

TAVERNIER<sup>1</sup> states that there are quantities of vines and good grapes, but no wine, the grapes being merely dried to distil spirits from. Wild vine grows in upper Siam and on the Malay Peninsula, and is said to furnish a rather good wine.<sup>2</sup>

A wine-yielding plant of Central Asia is described in the *Ku kin ču* 古今注<sup>3</sup> by Ts'ui Pao 崔豹 of the fourth century, as follows: "The *tsiu-pei-t'en* 酒杯藤 ("wine-cup creeper") has its habitat in the Western Regions (Si-yü). The creeper is as large as an arm; its leaves are like those of the *ko* 葛 (*Pachyrhizus thunbergianus*, a wild-growing creeper); flowers and fruits resemble those of the *wu-t'un* (*Sterculia platanifolia*), and are hard; wine can be pressed out of them. The fruits are as large as a finger and in taste somewhat similar to the *tou-k'ou* 荳蔻 (*Alpinia globosum*); their fragrance is fine, and they help to digest wine. In order to secure wine, the natives get beneath the creepers, pluck the flowers, press the wine out, eat the fruit for digestion, and become intoxicated. The people of those countries esteem this wine, but it is not sent to China. Čaň K'ien obtained it when he left Ta-yüan (Fergana). This affair is contained in the *Čaň K'ien č'u kwan č'i* 張騫出關志 ('Memoirs of Čaň K'ien's Journey')."<sup>4</sup> This account is restricted to the *Ku kin ču*, and is not confirmed by any other book. Li Ši-čen's work is the only *Pen ts'ao* which has adopted this text in an abridged form.<sup>5</sup> Accordingly the plant itself has never been introduced into China; and this fact is sufficient to discard the possibility of an introduction by Čaň K'ien. If he had done so, the plant would have been disseminated over China and mentioned in the various early *Pen ts'ao*; it would have been traced and identified by our botanists. Possibly the plant spoken of is a wild vine, possibly another genus. The description, though by no means clear in detail, is too specific to be regarded as a mystification.

The history of the grape-vine in China has a decidedly methodological value. We know exactly the date of the introduction and

<sup>1</sup> Travels in India, Vol. II, p. 282.

<sup>2</sup> DILOCK PRINZ VON SIAM, Landwirtschaft in Siam, p. 167.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. c, p. 2 b. The text has been adopted by the *Sü po wu č'i* (Ch. 5, p. 2 b) and in a much abbreviated form by the *Yu yaň tsa tsu* (Ch. 18, p. 6 b). It is not in the *Pen ts'ao kaň mu*, but in the *Pen ts'ao kaň mu ši i* (Ch. 8, p. 27).

<sup>4</sup> HIRTH (*Journal Am. Or. Soc.*, Vol. XXXVII, 1917, p. 91) states that this work is mentioned in the catalogue of the library of the Sui dynasty, but not in the later dynastic catalogues. We do not know when and by whom this alleged book was written; it may have been an historical romance. Surely it was not produced by Čaň K'ien himself.

<sup>5</sup> See also *T'u šu tsi č'en*, XX, Ch. 112, where no other text on the subject is quoted.