

THE INDIAN GAZETTEERS



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PREFACE

District Gazetteers deserve a much wider publicity than they have received so far. Very few people in the country, even among the intelligentsia, are aware of their utility. To arouse the interest of the people in this project of great national importance, *viz.*, revision of the Gazetteers, I requested the authorities of the All India Radio to arrange a series of talks on their nature, importance and utility. The State Editors were requested to broadcast talks on the District Gazetteers of their respective States, emphasising the local aspects. Some of the suggested topics were:—

- (1) The Gazetteer as an index of economic progress;
- (2) The Gazetteer's contribution to regional history;
- (3) The Gazetteer and the Census; (4) The role of the Gazetteer in national integration; (5) The Gazetteer and the changing pattern of administration; and (6) The Gazetteer as a mirror of society.

This brochure contains the text of 13 talks given by the State Editors and a few articles by those who were not able to broadcast their talks. The inaugural talk is by Prof. Humayun Kabir, former Minister, Petroleum and Chemicals. In his thought-provoking speech, Prof. Kabir traces the development of Gazetteer writing in India from the earliest beginnings to our own era, when the entire series is being revised and brought up-to-date. The talks by the State Editors have been grouped under appropriate headings to facilitate reference.

These talks highlight the importance and utility of District Gazetteers. I would like, however, to discuss a few points which have not been touched upon

in this series. The District Gazetteers contain information of great strategic importance. They give details about the location, boundaries, area, population, rivers, water resources, geology and climate of the regions. In short, they contain valuable data on topography. They also provide an exhaustive historical background for a proper understanding of the problems connected with the borders of the country.

The District Gazetteers are a repository of authentic information. Their great importance is clear from the fact that the Prime Minister in his speech in the Lok Sabha (April 28, 1965) quoted from different Gazetteers to corroborate the fact that the Rann of Kutch formed a part of India. The District Gazetteers are indeed a national asset.

The District Gazetteers offer considerable scope for research. As aptly pointed out by the International Documentation Centre, Sweden, "The Indian Gazetteers are the incomparable collection of research material and a necessary source of information for all studies concerning the History and Culture of India". Recently the Quebec Geographical Commission inquired from the Government of India whether any research was being carried out in India in place names, more especially in toponymy. They were informed that the Central Gazetteers Unit and the State Gazetteers Units are doing useful work in this connection for they collect valuable data about the regions and the historical development of important place names. The Documentation Centres of some foreign countries have spent large sums of money on microfilming the entire series—the Imperial Gazetteer of India, the Provincial Gazetteers and the District Gazetteers. The

Chicago University (U.S.A.) is helping in the preparation of a complete index for this collection with cross references and tables for the various editions of the District Gazetteers. The importance of the Indian Gazetteers is thus recognised even in foreign countries.

There is one more point which I would like to stress. The emerging nations of Asia and Africa may like to compile similar series of Gazetteers of their countries and regions. These Gazetteers will give a complete picture of the country—its physical, social, cultural, political and economic aspects. Perhaps some of the United Nations' agencies, such as the UNESCO, may like to help these countries in compiling their Gazetteers.

Besides the text of the talks and articles, this brochure contains a list of the revised Gazetteers published so far, those in press, and those approved for publication. A list of the State Editors of the New Series has also been given.

In addition to the revision of the District Gazetteers, the Government of India have also undertaken the revision of the first four volumes of the Imperial Gazetteer of India. Volume I entitled 'Country and People' has already been published. The remaining three volumes will deal with 'History and Culture'; 'Economic Structure and Activities'; 'Administration and Public Welfare' respectively.

Lastly, I take this opportunity of thanking the authorities of the All India Radio for their co-operation in arranging these talks.

I am grateful to Prof. Humayun Kabir for his invaluable advice and guidance. I am obliged to Shri M. C. Chagla, Minister of Education and Shri Bhakt Darshan, Deputy Minister, for their keen interest in the work. I am particularly obliged to the Secretary, Shri A. K. Ghosh, I.C.S. (who has been associated with the project since its very inception) for his guidance, help and encouragement. I would also like to express my thanks to Shri M. G. Raja Ram, I.A.S., Shri B. P. Bagchi, I.C.S., and Dr. A. M. D'Rozario (Joint Secretaries of the Ministry of Education) for taking interest in the progress of this work. I am thankful to my colleagues, especially to Dr. Dharm Pal, Dr. L. M. Gujral and Shri L. C. Goswami for their help in the editing and publication of this brochure. Shri M. R. Sen Gupta has helped me in the correction of the proofs. My thanks are also due to Shri H. H. Pawar and to Shri R. N. Dwivedi of the Publications Unit of the Ministry of Education for expediting the publication of the brochure.

March 1, 1966.

P. N. Chopra.

INAUGURAL TALK

Many of you know that the Government of India, as well as the State Governments, are engaged in revising the Indian Gazetteers. You may naturally ask what are these Gazetteers? A Gazetteer literally means a geographical index or a geographical dictionary. Its scope is however much wider. It presents, within a limited range and in a readable manner, a comprehensive view of a country and its people. It describes the physical features of a region, relates its history and discusses the social, political and economic life of the people inhabiting it. It thus serves as a guide to the administrator, a reference book for the general public and a source of information for the specialist.

Gazetteer literature in India, as elsewhere, began with travellers' accounts. Examples of such literature in India are the accounts of Megasthenese, Fa-Hien, Hiuen Tsang, Al-Biruni, Ibn Battuta and others. Kautilya's *Arthashastra* also provides valuable statistical information about India in the Mauryan Age. None of these works can however be strictly regarded as a Gazetteer. The nearest approach to a Gazetteer in the modern sense is Abul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari*. Sir William Hunter, the Editor of the first two editions of the Imperial Gazetteer of India, stated that he had before him two works as model when he planned the Gazetteers, viz., Abul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari* and the *Military Survey of Egypt* conducted by the French Government in the first quarter of the 19th Century.

Talk broadcast on March 3, 1965 from A.I.R., Delhi.

Gazetteer literature gained in volume and variety during the early British period. Exigencies of administration compelled the British to undertake the preparation of surveys—general, military, revenue and statistical—in different parts of the country under official and semi-official auspices. To these were added the accounts of foreign travellers which were soon followed by regular Gazetteers by private authors. Walter Hamilton's *East India Gazetteer* was first published in 1815. Edward Thornton published his Gazetteer in 1844 and both ran into many editions. Till the publication of the first edition of the Imperial Gazetteer of India in 1881, Thornton's was the best known work on India for both the specialist and the general reader.

In addition to these general accounts, the preparation of 'District Statistical Accounts' was taken in hand even before the Great Revolt of 1857. It was however in 1867 that Richard Temple took the lead in the compilation of the District Gazetteers of the Central Provinces. A large number of District Manuals and Gazetteers followed in rapid succession, but the efforts of the Provincial Governments were uncoordinated and therefore not fully satisfactory.

The credit for planning the series entitled 'Imperial Gazetteer of India' must go to Sir William Hunter. In 1869 he submitted to the Government of India a plan for the compilation of the Gazetteers which was approved in 1871. The first edition of the Imperial Gazetteer of India was published in nine volumes in 1881. Fresh material was added and its revised edition was brought out in 1885-87 in 14 volumes. The general article on India received high

praise and was published as a separate volume entitled *The Indian Empire*.

Lord Curzon has been criticised for many of his political acts, but no one can deny his role in encouraging intellectual and cultural activities. It was mainly due to his interest that the Imperial Gazetteer was revised and published in 1907-1909 in 26 volumes. The first four volumes were the revised and enlarged version of 'The Imperial Gazetteer' by William Hunter. The next 20 constituted the Alphabetical Series and the last two the Index and the Atlas. Though produced over 50 years ago, the Gazetteer has continued till today to be the most dependable source of information for administrators, scholars and the public on all matters relating to life in India.

More than half a century has passed since the publication of the revised edition of the Imperial Gazetteer. This period has seen more revolutionary changes than perhaps any comparable period in human history. Old Imperial systems have disappeared. Science and technology have led to economic and social developments that were unimaginable 50 years ago. A new sense of nationalism is sweeping throughout the world. Along with growing nationalism has come growing awareness of international obligations. Against this background of a changing world the whole fabric of Indian life has changed beyond recognition.

India today is free. With political independence has come a new economic and social awakening. Small towns have become thriving cities. New industrial centres have been established in remote regions. Education is spreading throughout the land and

changing traditional beliefs. The national struggle which ultimately led to independence, the industrial developments since the First World War, the enormous expansion of education and the spread of democracy and egalitarian ideals have led to vast changes in the mental and moral attitude of the people.

Our perspective today is much wider than it was half a century ago. We have also much greater information regarding the growth of population and the life and livelihood of the people. This demands radical revisions in our account of the social and political life of the country. Even the chapters on geology written by some of the most competent experts of the time need to be revised and brought up-to-date in the light of the enormous expansion in our knowledge about the physical characteristics of the earth.

The changes mentioned above relate to questions of fact. Perhaps of even greater importance is the question of a new approach. The earlier Indian Gazetteers were written primarily for the use of British administrators. Today, the Gazetteers have to serve an entire people. Under modern Indian conditions, the administrators are not a few hand-picked men of proven ability but millions drawn from every strata of society. In 1869, Hunter had written to the Viceroy of the day, "Nothing, nothing is more costly to a Government than ignorance." This is a truth which applies with even greater force to the civilians of today. Administration 50 years ago was mainly a question of maintaining law and order. Today, it touches every aspect of life and there is a real risk that administrators may lose themselves in the vast expanse of the bureaucratic machinery which has

developed as a result of the ever increasing responsibilities of government.

The need for revising the Gazetteers was widely felt after the achievement of Independence. The credit for taking the first step goes to Bombay which started the work of revision in 1949 and published a volume on Poona in 1954. West Bengal issued District Census Handbooks in 1953 with lengthy introductions furnishing information that is normally included in Gazetteers. Bihar undertook the work in 1952 and published two District Gazetteers on Gaya and Hazaribagh in 1957. Madras began in 1954 and brought out the volume on Tanjore in 1957. Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh entered the field in 1953 and 1957 respectively. Since then, most State Governments have set up Units for the revision of the District Gazetteers.

The lead taken by the State Governments deserved the highest praise but there was a risk that uncoordinated and independent efforts by the different States might lead to results not commensurate with the effort. The Gazetteers are most useful when they follow a uniform pattern so that people from different parts of the country or outside can find out the information they seek without undue waste of time and energy. Accordingly, at a conference of representatives of the State Governments and of the various Ministries of the Government of India held in July, 1955 it was decided that the old 'Indian Empire' volumes were to be revised, rewritten and amplified under the authority of the Central Government, while the State Governments would undertake the revision or new compilation of District Gazetteers according

to necessity. The alphabetical volumes of the series were not to be re-issued, but there would instead be a comprehensive all-India index of the District Gazetteers. The preparation of the State Gazetteers was to be considered after the work on the District Gazetteers was completed. The whole of the Gazetteer work was to be 'planned as a single co-ordinated unit, with a uniformity of form, contents and standard, but providing room for variations and additions to meet local or special needs'.

The revised version of the Imperial Gazetteer of India is entitled "The Gazetteer of India: Indian Union". It will be published in four volumes, *viz.*, Vol. I: "Country and People", Vol. II: "History and Culture", Vol. III: "Economic Structure and Activities", and Vol. IV: "Administration and Public Welfare". Volume I is in the press and will be published shortly*. It had been originally proposed to publish it by the end of 1960, but since the Gazetteers are revised only after long periods, it was decided to defer publication in order to incorporate the results of the 1961 Decennial Census. A major portion of Volume II has also been written. It is my earnest hope that this will become a standard history of India and recognised as such by scholars throughout the world. We propose to issue later an abridged edition of about 300 pages which would be useful for students. The plans of Volumes III and IV have been drawn up and contributors appointed; a few chapters have already been received.

Now I would like to say a few words about the District Gazetteers. The revision of more than 300

*Already published.

Gazetteers is a stupendous task, but without a thorough revision of District Gazetteers, the picture painted by the Indian Gazetteers would necessarily remain sketchy and inadequate. I am glad to note that almost all the State Governments and Union Territories have adopted the scheme and taken up the work in earnest. The results achieved so far have been uneven as different State Governments started work at different times. Seventy-two District Gazetteers have been compiled, of which 36 have already been published and the rest are awaiting publication.

Before I conclude, I would repeat that the new Gazetteers are intended to educate not only the administrators but the people in whose hands power ultimately rests. They must be true to facts but at the same time reflect the thoughts, ideals and aspirations of independent India. In a vast country like India, inhabited by people of different languages, customs and creeds, it is essential that members of each community should learn to know and respect the life and culture of other regions and other communities. The Gazetteers must from their very nature provide all with the knowledge of this rich variety. At the same time, they must bring out the basic similarities underlying outer differences. Social, economic and political inequalities have been the chief causes of India's misfortunes in the past. These can be removed only through national planning guided by the principles of secularism, democracy and socialism. The Gazetteers have an important role in educating public opinion and thus strengthening the foundations of our national life.

Humayun Kabir

GAZETTEER AS A MIRROR OF SOCIETY

A Gazetteer as a mirror of society is a fascinating subject of study. As the limpid waters of a lake reflect the changing moods of the sky so a Gazetteer reflects the changing moods of the society. That is why an historical background is essential in a Gazetteer for a proper understanding of the various facets of the society.

