I Education:

Though it is not possible to get details about education for the common people during the first half of the 7th century A.D. contemporary evidences indicate that there were some primary schools as well as renowned centres of higher education. A definite course was followed. Various subjects secular, religious and philosophical were taught at the higher level. Girls received training in the fine arts. Professional education was not neglected. While all Brāhmaṇs were educated, among Kāshātriya and Vaishya, only princes and members of the merchant class appear to have received education. Generally, ordinary women and śūdras did not get any education. The study of grammar was considered to be the foundation of all education.

According to Dharmaśāstras the ceremony called Vidyāraṇī (commencement of learning the alphabet) was celebrated usually at the age of five. Bana and I-Tsing mention the commencement of learning alphabet at the age of six. A primer of alphabets was prescribed for teaching the first lessons in alphabets. Huien Tsang calls it a
text book of 12 chapters, but does not name it. I-Tsing calls it 'Siddha', the first chapter of which was titled as Siddham. Originally it suggested an auspicious invocation meaning "May good fortune be attained." Later on the name was given to the alphabetical book. According to I-Tsing there were 49 letters and vowels in that book. All these alphabets were included in 300 verses and 18 chapters. Hiuen Tsang gives the number of letters and vowels as 47. Such schools are usually described as lipisālas (script-schools) and their teachers as dvarakācharyas (teachers of little children). This education was completed at the age of 7 or 8 years and then the student was introduced to Śabda-Vidyā (grammar) and other subjects.

After the Siddham the Indian child, according to Hiuen Tsang, was introduced to the five sciences at the age of 7. (i) Grammar (Śabda-Vidyā) which taught and explained words. (ii) Shilpastraṇa Vidyā which included astrology and trained the students in the principles of mechanical arts. (iii) The medicinal treatise (Chikitsāvidyā) (iv) The Hetuvidyā (the science of reasoning) by which the orthodox and heterodox views were ascertained and true and false notions were defined and (v) The science of spiritual discipline
(Adhyātma-vidyā) which was related to the five vehicles and the subtle doctrine of Karma. \(^{15}\)

I-Tsang supports and supplements Hiuen Tsang. He observes that

**b. Study of Grammar:**

the student was introduced to grammar in his 8th year. Four books namely

(i) Sūtra (ii) Dhātupāthas (iii) Khilarayā and (iv) Vṛttī were taught. Sūtra meant the grammar lesson of Āstādhyāyī composed by Panini. This sūtra lesson containing 3983 sūtras and 1000 verses was learnt by the student in 8 months. \(^{16}\) Then he was taught Panini's Dhātupātha containing about 2,000 sūtras and 1000 verses. \(^{17}\) At the age of ten the student was introduced to Khilarayā. This included the study of three khilas viz. (i) Āstādhātu (ii) Maṇḍa and (iii) Unāḍī. The student had to study seven cases, ten tenses and eighteen prepositions affixed to verbs. \(^{18}\) There is a difference of opinion among the scholars about the exact meaning of Maṇḍa and Unāḍī. It seems as if both the Vidyās convey the same idea and differ only in details. The science dealt with the derivation of verbal nouns. Lastly the student was taught vṛttī (Kaśikāvrāttī composed by Jayāditya\(^{19}\) and Vāman). It was an exposition of Panini sūtra and contained 18,000 verses. \(^{20}\)

I-Tsang states that after the completion of Kaśikāvrāttī, the students who

**c. Study of Literature:**

did not go in for higher studies of
grammar, generally studied prose and poetry. This does not seem to be quite correct. It is not possible that the student, after knowing the art of reading and writing did not study any other subject except grammar for ten to twelve years. References of Bāna and even of I-Tsang indicate that the student became familiar with popular books like Panchatantra, Bṛhaṅkathā, Purāṇas, Mahābhārata and Rāmāyana. Poems of Kālidāsa, Bhāravi, Bhartruhari and Bhaṭṭī must have certainly formed an important part of the curriculum. The dramas of Kālidāsa,

Kṛtacakatika of Śūdraka, Muddrākṣahasa of Viśākhadatta and Priyadārśikā, Ratnāvalī and Nāgānanda of Harṣa could not have been neglected by the students. The prose books like Vasavadattā of Subandhu, Daśakumāracharita and Avanti-Sundarikathā of Dandin and Harṣa carita and Kādaṁbarī of Bāna might also have been studied by students. Treatises on prosody like Kāvyalankāra of Bhāmah, Kāvyadarśan of Dandin and Bhāṭṭikāvyā of Bhaṭṭī must have claimed the attention of students.

