

four or five inches long, and draw the cord to card the floss and make it even and fine. They roll it into small tubes and take it to the spinning-wheel to spin it. It runs on spontaneously in the same manner as a cocoon which is being unwound, without giving the trouble of twisting and connecting. Cloth is made with this. That which comes from Min (= Fu-chien) and Kuang [tung] is the most refined and close. . . » Hu San-hsing ends up with copying in its integrity Fang Cho's text already translated above (cf. *supra*, p. 498). This gloss stands quite apart in Hu San-hsing's work, which, as a rule, is almost devoid of original information. But Hu was a Chê-chiang man, and for once could not resist the temptation of describing at some length a recent form of cultivation which was practised in his own province. The interest of this text lies in the fact that it must have been written in 1285 at the latest, several years before the date assigned by later tradition to Huang tao-p'o's directions. Already in 1285 there was « much cotton » grown, with an elaborate technique, in Chiang-nan. It does not sound probable that the cultivation of a new plant should have been developed in the baleful years which culminated in the conquest of the Sung capital Hang-chou by the Mongols (1276). In all likelihood, the introduction of cotton cultivation into Chiang-nan goes back at least to the first half of the 12th century.

Not many years after the composition of Hu San-hsing's note, we find further information in Wang Chêng. BRETSCHNEIDER (*Botanicon Sinicum*, I, 81) attributes to Wang Chêng a special monograph on the cotton plant, entitled 木棉圖譜 *Mu-mien t'u-p'u*; but it never existed as an independent work. BRETSCHNEIDER may have inferred its existence from the « preface to the *Mu-mien t'u-p'u* » copied in *T'u-shu chi-ch'êng*, *ts'ao-mu tien*, 303, *i-wên*, 2a; this, however, is merely the introduction to the illustrated notices on cotton cultivation, which constitute the second part of ch. 21 (ff. 16-19) of Wang Chêng's comprehensive treatise on agriculture, the *Nung shu*, the general preface of which is dated 1313. Wang Chêng was the inventor of the « revolving case » for moveable type, which he actually devised to print his *Nung shu* (cf. T. F. CARTER, *The invention of printing in China*, 161-166; I do not know why CARTER always dates the *Nung shu* « 1314 »).

There are two sections on « cotton » (*mu-mien*) in the *Nung shu*, one in the general descriptions of plants (10, 5-6), and the other explaining the machines needed for cleansing and carding the floss. The first text begins as follows : « *Mu-mien* is also called *chi-pei*. It is sowed about *ku-yü* (20th of April), and progressively collected at *li-ch'iu* (7th of August). The flower is yellow like the 葵 *k'uei* ('mallow', a generic name of malvaceous plants, some of which have small yellow flowers); the 'root' (*kên*) is single and straight; the 'tree' (*shu*) is not valued for its height, but for the number of 'branches' (*kan*). It does not grow from the old root, but is produced by sowing seeds. As to the seeds to be sowed, those which are first collected are not full, and those [which ripen] near hoar-frost time cannot be used; the best are only those collected in the months between. [The fruit] must be thoroughly dried in the sun, and stored with the floss. When the time of sowing approaches it is sundried again, then rolled and planted. This plant (*chung*) was originally produced in the kingdoms of the southern sea (*nan-hai chu-kuo*). Later, all the districts (*hsien*) of Fu-chien had it. Recently (*chin*), it has also been much sowed in 江東 Chiang-tung (lit. 'East of the Chiang', i. e. Chiang-su and Chê-chiang) and 陝右 Shàn-yü (lit. 'Right