

STATEMENT NO.1.

HOW THE PRESENT WORK TENDS TO THE GENERAL ADVANCEMENT OF
KNOWLEDGE.

"The Purāṇas occupy a unique position in the sacred and secular literature of the Hindus, being regarded as next in importance only to the Vedas."¹ They afford us greater insight into all aspects of Hinduism and are useful for a cultural study of the Indian Society as well as for a comparative study in the fields of religion, philosophy and mythology etc. "Collectively they may be described as a popular encyclopaedia of ancient and mediaeval Hinduism - religious, philosophical, historical, personal, social and political".² In short, one gets a complete picture of the mind, heart, spirit and body of India from the comprehensive study of the Purāṇas.³

Among the eighteen Mahāpurāṇas, Matsya, Mārkaṇḍeya, Brahma, Vāyu, Agni are critically studied by Drs. S.G. Kantawala, Miss N.Y. Desai, Miss S.H. Trivedi, D.R. Patil, S.D. Gyani respectively. But except one or two articles and a very few stray paragraphs or sections in some monographs or in some works⁴, no scholar has paid any attention till to-day towards the critical study of the Brahmavaivartapurāṇa and hence there is a long-felt desideratum of an exhaustive critical and cultural study of the BVP which it so richly deserves.

Inspite of the few notices by the scholars there is still ample scope for a critical study of the BVP from the cultural point of view, especially from the point of view of society, religion and mythology.

It is from these points of view that the present study of the BVP is undertaken because it provides a rich and valuable material for the study of Kṛṣṇaism, an important branch of Vaiṣṇavism, Śaktism, Tāntrism etc. which were prevalent in Bengal in medieval India. Over and above this, it notes some of the local castes of Bengal and thereby the Purāṇa contributes significantly towards the study of the history of the caste-system in India.

It is among many other ways that this present humble work "Ancient Indian society, Religion and Mythology as depicted in the Brahmavaivartapurāṇa", contributes to the general advancement of knowledge.

-
1. Pusalkar A.D. Studies in the Epics and Purāṇas, introduction P. XIII
 2. Pargiter F.E. "Purāṇas" ERE X P.448.
 3. Banerjee A.K. "Purāṇas" P.65. Prabuddhabharata LIX No.2 Feb. 1954.
 4. Upadhyay Baladeva Purāṇavimarśa
 Shastri D.K. Purāṇavivecana
 Wilson H.H. Viṣṇupurāṇa
 Hazra R.C. Purāṇic Records on Hindu Rites and customs.

STATEMENT NO.2.

SOURCES, INDEBTNESS AND ORIGINALITY.

In the preparation of the present work, I have fully drawn upon all the available literature in print in many languages. An acknowledgement has been fully made at proper places.

I studied the text and the relevant literature and have tried to express my own views after a critical study.