According to Hiuen Tsang and I-Tsang, a Buddhist student after completing the study of Kaśikā-vṛtti, was taught good prose and poetry books such as Jātakamālā of Āryaśūra and Suhallekha of Nāgārjuna. He also learnt logic and Vasubandhu’s Abhidharmakośa, a book of Buddhist
philosophy named Sarvāstivāda. The student got himself acquainted with Nyāyasāstra (Nyāyadvāra) of Nāgarjuna and with Hindu Nyāyadarsāna. He might have also studied the familiar Buddhist books such as Avadānasatāka, Divyadāna, Mahāvastu, Dipavamsa, Mahāvaṃsa, Latitavistara, and works of Asvaghosa. The Jain student might have been taught Vimalāśūri's Prakrit Taumācariya and Sanghadāsāśūri's Vāsudevahindi which are Jain poetical versions of the careers of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa respectively.

According to Hiuen Tsang the Brāhmaṇas learnt the four treatises namely

d. Higher studies
   (i) Literature:
   (1) Āyur-veda (longevity)
   (2) The Yajur-veda (sacrifice)
   (3) Sāmaveda (Peace of regulation)
   (iv) The Atharva veda (Secret mysteries).

Curiously enough the pilgrim does not mention the study of Rāg-veda. Āyurveda is only a supplement to the Atharveda and denotes rather the science of medicine than any particular treatise. But it was reckoned as the fifth Veda. This does not mean that Rāgveda was not studied. Bāṇa returned as a Snātaka (graduate) at the age of fourteen from the residence of his preceptor. He continued his studies and became proficient in Vedas and the six systems of philosophy. In Prītkūṭa, the native place of Bāṇa, there were many Brāhmīns of Vatsāyana gotra whose residences were almost like
gurukulas. They taught Vedas, grammar, logic, Mīmāṃsā and other Dārṣṭāṇas to the Brahmacharins residing with them.32 Bāṇa's cousin brothers Gaṇapati, Adhipati, Tārāpati and Shyāmal were renowned scholars of several branches of grammar like Vṛtī (possibly Kaśikavṛtī) Vartika (sentence) and Nyāsa (possibly of Jīnendrabuddhi). They were also well versed in Nyāyashastra, Purāṇas, Mahābhārata and history.33

The Buddhist students and monks did not study Vedas, but different books on three pitakas viz. (1) Vinaya (ii) Sūtra and (iii) Abhidharma.34 The Jain students studied Āgama literature which was collected in 45 to 84 books at Mathurā in the 5th century A.D.35

The student who chose higher studies in
studied the Chūṇḍi, the Mahābhāṣya of Patanjali and Bhartriharīṣṭhastra composed by Bhartruhari, the famous Buddhist grammarian and philosopher who died about 651-52 A.D.36 Such a student joined some famous centre of learning to achieve proficiency in grammar or in the subject of his choice. The student who completed the grammar course was called Bahuṣrūta, the renowned scholar.37

Apart from these general branches of education there were special subjects for certain classes and castes. Students were trained in sciences like astrology, sculpture, archery, the art of using weapons
jewellery, music, drawing, dancing, medicine, magic and other technical arts. The example of Candrāpida indicates that most of the 64 arts mentioned by Vatsyayana must have been taught during this age also. Candrāpida was trained in grammar, dharmaśāstra, politics, the use of all types of weapons, instrumental music, dancing, painting, veterinary sciences, astrology, examination of different types of jewells, the art of writing books, carpentry, ivory, medicine, mechanical arts, science of the erotic, magic, physical exercise and different languages.39 In spite of the poetic exaggeration in this description, it certainly suggests some of the prevailing branches of education. It also hints at the training of a prince. According to Bāna the prince was trained to become an ideal ruler. The description may be based on the training received by Rājavāhana and Harṣavardhana.

