favour, recovered his eyesight, and, after seeing his son as king, to have died at the ripe age of a hundred years and ten days. Accord- ing to the same stanzas, the piece was enacted after the king’s death ; but it is probable that they were added for a subsequent performance. In Bana’s novel *Kãdamban* **(c. A.D.** 630), a king Südraka is represented as having resided at Bidisã (Bhilsa)— some 130 m. east of Ujjayinï (Ujjain), where the scene of the play is laid. Chãrudatta, a Brahman merchant, reduced to poverty, and

Vasantasenã, an accomplished courtezan, meet and fall in love with each other. This forms the main plot, which is interwoven with a political underplot, resulting in a change of dynasty. The connexion between the two plots is effected by means of the king’s rascally brother-in-law, who pursues Vasantasenã with his addresses, as well as by the part of the rebellious cowherd Aryaka, who, having escaped from prison, finds shelter in the hero’s house. The wicked prince, on being rejected, strangles Vasantasenã, and accuses Chãrudatta of having murdered her; but, just as the latter is about to be executed, his lady love appears again on the scene. Meanwhile Äryaka has succeeded in deposing the king, and, having himself mounted the throne of Ujjain, he raises Vasantasena to the position of an honest woman, to enable her to become the wife of Chãrudatta. The play is one of the longest, consisting of not less than ten acts, some of which, however, are very short. The interest of the action is, on the whole, well sustained; and, altogether, the piece presents a vivid picture of the social manners of the time, whilst the author shows himself imbued with a keen sense of humour, and a master in the delineation of character.

In Kãlidãsa the dramatic art attained its highest point of perfec­tion. From this accomplished poet we have three well-constructed plays, abounding in stanzas of exquisite tenderness and fine descriptive passages, viz. the two well-known mytho- pastoral dramas, *Sakuntalä* in seven and *Vikramorvasï@@*1 in five acts, and a piece of court intrigue, distinctly inferior to the other two, entitled *Malaυikagnimitra@@*2 in five acts. King Agnimitra, who has two wives, falls in love with Mãlavikã, maid to the first queen. His wives endeavour to frustrate their affection for each other, but in the end Mãlavikã turns out to be a princess by birth, and is

accepted by the queens as their sister.

êrï-Harshadeva—identical with the king (Sflãditya) Harshaνar-

dhana of Kãnyakubja (Kanauj) mentioned above, who ruled in the first half of the 7th century—has three plays attributed to him ; though possibly only dedicated to him by poets patronized by him. This at least commentators state to have been the case as regards the *Ratnävali,* the authorship of which they assign to

Bãna. lndeed, had they been the king’s own productions, one might have expected the Chinese pilgrims (especially I-tsing, who saw one of the plays performed) to mention the fact. The *Ratnaυaιi,@@*3 *“* the pearl necklace,” is a graceful comedy of genteel domestic manners, in four acts, of no great originality of invention ; the author having been largely indebted to Kälidãsa’s plays. A decided merit of the poet’s art is the simplicity and clearness of his style. Ratnãvalï, a Ceylon princess, is sent by her father to the court of King Udayana of Vatsa to become his second wife. She suffers shipwreck, but is rescued and received into Udayana’s palace under the name of Sãgarikã, as one of Queen Vãsavadattã’s attendants. The king falls in love with her, and the queen tries to keep them apart from each other: but, on learning the maiden’s origin, she becomes reconciled, and recognizes her as a “ sister.” According to H. H. Wilson, “ the manners depictured are not influenced by lofty principle or profound reflection, but they are mild, affectionate and elegant. It may be doubted whether the harems of other eastern nations, either in ancient or modern times, would afford materials for as favourable a delineation.” Very similar in construction, but distinctly in­ferior, is the *Priyadarsikä,* in four acts, having for its plot another amour of the same king. The scene of the third play, the *Naganandaf@@*4or “ joy of the serpents ” (in five acts), on the other hand, is laid in semi-divine regions. Jîmütavähana, a prince of the Vidyãdharas, imbued with Buddhist principles, weds Malayavatï, daughter of the king of the Siddhas, a votary of Gaurî (Siva’s wife). But, learning that Garuda the mythic bird, is in the habit of consuming one snake daily, he resolves to offer himself to the bird as a victim, and finally succeeds in converting Garuda to the principle of ahiípsã, or abstention from doing injury to living beings; but he himself is about

to succumb from the wounds he has received, when, through the timely intervention of the goddess Gauri, he is restored to his former condition. The piece seems to have been intended as a compromise between Brãhmanical (Saiva) and Buddhist doctrines, being thus in keeping with the religious views of king Harsha, who, as we know from Hiuen Thsang, favoured Buddhism, but was very tolerant to Brãhmans. It begins with a benedictory stanza to Buddha, and concludes with one to Gaurî. The author is generally believed to have been a Buddhist, but it is more likely that he was a Saiva Brahman, possibly Bana himself. Nay, one might almost feel inclined to take the hero’s self-sacrifice in favour of a Nãga as a travesty **of** Buddhist principles. In spite of its shortcomings of construction the Nãgãnanda is a play of considerable merit, the characters being drawn with a sure hand, and the humorous element introduced into it of a very respectable order.

