

The Persians appeared to the ancients as terebinth-eaters, and this title seems to have developed into a sort of nickname: when Astyages, King of the Medians, seated on his throne, looked on the defeat of his men through the army of Cyrus, he exclaimed, "Woe, how brave are these terebinth-eating Persians!"¹ According to Polyænus,² terebinth-oil was among the articles to be furnished daily for the table of the Persian kings. In the Būndahišn, the pistachio-nut is mentioned together with other fruits the inside of which is fit to eat, but not the outside.³ "The fruits of the country are dates, pistachios, and apples of Paradise, with other of the like not found in our cold climate."⁴

Twan Č'eñ-ši 段成式, in his *Yu yan tsa tsu* 酉陽雜俎, written about A.D. 860 and containing a great amount of useful information on the plants of Persia and Fu-lin, has the following:—

"The hazel-nut (*Corylus heterophylla*) of the Hu (Iranians), styled *a-yüe* 阿月, grows in the countries of the West.⁵ According to the statement of the barbarians, *a-yüe* is identical with the hazel-nuts of the Hu. In the first year the tree bears hazel-nuts, in the second year it bears *a-yüe*."⁶

Č'en Ts'an-k'i 陳藏器, who in the K'ai-yüan period (A.D. 713-741) wrote the *Materia Medica Pen ts'ao ši i* 本草拾遺, states that "the fruits of the plant *a-yüe-hun* 阿月渾 are warm and acrid of flavor, non-poisonous, cure catarrh of the bowels, remove cold feeling, and make people stout and robust, that they grow in the western countries, the barbarians saying that they are identical with the hazel-nut of the Hu 胡榛子. During the first year the tree bears hazel-nuts, in the second year it bears *a-yüe-hun*."

Li Sün 李珣, in his *Hai yao pen ts'ao* 海藥本草 (second half of the eighth century), states, "According to the *Nan čou ki* 南洲記 by Sü Piao 徐表,⁷ the Nameless Tree (*wu miñ mu* 無名木) grows in the mountainous valleys of Liñ-nan (Kwañ-tuñ). Its fruits resemble in appearance the hazel-nut, and are styled Nameless Fruits (*wu miñ tse* 無名

¹ Nicolaus of Damaskus (first century B.C.), cited by HEHN, *Kulturpflanzen*, p. 424.

² *Strategica*, IV. III, 32.

³ These fruits are walnut, almond, pomegranate, coconut, filbert, and chestnut. See WEST, *Pahlavi Texts*, Vol. I, p. 103.

⁴ MARCO POLO, Yule's edition, Vol. I, p. 97.

⁵ The editions of the *Yu yan tsa tsu* write 西園, "in the gardens of the West"; but the *T'u šu tsi č'eñ* (section botany, Ch. 311) and *Či wu miñ ši t'u k'ao*, in reproducing this text, offer the reading 西國, which seems to me preferable.

⁶ *Yu yan tsa tsu* 續集, Ch. 10, p. 3 b (ed. of *Tsin tai pi šu*).

⁷ This work is quoted in the *Ts'i min yao šu*, written by Kia Se-niu under the Hou Wei dynasty (A.D. 386-534).