

San-fu-ts'i (Palembang) and Malabar.¹ In vain also should we look in Chinese books for anything on the subject that would correspond to the importance attached to it in the West.

GARCIA DA ORTA (1562) held it for certain that "all the rhubarb that comes from Ormuz to India first comes from China to Ormuz by the province of Uzbek which is part of Tartary. The fame is that it comes from China by land, but some say that it grows in the same province, at a city called Çamarcander (Samarkand).² But this is very bad and of little weight. Horses are purged with it in Persia, and I have also seen it so used in Balagate. It seems to me that this is the rhubarb which in Europe we called *ravam turquino*, not because it is of Turkey but from there." He emphasizes the point that there is no other rhubarb than that from China, and that the rhubarb coming to Persia or Uzbek goes thence to Venice and to Spain; some goes to Venice by way of Alexandria, a good deal by Aleppo and Syrian Tripoli, all these routes being partly by sea, but chiefly by land;³ the rhubarb is not so much powdered, for it is more rubbed in a month at sea than in a year going by land.⁴ As early as the thirteenth century at least, as we see from Ibn al-Baitār, what was known to the Arabs as "rhubarb of the Turks or the Persians," in fact hailed from China. In the same manner, it was at a later time that in Europe "Russian, Turkey, and China rhubarb" were distinguished, these names being merely indicative of the various routes by which the drug was conveyed to Europe from China.⁵ Also CHRISTOVAL ACOSTA notes the corruption of rhubarb at sea and its overland transportation to Persia, Arabia, and Alexandria.⁶

¹ HIRTH, *Chau Ju-kua*, pp. 61, 88.

² Probably *Rheum ribes*, mentioned above.

³ LEONHART RAUWOLF (*Beschreibung der Raiss inn die Morgenländer*, 1583, p. 461) reports that large quantities of rhubarb are shipped from India to Aleppo both by sea and by land.

⁴ Cf. MARKHAM, *Colloquies*, pp. 390-392.

⁵ In regard to the Russian trade in rhubarb see G. CAHEN, *Le livre de comptes de la caravane russe à Pékin*, p. 108 (Paris, 1911).

⁶ Reobarbaro (medicina singular, y digna de ser de todo el linage humano venerada) se halla solamente dentro de la China, de donde lo traen a vender a Cãtaon (que es el puerto de mas comercio de la China, donde estan los Portugueses) y de alli vienẽ por mar a la India: y deste que viene por mar no se haze mucho caso, por venir, por la mayor parte corrõpido (por quanto el Reobarbaro se corrõpe cõ mucha facilidad en la mar) y dela misma tierra dẽtro de la China, lo lleuan a la Tartaria, y por la prouincia de Vzbeque lo lleuã a Ormuz, y a toda la Persia, Arabia, y Alexãdria: de dõde se distribuye por toda la Europa (*Tractado de las drogas, y medicinas de las Indias Orientales*, p. 287, Burgos, 1576). Cf. also LINSCHOTEN (*Vol. II*, p. 101, ed. of Hakluyt Society), who, as in most of his notices of Indian products, exploits Garcia.