language, a knowledge of which was essential to the understanding of the rest of the scriptures, and also, since texts were often printed with a nissaya translation - a phrase by phrase translation into Burmese - and an explanation and commentary in Burmese, they gave practice in reading Burmese also.

Pali continued to be an official subject for study, both for the purpose of the results grants and of the annual district prize examinations: there was however an interesting discrepancy at first between the comparatively small number of pupils presenting themselves for examination and the very large demand for the texts. In the three years 1878-79-80 in the district examinations, only twelve prizes were taken for Pali against 41 for Burmese and 49 for arithmetic. Perhaps this can be accounted for by the somewhat anomalous position of Pali studies in the government's scheme of education. There were always those willing to point out that Pali in Burma was really a religious study and, consequently, in accordance with the policy of the Government of India, should be excluded from official cognisance, and also that money and effort would be better applied to more practical subjects. The official reply to this - as in England to doubts about the teaching of the Latin classics - was that the study provided a mental training in precision in the use of language, by compelling an examination of its fundamental structure, and also provided access to the sources of the national intellectual tradition. In Burma in particular it also served as an introduction to the structure of more complicated inflected languages, which it was very difficult for someone only acquainted with Burmese to grasp.

Ferrars for instance wrote -

Pali should perform the same function in the Burman's training that Latin and Greek do in that of the European. The Burman child who began his Pali grammar at 9 years of age and English at 12, would make a better English scholar than the boy who learned English at 9 and learned no Pali. A barrier to the Burman's learning English, more than superficially, is the incongruity of idiom between the two languages. No greater congruity exists between Burmese and Pali: but the use of the two languages side by side for many years has softened the keenness of their divergence.

In fact it is probable that these official justifications served to cover up an obscure realisation that the Pali studies were so closely bound up with the traditional religious education that to exclude them would be to destroy a bridge. They were however in the Burmese view truly a religious matter of which it would be improper to make a worldly use in the winning of prizes, and consequently comparatively few students came forward. The religious examinations held in Malay in Pali were another matter, and not for a cash reward. It is true that there must have been a fundamental discrepancy between the official view of the place of Pali studies in education and the view which was held by the majority of those who taught it and studied it. It was the difference between the scholarship of Forchhammer and that of a learned monk. The Burmese point of view in the matter can be seen in Htin Aung's Burmese Monks' Tales -

(The British government) introduced the study of Pali, the classical language of Buddhism and the Burmese people, in the government schools, but the teachers being Europeans or Indians, who had hastily taken up the study of the language², used English text books and the Roman alphabet in teaching Pali, which annoyed or even amused Burmese monks and scholars... After contributing further confusion to the chaotic conditions already prevailing in the sphere of religion in Lower Burma, Pali became merely³ an easy optional subject which duller students studied....

Forchhammer must have met this attitude often, and it probably seemed to him parochial in the extreme. Pali had been studied for a century in Europe, and it had become conventional to use the Roman script for it - as it still is. But it is not really parochial - just another totally unrelated view of the subject. However, the authorities

² It must be said that this is quite untrue. All names mentioned in the reports and Gazettes in connection with the teaching of Pali, except for those of Forchhammer and Gray, are Burmese. They were international scholars of the subject, who devoted their lives to it.

³ Htin Aung - Burmese Monks' Tales p.27.

¹ P.I.R. 1877-78 p.10-11

*Presumably
Forchhammer
& Gray*

were content to let matters rest as they were. Things soon began to move their way, and after 1878 the number of Pali prizes awarded in the district examinations grew rapidly to outnumber the others - perhaps for the reasons suggested by U Htin Aung.

There are then 40 titles in the list of Burmese and Pali books approved by the Text Book Committee and the Education Department up to 1885, and teachers in the government schools were expected to use only books on this list. To non-government schools these books were recommended, but there was no obligation to use them. The school's grant depended primarily upon the number of its pupils who passed the examinations at each stage, and the Department were not very interested in what books had brought them to this stage. There was in fact a fair range of choices in most subjects, where there were books which had not reached the list: in 1881 for instance the Committee reported -

There is a constant supply of new publications of manuscripts of school books prepared independently of the Committee and submitted for its approval.¹

In fact not many of these reached the Approved list. The fate of some of them is noted in the Committee's minutes and reports which are published in the supplements of the British Burma Gazette, but the notes are disappointingly brief: rejections are usually on grounds of 'unsuitability' without giving detailed reasons. At a meeting of the Committee held on 27 October 1881 for instance, it was decided not to approve three books, namely 'Kavilak-khana-dipani' edited by Maung Ba Thaw, Thin-bon-let-thit by Maung Po, and 'Bhasa-naya' by the same author. The last, a grammar, was said to be too advanced for school use, but no other reason than 'unsuitable' is given for the other two. Possibly some books, especially books from and for the missions, were not submitted for approval: the two Readers published in 1881 and 1882 by Mrs. Bennett and by J. Christopher never seem to have been considered. Presumably this is because these books were produced expressly and solely for the mission schools, for which Sandys' Readers were no longer adequate and which mistrusted the Readers which the Department were about to produce. When the Departmental Readers were issued, missionary mistrust was found to be

¹ P.I.R. 1880-81

a severe check on sales. Normally where there is a book published by the Department itself, it seems to have taken a natural priority, but there was at least one instance (Forbes History of Burma) where the book, though published by the Department, failed to reach the Approved list. There may have been an element of chance and caprice in the matter: it was not unknown in England.

Chapter VII - Conclusions

It is a constant temptation to judge old policies and institutions in the light of hindsight: we know how things were going to turn out. We forget that those responsible for setting the course of development did not share that advantage. At the same time we are tempted to apply to those policies the values and priorities which it is the fashion to apply to such things today - or perhaps more often those which it was the fashion to apply when the critic was learning his set of values. These are two traps into which modern Burmese historians of education in their country seem to be particularly liable to fall. For instance U Khin Sse Win in an article seems to feel that nursing scholarships should not have gone to Eurasian girls,¹ failing to notice that at that time it must, on the contrary, have seemed grossly unfair that such scholarships should have been confined to 'Burmese and Karens of at least half blood and to Burmese speaking children of hospital assistants'.² Why, it must have been asked, should one or two classes of all the inhabitants of British Burma be so favoured?

In fact, the nineteenth century was far more internationally minded than any government would dare to be today. It is not, perhaps, anywhere expressly stated, but, if challenged over their justification for doing what they were doing in Burma, the British officials would have argued that it was in the general interest of humanity that the resources of the world and of each particular territory of it should be developed to the best advantage, and that he who would do it most effectively should be allowed to get on with it. A Lieutenant Governor of Bengal could write on 25 January 1876 that it was

desirable that a certain proportion of the surplus labour of Behar should be deported to the rich and comparatively untouched fields of employment in British Burma.³

From the broadest, crudest economic point of view he was probably

¹ Ko-lo-ni Hkit-ù Kalá (1860-1890) ga Myan-má Pjin-nya-ye-ùwin
Britishá-ásò-yá Hsaung-ywet chet-mya apaw Hsan-sit Thon-that-chin
JBRB vol.LII p.100

² P.I.R. 1882-83 p.68

³ Dispatch to the Governor General: Dispatches 1876

right, but the Burmese could not be expected to agree with him. He was not however for this reason a wicked imperialist bent on crushing the defeated Burmans; he was merely taking a more widely utilitarian view than is fashionable today.

It is necessary to establish what values and priorities the people of an era set themselves, before it is possible to consider how far their institutions reached towards the ideal, since it is their ideals which are the standards, not ours. In the field of education, as in most other fields, the second half of the 19th century was in England a time of intense activity and hot discussion. It was frankly recognised that England used three quite separate educational systems - that of the schools for the upper classes, mainly Eton and Harrow, but including also the other seven which had been considered worthy of the notice of the Clarendon Commission - that of the middle classes, covering a wide range of institutions, from ancient endowed grammar schools and the newer public schools to the somewhat dubious 'educational home' that Dickens caricatured - and the elementary schools for the working class. It must be emphasised that these were separate systems, for three separate elements of society, intended to handle pupils of the appropriate class, irrespective of age or ability, and that each system had its own separate end in view, bringing up its members to take their appropriate place in society.¹ Eton was intended 'to teach her aristocratic pupils virtues which are among the best virtues of an aristocracy - freedom from affectation, manliness, a high spirit, simplicity,² largely on a classical curriculum. Middle class schools were required for the children 'of the clergy of moderate or contracted incomes, officers of the army and navy, medical men, solicitors, and gentry of large families and small means'³, with a tendency towards a greater emphasis on more utilitarian subjects such as mathematics and modern languages. Elementary schools were simply for the 'working class'. At this time the phraseology of 'primary' and 'secondary' education was coming into use,

¹ The education of each class in society has, or ought to have, its ideal determined by the wants of that class and by its destination. Matthew Arnold - A French Eton or Middle-class Education and the State.

