



**SELF-GOVERNMENT**

**IN**

**INDIA**

**Vedic & Post-Vedic**

**N. B. PAYGEE**

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Self-Government

IN INDIA.

VEDIC AND POST-VEDIC.

BY

NÂRÂYAN BHAVÂNÎRÂO PÂVGEE.

*Retired Resident Magistrate First Class.*

1918.

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**Dedicated**

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**AND**

**The Utmost Gratitude**

**TO**

**Shree Sad-Guru**

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## INTRODUCTION.

Whatever the past *merited claims* of the East and especially of Ind on the West, I must here, at the outset, frankly acknowledge the deep debt of gratitude which the East, at present, owes to the West, on account of the great strides that the former has been able to make, in all the branches of improvement, nay even in various Sciences, in manifold Arts, in material progress, social culture, and moral elevation, consequent on her constant contact with, and the requisite help from, the latter, and especially from England, for which we can never be too grateful.

But, more than this let us not forget another fact of still greater importance; viz. that after innumerable political convulsions, that disturbed Ind for a considerable period, England again established peace in this land of ancient lore, as also of hoary civilization; and her strong hand once more restored *law* and *order*, which, however, before\* the advent of the Islam rule in this country, we had almost continuously enjoyed, (*vide infra p 493 et sequē*). These, therefore

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\* This is borne out by the fact that there was profound peace in Ind during the Vedic and post-Vedic period, as will be seen from the extensive Vedic and Post-Vedic Literature of inestimable worth (*vide infra pp 13, 14, 35, 52 Foot-note*), which the country could only secure under peaceful conditions and the tranquil state of the land. To this period, the great kings—Sudās, Divodās, Yayāti, Harischandra, &c., of Vedic fame belong; while the Rāmāyana and the Mahā-Bhārata Eras claim the most renowned King-Emperors.

having been brought about at a time, when, as a matter of fact, they were most needed, we—the children of the soil—do, and shall, ever remember the fact with feelings of warm appreciation, and deep gratitude.

This has naturally tended to engender *mutual sympathy*, create *respect for each other*, bridge over the wide gulf of separation, and thus appreciably soften or even greatly reduce the tension, which once existed between the Orientals and the Occidentals.

However, there still exists prodigious ignorance and *deep-rooted prejudice* in the West, as regards the East, in respect of many questions of great magnitude (*vide infra p 482 et Sequæ*, Chapters x, xii, &c.), and especially in the matter of the most ancient civilization<sup>1</sup> of Ind, her peculiar

1 (a) I may here state that, our Hindu or rather our Indo-Aryan civilization is the oldest. For, it is *older than* that of China. Nay, it is even *older than* that of Egypt, Babylon and Chaldea, Syria and Assyria, Persia and Carthage, Greece and Rome, or any other ancient nation on Earth. (*vide infra pp 348, 528 Foot-note*, proving our influence and *Colonics* in China).

(b) Now, as regards China, Dr. Haug says as follows:—

“ Thus, we obtain for the bulk of the *Sambhita* of the *Rig-Veda* the space, from 1400–2000 ( B. C. ); the oldest hymns and sacrificial formulas may be a few hundred years more ancient still, so that we would fix the very commencement of Vedic Literature between 2400–2000 B. C. (*Vide Ait. Br. By Dr Haug. Introduction. pp 47–48. Ed. 1863*).

(c) But, really speaking, our *Rig-Vedic antiquity* goes yet further, nay as far back as even the Tertiary period, as

*polity, her Village communities (समिति), her Popular Assemblies (सभा), her Religious Congress*

will be seen from Chapter xvi of my Work.—*The Aryâvartic Home and Its Arctic Colonies*. While, the antiquity of China and her literature does not carry us back beyond 2200 B. C. For, says Haug, "If we consider the completely authenticated antiquity of several of the sacred books of the Chinese, such as the original documents, of which the Shu—King, or Book of History, is composed, and the antiquity of sacrificial songs of the Shi—King, which all carry us back to 1700—2200 B. C., it will certainly not be surprising that we assign a similar antiquity to the most ancient parts of the Vedas. For, there is nowhere any reason to show, that the Vedas must be less ancient than the earliest parts of the sacred books of the Chinese, but there is on the contrary much ground to believe, that they can fully lay claim to the same antiquity". (*vide* Ait. Br. By Dr. Haug. Introduction. p 48. Ed. 1863; and *infra* p 328 F. N. I, proving our influence and Colonies in China).