The British Editors of the Old Series of District Gazetteers had one great advantage—they could express their ideas in their own language with ease and grace. They could write in a style at once simple, natural and spontaneous. They could present the facts clearly, logically and forcefully. Their narrative flows smoothly like a river. That is why, even after a considerable lapse of time, the old Gazetteers retain their literary flavour and have the freshness of dawn. The Editors of the New Series of District Gazetteers enjoy an equal advantage but of a different type altogether—the bounds of knowledge have been considerably widened and therefore they have ample material at their disposal to sift and present it in a narrative form.

The original sources for a proper study of the social history of a district are many, and vary in range and variety. Of inestimable value are the Census 1961 monographs, which discuss different aspects of society. What a wealth of information do these monographs contain! These are fine vignettes of society. They open up vast vistas of knowledge about the rural and urban society, pulsating with a new life. These pen-portraits of our people, drawn with imaginative insight, are invaluable for a proper study of the social history of a district.

Of these monographs particular mention may be made of the surveys of fairs and festivals. Thus the monograph describing the fairs and festivals of Gujarat is informative and well-written. When this series is completed a very valuable contribution will have been made to the study of the social history of districts and States. This additional information incorporated in the District Gazetteers will make them more informative, lively and readable.

Of equal importance is the series entitled 'Village Surveys'. The village survey monographs—Mahsa Tibba, Tandi, Kunran (Punjab), Brahmaur, Devi Kothi (Himachal Pradesh), Rajderwa Tharu (Uttar Pradesh), Iggalur (Mysore), etc., are a storehouse of information on the rural society of the various districts. They throw a flood of light on the different aspects of this society. What delightful pictures of rural society do we get—the daily life of the humble village folk, their dwellings, utensils, household goods, food and drink, marriages, ceremonies, fairs, castes, dialects, etc.! When this series is completed it will be a unique contribution to the subject. The handicrafts survey monographs are detailed studies of handicrafts—Potted Industry, Woollen Carpet and Blanket Industry, Leather Footwear Industry (Uttar Pradesh), Agate Industry of Cambay (Gujarat), etc. When this series is completed it will be a great contribution to the study and appreciation of the handicrafts of different States and districts. The District Gazetteers will gain in importance and utility when this information, garnered with so much skill and care, is incorporated in them. There will be other detailed studies, which will be useful for District Gazetteers—Studies of Indian Cities and Ethnographic Notes on Scheduled Tribes and Castes. There will also be detailed studies of subjects which are of vital importance to a District Gazetteer—Growth of Population in Kerala 1901—1961, Growth of Population in Mysore State 1901—1961, Towns of the Peninsula, etc. Apart from these Census monographs useful information is also available in various research publications, such as socio-economic surveys of cities like Delhi, Gorakhpur, Lucknow, Bhopal, and of villages like Sagoni Umaria (Madhya Pradesh), etc.

The Anthropological Survey of India has published monographs on Indian tribes and other sociological subjects of importance. These are scientific studies of great value. Particular mention may be made of Memoir No. 8: *Peasant Life in India*. Such monographs are very useful for the writing of District Gazetteers. A large number of scholars have published sociological studies of various Indian tribes—the Santhals, the Grasias, the Nagas, the Bhils, the Dublas, etc. These books are well-written and throw much light on the social aspects of the districts. The Research Department of the North East Frontier Agency is

doing useful work by publishing interesting books on the people of N.E.F.A.—the Akas, the Sherdukpens, etc.

A mass of material lies buried in old journals. Thus the old issues of the *Journal of Arts and Industry* contain many interesting articles, such as enamel-minakari, stone-carving, industrial art in Bikaner, etc. The correspondents of daily newspapers are playing an increasingly important role in publicizing the various aspects of society. In 1954 *The Times of India* published a series of interesting articles entitled 'Among the Bhils of South Rajasthan'. In 1957 it published another series of articles on Rajasthan's border landscape. In 1956 *The Hindustan Times* published an interesting article on the Raikas of Marwar. Later it published an article 'The Turban in Rajasthan'. Hundreds of interesting articles on different aspects of society have been published in daily newspapers. Painsstaking research would reveal many a hidden treasure. Dr. Mulk Raj Anand, the Editor of 'Marg' published a special number on 'Folk Dances of India'. It is of absorbing interest. The journals and the pamphlets brought out by the Public Relations Departments of the States are adding to our knowledge of Indian society. An Editor of District Gazetteers would be failing in his duty if he does not make full use of this material.

There are some books—though their number is meagre—which portray the regional society. One such book is written by Prakash Tandon and is entitled *Punjabi Century, 1857—1947*. Shri Tandon presents to us different aspects of the society in the Punjab. Here is a fine description of the women winnowing and harvesting the corn:—

"Women, tall and slim, would stand on low wooden stools, erect like taut bows with their breasts pointing upward, their arms stretched high above their heads holding flat reed trays. Like the opening movement of a dance, when from stationary feet a movement would shiver upward, and end in the finger-tips, these women would gently tilt the trays with a quivering movement into the wind, and shake them like bells. The wind would sweep the chaff while the grain fell into a heap below. The wind outlined their supple bodies as it swept their clothes back.

Few sights are more graceful than women winnowing, except perhaps women walking from the wells with pitchers of water on their head."

It would be wishful thinking to expect that the narrative of the District Gazetteers would have the rich glow of colour but is it too much to hope that these Gazetteers will contain enough material to provide inspiration to an Indian Gibbon, a Macaulay or a Trevelyan to write the social history of the country in imperishable prose.

Dharm Pal

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In the first talk on "What is a Gazetteer?" broadcast on March 5, 1965 it was indicated that the District Gazetteer should describe all that is worth knowing about the district. It should be an authoritative reference book for the administrator, the traveller who has more than a fleeting interest in the country, the social worker, the public man, the student, and anyone else who wants to have some information about the district. The Gazetteer is a story of the district and its people. It should be a record of the past and the present and should also give an outline of the future developments.

The headings and contents of the District Gazetteers, that are normally followed, cover the physiography including geology, flora, fauna, climate, and also the changes in the component parts of the district as an administrative unit. The Chapter on History should be based on standard works, with due attention to recent historical researches. An objective presentation is required for matters relating to economic, social, political and cultural life. The text on people should not only trace the trends of population through the different decades, their impact and manifestations but should also cover the languages and dialects, principal communities, castes, classes and tribes. The social structure should be interpreted through an account of the religious and social customs and

Talk broadcast on April 5, 1965 from A.I.R., Patna.

manners, castes and tribes, which are culturally distinct and unique, should be given a fuller treatment. The new religious and social reform movements, the changes in social life, the economic and professional groups and classes should be treated with reference to the changes that can be described as landmarks. Some of the other important chapters are Agriculture and Irrigation (with a coverage on Animal Husbandry, Fisheries and Forestry), Industries (including industrial potential and plans for future development), Banking, Trade and Commerce, and Communications. In the text on Communications the ancient trade routes, highways and modes of conveyance should be covered and the development of the communication system including rails, roads, waterways, airways, telegraphs and telephones, radio and wireless stations should be traced. In the Chapter on economic trends the livelihood pattern, miscellaneous occupations, general level of prices and wages, standard of living, incidence of unemployment, national planning and community development are important sub-sections. The Gazetteer has also chapters on General Administration and Law, Order and Justice, which trace the administrative history of the district and describe the functioning of important Government offices. The importance of the text on Local Self-Government is heightened by the extension of the Panchayats and the decentralisation of Local Self-Government to the village units.

The Gazetteer also describes in detail Education and Culture, Medical and Public Health Services. Labour welfare, advancement of backward classes and tribals, voluntary social service organisations, and the representation of the district in the State and the Union Legislatures form the components for the text on Public Life and Voluntary Social Service Organisations. The political parties and organisations, whether local or on all-India basis, their hold in the district at different times and as reflected in the last elections, and an account of the press, libraries, cultural institutions within the district, and the newspapers in circulation, give the Editor of the Gazetteers important data for arriving at conclusions. Lastly, there is a separate Chapter on Places of Interest, where all places of historical and tourist interest, pilgrim, commercial and trading centres, and other important places are covered.

A District Gazetteer should have some special chapters if they are considered important for the district. For example, the Singhbhum District Gazetteer has Chapters on the Forests, and Jamshedpur, the great steel city. Kosi has been dealt with in a separate Chapter in the District Gazetteer of Saharsa. In Ranchi District Gazetteer there will be a fuller treatment of the lesser known tribals, for which field enquiries are being made in many inaccessible villages right in the midst of jungles and hills. Some of these tribals are the Korwas, Lohras, Binjhias, Birjias, Asurs, Chik-Baraiks, Turis, Mahlis, etc. Our conclusions based on painstaking field work are expected to give many facts, which will differ from some published literature and will indicate the changes that have been brought about since the days of Dalton, Risley, O'Malley, and lastly Sarat Chandra Roy.

The re-written District Gazetteers will be a sort of a mirror of the society. The District Gazetteer of Singhbhum was re-written after 55 years. It reflects the phenomenal changes that have occurred since the last Gazetteer was published. The last District Gazetteer had stated that the Tatas were going to set up a factory at Kalimati, which would provide employment to about three thousand persons. Today we have in place of Kalimati the giant steel city of Jamshedpur in the midst of an industrial complex sponsored indirectly by the steel project, giving employment to lakhs of people. The very face of the district has been changed, including the physical features. When the District Gazetteer of Ranchi was written by Sir Maurice Hallet, who was the Deputy Commissioner in 1917, no one could dream that the district would undergo so many basic changes in the course of three or four decades. Very few districts in India have undergone such phenomenal changes in the course of four decades as Ranchi. Ranchi is a miniature India today and within the next two decades it will be at the centre of the most important industrial zone of India from Damodar to Bhilai. The new District Gazetteer of Ranchi will reflect the changes in the different aspects of life in the district, including those in the physical, biotic and cultural environments. It will particularly give the story of the original inhabitants—the *Adibasis*—who had literally to move from the hunting to the other stages. The district of Saharsa, carved out of the old Bhagalpur district, has the great Kosi Project. The

economy of the district was once ruled by the unpredictable Kosi river, currents of which have been known to shift over-night. The lullaby songs of the district threatened the child to sleep quickly or Kosi mother would burst out in a sudden flood. The harnessing of Kosi will change the sandy tracts covered with *Kas* and *Pater* jungles into smiling cultivation patches and the Gazetteer of Saharsa should describe the story in an objective manner.

In this task of making the Gazetteer a true mirror of society, even such details as changes in the food, dress and drinking habits, household and housing pattern, family life, vertical and horizontal movements among the communities, and particularly among the tribals, the economic trends set in by the incidence of urbanisation and particularly their effect on the rural areas etc., should be covered. The changes in the physiographic personality of the district should be featured for appreciating the story of man from the economic and social point of view. The fact that no district is now an exclusive unit and forms an essential link in the State and the country should be borne in mind. An objective presentation of the subject matter will give a correct picture of the society with reference to the past and an intelligent blue-print for the future.

In conclusion, it may be mentioned that this is, indeed, a monumental task of national importance. The need of the books will be appreciated more with the passage of time. The work can only be accomplished by a certain pooling of resources, study field investigations and tours, and valued collaboration from many sources.

P. C. Roy Chaudhury

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There is perhaps no Assamese or Hindi equivalent for the English word 'Gazetteer'. According to the dictionary a Gazetteer means a geographical dictionary or a work giving geographical information. In due course 'Gazetteer' came to signify a class of work where not only geographical information but various other

English translation of the talk in Assamese broadcast on April 11, 1965 from A.I.R., Gauhati.

descriptive accounts, ranging from physical features and history to developmental and other activities, are also given pertaining to the district or the territory that is dealt with in the Gazetteer.

We may note the following historical facts prior to the compilation of the class of work known as the Gazetteers. The British administrators of India took particular care to preserve the records of their administration of the country in a proper manner. Many British officers devoted their attention to the study of India's ancient history and culture and wrote many thoughtful historical and other works to enlarge the bounds of their knowledge about India. As new and hitherto unknown areas came under their possession during the course of the expansion of their empire in India, officers were put in charge of these areas. They undertook topographical and other exploratory surveys, investigations to ascertain the economic resources and future possibilities of these areas, and compiled various reports on different subjects for the benefit of the administration. Later, for the convenience of all, and especially of the English civilians and other Government officers, the British Administration in India officially undertook the compilation of this class of informative literature, known as the Gazetteers.

Thus the series, known as the Imperial Gazetteer of India, which is replete with highly valuable data and information on various subjects relating to the country, was compiled and published. Some of these dealt with India as a whole and in others the then provinces of the British Empire in India were dealt with on a well thoughtout plan. Similarly in the Provinces also (now States) a series known as the District Gazetteers was brought out. In the District Gazetteers everything that ought to be known about a district was put in a factual and authentic manner. The physical features of the district, its history, the people and their culture, and other important subjects, such as agriculture and forests, industry, economic condition, and general administration were described in a few well-written chapters. Tables were appended, giving figures on matters of statistical interest. No officer occupying a responsible position in the administration of the district could do without a careful study of the Gazetteer of his district. Government officers, scholars and

other investigators who wanted to know something about the district consulted the District Gazetteer.

In compiling these Gazetteers the historical method was followed and necessary data and materials were collected from various official and non-official records, Census Reports, and standard works on different subjects. Hunter's *Statistical Account of Assam* published in the last quarter of the 19th Century served as a Gazetteer for Assam at that time. The Gazetteers of the Assam districts were for the first time prepared after the 1901 Census and were published during 1905 and 1906. Mr. B. C. Allen, I.C.S., was the Editor of these Gazetteers. A few supplementary books were brought out in 1915, where only the statistical portion of the District Gazetteers was brought up-to-date. No further revision was undertaken thereafter.

