THE PRĀKRTA-PRAKĀŚA
Of
VARARUCI

[Text edited for the first time with a new commentary entitled *Prākṛta-pāda-ṭīkā* by Nārāyaṇa Vidyāvinoda from a collation of two manuscripts together with an elaborate introduction on Vararuci and Prakrit dialects along with an Outline of Prakrit Grammar]

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38 Bidhan Sarani, Koklata-6

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INTRODUCTION

I. On Vararuci

1. Vararuci—the oldest Prakrit grammarian of the Eastern School

Mārkaṇḍeya, in one of his introductory verses of the *Prākṛta Sarvasva*, mentions the name of Vararuci who is regarded as the oldest extant Prakrit grammarian belonging to the eastern school.* Besides Mārkaṇḍeya's reference (for which we place him in the eastern school), we find some sort of indication in the *Kathāsaritsāgara* where it is stated that he was an inhabitant of Magadha. Grierson and (perhaps, following him) Keith call him an easterner.

2. References to Vararuci

Vararuci is a mysterious figure in the field of early Indian literature. He is extolled as one of the nine jewels of the court of an equally mysterious king Vikramāditya with whom is associated Dhanvantari, Kṣapaṇaka, Amarasiṃha, Śaṅku, Vetālabhaṭṭa, Ghaṭakarpara, Kālidāsa and Varāhamihira. But this traditional account which owes its currency from an ill-authenticated verse[1] of a late work, seems to have little historical value, since it must be borne in mind that

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*Prakrit grammarians are generally divided into two distinct groups—an Eastern and a Western school. To the eastern school belong Vararuci and his commentators, Kramadīśvara, Puruṣottama, Rāmaśarmā, Mārkaṇḍeya, Rāvaṇa Laṅkeśvara and others, and the western school is headed by Vālmīki (?), Hemacandra, Trivikrama, Lakṣmīdhara and others. (For a fuller treatment of the subject, vide my article—A Note on the two Schools of Prakrit Grammarians, Jaina Bhāratī, Research volume, January, 1964. pp. 32—41).

1. Dhanvantari-Kṣapaṇakā'marasiṃha-Śaṅku-Vetālabhaṭṭa-Ghaṭakarpara-Kālidāsāḥ/khyāto Varāhamihiro nṛpatēḥ sabhāyāṃ ratnāni vai *Vararucir nava* Vikramasya//