(d) Here, by the bye, in view of vindicating the very great, nay, the *greatest* antiquity of our Rig-Veda and its civilization, I beg to quote Professor Bloomfield, who, while noticing Mr. Tilak's *Orion*, observed as under:—....."The language and literature of the Vedas is, by no means, so primitive as to place with it the real beginnings of Aryan life"....."These in all probability and in all due moderation reach back thousands of years more". He even further added that, it was for this reason, "needless to point out that this curtain, which seems to shut off our vision at 4500 B C., may prove in the end a veil of thin gauze". (Eighteenth Anniversary Address. John Hopkins University).

(e) Moreover, as to India's antiquity and her civilization, exceeding that of all ancient nations, M. Louis Jacolliot—a French *Savant* and Antiquarian—says, "Manou (मनु) inspired Egyptian, Hebrew, Greek, and Roman legislation, and his spirit still pervades the whole economy of our European laws". (Preface, p viii).

( विद्य ), her *Representative Institutions*, her *Republican States*, and her fascinating *Constitutional Government*, that went so far *back* as the Mediæval Ages, nay the Buddhist period, and even *the hoary times* of the Rigveda. I have called the VEDIC POLITY and the ANCIENT GOVERNMENT of

(f) The French *Savant* has also endeavoured to prove that Moses had only confined himself "to copying with modifications, the constitution of Hindoo emigrations and colonization, honoured in Egypt and throughout Asia". p 119. (*vide* La Bible Dans L'Inde. Edition 1870).

(g) While Thornton, the Historian of India, says, as regards the great antiquity of Indian civilization: "Ere yet the Pyramids looked down upon the valley of the Nile,—when Greece and Italy, those cradles of modern civilization, housed only the tenants of the wilderness, India was the seat of wealth and grandeur". (Vol. i. p 2; *infra* p 497. Foot-note).

(h) Besides, Count Bjornstjerna says the same, in respect of the antiquity of the Hindus or Indo-Aryans, with still greater force, in his "Theogony of the Hindus". (*vide* *infra* p 276. Foot-note).

(i) And, obviously, it was owing to all the aforesaid cogent arguments and other available evidence, that Mr. Halbed exclaimed with deep reverence, after discussing the four Yugas of the Hindus, as indicated in the sequel. (p 276. Foot-note).

(j) I may here add that, I have proved by Geological evidence, the great antiquity of Man and his having been of the *Tertiary Period*, in my work "The Vedic Fathers of Geology." (pp 5, 6, 32, 33, and Chapter V). While, in my work "The Âryāvartīc Home and Its Arctic Colonies," I have, endeavoured to show our *Aryan Civilization* of the *Tertiary Period* (pp 470 @ 479). Nay, the pre-Glacial emigrations from Âryāvarta of the Rig-Vedic man, as also his colonization of the Arctic Regions, not to speak of his interesting observations made therein, evince the same thing. (*vide* *infra* p 205. Foot-note b, in connection with this ),

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Ind *fascinating*, because it exhibits to us, as shown in the sequel (*pp* 377-384), the various forms of Government as also the irresistible power of having exercised its beneficial influence on the Indian mind, and thus made it last long, by its *tenacity* and *heredity*.

It would, therefore, not be out of place, at this stage, to make only a passing reference to the very important, and doubtless genuine sources of information, which we have utilized, and of which requisite details would be found in Chapters ii-xi of this work, in respect of our ancient *Self-Government* as well as our *Elective Franchise*. These sources are obviously five-fold :

- (a) Archæological,
- (b) Numismatical,
- (c) Epigraphical,
- (d) Historical, and
- (e) Vedic.

Despite vandalism which has done incalculable mischief, nay caused terrible havock in India, and ruthlessly destroyed our innumerable, not to say inestimable works of Art as also of Science, and other invaluable Literature, (*vide* Vincent Smith's *Early History of India*. 2nd Ed. *pp.* 294, 295, and *Tod's Rajasthan*. Vol. I. *pp.* viii, ix, xiv, 217. Third Reprint), there is yet ample material left, which, if systematically exploited would certainly yield excellent results. The Archæological and Numismatical materials, however, seem to be scanty ; and it is only the Epigraphical matter that has so far given historical

facts,—facts which even when subjected to historical criticism, have yielded abundant, and yet most valuable and extremely satisfactory evidence, as regards our *old traditions of Self-Government and elective franchise*.

