

Persia.¹ We have, however, the testimony of the Arabic merchant Soleiman, who wrote in A.D. 851, to the effect that the fig then belonged to the fruits of China.²

Bretschneider has never written on the subject, but did communicate some notes to the botanist Solms-Laubach, from whom they were taken over by G. EISEN.³ Here we are treated to the monstrous statement, "The fig is supposed to have reached China during the reign of the Emperor Tschang-Kien [sic!], who fitted out an expedition to Turan in the year 127 A.D." [sic!]. It is safe to say that Bretschneider could not have perpetrated all this nonsense; but, discounting the obvious errors, there remains the sad fact that again he credited Čan K'ien with an introduction which is not even ascribed to him by any Chinese text. It is not necessary to be more Chinese than the Chinese, and this Changkienomania is surely disconcerting. What a Hercules this Čan K'ien must have been! It has never happened in the history of the world that any individual ever introduced into any country such a stupendous number of plants as is palmed off on him by his epigone admirers.

Li Ši-čen, in his notice of the "flowerless fruit," does not fall back on any previous *Pen ts'ao*; of older works he invokes only the *Yu yan tsa tsu* and the *Fan yü či* 方輿志, which mention the *udambara* of Kwan-si.

The fig of Yün-nan deserves special mention. Wu K'i-tsün, author of the excellent botanical work *Či wu min ši t'u k'ao*, has devoted a special chapter (Ch. 36) to the plants of Yün-nan, the first of these being the *yu-t'an* (*udambara*) flower, accompanied by two illustrations. From the texts assembled by him it becomes clear that this tree was introduced into Yün-nan from India by Buddhist monks. Among other stories, he repeats that regarding the monk P'u-t'i (Bodhi)-pa-po, which has been translated by C. SAINSON;⁴ but whereas Yaň Šen, in his *Nan čao ye ši*, written in 1550, said that one of these trees planted by the monk was still preserved in the Temple of the Guardian Spirit 土主廟 of Yün-nan fu, Wu K'i-tsün states after the *Yün-nan t'un či* that for a long time none remained in existence, owing to the ravages and burnings of troops. Judging from the illustration, the fig-tree of Yün-nan is a species different from *Ficus carica*. The genus *Ficus*

¹ Contrary to what is stated by A. DE CANDOLLE (*Origin of Cultivated Plants*, p. 296) after Bretschneider. But the description of the fig in that Chinese work leaves no doubt that the author speaks from observation, and that the fig, accordingly, was cultivated in the China of his time.

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

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 20.

⁴ *Histoire du Nan-Tchao*, p. 196.