

In the T'ang period the Chinese learned also that the people of Fu-lin (Syria) relished grape-wine,<sup>1</sup> and that the country of the Arabs (Ta-ši) produced grapes, the largest of the size of fowl's eggs.<sup>2</sup> In other texts such grapes are also ascribed to Persia.<sup>3</sup> At that epoch, Turkistan had fallen into the hands of Turkish tribes, who absorbed the culture of their Iranian predecessors; and it became known to the Chinese that the Uigur had vine and wine.

Viticulture was in a high state of development in ancient Iran. Strabo<sup>4</sup> attributes to Margiana (in the present province of Khorasan) vines whose stock it would require two men with outstretched arms to clasp, and clusters of grapes two cubits long. Aria, he continues, is described as similarly fertile, the wine being still richer, and keeping perfectly for three generations in unpitched casks. Bactriana, which adjoins Aria, abounds in the same productions, except the olive.

The ancient Persians were great lovers of wine. The best vintage-wines were served at the royal table.<sup>5</sup> The couch of Darius was overshadowed by a golden vine, presented by Pythius, a Lydian.<sup>6</sup> The inscription of Persepolis informs us that fifty congii<sup>7</sup> of sweet wine and five thousand congii of ordinary wine were daily delivered to the royal house.<sup>8</sup> The office of cup-bearer in the palace was one of importance.<sup>9</sup> The younger Cyrus, when he had wine of a peculiarly fine flavor, was in the habit of sending half-emptied flagons of it to some of his friends, with a message to this effect: "For some time Cyrus has not found a pleasanter wine than this one; and he therefore sends some to you, begging you to drink it to-day with those whom you love best."<sup>10</sup>

Strabo<sup>11</sup> relates that the produce of Carmania is like that of Persia, and that among other productions there is the vine. "The Carmanian

<sup>1</sup> HIRTH, *China and the Roman Orient*, pp. 58, 63.

<sup>2</sup> *T'ai p'ih hwan yü ki*, Ch. 186, p. 15 b.

<sup>3</sup> For instance, *Pen ts'ao yen i*, Ch. 18, p. 1 (ed. of Lu Sin-yüan).

<sup>4</sup> II. I, 14, and XI. x, 2.

<sup>5</sup> Esther, I, 7 ("And they gave them drink in vessels of gold, the vessels being diverse one from another, and royal wine in abundance, according to the state of the king").

<sup>6</sup> Herodotus, VII, 27; Athenaeus, XII, 514 f. According to G. W. ELDERKIN (*Am. Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. XXI, 1917, p. 407), the ultimate source of this motive would be Assyrian.

<sup>7</sup> A measure of capacity equal to about six pints.

<sup>8</sup> JORET, *Plantes dans l'antiquité*, Vol. II, p. 95.

<sup>9</sup> Xenophon, *Cyropædia*, I. III, 8-9.

<sup>10</sup> Xenophon, *Anabasis*, I. IX, 25.

<sup>11</sup> XV. II, 14.