² op.cit. - quoting Sir John Coleridge - p.132 in 'Arnold on Education'

³ op.cit. p.116

but it would be a misnomer to equate 'primary' with 'elementary' and 'secondary' with 'middle' school, although Arnold defined secondary education as

the great first stage of a liberal education, coming between elementary instruction, the instruction in the mother tongue and in the simplest and most indispensable branches of knowledge on the one hand, and superior instruction given by universities on the other.¹

The reason is that the receiver of secondary education did not generally receive primary education at an elementary school, and the elementary school pupil was most unlikely ever to attend a middle-class school, though by 1880 a few picked scholars were going on to such schools as the Manchester Grammar School. Of these three separate systems, it was almost universally agreed in England - but not on the continent - that the government should have no concern with the two topmost. Those who were likely to require, and to be able to pay for, secondary and University education, were considered to be quite capable of making their own arrangements privately without government intervention. The only schooling with which the government was concerned was elementary education, and even this was a subject for heated argument right up to the 1880s. It was a very powerful minority which held that this was a matter to which the government should never have committed themselves, and from which they should extricate themselves as soon as possible. This minority was sufficiently powerful to ensure that government money should be restricted to providing three basic essentials only in elementary schools - reading, writing, and arithmetic. The system of payment by results under the Revised Code of 1862 ensured that payments to schools were tied strictly to the schools' success in producing pupils who could read, write, and calculate: nothing else brought in any further payment so far as the government were concerned. The function of government in education was exclusively to spread elementary literacy and numeracy as widely among the population as available resources would permit: the introduction of any other subject was an improper diversion of resources.² The rigidity of this system did not last long under steady attack such as

¹ op.cit p.117

² Matthew Arnold formulated this point of view not too unfairly, though strongly disagreeing with it, as - 'The duty of the State in public education is... to obtain the greatest quantity of reading, writing and arithmetic for the greatest number.'

The Twice-Revised Code (1862) - Arnold on Education p.29

Matthew Arnold and others made, but, although by 1880 grants could be made for teaching as 'class subjects' any two out of the subjects 'geography, natural history, physical geography, natural philosophy, history, social economy, grammar, and, in the case of girls, needlework', and for two 'specific subjects', including English literature, mathematics, and languages, these were usually regarded as mere frills. The grants for them were small and the subjects optional: the main income of a school, so far as it depended upon the government, consisted of its results grants for reading, writing and arithmetic, which were the only compulsory subjects. It must be emphasised however that, throughout the period, the whole subject was a ground for the acutest controversy, through a very broad spectrum of opinion with very little common ground. Consequently policy tended to change rapidly.

In these circumstances it can hardly be expected that the educational decisions made in India and Burma should show any very clear or consistent view of what exactly education was expected to achieve, in particular on the question, still with us, of whether its prime aim should be to fit its pupils to earn a living in the best interests of society and of themselves, or to 'train generally all who are born men to all that is human', as Commenius wrote nearly three hundred years earlier, or as the 1917 Committee on the Inculcation of the Imperial Idea expanded it

the discovery and development of the capacity of each individual child... to make the most of each gift which each member possesses - an eye for colour, a taste for machinery, excellent draftsmanship, a sense of touch, powers of elocution, an exceptional memory for faces....

In fact the Victorians tended to regard their 'upper-class' education as intended to produce a 'better man', and their 'middle-class' education as producing one competent to make a good living. The difference was certainly not resolved in Burma, where traditional monastic education was devoted to the ^{ethics} ~~mythology~~ of society, and the practicalities had been left to family traditions or to ad hoc royal commands.

However the lines laid down for the development of the educational system in Burma were considerably closer to modern ideas than to those expressed in the ruling policies in England in 1870. It was the stated intention that the system should form a single whole

along which any pupil who wanted could, in principle, proceed from bottom to top in definite stages by age groups from the first year in the primary school up to a university: it was not to be a set of compartments, water-tight but subject to slight leakage. At the same time it was intended that it should be a Burmese system -

No scholar should be allowed to abandon the study of his vernacular, which should be kept up until the end of his school course. If the educated classes neglect the cultivation of their own languages, these will sink to the level of mere colloquial dialects and no progress will be possible in giving effect to the principle that European knowledge should gradually be brought by means of the vernaculars within reach of all classes of people.¹

This was written in 1904, but only gave final expression to principles which had been in force for thirty years. It was something quite other than what might have been expected, in view of the impression that subsequent writers have sought to give, that the only purpose of government in education in Burma was to ensure a regular supply of English-speaking clerks - and also in view of, say, Arnold's ideas on Welsh -

Sooner or later the difference of language between Wales and England will probably be effaced as has happened with the difference of language between Cornwall and the rest of England... and they are not true friends of the Welsh people who from a romantic interest in their manners and traditions would impede an event which is socially and politically so desirable for them.²

The third major point of difference from current policy in England was of course the fact that the government directly involved themselves in secondary education in a way that was totally impossible in England until the 1890s at least. There was nothing in England directly comparable with the Rangoon High School for many years.

All these major differences from English practice of course stemmed from the directives of the 1854 dispatch from the Court of Directors of the East India Company to the Governor General. In 1858 it was at last decided - a decision precipitated by the Indian Mutiny - that the government of Great Britain could no longer use the Company to camouflage their own responsibility for India. The Company was

¹ Resolution - Government of India, Home Department 11th March 1904: quoted in full in 'The Province of Burma' by Alleyn Ireland.

² Matthew Arnold - Report for 1852. ('Arnold on Education' p.24.)

abolished, and India (including Burma) was ruled directly through a Secretary of State. One of the new Secretary's first actions was to issue a Dispatch confirming the principles of the 1854 Dispatch, but it is possible to doubt whether it would have been possible politically in 1859 for a British government to initiate a policy based upon these principles, whereas the Company had had no difficulty. They had been able to rule out considerations of religion, and it had been religious jealousies which, for better or for worse, had so far kept the Continental pattern of extensive State intervention in education out of England.

There were however in Burma factors which bedevilled the smooth establishment of a system which should conform to the policy which had been laid down, which required that -

the expansion of education must be from the primary schools through the middle-class schools and district schools to the High School in Rangoon, and attention devoted to the few with the object of attaining a position in the high class or distinction at Calcutta University is a delusive and disappointing effort.¹

As the result of Phayre's and Fytche's decisions Between 1868 and 1872, the primary schools were mainly in the hands of the Sangha. A certain number were with the missions, and the few government schools also had their primary sections, but in terms of numbers the monastery schools were by far the most important. In 1874-75 for instance, 939 monastic schools were examined against 155 lay schools, while government and mission schools totalled 51. Outside the sphere of inspection, which had to be positively requested, in theory at least, the preponderance of the monastic schools was even more marked. To Phayre, and after him to Fytche, the attempt to build a modern system of education on the basis of the monasteries must have seemed the obvious thing to do. To anyone even vaguely acquainted with the history of education in Europe, the parallel between mediaeval monasteries in Europe and the monasteries in contemporary Burma must have seemed exact, and from the education provided by the mediaeval church had grown the European endowed schools and Universities, which had been responsible not only for the scientific study of the ancient classics, but also for the mathematics and practical engineering which were the foundation of 19th century industry and science. It must have seemed that a little judicious forcing could lead to a similar flowering in Burma.

¹ Government Resolution on P.I.R. 1876-77 (Gazette 1878)

There was however a fundamental difference between the mediaeval monastery in Europe and the Burmese Buddhist monastery, which nullified the parallel. It was precisely the worldliness of the mediaeval church which good Victorian protestants were so fond of condemning that made it a valuable provider of secular education: In Byzantium the church left worldly matters to the Emperor and argued over dogma and heresy. In the West however the church became, in part at least, an instrument for the initiation of that economic inequity, the accumulation of capital, which is the first requirement of economic development. An Archbishop who was Chancellor of England was naturally interested in the provision of educated clerics from among whom he could look for reliable secretaries and assistants - and indeed a successor. The head of an abbey who was a great land-holder was interested in training his juniors in surveying the land and in drawing up accounts of his rentals: he was also interested in developing the ability to design a better mill for grinding his corn and for carding his wool.

The Sangha on the other hand was a genuinely unworldly body. Monks might advise and lecture the King, but never hold office: monasteries drew their subsistence from the villages, but never owned land. If, as sometimes was done, land was assigned for the support of a particular monastery, it remained in the management of lay trustees, not directly in the control of any monk. There was no concentration of economic power in any monastery. Consequently such matters as interested the Education Department, except for the moral and religious books included under the 'Burmese Classics' head of the Department's Approved list, and for the study of Pali as an adjunct to these, were to the Sangha the purest frivolity. To have interested themselves in such things would be to deny the whole purpose of their monkhood - to escape from such things for ever. The 'pwe-kyauṅs' of King Bo-daw-hpaya's time might perhaps have developed in a way which would have allowed monastic education to take a direction in line with the Department's ideas, but they had been suppressed.¹ The impulses which had given rise to them no doubt still existed, to provide some life behind the yielding to pressure or to politeness, which in many instances led monasteries to introduce 'modern' subjects, but only exceptionally could much enthusiasm be looked for in anything but instruction in the Law, the Rules of behaviour and of morality, as

¹ On the 'pwe-kyauṅ' see J.A. Stewart 'Buddhism in Burma' p.5.

