

The Chinese Buddhist Pilgrims visited India during the early centuries of the Christian era. The Buddhist literature of China contains the records of their travels, the authenticity of which is vouchsafed by the fact that they embody the testimony of independent eye-witnesses as to the facts related in them.

The Principal Chinese Buddhist Pilgrims who visited India and wrote the accounts of their travel were Shih Fa-hian (400 A.D.), Sung Yun and Hwei Sang (500 A.D.), Hiuen Tsiang (629 A.D.) and I-tsing (670 A.D.).

Fa-hian wrote *Fo-kwo-ki*—a work well known in Europe through a translation by M. Abel Rémusat. The accounts of Sung Yun and Hwei Sang are derived from the private records of Tao-Yung and Sung-Yun. Hiuen Tsiang the most famous Chinese traveller composed the *Ta-t'ang-si-yu-ki* in twelve books.

The records are very interesting as they refer to the geography, history, manners and religion of the people of the countries West of China, of India in particular, visited by the pilgrims.

The reader who looks into the pages of this book will find ample material for study on some important questions: the different manners and customs of separate people, the various products of the different soils and the diverse class divisions of the society; when Buddhism flourished and when Buddhism declined as also how the devoted pilgrims encountered the perils of travel in foreign and distant lands and endured sufferings by desert, mountain and sea.

SI-YU-KI

BUDDHIST RECORDS
OF
THE WESTERN WORLD

Translated from the Chinese
of Hiuen Tsiang (A.D. 629)

SAMUEL BEAL

B.A. (Trin. Col. Camb.), R.N. (Retired Chaplain and N.I.),
Professor of Chinese, University College, London; Rector of Wark,
Northumberland, etc.

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