The Research-work and other historical sources are certainly of great value, while the Vedic source, above all, is not only of hoary antiquity, but has moreover, been declared by even Western Oriental\* scholars of note, well versed in the knowledge of historical criticism, to be *historical, inaccessible to foreign tributaries, and to have continued fuller, purer, and truer to its original character*. As such, therefore, it is doubtless of inestimable value, and simply matchless. (*vide infra pp. 12, 23, 52 Foot-notes, 87, 129, 130, 297, 527, Foot-notes, 443-465*).

These, therefore, I have ventured to utilise in the sequel, without unnecessarily encumbering the volume, especially that portion which relates to the Uttar Mallur (उत्तरमल्लुर), Tanjore (तंजावर), and Ukkal (उककल) Inscriptions, of which the particulars have appeared in the Annual Reports of the Archæological Survey of India, 1904-05, G. O., &c, of the Government of Madras—Nos. 922, 923, dated 19th August 1899. (*vide infra pp. 16, and 165-176*). All these, I need hardly say, were

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\* (a) Max-Muller. See Rig-Veda, Vol. iv. p lxxi; History of Ancient Sanscrit Literature. Ed. 1859. p 63; and India. What Can it Teach us? Ed. 1883. p 21.

(b) Dr. Rudolf Roth. *Vide* the volume of the German Oriental Society for 1848. p 216.

and have been accessible to the Public, and as such, open to all, for scrutiny or investigation, for study or information.

And yet, I may at this stage take the liberty to state that, owing to predisposition and ignorance, not to say even on account of their having been fed exclusively on Greek, Roman, and Jewish literature (*vide infra pp. 34, 35*), many European writers known to fame, have been inclined to think like the German philosopher Goethe,\* that "Chinese, Indian, and Egyptian antiquities are never more than curiosities." But, this dictum cannot now, in the least command assent, in the present state of our knowledge, nay of the great Researches in Sanskrit Literature, Indian Epigraphy, and Numismatics; especially, when European languages, literature, art, and philosophy, have been proved to be materially connected with those of India by innumerable bonds, a thing admitted also by historian Vincent Smith, in his "Early History of India." (*p 2. Edition 1908*).

Now, every student of history will have to admit the fact, noticed by a recent Indian author, Mr. C. N. K. Aiyar, M. A. L. T., that, "India suffers to-day in the estimation of the world, more through that world's ignorance of the achievements of the heroes of Indian history, than through the absence or the insignificance of such achievements". (*Vide Life and Times of Shree*

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\* *Vide "The Maxims and Reflections of Goethe"*, in Bailey Saunder's translation. § *Vide infra pp 348, 528.*

*Shankarāchārya*. p 5. Fourth Edition). And it is certainly no small satisfaction to find even Vincent Smith—the historian—fully endorsing the statement of Mr. Aiyar, nay also holding it to be a just observation, and adding further that, “the men of old time in India did deeds worthy of remembrance, and deserving of rescue from the oblivion, in which they have been buried for so many centuries.” *Early History of India*. p 3. Edition 1908).

In the circumstances it is but natural that Ind or ancient Bhārata Varsha, better known during the *Vedic period* as the *Land of the Seven Rivers*, should be proud of her claims to originality in having given birth, first and before all, to ideas of *Self-Government*, nay even to ideas in respect of not only *Constitutional Government*, but also in respect of other forms of Government, and of Government based on the matter-of-fact *popular Representation*, which, as will be shown in the sequel, seems to have received, from our ancestors, greater attention and higher regard from all stand-points, as years rolled on. (*vide infra pp.* 273, 376-384). The crude ideas and forms of Government had gradually grown and blossomed into *Public Institutions* like the *Vedic Religious Congress* (विद्य), *Popular Assembly* (सभा), and the *Village Community* or *Commune* (समिति), the Proto-types perhaps of subsequent democratic institutions in Europe, or of “the Houses of Parliament in England, though admittedly on a smaller scale. (*vide infra pp.* 156, 157, 192, 195, Chapters ii—ix, and *pp.* 377, 443-465).