The District Gazetteers of Assam having long gone out of print since their first publication in 1905, it was extremely difficult to get their copies and even educated people had little knowledge of what a District Gazetteer was like. But the intrinsic value of the District Gazetteers, as also of the Imperial Gazetteer of India was great. The books were immensely rich, both from the point of view of the subject-matter dealt with and the style of their presentation, although after the lapse of more than 50 years since their first publication many things had become antiquated and out-of-date. Having regard to the permanent value and importance of these publications the Government of India, after Independence, decided to bring out these Gazetteers in a revised and enlarged form, according to a carefully laid-out plan. Accordingly, four volumes of the Gazetteer of India (newly named as such) at the Centre, and the District Gazetteers in the States of the Indian Union have been under preparation since 1958. In a few States, like old Bombay and Bihar, the work had already been commenced a few years before the Central plan was evolved. Several District Gazetteers have already been published in these two States as also in other States.

Although the new District Gazetteers are being compiled on the basis of revising the old District Gazetteers, they are in most cases completely re-written. In the old Assam District Gazetteers

there were only six or seven Chapters, such as physical features, history, population, agriculture and forest, industry, economic condition and general administration. In the new District Gazetteers there are altogether 19 Chapters, including all these and many more. New Chapters, on education and culture, medical and public health, local self-government, public life and social service organisations, places of interest, etc., have been incorporated in the new District Gazetteers. The work of collecting necessary materials and data for the Gazetteers needs both time and labour. The narrative has to be factual, impartial and authoritative. It is, therefore, a work of close investigation and thoughtful research.

A District Gazetteer, being a repository of facts and information collected from various reliable sources relating to the district, reflects a picture of life in the district, as it is lived by the people with their natural and other resources. It may, therefore, be viewed as a mirror of society. The district, its inhabitants, its place in the larger entity of which it is a part—these are the angles from which the district is viewed in compiling the District Gazetteer. There is no doubt that the District Gazetteers can be works of lasting value if prepared according to plan. The Chapters have been so devised as to make the Gazetteer a work of great value and interest. The aim of physical description of a district is to bring into view the natural wealth of the district by giving an account of its geographical situation and topographical features, its rivers and mountains, hills and forests, lakes and tanks, trees and plants, birds and animals, minerals, and such other things. In the Chapter on 'History' local history is brought into greater relief and an attempt is made to determine the role of the district in the history of the larger whole, Division or State, of which it is a part. It is natural for the residents of the district to have a desire to know the details of their own history and feel proud of their achievements in the past. For others also it becomes easier to understand the district. In narrating the historical events there need not be much difference between the old Gazetteers and the new. But the angles of vision are bound to be different. The English writers narrated the history of India generally from an imperialistic stand-point. In its place there will now be a nationalistic approach. The object of the nationalistic view-point is to see the events of history in

their true colour. In the Chapter on the People, the racial divisions, religion, creed and community, manners and customs, and social usages of the people, including their food and dwelling houses, are studied in some detail. In other Chapters are described how with the people in the background, the administrative structure, agriculture, industry, trade and commerce, means of transport and communication, education and culture, public life and various welfare institutions have taken shape in the district. In other words, nothing of interest in the district is left out of account in the District Gazetteers.

As the new District Gazetteers will bring the accounts of the old Gazetteers up-to-date, taking into account the progress and changes which have taken place during the last 50 years or more, there is hardly any doubt that these volumes would be of immense value to the administrators, journalists, writers, research workers, politicians, teachers and students, and even the common man will find matters of interest in these Gazetteers. The subject-matter of the Gazetteer is of a complex and varied nature but it has to be dealt with in a simple manner. It needs wide study and research and perseverance to accomplish the task of writing the Gazetteers in a satisfactory manner.

K. N. Dutt

ROLE OF GAZETTEER IN NATIONAL INTEGRATION

No compiler of the District Gazetteers can do justice to the objectives set before him if he is not always conscious of the fact that the cultural and economic development of his district or State reflects basically the corresponding development in the country as a whole, howsoever fine the local achievements may have been in any particular direction. I may be pardoned for saying that this is particularly true of the compilers of the Gazetteers in Andhra Pradesh, which has since the dawn of history been the meeting ground of the north and the south and the west and the east.

Dealing with the people of each district, the Gazetteers have to devote some attention to the local castes, languages and religions. The caste system, it is sometimes said, is based on ethnic differences or the professions followed by distinct groups from time immemorial. Some go to the extent of giving the measurements of head and nose and varying shades of colour of different castes as indicative of their ethnic composition. But how meaningless all this is will be evident from examining the prevalent position among the Chenchus, who are perhaps the most primitive and exclusive of the social groups indigenous to this State. Some publications state that they are Malids or Australoids, characterised by their small stature, flat and broad noses, and so on. But even in this extremely exclusive group, individuals of tall or medium stature with narrow noses are by no means uncommon. The degree of ethnical mixture among the more socially developed groups can easily be imagined, even if it is admitted that they started initially with some basic differences in this regard. Speaking of Andhra Pradesh, small or large bands of people have migrated and settled down in this region from different parts of the country since time immemorial. Such movements were generally the result of famines or epidemics, or oppression or persecution of the migrants in their home areas, or merely of their anxiety to improve their economic conditions. And, even in cases where such movements were due to an armed invasion, the invading groups

Talk broadcast on March 6, 1965 from A.I.R., Hyderabad.

were not restricted to just their chiefs and soldiers. They often represented the migration of an entire cross section of the population, from princes and priests to carpenters and cobblers. And such migrant groups were sooner or later absorbed among the indigenous groups on the basis of the status they then enjoyed. Some migrant groups in more recent times, however, tended to maintain themselves as distinct units. The Lambadis or Sugalis, who constituted the transport corps of the Mughal and Rajput armies marching into the Deccan, were one of these groups. But such recent migrants had already undergone a similar metamorphosis in their own home areas. In brief, every caste in this State has absorbed diverse ethnic groups, Aryan, Dravidian and others, from various parts of the country. And there is no caste which is an exception to this rule.

Again, the caste system has never been a rigid frame. New castes or sub-castes have been formed and old ones have disappeared all through the ages. And such groups have moved up and down the social order according to the changes in their fortunes. I can quote cases of groups which have been admitted as a sub-caste of the Brahmins only in recent decades. And to take an opposite example, the Mutrachas, Bedars and Bantolus and some other groups held a fairly high place in society during the days of the Rayas of Vijayanagar. They constituted the backbone of the Vijayanagar armies. But with the loss of this employment they came down steeply in the social ladder. There was also nothing very rigid about the professions followed by the different castes. To quote one example, in Cuddapah district, one of the most ancient and sacred of its shrines is the Pushpagiri temple. In this shrine, the priests were not Brahmins when Krishnadevaraya visited it in the first quarter of the 16th Century. It was this great monarch who arranged for Brahmins to officiate as priests at this shrine. Numerous instances can be given as to how mixed up the professions were in terms of caste and how erroneous it is to refer to castes in terms of a specific profession.

Coming to languages, it is not generally realised that quite a few of the languages spoken and written today are relatively of recent origin. This, together with the background of the movement of population, hardly permits any one to claim with

any degree of certainty as to what the mother tongue of his ancestors was some centuries earlier. Apart from this, from the point of view of literature, the languages of this country have developed on amazingly similar lines. While collecting details about the ancient literary figures of a particular district of Andhra Pradesh, I was struck not only by the large number of great literary figures associated with it in the past but also by the fact that most of them drew their inspiration from contemporary or earlier compositions of authors belonging to different linguistic regions of the country. Men of letters were honoured in the past irrespective of the place to which they belonged. And surprisingly, many of these personalities soon became famous for their compositions in the local languages as well. Incidentally, in the district referred to by me, though Telugu now claims the overwhelming majority of its inhabitants, a large number of its early inscriptions were in old Kannada, Tamil or Sanskrit. And reading the accounts of its villages written in Telugu about the turn of the 19th Century or a little earlier, I was struck by the unusually large number of Urdu or Hindi words used in them.

Religion has also been a great cementing factor in the country. In the district referred to, its most important route in ancient times was not known by the chief towns it connected in the vicinity. It was called the Kasi-Rameswaram highway. Places like Kasi, Ayodhya and Srirangam were as dear and near to their hearts as Tirupati or Srisailem. No doubt, some of our history books highlight dynastic wars as communal wars. I do not think there has been even a single war fought in this region for the cause of any particular faith. To take one instance, in the dynastic struggles of the Vijayanagar-Bahmani period, the Hindu rajas were not all arrayed against the Muslims and *vice versa*. And these rulers, Hindu or Muslim, were constantly changing sides. The most inveterate of the enemies of the Vijayanagar rayas included the Gajapatis of Kalinga. Even the main Vijayanagar army at the battle of Talikota or Rakshasi Tangadi had a large proportion of Muslim soldiers, and the forces of the Deccani Sultans, especially of Bijapur, a large proportion of Hindus.

Again nothing brings out the unity of the country and the inter-dependence of different regions more exquisitely than the

architecture its ancient monuments display. To quote again the example of Cuddapah district, its ancient monuments have drawn freely from Chalukyan, Rashtrakuta and Bahmani styles from the north and the Pallava, Chola and Pandyan styles from the south. And this list is by no means exhaustive. Music and other realms of fine arts indicate how each region is heavily indebted to others and how the myriad local variations cannot hide the essential unity of the main treatment.

The Gazetteers deal with diverse other subjects, too numerous to be detailed here. Talking about the livestock of a district we have to refer to breeds imported from distant areas of the country to improve the local stock or of indigenous breeds exported elsewhere for similar purposes. Examining all crops or the changes in crop pattern over the decades, we find how events and measures adopted in distant tracts in the country influence the local pattern. Talking of industries, the development of textile industry in Bombay, Ahmedabad and Sholapur has had a tremendous impact on the great handloom industry of this region. But it also provided to the local weavers and other artisans with the avenues of employment at these centres, which this region by itself was then hardly in a position to extend. The basic unity and inter-dependence of the country comes out I think in its purest form, when any part of it is faced with any great disaster. While collecting material about famines in Rayalaseema district, I came across the case of a munificent donation from a citizen of Indore to relieve the distress among such sections of the affected population, who needed relief but were reluctant, for some reason or other, to approach the free kitchens of relief centres. Perhaps my colleagues collecting material in other areas may have come across instances of similar kinship exhibited by the citizens from this region, also under corresponding circumstances.

So intensively connected and inter-dependent is the development of all subjects in this great country of ours that one cannot deal with any subject in a district without keeping in view the all-India background. None can appreciate fully what was done at Nagarjunakonda centuries back and what is now being achieved there, ignoring the great forces that were generated and set in motion by movements, which are the common heritage of

our country. To love well any district in India, one has got to be enamoured of the country as a whole. The District Gazetteers will make this fairly clear.

C. K. Murthy

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National integration is the *sine quo non* for the progress and prosperity of a nation. It is the very life-breath of a nation. 'United we stand; divided we fall' is an old adage. To our country, at this juncture of our national life, this maxim is pregnant with meaning. This vast sub-continent of ours has many regions, with varied physical features and climatic conditions. These differences, to a considerable extent, influence the day-to-day life of the people and their occupations. Recent changes in the social, political, economic, scientific and industrial fields have magnified the already existing deep-rooted divergences among the people.

In order to take its rightful place of honour and strength among other nations of the world, a nation should have cultural homogeneity and unanimity of opinion on the basic ideals that guide its economic, social and spiritual problems. If the people living in different parts of the country have varied views on the many problems faced by the nation and try to enforce them by working at cross purposes, their unity will be shattered and their power weakened.

The main reasons for the growth of the differences of opinion among sections of the people are their narrow outlook and their environmental conditions. If the ideal of one community and one nation is to be achieved, we must root out those defects, which make the people magnify small differences. We must also try to avoid the growth of feuds due to baseless and mistaken notions.

Let us now see how national integration may be promoted. The best means of achieving this objective is to spread the culture of the country among the people by publishing books containing true facts about the culture, art, history and economic conditions

Talk broadcast on April 28, 1965 from A.I.R., Madras.

of the people living in different regions. It is also necessary to have correct information about the various social organisations and beliefs of the people living in different parts of the country. Persons, who have travelled in different parts of the world and lived with different kinds of people, acquire an innate ability to adjust themselves to the conflicting views. They understand the real significance of different cultures. Similarly, if more opportunities are made available to individuals or a group to understand the habits, customs and ideals of life of the people living in different parts of the country, petty differences will disappear and national unity will grow. Though there may be some differences in the Indian society due to differences in language, religion and topography, there is one unifying strain of cultural homogeneity which permeates it. If the ideal of national integration is to grow, the opportunities to know the facts about the people living in different parts of the country must be increased. All-India exhibitions and film shows will greatly help in realising this objective. The various small pamphlets and brochures issued by the Information Department of the Government are also of great help. Apart from this, compendious books containing detailed information about the country and the regions are also invaluable instruments for promoting national integration. These books help us to assess the differences among the many regions of the country and to enlarge the scope of contacts among the people of the different regions. This is the real foundation for the growth of national integration. To this category of books belong the District Gazetteers.

To begin with, the District Gazetteers were published by the British Government in the 19th Century. They contained an account of history, social conditions, industries, agriculture, taxation and places of interest of the concerned regions. These books helped to a large extent the Government officials and others to get a true picture of the district they had to administer.

