

When I had established the above identification of the Sanskrit name, it was quite natural for me to lay my hands on MATSUMURA'S "Shokubutsu mei-i" and to look up *Cassia fistula* under No. 754: it was as surprising as gratifying to find there, "*Cassia fistula* 阿勃勒 *namban-saikachi*." This Japanese name means literally the "*Gleditschia japonica* (*saikači* = Chinese *tsao-kia-tse*) of the Southern Barbarians" (Chinese Nan Fan). The Japanese botanists, accordingly, had succeeded in arriving at the same identification through the description of the plant; while the philological equation with the Sanskrit term escaped them, as evidenced by their adherence to the wrong form *a-p'o-lo*, sanctioned by the *Pen ts'ao kan mu*. The case is of methodological interest in showing how botanical and linguistic research may supplement and corroborate each other: the result of the identification is thus beyond doubt; the rejection of *a-p'o-lo* becomes complete, and the restitution of *a-lo-p'o*, as handed down in the *Čen lei pen ts'ao*, ceases to be a mere philological conjecture or emendation, but is raised into the certainty of a fact.

The Arabs know the fruit of this tree under the names *xarnub hindi* ("Indian carob")¹ and *xiyār šanbār* ("cucumber of necklaces," from its long strings of golden flowers).² Abu'l Abbās, styled en-Nebāti ("the Botanist"), who died at Sevilla in 1239, the teacher of Ibn al-Baiṭār, who preserved extracts from his lost work *Rihla* ("The Voyage"), describes *Cassia fistula* as very common in Egypt, particularly in Alexandria and vicinity, whence the fruit is exported to Syria;³ it commonly occurs in Bassora also, whence it is exported to the Levant and Irak. He compares the form of the tree to the walnut and the fruit to the carob. The same comparison is made by Iṣāk Ibn Amrān, who states in Leclerc's translation, "Dans chacun de ces tubes est renfermée une pulpe noire, sucrée et laxative. Dans chaque compartiment est un noyau qui a le volume et la forme de la graine de caroubier. La partie employée est la pulpe, à l'exclusion du noyau et du tube."

The Persians received the fruit from the Arabs on the one hand, and from north-western India on the other. They adopted the Arabic word *xiyār-šanbār*⁴ in the form *xiyār-čambar* (compare also Armenian *xiar-*

¹ LECLERC, *Traité des simples*, Vol. II, p. 17.

² *Ibid.*, p. 64. Also *qitta hindi* ("Indian cucumber"), *ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 62.

³ GARCIA DA ORTA says that it grows in Cairo, where it was also found by Pierre Belon. In ancient times, however, the tree did not occur in Egypt: LORET, in his *Flore pharaonique*, is silent about it. It was no doubt brought there by the Arabs from India.

⁴ GARCIA DA ORTA spells it *hiar-xamber*.