

study of cultivated plants, and this is the early literature on medicine. Prominent are the books of the physician Čaň Čuň-kiň 張仲景 or Čaň Ki 張機, who is supposed to have lived under the Later Han at the end of the second century A.D. A goodly number of cultivated plants is mentioned in his book *Kin kwei yü han yao lio faň lun* 金匱玉函要畧方論 or abbreviated *Kin kwei yao lio*.¹ This is a very interesting hand-book of dietetics giving detailed rules as to the avoidance of certain foods at certain times or in certain combinations, poisonous effects of articles of diet, and prescriptions to counteract this poison. Neither this nor any other medical writer gives descriptions of plants or notes regarding their introduction; they are simply enumerated in the text of the prescriptions. But it is readily seen that, if such a work can be exactly dated, it has a chronological value in determining whether a given plant was known at that period. Thus Čaň Ki mentions, of plants that interest us in this investigation, the walnut, the pomegranate, the coriander, and *Allium scorodoprasum* (*hu swan*). Unfortunately, however, we do not know that we possess his work in its original shape, and Chinese scholars admit that it has suffered from interpolations which it is no longer possible to unravel. The data of such a work must be utilized with care whenever points of chronology are emphasized. It was rather tempting to add to the original prescriptions of Čaň Ki, and there is no doubt that the subsequent editions have blended primeval text with later comments. The earliest commentary is by Waň Šu-ho 王叔和 of the Tsin. Now, if we note that the plants in question are otherwise not mentioned under the Han, but in other books are recorded only several centuries later, we can hardly refrain from entertaining serious doubts as to Čaň Ki's acquaintance with them. A critical bibliographical study of early Chinese medical literature is an earnest desideratum.

A. DE CANDOLLE's monumental work on the "Origin of Cultivated Plants" is still the only comprehensive book on this subject that we have. It was a masterpiece for his time, and still merits being made the basis and starting-point for any investigation of this kind. De Candolle possessed a really critical and historical spirit, which cannot be said of other botanists who tried to follow him on the path of historical research; and the history of many cultivated plants has been outlined by him perfectly well and exactly. Of many others, our conceptions are now somewhat different. Above all, it must be said that

¹ Reprinted in the *Yü tswan i tsuň kin kien* of 1739 (WYLIE, Notes on Chinese Literature, p. 101). A good edition of this and the other works of the same author on the basis of a Sung edition is contained in the medical Ts'uň-šu, the *I t'uň čen mo ts'üan šu*, published by the Če-kiän šu kü.