There was however a further dislocating factor in the situation regarding the middle schools. This was their origin as 'middle-class' schools, mainly in the hands of missionaries. In this origin they accepted pupils of all levels of accomplishment who seemed likely on social and financial grounds to continue their education beyond the mere rudiments. The primary schools tended to be for those only who would not be staying for more than the most elementary education before going out to work. To fit into the official policy the middle schools had to change their whole function, from one providing a complete education adapted to the children of a limited social class, to the very different one of providing a limited stage of education to children of all classes. This necessity was masked for a time by the fact that, in the natural course of events the only children who would stay on for a middle school education were the same middle-class children - children of the merchants and professional classes of the bigger towns - who would have been catered for in the original conception of a 'middle-class' school. The only change obviously necessary was to ensure that the middle schools were not encumbered with children who had not already received an elementary education. Children must be qualified by a primary education for admission to the middle school. This meant that a proper distinction must be maintained between primary and secondary schools. The point is regularly stressed in the reports of the 1870s, and in 1876 the D.P.I. issued a circular (no.169-1 dated 20th October 1876) reiterating the necessity for stringent entrance tests. It was stressed again in the statement of policy enunciated in 1878.¹ For the time this seems to have been hard to enforce: in 1878 Ferrars wrote -

The neglect of the prescribed entrance tests is partly accounted for by what has been said in the last paragraph. Many masters do not see beyond the horizon of their school... When the entrance tests were prescribed one master who had 100 pupils on his roll complained that nine would be excluded by the new regulation.²

Hordern however seems to have doubted the present practicability of immediate strict enforcement. The next year he wrote

I think... that we have carried too far, or rather applied injudiciously, the salutary principle of enforcing an entrance test.³

¹ Admin. Report 1877-78

² P.I.R. 1877-78 para.28 p.12

³ P.I.R. 1878-79 para.43 p.11

in spite of the fact that it had been insisted upon in the recommendations of the 1877 General Conference on Education. The potential misunderstandings continued. The fact that many of these schools were mission-run and that all of them were run on western lines also meant that there was a major break between the monastery school and the middle school. Just how major the break was varied, depending on the policy of the controlling body. Schools run by the Baptist Mission, for instance, particularly in their Karen section, were much more closely orientated on the vernacular languages than those of the Church of England. Moving from a monastic primary school to a middle school however was always to move to a totally different kind of institution, and the pupil who came up in this way must always have been at a disadvantage as against one who had started in the institution's own primary section. It was obviously hard to integrate the two systems, and the natural probability for future development was in the direction of something like the split in education which had come into being by this time in England, between the preparatory school, public school and University course, and the elementary school with nothing much to go on to, except in rather exceptional cases.

The position of the English language was a further factor tending to split the educational system into two. It was the official language of the government of India and so, for many purposes, of the government of Burma: it was also the main language of international trade in Burma. Without a first-class knowledge of English also, knowledge of the world outside Burma, of the sciences and arts, of economics and history, was wholly dependent upon translations. For anyone who had an ambition to make a figure outside his own circle of villages, a knowledge of English had become essential by 1880: without it he might, if he came of the right family, become a myó-thu-gyí, but no more. There was therefore a very strong pressure, both from parents and from prospective employers, that schools should teach as much English as possible from the earliest possible age. It was in fact in everyone's short-term economic interest that education should be in, and oriented upon, the English language. There was for a time a real danger that Burmese would be allowed to slip back to the position of 'a mere colloquial dialect', as had happened to Welsh and Gaelic. There were many who thought that it should; in 1881 Taw Sein Ko wrote that 'at present in Burma Western education possesses

or a
Revenue
Purveyor

more advocates, if not votaries, than native learning.¹ It was education in English of which he was thinking. Others felt that English schooling should be separated from Burmese schooling, which produced some odd results -

The evils attendant upon the theory advocated by many in Burma that a boy should complete his course of study in the vernacular before commencing English... (are many)... The boys in Dr. Marks' school are said to have done this. After they come to his school they, having done with Burmese, devote almost their whole time to English and have only reached the upper primary standard in their eighteenth year.²

In such circumstances, those whose mother- (or more accurately father-) tongue was English obviously started with a big advantage. As has been noted earlier -

A large proportion of the pupils (at St. Paul's school) are Eurasians among whom the prejudice³ against the study of the vernacular is unreasonably strong.

It was not in fact 'unreasonable': integration meant wasting time on Burmese which meant sacrificing a part of their advantage - quite apart from social considerations.

There were in fact signs of a split in the system by 1880, between the government (or municipal) primary school/Anglo-vernacular secondary school system, which was the lot of the children of the richer and more ambitious families of the cities and larger towns, who would grow up to be government servants or traders or pleaders, and the 'indigenous' monastic or lay schools, just possibly leading on to a vernacular middle school, where children of the villages and of the poorer town families, who would become field workers or labourers, were taught. It is to this to which U Kaung refers when he writes

The two forms have developed separately,⁴ creating a gulf between the villager and the townsman.

It is no good therefore to complain, as U Kaung does, that -

Burmese education was classed as 'lower grade' of 'lower class' education. The Monastic and lay schools were considered suitable for the masses... but that they could give and had given in the past a higher education of their

¹ Burmese Sketches I p.225

² P.I.R. 1881-82 p.14. Reasonable enough of course if the English is regarded as an office skill - like typing, to be learnt after one's regular education is completed.

³ P.I.R. 1878-79 p.14.

⁴ U. Kaung - History of Education in Burma: JERS vol.LXVI ii 1963 p.76

own was not considered.¹

The customer was King: having paid for his education, he considered that he had the right to get what he wanted, even if it were different from what the government thought good for him. The government in turn never aimed at prescribing the course of education, as do modern governments, only at influencing as far as possible the course of events. Where they had tried to take charge of events, as in the case of the Cess schools² and the early days of the Teachers' Training Schools³, the results had been fairly disastrous.

The Education Department did however generally manage to provide a resistance to such pressures. The policy determined in 1854 was that the education to be provided should be in an integrated system progressing from the Primary school to the University, in which the local languages, to ensure that this education should form part of the general life of the country, should play what part they could. The Department managed to hold pretty consistently to this policy. Obviously it was a difficult task to promote the integration of the highly diverse elements constituting the system, since changes would be needed in all of them. Selecting an institution so resistant to change as the monastery, to be the basis of an integrated system, perhaps made the task harder than it need be, and obscured the essentials of what had to be done. This however is in the light of hindsight, and it had to be attempted. U Aye Hlaing, in his paper on 'Public Finance and Public Policy in Burma 1870 - 1940'⁴ quotes a note by Furnivall as follows -

In 1871 the Director of Public Instruction recommended that the teaching of English in monastic schools should be encouraged but it was rejected by the then Chief Commissioner on the ground that English should only be taught by teachers with a correct accent and perfect knowledge of the language and this was impossible in monastic schools. Furnivall contended that this decision was one of the most critical and unfortunate in the history of Burma as it 'pushed the monasteries back

¹ op.cit.

² see p.65 sup.

³ see p.81 sup.

⁴ U Aye Hlaing: JERS vol.LVI p.23. The quotation is from an unpublished mimeograph entitled 'A Study of the Social and Economic History of Burma by J.S. Furnivall.' Judging from his remarks on p.28 of 'Educational Progress in S.E. Asia', Furnivall got this from the P.I.R. for 1928-29 - an example perhaps of the distortions of legend.

into the middle ages and condemned the national system of education to futile opposition against the liberalising influence of Western civilisation.

This seems to be quite misconceived and probably mistaken. The only similar incident traceable is in 1873 in connection with the teaching of English in the government cess schools, and on this point the authorities rapidly gave way to pressure. In 1871 there could have been no imagined possibility that the monasteries could substitute English for Pali: that would have been to give up their *raison d'etre*. In 1882 Taw Sein Ko could write -

At the advent of Western civilisation Buddhism has fled from the towns and villages to the hpongyikyaungs and pagodas and a smattering knowledge of Pali is eagerly exchanged for a smattering of English.¹

No monastery could abet the process: there were small means available to encourage them to do so either. In 1872 the policy for dealing with monastic schools was defined as 'not to interfere but to offer, if requested, examinations with rewards, and trained teachers for arithmetic, surveying and drawing'.² All that could have been done was to offer a reward for examination passes in English, and there is no reason to suppose that any requests for examination would ever be received. The fact however that Furnivall, whose connection with Burma dates from a time so comparatively close to the events in question, could write this indicates how the nature of the monastic schools could be misunderstood, and also the nature of the government's policy. This however was a symptom of the split which develops in any static society which is brought into contact with another more dynamic (or hag-ridden) society, and was markedly appearing in Burma at this time between those who held to the old ways and old values and those who were influenced by Western ideas and values.³ The English education of the Anglo-vernacular schools was brought into being at the demand of the people who wanted the best education. It was not, as U Kaung says, the result of 'the declared policy of the government'. It was a development which it was the declared policy of the government to combat all through the Indian dominions. Paragraph 39 of the 1854 Dispatch discouraged

too exclusive a direction of the efforts of government

¹ Burmese Sketches I p.228

² P.I.R. 1872-73

³ It is well described in the preface to Htin Aung's 'Burmese Monks' Tales'.

towards the means of acquiring a very high degree of education for a small number of natives of India, drawn for the most part... from the higher classes.