Here, perhaps, the Reader will not be inclined to believe me, or repose any credence in what I have stated, suspecting the same to be embellished or exaggerated. Let me, however, assure him, that I shall, as observed by Mallinātha<sup>2</sup>, our great Sanskrit commentator, endeavour to state nothing *that is not warranted by facts*, nor anything that is not fortified by evidence. In brief, it would be sufficient here to state that our *Self-Governing Popular Assembly* (सभा) and the *Village Community* (समिति) of the Vedic Epoch (*infra pp 93-136, 273*), our *Republican Institutions* of pre-Buddhistic and the Buddhistic Eras (*pp 137-164*), our *Constitutional Monarchy* of Vedic and pre-Vedic times (*pp 98,99*), and even our *Representative Government* of Ancient and Medieval period (*pp 22,47,48,125-140,142 et seque*), have certainly been proved facts and admitted truths.

Besides, Politics has been described in our ancient Epics and other great works, whether religious, social, or historical, as *the very head and front* of every thing. As such, therefore, it had, from very early ages, rightly attracted the attention it deserved of our great Ancestors. Nay, even the popular Assembly (सभा) and the *Village Commune* (समिति) were considered to be of divine origin. As, however, I have given the requisite details below, for information of the Reader, I need not dwell on them here. (*vide infra pp 127,128, 246-249*).

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2. नामूलं लिख्यते किञ्चिन्नानपेक्षितमुच्यते ॥ (रघुवंशकाव्ये मल्लिनाथोक्तिः).

But, apart from this, which tells its own tale, in respect of the *democratic* and *republican* Institutions of Ind, I may here, in brief, venture to observe that, even in modern times, so far back as A. D. 1746, we see the Honourable East India Company's English Representative at Calicut, actually designating the *Nayar's Assembly* a "Parliament," on account of its *representative character*. In like manner, even Mr. Logan,<sup>3</sup> the Collector of Malabar District, writes as follows, in respect of this matter :—"The Nad or County was a congeries of taras or *Village Republics*, and the Kuttam or the Assembly of the *Nád* or County, was a *Representative body of immense power*, which, when necessity existed, set at naught the authority of the Rájá, and punished his ministers, *when they did unwarrantable acts.*" The Honourable Company's Representative also remarks thus :—"These Nâyars, being heads of the Calicut people, *resemble the Parliament,*<sup>4</sup> and do not obey the King's dictates in all things, but chastise<sup>5</sup> his ministers, when they do unwarrantable acts." (*vide* Tellicherry Factory-Diary of 28th May 1746).

Mr. Logan, speaking of the Nâyars' *Self-Government* and their all-powerful influence during olden times, writes thus again :—"This bulwark against the tyranny and oppression of their own rulers secured for the country a high state of

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* The Malabar Gazetteer " Vol I. Edition 1887. pp 88,89.

<sup>4</sup> The *Italics* in the above quotation are mine. (*The Author.*)

<sup>5</sup> *Vide* Malabar Gazetteer. Vol I. Edition 1887. p 89.

happiness and peace ; and if foreign peoples and foreign influences had not intervened, it might, with almost literal truth, have been said of the Malayalis that, happy is the people who have no history" ( *Malabar Gazetteer*. Preface. Vol I. p iv, Edition 1887 ).

Moreover, in connection with our system of *Self-Government* and even of *Representation*, it would, I believe, not be out of place to offer the testimony of Mr. Anstey, a scholar of vast erudition, varied culture, and ripe judgment. I, therefore, invite the attention of the Reader to the remarks made by the scholar in respect of the matter. ( *Vide infra pp 22, 23* ).

Thus, having had due regard to (a) the oldest Rig-Vedic evidence, its past traditions, and the latest Post-Vedic testimony in respect of our *very ancient Constitutional and Representative Government* in the Land of the Seven Rivers, as also to (b) the most valuable record that relates to *Self-Governed Republics* of Buddhistic times, nay even to (c) historical facts of pre-eminence, bearing on the subject of *Self-Government and Representative Bodies*, during the period of the indigenous Paramount Sovereigns of Northern India, of Mahārāshtra, as well as of Southern India, and especially to (d) the Village-Communities of our country, that really present to the world the so-called sheet-anchor of our indigenous *Self-Government*, there absolutely remains no doubt whatever, that Ind had enjoyed, under her own indigenous Rulers, *Self-Government, Constitutional sway, and even Government by Representation*, almost continu-

ously, till, within her own borders and on her own sacred soil, the appearance of foreign influences and foreign invasions, had slowly but steadily ruined them all, leaving here and there but indestructible remnants of *the Village Communities* (*vide supra p v, infra pp 19, 20, 264 Foot-note*).

