

Laboratory at Miami, Fla., visited for this Office in 1903 several islands in the West Indies in search of varieties of cassava and other suitable agricultural plants for southern Florida. Mr. G. Onderdonk, of Nursery, Tex., a specialist on stone fruits, made a trip to Mexico for this Office in search of varieties of this class of fruits for the Southern States.

In addition to the seeds and plants which these various exploring trips have brought in, the Office is indebted to correspondents all over the world for numerous interesting things which have been presented to it and for which credit is given in each separate instance under the various numbers.

It is desired to urge strongly in this introductory statement that the numbers which accompany these seeds and plants when they are sent out should be carefully preserved by those who receive them. By means of these inventory numbers the seeds and plants can always be identified. The machinery of the Office is so arranged that a permanent record is kept on file of all seeds and plants sent out, and the addresses of the experimenters to whom they are sent. This feature is considered essential, and unless carefully carried out there will be nothing on record to prevent reintroductions of plants which have proved by extensive trials to be unworthy of a place in American agriculture, and much annoyance and delay will be caused in the handling of those things which are successful.

While it is one of the aims of plant introduction to encourage those who can afford it to try new plants, such an object would not be gained by any attempt to supply those who—misguided, perhaps, by exaggerated newspaper accounts—apply for seeds or plants which they are not in a position to test successfully. All seeds are sent out with the idea that those who receive them are willing to take the pains to reply to queries from this Office regarding the success of their trial and to supply on request reasonable quantities of seeds, scions, or plants produced from the imported material. A failure on the part of an experimenter to respond to repeated inquiries or his refusal to assist in giving new introductions a wide distribution will affect unfavorably his standing in the list of capable experimenters which it is one of the objects of this plant introduction work to create.

DAVID G. FAIRCHILD,
Agricultural Explorer.

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