Astrology with its two main branches, viz.,

(1) Astrology: (i) higher mathematics including astronomy and (ii) science of zodiac seems to have been one of the popular branches of knowledge. It was considered as a vedāṅga. I-Tsang also mentions these branches in the science of sculpture.40 Other popular studies included Āryasiddhānta of Āryabhaṭṭa, Brāhmaśāhitya and Panchasiddhāntikā of Varāhamihira. The Maitraka inscriptions suggest that in the age of Harṣa calendars
were prepared and interpreted according to Brahmasiddhānta, composed by Brahmagupta in 628 A.D. Sculpture was one of the important subjects taught at the famous educational centres at Nālandā and Valabhi. Bāna also mentions it as an important science.

Āyurveda seems to have been quite popular. Hiuen Tsang remarks that Brahmāṇas studied Āyurveda along with the other Vedas. Čandrāpiḍa was proficient in medical science also. Bāna mentions eight divisions of Āyurveda and this is confirmed by I-Tsing. According to the latter, there were originally eight books on these eight divisions. But later a physician edited them into a single book and all the physicians of India followed that book. Takakasu assumes that the physician referred to is Sushruta. But the reference is more applicable to Vāgbhaṭṭa who wrote a book called 'Āṣṭāṅgaḥridaya'. He came after Sushruta and Caraka. Vāgbhaṭṭa deals at length with both (i) surgery and (ii) medicine described separately by Sushruta and Caraka. Moreover he refers to the works of Dhanvantari, Nimi, Kaśyapa and others. Certainly the teaching of Āyurveda during the age under review must have included the study of Sushrut-sāmītā, Caraka-sāmītā, Vāgbhaṭṭa's Āṣṭāṅgaḥridaya and probably other similar works. According to Hiuen Tsang Āyurveda (dikṣitsastra) was taught at Nālandā, and possibly at Valabhi too.
Altekar refers to veterinary science also. According to Kautilya and Many the Vaisyas obtained knowledge about a variety of articles of their dealing, commercial geography, different land routes, currencies and exchange, folk-lore and some useful languages. We have no means to ascertain which of these subjects were taught to Vaisyas during the time of Harsha. But the fact that merchants played a prominent part in district administration and that internal and international trade was well developed are sufficient proof that many of these subjects were taught to the Vaisyas, specially to the merchant class, we have no information from contemporary source about how artisans were trained in their various craft. But Bana's reference to skilled artisans helps us to infer that apprenticeship system existed.

B. Note-worthy educational centres of the age:

According to Hiuen Tsang Sakraditya (possibly Kumāragupta I 414-455 A.D.) laid the early foundation of Nalanda's greatness by founding and endowing a monastery there. Some of the subsequent Gupta rulers namely Buddhagupta, Tathagupta, Bālāditya (second) and Vajra, and a king of middle India (probably Harsha) added further monasteries to the establishment. Harsha also constructed a, monastery with a bronze cover...
100 ft. high. Round this huge establishment there was built a lofty enclosing wall with one gate.\(^{57}\) The description of I-Tsang shows that several new buildings were added to the establishment and it was at the zenith of its fame when he visited it.\(^{58}\)

Free boarding and lodging arrangement was provided in the monasteries at Nalanda. These monasteries had double seated and single seated rooms. Each occupant of a room had a stone cot, and was also provided with nitches for lamp, books etc. According to I-Tsang the university had received 200 villages as endowment.\(^{59}\) Hiuen Tsang mentions 100 villages. More villages may have been received in the interval between the two visitors. The biographer of Hiuen Tsang states that in the second quarter of the 7th century, the number of students at Nalanda was 10,000.\(^{60}\) This figure seems to be exaggerated. Hiuen Tsang simply observes that there were some thousand brethren residing at the centre.\(^{61}\) I-Tsang who stayed there for ten years mentions that more than 3000 monks resided there.\(^{62}\) The number might have been about 5000.\(^{63}\)

Hiuen Tsang observes that the brethren at Nalanda were famous for great learning and ability. They observed strict discipline and scrupulously followed the rules of the order. They spent their time in learning and discussing. Foreign students came there to
solve their doubts, Nalanda teachers and students commanded great respect. The teachers like Dharmapala, Chandrapala, Gunamati, Sthiramati, Prabhāmitra, Jinamitra and Silabhadra were celebrated both for their scholarship and piety.