Evidently, the idea of Self-Government had its *source* and *origin* in this very *Land of the Seven Rivers*; and *the plant has certainly been indigenous here, and not at all exotic*, nor in any way foreign to the soil. Accordingly, I desire to give a brief yet connected history of it, in the present volume, from the Rig-Vedic times down to the present century, in view of removing all ignorance, and setting at rest every doubt that exists, in respect of the subject.

For, barring honourable exceptions, in respect of which we cannot ever speak too highly, nor too gratefully, the ever favourite theme of the West appears to be, that the East, or to come nearer home, Ind never knew before, what Self-Government was, and that, therefore, she is not *even now fit for it*. Probably, this has been supposed by some Westerners to be the most melodious chord on which to harp, in season and out of season, for respite and recreation, not to say for political ends as well. Or, as Dr. Dādābhai Nowroji would put it, ‘exhibition of the want of capacity of the Indians in the matter of Self-Government, is but another favourite argument of some Anglo-Indians; and it is the old trick of the tyrant not to give you the opportunity of fair trial, and condemn you off-hand as incapable.’ (*vide infra p 480*).

Besides, many Westerners speak and maintain with an air of superiority, but without the least foundation, nay without the slightest and the remotest proof, that Orientals were *quite innocent of Self-Government*, and that they had no conception of it at all, until western thought and western culture, western contact and western communication, western light and western civilization introduced it in the East, and made them conversant with the ideas of the West in respect thereof.

Obviously, this has become a supremely hackneyed yet favourite theme ; and even great politicians, statesmen of the foremost rank in Europe, and eminent writers dwell on it with some animadversion, and thereby declare<sup>6</sup> to the world that,

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6. (a) For instance, during the discussion in the House of Commons on the Egyption question, that ensued on the 14th of June 1910, Mr. Balfour, the then Premier of England, has been reported to have said as follows:—No Oriental nation had ever shown any trace of capacity for Self-Government.

(b) In like manner, Lord Ronaldshay, now Governor of Bengal, who was for some time the A. D. C. to Lord Curzon during his Viceroyalty, who must have read much of the Political Institutions of India, who had, moreover, all the available means to know these, if only he had wished to do so, and who could have easily picked out the requisite information from the valuable Reports of the Archæological Survey of India, or from Ukkaal Inscriptions of Southern India printed therein, appears to have observed in his speeches and writings that, a certain section of the Indian peoples is imbued with an unnatural desire for a reform of Government, for which they have no aptitude either by instinct, or by tradition. *Vide* Modern Review for April 1917 ; Maratha ( 10-12-1916 ). How deep this ignorance !

no nation of the Orient had ever shown any trace of capacity for *Self-Government*. But, as a matter of fact, there is, doubtless, chapter and verse, nay

How deplorable this want of knowledge about India, even when Lord Ronaldshay could have conveniently laid his hands on the stout Volumes published by Government, as these clearly showed the knowledge of, and great regard for, *Self-Government* in Ancient India !! *Vide supra pp vi-xii.*

(c) Moreover, Lord Sydenham, the Ex-Governor of Bombay, has also, owing to ignorance, gone the length of saying that, "In India,.....even the elements of democracy are non-existent".....(*Vide The Nineteenth Century And After*. December, 1916. p 1122). The Reader, I think, is aware that Lord Sydenham was Governor of Bombay for full five years, and if he had the mind to utilise the Government sources of information in respect of *Self-Government* and *Representative Institutions* in Ancient India, shown above, he would not have made the aforesaid ignorant assertion.

(d) In like manner, Mr. Lloyd George, in his speech at Carnarvon, on 3rd February 1917, had referred with approval to "the doctrine that the Turk is incapable of governing any other race justly, and even his own race well." (*Vide India* of February 9, 1917. p 57).

(e) And last but not least, a Western writer of acknowledged authority has declared us.—Indians, unfit for *Self-Government*. (*Vide Encyclopaedia Britannica*. XI, 20).

Nay, he has even ranked us with the savage aborigines of Figi Islands, and written with evident pride and pleasure, about the self-governing qualities of his own race and communities; though, by doing so, he has only betrayed his utter ignorance of the East, and especially of Ind and her hoary civilization. (*Vide supra pp ii-iv, and infra p 385*).

