

AROMATICS

53. The *Sui šu*¹ mentions two aromatics or perfumes peculiar to K'añ (Sogdiana),—*kan hian* 𑖀²香 and *a-sa-na hian* 阿薩那香. Fortunately we have a parallel text in the *T'ai p'in hwan yü ki*,³ where the two aromatics of K'añ are given as 甘松香阿薩那香. Hence it follows that the *kan* of the *Sui Annals* is no more than an abbreviation of *kan sun*, which is well known as an aromatic, and identical with the true spikenard furnished by *Nardostachys jatamansi*. It is Sanskrit *nalada*, Tibetan *span spos*, Persian *nard* or *sunbul*, Armenian *sumbul*, *smbul*, *snbul*, etc.⁴ It is believed that the nard found by Alexander's soldiers in Gedrosia⁵ represents the same species, while others hold that it was an *Andropogon*.⁶

The Sanskrit term *nalada* is found in the *Fan yi min yi tsi*⁷ in the form 那羅陀 *na-lo-t'o*, **na-la-da*. It is accompanied by the fanciful analysis *nara-dhara* ("held or carried by man"), because, it is said, people carry the fragrant flower with them in their girdles. The word *nalada* is of ancient date, for it appears in the *Atharvaveda*.⁸ Hebrew *nērd*, Greek *nardos*,⁹ Persian *nard* and *nārd*, are derived therefrom.¹⁰ Being used in the Bible, the word was carried to all European languages.

¹ Ch. 83, p. 4 b.

² This character is not listed in K'añ-hi, but the phonetic element 𑖀 leaves no doubt that its phonetic value is *kan*, **kam*.

³ Ch. 183, p. 4.

⁴ ABU MANSUR (Achundow's translation, pp. 82, 241) mentions *sunbul-i-hindī*, the nard of India. SCHLIMMER (*Terminologie*, p. 36) identifies this name as *Andropogon nardoides* or *Nardus indica*. On the other hand, he says (p. 555) that *Nardostachys* or *Valeriana jatamansi* has not yet been found in Persia, but that it could be replaced in therapeutics by *Valeriana sisymbriifolia*, found abundantly in the mountains north of Teheran.

⁵ Arrian, *Anabasis*, VI. XXII, 5.

⁶ JORET, *Plantes dans l'antiquité*, Vol. II, p. 648. See, further, *Periplus*, 48; and Pliny, XII, 28; WATT, *Commercial Products of India*, p. 792. MARCO POLO (ed. of YULE, Vol. I, pp. 115, 272, 284) mentions spikenard as a product of Bengal, Java, and Sumatra. The Malayan word *nārāwastu*, mentioned by YULE (*ibid.*, p. 287), must be connected with Sanskrit *nalada*.

⁷ Ch. 8, p. 4 b.

⁸ MACDONELL and KEITH, *Vedic Index*, Vol. I, p. 437; H. ZIMMER, *Altindisches Leben*, p. 68.

⁹ First mentioned by Theophrastus, IX. VIII, 2, 3.

¹⁰ See above, p. 428.