

product may be explained from the fact that to the south-west of China, west of the Irawaddy, there was a city Nan-si 安西, mentioned in the Itinerary of Kia Tan and in the *Man šu* of the T'ang period.¹ The exact location of this place is not ascertained. Perhaps this or another locality of an identical name lent its name to the product; but this remains for the present a mere hypothesis. The *Tien hai yü hen č'i*² states that *nan-si* is produced in the native district Pa-po ta-tien 八百大甸土司, formerly called 八百媳婦地, of Yün-nan.

The *Yu yan tsa tsu*³ contains the following account: "The tree furnishing the *nan-si* aromatic is produced in the country Po-se.⁴ In Po-se it is termed *p'i-sie* 辟邪 tree ('tree warding off evil influences').⁵ The tree grows to a height of thirty feet, and has a bark of a yellow-black color. The leaves are oblong,⁶ and remain green throughout the winter. It flowers in the second month. The blossoms are yellow. The heart of the flower is somewhat greenish (or bluish). It does not form fruit. On scraping the tree-bark, the gum appears like syrup, which is called *nan-si* aromatic. In the sixth or seventh month, when this substance hardens, it is fit for use as incense, which penetrates into the abode of the spirits and dispels all evil." Although I am not a botanist, I hardly believe that this description could be referred to *Styrax benjoin*. This genus consists only of small trees, which never reach a height of thirty feet; and its flowers are white, not yellow. Moreover, I am not convinced that we face here any Persian plant, but I think that the Po-se of the *Yu yan tsa tsu*, as in some other cases, hints at the Malayan Po-se.⁷

text of the *Pen ts'ao*, occurs a curious misunderstanding. The sentence 燒之能集鼠者爲眞 is rendered by him, "By burning the true *an-si hiang* incense rats can be allured (?)." The interrogation-mark is his. In my opinion, this means, "In burning it, that kind which attracts rodents is genuine."

¹ Cf. PELLLOT, *Bull. de l'Ecole française*, Vol. IV, pp. 178, 371.

² Ch. 3, p. 1 (see above, p. 228).

³ Ch. 18, p. 8 b.

⁴ Both BRETSCHNEIDER (Bot. Sin., pt. III, p. 466) and HIRTH (Chao Ju-kua, p. 202) identify this Po-se with Persia, without endeavoring, however, to ascertain what tree is meant; and *Styrax benzoin* does not occur in Persia. Garcia already stated that benjuy (as he writes) is not found in Armenia, Syria, Africa, or Cyrene, but only in Sumatra and Siam.

⁵ *P'i-sie* is not the transcription of a foreign word; the ancient form *bik-dza would lead to neither a Persian nor a Malayan word.

⁶ BRETSCHNEIDER, who was a botanist, translates this clause (葉有四角), "The leaves spread out into four corners (!)." Literally it means "the leaves have four corners"; that is, they are rectangular or simply oblong. The phrase *se len* 四稜 with reference to leaves signifies "four-pointed," the points being understood as acute.

⁷ See the following chapter on this subject.