

province of Gujarat from Persia, where they grow in dry and arid places between rocks; they are as bitter as colocynth, and there is no fear that children will amuse themselves by eating them.¹

What WATTERS² has stated about the almond is for the greater part inexact or erroneous. "For the almond which does not grow in China the native authors and others have apparently only the Persian name which is Bádán. This the Chinese transcribe *pa-tan* 八擔 or 巴旦 and perhaps also, as suggested by Bretschneider, *pa-lan* 杷攬." First, the Persian name for the almond is *bādām*; second, the Chinese characters given by Watters are not apt to transcribe this word, as the former series answers to ancient *pat-dam, the latter to *pa-dan. Both 八 and 巴 only had an initial labial surd, but never a labial sonant, and for this reason could not have been chosen for the transcription of a foreign *ba* in the T'ang period, when the name of the almond made its début in China. Further, the character 旦, which was not possessed of a final labial nasal, would make a rather bad reproduction of the required element *dam*. In fact, the characters given by Watters are derived from the *Pen ts'ao kan mu*,³ and represent merely a comparatively modern readjustment of the original form made at a time when the transposition of sonants into surds had taken effect. The first form given by Watters, as stated in the *Pen ts'ao* itself, is taken from the *Yin šan čen yao* (see p. 236), written by Ho Se-hwi during the Yüan period; while the second form is the work of Li Ši-čen, as admitted by himself, and accordingly has no phonetic value whatever.⁴ Indeed, we have a phonetically exact transcription of the Iranian term, handed down from the T'ang period, when the Chinese still enjoyed the possession of a well-trained ear, and, in view of the greater wealth of sounds then prevailing in their speech, also had the faculty of reproducing them with a fair degree of precision. This transcription is presented by 婆淡 *p'o-tan*, *bwa-dam, almond (*Amygdalus communis* or *Prunus amygdalus*), which actually reproduces Middle Persian *vadam*, New Persian *bādām* (Kurd *badem*, *beiv* and *baif*, "almond-tree").⁵ This term,

¹ TAVERNIER, *Travels in India*, Vol. I, p. 27.

² *Essays on the Chinese Language*, p. 348.

³ Ch. 29, p. 4. Hence adopted also by the Japanese botanists (MATSUMURA, No. 2567), but read *amendo* (imitation of our word).

⁴ He further gives as name for the almond *hu-lu-ma* 忽鹿麻 = Persian *xurmā* (*khurmā*), but this word properly refers to the date (p. 385). From the *Ta Min i t'un či* (Ch. 89, p. 24), where the almonds of Herat are mentioned, it appears that *hu-lu-ma* (*xurmā*) was the designation of a special variety of almond, "resembling a jujube and being sweet."

⁵ The assertion of STUART (*Chinese Materia Medica*, p. 40), that *pa-tan* may refer to some country in Asia Minor or possibly be another name for Persia, is erroneous.