The descriptive account and the statistics found in those District Gazetteers published many years ago are not quite adequate for the present day requirements. They contained mere details required for administrative purposes. They did not attempt to describe the cultural and social unity of the country. In order

to remedy these defects, the Government of India, in 1958, drew up a scheme to rewrite the Gazetteers. The Scheme has been included as a part of the section on 'Cultural Activities' in the Third Five Year Plan. According to the Scheme, every State Government is encouraged to rewrite their District Gazetteers in accordance with a new pattern drawn up by the Government of India. Each State Government has appointed a State Editor for revising and rewriting the District Gazetteers. The State Gazetteer Unit has been constituted to function under the State Editor.

The District Gazetteer compiled on the new pattern contains nineteen chapters. From these chapters we can learn about the physical features, climatic conditions, mineral resources, history, sociology, religion, art, agriculture, large-scale industries, small-scale industries, irrigation, educational system, growth of medical facilities, courts, police, communications, posts and telegraphs, general administration, elections, community development programme, economic development, advancement of backward classes, voluntary associations, places of interest, etc., of the concerned district. Thus every type of information about the district, which a person may like to have, is given in this book under different heads. A subject index is also appended at the end of the book. At the end of every section, useful statistical information is also given.

Thus, all the nineteen chapters in the District Gazetteers are prepared, giving the foremost importance to the details about the district. The chapters are written with an aim to promote national unity and no chance is given for the growth of any idea that the district is the beginning and the end in itself. These chapters specifically indicate that this country spreading from the Himalayas to the Cape Comorin is economically and culturally unified, though there may be many sociological differences. These District Gazetteers are compiled with the sole object of presenting the true facts to the people, so that national awareness may grow, and all doubts and misgivings be removed.

By reading the District Gazetteers of one's own State along with those of other States, a person will be imbued with feelings of patriotism and national oneness. These District Gazetteers

promote 'unity in diversity'. If all the States bring out at an early date their revised District Gazetteers, the people will have greater opportunities to develop social and political unity by a study of these books, a study which will ultimately enrich and ennoble their life.

A. Ramaswami

GAZETTEER'S CONTRIBUTION TO REGIONAL HISTORY

In the 17th and early 18th Centuries the word 'Gazetteer' conveyed the meaning of a geographical guide-book of important places and people. The scope of the Gazetteer, however, widened in the later part of the 18th and the 19th Centuries, when various types of such literature giving elaborate accounts of social, economic, historical and cultural activities of the people, as well as the physical and natural features of the territory they inhabited, were written in different countries of Europe. It was also during the 19th Century that several Gazetteers were published in India. Not only Gazetteers for the entire country, including British territories and the Native States, were compiled but also regional works such as *A Gazetteer of Southern India*, *The Bengal and Agra Annual Guide and Gazetteer*, as well as District Manuals and District Gazetteers were published. The most important publication was the Imperial Gazetteer in 14 volumes, edited by W. W. Hunter. Early in the 20th Century that work was revised and published in 26 volumes. The British civilians such as Nelson Nicholson, Francis, Richards, O'Malley and others produced very admirable works—the District Manuals and District Gazetteers. Formerly, the compilation of Gazetteers was considered to be an individual venture either by governmental or private agency, but after Independence this work has been taken up as a national project by the Government of India. The revision of District Gazetteers on a uniform pattern, as well as compilation of the Gazetteers of India are at present in progress.

The District Gazetteer is generally considered to be a hand-book of ready reference for the district officers, but in fact, it is neither a handbook nor a guide-book. It deals with all aspects of the district and its people, in as comprehensive a manner as possible and in a lucid narrative form in order to serve the interest not only of the administrators but also of the legislators, teachers, research scholars, social workers and even businessmen. The importance of the District Gazetteer lies in its presentation of authentic accounts of the district, with proper emphasis on their

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historical perspective. One of the most important Chapters of a District Gazetteer is Chapter II on 'History', which presents the detailed history of the district right from the Pre-historic period up to the present time. It is generally divided into three parts—(a) Pre-history and Proto-history, (b) Archaeology, and (c) General History dealing with ancient, medieval and modern times. Pre-history is a subject of international importance as the activities of the early man transcend the present political or national boundaries. But while the Pre-historic relics in the forms of stone implements, menhirs, megaliths, terracotta-sherds or rock paintings are studied with reference to a particular district it becomes a subject of greater human appeal, so far as the culture of the locality is concerned.

Such a study not only throws light on the activities of the early man in the district millions of years ago, but it also gives a place of honour to the locality in the international map of Pre-historic study. The writings of Pre-historians fail to come down to the level of the common man, but it is the District Gazetteer which can bring home to the people the megaliths of the Gadabas in Koraput district, the rock paintings at Gudahandi in Kalahandi district and at Vikramkhola in Sambalpur district, the neolithic tools and pottery at Baidipur and Kuliana in Mayurbhanj district, the copper axe of Bamanghati in the same district as well as that of Dunria in Puri district, and above all the interrelation of Pre-historic men of the Brahmani and Baitarni valleys in Dhenkanal, Sundargarh and Keonjhar districts of Orissa. The information about the wealth of Pre-historic relics must broaden the horizon of knowledge of the reader in respect of the cultural heritage of the district. The same also can more or less be said about our study of archaeology, which deals with relics of the historical period in the form of caves, temples, forts, sculptures, inscriptions and coins. Important archaeological relics, like the caves of Khandagiri and Udayagiri in Puri district, the temples of Konarak and Bhuvaneswar in the same district, the Asokan edicts at Dhauhi in Puri district and at Jaugada in Ganjam district are well known to scholars and laymen alike. But there are many important monuments and other relics lying obscure and uncared for in different districts, which probably the District Gazetteer can bring to light in the interest

of all. In Orissa we find monuments of great national importance in almost all the districts, altogether unnoticed by the people. To give only a few examples here—two colossal Vishnu images at Bhimakanda and Saranga in Dhenkanal district, which are the largest and the most beautiful of their kind in India, the Saranga image being 32 feet from head to foot and the Bhimakanda 42 feet, both belonging to 9th Century A.D.; the twin temples of Gandharadi in Baudh-Khondmals district is unique in conception with two pyramidal Sikharas having a device for allowing the rays of the rising sun to enter into the sanctum and touch the feet of the deities; the punch-marked silver coins containing four symbols of Pre-Asokan type in Bolangir district; the Proto-Oriya and Oriya inscriptions in Sambalpur and Balasore districts respectively, which throw light on the development of Oriya language and literature. It is needless to multiply such a list of relics of national importance found in different districts, which the District Gazetteer can well bring home to the general reader.

The history of the district, if properly presented, brings to light many interesting and obscure aspects of the past, which no text book on history can do. India being a vast country, her history aims at marking the vital stages of political and cultural events in a broad framework, which submerges regional or local achievements of the people. Common social ordering of human history in a land of diverse cultures like India, is bound to supersede regional values although these are of great significance so far as the history and culture of the people are concerned. The modern trend, therefore, is to bridge the gulf between the common social order and individual growth of the regional social group. It is the District Gazetteer which emphasises the interconnection between regional and national culture, depicting local history in the background of the history of the nation as a whole. Take for instance the history of the district of Ganjam in Orissa. This district prominently featured as a part of the Mauryan empire in the 3rd Century B.C., when a senior Executive Officer, called Rajavachanika, was stationed there at the township of Samapa. It also formed part of Kharavela's kingdom of Kalinga in the 1st Century B.C., and also of the empire of Gautamiputra Satakarni in the 1st Century A.D., when that empire extended up to the Mount Mahendra. About the middle of the 4th Century A.D.,

King Samudragupta of Magadha led his campaigns through this district and following his retreat the Matharas—a local dynasty—rose to prominence, extending their political influence from the Mahanadi in the north to the Krishna in the south. In the 7th Century the Sailodbhavas became powerful in this district, but after their decline towards the end of that century one of their branches founded a kingdom in Java, which eventually became a powerful empire—the Sri-Vijaya empire of the Sailendras. The Eastern Gangas, who hailed from Mysore, established themselves round about modern Mukhalingam in Srikakulam district about 500 A.D., and becoming masters of Ganjam region eventually occupied the whole of Orissa about 1100 A.D. Thus we find that the history of one single district merges with that of the history of the State of Orissa, as well as of India, even commanding at times an extra national importance. These significant features of the history of Ganjam cannot properly be shown in the history of Orissa or the history of India in general. During the medieval period this district was dotted with a large number of feudal states enjoying quasi-political independence and a short historical description of each of these states is of great local interest. In this respect the service rendered by the District Gazetteer is invaluable. What is said about the district of Ganjam is more or less applicable to other districts of Orissa, as well as of India. Each region has its specific contribution to make to the growth of Indian culture and Indian political organisation, and the importance of the regional values cannot properly be assessed by the general survey of the history of the entire country. Thus, where the text books of history fail to assimilate events of local interest the District Gazetteer comes forward to show their importance by interpreting regional history and emphasising the many-sided and multi-cultural trend of the Indian history. The Gazetteer of India, which is now under compilation, has to integrate as far as possible the units of history furnished by the District Gazetteers. But it must be pointed out that history even in its cumulative function is not an ensemble; it is a dynamic whole with an inherent order and continuity.

N. K. Sahu

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Gazetter literature in Kerala had its origin in the later half of the 19th Century. The *Manual of the Malabar District* compiled and published by W. Logan in 1887 is the earliest work of its kind pertaining to Kerala. In 1908 the *Malabar District Gazetteer* by Innes and Evans was published in the revised series. The publication of these books pertaining to British Malabar had its impact in the erstwhile princely States of Travancore and Cochin. In Travancore the *Travancore State Manual* was compiled by V. Nagam Aiya in 1906 and in Cochin the *Cochin State Manual* by C. Achutha Menon in 1911. Both the publications closely followed the pattern set in the District Manuals and Gazetteers of British India. While the *Travancore State Manual* was revised in 1940 by T. K. Velu Pillai, no such revision was effected in the case of the *Cochin State Manual*.

When the question of the revision of Gazetteers and bringing them up-to-date engaged the attention of the Government of India in the post-independence period, the Government of Kerala accepted a scheme for the preparation of Gazetteers for the nine districts of the State in accordance with the all-India pattern. The work on the scheme started in July 1958 and it is expected that the whole project would be completed by 1968-69, i.e., long before the end of the Fourth Plan period.

The Gazetteers, old and new, have been so planned as to help the cause of historical studies and research in Kerala. The Chapters on History in the old Gazetteers and Manuals of Kerala bear the impress of sound scholarship and learning and they are quoted with authority by scholars even today. Nevertheless, it has been found necessary to revise and bring up-to-date the historical portion in these old publications, keeping in view the latest developments in regard to the administrative set-up, the economic condition of the people as well as the social, religious and cultural trends. Far-reaching changes have taken place in Kerala since the Gazetteers or Manuals were last brought out, and the new Gazetteers ought to reflect these changes. Archaeological and antiquarian researches have also progressed in recent decades and standard works on Kerala history have appeared, particularly in the regional language. The revised Gazetteers have to take due note of these new developments and utilise with profit whatever

fresh information has come to light. In addition to bringing the Chapters factually up-to-date, certain changes in the basic approach to the treatment of history have also been found to be essential in the light of the new values and ideals of life that have come to the fore in our country in the wake of freedom.

The old Gazetteers and Manuals, monumental works though they are, cannot be said to have presented the history of Kerala from an objective and impartial point of view. The Gazetteers compiled by the British administrators reflected the alien and partisan spirit of the authors and they also laid undue stress on inconsequential things, which interested the average British civil servant. At the same time in the State Manuals compiled under royal patronage in the princely States there is a tendency to glorify the local dynasties and exaggerate the achievements of their rulers, even at the risk of sacrificing historical truth. The authors of the State Manuals were, as Sardar K. M. Panikkar has observed, "more *prasasthi* writers than historians and naturally their one interest was to bolster up false legends about their patrons". The revised Gazetteers are to be free from the alien spirit of the British civilians, who compiled the District Gazetteers, as well as from the parochial and royalist spirit of the panegyrists, who compiled the State Manuals. Another serious defect of the old Gazetteers is that they have not assessed the role of our historical personages with objectivity and evaluated their real services to the country. Thus an impression was created that the Kunjali Marakkars were pirates, the Ettuveetil Pillamar treacherous assassins, Velu Tampi a seditious rebel, and the Pazhassi Raja a brigand. Naturally, the new Gazetteers are expected to reassess the role of such personages and present them in the true light of history.

The new Gazetteers emphasise the factors of concord and harmony in our national life and thus serve the larger cause of national integration. The fascinating story of the confluence of cultures in Kerala deserves to be told with all the richness and variety of its details in the new Gazetteers. All the great world religions, such as Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism and Islam have their place of honour in this story, which perhaps goes back to a period prior to the beginning of

the Christian era. It was Kerala's genius for cultural synthesis and national integration that found its supreme expression in the philosophy and work of the great Sankaracharya, even as early as the 8th or 9th Century A.D. The land of Kerala, where churches, temples, mosques and synagogues have existed side by side in close proximity to one another from time immemorial, and peoples of diverse religions and castes have lived in perfect amity through the centuries provides even today several classic examples of communal harmony and cultural synthesis. The new Gazetteers highlight such facts of Kerala history and excite the curiosity of the student of history and lead him on to further researches into the unique social background, that has made the evolution of such a composite life possible in this part of the country.