Consequently, in order to ensure a wide spread of education -

13. It is neither our aim nor desire to substitute the English language for the vernacular dialects of the country. We have always been most sensible of the importance of the use of the languages which alone are understood by the great mass of the population. These languages and not English have been put by us in the place of Persian in the administration of justice and in the intercourse between the officers of government and the people. It is indispensable therefore that, in any general system of education, the study of them should be assiduously attended to, and any acquaintance with improved European knowledge which is to be communicated to the great mass of the people - whose circumstances prevent them from acquiring a high order of education, and who cannot be expected to overcome the difficulties of a foreign language - can only be conveyed to them through one or other of those vernacular languages.

14. In any general system of education, the English language should be taught where there is a demand for it; but such instruction should always be combined with a careful attention to the study of the vernacular language of the district, and with such general instruction as can be conveyed through that language: and while the English language continues to be made use of as by far the most perfect medium for the education of those persons who have acquired a sufficient knowledge of it to receive general instruction through it, the vernacular languages must be employed to teach the far larger classes who are ignorant of, or imperfectly acquainted with English.

The danger that education in English might bring about the existence of a separate educated class, who could hardly talk to their fellow countrymen who had had a vernacular education, was always recognised. It was however still not possible to provide teaching of 'modern' subjects to a higher standard in the vernaculars, and the higher education of the monasteries was not what was generally called for at this time by the public who wanted a 'higher education'.

In fact, no one had ever really worked out how the official policy, that 'European knowledge should be diffused through the medium of the languages which are alone understood by the great mass of the people'¹, could be carried out in the absence of books and teachers of the subjects in the languages concerned. The dilemma is clearly shown in the comment -

The failure of the Law and Medical classes, and the result

¹ M. & M.P. 1872-73 p.141, repeating the 1854 Dispatch para.13.

of the first independent test applied through the examinations of last October disclose the fact that... the best of the pupils are lamentably backward in English.¹

Heavy reliance on English was objectionable on the cultural side,² but the practicalities of the situation made it essential. It became a subject for results grants in lower primary schools in 1881.

The Department therefore had to deal with a system which was made up of incompatible components. The only ways of dealing with the situation were either to hope that it would work itself into smooth running by the lapse of time, and carry on accordingly, or to scrap intractable parts and build anew. The resources available, of money and manpower, did not allow of the latter, and all were allowed to co-exist. The dislocation is however visible in the list of Approved school books, and the ease with which it can be broken down into three very dissimilar sections.

1) The long List of 'Burmese Classics' and Spelling Books. These are all books which had been read in the monasteries for years or centuries, being mainly translations from Pali into Burmese, the work of authors dead and often unknown, and studied as guides to the Way of the Buddha, or at any rate to the principles of prudent action in Burmese society. Government encouragement and initiative in the publication of such books was in fact welcomed by the Sangha.

Ferrars reported a conversation in 1878 -

One of (the monks) said to me, 'Government is doing much for education.' I asked, 'Do you refer to the Cess Schools?'
'No, to the books it has brought out.'³

It seems to have become a cliché to describe the monastic schools as havens of refuge for Burmese culture, against the assaults of Western ideas. Ferrars started it in the report quoted above: 'The monasteries serve the important purpose of local depots of literature and nuclei

¹ G.R. 353 dt 20 Sept 1876

² see for instance Ferrars on St. John's College - P.I.R. 1877-78 p.22
'effectually satisfies the morbid craving which has called it into existence, in doing which it largely counteracts the direction which disinterested observers generally assign to school education.'

³ P.I.R. 1878-79 p.24

of learned persons.' He has been often echoed in later publications.¹ They were not however repositories of the whole range of Burmese literature. The elaborate literary forms which had been developed at the Court were outside their scope - which presumably accounts for the rapid decline of the drama into popular sensationalism after the disappearance of the Court, and its supersession by Western literary forms - and the Department's list includes nothing of this sort. It is a list for the monastic schools.

2) A shorter list, devised by missionaries, chiefly the Baptists, for their own schools. These schools were intended primarily for the gaining and edification of Christian converts. The content of the education provided was therefore less important than its moral and theological tone, although missionaries also sometimes aimed at undermining the non-Christian structure of beliefs by scientific explanations of natural phenomena, so as to have a chance of re-building on the ruins. It was traditional practice among missionaries to attract pupils by offering instruction in the 'useful arts' in the local languages, and had been since the Italian missions of the 18th century, but for these reasons it was not, in the second half of the 19th century, of prime importance that the information should be really up to date. The missionaries were therefore generally content to work with new editions of the same old books, originating in the 1840s or even earlier - even the 'Catechism of Astronomy and Geography' which Judson had prepared, apparently under protest,² in 1826. Their books were however aimed at opening their pupils' minds to a wider world of ideas, and they were perfectly prepared to break the pattern of behaviour which the monasteries were concerned to preserve. The abortive series of text books which W.S. Sandys produced between 1870 and 1873 was really a late effusion

¹ Taw Sein Ko, Burmese Sketches I, quoted above p.195. Compare also U Khin Zaw Win - JERS vol.LIII p.83 (မုခ်မာ နိုင်ငံ ၏ အခြေခံ ပညာ ရှိမ့် များ ဖြစ်သော အားကြီး ကျောင်း များ and Daw Kyan - JERS vol.XLIX ii p.226 အားကြီး ကျောင်း တိုင်း သည် မြန်မာ ယောကျ်ား ကလေး များ ကို စာပေ သင် ကြား နှိမ့် ပေး ရာ ပညာ ရှိမ့် များ ဖြစ်ကြ သည် ..

² He did not propose to spend his time in teaching the arts and sciences of the Western world, in imparting more correct astronomical, geographical and geological conceptions in order, little by little, to prepare the mind of the Burman to accept his religious ideas - 'Dr. Judson: His Life and Labours'

of this tradition - a tradition already obsolescent, which goes some way towards explaining his lack of success.

3) Leading on from the mission-school books, and bridging the gap between them and the Text Book Committee's own productions, are Haswell's books of Arithmetic and Geography, based upon earlier works by Stilson and Hough, but effectively bringing them up to date and now very much concerned with the quality of the instruction. They were of course produced at the instance of the Education Department. By the early 1880s the Text Book Committee was in full operation and had started to produce the series of books on 'modern' subjects which show their ideas of what Burmese school books should be. These books were all by members of the Department's own teaching or inspecting staff, usually Burmese or Anglo-Burmese, and are severely practical text-books in very plain language. A partial exception is the series of Readers which it had been decided should be made up from excerpts from existing texts; they therefore consist in part of texts already included in the list of 'Burmese Classics', and, whether by design or not, form a link with that list.

There is a tendency in modern Burmese writers on the history of education to accuse the British administration of a lack of sympathy with education except so far as it fitted in with their own interests. This is natural, but it is not correct. Both the Government of India and their subordinate government in Burma worried a great deal about the education of the people in their charge. Initially, for instance, the requirement that a certificate of education should be produced as a qualification for government service was introduced as an inducement to go to school, not because what was learned at school was likely to be of much use to the employer. By 1880 the position had changed a good deal, and a school-derived knowledge of English and Arithmetic were useful accomplishments. Nevertheless -

It is not only in order to fit the natives of the country for the public service that we teach them the English language. Our aim is the general cultivation both of intellect and character.¹

¹ P.I.R. 1881-82 p.20

The Victorians never lost their faith in the power of education to 'make a better man', even if they tended sometimes to equate 'better' with 'richer'. They genuinely believed in 'the vast moral and material blessings which flow from the general diffusion of useful knowledge'¹. When the time came to start work on education in Burma they were faced with formidable difficulties. The basic ethos of the country tended to devalue the 'intensifying (of) the powers of observation, conducing to an accurate apprehension of external matters (and) training the mind to search for what is beautiful and attractive'². The Burmese liked the 'material blessings' but were not prepared to allow them any moral value, and consequently tended to regard the education pressed upon them by the Education Department only as a means to a livelihood: they gave much more of an absolute value to the inward-looking studies of the monasteries. At the same time, the Department had to try to carry out its purpose with a school system that was incoherent and self-contradictory. The only wholly coherent institution which they had to hand - and carefully kept in their own control through all changes, until it could in the end be handed over to the Educational Syndicate intact - was their own Rangoon High School, which with its attached primary and middle schools could provide a unitary system from primary to University level. This no doubt served as a model and example. Resources were lacking however, partly perhaps because of the attachment of the Burmese provinces to India - but did Ceylon do so much better? - and did not allow of its duplication elsewhere. It was not so much a question of money as of the availability of teachers on the one hand, and of willingness to be taught on the other. In the circumstances therefore it was rather a matter for credit that Peter Hordern and his Department managed to use the means at their disposal to lay a foundation for the 20th century system that grew upon their work, and that the permanent split in the English educational system was not visited upon Burma also. With hindsight it is possible perhaps to say 'Could have done better', but generally the Department was compelled to struggle against the natural course of events in trying to damp down what they saw as an over-enthusiastic rush by a part of the people towards things Western.

