

It was advisable not to display too much *empressement* at this stage, and such diplomatic restraint had its immediate reward. It seemed to confirm the priest in his indifference to relics of this kind. So hoping apparently to divert by their sacrifice my attention from the precious rolls of Chinese canonical texts, he proceeded more assiduously to grope for and hand out bundles of what he evidently classed under the head of miscellaneous rubbish. The result was distinctly encouraging; for among the quantities of fragmentary Chinese texts there could be picked up in increasing numbers documents of clearly secular character, often dated; drawings and block prints on paper; small packets of leaves from texts in Indian writing as well as remains of pictures and fine silk textiles, manifestly all votive offerings. So Chiang Ssü-yeh and myself worked on without a break that first day until darkness.

The task all-important for the time being was to keep Wang Tao-shih from giving way to his fears and flutterings about hostile rumours, etc. I had taken care to assure him in advance of generous donations for his shrine. Yet he seemed constantly to vacillate between fears about his saintly reputation and a shrewd grasp of the advantages to be obtained for his cherished task. In the end we succeeded, thanks to Chiang Ssü-yeh's genial persuasion and such reassuring display as I could make of my devotion, genuine enough, to Buddhist lore and Hsüan-tsang's blessed memory.

But my satisfaction was great when devoted Chiang Ssü-yeh cautiously appeared towards midnight at my tent and brought himself the big bundle containing the 'selections' of that first day. The Tao-shih had stipulated