When all is said, it should be emphasised that the District Gazetteers, by the very nature of their contents, can serve only a limited purpose from the point of view of the student of Kerala history in so far these volumes are not meant as records of general history pertaining to the State or country as a whole. They highlight only local history, as distinct from State History or Indian History, and can satisfy at best the curiosity of those, who are primarily interested in the study of local life and events. However, even within the framework of the limitations which inevitably arise from the very nature of the District Gazetteers' scheme itself, it may be claimed that an honest attempt has been made to present in the new series of Kerala Gazetteers the history of each District of this State in the general background of the history of Kerala. In the first stage of the work the District Gazetteers of Trivandrum, Trichur and Kozhikode were taken up for compilation as these three Districts represent the erstwhile administrative units of Travancore, Cochin and British Malabar that comprise the modern State of Kerala. The stream of Kerala history takes its source mainly from the three regional water-sheds referred to above, and the District Gazetteers of Trivandrum, Trichur and Kozhikode must have served to present to the general reader at a very early stage of the work a broad outline of the history of Kerala. In the compilation of these volumes the old Gazetteers and Manuals have, of course, been made use of, but in bringing the story up-to-date, the later works published in the field, embodying the results of the more recent historical research,

have also been used. Mention may, however, be made in this connection of the fact that a scheme for the compilation of the Kerala State Gazetteer, as distinct from the District Gazetteers, has been provisionally included in the Fourth Five Year Plan of the State. It may be hoped that the general history of Kerala would be treated in a fairly detailed manner in this volume and that, together with the District Gazetteers already published and yet to be published, the proposed State Gazetteer would fill in the existing gap and make a useful contribution to the study of the history of Kerala.

A. Sreedhara Menon

IMPORTANCE AND UTILITY OF GAZETTEER

A new era of far-reaching consequence has dawned in India. The democratic set-up has brought about among the people a wide awareness and has stimulated aspirations and urges of an unprecedented kind. Social values have undergone a tremendous change. The functions of the State are no longer confined to a limited range of subjects. Fresh possibilities of development, touching various aspects of life, have opened up. All these changes all over the country have to be explained in their correct perspective and interpreted properly so that the people's co-operation in the task of building up a nation may be forthcoming. It is in this context that the re-oriented Gazetteers of the districts, of the States of the Union, and of the country as a whole play a prominent part.

Since the first appearance of Gazetteers in Europe over two centuries ago, the conception and scope, the lines of treatment and presentation of the material have changed radically. In the past, in India at least, the Gazetteers were intended chiefly to meet the requirements of the colonial administration. It was natural that the British administrators lacked a sense of responsibility to the people. The following observation of Sir William Hunter, who held a pre-eminent position in working out the plan for the publication of Gazetteers in the later part of the last century and who set the model for later publications as well, is revealing:—

“My conception of the work is that in return for a couple of days' reading, the account should give a new Collector a comprehensive and at the same time a distinct idea of the district, he had been sent to administer.”

It is noteworthy that even in those early days, the District Gazetteers were designed on more or less a common pattern. They furnished a topographical survey in general, as also departmental statistical accounts, and described contemporary administrative arrangements and governmental problems faced in the past. They had a directory of principal places. There was, of course, an over-emphasis on the differences between the

communities, castes and tribes, their mutual wrangles and cleavages, and the quaintness of their customs, rituals, beliefs and superstitions, without at the same time giving a picture of their rich cultural heritage.

To what extent these District Gazetteers were relied on as standard works of high importance is illustrated by the glowing tribute paid to them by no less a person than Lord Curzon. In one of his minutes, he remarked: "During my recent tour, I have, over and over again in reply to an inquiry, had the district volumes thrust into my hand and found all that I wanted to know excellently told. The volume accompanies the District Officer in camp or lies on his office table and its condition shows how constantly it is referred to. It would be difficult to praise too highly some of these productions. Many of them are full of information regarding the customs and peculiarities of the people of the district, its history, its tenures and so forth, a knowledge of which is simply invaluable to the District Officer and especially to a newcomer."

The British compilers, many of whom were very erudite civilians, possessed a splendid spirit of enquiry, and some of the volumes they have produced are of abiding interest and help us to know in some measure the prevailing conditions in the country at that time. As pioneering efforts, these works are indeed laudable. Whatever might be their selections of topics, interpretations and emphasis, we cannot but be impressed by the formidable array of facts and figures they assembled and the pains they took and the intelligence they displayed in analysing and sifting the material. B. Lewis Rice, who was devoted to antiquarian studies in this part of the country, laboured for long years to produce the volumes for the old Mysore State and Coorg. His work was extolled by Sir William Hunter "as better than anything he himself had been able to do even for Bengal." A few decades later, these volumes were largely re-written and expanded under the direction of C. Hayavadana Rao, a versatile scholar of repute.

Besides the administrative details, which were, of course, liable to change even the materials relating to natural resources

and past historical events embodied in the old Gazetteers have now become antiquated. This is so because numerous facts pertaining thereto have since been brought to light by the labours of many savants and investigators.

Now, the radically changed circumstances in the country have necessitated an almost complete re-writing of the Gazetteers. There is a widespread interest among the people of the country to know what is what. Many old records, documents and publications such as memoirs, histories, travelogues and the like are not easily available to the public. For the recent years there is quite a large number of reports of State activities and social service organisations and a mass of publicity and other literature, reviews and periodicals, acts, regulations and rules. There are standard publications by specialists in different fields. From all these diverse and scattered sources, relevant information has to be collected for the Gazetteers and critically examined and supplemented by on-the-spot investigations and by personal discussions with persons in the know of things. New social and economic developments ushered in by the successive Plans have to be dealt with and the final draft evaluated by eminent experts.

The treatment, which has to be objective and without losing sight of the national interests, should not be very academic. A practical approach has to be brought to bear upon the subject. The presentation has to be in a digested form and in an intelligible style. The District volumes have to be self-sufficient mines of information unobtainable elsewhere under one cover, giving an authentic, rounded and complete picture of the District.

National and State Gazetteers are in a category considerably different from that of District Gazetteers. A National Gazetteer takes in its stride the whole country and would give a broad outline and leave out very many matters of local importance, which have, in their turn, contributed to the richness of the nation as a whole. Their treatment of the material would be general and of an extensive kind, while that of the District Gazetteers would be intensive. It may be noted that reference books for the whole of India or for the States are available both for the general and specialist purposes. But that is not the case

in relation to the Districts. This want all the more heightens the utility of the District Gazetteers.

In the administrative organisation and economic life of the country, the special position of the District cannot be ignored. It is a sizeable unit, which is neither too small, nor too big. In the course of many decades, the people residing therein have developed a sense of belonging thereto and also a tradition of collective effort. In the execution of the vital Plan schemes, the role of the district units, which are over 300 in the country, cannot be over-stressed. There is a crying need to give the people living therein a vivid over all account in respect of natural resources, the socio-economic life, and the stupendous efforts that are being made by the States and the Centre for promoting at a fast pace their material, social and moral well-being.

The District volumes have to give prominence, *inter alia*, to a study of local industries, arts and crafts, urban and rural markets, recreational activities, cultural centres and the institutions that have grown up around them and the social and economic developments peculiar to the area. Many a time, it so happens that the personnel of a department or a social or an economic organisation may not know what is being done by the other departments or institutions in the district. The District Gazetteers would be helpful in removing these lacunae. Because of the almost uniform arrangement and treatment of the contents for all the districts, any reader can get what he wants from any District volume without difficulty.

The reorganisation of the States has further increased the need and importance of the District Gazetteers because districts, which were relatively less known to one another, have now come together. Mysore is one of such States, most affected by the large-scale realignment of the State's boundaries. Here, areas which formerly belonged to five different political divisions, namely, Mysore, Bombay, Madras, Hyderabad and Coorg were brought together. In the course of long years, they had developed divergent links, traditions and institutions and were in various stages of socio-economic development and had also

experienced different vicissitudes in the recent historical past, although they belonged to a common linguistic and an over all cultural unit and had to a large extent common historical associations from time immemorial.

This position inevitably brought in its wake problems, administrative, educational, legal and developmental. Formerly, the people of these various component parts did not know much of the affairs and problems of the districts of the other parts. Administrative, social, economic and, to a certain extent, cultural conventions and allegiances had to be reconciled and welded into a single whole. The lack of mutual knowledge of the past and present has to be met to a large extent by the District Gazetteers, which have also to help in the emotional integration of the people. The administrators and the general readers need to know the past and the present condition of the districts of these various component parts. Tracing the evolution or background of different activities would also help to throw light on the present circumstances. For correctly assessing the present, an accurate knowledge of the past too is essential. Some of the districts had been centres of political activity for large tracts and were seats of Government or were scenes of social or religious movements of extensive implications. These features have got to be borne in mind.

The medium of the Gazetteers has been hitherto English, which is known by a relatively small number of people. In a Welfare State, it would be advantageous to publish the District Gazetteers in the people's language also, so that they could be accessible to the largest number. Having regard to the heavy cost of production, a beginning could be made with reasonably abridged editions in the regional media.

The task connected with the District Gazetteers bristles with complexities and is of great magnitude. It calls for not only scholarship but also resourcefulness of a high order and prompt co-operation from many quarters. These assured in adequate measure, the District volumes would indeed yield a handsome reward to the State and to the Society.

B. N. Sri Sathyan

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There is no word in Bengali exactly corresponding to the English word 'Gazetteer'. It is doubtful whether Bengali terms like *tathva-panjee* or *parichayika*, which are rather far-fetched, convey the correct meaning of a Gazetteer. Under the circumstances, this alien word may be borrowed without hesitation and used as such to help its adequate expression in Bengali. Incidentally, it may be stated that the word 'Gazette' has already passed into common use in Bengali like so many other English words. The news-monger, who moves in the village or in a particular locality to collect information so as to be able to disseminate it later amongst the gullible, is usually branded in Bengali as a 'Gazette' and there is no difficulty in understanding its meaning in Bengali. If we continue to use the word 'Gazetteer' in Bengali speech, a time will come, sooner or later, when the Bengali speaking people will readily understand that a Gazetteer is a kind of book in which all worthwhile information about a particular region is marshalled.

According to some indologists, the *Vayu Purana* and the *Brihat Samhita* of Varahamihira are the oldest Gazetteer type literature in this country. Ages after these ancient texts were written, the man who became very famous in the field of Gazetteer compilation during the British rule was Sir William Hunter. Keeping in view the great success he had achieved, Dr. Jadunath Sarkar calls Abul Fazl, the author of the famous *Ain-i-Akbari* as the William Hunter of the Mughal period. The *Vayu Purana* the *Brihat Samhita* or the *Ain-i-Akbari* cannot be accepted today as a Gazetteer in the proper sense of the term though these texts followed a pattern similar to that of a modern Gazetteer in certain respects. In fact, the work of preparation of a Gazetteer was first taken up in India in 1806 when Buchanan Hamilton started an extensive collection of materials in the eastern region of India. For six long years his fact-finding work continued but Hamilton, very unfortunately, died before anything could be published. In 1836, Montgomery Martin was appointed to edit Hamilton's manuscript. Under the latter's editorship Buchanan's *Eastern India* was published in several volumes. This initial attempt met with further success after the publication in 1858 of the

English translation of the talk in Bengali broadcast on July 8, 1965 from A.I.R., Calcutta.

Gazetteer compiled by Thornton. The series to follow was 'The Central Provinces Gazetteers' issued in 1867. These were also of an exploratory nature but during these years the work of editing Gazetteers became more systematized and as such this latest series may be regarded as the precursor of similar publications brought forth in succeeding years.

The year 1858 was significant in many ways during the British rule. Immediately after the Great Revolt of 1857, the administration of the country was transferred from the East India Company to the British Crown. It is an accepted principle of colonial rule that alien supremacy over a foreign country is strengthened if the land governed is well-known to the administrators on the spot. With this end in view Sir William Hunter was commissioned in 1869 to edit a new series of District Gazetteers and his work—*Statistical Accounts of Bengal*—published in 1875 is recognised even today as an outstanding contribution towards Gazetteer literature in India.

It was at the time of Lord Curzon, some years later, that the British bureaucracy in India took some interest in Indian culture and L. S. S. O'Malley, a very successful officer of the Indian Civil Service, was entrusted with the task of editing a new series of Gazetteers relating to the districts in Bengal, East Bengal and Assam. The Shahabad District Gazetteer, published in 1906, was the first and the Faridpur District Gazetteer, published in 1925, was the last in this series. These authoritative works, which were the result of twenty years of continuous labour, are universally accepted as standard reference books regarding the districts which they cover.

In Indian history, the year 1947 may also be regarded as very important. Not only that the borders of many districts were then altered as a result of the partition of the country but also because social and administrative changes of far-reaching consequences took place in the post-Independence days. In this new context of things, the one-time valuable Gazetteers of O'Malley became outdated to some extent. A series of 'Handbooks', based on the 1951 Census, was published in the following years but these did not meet the requirements of the

changed situation. During the period from 1955 to 1959 the Government of India took the initiative and, in consultation with the various State Governments, adopted a nation-wide programme for the compilation of an entirely fresh set of District Gazetteers covering each single district of India. It was decided that the Central Gazetteers Unit would publish four comprehensive volumes, more or less on the lines of the old Imperial Gazetteer, dealing with the Country and People, History and Culture, Economic Structure and Activities, and Administration and Public Welfare of the whole country whereas the aim of the State Units would be to prepare an up-to-date series of Gazetteers relating to each single district within their respective jurisdictions.

