

with this dye. Abu Hanīfa has a long discourse on it.<sup>1</sup> Ibn Hassan knew the root of *wars*, and confounded it with saffron.<sup>2</sup> Ibn al-Baiṭār offers a lengthy notice of it.<sup>3</sup> Two species are distinguished,— one from Ethiopia, black, and of inferior quality; and another from India, of a brilliant red, yielding a dye of a pure yellow. A variety called *bārīda* dyes red. It is cultivated in Yemen. Also the association with *Curcuma* and *Crocus* is indicated. Iṣak Ibn Amrān remarks, "It is said that *wars* represents roots of *Curcuma*, which come from China and Yemen"; and Ibn Massa el-Basri says, "It is a substance of a brilliant red which resembles pounded saffron." This explains why the Chinese included it in the term *yü-kin*. LECLERC also has identified the *wars* of the Arabs with *Memecylon tinctorium*, and adds, "L'ouars n'est pas le produit exclusif de l'Arabie. On le rencontre abondamment dans l'Inde, notamment aux environs de Pondichéry qui en a envoyé en Europe, aux dernières expositions. Il s'appelle *kana* dans le pays."<sup>4</sup> The *Yamato honzō* speaks of *yü-kin* as a dye-stuff coming from Siam; this seems to be also *Memecylon*.

The fact that the Chinese included the product of *Memecylon* in the term *yü-kin* appears to indicate that this cheap coloring-matter was substituted in trade for the precious saffron.

While the Chinese writers on botany and pharmacology have overlooked *yü-kin* as the name of a tree, they have clearly recognized that the term principally serves for the designation of the saffron, the product of the *Crocus sativus*. This fact is well borne out by the descriptions and names of the plant, as well as by other evidence.

The account given of Central India in the Annals of the Liang Dynasty<sup>5</sup> expressly states that *yü-kin* is produced solely in Kashmir (Ki-pin), that its flower is perfectly yellow and fine, resembling the flower *fu-yün* (*Hibiscus mutabilis*). Kashmir was always the classical land famed for the cultivation of saffron, which was (and is) thence exported to India, Tibet, Mongolia, and China. In Kashmir, Uḍḍiyāna,

<sup>1</sup> ACHUNDOW, Abu Mansur, p. 272.

<sup>2</sup> LECLERC, *Traité des simples*, Vol. III, p. 167.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 409.

<sup>4</sup> Arabic *wars* has also been identified with *Flemingia congesta* (WATT, *Dictionary*, Vol. III, p. 400) and *Mallotus philippinensis* (*ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 114). The whole subject is much confused, particularly by FLÜCKIGER and HANBURY (*Pharmacographia*, p. 573; cf. also G. JACOB, *Beduinenleben*, p. 15, and *Arab. Geographien*, p. 166), but this is not the place to discuss it. The Chinese description of the *yü-kin* tree does not correspond to any of these plants.

<sup>5</sup> *Lian šu*, Ch. 54, p. 7 b. This work was compiled by Yao Se-lien in the first half of the seventh century from documents of the Liang dynasty, which ruled from A.D. 502 to 556.