

According to STUART,¹ this plant is found in the province of Yün-nan and on the western borders of Se-č'wan, but whether indigenous or transplanted is uncertain. If it should not occur in other parts of China, it is more likely that it came from India, especially as Yün-nan has of old been in contact with India and abounds in plants introduced from there.

54. 阿薩那² *a-sar(sat)-na (*Sui šu*), 阿薛那 *a-sie-na* (*Wei šu*, Ch. 102, p. 9), is not explained. There is no doubt that this word represents the transcription of an Iranian, more specifically Sogdian, name; but the Sogdian terms for aromatics are still unknown to us. Hypothetical restorations of the name are *asarna, axšarna, asna.

55. Storax, an aromatic substance (now obtained from *Liquidambar orientalis*; in ancient times, however, from *Styrax officinalis*), is first mentioned by Herodotus³ as imported into Hellas by the Phœnicians. It is styled by the Chinese 蘇合 *su-ho*, *su-gap (giep), su-gab (Japanese *sugō*), being mentioned both in the *Wei lio* and in the Han Annals as a product of the Hellenistic Orient (Ta Ts'in).⁴ It is said there, "They mix a number of aromatic substances and extract from them the sap by boiling, which is made into *su-ho*" (合會諸香煎其汁以爲蘇合).⁵ It is notable that this clause opens and ends with the same word *ho* 合; and it would thus not be impossible that the explanation is merely the result of punning on the term *su-ho*, which is doubtless the transcription of a foreign word. Aside from this semasiological interpretation, we have a geographical theory expressed in the *Kwan č'i*, written prior to A.D. 527, as follows: "*Su-ho* is produced in the country Ta Ts'in; according to others, in the country Su-ho. The natives of this country gather it and press the juice out of it to make it into an aromatic, fatty substance. What is sold are the sediments

¹ Chinese Materia Medica, p. 278.

² This character is not in K'añ-hi. It appears again on the same page of the *Sui šu* (4 b) in the name of the river *Na-mit 那密 (Zarafšan) in the kingdom Nan 安, and on p. 4 a in 那色波國, the country Na-se-po (*Na-sek-pwa; according to CHAVANNES, Documents sur les Tou-kiue, p. 146, Nakhšab or Nasaf). On pp. 6 b and 7 a the river Na-mit is written 那. Cf. also CHAVANNES and PELLLOT, Traité manichéen, pp. 58, 191.

³ III, 107.

⁴ *Hou Han šu*, Ch. 118, pp. 4 b—5 a. E. H. PARKER (*China Review*, Vol. XV, p. 372) indicates in an anecdote relative to Čwañ-tse that he preferred the dung-beetle's dung-roll to a piece of storax, and infers that indirect intercourse with western Asia must have begun as early as the fourth century B.C., when Čwañ-tse flourished. The source for this story is not stated, and it may very well be a product of later times.

⁵ The *Sü Han šu* gives the same text with the variant, "call it *su-ho*."