

This divergence is a remarkable fact and may afford important evidence as to the extent to which the Purāṇa is genuine. We have already referred to the opinion of Professor Wilson that the Purāṇa is incomplete because of its abrupt conclusion. He must have based his opinion on a consideration of Bengal manuscripts, for therein the conclusion is certainly abrupt. Take the various lection, however, with which Maithila manuscripts supplement the Purāṇa, and the conclusion is not so abrupt.

The abrupt conclusion of Bengal manuscripts is to us an evidence of their comparative purity. If our theory be correct that the Purāṇas are compilations of detached memoranda, their abrupt conclusion can be no more wonderful than the abrupt conclusion of a person's journal, in which the diaries were entered at different times and on different occasions ; and the greater the abruptness of the conclusion, the less is the suspicion of after-embellishment.

The Bengal manuscripts, as we have already said, do not contain the foolish and hackneyed enumeration of the eighteen Purāṇas, and of Vyāsa their common parent, which can serve only to detract from their value as historical guides. There are however seven slokas at the end on the glory of the Márcanḍeya which are no doubt an interpolation. Setting these aside, the Purāṇa concludes with the words, "Dama (the king) said nothing to his father's enemies when they were put to the flight." This may have been the last entry of the annalist who wrote this Purāṇa. If we accept it as the conclusion, and discard the supplement of the Maithila manuscripts, we may, again, have some light thrown on the introductory part of the Purāṇa.

The introductory part, or what we have called our