

tun kwa 冬瓜 (*Benincasa cerifera*)¹ and of sweet taste."² The water-melon is here pointed out as a novelty discovered by a Chinese among the Kitan, who then occupied northern China, and who professed to have received it from the Turkish tribe of the Uigur. It is not stated in this text that Hu Kiao took seeds of the fruit along or introduced it into China proper. This should be emphasized, in view of the conclusion of the *Pen ts'ao kan mu* (see below), and upheld by Bretschneider and A. de Candolle, that the water-melon was in China from the tenth century. At that time it was only in the portion of China held by the Kitan, but still unknown in the China of the Chinese.³

¹ "Cultivated in China, Japan, India and Africa, and often met with in a wild state: but it is uncertain whether it is indigenous" (FORBES and HEMSLEY, *Journal Linnean Society*, Vol. XXIII, p. 315).

² Hu Kiao was a good observer of the flora of the northern regions, and his notes have a certain interest for botanical geography. Following his above reference to the water-melon, he continues, "Going still farther east, we arrived at Niao-t'an, where for the first time willows [*Jurči suxei*] are encountered, also water-grass, luxuriant and fine; the finest of this kind is the grass *si-ki* 息雞 with large blades. Ten of these are sufficient to satisfy the appetite of a horse. From Niao-t'an we advanced into high mountains which it took us ten days' journey to cross. Then we passed a large forest, two or three *li* long, composed entirely of elms, *wu-i* 蕪莢 (*Ulmus macrocarpa*), the branches and leaves of which are set with thorns like arrow-feathers. The soil is devoid of grass." *Si-ki* apparently represents the transcription of a Kitan word. Three species of elm occur in the Amur region,—*Ulmus montana*, *U. campestris*, and *U. suberosa* (GRUM-GRŽIMAILO, *Opisanie Amurskoi Oblasti*, p. 316). In regard to the locality T'añ-č'eñ-tien, Hu Kiao reports, "The climat there is very mild, so that the Kitan, when they suffer from great cold, go there to warm up. The wells are pure and cool; the grass is soft like down, and makes a good sleeping-couch. There are many peculiar flowers to be found, of which two species may be mentioned,—one styled *han-kin* 旱金, the size of the palm of a hand, of gold color so brilliant that it dazzles man; the other, termed *ts'in žaň* 青囊, like the *kin t'eñ* 金燈 (*Orithia edulis*) of China, resembling in color an *Indigofera* (lan 藍) and very pleasing." The term *han-kin* appears to be the transcription of a Kitan word; so is perhaps also *ts'in žaň*, although, according to STUART (*Chinese Materia Medica*, p. 404), the leaves of *Sesamum* are so called; this plant, however, cannot come here into question.

³ The *Pien tse lei pien* cites the *Wu tai ši* to the effect that Siao Han 蕭翰, after the subjugation of the Uigur, obtained the seeds of water-melons and brought them back, and that the fruit as a product of the Western Countries (*Si yü*, that is, Central Asia) was called "western melon" (*si kwa*). I regret not having been able to trace this text in the *Wu tai ši*. The biography of Siao Han inserted in the *Kiu Wu tai ši* (Ch. 98, pp. 6 b-7 a) contains nothing of the kind. The statement itself is suspicious for two reasons. Siao Han, married to A-pu-li, sister of the Emperor Wu-yü, in A.D. 948 was involved in a high-treason plot, and condemned to death in the ensuing year (cf. H. C. V. D. GABELENTZ, *Geschichte der grossen Liao*, p. 65; and CHAVANNES, *op. cit.*, p. 392). Hu Kiao was secretary to Siao Han, and in this capacity accompanied him to the Kitan. After his master's death, Hu Kiao was without support, and remained among the Kitan for seven years (up to the year 953). It was in the course of these peregrinations that, as related above, he was first introduced to water-melons. Now, if Siao Han had really introduced this fruit into