

A  
NATIONAL SYSTEM OF TAXATION

BEING A STUDY OF THE THEORY OF TAXATION  
IN RELATION TO NATIONAL WELFARE  
WITH SOME APPLICATIONS TO BRITISH INDIA

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## PREFACE.

In this book an attempt has been made to set out in more or less systematic form, some of my own views on the subject of taxation. Having a profound faith in the validity of the doctrine that the end and aim of all state existence and activity is the promotion of the well-being or good-living of the members of the community for whom it exists, I have tried in these pages to trace in outline, the path along which the logic of the doctrine, in so far as it may apply to the taxative policy of a modern national state, appears fairly to lead. The theory of taxation, discussed on the basis of the doctrine, points to certain important conclusions regarding the conditions and construction of a national system of taxation, which, though they may require further investigation at the hands of research students are well worth the attention of all finance ministers and National Legislatures. So far as the present book is concerned, no pretence is made, that it

contains a complete or comprehensive discussion of the subject of taxation from the standpoint of the doctrine, nor is any claim made to expert knowledge of economics, finance and politics, or even a full acquaintance with the literature on the subject. The aim of the book is very humble and it contents itself with merely suggesting and indicating the lines on which the taxative policy of a modern national state requires to be guided and governed: thought in some important matters it has been thought useful to elucidate some of the general considerations arrived at by application to conditions obtaining in British India. On the whole, whatever may be thought of the usefulness of the book from the standpoint of the expert reader who will probably find nothing new or original in it, it is my humble hope that my exposition of the subject may incite further exploration and help the way to a clearer understanding of the nature and conditions of a national system of taxation as it ought to be.

Before I sent the mss. to the press, I placed it in the hands of the late Dr. Alfred Marshall who, while expressing his inability on account of extreme old age to give me any help by way of suggestions and corrections, went through the matter, and

communicated to me that he found it to be an interesting and suggestive contribution on the subject. Dr. Marshall is now dead, and in view of the fact that the little knowledge of economics I possess, and my interest in economic and social problems are largely due to the inspiration of his writings, I dedicate this book respectfully to his memory.

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