¹ Government Resolution, Home Department, India, dated 11 March 1904: quoted in 'The Province of Burma' - Alleyn Ireland

² Minute by Sir Richard Temple (in Bombay) dated 6 Sept 1878

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The years during which an institution is taking shape, while it is still plastic and subject to the moulding of pressing arguments on the principles on which it should operate for the rest of its history, are extremely important in its development, and the understanding of what happens in these years is vital to understanding what the institution becomes in its more settled stages. To the institution of an elaborate system of State controlled education in Burma the years from 1860 to 1875 are thus vital, but not very much has been written on them. The best work on the subject is still U Kaung's 'A Survey of the History of Education in Burma Before the British Conquest and After,' which was first published as scattered articles in the Journal of the Burma Research Society during the 1920s and finally consolidated in JBRS XLVI, ii, 1963 - p.9 ff. Unhappily U Kaung died with his work unfinished and he deals only sketchily with the most important period. Other works specifically on the subject which have been consulted are:-

1. A History of the Development of Education under British Administration in Burma to 1886 by Lindsay A. Semmens - University of Southern California 1938.

Semmens had worked in a missionary school in Burma during the 1920s but his thesis is disappointing. He does not give an impression of understanding the issues involved, and is capable of the howler of explaining that the 'Madrassah' department of the Rangoon High School was for the purpose of caring for Madrassi pupils.

2. Thi-baw Mìn Pā-daw-mu-chein-gá Britíshá-Myan-ma Naing-gan-i Rjīn-nya-yèi Achei-aneí (The state of education in British Burma from the time of King Thibaw) by Ma Kyan - JBRS XLIX, ii, 1966 p.225

3. Ko-lo-ni Hkit-ù-kalá (1860-1890) ga' Myan-mé Rjīn-nya-yèi-dwīn Britísh-āso-yá Hsaung-ywet-chet-mya-ápaw Hsan-sit Thon-that-chin. (An examination of the activities of the British authorities in the field of Burmese education in the early colonial period 1860-1890) by U Khin Zaw Win - JBRS LII, ii, 1969 p.81.

These articles are somewhat similar to each other. In both, the authors tend to look for figures rather than at the principles which were operating, and both are concerned to lambast the British. It is perhaps revealing that the government agency always appears as a vague generalisation, "British officials", never personalised. Yet it did matter who they were.

Other works do touch upon the subject, notably Furnivall's 'Colonial Policy and Practice', and a fairly recent article by U Aye

Hlaing 'Public Finance and Public Policy in Burma 1870-1940' published in JBRS LVI, i & ii, 1973, but it has seemed best to go back to the original sources, which exist so plentifully in the Gazettes, reports and memoirs of the time, rather than to look for help to these secondary sources, which could often only be quoted for the purpose of negation.

This bibliography does not claim to be exhaustive. That with U Kaung's article provides almost as exhaustive a list as could be desired, though strangely he omits Fytche's 'Burma Past and Present', which is very important as giving the ideas of the man who was Chief Commissioner at the most crucial time, and who might indeed have been the prime mover in trying to lay the foundation of the educational system on the monastic schools. The books in the lists below are those which are cited or mentioned in the essay. Library references are given where it has seemed that they might be helpful - IOL for India Office Library, and SOAS for that of the School of Oriental and African Studies. In some cases books have been mentioned which are not traceable and may no longer exist.

I - Historical Background

1. Arnold on Education - edited by Gillian Sutherland: Penguin Education 1973
2. Colonial Policy and Practice - J.B. Furnivall: New York 1956
3. A Description of the Burmese Empire - San Germano translated by William Tandy: Rome, Oriental Translation Fund, 1833. Many times reprinted.
4. English Historical Documents, vol. XI 1783-1832 - edited by A. Aspinall and E.A. Smith: Eyre and Spottiswood 1959
5. English Historical Documents, vol. XII 1833-1874 - edited by G.M. Young and W.D. Handcock: Eyre and Spottiswood 1956.
6. The Fisher Memorandum: printed in Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company 1832, Vol. I (Public) Appendix I. Also summarised in Selections from Educational Records Part I 1781-1839 (see below)
SOAS Ind. Papers 32321
7. A History of the British Residency in Burma 1826-1840 - W.S. Desai :
Rangoon 1939. SOAS: GB 327 - 37161
8. The History of Burma - Sir A.P. Phayre: Trubner 1883
9. Policy Making in Elementary Education 1870-1875 - Gillian Sutherland:
Oxford Historical Monographs. 1973

10. A Report on the State of Society in Asia - C. Grant: Printed in the Select Committee Minutes along with No.6 above.
11. Shei Hkit Myan-ma Pyei Thadin-sa-mya - Bá Thàn: Sa-peí Beikman, Rangoon 1974
12. A Social History of Education in England - John Lawson and Harold Silver: Methuen 1973
13. Society and Education in England since 1800 - P.W. Musgrave : Methuen 1968
14. The Working Men's College 1854-1904 - Records of its History and its Work for Fifty Years, by members of the College - ed. by the Revd. J.L. Davies: MacMillan 1904

25

II - Indian and Burmese Records and Reports

15. Public Instruction Reports - Burma: from 1867-68 onwards. Abbreviated above as 'P.I.R.' although the first of the series is entitled 'British Burma Education Report 1867-68'. Only this volume is available in the IOL: the whole series is in the Official Publications section of the British Library.
16. British Burma Administration Reports: from 1859-60 onward. Abbreviated above as 'Admin. Report'. From 1859-60 to 1861-62 inclusive these reports form sections in the series 'Statement showing Material and Moral Progress of India'. At first these reports are separate for Pegu and for Tenasserim and Martaban, but from 1861-62 there is a consolidated report for British Burma. Separate Administration Reports are published from 1862-63; and that for 1874-75 is missing from the IOL.
17. Statement showing Material and Moral Progress of India - series. After 1862-63 these 'Statements' are consolidated by sections under various subjects, but continue to provide an abridgement of the Administration Reports. Available on open shelves in IOL. Referred to above as 'Material and Moral Progress' or 'M. & M.P.'
18. Quinquennial Report on the Progress of Education in India - series. Published every five years from 1867-71. Appear to be abstracted from the Admin. Reports but at times provide a useful conspectus. Referred to as 'Quinquennial'. Available in IOL.
19. The Province of Burma - Alleyne Ireland, 2 vols: Colonial Administration series, University of Chicago - Houghton Mifflin 1907
20. This is a convenient source of official notifications and statistics.
20. Selections from Educational Records, Part I, 1781-1839 - H. Sharp: Bureau of Education, India. Calcutta 1920.
21. Selections from Educational Records, Part II, 1840-1859 - J.A. Richey: Bureau of Education, India. Calcutta, 1922.
22. Selections from Educational Records of the Government of India, Vol.I Educational Reports 1859-61 edited by Prem Kirpal: Delhi 1900
23. Selections from Education Records of the Government of India, Vol.II The Development of University Education 1860-1887: J.P. Naik: Delhi 1963.

24. Selections from Dispatches addressed to the several Governments in India by the Secretary of State in Council: Stationary Office
1859 onward (Dispatches) SOAS 28643
25. Abstracts of Letters received from India: Stationery Office
1859 onward (Letters) SOAS 28642
26. Handbook of the Rules and Practice of the Department of Public Instruction in British Burma 1885 (Education Handbook)
IOL 61.C.31
27. Report of the Indian Education Commission 1882 (Hunter Commission Report)
28. British Burma Gazette: series in IOL starts 1875.
29. Selected Correspondence of Letters issued from and received in the Office of the Commissioner, Tenasserim Division, for the Years 1825-26 and 1842-43. Rangoon 1929 SOAS LGB352 22419

