

these pilgrims older even than Fahian, the monk Shi-tao-an who died in 385. It does not seem to be known if the work is extant.¹

These pilgrimages must have become more unfrequent as the indigenous Buddhism of India gradually perished, but perhaps they had not altogether ceased even in the middle of the fourteenth century. For at that date we find the Emperor of China asking leave from Mahomed Tughlak to rebuild a temple near the base of the Himalya, which was much visited by his subjects.²

50. In the thirteenth century we find revived indications of communication with Ceylon. Singhalese writers mention imports from China at this time; and in 1266 Chinese soldiers are mentioned as taking service in the army of the Ceylonese king. We hear, also, during the Mongol reign in China of the occasional despatch by the Emperors of officers to Ceylon to collect gems and drugs; and, on three occasions, envoys were sent to negotiate the purchase of the sacred alms-dish of Buddha. Such missions are alluded to by Polo and Odoric.

51. As late as the beginning of the fifteenth century, under the Ming dynasty, the Chinese made a remarkable and last attempt to renew their former claims to honorary allegiance in the maritime countries of the west. In 1405 a mission from China, which had come to Ceylon bringing incense and offerings to the Shrine of the Tooth, was maltreated by the reigning King Wijayabahu VI, who was a native of *Solli* or the Peninsula, and an oppressor of Buddhism. The Emperor Chingtsu, indignant at the outrage, and anxious to do something for the re-establishment of the declining prestige of China, despatched Chingho, a soldier of distinction, with a fleet of sixty-two ships and a military force, and armed with credentials and presents, to visit the western kingdoms. He touched at Cochin China, Sumatra, Java,

¹ *Julien* op. cit., pp. 272-294, and Preface to *Vie de Hiouen Thsang*. The Chinese bibliographer quoted by Julien observes of Fa Hian that he applies the term *Chong Kué* or Middle Kingdom to *India* instead of China. This error he observes is a fashion of the Buddhist monks, and is not worth the trouble of refutation! I suppose the Buddhists used it as a translation of *Madhyadesa*, the classical name which the Burmese still apply to Gangetic India.

² See *Ibn Batuta*, *infra*, p. 410.

³ *Tennent*, i, 497-8.