

not acquainted with any *Cassia* trees of the south. Certainly there was no Chinese navigation and sea-trade at that time. The Chinese word *kwei* 桂 (*kwai, kwi) occurs at an early date, but it is a generic term for *Lauraceae*; and there are about thirteen species of *Cassia*, and about sixteen species of *Cinnamomum*, in China. The essential point is that the ancient texts maintain silence as to cinnamon; that is, the product from the bark of the tree. *Cinnamomum cassia* is a native of Kwan-si, Kwan-tuñ, and Indo-China; and the Chinese made its first acquaintance under the Han, when they began to colonize and to absorb southern China. The first description of this species is contained in the *Nan fan ts'ao mu čwan* of the third century.¹ This work speaks of large forests of this tree covering the mountains of Kwan-tuñ, and of its cultivation in gardens of Kiao-č'i (Tonking). It was not the Chinese, but non-Chinese peoples of Indo-China, who first brought the tree into cultivation, which, like all other southern cultivations, was simply adopted by the conquering Chinese. The medicinal employment of the bark (*kwei p'i* 桂皮) is first mentioned by T'ao Huñ-kiñ (A.D. 451-536), and probably was not known much earlier. It must be positively denied, however, that the Chinese or any nation of Indo-China had any share in the trade which brought cinnamon to the Semites, Egyptians, or Greeks at the time of Herodotus or earlier. The earliest date we may assume for any navigation from the coasts of Indo-China into the Indian Ocean is the second century B.C.² The solution of the cinnamon problem of the ancients seems simpler to me than to my predecessors. First, there is no valid reason to assume that what our modern botany understands by *Cassia* and *Cinnamomum* must be strictly identical with the products so named by the ancients. Several different species are evidently involved. It is perfectly conceivable that in ancient times there was a fragrant bark supplied by a certain tree of Ethiopia or Arabia or both, which is either extinct or unknown to us, or, as Fée inclines to think, a species of *Amyris*. It is further legitimate to conclude, without forcing the evidence, that the greater part of the cinnamon supply came from Ceylon and India,³ India being expressly included by Strabo. This, at least, is infinitely more reasonable than acquiescing in the wild fantasies of a Schumann or Muss-Arnolt, who lack the most elementary knowledge of East-Asiatic history.

6. The word "China" in the names of Persian and Arabic products,

¹ The more important texts relative to the subject are accessible in BRET-SCHNEIDER, *Bot. Sin.*, pt. III, No. 303.

² Cf. PELLLOT, *T'oung Pao*, 1912, pp. 457-461.

³ The Malabar cinnamon is mentioned by Marco Polo (YULE's ed., Vol. II, p. 389) and others.