There was a great rush of students from all parts of India and abroad to get admission at Nalanda. During the short interval of thirty years between the visits of Huen Tseng and I-Tsing, several students from China, Korea, Tibet and Tokara came to Nalanda and stayed there for studying and copying manuscripts. The standard of admission was naturally high. Only those who were deeply versed in old and modern learning were admitted and of these only two or three succeeded.

The university maintained a splendid library for its hundreds of teachers and thousands of students. Chinese scholars spent several months there to get true copies of sacred books and other works of Buddhism. I-Tsing got copied at Nalanda 400 Sanskrit works amounting to 5,00,000 verses. The library section was known as Dharma-ganja (Mart of religion). It was located in three buildings appropriately called Ratnasagara, Ratnodadhi and Ratna-ranjaka.

In the total strength of about 5000, a
thousand could explain thirty collections of sūtras. It may mean that there were about a thousand competent teachers to look after the education of about 4000 students. Thus on an average no teacher was in charge of about more than 4 students. Personal attention might have been given to each student and as a result the teaching must have been very efficient. The teachers were experts in the art of teaching and expounding. I-Tsung has high praise for them.

Though the establishment belonged to the Mahāyāna school, the curriculum at Nālandā was comprehensive and catholic. The works of the rival school, the Hinayāna and other religious and secular subjects were also taught. Works of famous Mahāyāna authors like Nagarjuna, Vasubandhu, Asanga and Dharmakirti were studied. But the course was not sectarian in any way. Subjects like grammar, logic and literature were common to both the Hindus and the Buddhists. The Baudha and Hindu religion and philosophy had become so interconnected that it was not possible to study the one without the other whether for the ambitious controversialist or for the sincere lover of truth. Vedas, Vedānta and Sāmkhya philosophy were taught at the university along with miscellaneous works. The term 'miscellaneous' may have included subjects like
like dharmásástras, puránas, astronomy, astrology etc. The science of medicine (cikitsásástra) was also taught.

Valabhi, situated near modern vala in Saurásstra, became famous as a seat of learning during 7th century A.D. I-Tsing states that its fame rivalled with that of Nalanda. Hsuan Tsang informs us that there were about a hundred Buddhist monasteries at Valabhi in 640 A.D. and they accommodated 6000 monk students. The famous Buddhist scholars Sthiramati and Jnanamati were the leading personalities of the university in the middle of the 7th century. Though mainly a Hinayana establishment, it was not exclusively a Buddhist or monastic centre of learning. According to a story of Kathásaritaságar, a brahman Vasudatta living in the Gangetic plain had sent his son Vissudatta aged 16 years to Valabhi for higher education.

Graduates of Valabhi used to be appointed to posts in executive fields. This would not have been possible if secular subjects like law, economics and literature had not been taught at the university. It was famous for its catholicity and intellectual freedom. Scholars from all parts of India used to assemble at Valabhi and stay there for at least two to three years. They discussed possible and impossible doctrines and achieved wisdom. The names of the
famous scholars of the university were written in white on its lofty gates, as was done at Nālandā. Vedas, Darsanas and astrology must have been studied here as well as the eighteen Nikāyas of Buddhism but Sammatiya Nikāya (the main book of Hinayāna) was probably the most important subject in the curriculum. Epigraphic evidences suggest that the Maitraka rulers from the period of Drīvasena I (about 520-550 A.D.) unto the age of Śilāditya III (approximately 660-685 A.D.) were great patrons of learning. They gave direct grants to the university for its maintenance and for strengthening its library. Valabhi declined in prestige afterwards and ceased to be the famous seat of learning when it was destroyed by Araba invaders about 786 A.D.

