PREFACE

A knowledge of ancient Indian Geography is virtually indispensable not only for the proper reconstruction and study of ancient Indian history, but also for the proper appreciation of the ancient Indian culture, its literature secular and religious, its philosophy, its polity and administrative system and its social institutions. The ancient Indian works on geography in Sanskrit have not come down to us. Therefore the task of the compilation of a comprehensive and authentic geography of ancient India becomes very imperative in order to serve as an aid to all branches of Indological studies. Fortunately, we have a very rich source material for the knowledge of ancient Indian geography which lies scattered in the two great Epics - The Ramayana and The Mahabharata and the Puranas. Some other works as for example the Brhatasamhita of Varahamihira and the Kavyalilanidhi of Rajasekhara supply important information on the subject.

Ancient Sanskrit and Prakrit inscriptions are a very rich and important source of ancient Indian geographical names. The information contained in the land-grants is particularly reliable as it is based
on a definite information about the place names mentioned and is in most cases capable of identification in modern terms. Although the editors of the inscriptions published so far, generally deal with the geographical information contained in these records but this information is not easily available to the reader, as it lies scattered in a large number of research journals. It is therefore necessary to collect it at one place. Moreover, there is the need of a proper classification of the geographical matter contained in these inscriptions, and of establishing a co-relationship with the information obtainable from Sanskrit literature. A fresh study of the geographical information obtained from the inscriptions is therefore a great desideratum. Such a study can be undertaken only by a student of Sanskrit who has a sound knowledge of Epigraphy.

As the inscriptions of the earlier period upto A.D. 650 have been covered up in the Thesis of Dr. Parmanand who was originally registered at the Panjab University, I have ventured to take up the succeeding period from A.D. 650 to A.D. 1000, confining my study to Sanskrit and Prakrit records only, leaving out the inscriptions in local dialects to which justice can be done only by a student of the particular
region to which the inscriptions belong. These inscriptions are available in the research periodicals such as:

1) Archaeological Survey of India - Annual Reports;
2) Archaeological Survey Reports, Alexander Cunningham;
3) Ancient India - Publication of the Archaeological Survey of India;
4) Corpus Inscriptions Indicaeum Volumes IV-V;
5) Epigraphia India Volumes 1 to 3;
6) Indian Antiquary;
7) Indian Historical Quarterly; Calcutta.
8) Indian Culture, Calcutta.
9) Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
10) Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal.
13) Journal of the Oriental Institute, Baroda.
14) New Indian Antiquary;
15) Vienna Oriental Journal.

The present study has been divided into eight chapters. The first chapter presents a survey of the different sources of information. This clearly brings out the special contribution of the epigraphic records.
to our knowledge of the geography of India while the literary sources or the writings of the foreigners refer to the major countries, capital cities, rivers and mountains of India, the inscriptions reveal the names of districts and sometimes even their sub-divisions, small towns and village, small local streams, rivulets and mills and thus help in completing the picture of India which is otherwise known in broad outlines.

In order to serve as a background for the general understanding of ancient Indian geography in some detail, the information available in the epics and the Puranas has been set out in the second chapter. The ancient writers on the subject usually divided India into five regions - Eastern, Western, Northern, Southern and the Middle region. From this point onwards commences a classified account of the information derived from inscriptions. The entire information has been arranged under the following topics: -

Countries and the People

Division, District and Smaller Units

Cities

Villages

Mountains

Rivers

Besides giving the identification of the ancient
names, some additional information derived from modern archaeological research and also from a study of Sanskrit literature has been added, wherever possible. This information may prove useful for the political, economic, religious and ethnological history of the country and may prove the adage that the study of ancient Indian history will remain incomplete without an adequate knowledge of ancient Indian geography. The present study is an humble attempt in that direction. It is now for the learned critics to judge how far I have succeeded in my attempt. Indeed our great poet Kālidāsa has very aptly remarked:

का निमित्तं द्रुपदं न सयं तस्य प्रपन्नं प्राणं

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November, 1981.

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