

as far as I know, is first mentioned in the *Yu yan tsa tsu*,¹ where it is said, "The flat peach 扁桃 grows in the country Po-se (Persia), where it is styled *p'o-tan*. The tree reaches a height of from fifty to sixty feet, and has a circumference of four or five feet. Its leaves resemble those of the peach, but are broader and larger. The blossoms, which are white in color, appear in the third month. When the blossoms drop, the formation of the fruit has the appearance of a peach, but the shape is flat. Hence they are called 'flat peaches.' The meat is bitter and acrid, and cannot be chewed; the interior of the kernel, however, is sweet, and is highly prized in the Western Regions and all other countries." Although the fact of the introduction of the plant into China is not insisted upon by the author, Twan Č'eñ-ši, his description, which is apparently based on actual observation, may testify to a cultivation in the soil of his country. This impression is corroborated by the testimony of the Arabic merchant Soleiman, who wrote in A.D. 851, and enumerates almonds among the fruit growing in China.² The correctness of the Chinese reproduction of the Iranian name is confirmed by the Tibetan form *ba-dam*, Uigur and Osmanli *badam*, and Sanskrit *vātāma* or *bādāma*, derived from the Middle Persian.³

The fundamental text of the *Yu yan tsa tsu* has unfortunately escaped Li Ši-čen, author of the *Pen ts'ao kan mu*, and he is accordingly led to the vague definition that the almond comes from the old territory of the Mohammedans; in his time, he continues, the tree occurred in all places West of the Pass (Kwan si; that is, Kan-su and Šen-si). The latter statement is suppressed in BRETSCHNEIDER'S translation of the text,⁴ probably because it did not suit his peremptory opinion that the almond-tree does not occur in China. He did not know, either, of the text of the *Yu yan tsa tsu*, and his vague data were adopted by A. DE CANDOLLE.⁵

LOUREIRO⁶ states that the almond is both wild and cultivated in

¹ Ch. 18, p. 10 b.

² M. REINAUD, *Relation des voyages*, Vol. I, p. 22.

³ Cf. the writer's *Loan-Words in Tibetan*, No. 111. It should be repeated also in this place that the Tibetan term *p'a-tiñ*, which only means "dried apricots," bears no relation to the Persian designation of the almond, as wrongly asserted by Watters.—The almond is also known to the Lo-lo (Nyi Lo-lo *ñi-ma*, Ahi Lo-lo *i-ni-zo*, *i-sa*).

⁴ *Chinese Recorder*, 1870, p. 176.

⁵ *Origin of Cultivated Plants*, p. 219. He speaks erroneously of the *Pen ts'ao* published in the tenth or eleventh century. Bretschneider, of course, meant the *Pen ts'ao* of the sixteenth century.

⁶ *Flora cochinchinensis*, p. 316. PERROT and HURRIER (*Matière médicale et pharm. sino-annamites*, p. 153) have an *Amygdalus cochinchinensis* for Annam.