Bhavabhuti, surnamed Sri-kaçtha, “he in whose throat there is beauty (eloquence),”@@5 was a native of Padmapura in the Vidarbha country (the Berars), being the son of the Brãhman Nïlakantha and his wife Jãtukarni. He passed his literary life chiefly at the court of Yasovarman of Kanauj, who must have reigned in the latter part of the 7th century, seeing that, after a successful reign, he suffered defeat at the hands of Lalãditya of Kashmir, who had mounted his throne in **A.D.** 695. Bhavabhuti was the author of three plays, two of which, the *Mahä- υiracharita@@*6 (“ life of the great hero ”) and the *Uttararämacharita@@*7(“ later life of Rama ”), in seven acts each, form together a dramatized version of the story of the *Ramayana.* The third, the *Mälati- mαdhαvα@@*8 is a domestic drama in ten acts, representing the fortunes of Mãdhava and Mãlatï, the son and daughter of two ministers of neighbouring kings, who from childhood have been destined for each other, but, by the resolution of the maiden’s royal master to marry her to an old and ugly favourite of his, are for a while threatened with permanent separation. The action of the play is full of life, and abounds in stirring, though sometimes improbable, incidents. The poet is considered by native critics to be not only not inferior to Kãlidãsa, but even to have surpassed him in his *Uttararäma­charita,* which certainly contains many fine poetic passages instinct with pathos and genuine feeling. But, though he ranks deservedly high as a lyric poet, he is far inferior to Kãlidãsa as a dramatic artist. Whilst the latter delights in depicting the gentler feelings and tender emotions of the human heart and the peaceful scenes of rural life, the younger poet finds a peculiar attraction in the sterner and more imposing aspects of nature and the human character. Bhavabhñti’s language, though polished and felicitous, is elaborate and artificial compared with that of Kãlidãsa, and his genius **is** sorely shackled by a slavish adherence to the arbitrary rules of dramatic theorists.

Bhatta Nãrãyana, surnamed Mpgarãja or Simha, “ the lion,” the author of the *Venisamhαrα@@*9 (“ the binding up of the braid of hair ”), is a poet of uncertain date. Tradition makes him one of the five Kanauj Brãhmans whom king Ädisura of Bengal, desirous of establishing the pure Vaishnava doctrine, invited to his court, and from whom the modern Bengali Brãhmans are supposed to be descended. But be this as it may, a copperplate grant was issued to our poet in a.d. 840; and, besides, he is quoted in Anandavardhana’s *Dhυanyaloka,* written in the latter part of the 9th century. The play, consisting of six acts, takes its title from an incident in the story of the *Mahabharata* when.Draupadï, having been lost at dice by Yudhishthira, has her braid of hair unloosened, and is dragged by the hair before the assembly by one of the Kauravas; this insult being subsequently avenged by Bhïma. slaying the offender, whereupon Draupadï’s braid is tied up again, as beseems a married woman. The piece is composed in a style similar to that of Bhavabhûti’s plays, but is inferior to them in dramatic construction and poetic merit, though valued by critics for its strict adherence to the rules of the dramatic theory.

The *Hαnuman-nataka@@*10 is a dramatized version of the story **of** Rãma, interspersed with numerous purely descriptive poetic passages. It consists of fourteen acts, and on account of its length is also called the *Mahä-nätaka,* or great drama. Contrary to the general practice, it has no prologue, and Sanskrit alone is employed in it. Tradition relates that it was composed by Hanumãn, the monkey general, and inscribed on rocks; but, Vãlmïki, the author of the *Rämäyana,*

@@@1 Both these plays are known in different recensions in different

parts of India. The Bengali recension of the *Sakuntalä* was trans- ated by Sir W. Jones, and into French, with the text, by Chézy, and again edited by R. Pischel, who has also advocated its greater antiquity. Editions and translations of the western (Devanagarï) recension have been published by O. Böhtlingk and Mon. Williams. The *Vikramorvasï* has been edited critically by S. P. Pandit, and the southern text by R. Pischel. It has been translated by H. H. Wilson and E. B. Cowell.

@@@2 Edited critically by S. P. Pandit; translated by C. H. Tawney (1875), and into German by A. Weber (1856), and L. Fritze (1881).

@@@3 Edited by Tãrãnãtha Tarkavächaspati, and by C. Cappeller in Böhtlingk’s *Sanskrit-Chrestomathie;* with commentary (Bombay, 1895); translated by H. H. Wilson.

@@@4 Edited by Mãdhava Chandra Ghosha and translated by P. Boyd, with a preface by E. B. Cowell.

@@@5 This is the commentator’s explanation of the name, whilst M. Lévi would render it by “ the divine throat.”

@@@6 Edited by F. II. Trithen (1848) ; with commentary, A. Barooah (Calcutta, 1877) and Parab (Bombay, 1892); translated by J. Pickford (1871).

@@@7 Edited with commentary and translation (Nagpur, 1895); with commentary, Aiyar and Parab (1899); translation by H. H. Wilson and C. H. Tawney.

@@@8 Edited by R. G. Bhandarkar (1876); translated by H. H. Wilson. Whether, as M. S. Lévi suggests, the fact of the play con- sisting of ten acts points to its having been composed in imitation of the *Mrfchchhakatikä* must remain uncertain.

@@@9 Edited by J. Grill (1871); twice with commentary (Bombay); English translation by S. M. Tagore (Calcutta).

@@@10 Printed with Mohanadãsa’s commentary (Bombay, 1861).