Faḍlān, the tree occurred in Tabaristān, whence its wood reached the comb-makers of Rei.[1] The Arabic *xaleṅ*, Persian *xadaṅ* or *xadanj*, is of Altaic origin: Uigur *qadaṅ*, Koibal, Soyot and Karagas *kadeṅ*, Čuwaš *xoran*, Yakut *xatyṅ*, Mordwinian *kileṅ*, all referring to the birch (*Betula alba*). It is a common tree in the mountains of northern China (*hwa* 樺), first described by C'en Ts'aṅ-k'i of the eighth century.[2] The bark was used by the Chinese for making torches and candles filled with wax, as a padding or lining of underclothes and boots, for knife-hilts and the decoration of bows, the latter being styled "birch-bark bows."[3] The universal use of birch-bark among all tribes of Siberia for pails, baskets, and dishes, and as a roof-covering, is well known.

17. It would be very desirable to have more exact data as to when and how the consumption of Chinese tea (*Camellia theifera*) spread among Mohammedan peoples. The Arabic merchant Soleiman, who wrote about A.D. 851, appears to be the first outsider who gives an accurate notice of the use of tea-leaves as a beverage on the part of the Chinese, availing himself of the curious name *sāx*.[4] It is strange that the following Arabic authors who wrote on Chinese affairs have nothing to say on the subject. In the splendid collection of Arabic texts relative to the East, so ably gathered and interpreted by G. FERRAND, tea is not even mentioned. It is likewise absent in the Persian pharmacology of Abu Mansur and in the vast compilation of Ibn al-Baiṭār. On the other hand, Chinese mediæval authors like Čou K'ü-fei and Čao Žu-kwa do not note tea as an article of export from China. As far as we can judge at present, it seems that the habit of tea-drinking spread to western Asia not earlier than the thirteenth century, and that it was perhaps the Mongols who assumed the rôle of propagators. In Mongol, Turkish, Persian, Indian, Portuguese, Neo-Greek, and Russian, we equally find the word *čai*, based on North-Chinese *č'a*.[5] Ramu-

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[1] G. JACOB, Handelsartikel der Araber, p. 60.

[2] *Pen ts'ao kaṅ mu*, Ch. 35 B, p. 13.

[3] *Ko ku yao lun*, Ch. 8, p. 8 b. Cf. also O. FRANKE, Beschreibung des Jehol-Gebietes, p. 77.

[4] REINAUD, Relation des voyages, Vol. I, p. 40 (cf. YULE, Cathay, new ed., Vol. I, p. 131). Modern Chinese *č'a* was articulated *ja (dža) in the T'ang period; but, judging from the Korean and Japanese form *sa*, a variant *sa* may be supposed also for some Chinese dialects. As the word, however, was never possessed of a final consonant in Chinese, the final spirant in Soleiman's *sāx* is a peculiar Arabic affair (provided the reading of the manuscript be correct).

[5] The Tibetans claim a peculiar position in the history of tea. They still have the Chinese word in the ancient form *ja* (*dža*), and, as shown by me in *T'oung Pao* (1916, p. 505), have imported and consumed tea from the days of the T'ang. In fact, tea was the dominant economic factor and the key-note in the political relations of China and Tibet.