

tion has cost. While individual firms, through the increasing intercourse between countries, can be depended on more and more to introduce varieties of staple crops, there is no money to be made from the search for these wild forms for the use of plant breeders, who are generally spending all the money they can spare on their nurseries and trial grounds.

It is therefore a legitimate work for the Government to aid these experimenters, who are at the same time benefactors and who seldom make financial gains from their new originations, because there is no way of retaining control of their sale long enough to make them very profitable.

It may not be out of place to give here some idea of the labor involved in taking care of these new introductions as they come in.

In order to be as sure as possible that no plant gets in which is likely to be a weed or that has on it some dangerous insect pest or other plant disease; that, so far as it is possible to determine from an examination of the seeds or cuttings, the plant comes in under its true name; that the seeds are not dead before they are sent out; that the information which comes with the seeds is recorded on the inventory cards from which this printed inventory is made up, and that the experimenter in the field is written to and the shipment to him recorded in a card catalogue, every new introduction has to pass through the hands of fourteen different clerks or experts.

The time consumed in carrying out these different steps is generally from one to two weeks if there are not discovered on the shipment some diseases which make a quarantine necessary, in which case a much longer time will be required for the necessary fumigation and disinfection.

This large amount of labor is necessary, and it forms one of the reasons why the friends of this work who so kindly offer to send gratis all sorts of things from their regions have to be sent discouraging or rather unappreciative replies. It is such an easy thing to import a small packet of seeds or a few cuttings and such an expensive thing to get it into the hands of a great number of experimenters that unless the attention of the office force is limited to the handling of such things as are on the programme, so to speak, those actually imported will not get the attention they require. With increased funds an increasing number of new introductions will be handled.

Among the more notable collections which appear in this inventory are those of our agricultural explorer Mr. Frank N. Meyer, who has spent the entire time represented by this inventory in northern China and who has with most unusual devotion and bravery gathered together and successfully gotten to this country 680 different things. He has collected personally the seeds and cuttings of valuable trees and shrubs from the neighborhood of Peking; forage crops from