There was another centre comparable to Nālandā and Valabhi in the freedom of its academic life and the variety and catholicity of its studies. This was the hermitage of sage Divākaramitra, described by Bāna. Students professing widely different faiths and practices assembled in the depths of the vindhyan forest for the common purpose of search for truth - the ideal of every university. There were the different sects of Buddhists, Jains such as the Ārhatas (Digambara) and the Svetapatas (Svetambaras),
various classes of Brahmanical ascetics, atheists like the Lokayatikas (caravákás), philosophers like the Kapilas, Kanadas, Aupanisadas and Naiyáyikas; experts in law (Dharmaśāstra), linguistics (śābdika) and the paurāṇicas experts in rituals and even metallurgists. 84

From casual references in the 'Life' and 'Travels of Yuan chawang' we learn that there were several monasteries in different parts of India where Hiuen Tsang learnt various sciences. At (i) Jayendra monastery in Kāshmir the pilgrim learnt grammar, logic and other sāstras from its old principal abbot. 85 (ii) At the famous monastery of Nagarghara (Jālandhara), Hiuen Tsang stayed for four months and studied Sarvāstivāda. 86 (iii) In the monastery of Srugna country he learnt sāstras at the hands of Jayagupta. 87 Srugna was the famous centre of Hinayānists who were so learned that monks from other countries came to them to clear their doubts. 88 (iv) At Matipura monastery he studied the different principles of Sarvāstivāda from Mitrāsena. 89 (v) In Bhadra monastery of Kānyakubja, the preceptor Viryasena taught him the three pitakas for three months. 90 (vi) Hīranya (vii) Pudravaradhana and (viii) Karṇasuvarpa had also monasteries which were famous centres of learning. 91
According to Bāṇa, Ujjayini was a great centre of learning. There the people knew foreign languages and were expert in different sciences and arts. Benāras had maintained its reputation as a seat of learning for both Buddhist and Hindu sāstras. Gurukulas (residential schools maintained by renowned preceptors) are casually mentioned by Bāṇa. At Pṛitikūṭa, the native place of Bāṇa, the houses of the Vatsāyana Brāhmīns were just like residential schools where grammar, logic and different sāstras were taught. Many Agrahara villages must have been centres of learning. Moving medicants were like living institutions disseminating education far and wide.

Hsiuen Tsang remarks that Indian teachers were past masters in the art of explanation and exposition. They explained the general meaning to their disciples. They roused them to activity and cleverly helped them to progress. They instructed the inert and sharpened the dull. At the age of thirty having completed their education, they started earning their livelihood. Their first duty was to repay the kindness of their teacher. Learning in ancient India was mainly oral. Recitation and recapitulation were thus the most important aspect of education. I-Tsang also refers to ways of memorisation.
features of higher studies. The students of various schools of orthodox and heterodox systems of religion and philosophy studying under Dvākaśāmitra, discussed their respective systems with their opponents, raised doubts and took decisions in consultation with their guru. I-Tsing says, "I have been always very glad that I had an opportunity of acquiring knowledge from my Indian gurus personally."

We are indebted to Hiuen Tsang for information about the state of literacy in Northern India during the age of Harṣa. He observes that the people of Gāndhāra, Kāshmir, Cāminapātik, Mathurā, Srughna, Ahikshetra, Kāṇyakubja, Prayāga, Benāras, Ujjain, etc. loved learning and literature. This does not mean that all the common people in these parts were educated. Śāṇa also describes the people of Ujjain and of Thāṃśāwara Tract as trained in several branches of knowledge.

II LITERATURE:

Compared with the Gupta age the age of Harsha was not as rich in literature. But some branches of literature such as prose, grammar, and philosophy reached their zenith at this time. There is much difference of
opinion among the scholars about the date of Daandin. It is fixed between the 5th and 7th centuries A.D. \(^{115}\) Probably he flourished in the last quarter of the 6th century A.D. or in the first quarter of the 7th century A.D. \(^{116}\) In that case Daandin is almost contemporary to Subandhu, while Bāṇa came a little later just in at the time of Hārsha. The theory that Daandin was a resident of Kan-chi and he flourished under the Pallava kings and that the hero Ratnavarman or Rājavarman referred to by him was a Pallava prince, is mere guess work. \(^{117}\) Thus Daandin the author of 'Daśkumāra carita', 'Kāvyadarśa' and 'Avantisundarikathā' may be placed during the 6th or the 7th century A.D. Along with 'Brāhatkathā' of Guṇādhyāya (now lost), Bāṇa praised 'Vasavadattā' composed by Subandhu. \(^{118}\) Subandhu also mentions the Naiyāyakas namely Udyotkara and Dharmakīrti. Dharmakīrti was a pupil of Dharmapāla, the principal abbot of Nālandā before Siλabhadrā who was the principal when Hiuen Taing visited it (637 A.D.) Dharmakīrti was also a contemporary of the king Srang-sun-gampo (609-688 A.D.) of Tibet. \(^{117}\) Thus the belief of Keith that Subandhu was an older contemporary of Bāṇa, seems to be correct. \(^{118}\)

The age of Hārsha witnessed three great

(i) Great Romance: ('Akhāyika' and 'Kathā')

(ii) Daandin (ii) Subandhu and

(iii) Bāṇa. The romance is either based on historical facts or on imaginary
accounts. Amara names the former as Ākhyāyikā and the latter as Kathā. Bāṇa endorses this view.

