

Kautilya's
Arthashastra

Translated into English by
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[Thus ends Chapter III, "Determination of the place of the Triple Vedas" among Sciences in Book I, "Concerning Discipline" of the *Arthasástra* of Kautilya.]

CHAPTER IV. THE END OF SCIENCES.

Varta and Dandaniti.

AGRICULTURE, cattle-breeding and trade constitute *Varta*. It is most useful in that it brings in grains, cattle, gold, forest produce (*kupya*), and free labour (*vishti*). It is by means of the treasury and the army obtained solely through *Varta* that the king can hold under his control both his and his enemy's party.

That sceptre on which the well-being and progress of the sciences of *Anvikshaki*, the triple *Vedas*, and *Varta* depend is known as *Danda* (punishment). That which treats of *Danda* is the law of punishment or science of government (*dandaniti*).

It is a means to make acquisitions, to keep them secure, to improve them, and to distribute among the deserved the profits of improvement. It is on this science of government that the course of the progress of the world depends.

"Hence," says my teacher, "whoever is desirous of the progress of the world shall ever hold the sceptre raised (*udyatadanda*). Never can there be a better instrument than the sceptre to bring people under control."

"No," says Kautilya; for whoever imposes severe punishment becomes repulsive to the people; while he who awards mild punishment becomes contemptible. But whoever imposes

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punishment as deserved becomes respectable. For punishment (*danda*) when awarded with due consideration, makes the people devoted to righteousness and to works productive of wealth and enjoyment; while punishment, when ill-awarded under the influence of greed and anger or owing to ignorance, excites fury even among hermits and ascetics dwelling in forests, not to speak of householders.

But when the law of punishment is kept in abeyance, it gives rise to such disorder as is implied in the proverb of fishes (*matsyanyayamudbhavayati*); for in the absence of a magistrate (*dandadharabhava*), the strong will swallow the weak; but under his protection, the weak resist the strong.

This people (*loka*) consisting of four castes and four orders of religious life, when governed by the king with his sceptre, will keep to their respective paths, ever devotedly adhering to their respective duties and occupations.

[Thus ends Chapter IV, "Determination of the Place of Varta and of Dandaniti" among Sciences in Book I, "Concerning Discipline" of the *Arthasástra* of Kautilya. "The End of Sciences" is completed.]

CHAPTER V. ASSOCIATION WITH THE AGED.

HENCE the (first) three sciences (out of the four) are dependent for their well-being on the science of government. *Danda*, punishment, which alone can procure safety and security of life is, in its turn, dependent on discipline (*vinaya*).

Discipline is of two kinds: artificial and natural; for