

RISE AND GROWTH OF
BOMBAY MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT
BY D. E. WACHA.

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RISE AND GROWTH
OF
BOMBAY MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

BY

D. E. WACHA,
*Councillor of the Bombay Municipal Corporation
and its Ex-President.*

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TO
THE HON. SIR PHEROZESHAH MEHTA, K.G I.E.
MEMBER
OF THE
BOMBAY MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
FOR
THE UNINTERRUPTED PERIOD OF 43 YEARS,
ITS
CHOSEN REPRESENTATIVE
IN THE
BOMBAY LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
FOR 21 YEARS
AND
FOUR TIMES ITS PRESIDENT,
THIS VOLUME
IS
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED
AS A
TRIBUTE OF SINCERE ADMIRATION
FOR
HIS DISTINGUISHED AND DISINTERESTED SERVICE
AS A
CITIZEN OF BOMBAY
AND
A GREAT LEADER OF THOUGHT
IN THE COUNTRY
BY
HIS LIFE-LONG FRIEND AND CO-WORKER
THE AUTHOR.

FOREWORD.

In the years 1901 and 1902 I had contributed, at the suggestion of its proprietors and publishers, the well-known Messrs. S. M. Ratnagar & Co, a series of articles on the Rise and Growth of Municipal Government in the city of Bombay to the columns of the *Bombay Municipal Journal*, an excellent periodical but unfortunately defunct for some years past. The articles were widely read, and I was urged by many a friend to have them collected in book form for permanent reference. Owing to a variety of work I was not able to do so till the close of last year when I applied to Messrs. Ratnagar & Co, to make me available their own press files which they very kindly did. I had also their permission to reprint the articles. Meanwhile my other enterprising press friends, Messrs. G. A. Natesan & Co, with their usual courtesy, which I greatly appreciate, offered to print and publish the book. The volume is now before the public.

All that I would venture in this place to claim for the book is this. I have endeavoured to collect what may be called the dry bones of our civic history which, it is to be hoped, some historian in the near future will clothe with flesh and blood and produce a living narrative which shall serve as an enduring record for the benefit of future generations of the Bombay Municipal Corporation which has long since been recognised as a model for all India to copy. It is indeed a stately structure, beautiful to behold for the symmetry of its design and the elegance of its proportion. Bombay owes this edifice, firstly, to the liberal

statesmanship of Sir Bartle Frere and Lord Reay, the two most brilliant administrators after Mounstuart Elphinstone, secondly, to the sagacity and patriotism of the legislators who were instrumental in giving it body and form in the Legislative Council of whom the late Mr. Telang, Sir Frank Forbes Adam, and Sir Pherozechah M. Mehta were the most conspicuous, and, thirdly, to the public spirit and unceasing activity of those past and present members who have so well taken their respective part in the active proceedings in the civic hall. That hall, it is gratifying to record, is already instinct with the noble traditions of the past half a century. May it be the good fortune of the Corporations of the future to garner and enrich them preserving for all time to come the proud motto of *Urbs Prima in Indis* which is inscribed on its banner in letters of gold.

1st October 1913.

D. E. WACHA.

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APPENDIX NO. 1.

MEMO OF LEGISLATION SINCE 1888 FOR THE AMENDMENT OF CITY OF BOMBAY MUNICIPAL ACT OF 1888.

Act IV of 1888.—Amending Sections regarding reservation of control by the Government of India over the loan transactions of the Corporation and the removal of oil of petroleum from the list of dutiable articles etc.

Act I of 1894.—Amending Sections regarding the question of repayment by the Corporation of the Vehar water-works debt, extension of period of repayment etc., and also regarding the question of giving power to the Corporation of investing surplus moneys.

Act I of 1897.—Amending the Act so as to enable the Deputy Municipal Commissioner to represent the Municipal Commissioner at meetings of the Corporation and Standing Committee.

Act I of 1898.—(The City of Bombay Municipal Investment Act). Supplementing the provisions of the Municipal Act with respect to the Investment of Sinking Funds and Surplus moneys and to validate certain Debentures.

Act II of 1900.—Raising the maximum monthly pay of the Executive Health Officer from Rs. 1500 to Rs. 2000 and the minimum from Rs. 1200 to Rs. 1500.

Act V of 1903.—Raising the maximum salary allowable to the Municipal Executive Engineer from Rs. 1500 to Rs. 2000.

Act V of 1905.—Amending Sections relating to drainage and the construction and inspection of buildings, and also regarding the control of the supply of water to private properties and the overcrowding and ventilation of houses.

Act III of 1907.—(The City of Bombay Police Charges Act). Transferring the City Police Charges to Government and giving full control of public vaccination, medical relief and primary education to the Corporation instead.

Act I of 1910.—Adding clauses to certain Sections regarding provision of music for the people and issue of duplicate securities etc.

Act II of 1911.—Amending the Act so as to admit of creation of the post of Hydraulic Engineer and regarding levy of halalkhore tax on certain premises, abolition of cycle tax etc., improving the system of numbering houses in the City, provision of sufficient means of egress in the event of fire, suppressing the smoke nuisance, control over bake-houses, checking the illicit import of meat, control of hand-carts, raising the motor tax etc.

APPENDIX No. 2.

Gross Income of Bombay Municipality.

Years.	Income in lakhs of	Incidence per head of the population.			Gross Assessment in crores of
		Rs.	Rs.	A. P.	
1867 ..	30.40	3	6	1	1.63
1872 ..	36.48	4	3	1	1.29
1877 ..	32.41	4	4	2	1.15
1882 ..	46.12	4	15	6	1.26
1887 ..	49.61	4	14	10	2.16
1892 ..	62.65	8	6	1	2.86
1897 ..	62.08	6	5	10	2.89
1902 ..	77.66	8	10	3	3.18
1907 ..	96.48	8	7	10	4.14
1912 ..	126.55	10	13	2	5.36

NOTE.—From 1865 to 1872 there was a Bench of Justice who formed the Corporation. Owing to financial extravagances of the chief Executive the Municipality was reconstructed and reorganised on an elective basis with a Corporation in 1872.

APPENDIX No. 3.

*Gross Expenditure of the Bombay Municipality
in Lakhs of Rupees.*

Year.	Total Expenditure.	Interest on Debt.	Public Works.	Public Health.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1867 ..	42·16	0·21	17·38	14·26
1872 ..	31·15	4·75	12·86	7·61
1877 ..	30·36	7·09	8·96	7·49
1882 ..	47·53	12·28	14·01	10·14
1887 ..	41·77	23·27	13·84	10·10
1892 ..	57·82	21·97	17·72	12·92
1897 ..	70·04	22·60	15·55	14·09
1902 ..	82·26	27·11	15·71	20·97
1907 ..	85·20	32·26	19·39	21·16
1912 ..	114·84	37·14	24·92	21·40

NOTE.—From 1865 to 1872 there was a Bench of Justice who formed the Corporation. Owing to financial extravagances of the chief Executive the Municipality was reconstructed and reorganised on an elective basis with a Corporation in 1872.

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