'Harṣa-carita' of Bāṇa is an Ākhyāyikā, while his 'Kādambarī', 'Vasavadatta' of Subandhu and 'Daśakumāracarita' of Dandin are Kathās. Moreover the authorship of a stotra named 'Candi-sātaka' and a play called Pāravati-pariniṣya are ascribed to Bāṇa, but scholars do not agree about it. Similarly it is said that of the three parts of the Daśakumāracarita, the Purvapithikā (chapters I to V introduction) and the Uttarapithikā (conclusion chapter XIV) are not written by Dandin. Dandin wrote the remaining eight chapters (VI to XIII). But this does not go against the Daśakumāracarita proper being the work of Dandin.

Harṣa-carita of Bāṇa, a fine specimen of Ākhyāyikā, depicts the life of his patron Śrī Harṣa of Kanauj. The events are narrated up to the recovery of his sister Rājyasrī in the Vindhya forest and then the narrative breaks off. We cannot agree with the statement of Dr. Keith that Harṣa-carita has very little historical importance. Cowell and Thomas correctly state that Bāṇa is not a mere rhetorician. His descriptions abound with masterly touches reflecting contemporary life. Not even the Pāli Jātakas introduce us more directly into the very heart of the period or give us a more life like picture. The court, the camp, the quiet villages, which then, as now,
contained the great mass of the population and the still more quiet monasteries and retreats, whether of Brāhmans or Buddhists, are all painted with singular power; and his narrative illustrates and supplements the Chinese traveller's account at every turn. 'Kādambarī' depicts the princely as well as the ascetic life of the age. It also reflects contemporary social and religious conditions. Bāna did not complete his Kādambarī. It was completed by his son Bāṣanabhaṭṭa or Bhāṭapulina.

Bhāravi, Bhāṭṭi and Māgha were the famous poets of the age. The Kiratarjunīya of Bhāravi, 'the Bhaṭṭikṛṣṇya' or of Bhāravi, 'the Bhaṭṭiycya' or 'the Rāvanavadha' of Bhāṭṭi and the 'Sisupālavadha' of Māgha are considered as Mahākāvya (epics). Bhāravi is mentioned in the Aihole Inscription (A.D. 634) along with Kālidāsa, and is also cited in the Kāśikā-vṛtti (650 A.D.) He is possibly not much earlier than Bāna who, however, ignores him. It is possible that Bhāravi was not sufficiently famous for Bāna's reference. It also shows that he did not flourish much earlier than Bāna. His poem in eighteen cantos, describing the Mahābhārata story of the combat between Arjuna and god Śiva in the garb of Kirāta, displays vigour of thought, language and expression. It also shows Bhāravi's attempts at the artificialities of the citrakāvya and several mannerisms.
Slightly later is 'Bhattikāvya' or 'the Rāvanaśadha' composed by Bhatti under the patronage probably of king Bharasena III (about 620-628 A.D.) of Valabhi. It is composed in 22 cantos containing 1624 verses. Bhatti has illustrated in it the rules of grammar as given by Pāṇini in his Aṣṭādhyāyī and has also devoted one full canto to Alāṅkāras. The fact that several critical books have been written on this Bhattikāvya, is a proof of its popularity. The treatise named 'Jayamangala', composed by Jayamangala, is the oldest criticism on Bhattikāvya. 129

Māgha, who flourished in the latter half of the seventh century A.D. competes with Bāravi in every respect in his mahākāvya namely 'Sīṣupālavadha'. Māgha refers to Kāśikāvṛttī and the Nyāsa there on and also knew the Nāgāṇand of Harsha. 130 His skill is well praised in the saying, "In Māgha exist all the three qualities Upamā, Artha-gaurava and Pada-lālitya." He is also very rich in vocabulary. The device of artificiality ushered in by Bāravi has been carried a step further by Māgha.

