PREFACE

The paccekabuddha has been described in many stories which are popular in the Buddhist world and show the portrait of the Indian ascetic as a part of the Buddhist tradition. They give evidence of the importance of the ascetic and introspective tendencies in Buddhism and of the deep urge of the individual towards insight and salvation.

Some of the stories, especially those which Buddhaghosa has compiled in his commentary on the Suttanipāta, are documents of the intense experience of the individual leading to the decision to search for enlightenment. It has given me much satisfaction to translate these stories and to place them in an historical and systematic context.

At the completion of this work, I wish to express my gratitude to Prof. Dr. J. Gonda, who initiated me into the study of Sanskrit and Pāli. With his enthusiasm for the study of the Indian religions, he inspired me to concentrate upon this diverse and fascinating subject. During hours of concentrated work in Leyden, under the guidance of Prof. Dr. D. S. Ruegg, I became aware of the value of the study of Buddhism.

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