

HENNA

19. It is well known that the leaves of *Lawsonia alba* or *L. inermis*, grown all over southern China, are extensively used by women and children as a finger-nail dye, and are therefore styled *či kia hwa* 指甲花 ("finger-nail flower").¹ This flower is mentioned in the *San fu hwañ t'u*,² of unknown authorship and date, as having been transplanted from Nan Yüe (South China) into the Fu-li Palace at the time of the Han Emperor Wu (140-87 B.C.). This is doubtless an anachronism or a subsequent interpolation in the text of that book. The earliest datable reference to this plant is again contained in the *Nan fañ ts'ao mu čwañ* by Ki Han,³ by whom it is described as a tree from five to six feet in height, with tender and weak branches and leaves like those of the young elm-tree 榆 (*Ulmus campestris*), the flowers being snow-white like *ye-si-min* and *mo-li*, but different in odor. As stated above (p. 329), this work goes on to say that these three plants were introduced by Hu people from Ta Ts'in, and cultivated in Kwañ-tuñ.⁴ The question arises again whether this passage was embodied in the original edition. It is somewhat suspicious, chiefly for the reason that Ki Han adds the synonyme *san-mo*, which, as we have seen, in fact relates to jasmine.

The *Pei hu lu*,⁵ written about A.D. 875 by Twan Kuñ-lu, contains the following text under the heading *či kia hwa*: "The finger-nail flower is fine and white and of intense fragrance. The barbarians 番人 now plant it. Its name has not yet been explained. There are, further, the jasmine and the white *mo-li*. All these were transplanted to China by the Persians (Po-se). This is likewise the case with the *p'i-ši-ša* 毗尸沙 (or 'gold coin') flower (*Inula chinensis*). Originally it was only produced abroad, but in the second year of the period Ta-t'uñ 大同 (A.D. 536 of the Liang dynasty) it came to China for the first time (始來中土)." In the *Yu yañ tsa tsu*,⁶ written about fifteen years earlier, we read, "The gold-coin flower 金錢花, it is said, was originally produced abroad. In the second year of the period Ta-t'uñ of the

¹ Cf. *Notes and Queries on China and Japan*, Vol. I, 1867, pp. 40-41. STUART, Chinese Materia Medica, p. 232.

² Ch. 3, p. 9 b (see above, p. 263).

³ Ch. B, p. 3 (ed. of *Han Wei ts'uiñ šu*).

⁴ Cf. also HIRTH, *China and the Roman Orient*, p. 268.

⁵ Ch. 3, p. 16 (see above, p. 268).

⁶ Ch. 19, p. 10 b.