Among other poets of lesser repute may be

(ii) Other poetical works and Satakas:

(11) Other poetical works and Satakas: mentioned Kumāradāsa, the author of 'Jānakiharana'. He possibly flourished in the
latter half of the seventh century A.D. He narrates in 20 cantos the story of the abduction of Sītā by Rāvana. Bāṇa mentions the vernacular poet Iśāna, the descriptive poet Venibhārata and the Prākrit poet Vāyuwikāra as among the literary celebrities of the age. But unfortunately we know nothing about them except their names. Sātakas (poetical works consisting of one hundred stanzas) were composed during this age. The three sātakas of Bhartṛihari viz. Śringāra (love), Nīti (wise conduct) and vairāgya (indifference to worldly enjoyment) are good specimens of saintly advice on general conduct of life. The author Bhartṛihari is identified with the author of the Vākyapatiya who is said to have died in 650 A.D. Mayūra, possibly brother-in-law or father-in-law of Bāṇa, composed Mayūra-Sātaka also called the Sūrya-sātaka. Slightly later comes Amara who has given us The Amara-Sātaka in which various aspects of love both erotic and philosophical have been discussed.

These three dramas are generally attributed to Shri Harsha of Kanauj. Doubts have, however, been raised regarding Harsha's authorship of these plays. A passage in Rājaśekhara's 'Kāvyamimansa' ascribes these dramas to Dhāvaka Bhāsa who sold Priyadarsikā and other dramas for money to Śri Harsha Vikrama. Harsha later on
appointed Dhāvaka as his court poet. Perhaps this passage was the source of Mamāta's statement in his Kāvyaprakāśa in which he speaks of Harṣa's (Harṣa of Kanauj) gift of gold to Bāṇa (or Dhāvaka in some Mss). The commentators connect this gift with the Ratnāvalī which was accepted as Harṣa's composition by his own court poet. Thus Hall and Buhlar attributed all the three plays to Bāṇa, while Pischel ascribed them to Dhāvaka, a contemporary of Śri Harṣa. Cowell attributed Ratnāvalī to Bāṇa, Nāgānanda to Dhāvaka and Priyadarśikā to some unknown author. Some critics argue that these plays were written by another ruler named Harṣa but not by Śri Harṣa of Kanauj. History knows of five other persons who bore the name of Harṣa but all of them flourished after the 8th century A.D. therefore they cannot be the authors of the dramas which were popular by the end of the seventh century A.D.

There are some internal and external evidences which signify that these three dramas are written by Śri Harṣa of Kanauj. They all have a common verse in the prologue ascribing their authorship to Harṣa who is also described as an accomplished poet. There are indirect references to Harṣa and to his ideals and achievements. The prologue definitely mentions the assembly of kings from different quarters
attending upon Śrī Harshadeva, the king of kings. This is quite applicable to Harsha who excercised sovereignty over several feudal kings. The incident in Ratnāvali about the princess driven to seek shelter in the Vindhyan forest under its chief Vindhyaketu seems to be directly inspired by the incident of Harsha's own sister Sājyaśrī seeking the protection of the forest chief Sarabhaketu and his son Vyāghraketu. Descriptions of battles fought and ideals achieved in both the Ratnāvali and the Priyadarśikā echo the hopes and aspirations of king Harsha. The Nāgānanda, evidently later than the other two works, must have been composed in the latter part of his reign when he turned a Buddhist. His ideal is embodied in Jimutavāhana, not a gallant but a moral hero who sacrificed his life for the sake of others.

