

from a tree growing on the Island of Cabros in the Red Sea (near Kadez, three days' journey from Suez), the product being obtained by boiling the bark in salt water until it obtains the consistency of glue.<sup>1</sup>

56-57. The earliest notice of myrrh is contained in the *Nan čou ki* 南州記 of Sü Piao 徐表 (written before the fifth century A.D., but only preserved in extracts of later works), if we may depend on the *Hai yao pen ts'ao*, in which this extract is contained.<sup>2</sup> Sü Piao is made to say there that "the myrrh grows in the country Po-se, and is the pine-tree resin of that locality. In appearance it is like 神香 *šen hian* ('divine incense') and red-black in color. As to its taste, it is bitter and warm." Li Ši-čen annotates that he is ignorant of what the product *šen hian* is. In the *Pei ši*, myrrh is ascribed to the country Ts'ao (Jāguḍa) north of the Ts'un-liñ (identical with the Ki-pin of the Han), while this product is omitted in the corresponding text of the *Sui šu*. Myrrh, further, is ascribed to Ki-pin.<sup>3</sup> The *Čen lei pen ts'ao* gives a crude illustration of the tree under the title *mu yao* of Kwañ-čou (Kwañ-tuñ), saying that the plant grows in Po-se and resembles benjoin (*ñan-si hian*, p. 464), being traded in pieces of indefinite size and of black color.

In regard to the subject, Li Ši-čen<sup>4</sup> cites solely sources of the Sung period. He quotes K'ou Tsuñ-ši, author of the *Pen ts'ao yen i* (A.D. 1116), to the effect that myrrh grows in Po-se, and comes in pieces of indefinite size, black in color, resembling benjoin. In the text of this work, as edited by Lu Sin-yüan,<sup>5</sup> this passage is not contained, but merely the medicinal properties of the drug are set forth.<sup>6</sup> Su Suñ observes that "myrrh now occurs in the countries of the Southern Sea (Nan-hai) and in Kwañ-čou. Root and trunk of the tree are like those of *Canarium* (*kan-lan*). The leaves are green and dense. Only in the course of years does the tree yield a resin, which flows down into the soil, and hardens into larger or smaller pieces resembling benjoin. They may be gathered at any time."

A strange confusion occurs in the *Yu yañ tsa tsu*,<sup>7</sup> where the myrtle (*Myrtus communis*) is described under its Aramaic name *asa* (Arabic

<sup>1</sup> SCHLIMMER, Terminologie, p. 495.

<sup>2</sup> *Čen lei pen ts'ao*, Ch. 13, p. 39; *Pen ts'ao kañ mu*, Ch. 34, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> *T'ai p'ih hwan yü ki*, Ch. 182, p. 12 b.

<sup>4</sup> *Pen ts'ao kañ mu*, l. c.

<sup>5</sup> Ch. 14, p. 4 b.

<sup>6</sup> In all probability, there is an editorial error in the edition of the *Pen ts'ao* quoted; in other editions the same text is ascribed to Ma Či, one of the collaborators in the *K'ai pao pen ts'ao*.

<sup>7</sup> Ch. 18, p. 12.