

He took there the final vows of a Buddhist Çramaṇa and spent there no less than four years, engaged, as we are told in the Itinerary (*L'Itinéraire d'Ou-K'ong, Journal Asiatique*, 1895, VI, p. 356), in the study of Sanskrit and in pilgrimages to sacred sites of which the Valley has always boasted in abundance. If we may judge from this long stay — the longest which Ou-k'ong seems to have made anywhere in India after assuming the monk's garb, — our pilgrim appears to have fully realised the attractions both spiritual and material, which the Valley has at all times offered to pious visitors, — in particular if they hailed from northern climes.<sup>1</sup>

To this circumstance we may attribute the comparative fullness of the notices relating to Kaçmîr which strikingly contrast with the very meagre statements given by the biography as to Ou-k'ong's visits to the most sacred sites in India proper, such as Kapilavastu, Kuçinanagara, etc.

Messrs. LÉVI and CHAVANNES have already pointed out in an instructive note, *L'Itinéraire*, p. 362, that the picture which Ou-k'ong's relation gives us of the flourishing condition of the Buddhist establishments and shrines in Kaçmîr during the time of his visit, fully agrees with the numerous notices which we find in the Rājatarāṅgiṇī as to the erection of Vihāras and Stūpas under King Lalitāditya-Muktāpīḍa. In the reign of the latter or the period immediately following must have fallen the visit of the Chinese pilgrim.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> To this day the Mecca pilgrims from Yarkand, Kashgar and other parts of Chinese Turkestan regularly pass the summer months in Kaçmîr, whether on their way to the Indian plains or on the return journey en route for Ladāk. They can be seen in numbers at the pilgrimages to the more popular of the Muhammadan shrines in the Valley. I have never met on the march these ruddy-faced pilgrims from the North, cheerful to behold in their homely fur-coats and imposing boots, without thinking of Hionen-tsang and other Buddhist pilgrims who may have followed his track through the 'paradis terrestre des Indes' to the sacred places of the dusty hot plains.

<sup>2</sup> That the data of the Annals of the T'ang dynasty necessitate an adjustment in Kalhana's Chronology of the Kārkoṭa dynasty, and in particular indicate a later date for Lalitāditya-Muktāpīḍa than that assumed in the Chronicle (699—735), has already been pointed out by General CUNNINGHAM, *Ancient Geography of India*, pp. 91 sq., and Professor BÜHLER,