There are some external evidences connecting these dramas with Harsha. Bāṇa distinctly says that Harsha was a great poet. I-Ts'ing states that Śilāditya versified the story of Jimutavāhana, (who sacrificed himself for a Nāga) which was enacted on the stage. It clearly refers to the performance of the play Nāgānanda composed by Harsha. The famous poet Jayadeva, the author of Gitagovinda, (who cannot be placed later than the 11th century A.D.) mentions Harsha along with Bhaṣa, Kālidāsa, Bāṇa and Mayūra as authors of equal rank. Damodargupta, minister of Jayapīda who ruled Kāshmir at
the end of the 8th century A.D., in his work Kuttinimata ascribes 'Ratnāvalī' to a royal author. As Keith points out there is absolute similarity of style and tone in the three dramas proving a common authorship. There is close similarity of form and subject matter between 'Ratnāvalī' and 'Priyadarśikā'. Each is a nāṭikā in four acts, they have also a common hero, Udayana and a common theme one of his numerous amourettes. The dramas Ratnāvalī and Priyadarśikā are obviously modelled on Mālavikāgnimitra of Kālidāsa. Naturally Harṣa is indebted to Kālidāsa. As already shown, it is quite probable that, as in the case of Mālavikāgnimitra, there is a historical basis for Harṣa’s dramas. They mostly illustrate the court life of the time. Both of them are in the conventional style. From the purely artistic point of view neither Ratnāvalī nor Priyadarśikā has anything distinctiv to entitle its royal author to a high place in Sanskrit literature. But Harṣa’s claim as a playwright is based on the Nāgānanda which is an entirely different type of work. It does not follow any model. It is a drama in five acts depicting the story of Jimutavāhana, who, after conventionally falling in love with the princess Malayāvati, becomes a moral hero by sacrificing his life for the sake of a helpless Nāga. Here Harṣa has succeeded in sustaining the interest of the reader up to the end. However, none of the dramas possess either the unique charm of Kālidāsa or the dignity of Bhavabhūti.

Besides these three dramas two short Sanskrit
poems of Buddhistic content are attributed to Harsha. The poem 'the Suprabhātastotra, a hymn in praise of the Buddha mentions the name of Harsha in its colophon. The other entitled Astamahāśeṣacaityaṣāṃskṛta stotra, a hymn to the eight great Buddhist shrines, is preserved in the Chinese language. It is attributed by Huien Tsang to an Indian king designated Śilāditya who is inferred to be king Harsha. Possibly the Madhuban and Banskherā inscriptions were also composed by Harsha.

The Pālava king Mahendravarman, a contemporary of Harsha, composed a farce named Mattavilāsa. It refers to the prevailing social and religious conditions of the time and ridicules the immoral practices of the Kāpālika and Buddhist sages. It attacks the principles of Buddhism. The matter is very simple but the style is very impressive.

The age of Harsha seems to have produced some valuable philosophical works. Most of the commentaries on the six systems of Hindu philosophy appear to have been composed during this period. Some distinguished Hindu, Buddhist and Jain authors also flourished during this period. Uddyotakara who flourished in the 7th century A.D. wrote his Nyāyavarttika and defended Vatsyayana, the earliest expositor of the Nyāyasūtra (4th century A.D.)
against the attacks of Dinnāga, the celebrated Buddhist
logician. On the other hand Dharmakīrti composed his
Nyāyabindu to defend Dinnāga against Uddyotsakara, who was
perhaps his senior contemporary. The Jain author Divākara,
better known as Siddhasena Divākara composed his Nyāyavatāra
in thirty two stanzas by the end of the 7th century A.D.

After Śābara the Bhāṣyakaras on the Mīmāṃsa

(ii) Commentaries on the Mīmāṃsā
   Sūtra of Jaimini divided themselves
   into two main schools one headed by
   Prabhākara and another championed
   by Kumārila, generally known as Bhaṭṭa. Prabhākara
   composed his Brihati, a commentary on Śābara’s Bhāṣya about
   600 A.D., while Kumārila wrote his commentary on Śabarabhāṣya
   probably by the end of the 7th century A.D.

According to Hiuen Tsang Silabhadra the princip

(iii) Works of the Buddhist teachers
    and of Hiuen Tsang:
    Abbot of Nālandā university at the
    time of his visit to the institution,
    was the author of several works
    explaining the principles of Mahāyāna, specially Yogācārā-
    sana. Hiuen Tsang himself was the author of
    Yogācārāsana. He also translated several philosophical
    works into Chinese. Guṇamati and Sthiramati the prominent
    abbots at Valabhi composed their works in that monastery.
    Moreover Hiuen Tsang mentions several Buddhist teachers
    who stayed in various monasteries all over India, and
    composed their works expounding the principles of existing
    Buddhist schools.