III - Memoirs, Biographies, et cetera

30. Burma as I Saw it, 1889-1917 - G.E.R. Grant Brown: Methuen 1926
SOAS GB572 18555
31. Burma - M.H. and Bertha Farrars: Sampson, Low. Marston 1900
SOAS LGB572 3717
32. Burma Under British Rule - and Before ? J. Nisbet: 2 vols,
Constable 1901 SOAS GB945 3569
33. Burmese Sketches I & II - Taw Sein Ko: British Burma Press
1913 and 1922 SOAS GB031 232564
34. Burma Past and Present - Lieut.Gen. Albert Fytche C.S.I.:
Kegan Paul 1878 SOAS GB909 4441
35. A Civil Servant in Burma - Sir H.T. White: Arnold 1913
SOAS GB351 18055
36. Christian Missions in Burma - Revd. W.C.B. Purser: S.P.G. 1911
SOAS GB266 15491
37. The Dalhousie - Phayre Correspondence, 1852-56 - edited by
D.G. Hall: London 1932 SOAS GB266
38. Forty Years in Burma - Dr. Marks, edited by the Revd. W.C.B. Purser:
Hutchinson, London 1917
39. Four Years in British Burma - W.H. Marshall, late editor of the
Rangoon Chronicle: Charles J. Skeet 1860 SOAS GB909 18320
40. Far Cathay and Farther India - A.R. MacMahon: Hurst and Blackett,
London 1893 SOAS GB301 4534
41. The Gospel in Burma - Mrs. McLeod Wyllie: Dalton, London 1859
SOAS GB266 18377
42. Dr. A. Judson, His Life and Labours, by his son Edward Judson:
Hodder and Stoughton, London 1883. (Simultaneous American edition
entitled 'Life of Dr. Judson' by Randolph and Sons, New York)
43. A Memoir of George Edward Lynch Cotton D.D., Bishop of Calcutta
and Metropolitan - edited by Mrs. Cotton: Longmans Green & Co.,
London 1871

44. Papers on Burma - W.F.B. Lawrie: London 1870 SOAS GB945 46499
45. A People at School - H. Fielding Hall: McMillan, London 1913
SOAS GB909 63006
46. A Personal Narrative of Two Years Imprisonment in Burma 1824-26
- Henry Gouger: John Murray, London 1860 SOAS GB909 18333
47. Travels in South East Asia - Howard Malcom: Tilt 1839
SOAS EB83.379 18332
48. Rough Pencillings of a Rough Trip to Rangoon in 1846: Anon.
Thacker and Spink and Co., Calcutta 1853
49. Two Years in Ava - T.A. Trant. Murray 1827. SOAS EB.82.34 42078
50. Personal Recollections of British Burma in 1878-79 - the Rt.Rev.
J.H. Titcomb D.D., First Bishop of Rangoon: Wells Gardner Darton
and Co. 1880 SOAS GB909 46913
51. Reminiscences of the Court of Mandalay - Gen. Horace A. Browne:
Woking Oriental Institute 1907 SOAS GB909 196760
52. Six Months in British Burma or India Beyond the Ganges in 1857 -
C.J. Winter: Richard Benchley, 1858 SOAS GB909 18324
53. To My Son - Peter Hordern: unpublished MS

IV - Articles in Journals

- A. Journal of the Burma Research Society (JBRS)
54. Matriarchal Vestiges in Burma - J.S. Furnivall: Vol.I, i, 1910 p.17
55. The Fashioning of Leviathan - J.S. Furnivall: Vol.XIX, i, 1929 p.6
56. The Odyssey of the First Burmese Types - Vivian Ba: Vol.XLV, ii,
1962, p.209
57. The Beginnings of Western Education in Burma - The Catholic Effort -
Vivian Ba: Vol,XLVII, ii, 1964, p.290
58. A Survey of the History of Education in Burma before the British
Conquest and After - U Kaung: Vol.XLVI, ii, p.9
59. Thi-baw Min Pa-daw-mu-chein-gá Britishá-Myan-ma Naing-gan-í
Pin-nya-yei Achei-aneí (The State of Education in British Burma from
the Time of King Thibaw) - Ma Kyan: Vol.XLIX, ii, 1966 p.225
60. Ko-lo-ni Hkit-ù-kala-(1860-1890)-gá Myan-má Pin-nya-yei-Hwin
Britishá Aso-yá Hsaung-ywet-chet-mya apaw Hsán-sit Thon-that-chin
(An Examination of the Activities of the British Authorities in the
Field of Burmese Education in the Early Colonial Period 1860-1890
- U Khin Zaw Win: Vol.LII, ii, 1969 p.81.
61. Public Finance and Public Policy in Burma 1870-1940 - U Aye Hlaing:
Vol.LVI i and ii, 1973 p.1.

- B. The Christian Observer - London
 62 "Public Affairs" Jan. 1858 and March 1859 quoted, but the whole publication is a valuable record of contemporary attitudes.
- C. Buddhism - Rangoon
 64. Education in Burma - anon: Vol.I no.3, March 1904
- D. Fraser's Magazine
 65. Buddhist Schools in Burma - Peter Hordern: Vol.XVI, Nov. 1877 p.626
 66. Among the Burmese,- Peter Hordern: Vol.XVIII, July-Dec 1878 serialised.

V - Miscellaneous

67. Buddhism in Burma - J.A. Stewart: short article, 1939, available from School of Oriental and African Studies.
68. Burmese Folk Tales - Htin Aung: Oxford University Press 1948
69. Burmese Law Tales - Htin Aung: Oxford University Press 1962
70. Burmese Monks' Tales - Htin Aung: Columbia University Press 1966
71. Letteratura Birmana, in Storia delle Letterature d'Oriente, Vol.4 edited by Oscar Botto, pp.245-301, Vallardi, Milan, 1969. English version available SOAS (quoted as 'Burmese Literature')
72. A History of the Development of Education under British Administration in Burma to 1886 - Lindsay A. Semmens: unpublished Ph.D. thesis ref. 864A - University of Southern California 1938
73. Masks of God - Joseph Campbell: Secker and Warberg 1960
74. The Myth of the ~~Eternal Return~~ ~~Mircea Eliade~~ ~~etc.~~ Routledge 1955
75. The Burmese Hitopadesa - translated by R.F. St. John: reprinted from the Indian Magazine 1887
 IOL Bur D 1825
 SOAS GPC 398 12206

VI - Burmese School (and Other) Books

76. Addá-than-hkeik Damma-that - ~~the~~ Kín-wùn Mìn-gyì: Burma Herald Press 1870.
 SOAS 12202
 IOL Bur D 13.
77. The Fables of Aesop for the Use of Vernacular Schools in British Burma (I-sok-í Dandari-sa) translated by W.S. Sandys: Published for the Education Department by the American Mission Press -
 First Edition 2,000 copies 1873
 Third Edition 1880
 IOL Bur D1328
78. Aesop's Fables (Isok Dandari-sa) - anon, but Catalogue gives Translator's name as 'Asan': American Mission Press 1887
 IOL Bur V TR 333
79. Aesop's Fables - S. McKertich: no information available.

80. Arithmetic - L. Stilson: American Baptist Mission Press ca. 1847
81. Stilson's Arithmetic (Thin-cha Twet-pon-sa) - revised and edited by James Haswell: American Baptist Mission Press 1876
82. An Abridgement of Arithmetic (Ari-tha-ma-beik twet-pon htei-gá Akyei-hnok-yu-thei Sa) - anon (Fr. Dumollard): St. Peter's Institute, Bassein 1876. IOL Bur D440
83. A Handbook of Agriculture - Martini and Fuller: Government Press 1883 (Myan-ma Pyei-dwin Le -ya Saik-pyo-gyin-hnaik Lok-kaing-yan ~~Ni-na-dó-go~~ Pya-thá thaw Let-swei Sa-ok followed by Saik-pyo-gyin Akyang ~~Pachto-má~~ Hpat-sa) IOL Bur B3
84. Burmese Pictorial Reader - originally prepared by MOUNG NA-GAU, re-arranged and revised by Lucretia Stilson. (Yok-pon Hpat-saya Akyang-sa): American Baptist Mission Press 5th edition 5000 10,000 1875 IOL Bur B483
85. Burmese Reader No. 1 - designed for the use of Vernacular Primary Schools in British Burma by W. Shwe Too Sandys (Myan-ma Hpat-sa ~~Pachto-má-dwé~~): First edition 1000, American Mission Press 1872 IOL Bur D452
86. Burmese Reader No.1 (Education Department Series) - anon (compiled by P.H. Ripley and A.B. Savage): American Mission Press, 2nd edition 11,000 copies 1884 IOL Bur B159
87. Astronomy and Geography (Set-kyá-win hnín ~~Pachto-wi~~-win Amèi-aphyei-sa) - A. Judson: American Mission Press 1877 IOL Bur B437
88. Damma-pada (Wut-htú and Gāthā) editions
- a. Dhammapada (Wut-htú) in Latter's Selections (v.s.) Moulmein 1850
 - b. Akyab Press reprint (v.s.) 1866
 - c. Untitled reprint before 1877 (v.s.)
 - d. Buddhaghosa's Parables (Damma-pada wut-htú in English) translated by Capt. T. Rogers with an introduction, which includes a translation into English of the Dhammapada-gāthā, by Max Muller: London 1870 SOAS GB 293 49314
 - e. Dhammapada-gāthā (translated into Burmese) - Thomas Lewin and Ma Tu: American Mission Press 1873. Also reprinted in 1882 and 1888. SOAS GPC 293 10415
 - f. Damá-padá Pali-daw Pāt Nissaya: Burma Herald Press 1880 Pali gāthā with Nissaya translation and brief cross references to the wut-htú. IOL Bur V TR 248/1 SOAS GPC 293 73154
 - g. Dhamma-pada: Government Press 1881 Pali gāthā with single-word cross-references to wut-htu IOL Bur V TR 248/1 SOAS GPC 293 73139
 - h. Damá-padá Wut-htú: Burma Herald Press 1882 SOAS GPC 398 12269
 - i. Damá-padá Wut-htú: Burma Herald Press 1886 Wut-htú only IOL Bur V TR 124/1
 - j. Damá-padá Wut-htú: Pyei-gyi Man-daing Press 1889 Includes gāthā in Pali with nissaya translations along with Wut-htu

