

PREFACE

IN one sense, it was an evil day for India when the *Sacred Books of the East* made their appearance : it showed to what absurd lengths 'other-worldliness' could go. That the culture of the ancient Hindus was a well-balanced one and that they were as much worldly as any other people, have been amply demonstrated by recent researches in Indology. The present book is the outcome of a desire to establish the fact, that in realms of political thought, the Hindus were not as backward as some writers try to make out ; and with that end in view, I have examined some aspects of political thought in some detail.

Most of the articles incorporated in this book were originally meant for periodicals : this will, perhaps, explain the manner of treatment and some unavoidable repetitions which have crept into the book. I have throughout dealt with political thought, and have no concern with political institutions as such. I had a mind to make the book more comprehensive by including some more articles in it, dealing with the nature of punishment, ideal of universal sovereignty etc. ; but for some reason I had to give up the idea. Up till now, the literature on the subject is scanty, though growing, and it requires many serious students to explore it in full : it is with this end in view, and also

to facilitate comparative study, that ample footnotes have been added.

I have to thank the editors of the *Calcutta Review* and the *Modern Review* for their kindness in allowing me to incorporate some articles which appeared in their Reviews. (I) and (VII) appeared in the former in four issues,—March, 1925 ; Sept., Nov., Dec., 1925 —while (V) appeared in the latter in Oct., 1924.

To my former teacher Sj. Satis Chandra Ray one cannot be too highly grateful : it was he, who, in the beginning, encouraged me in my contributions to the periodicals. It is both a pleasure and duty to acknowledge my indebtedness to the writings of Professors Benoy Kumar Sarkar and Upendra Nath Ghoshal and to those of Dr. Pramatha Nath Banerjee ; specially so, in the case of my article on the origin of kingship. My colleague, Sj. Jyotirmoy Sen of the Dacca University, has occasionally helped me with suggestions, while Sj. Sarat Chandra Sen and my brother Sm. Abani Kumar Sen have considerably lightened my labours by helping me in revising the proofs.

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