

have occasion to discuss below the time-honoured tradition which Hsüan-tsang heard about the first introduction of sericulture into Khotan. It proves that in his time this industry was already so old as to be credited with a legendary origin, and that it was certainly derived from China. How much of the silk which the nations of the classical West received through Persia from the distant half-mythical land of the Seres really came from Khotan we shall never know with any certainty. But the antiquity of sericulture in Khotan and the early commercial importance of the oasis seem to give some support to the conjectural location at Khotan of Ptolemy's *Issedon Serica*, as first proposed by Baron von Richthofen¹¹. There appears to me still more reason to believe that the same great scholar, and before him Sir H. Yule, were right in suggesting Khotan as the territory probably meant by the country of *Serinda*, whence, according to the story related by Procopius, two monks in the time of Justinian (about 550 A.D.) first introduced the silkworm into the Byzantine empire¹².

Cotton industry.

Khotan produces more cotton than any other district of Eastern Turkestān, and the export of cotton goods, chiefly in the form of *Khām*, a rough but very durable fabric, is very considerable. Cotton weaving is carried on by a large portion of the agricultural population as a supplementary occupation. M. Grenard estimated the number of households engaged in it at about 12,000, and the value of the output at about 6,700,000 francs¹³. Though the early Chinese records do not appear to make special mention of the cotton goods of Khotan, yet fine fabrics represented among my finds at the sites of Niya and Endere clearly establish the antiquity of this industry¹⁴.

Carpets and felts of Khotan.

Wool is plentifully obtained from the flocks grazing in the mountains and in the riverine forests, but its use is restricted almost exclusively to the fabrication of carpets and felts. For both of these manufactures Khotan is famous throughout Turkestān, and their preeminence in early days is proved by the specific reference Hsüan-tsang makes to them¹⁵. The carpets of Khotan, sometimes made in silk, are widely exported, and are met with throughout Central Asia and far into China. They are easily recognized by their characteristic designs and patterns, which seem to retain certain ancient motives pointing partly to Indian, partly Chinese origin¹⁶. We shall see hereafter that the specimens of ancient rugs found by me at the site of Niya though made in cotton, attest the high development of carpet *technique* for the third century of our era¹⁷. The same site has furnished the oldest samples of those felts or 'Numdahs' (*namad* in Persian, *kīgiz* in Turkī), of which Khotan exports nowadays very large quantities both to Kashmīr via Ladāk and northward. M. Grenard estimated the number of felt workshops in Khotan at approximately a thousand, the industry being conducted by households¹⁸.

Manufacture of paper.

Another industry extensively carried on in Khotan, which deserves to be specially mentioned here, is that of paper. It is now manufactured exclusively from the bark of a mulberry-tree

¹¹ Comp. Richthofen, *China*, i. pp. 487 sqq. For a valuable analysis of the notices relating to early silk trade through Central-Asia, see ib. pp. 442 sqq., 474 sqq. They have been discussed briefly, but with his usual lucidity, by Sir H. Yule, *Cathay*, i. pp. xlv sqq.

¹² Compare Yule, *Cathay*, i. p. xlvi, and for a translation of the original text, pp. clix sqq.; Richthofen, *China*, i. 529 sqq., 550. Procopius' mention of 'many nations of the Indians' in connexion with *Serinda* points more than ever to Khotan, since we have learned how thoroughly and how early Indian influence established itself there. The story as related by Theophanes of Byzantium (end of sixth century) speaks only generally of the country of the Seres from which a certain

Persian brought away the eggs of silkworms hidden in a walking-stick; see Yule, *Cathay*, i. p. clx. This feature of the story may be pure folk-lore; but it curiously recalls the Khotan legend told by Hsüan-tsang how the first eggs of silkworms were brought there hidden in the headdress of a princess from China; see below, chap. ix. sec. iv.

¹³ See *Mission Dutreuil de Rhins*, ii. p. 191.

¹⁴ See below, chap. xi, xii; also Plates LXXVI, LXXVII.

¹⁵ Comp. *Mém.*, ii. p. 223; Beal, ii. p. 309.

¹⁶ For a plate showing Khotan carpets and for some notes on the industry, comp. *Mission D. de Rhins*, ii. p. 195.

¹⁷ Comp. chap. xi. sec. ii.; also Plate LXXV.

¹⁸ See *Mission D. de Rhins*, ii. p. 194.