As regards the list of subjects to be included in the revised District Gazetteers it would suffice to mention that, besides a broad geographical description of the district, its history from ancient times to the present day and a complete account of the people inhabiting it, other subjects like agriculture and irrigation, commerce and industries, communications, general administration, revenue administration, law and order, local self-government, health and sanitation, etc. will be dealt with in these Gazetteers as they were done in the O'Malley series. A noteworthy difference will be that whereas in O'Malley's Gazetteers the history of a district had been traced, in most cases, from the pre-British period, in the new Gazetteers it will be compiled from very ancient times, preferably from the pre-historic period, if materials are available. The latest Gazetteers will also contain a history of the freedom struggle for emancipation from the British rule. Inclusion of adequate materials relating to the culture and heritage of a district will also be a novel feature. Cottage industries and artistic rural crafts will also be covered. Accounts of old newspapers, educational institutions, cultural organisations, social welfare bodies as also of renowned families in the district will be included. There have been significant additions to our knowledge in the fields of economics, politics, history, anthropology, social sciences, architecture, etc. since the days of O'Malley and all these will be pooled while drafting the new series of District Gazetteers. In short, every attempt will be made to make the present series of

West Bengal District Gazetteers as informative and reliable as possible.

The Gazetteer's work in West Bengal started a few years ago and one volume, covering the West Dinajpur district, has since been published. The manuscript relating to Malda will be in the press very soon. It should be mentioned that there is an Advisory Committee at the State level consisting of renowned scholars, which examines and approves the drafts after they have been vetted by the Central Gazetteers Unit. This double scrutiny takes a little time no doubt but it certainly improves the quality of the manuscripts. So long the Census Superintendent in West Bengal used to be the State Editor of District Gazetteers—an arrangement which was not conducive to expeditious work. This has now been changed and a whole-time Editor has been appointed since August, 1964 to deal with Gazetteer's work exclusively. According to the target laid down by the Ministry of Education, Government of India, the work relating to the publication of the new series of District Gazetteers would be completed, all over India, by March, 1971. It is hoped that the work in West Bengal will be finished by the prescribed date.

There is no Gazetteer of Calcutta. The present scheme envisages that a Gazetteer of Calcutta would be compiled in two volumes. Besides these, there will be one volume of Gazetteer for each district of West Bengal, thus making a total of 17 volumes for this State.

The Gazetteers now under preparation will be in English so that not only the people of other States in India but also foreigners can consult them. Although no decision has yet been taken in this behalf, it is possible to have the series translated into the regional language should the Government of India approve of such a scheme. If this happens, it will certainly help in unfolding this great store-house of knowledge to those who do not know English.

A. K. Banerji

The need for the preparation of a chronicle in which complete information about a district would be incorporated, received the attention of the Government as far back as 1803, when the Board of Directors of the East India Company asked its officers to supply information on the basis of which it could prepare a history of its possessions in India. But it was not till 1872 that the actual preparation of what was then called the Imperial Gazetteer of India was undertaken by the Government of India. The compilation of a Gazetteer for each district was taken in hand and the publication was spread over a period of about ten years commencing from 1874. An alphabetical Gazetteer in two volumes for the whole province of Avadh (Oudh), which came to be known as the *Gazetteer of the Province of Oudh*, was also issued. A revision of these Gazetteers was undertaken in 1901, when a separate volume for each district was prepared, the alphabetical arrangement being given up. Supplementary volumes were published in 1915, 1926 and 1934 after the Census operations of 1911, 1921 and 1931 respectively but they merely brought up-to-date the statistical data pertaining to the districts concerned.

The District Gazetteer is a factual account, supported by figures and other data, of the life story of the district and its people from the earliest times. It is a compendium or book of reference and a mine of information covering a vast compass in the small space of a few hundred pages and omits nothing that is of vital significance or lasting importance. It presents an authentic and comprehensive picture of the district. Some of the main topics it deals with are the physical features, history, people, agriculture and irrigation, industries, banking, trade and commerce, communications, law, order and justice, general administration, education and culture, medical and public health services, etc. It also gives a brief account of those places which are of historical, industrial, archaeological, scenic or other special interest. It also includes relevant tables on such subjects as area, population, rainfall, irrigated and non-irrigated areas, areas under principal crops, livestock population, land revenue, public receipts and expenditure, literacy and education, and has lists

English translation of the talk in Hindi on April 5, 1965 from A.I.R., Lucknow.

of fairs, circuit and inspection houses, dak bungalows and post-offices, a small-scale map of the district showing certain relevant features which find mention in the text, some photographs, a bibliography mentioning sources used or referred to, some graphs and an index.

The Government has undertaken the re-writing rather than the mere revision of the Gazetteers because the earlier ones were brought out over 50 years ago and the period since then has seen a number of significant changes, the circumstances of life as well as social and other values having changed considerably. The presentation of the account is now in terms of a synthesis of the larger context of life as it obtains today.

The Gazetteer of the district is of great importance as it is the key which opens the door to future historians and specialists so as to enable them to lay hold of relevant clues for developing various theses regarding the district. Thus, though not an excursus into any specialised feature or the result of research, it can form the basis of valuable research. It is not only of practical help to the administrator and the scholar but also to the general public and is useful not merely for the reader of today but for all people for all time, whether Indian or foreign.

Its value also lies in its being non-controversial, unbiased and objective. It should never become a forum for the expression of the ideology of any individual, however great or learned, or the arena where the battles, however laudable, of historians or specialists are lost and won.

A single Gazetteer is a co-ordinated and self-contained unit, but it has uniformity of content, standard and form *vis-a-vis* the rest of the District Gazetteers being re-written in the country. At the same time it provides for variations to its own special needs and local colour. Thus all the District Gazetteers of the country will make a valuable series, which will serve as a harmonising factor by increasing one's knowledge of the different parts of the country and the people, which will lead to the engendering of sympathy, tolerance, and a greater understanding of one another. By stressing the fundamental unity underlying

the differences, that exists from district to district in any one State or in the country as a whole, a vital contribution will have been made to political unity, cultural oneness and national integration.

E. B. Joshi

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Literally a Gazetteer means a geographical dictionary. In practice however, the connotation of the term has widened so as to include practically every aspect of a country's civilisation and culture. Just as there could be a Gazetteer covering the entire length and breadth of a country there could also be a Gazetteer for a part thereof, namely a province or a district. The first attempt at the preparation of such a Gazetteer, with particular reference to the former Bombay Presidency, was made in 1843. In that year the Government asked the Revenue Commissioner to obtain from all the Collectors, as part of their next annual report, the fullest available information regarding their districts. This was to include observations on every point from which a knowledge of the actual conditions of the country could be gathered. However, such reports were received from a few districts only.

The question of preparing the Gazetteers was again taken up in 1867, when the Secretary of State for India asked the Bombay Government to take steps for the compilation of a Gazetteer of the Presidency on the model of the Gazetteer prepared during that year for the Central Provinces. A committee was set up for the purpose which submitted its report on the nature and contents of the Gazetteer volumes. The Gazetteer was to have 16 Chapters. It would be interesting to note that the same pattern has been adopted for the revised edition of the old Gazetteers, with only a few changes here and there. The Bombay Presidency then comprised 18 districts and 82 Native States. The compilation of the volumes was entrusted to James M. Campbell of the Bombay Civil Service, who commenced his work in 1874. The series were completed in 1884. The entire work of publication, however, of these volumes

was spread over a period of 27 years, that is, between 1877 and 1904. These Gazetteers covered 33 volumes and ran into 17,800 pages. The Gazetteers included not only a description of the physical and natural features of a region but also a broad narrative of the social, political, economic and cultural life of the people living in that region. Some of the volumes were of a general nature and not confined to the limits of a particular district, such as (1) History of Gujarath, (2) History of Konkan, Dekhan and Southern Maratha country, (3) Population of Gujarath and (4) Botany.

With the advent of Independence and integration of States, the administrative boundaries underwent a change and so also the district boundaries. These changes had to be incorporated in the new edition of the Gazetteers. The old Gazetteers compiled over 90 years ago had become outdated. This necessitated the revision of the entire series so as to bring out a new and revised series of Gazetteers. The then Government of Bombay entrusted the work of revision to an Editorial Board specially created for this purpose in 1949.

In the nature of things, after a lapse of over 90 years after their publication, most of the statistical information contained in the old Gazetteers had become out-of-date and had to be brought up-to-date. In the new edition of the Gazetteers an attempt has been made to give an idea of the latest developments, whether in regard to the administrative structure or the economic set-up or in regard to social, religious and cultural trends. There are portions in the old Gazetteers bearing on archaeology and history, which have the impress of profound scholarship and learning. Their worth has not diminished by the mere passage of time. The same have been restated with slight modifications resulting from later investigations and new archaeological discoveries by scholars. An attempt has been made to incorporate in this edition the results of such research. The revision of old volumes has in fact meant the re-writing of most of the Chapters and Sections. The statistical and other information required for the purpose is obtained from the relevant departments of Government and through field research conducted by the staff of the Gazetteers Department. Articles on certain

specialised subjects such as history, physical features, fauna etc., are obtained from competent and well-known scholars in the respective fields.

In this dynamic world, circumstances and facts of life change and so do national requirements and social values. Such significant changes have taken place in India as in other countries during the last half a century, and more so after the advent of Independence in 1947. The general scheme and contents of this revised series of the Gazetteers have been adapted to the needs of the altered conditions. There is inevitably some shift in emphasis in the presentation and interpretation of certain phenomena.

An important addition to the district volume in this edition is the Directory of Villages and Towns given at the end, which contains in a tabulated form useful information about every village and town in the district. The Gazetteer also includes the district map, which is fairly large and up-to-date.

The revised Gazetteers are published in two series:—

(1) General Series—This comprises volumes on subjects which can best be treated for the State as a whole and not for the smaller area of a district. As at present planned, they will deal with (1) Physical Features, (2) Fauna, (3) People and their Culture, (4) History, (5) Language and Literature, (6) Botany and (7) Public Administration. Of these, the first three parts of the Botany volume have been published. The volumes on Ancient Period and that on Maratha Period of the History General Volume are in the press. The rest of the General Volumes are in various stages of compilation.

(2) The District Series—This contains one volume for each district of the State of Maharashtra. The information given in all the volumes will follow the same pattern and the table of contents will more or less be the same for all the districts.

P. Setu Madhava Rao

The term "Gazetteer" means only a geographical index or dictionary. In view, however, of their long association with works of literary nature and the difference in the objective of their compilation, the Gazetteers have acquired a different connotation. For the Gazetteers, as we have now come to understand, vividly portray the various aspects of the life of the people of the district—social, political, economic and cultural. An attempt at such a compilation, called Statistical Accounts for different districts, was first mooted in the former Bombay Presidency in 1843. The Government of Bombay asked the Revenue Commissioner to obtain from all the Collectors the fullest available information about the districts while submitting their next annual report. The Collectors and Assistant Collectors, who were constantly on the move and touring intensively within their jurisdiction, had very wide scope and opportunity to gather intimate knowledge and information about the people, observe the trends of progress or retrogression, trace the evils and defects, if any, in the existing institutions and suggest appropriate measures to remove them. Being men on the spot the Collectors had the opportunity, which no other officer had, of judging the effects of the British rule on the condition and character of the people. They were therefore asked to collect information about the people of their district—their housing condition, clothing and diet, implements of husbandry and other crafts, mode of transport, state of education, etc. They were also required to note the extent to which the existing village institutions had served their original purpose and how far they could be utilised for self-government in the field of local taxation to be levied for local purposes. All this information was initially collected for only five districts of the then Presidency of Bombay, as there was no response from other districts. In October 1867 the Secretary of State for India issued orders that steps should be taken for the compilation of a Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency. Opinions of responsible officials about the scheme of Gazetteers were called for and the work was finally entrusted to James M. Campbell of the Bombay Civil Service. He commenced work in 1874 and completed it in 1884. But the actual publication of the various volumes of District Gazetteers was spread over a long period of 27 years between

1877 and 1904. Similar attempts were made in other parts of the country also, giving rise to two different modes of compilation, one known as the Bombay tradition of the Campbell School and the other as the Bengal tradition. Campbell kept the administrator's view in the forefront. The Gazetteers prepared by him and his school of thinkers gave detailed and exhaustive information on all matters, running into thousands of printed pages, whereas the Bengal School kept the general reader in view and therefore the Gazetteers of Bengal were comparatively smaller in size. The old District Gazetteers of the Bombay Presidency were thus designed to give a complete picture of the District to men who were entirely strangers to India and its people, but who as members of the ruling race carried on their shoulders the responsibility for conducting its administration.

The Gazetteers published for Bombay had 27 volumes, some split up into two or three parts. They included some of the volumes of a general nature as well as those dealing with history and people. The volume devoted to the population of Gujarat is in two parts, one describing Hindus and the other Musalmans and Parsis. Among Gujarat districts, Surat and Broach and Kaira and Panchmahals were combined in one volume each. Baroda State had its own Gazetteers while the rest of the area comprising Peninsular Gujarat, formed part of Kathiawar Gazetteers. There were separate volumes also for some of the Political Agencies.

Prior to the compilation of Gazetteers, there were very few authentic sources of information either about the history or about the social, religious, economic or cultural conditions prevalent in the various parts of the country. The only information, which was then available, was the accounts of the foreign travellers and visitors, and some of the writings locally compiled. Viewed against this background, the Gazetteers provided a comprehensive compendium of authentic information on various aspects of the life of the people of this land.