89. Decisions of the Princess Sudhammasari (Thú-damá-sáyi Mìn-thamì Hpyat-h̀tòn) editions
- a. In Selections from the Vernacular Buddhist Literature of Burmah edited by Thomas Latta: American Baptist Mission Press, Moulmein 1850. IOL Bur F7
also in Ind.Inst. Oxford.
 - b. in a reprint of the above from Akyab Press 1866
IOL Bur D 733
 - c. in a similar reprint, title page missing but before 1877
IOL Bur D 1123
 - d. American Mission Press 1879 IOL Bur D773
 - e. American Mission Press 1881 IOL Bur D740
Note: this edition is described in the Catalogue as the 6th edition of 5000 copies, edited by H. Soltau. An English version was published simultaneously translated by C.J. Bandow.
 - f. American Mission Press 1882 (2nd edition) IOL Bur V TR122/3
 - g. Hanthawadi Press 1883 (3rd edition) IOL Bur V TR 248/2
 - h. Hanthawadi Press 1888 IOL Bur V TR 333/9
90. A Dictionary - Burmese and English - A. Judson: AMP Moulmein 1852
SOAS EB 85.38 1020
91. A Dictionary - English and Burmese - A. Judson: AMP Moulmein 1849
SOAS EC 84.14 63042
92. Anglo-Burmese Dictionary, in three parts - G. Hough, Superintendent of Government Schools, Tenasserim Province: AMP Moulmein 1845
SOAS GPC 413 213129
93. Eclectic Arithmetic or Cross' Arithmetic Enlarged - Mason: Rangoon 1870: title only from Catalogue
94. Eclectic Arithmetic - Nicholls
title only from Approved list
95. Elementary Arithmetic - anon: AMP 1873
title from Catalogue; probably that by the Revd. C. Bennett which appears in the Government Book Depot's lists. No copy has been found.
96. Elementary Arithmetic (Ganàn Thin-kya Twet-pon-sa) - W. Shwe Too Sandys. Published for the Education Department by AMP 1873
IOL Bur D1282/2
97. Geography - the Revd. G. Hough: Moulmein ca. 1845. No copy found.
98. Hough's General Outlines of Geography in Burmese (Pakhtawii-wìn-gyok) - Revised by James Haswell: AMP Rangoon 1874,
IOL Bur D1326
99. A Geography of Burma, compiled for the Use of Vernacular Schools (Pin-nya Wukhtana Kyàn) - W. Shwe Too Sandys: AMP Rangoon 1869
IOL Bur D62
SOAS EB 86.6 46
100. An Elementary Geography, compiled for the use of Vernacular Primary Schools in British Burma by W. Shwe Too Sandys: AMP, Rangoon, 1st edition 1000 1872
2nd edition 1873 IOL Bur D457 & D1327

101. Elements of Geography - J. Simeon: Bassein 1878 D1116/1
1881 D803/1
102. Grammatical Primer (She-~~u~~-zwa Thin-yan Myan-ma Thada~~de~~) - anon:
Hanthawadi Press 1885. Later editions of the same book give
the author's name as J. Gray.
103. Notes on Burmese and Pali Grammar - J. Gray.
Title from Catalogue but not traceable.
104. Grammar of the Burmese Language - A. Judson: AMP Rangoon 1866
IOL Bur D1491/4
a copy of the 1842 edition is in the Indian Institute, Oxford.
105. A New and Complete Grammar of the Burmese Language (Thada~~de~~
Kyan) - Ko Shwe Bwin: Ramapura Press, 2nd edition 1882.
IOL Bur V TR117/4
106. That-da Byu-ha (Grammar) -~~T~~ang-dwin Hsaya-daw: Ramanya~~taing~~
Press, 2nd edition 1882 IOL Bur V TR 117/4
107. Hman-pya¹ That-pon¹ hnin¹ Karaka Let-hkana Kyan (Grammar) -
Maung Hpyei, Pali Instructor at the Rangoon High School:
Hanthawadi Press 1885 IOL Bur V TR 113/2
108. General Summary of the History of Burma - anon (? Talboys
Wheeler): J.W. Baynes, Rangoon, 1871. In English
SOAS
109. Outline of the History of Burma - anon (but Catalogue gives
author as J. Simeon): St. Peter's Institute, Bassein, 1876.
English with Burmese notes. SOAS GB930 9384
110. A Brief History of the Indian People - W.W. Hunter CIE, LLD;
adapted and translated for Schools in Burma (by A.B. Savage)
1st edition 1885 IOL V TR 1493/3
111. 'Sketch of Ancient History' - Elements of General History in
two volumes translated by the Revd. E.A. Stevens from Vol. VII
of 'The Instructor': AMP Moulmein
Vol. I Ancient History 1850
Vol. II Modern History 1853: both in Indian Institute,
Oxford.
112. Hitaw-padetha editions
- an unidentifiable copy of the 'Burmese Version' without
title page in Indian Institute, Oxford. 37 pp. along
with Buridat Min Wut-htu ? ca. 1850-60
 - 'Burmese Version' pp.21 to 100 in a 'Chauk-saung-dwe'
of 151 pp with Maha-pyin-nya=kyaw's Decisions, Shin-
Kyaw-thu's Decisions, and three of U Pon-nya's Jataka
stories: BHP, Rangoon, 1870. Editor's name in Catalogue as
H. Ahee. SOAS A345.91 12181
 - Later edition almost identical: AMP, Rangoon, 1881:
147 pp. Editor's name as Maung Bwa IOL Bur D738
 - another almost identical: Hanthawadi Press 1886. 127 pp.
SOAS A345.91 12224
 - Burmese translation of the Sanskrit text Books I to III:
serialised for subsequent binding, in the Educational

123. Easy Vernacular Course in Land-measuring for Use in Burma - anon
(? J. Simeon): St. Peter's Institute, Bassein, 1878
IOL Bur D1823
124. Natural Philosophy - Lucretia Stilson: American Mission Press 1874.
not now traceable-translation of English book by Mary Swift.
125. The House I Live In or The Human Body - Dr. W. Alcott translated
By Mrs. S.K. Bennett: AMP, Rangoon, 1875. 3rd edition
IOL Bur B4
SOAS GPC 611 11097
- 126 Pali Texts
Many editions under many titles: for example
- a. A 'Chauk-saung-dwe' including Mingala-thok, Atwin Aung-gyin, Apyin Aung-gyin, Yadana Shwe-chaling, Namakara and Lawka-niti: Government Press, Rangoon. 1st edition, 10,000 Aug.1879
2nd edition, 10,000 Nov.1879
 - b. Ko-saung-dwe printed at B.H.P. in 1880, 1881, and 1888
 - c. A 'Hse-saung-dwe' comprising the above plus Hse-karanta-naya That-pon, Kabya-saratta-sangaha That-pon, Thada Niti and Pareik-kyi: Burma Herald Press 1887 Indian Institute Oxford
2nd edition 1889 IOL Bur V TR 270/2
SOAS GPC293/12192
 - d Six Pali Texts - edited by J. Gray: Government Press, being printed in 1881). Also separate editions by Gray of Atwin-aung-gyin, Mingala-thok and Yadana Panjaram were on sale at the Government Book Depot in 1882.
- There were many others. Separate editions of the Mingala-thok and the Lawka-niti appeared, and the Mingala-thok and Pareik-kyi particularly but also others were frequently printed in Thin-bon-gyi and That-pon.
127. Pa-ra-yana Wut-htu - Shin Sila-nansa. IOL Bur D 594
128. Buddhaghosa's Parables (the Damapada Wut-htu) - translated into English by Capt. T. Rogers with an introduction by Max Muller: London 1870
- 129 (Thu-dama-sayi Min-thami Hpyat-hton: see Decisions of the Princess Sudhammacari)
- 129 Samuhadda Vicchedani Damma-that Chok - de Courcy Ireland: title page missing. SOAS GPC 290 17148
130. Introduction to Plane Trigonometry (Ta-ri-gan me-ta-ri Pin-nya-sa) - L. Stilson: 1st Burmese edition - 500: AMP, Moulmein, 1845. SOAS EC 84.61 52703
131. Thin-bon-gyi and That-pon
very many versions: for example
- a. Thin-bon-gyi - St. Peter's Institute, Bassein. 5th ed. 1876
 - b. Burmese Spelling Book: AMP, Rangoon. 4th edition 1879
 - c. Thin-bon-gyi Reader - A.W. Lonsdale: AMP Rangoon. 1st edition 1888 - including alphabet and graduated exercises working up from words to phrases, sentences, and finally continuous prose.

