

since his days Oriental studies have made such rapid strides, that his notes with regard to India, China, and Japan, are thoroughly out of date. As to China, he possessed no other information than the superficial remarks of BRETSCHNEIDER in his "Study and Value of Chinese Botanical Works,"<sup>1</sup> which teem with misunderstandings and errors.<sup>2</sup> De Candolle's conclusions as to things Chinese are no longer acceptable. The same holds good for India and probably also for Egypt and western Asia. In point of method, de Candolle has set a dangerous precedent to botanists in whose writings this effect is still visible, and this is his over-valuation of purely linguistic data. The existence of a native name for a plant is apt to prove little or nothing for the history of the plant, which must be based on documentary and botanical evidence. Names, as is well known, in many cases are misleading or deceptive; they constitute a welcome accessory in the chain of evidence, but they cannot be relied upon exclusively. It is a different case, of course, if the Chinese offer us plant-names which can be proved to be of Iranian origin. If on several occasions I feel obliged to uphold V. Hehn against his botanical critic A. Engler, such pleas must not be construed to mean that I am an unconditional admirer of Hehn; on the contrary, I am wide awake to his weak points and the shortcomings of his method, but wherever in my estimation he is right, it is my duty to say that he is right. A book to which I owe much information is CHARLES JORET's "Les Plantes dans l'antiquité et au moyen âge" (2 vols., Paris, 1897, 1904), which contains a sober and clear account of the plants of ancient Iran.<sup>3</sup>

A work to which I am greatly indebted is "Terminologie médico-pharmaceutique et anthropologique française-persane," by J. L. SCHLIMMER, lithographed at Teheran, 1874.<sup>4</sup> This comprehensive work of over 600 pages folio embodies the lifelong labors of an instructor at the Polytechnic College of Persia, and treats in alphabetical order of animal and vegetable products, drugs, minerals, mineral waters, native

<sup>1</sup> Published in the *Chinese Recorder* for 1870 and 1871.

<sup>2</sup> They represent the fruit of a first hasty and superficial reading of the *Pen ts'ao kan mu* without the application of any criticism. In Chinese literature we can reach a conclusion only by consulting and sifting all documents bearing on a problem. Bretschneider's *Botanicon Sinicum*, much quoted by sinologues and looked upon as a sort of gospel by those who are unable to control his data, has now a merely relative value, and is uncritical and unsatisfactory both from a botanical and a sinological viewpoint; it is simply a translation of the botanical section of the *Pen ts'ao kan mu* without criticism and with many errors, the most interesting plants being omitted.

<sup>3</sup> Joret died in Paris on December 26, 1914, at the age of eighty-five years (cf. obituary notice by H. CORDIER, *La Géographie*, 1914, p. 239).

<sup>4</sup> Quoted "SCHLIMMER, Terminologie." I wish to express my obligation to the Surgeon General's Library in Washington for the loan of this now very rare book.