PREFACE.

The following pages embody the results of the research work done by me since 1975 as a part-time research student in the History Department of Sardar Patel University, Vallab Vidyanagar (Gujarat).

The very title of the dissertation, "The Development of Rural Local Self-Government in Madras State: 1920-1950 - A Study" indicates the virgin nature of the problem taken up for research.

Research on local self-government done so far in the areas of specialization has covered only the constitutional and functional development.

The dissertation is concerned with the development of three types of rural local institutions viz., the District boards, Taluk boards, and Village Panchayats in the background of provincial politics. They have clearly demarcated territories, powers, functions and finance. Various Acts passed by the state government regulate their activities but their functions are related primarily to the population living within their jurisdiction.

Thus the present study may be expected to fill an important gap in the series of studies emphasising the origin, growth and development of micro-level bodies in Madras State and the political system under which they were taking shape.
It may, however, be stressed that urban local units vis. the Corporation of Madras, Municipalities and Town Panchayats are as such beyond the scope of the present study.

Being a full-time teacher in History I could not give a formal shape to the present historical problem though I had been thinking about it for the past two decades. Hence the thesis could not have seen the light of the day had not the authorities of the Sardar Patel University graciously permitted me to register for the Ph.D. degree.

Many individuals and institutions have helped me in the preparation of the thesis. My heartfelt thanks are due to all of them.

I owe a deep debt of gratitude to my beloved supervisor Dr. Arya Ramachandra G. Tiwari, M.A., LL.B., Ph.D., Professor and Head of the Post-Graduate Department of History, Sardar Patel University, Vallab Vidyanagar, for the valuable guidance, encouragement and wholehearted support which he has unstintingly given to me at every stage of my research work.

Special mention must be made of the authorities of Sri Ramakrishnan Mission Vidyalaya Central Library at Coimbatore and the Private Library of the late lamented industrial prodigy of Coimbatore Mr. G.D. Naidu.

The Curator and the staff of Madras Record Office (Tamilnadu Archives) were most helpful.
I was permitted to use the personal collections—both published and unpublished—at the Periyar E.V.R. Library and Research Centre at Vepery, Madras.

The Librarians and staff of the Coimbatore Public Central Library and the Madras University Library (Both in Madras) spared no efforts to give their utmost co-operation and help whenever I approached them for my requirements while collecting data for this dissertation.

I must also thank the authorities and employees of the Rajapalayam Rajas' College, Rajapalayam, who were not only co-operative but also provided me the necessary environment to finish my dissertation in time.

Finally I crave the indulgence of the scholars for inadvertent omissions, if any, on the documentation part of the thesis.

With these prefatory remarks I place this work before the learned historians with utmost humility.

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