(f) It may be noted here, by the bye, that notwithstanding our having been thus ranked with the savage aborigines of the Figi Islands, even Lord Macaulay, who is in

an enormous mass of evidence to prove, that quite the contrary has really been the case. This, therefore, I have endeavoured to establish in the sequel,

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no way an admirer of the Hindus, has had to admit the fact of the people of India having been "quite as highly civilised as the victorious Spaniards. They had reared cities larger and fairer than Saragossa or Toledo, and buildings more beautiful and costly than the Cathedral of Seville. They could show bankers richer than the richest firms of Barcelona or Cadiz, viceroys whose splendour far surpassed that of Ferdinand the Catholic, myriads of cavalry and long trains of artillery, which would have astonished the great captain" (vide Macaulay's Lord Clive. Longman's Edition, 1877. p 497).

(g) Besides, it is still more worthy of note that, while on the one hand, deliberate attempts have been made to dub us unfit for *Self-Government*, on the other hand, even those statesmen at the helm, who are responsible in every way for the Government of the British Empire, unhesitatingly declare us (Hindus) *capable of Government* (vide infra p 484). Moreover, Mr. Anstey says that India's Local Self-Government and the system of Representation are as old as the East itself (see below pp 22,23). Nay, Dr. ir, W. W. Hunter has declared us to be "the *Ruling* power in a country not by force of arms, but by the vigour of hereditary culture and temperance" (infra p 25); and Sir Henry Maine and others have thought our Village Communities to be little Republics, independent, self-acting, organised, and representative. (infra pp 22,23,96,97,98).

(h) Above all, Mrs. Annie Besant has, "fearlessly" placed a book of 760 pages, entitled "How India wrought for Freedom," before the Public, "as a proof of India's fitness for Home Rule," telling every one to "Read the Penal laws against Roman Catholics in Ireland, and ask if the English, who enacted and enforced them were fit for Self-Government. See the misery and starvation of France in the eighteenth century ending in the Revolution, review

with the requisite proof which I could lay my hands upon. As in the case of our ancient *Self-Government*, much ignorance prevails in the West, so also does it prevail in respect of the influence of Public Opinion in India, which, by the by, we have always supposed, in the very nature of things, to be an *all-powerful factor* in this country, as will be seen later on. In fact, it has been an indigenens *plant* in the land, and *not* at all *exotic*. Nay, it has been the real source of *Self-Government*, and has, moreover, been of material importance in assisting it to last where nothing else has lasted. I have, therefore, thought it desirable to devote a separate Chapter to the consideration of the subject, for removing the erroneous impression that had already gained ground in the foreign heart that there was absolutely nothing like Public Opinion in the East; that as such, the Orientals never knew what Public Opinion was; that they were not aware that, Public Opinion was but a great power and a marvellous force; that it was only the Occidentals that had any idea about it at all in the West, who, therefore, having been the *Pioneers of the movement*, have been able to

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the Peasant's War in Germany, the constant Wars in Italy, the turbulence of Hungary and Poland, the royal murders and revolutions in England, and say if all these countries were more fit for Self-Government than India. Yet, they, unworthy, took it, and have purified themselves by it, becoming more fit in the using of it. India, more worthy than they to take it, is deemed unfit. The only argument against India's fitness is her submission." (Vide the Foreword in the Book of Mrs. Annie Besant, referred to above; and *infra pp 295-300*).



show to the East such splendid results thereof, as have been at present perceived, by properly utilising the force to its fullest extent.

Now, speaking of the ever-powerful *Public Opinion* in India, which, doubtless, as I have shown later on (*vide infra pp 202 @ 224*), has been as much respected, appreciated, and deemed valuable in India as in England, it is certainly very amusing not to say ridiculous to see, how some Westerners steeped in inveterate prejudice and deep ignorance about India, apply different measures to connote the quality or denote the meaning of Public Opinion, in respect of the people of India, as distinguished from those of England. And it naturally becomes extremely painful to observe, how fanciful, nay even absurd arguments have been advanced, and how great endeavours have been made *in right earnest*, even by those who consider themselves elite, erudite, veracious, and civilized, to explain to the world that, some words and expressions, viz. *public opinion, the love of liberty, the influence of the Press*, have varied and peculiar meanings — *one* in India, and *another* in England —, or, different meanings in India and in England, and that, *the same words and expressions stand for very different things at different places, and in different communities.*