The old Gazetteers, which were compiled over 90 years ago, had long become scarce and entirely out of print. The

pages of some of those Gazetteers (which were rarely available in Government offices or public libraries) had been crumpled up and had become detached with the passage of time, posing a problem for the reader as to how he should use and handle them. These volumes, containing as they did useful information of great value had become obsolete and out-of-date. The Government of India after Independence, therefore, decided to take up the task of revising and bringing them up-to-date. The programme of revision covered not only the District Gazetteers but also the Imperial Gazetteers, known as 'Indian Empire Volumes'. A conference of persons interested in this work, as well as representatives of the Central and State Governments, was convened in 1955 to draw up a general scheme of revision of both these types of Gazetteers, Central as well as the State, on a uniform pattern, allowing for such local variations as may be deemed necessary under the changing circumstances. A detailed plan for the revision of these volumes was then made and adopted by the various States and Union Territories. As quite a number of new items had to be added to meet the needs of new trends and ideas, that had come to the forefront since the Gazetteers were last compiled, the work of revision was nothing short of re-writing. The old Gazetteers were characterised by the alien spirit of the writers consciously or unconsciously expressed in view of their principal objective, which laid stress on things which were of interest to the British Civil Servants. It was therefore specifically laid down that the Gazetteers to be revised should be confined entirely to an objective and authentic presentation of facts, avoiding any account of bias and controversy. It was also laid down that the revised edition, while aiming at preserving what is useful and reliable in the old, should endeavour to give a comprehensive picture of the latest developments, recent finds, investigations and research by restating these facts to bring them in line with the new discoveries and scientific advances.

While such an arrangement for the revision of District Gazetteers on an all-India basis was under consideration by the Central Government and the States, the Government of Bombay had already taken a decision in 1949 that the old Gazetteers should be revised and published. After the

bifurcation of the composite Bombay State and creation of the separate State of Gujarat from May 1, 1960, the preparation of revised Gazetteers of districts has also been undertaken by the Government of Gujarat. An Advisory Board has been constituted and the services of experts and scholars in certain specialised fields requisitioned for the purpose.

Prior to 1947 the units now forming part of Gujarat State were known as Ahmedabad, Kaira, Panchmahals, Surat and Broach districts of the former Province of Bombay, the former Gujarat States Agency, the Sabarkantha Agency, the Indian States of Baroda, Idar, Radhanpur, Vijaynagar, Palanpur and Dantia except Abu Road taluka, the States of Kathiawar and Kutch included in the Western Indian States Agency and the former Dangs State. As a result of integration, enlargement of the former districts and formation of new ones, while the former British districts have considerably outgrown their original territorial limits, quite a number of them have come into existence for the first time. So far as Gujarat is concerned the object is therefore not to revise but to re-write the Gazetteers of the districts.

The general scheme and contents of this revised series may be referred to in brief. They have been so devised as to meet the needs of the present times by laying proper emphasis on the presentation and interpretation of certain important phenomena and events, which have had profound influence on the life of the people of this land. The former weightage which was given to castes and communities and the emphasis on religious differences aiming at accentuating the fissiparous tendencies among the people have no place under a Welfare State, whose sole objective is to view things against a broad national background. Race, caste and creed, which had significance in the past have no relevance in a socialistic pattern of society.

Gujarat Gazetteers will be published in two series, namely: (i) the General Series and (ii) the District Series. The General Series will comprise volumes on subjects which can best be treated for the State as a whole and not for the smaller area of a district. The revised District Gazetteer is divided into

five parts, distributed into 19 Chapters dealing with such subjects as physical features, natural resources, history, people and their culture, economic organisation in all its varied branches including agriculture, animal husbandry, industries, finance, trade, transport and communications, public administration, social services, and places of interest. It also includes a Directory of Villages and Towns in a tabulated form, giving useful information about every village and town in the district.

All this information which the revised Gazetteers aim at compiling and presenting in their proper perspective will, it is hoped, give a realistic picture of the district in all its varied aspects.

R. K. Trivedi

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The origin of the word Gazette, of which Gazetteer is a derivative, is believed to be from a Greek word Gaza meaning "treasury of news". Gazetta was also a name of a newspaper published by the Government of Venice in 1566 A. D. and sold for a coin also named Gazetta. Later on, in many countries, Gazetta came to be recognised as an official bulletin or leaflet publishing its important circulars. However, the Chambers's Dictionary describes a Gazetteer as a geographical dictionary. The *Chambers's Encyclopaedia* defines Gazetteer as "an alphabetical arrangement of place-names, giving some indication at least of their situation". The *Everyman's Encyclopaedia* gives a more comprehensive definition of a Gazetteer—"this term signifies an alphabetical arrangement of place-names, in other words, a geographical and topographical dictionary containing more or less abundant information, comprising statistics, descriptions, and historical details". So that a Gazetteer, by definition, is a book that mainly gives an idea of the geography of a particular region, as well as the details of its history, people and general conditions of life.

The term was first employed as the equivalent for a geographical index by Lawrence Echard in 1704. Among other

Talk broadcast on July 19, 1965 from A.I.R., Jaipur.

famous Gazetteer writers mention may be made of a Neumann for Italy, Hunter for India, and Semenov for Russia.

In India, as elsewhere, Gazetteer literature began with travellers' accounts. Travelogues of Megasthenese, Fa-Hien, Hiuen Tsang, etc. give valuable information about contemporary India. But, as pointed out by Prof. Humayun Kabir, the nearest approach to a Gazetteer in the modern sense is Abul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari*. It attempted to give a complete picture of the administration, the economic and social conditions of the people, and the relations between government and the governed during those days. It describes in the minutest details the ruler, court affairs, military and civil services, regulations of the judicial and executive departments, system of land survey, finance and sources of revenue, income and heads of expenditure, social conditions and literary activity, philosophy and law, saints and seers, moral sayings of the people, famines and other natural calamities. As a matter of fact, *Ain-i-Akbari* brought the governed class to the fore in an era, when the rulers and military leaders alone, generally speaking, were the main concern of history.

The work of writing Gazetteers for Rajputana began in the late seventies of the last century and continued up to the first decade of the present century. The names of Powlett, Bayley, La Touche and Erskine are more pronounced as the authors of the Gazetteers. However, their outlook and purpose was circumscribed by their own times. These Gazetteers gave details of the geography, history and means of communications. Little was said of the actual social, economic and political conditions of the people. The last 50 years, and specially the post-Independence period, have witnessed sweeping changes. The British have gone, science and technology have led to economic and social developments. Some old institutions are fast withering. Our perspective today is different and much wider than it was half a century ago. Gazetteers in Independent India have to be written afresh and they have to take into account all these factors.

The Government of Rajasthan realised the necessity of writing Gazetteers on these lines, as early as 1953. The work

was entrusted to the then Superintendent of Census Department. Material for some districts was collected but after 1956 only a skeleton staff was maintained and no officer was appointed independently for this work.

The scheme of revising District Gazetteers, as sponsored by the Government of India, was accepted by the Government of Rajasthan, and a Directorate of District Gazetteers was set up in 1960 under the Revenue Department of the State.

The Gazetteers depict how events have changed the feudal, stagnant structure of society to one based on independence, equality and progressive ideas. The District Gazetteers will be an eloquent commentary on how political, social and economic reforms were introduced after Independence and to what effect. They are intended to trace the economic changes *e.g.*, what more resources have been exploited, which industries have been established, and how employment potential has increased, and so on. They will describe how the whole conception of ownership of land and the rights of cultivators have been established, with resultant changes in revenue administration and agricultural production. Trade, transport and communications will all be described in the Gazetteers.

Besides giving a picture of a particular area to the general reader, the Gazetteer is intended to be of help to the persons interested in particular aspects of our life. It will, for instance, provide useful assistance to an industrialist if he wants to make a detailed study concerning a particular project. In the same way, it will be helpful not only to the military or civil administrators but also to the research scholars and experts in as much as it will provide information to them at one place on all the aspects of life in a particular district on which to carry out specialised studies. The social life of people inhabiting a particular area will be described so as to portray the changes in people's attitudes towards religion, customs, rituals, social relationships, class formations, etc. The changes in the political trends will also be described in the Gazetteer. In fact, each District Gazetteer will give a general view of what has happened in a particular area to its people and their life during the last

half a century and more. As such, these Gazetteers will not be merely geographical lexicons, or statistical tables, but will reflect the changes almost amounting to a metamorphosis in certain fields.

In fact, Gazetteers can play an important role in bringing about national integration. All emotions arise on the basis of knowledge. The more a man's knowledge is the more and varied emotions he is capable of experiencing. One has much more compassion or sympathy for the sufferings of those known to him. These Gazetteers help us to know and understand the country and its people better and thus will maintain and promote the sense of unity in the country.

Maya Ram

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A District Gazetteer is a compendium of historical, cultural and socio-economic records of a district and as such it touches upon almost all aspects of the life of the people—their manners, customs and traditions, history, culture, etc. Though it provides the basic knowledge of all that is required to be known about a district, it is to be differentiated from a General Knowledge Book or a Public Relations Department Handbook. It is an important reference book of fundamental importance to administrators, research workers and general readers. It has often been produced in courts for verification of certain disputes relating to leading families. The importance of the District Gazetteers for the administrators can be realised from the fact that during the days of the British whenever a Deputy Commissioner took over the charge of a district, the first thing that he did was to ask for a copy of the Gazetteer and go through it thoroughly so that he could acquaint himself well with the conditions of the district. Not only this, he also asked other district officers, immediately under his control, to go through the District Gazetteer thoroughly so that they could be his deputies in the real sense of the term.

Although some sort of district records, particularly pertaining to revenue and trade of a district, are known to have existed during the period of the Mughal Emperor Akbar also, the British Administrators were the first to perceive the need of a

Talk broadcast on August 3, 1961 from A.I.R., Jullundur.

comprehensive record of this nature, to be compiled in a methodical and scientific way. They attempted the work in a very scientific manner and brought to bear on this task their great qualities as explorers, geographers, archaeologists, historians and administrators.

During the British times, the work of compiling Gazetteers was taken up in the Punjab after the great Census Report of Sir Denzil Ibbetson in 1881. These Gazetteers were written by the Settlement Officers who were administrators of long standing and knew the districts very intimately.

No one need detract from the greatness of these works but evidently they were written under certain limitations and subjective reservations of our alien rulers. They failed to give the proper orientation to these works of local history inasmuch as the Indian point of view was conspicuous by its absence. Thus certain portions, especially relating to the struggle for Freedom Movement, manners and customs have to be wholly re-written rather than revised. Moreover, the last set of these Gazetteers was written over five decades back. This necessitated a revision from two points of view. First, it was intended that the information contained in the existing District Gazetteers, which was about half a century old, should be brought up-to-date. Secondly, it was felt that these Gazetteers should also reflect the new impulses and urges of the people generated by the attainment of Independence by appropriately reorientating the emphasis, and widening the scope, if necessary.

The re-organisation of States in India almost confirmed the political boundaries of each State and incidentally that of each district. This afforded an opportunity to act in the matter. This time the work is required to be done on a centralised pattern and separate Gazetteer Units have been set up in each State with specialists and writers as State Editors and Editors. This work is, therefore, no longer an appendage of the Settlement operations.

This being a new type of work, naturally bristles with many problems, some of them technical and some administrative. Two State Editors' Conferences have been held to thrash out

these problems and they have reached a broad agreement on the point that the State Editor, with the assistance and guidance of the State Advisory Committee on the Revision of District Gazetteers, should have sufficient independence to deal with the problems of the districts in the best manner he thinks fit, of course, within the general scope of the Chapters. It has also been decided that the revised District Gazetteers should consist of only one volume, containing both descriptive and statistical portions, as against the previous practice of issuing the District Gazetteer in two parts—Part A containing the descriptive portion and Part B the statistical portion—the idea being not to burden the volume with too much statistical data and to make the Gazetteer more interesting and intelligible to the common man.

The problems involved in the revision of District Gazetteers in the Punjab are a bit more complex. Till recently the Punjab had 18 districts, 13 of the Punjab as it emerged out of the Partition and five of the erstwhile Pepsu. During the past 13 years there have been some territorial adjustments between Punjab, Pepsu and Himachal Pradesh, certain enclaves having been ceded away and certain others absorbed in various districts. Lahaul and Spiti have been clubbed together to form a separate district with headquarters at Keylong. Moreover, Punjab has two international borders, one with Pakistan and the other with China.

The Partition and consequent exodus of Muslims and rehabilitation of Hindus and Sikhs displaced from West Pakistan have also resulted in many problems of local adjustments, both emotional and physical. This has necessitated a change of treatment.

Another specific problem is that the Punjab has a rich pre-history as it extends back to the age of the Indus Valley Civilisation. Punjab is also the home of the Vedic Aryans. Modern archaeological excavations and historical researches have fundamentally influenced one's approach to Indian History and Civilisation and one has to take a note of it.

The Patiala Division of the State has more typical problems so far as the revision of Gazetteers is concerned. The former

Gazetteers were those of the mutually incongruous Cis-Sutlej States. Now these States no longer exist and instead compact districts have come into being. From autocracy to democracy is a great sweep of events and this will have to be taken into account.

Certain changes are contemplated in a few districts of the State. It might, therefore, be necessary to issue supplements in case of those districts, which undergo changes soon after their Gazetteers are published.

In view of the above, the task of the revision of District Gazetteers in this State has become somewhat involved but all efforts are directed towards making the Gazetteers as useful documents as possible. According to the pattern laid down by the Centre, the revised District Gazetteers should have 19 Chapters. The Punjab Government has decided to include another Chapter on Rehabilitation in some of the District Gazetteers, because the Partition has been as much the misery of Punjab as the Rehabilitation its glory.

