

soil, loam, gravel, or sand, and also in dry, open heavy soils; it can, besides, stand a fair amount of moisture in loose soils. It forms an excellent graft-bearer for all varieties of European vines, except *Hannepoot*, and possibly also other members of the *Muscad* family." (cf. J. P. de Waal, in the *Agricultural Journal*, Cape of Good Hope, December 19, 1901, p. 838.) This variety, I am informed by Mr. Eustace Pillans, is the best of all the resistant stocks yet tried at the Cape, as its ease of grafting, great vigor, suitability to different kinds of soil, and grafting affinity for all but varieties of the *Muscad* type, make it a general stock of great value. Even those who do not claim that it exceeds in vigor any other sort, admit that it is the easiest grafted of any of the American stocks. The stock originated at Groot Constantia Wine Farm in a lot of seedlings from seed sown in 1886. It is uncertain whether the seed came direct from America or from France. This is entirely distinct, according to Mr. J. Bioletti (formerly of Berkeley University, California, now at Elsenburg Agricultural School), from the *Metallica* of French vineyardists. Its name applies to the luster of its foliage. The seedling was picked out in 1894, and by quick propagation in 1901 yielded 687,000 cuttings, and in 1902, 864,000 cuttings were distributed. It has been tested side by side with many French stocks, such as *Aramon vepestris*, *Riparia Gloire de Montpellier*, etc., and takes its place as their equal in all points and their superior as regards ease of propagation and suitability to the varieties of soil mentioned. Mr. Pillans goes so far as to predict that it will drive all other stocks out of South Africa, except for *Muscad* sorts. He claims for it a remarkable yielding power, extreme vigor, and resistance to the phylloxera. Mr. Bioletti admits its excellent qualities and practical growers are enthusiastic over it. This is well worth the serious consideration of Californian vine growers. The originators of this remarkable seedling are Messrs. J. P. de Waal and Eustace Pillans, of the Cape of Good Hope department of agriculture, and its trial in California should be made at once. We are indebted to Mr. Pillans for the plants sent." (*Fairchild*.)

#### 9608. CHLORIS VIRGATA.

#### Rhodes grass.

From Cape Town, South Africa. Received through Messrs. Lathrop and Fairchild (No. 1131, March 8, 1903), May 6, 1903.

"A species of pasture grass that, although scattered widely through the Tropics of both hemispheres (according to the books), has probably not before been brought into culture. Mr. Cecil Rhodes had the seed of this plant collected several years ago and sown in large patches on his place near Cape Town, called 'Groote Schuur.' The grass has done well there, forming heavy sods of a good herbage, and the manager of Mr. Rhodes's farm has had the seed collected and distributed among the planters of the colony, by whom it is called 'Rhodes grass.' From what I saw of these patches on the slopes of a hillside, I do not believe this is a drought-resistant form; at least it is not able to withstand very severe dry weather. It has the typical finger-like inflorescence of the genus and its strong, tough, creeping stems lie flat on the ground. When given sufficient moisture the grass is said to produce a mass of forage over 2 feet high, but what it would do if subjected to severe drought has yet to be found out. I saw a single patch which had been sown with the seed and had failed to take, and it was evident that the drought-resisting powers of the plant are quite limited. However, a grass which has attracted the attention of so keen a cultivator as Mr. Rhodes and is meeting with favorable comment from many practical men here at the Cape deserves a thorough trial in America. As the species is a perennial it need only be tested in frostless or nearly frostless regions. Its fodder value will be much inferior to alfalfa, but it will thrive on soil with little lime in it. This seed was given Mr. Lathrop for distribution in America by the steward of Mr. Rhodes's estate, and in case it succeeds, the Chartered South African Company, at Cape Town, should be notified of the success it attains." (*Fairchild*.)

#### 9609. TRITICUM JUNCEUM.

From Cape Town, South Africa. Received through Messrs. Lathrop and Fairchild (No. 1136, March 9, 1903), May 6, 1903.

"A grass which is a native of North Africa and Europe, and is used as a sand binder here in Cape Colony. Mr. Hutchins, conservator of forests of the colony, to whom we are indebted for the seed, has found this species especially serviceable in experiments near the seashore. Von Müller remarks that it is one of the best grasses to keep rolling sand ridges together. Probably this has already been tried in America, but this South African seed may be of a different strain." (*Fairchild*.)