

LXXVI., p. 199.

KINSAY, KHANFU.

Pelliot proposes to see in Khanfu a transcription of Kwang-fu, an abridgment of Kwang chau fu, prefecture of Kwang chau (Canton). Cf. *Bul. Ecole franç Ext. Orient*, Jan.-June, 1904, p. 215 n., but I cannot very well accept this theory.

LXXX., pp. 225, 226. "They have also [in Fu Kien] a kind of fruit resembling saffron, and which serves the purpose of saffron just as well."

Dr. Laufer writes to me: "Yule's identification with a species of *Gardenia* is all right, although this is not peculiar to Fu Kien. Another explanation, however, is possible. In fact, the Chinese speak of a certain variety of saffron peculiar to Fu Kien. The *Pen ts'ao kang mu shi i* (Ch. 4, p. 14 b) contains the description of a 'native saffron' (*t'u hung hwa*, in opposition to the 'Tibetan red flower' or genuine saffron) after the Continued Gazetteer of Fu Kien, as follows: 'As regards the native saffron, the largest specimens are seven or eight feet high. The leaves are like those of the p'i-p'a (*Eriobotrya japonica*), but smaller and without hair. In the autumn it produces a white flower like a grain of maize (*Su-mi, Zea mays*). It grows in Fu Chou and Nan Ngen Chou (now Yang Kiang in Kwang Tung) in the mountain wilderness. That of Fu Chou makes a fine creeper, resembling the *fu-yung* (*Hibiscus mutabilis*), green above and white below, the root being like that of the *ko* (*Pachyrhizus thunbergianus*). It is employed in the pharmacopeia, being finely chopped for this purpose and soaked overnight in water in which rice has been scoured; then it is soaked for another night in pure water and pounded: thus it is ready for prescriptions.' This plant, as far as I know, has not yet been identified, but it may well be identical with Polo's saffron of Fu Kien."

LXXX., pp. 226, 229 n.

THE SILKY FOWLS OF MARCO POLO.

Tarradale, Muir of Ord, Rosss-shire, May 10, 1915.

In a letter lately received from my cousin Mr. George Udny Yule (St. John's College, Cambridge) he makes a suggestion which seems to me both probable and interesting. As he is at present too busy to follow up the question himself, I have asked permission to publish his suggestion in *The Athenæum*, with the