This being so, and storax being elsewhere stated to have come from Syria [大秦], it seems that indirect intercourse with the west of Asia must have begun as early as the fourth century B. C., when Chwang-tsz flourished.

A BALLAD.—The following is an interesting country ballad of the 10th century, by 聶夷中:—

(1)二月賣新絲 (2)五月糶新穀
(3)醫得眼前瘡 (4)剜却心頭肉

The Emperor was so pleased with it, as expressing the rustic sorrows and anxieties, that he ordered copies of it to be made and frequently hummed it over. The phrase 剜肉補瘡 *is colloquial to this day.*

THE KITE.—It is remarkable that the Pekingese word [鷂子] for a kite (bird) is the same as the Cantonese word for a paper kite, and that the *Japanese word for the* former is *taka* and for the latter *tako*.

FINANCIAL.—From a Memorial by the Viceroy in Kan Suh, certifying to the balance in the Treasurer's chest, it appears that this must be a (? new and) periodical custom.

The extra allowances [商耗] on the full legal quantity [足正] of tribute grain, over and beyond the boatmen's food allowance [食耗], are purchased from the boatmen by government. The following are the prices paid for different qualities: 白粳 and 白糯 6,000 *cash*; 漕粳 4,000 cash; 漕籼 3,500 cash the full *pecul* [平斛一石].

It seems that the warrants for Tientsin [長蘆] salt are issued in the spring and autumn. A deputy is stationed at Lu-t'ai [蘆台] to weigh and examine the salt; 5,000 *yin* or warrants seem to be one season's store for Ki Chou, Tsun-hwa, and Yüh-t'ien *Districts. From a casual remark by the* Fu Kien Comptroller it appears that, in remittances of salt excise, there is no weight or food allowance added.

The salt office of the Two Chê [兩浙鹽局] has been transferred to the Salt Comptroller *instead of* being under a special *taotai*. The number of *yin* [引] which the said office is bound to convey to east Chê kiang is 16,000 a year, but now the number is reduced to 6,000.

The character 垞 seems to be used with 坨 in connection with Tientsin salt; their 丨地, 丨役, 閱丨, seem to mean '(salt) flats,' 'salt makers,' 'inspect the flats' or 'heaps.' Tientsin salt has to be measured out by standard weights issued by the Board; 管丨人 may possibly mean 'a weigher.'

From the year 1883, when the Viceroy Tso increased the number of Hu Kwang and An Hwei salt warrants, the excise and *likin* on the old and new warrants have had to be reported separately each half year. In the first half of 1886 the old Hwai merchants paid Tls. 1,140,765, and the new Tls. 74,783, in excise and *likin*. There were also 10,314 strings of cash taken as duty [稅] on the Hwai salt sent as a test into 鄖陽, 襄陽, and certain places in Hu Nan. Also 85,838 strings of cash taken at 萬戶沱 on Sz Ch'wan salt, (and which appears to be due to the Hwai treasury because the said salt is an encroachment upon the Hwai interest).

The wood and bamboo tax collection at 樊口 near Hankow is officially fixed at a minimum of 145,000 strings of cash a year. In Hu Peh Province there are considerably over 100 *likin* taxing stations.

The Governor of Kashgaria and Dzungaria gives the total registered population [漢回纏民] at 1,238,583 souls in 266,959 households. Dzungaria or the North Road is more thinly populated than Kashgaria or the South Road. In Dzungaria the taxation per *mou* is seven, four, or three *shing of grain, according to the quality of* the land, and no 耗 or 'waste allowance' is levied. In Kashgaria from four to five pints of grain and five catties of straw