- d. Myan-ma Thin-bon-gyi hnin Hpat-sa - anon: Hanthawadi Press 1888
- e. A 'chauk-saung-dwe'z', including Burmese spelling book, Mingala-thok with translation and commentry, arithmetical tables, rules of versifying, etc.: BHP 1886
- f. Mingala-thok Pali-daw: Mingala 38pa akauk: Taya Min-gyi Maha-bi-nan-thu ye-thei ta-hpyan that-pon-sa: BHP 1870
and very many more
132. Vocabulary and Phrase Book - Revd. C. Bennett
not traced
133. Selections from the vernacular Boodhist Literature of Burmah -
edited by Thomas Latter: ABM Moulmein, 1850.
reprint of above less Pok-sa ~~Pok~~kein-naka Kyàn:
Akyab 1866.
134. Wei-than-daya Zat-daw-gyi 'The History of Prince Waythandaya'
Pegu Press 1856 SOAS
- 134a. Wei-than-daya Zat-daw-gyi Wut-htu': Bassein 1875. IOL Bur DL232
Burma Herald 1882
135. Zanet-ka Zat-daw-gyi 'The History of Zaneka.'
Pegu Press 1856. IOL Bur B662
Zanet-ka Zat-daw-gyi Wut-htu': Bengali Job Printing Press 1880
IOL Bur B608
136. Mahaw-thanta Zat-daw-gyi: Burma Herald Press 1882
SOAS GPC 293/12231
IOL Bur D 1686
Hanthawadi IOL Bur D 737/1
137. Nemi Zat-daw-gyi: Bassein 1874
138. Temi Jataka Wutthu: Government Press 1881
Note: According to the title page of this edition, the press had already published editions of the Wei-than-daya, Nemi and Mahaw-thanta jatakas, but no copy has been seen. The others however appear in the Approved list, but this does not. All were on sale at the Government Book Depot in 1882.
139. First Reading Book for Burmese Schools (~~Pakata-ma~~ Hpat-yan-sa), translated from a reading book of the Christian Vernacular Education Society - anon (Mrs. Bennett in Catalogue):
AMP, Rangoon. 1st edition 1881
2nd edition, 5,000, 1884 IOL Bur B277
140. Second Reading Book for Burmese Schools (in continuation of above) - anon (J. Christopher in Catalogue):
AMP Rangoon. 1st edition - 2000 - 1882 IOL Bur B278

GLOSSARY OF BURMESE WORDS IN THE TEXT

- È-gyìn: a particular type of court verse - typically cast as an address to a royal child
- Hpòn-gyì: 'Great Glory', a senior monk, but applied to monks generally
- Hpyat-hton: a book of legal decisions and precedents
- Hsaya: a teacher - used of a particularly respected monk; also Hsaya-daw 'King's teacher'
- Kyaung: a monastery or school
- Myò-thu-gyì: head man of a township; a post normally hereditary in a prominent local family and constituting the point of contact between people and government
- Myò-wun: usually translated 'Viceroy' - the King's officer appointed over an area.
- Nissaya: the traditional form of translation from Pali into Burmese, where the Pali text is taken more or less word by word and translated and expanded.
- Pwè-kyauṅ: a type of monastery which existed at least during the reign of King Bò-daw-hpayà, in which secular knowledge and skills took a prominent place.
- Pyà-zat: ~~is jataka demonstrated~~ - a stage play, ~~often based upon a jataka tale.~~
- Pyò: a form of religious poem in four syllable lines, very often based upon the jataka stories.
- Sangha (Burmese Thih-ga): the Order of Buddhist monks in Burma.
- Sansara (Burmese - Than-thaya): the world of time and change, escape from which to the state of Nibban (Bur. - Neik-ban) is the aim of the Way.
- Sasana (Bur. - ~~The-thawa~~): Religion, pre-eminently of course Buddhism.
- Talapoin: a word used by early European writers for a monk. Origin disputed, possibly Mon.
- Tamein: the skirt worn by Burmese women.
- Tha-tha-na-baing: the leading monk appointed by the King, with the consent of the Sangha, to control and regulate religious matters. Often referred to as 'the Buddhist Archbishop' in contemporary writings.
- That-pon: a book laying down standards of correctness on alternative spellings.
- Thin-bòn-gyì: a book of possible combinations of letters in the Burmese script, for learning to read and write.
- Wut-htu: a story, particularly a story from the Buddhist scripture.

မြို့: က ပင်လျှင် " မ ကောင်း
သေ အာဂုံ ကို မြင် ရ ဘိ
၏ တ ကါ:

အဘယ် သူ တို့ အဘ
ကောက် လေ လတ္တံ့ ဟု
ဆိုလျက် ရေးလင့်၏

ဟု ရှေ့ တော ရှေ့ ငှက်
တို့ တွင် အနိစ္စ ဖြစ် မည်
ထင် သည် ဆို ဖြိုး လျှင်

အဘယ် မျှင် သော သူ
တို့ အား: ဤ သူ ဟုတ် ၏
ဘယ် အာဂုံ ရယ် ဖြစ်
လတ္တံ့ မည် ကို မသိ ရ သေး:

မြို့ သေ သတ် ပင် အပြား:
သို့ တက် ကို ဆို မှတ် ဆို:
၏ အကြောင်း: ကို ကြည့် ရှိ
ရေး သည် "

ဟု အကြံ ပြု ဖြိုး လျှင်
အလွန် ကြောက် လန့် တွန့်
လုပ် သည် ဖြစ် ကျိ ၊ ဝေ:
သေ အာဂုံ သို့ ပျံ ပြေး
လေ ၏ "

မြို့ ဆို: လျှင်: ပိုက်
အို မြို့: ဖြိုး: ရသော် "
စေ: တို့ ကို ချ ကြိ လေ

This is the first tale in all versions. The closeness of the Sandys version to the traditional, and the comparative remoteness of the Gazette version are easily apparent.

APPENDIX B

Aesop's Fables - the Cock and the Jewel
versions

Sandys

ကြက် ဖ တကောင် သည်
နောင် ချေး ပုံ တခုကို
၇က် ဖြစ် နေ့စဉ်တွင်

အဖိုး ထိုက် သောကျောက်
တလုံး ကို

၇က် ဖ ၇က် ဖ ဖြစ် သွား

အဖိုး ကျောက် သည် နှစ်
ဖွဲ့ အလှူ ဖြစ် အဖိုး ထိုက်
သော ဥဒါဖြစ် စု တက်

သို့ ဂွာတွင် ငါ အဖိုး ဖြစ်
အသုံး မရှိ သော ဘရာ
တို့

အစေ သော ဆန် ကို
ချေ နေသ်
အလှူ ဖြစ် သော အကျိုး
ရှိ မည် မှာ ထို နေ့၏

McKertich

တနေ့ သို့ ကြက် ဖ တ
ကောင် သည် နောင် ချေး
ပုံ တခုကို ၇က် ဖ ဖြစ် စေ

ကံ အား လျော့စွာ အလှူ
တကု အဖိုး ထိုက် သော
ပစ္စည်း များ ကျောက် တလုံး

ပုံကို မိ နေ၏

ထို အခါ ချွန် ကျောက်
သည် အဖိုး ထိုက် အကျိုး
အား ကြုံ ပြန် စေ လျှောက်
မည် ဖြစ် သော ကြောင်း
၇ သော သို့ သည် အလှူ
ဖြစ် ဖြစ် ကြ ပေ
သို့ မည်

သို့ ဂွာတွင် ငါ တို့ ကြက်
မျိုး ဖြစ် ကြား
ကမ္ဘာ ပေါ် မှု ဝိ သမျှ
သော ကျောက် အား ပျံ
ထို ကို ၇ သည် စက်

ဆန် တစေ ကို ဂွာ
သို့ အကျိုး ရှိ ပေ
သို့ မည် မှာ ထို နေ့
၏

'Asan'

ကြက် ဖ တကောင် သည်
မိမိ တို့ မိမိ ကြက် ဖ များ
အဖိုး အစာ အိ ယက်

အဖိုး ထိုက် သော ကျောက်
တလုံး ကို

မိမိ နောင်

ငါ မယုတ် ဘဲ သင်
အဖိုး သော ဥဒါ
သည် သင် အ ကောင်
မျှ ဖြစ် ကျား ဖြစ် ဖြစ်
အဖိုး ထိုက် မည်

ငါ မှု ကြား သင် အဖိုး
သော လှူ
အလှူ ဖြစ် မိမိ
ကမ္ဘာ ပေါ် မှု ဝိ သော
ကျောက် မြစ် အလှူ
အဖိုး ထိုက်

ငါ သည် ဆန် တစေ
သို့ အကျိုး ရှိ ကြား
ဟု ထို ကြား