

CHAPTER III.

FA-HIEN.

For the view of the earlier travellers regarding the *Ts'ung-ling* mountains, we have to study the narratives of the great Chinese pilgrims, and begin with FA-HIEN 法顯, 399—414.¹ For a rather long time the narrative of Fa-hien has aroused great interest amongst geographers and sinologists, and his itinerary has been interpreted in different ways by different scholars. We are not concerned with his journey to *Khotan*; we have only to deal with his travels over the world of mountains which he calls *Ts'ung-ling*.

1. HIS ITINERARY IN GENERAL.

Fa-hien's description of his and his followers' journey from *Khotan* to *India* runs as follows:

HUI-CHING 慧景, TAO-CHING 道整, and HUI-TA 慧達, set out in advance towards the country of *Chieh-ch'a*; but Fa-hien and the others, wishing to see the procession of images, remained behind for three months.... When the processions of images in the fourth month were over, SENG-SHAO 僧韶, by himself alone, followed a Tartar who was an earnest follower of the Law, and proceeded towards *Chi-pin*. Fa-hien and the others went forward to the kingdom of *Tzū-ho*, which it took them twenty-five days to reach.... Here (the travellers) abode fifteen days, and then went south for four days, when they found themselves among the *Ts'ung-ling mountains*, and reached the country of *Yü-hui* (*Yü-mo*²), where they halted and kept their retreat. When this was over, they went on among the hills for twenty-five days, and got to *Chieh-ch'a*, there rejoining Hui-ching and his two companions.... The country, being among the hills and cold, does not produce the other cereals, and only the wheat gets ripe.... To the east of these hills the dress of the common people is of coarse materials, as in our country of *Ch'in* 秦, but here also there were among them the differences of fine woollen cloth and of serge or haircloth.... The country is in the midst of the Onion range. As you go forward from these mountains, the plants, trees, and fruits are all different from those of the land of Han, excepting only the bamboo, pomegranate, and sugar-cane. From this (the travellers) went westwards towards *North India*, and after being on the way for a month, they succeeded in getting across and

¹ According to Sir HENRY YULE the monk TAO-AN 道安, who died in 385, mentions narratives from the Western countries older than Fa-hien, still unknown to us. — *Cathay and the way thither*. New edition, revised... by Henri Cordier, Vol. I, London MDCCCXV, p. 75. The best known transcription of the name of this monk is Fa-hien; other forms are Fa-hsien (according to Wade's system) and Fa-hian.

² *Yü-mo* is the correct form, see p. 29.