This will certainly appear ludicrous, nay even unnatural, and will doubtless sound strange to all. But, I may safely say without the least fear of contradiction, that the statement is neither a fiction nor a fable, nor for the matter of that a concocted thing. But, it is a fact, and we have it in

the positive yet altogether ridiculous assertion of Lord Macaulay himself. Says he : " The political phraseology of the English in India is the same with the political phraseology of our countrymen at home ; but it is never to be forgotten that the same words stand for very different things at London and at Calcutta. We hear much about public opinion, the love of liberty, the influence of the Press. But, we must remember that public opinion means the opinion of five hundred persons who have no interest, feeling, or taste in common with the fifty millions among whom they live ; that the love of liberty means the strong objection which the five hundred feel to every measure which can prevent them from acting as they choose towards the fifty millions ; that the Press is altogether supported by the five hundred, and has no motive to plead the cause of the fifty millions." ( *Vide* " The Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay.

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7. All this forcibly recalls to our mind the observations of the Honorable Mr. D.E. Wacha, in respect of matters of this sort, or of a kindred nature. Says he : " It is notorious that there is a school of Anglo-Indian writers on Indian history, whose vocation seems primarily to deprecate, if not altogether run down, all that is valuable politically, socially, and morally, in the India of the period antecedent to British rule, rather than give a faithful portraiture ; and secondly, to persist in relating the history itself in a distorted fashion, in face of well-known facts, and pervert an impartial judgment by a dissertation on motives, which existed in their own imagination."

( *Vide* the Introduction written by the Honorable Mr. D. E. Wacha, to the Volume of Miscellaneous Writings of the late Honourable Mr. Justice M. G. Ranade, p ii. Edition 1915.)

By his nephew, the Right Honourable Sir George Otto Trevelyan. Bart. M. P. Popular Edition. 1893. p 257).

Asseverations<sup>s</sup> of this kind had they been true, or prejudiced statements like these, had they been just, would have hardly provoked any indignation or evoked surprise, and could have little induced this humble Self, to write or speak in defence of *the oldest Political Institutions* of Ind, or of *the latent force of Public Opinion* that has been in existence in the Land of the Seven Rivers, from her hoary antiquity, and even before other ancient nations had yet raised their heads ( *supra pp ii-iv*, *infra pp 101,348,497*). But, when it has actually been perceived, that not only the ignorant masses, but also the elite and the refined in manners, the erudite and the highly civilized, nay, even well read and the *foremost politicians*, barring eminent exceptions, pronounce authoritatively, and yet without an iota of evidence, that the *Orient* never knew, before her contact with the West, what *Self-Government* or *Public Opinion* was; when it is observed, that even the most distinguished statesmen show such prodigious ignorance of the East and of hoary Ind; that even the learned, excepting a few, are not inclined to dive deep into the *past* and its real sources of information,—sources which, as will be shown in the sequel, have been *as pure as crystal*, and have not, in the least, been contaminated, tampered with, or made corrupt and impure (*Vide infra pp 129,130,52 foot-notes*); that no one, except only a few,

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8. *Vide Supra pp xiii-xviii, infra Chapters ii-X.*

would go even below the surface, to see for himself, how really the facts stand ; and that even those, who emphatically claim the epithet of *veracious*, make statements quite the reverse of truth, or show an undesirable attitude in passing sweeping condemnations on the Orient, *even* while they, as a matter of fact, stand face to face with tangible evidences in respect of the grandeur of Ind, of her Self-Government, of her Elective franchise, of her great Institutions—Political, Social, Religious, Moral, Educational,—of her past gigantic intellectual achievements, of the wonderful acumen and deep penetration of the *Sons of the soil*, as also the very *rare talents of her gifted few* ; and when lastly, it is noticed that during this process of wholesale condemnation, not the slightest endeavour was ever made by those who have condemned us, to open up *the* invaluable *Vedic Mines*, or explore *the fathomless deep* of our ancient Sanskrit Literature, for the sake of getting genuine information as regards the nature of our Vedic and Post-Vedic polity, our Political Institutions, our administration of olden times, as also the various forms of Government prevalent in Ancient India ; then, certainly, it is humbly deemed to be time for an unpretentious attempt to vindicate the *prior* and *legitimate* claims of Ind, in respect of her most ancient Self-Government, and even of her past and present capacity, or aptitude for Self-Government, by raising our voice, howsoever feeble and humble, howsoever solitary for the moment, in the *just cause* of this most ancient country and its hoary civilization, with

fervent hopes that true representation of facts will never be considered to be a forbidden game.