The Punjab Government set up a Gazetteers Revision Organisation under the control of the Financial Commissioner in 1960. To expedite the work and to improve the quality of the Gazetteers, the State Advisory Board for Revision of District Gazetteers, and Local District Gazetteer Revision Committee have been constituted at State and district level. The Board is a high-powered body with the Chief Minister as Chairman.

In the local Gazetteer Revision Committees, which function under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner, local non-officials who have intimate knowledge of the district have been associated.

The Gazetteers Revision Organisation has worked out its targets for finishing the entire work within a space of ten years. Of course, the completion of this ~~tremendous~~ task is dependent on various factors, particularly the amount of co-operation received. Contacts will have also to be developed with the leaders of the community and other persons who might be in possession

of some rare material. The quality of information from the headquarters, as well as field sources, has also an important bearing on the quality and the completion of the task.

I. M. L. Bhatnagar

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Literally the Gazetteer is 'a geographical dictionary, descriptive of towns, rivers, mountains, and the like arranged in alphabetical order'. However, in the modern context, it is rather a geographical dictionary or topographical dictionary, or alphabetical arrangement of place-names, with a more or less abundant complement of information, descriptive, statistical and historical.

In historical retrospect, we notice that fragments of the Gazetteer of Stephanus Byzantinus of the 6th Century are extant. But it was not until the 19th Century that Gazetteers, conforming to modern concepts howsoever remotely, were compiled. It was during this period that national Gazetteers came into being. Some classical efforts in the field are those of Wilson for England and Wales, Groome for Scotland, De Colagne for the United States, Huhn for Germany, Raffelsperger for Austria, Joanne for France, Meert for Belgium and Madoz for Spain.

Coming to the Indian scene, we find that a remarkable pioneering work was done by the British scholars. The first Gazetteer on India was compiled by Hamilton and published in 1815. Thornton wrote the twin-epitomes, '*A Gazetteer of the Territories under the Government of the East-India Company*' and '*A Gazetteer of the Countries Adjacent to India on the North-West*' in the middle of the last Century. Hunter's masterpiece is still the only comprehensive source for a student of Indian Gazetteer. During the early years of 20th Century, British administrator-scholars, ably assisted by selfless Indian Officers, compiled District Gazetteers for the entire sub-continent of India.

And now under the Central scheme, all these monumental Gazetteers, both Imperial and District, are being revised.

Gazetteers present a kaleidoscopic picture of people in their myriad activities, as homo-sapiens, as house-holders, as social units and as citizens. The days are gone when the history of a country meant the account of a monarch's career, dynastic wars, succession tangles, matrimonial alliances, religious alignments and personal aggrandisements. When Louis XIV said that he was the State, he was not exaggerating the reality. He and persons of his ilk strutted the stage like a peacock and the subjects were the mute, admiring audiences. History has transcended that narrow tradition and it is the people who are now the actors on the stage. Democracy has revolutionised the angle of vision. Independence brought in its wake a Sovereign Republic in the land. People and people alone shape their destinies. Anything worthy of knowledge and interest are the Indian people themselves. A true and intimate picture of Indian life in its infinite variety is presented by Gazetteers in a faithful, comprehensive and harmonious way. The past is connected with the present, and the present gives a glimpse of the Promised Land. Gazetteers are an integrated whole, whose components are the geographical, historical, social, economic, administrative, literary, cultural and philanthropic aspects of human life. Where else can we find such a vast, one-piece canvas wherein the totality of Indian life is resplendent in its variegated colours and in its entirety?

A thousand years ago, India was one entity. In spite of vast distances, separate political units and differences in habits, sartorial fashions and dietary varieties, there was a strong undercurrent of unity. Differences were superficial. The bond of religion, scriptural language and literary traditions was unbreakable. Sankaracharya of extreme South could freely breathe in the pure Himalayan air. A Maharashtrian went to Kashi for learning. An orthodox Hindu believed in having ablutions at all the four extremities of the country. There was free traffic of the mind and unrestrained movement of the body. If not the whole world, the whole of India was one family. This rich tradition of India, once a free-flowing, perennial river in the past, was bogged in the sands of foreign rule. No echo of the glorious heritage of unity in diversity could reverberate through the successive corridors of time. Independence has not yet revived the lost glory. Indeed, it would be a miracle if overnight we could cast off the shackles of enslaved

minds. Freedom seems to have loosened the bonds of whatever unity we had achieved during our struggle with the foreign power, and we are victims of prejudice, suspicion, intolerance and selfishness. Each of us is an island. We do not know about our neighbours, and what is more, we refuse to know. We wrangle over language issue. Territorial adjustments agitate our minds. We doubt the *bona fides* of each other. The present is difficult and the future appears bleak. It is at this juncture that Gazetteers can lend a ray of hope. Knowledge is a prelude to understanding, and understanding brings about sympathy and tolerance. Enlightenment can dispel the pall of ignorance and remove prejudices. In a quiet, unobtrusive, non-political way, through objective information, Gazetteers can bring about, in howsoever small a measure, a consciousness, a knowledge of other people and their lives. Perhaps it is a tardy gain but, then, no great things are achieved with a wand of magic. Gazetteers certainly have a small but important role to play in the national effort to retrieve the lost sense of unity of Indian people.

The District Gazetteers are of great help to the administrators. An administrator can certainly discharge his duties efficiently if he knows his district and his people well. The knowledge of geography, agriculture, customs, industries, etc., will be of immense help to him to deal with the various problems quickly and thoroughly. He will not be required to adopt the trial and error method of empirical administration. It is in the interest of the people themselves that the Collector, the Superintendent of Police, the Sessions Judge, the District Education Officer and other Heads of District Administration should be well informed about the district.

It will be readily seen that the Gazetteers are the handiest and the most useful reference books. They are in a manner an encyclopaedia in miniature—without its defect of trotting out a legion of bald data. Gazetteers are more useful than any single book on any one subject. They serve the combined purpose of hundreds of books on dozens of subjects. A reader has not the time, the energy or the facility to gather even a fragment of information given in Gazetteers from any other single source. Apart from this usefulness, Gazetteers do provide a certain

amount of literary pleasure. For instance, the description of the marble rocks in the old Jabalpur Gazetteer is a rhapsody in prose. There is a feast of beauty spread all over the hundreds of pages of Gazetteers; it is for the discerning eye to see it.

With an emphasis on the modern period, Gazetteers deal in great details with our Five Year Plans. All that the three Plans have achieved finds a proud mention in Chapters on Economic Trends. The great industrial, manufacturing and building projects that the country is having at district levels makes an inspiring reading. The vast strides that our economy has made fills our hearts with joy and patriotism. Gazetteers are rendering a yeoman's service in this respect. At one place, in a continuous narration, they vividly paint the picture of renascent India. It is only natural that the reader feels a sense of pride in being a citizen of new India and looks up with pride and expectancy at the future.

P. N. Shrivastav

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For the last few years the scheme for the revision and rewriting of Gazetteers is being implemented throughout the country. The new Gazetteer of India is being prepared at Delhi and the District Gazetteers are being compiled in the States and Union Territories, in collaboration with the Government of India.

The word 'Gazetteer' means a geographical dictionary. The origin of the word 'Gazetteer' is quite interesting. It is said that, to begin with, the word 'Gazetteer' in the Western countries denoted a person writing a Gazette or an official newspaper. In the 16th Century a single-sheeted literary periodical was published which sold at one 'Gazetta' per copy. After the name of the 'Gazetta' coin the said periodical came to be known as 'Gazettee'. Even today the official newspaper is known as Gazette.

With the passage of time the word 'Gazetteer' came to be applied to a geographical dictionary of a particular area, and in

English translation of the talk in Hindi on May 8, 1965 from A.I.R., Simla.

view of their long association with works of a literary type, the scope of the Gazetteers was considerably widened. Gazetteers began to be compiled in India during the British regime. Known for their vividness and authenticity, these Gazetteers contained a wealth of information on social, economic, political and cultural conditions of people inhabiting a particular district or province.

The prime motive of the British rulers in bringing out the Gazetteers was to keep their administrative officers well informed about the prevalent conditions of a particular area. Gazetteers prepared with this sole idea were naturally bound to be somewhat limited sources of information.

Old Gazetteers were written and published about 50 years ago. During this long period our country witnessed many far-reaching changes. Many events occurred, numerous researches were made in literary and other fields, and phenomenal developments took place especially after Independence. All these important events could not find a place in the old Gazetteers. Therefore, the Government initiated the scheme for the revision of the Gazetteers. Out of the erstwhile States merged into Himachal Pradesh, Chamba, Sirmur, Mandi and Suket had separate volumes of Gazetteers. The other States had no separate Gazetteers. These States were, however, briefly mentioned in the Simla Hill States Gazetteer. This volume did not contain much material, and information about some of the States was limited to one page only.

A modern Gazetteer is quite different from a geographical dictionary. It is not merely a guide book, a handbook, a directory, or a book of socio-economic survey. Each District Gazetteer contains 19 Chapters covering the entire field of human activity. Geographical, archaeological, historical, economic, social, political and administrative conditions are featured in them. An account of folk culture, literature and art finds a suitable place in them and as far as possible the topics are presented in an interesting manner. Specimens of local dialects are given and instances are also given to show as to how these dialects differ from place to place. Mention is also made of the standard of living, dress, diet, customs, marriage and death rites, and religious beliefs.

Similarly, to depict various facets of people's life, local crafts, old and new, are mentioned, together with relevant local terminology. By presenting all these details in an interesting manner, a Gazetteer does not merely remain a collection of dry statistics but becomes a lively and interesting book.

As a modern Gazetteer deals with many important topics it is a reference book useful not only for district or State officers but also for historians, economists, sociologists, etc., who generally consult it. A Gazetteer is consulted not merely by a resident of a particular district or a State, even foreigners read it with great interest. How advantageous it would be if students of higher classes in schools and colleges also read the Gazetteer of the district to which they belong. They would come to know of many things about their district of which they were ignorant previously. The Gazetteer of their district will inspire them to acquire knowledge of other parts of the country and they will also read with pleasure the Gazetteers of other districts.

A Gazetteer throws light on our traditions. It reflects our civilisation and is a mirror of society. Its study helps to illumine the unity of civilisation and to develop emotional integration. By reading a Gazetteer we come to know the people of an area, our feeling of sympathy is increased and the sense of oneness is aroused. It contains also accounts and statistics of the present and the past, revealing the economic conditions and the standard of living of the people, and how planned programmes are being pursued for the future prosperity.

Thus a Gazetteer can render valuable assistance to the planners and to those concerned with the implementation of economic plans, the social reformers and the politicians. The study of a Gazetteer is important for the defenders of the country as it contains details about the geographical and climatical conditions etc., of an area. Above all, a Gazetteer is a useful book for the general public for in a democratic country the masses need to be well informed to make their influence felt in the administration, which affects every aspect of life today.

D. S. Kutlahria

The Gazetteer is not a mere dictionary of geographical names or a bulletin. It describes the different aspects of the life of a particular region or area—the laws and customs, beliefs and religions, ceremonial usages and practices, traditions and institutions, culture, history and economic developments.

The vast changes which are affecting India require special emphasis. In tribal areas, where industrialisation is making progress, we find some of the tribal institutions and usages fast disappearing. The District Gazetteers should record these vast and fundamental changes, which are transforming the face of India.

There is no denying the fact that the Gazetteers of Assam edited by B. C. Allen, published at the beginning of this Century, have given us some idea about the hill people inhabiting the hills of N.E.F.A. But they do not deal with every aspect of society. No economic survey on a large scale was undertaken for the N.E.F.A. tribals during the pre-Independence periods although a large portion of N.E.F.A. was partly classed as areas under the Inner line regulation and partly under the administrative control. N.E.F.A. remained in splendid isolation in British times.

N.E.F.A. is well known for its wonderful varieties of races and cultures, arts and languages. Steps have been taken to raise the standard of life of the people—the building of a net-work of communications, the opening of schools and spread of education, and the encouragement of tribal arts, crafts and industries, the setting up of hospitals and health units, the holding of agricultural demonstrations and the opening of irrigation facilities.

Dr. Verrier Elwin played a leading role in writing interesting books on N.E.F.A.—*The Art of the North-East Frontier of India*, *A Philosophy for N.E.F.A.*, *Myths of the North-East Frontier of India*. The Research Department has brought out many publications relating to the life and culture of diverse peoples of N.E.F.A.—*The Sherdukpens*, *The Akas*, *The Idu Mishmis*, *The Gallongs* and *The Tangsas*.

- Talk broadcast on July 14, 1965 from A.I.R., Gauhati.

The District Gazetteers of N.E.F.A. will enlighten the people of India about the society and culture of this region. Five District Gazetteers on the following Divisions of the North East Frontier Agency are to be brought out in course of time—Tirap, Lohit, Siang, Subansiri and Kameng.

H. Boreh

APPENDICES

A. GAZETTEERS UNIT (MINISTRY OF EDUCATION) GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

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Area and population, urban and rural; Population according to language; Population according to religion, and scheduled castes and tribes; Temperature, rainfall and humidity; Irrigated and non-irrigated areas, and areas under principal crops; Land revenue demand at successive settlements; Public receipts and expenditure in respect of the Union and the State Governments; Public receipts and expenditure in respect of local self-governing bodies; Literacy and Education: Number of literates and number of scholars at different stages in schools and colleges; Livelihood pattern; List of fairs; Livestock population; List of dak bungalows, rest houses, including circuit houses and inspection bungalows.

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