In view, therefore, of throwing, on this most important and yet greatly neglected subject, some side-lights from the great world Torch, the Rig-Veda and other Vedic and Post-Vedic Literature, I have ventured, in the following pages, to give a short yet connected and consistent History of the Vedic and Post-Vedic Polity, its *Representative Character*, and the Brāhmanic Constitutional Monarchy, that seems to have been moulded by the indigenous influence of the Political Institutions of Bhāratavarsha.

I have also endeavoured to show further, in a separate chapter, how remarkable has been the influence and how great the weight, which *Public Opinion in Ind* has ever been exercising from the Vedic times, not only here and there, but throughout this extensive continent of India, on her people and her society at large, on her various institutions scattered over the vast country, and even on the *sovereigns* of the times; which, therefore, secured some sort of *constitution* and *representation*, though not in a perfect form, nor even in such forms as we see in the West at present, and thus *moulded* the actions of the persons in power.

Here, by the bye, I may be permitted to state that, I have nowhere indulged, in the least, in fiction, and have, therefore, as a mere narrator of bare facts, only ventured to do what I could, in the investigation of matters that required close scrutiny. In short, I have humbly claimed the

privilege of looking into the available genuine sources of information or other evidence, and have also conscientiously done the duty of sifting it according to the rules of historical criticism, and the accepted notions in respect thereof, howsoever feeble my pen, howsoever humble the attempt, especially as I conceive that the sacred object in performing the duty is to.....“Nothing extenuate. Nor aught set down in malice.”

Or, to quote Goethe :—“The historian’s duty is to separate the true from the false, the certain from the uncertain, and the doubtful from that which cannot be accepted.....Every investigator must, before all things, look upon himself as one who is summoned to serve on a jury. He has only to consider how far the statement of the case is complete, and clearly set forth by the evidence. Then, he draws his conclusion and gives his vote, whether it be, that his opinion coincides with that of the foreman or not.” (*The Maxims and Reflections* of Goethe).

Naturally, therefore, I am not without diffidence in respect of the work that I have undertaken, though it be from pure love of labour. However, I hope that this will, by exhibiting the other side of the shield, remove, partially at any rate, if not completely, the prodigious ignorance and the consequent inveterate prejudice of the West, about ancient Ind and her peoples, her former *Self-Government* and her autonomous administration, her hoary civilization and her wide influence on the world, beyond Bhārata Varsha. (See *infra pp* 528, 529).

And here, I believe, it would not be out of place at this stage to state that, to shape the whole future is not our problem. But, the all-ruling Heaven willing, it is just possible for us to do what we ought to do. Obviously, the general issue, as is always the case, will ever rest with that Highest Intelligence, who is *Omniscient, Omnipotent, and Omnipresent.*

Lastly, I would here further respectfully observe that, the one great thing or even an essential precept, underlying all successful literary efforts, is, I humbly think, to look into our heart, to be fearless, and to be ever true to our Conscience, nay be always loyal to the promptings of our own soul. In this way, and by these means alone,

"If we can only brave the storm,  
Or do the painful duty,  
The clouds will break, the light will Come,  
And fill the world with beauty."

All these facts having emboldened me to write and complete the work, I have ventured to deliver it to the candour and curiosity of the Public.

POONA  
January 1918. }

**N. B. Pavgee.**



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## Errata Et Corrigenda.

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viii	8	burried	buried
xiii	18	favourite	favourite
xv	31	wrough	wrought
25	27	desciple	disciple
47	10	geners	genoral
50	35	Cnommune	commune
62	3	भूरिदान्ब	भूरिदान्ब
71	21	littles	titles
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88	27	एतद्देश प्रसूतस्य	एतद्देश प्रसूतस्य
101	4	anti-diluvian	ante-diluvian
102	5	boron	born
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129	4	अतो नति-	अतोऽनति
147	17-18	self-contains	self-contained
167	24	histarion	historian
181	19	administative	administrative
189	13	p 164	Vol I. p 164
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261	3	gacat	great
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367	10	p II.	p II. Vol xi.
386	6	cæsor	Cæsar
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453	28	Era 968	Era 998
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524	12	riligion	religion.