

19597 to 19605—Continued.

19601. SALIX sp.

Willow.

From Knorrink, Siberia. "(No. 566, Oct. 29, 1906.) A bushy willow making long, straight shoots. Grows on moist, peaty soil and is well fitted for basket making; has been planted by the Russians along some of the river banks, but is apparently not the best kind of willow for bank-binding purposes." (Meyer.)

19602. SCHIZANDRA CHINENSIS.

From Merkoechofka, Siberia. Cuttings and seed. "(Nos. 360a, 567, and 568, Oct. 25, 1906.) A climber bearing long racemes of scarlet berries which are edible, though not very good. The plant can be used as a graceful vine for trellis work and for porches." (Meyer.)

19603. MALUS MALUS.

Apple.

From Khabarovsk, Siberia. "(No. 569.) A small, red-colored apple; withstands the cold and droughts in Khabarovsk very well. Called in Russian *Reinctka* apple, but it is of Chinese origin. Obtained from the garden of Gen. M. Vedensky." (Meyer.)

19604. PYRUS SINENSIS.

Pear.

From Khabarovsk, Siberia. "(No. 570, Nov. 6, 1906.) Scions of an improved form of *P. ussuriensis*, the wild pear here; obtained from the garden of Gen. M. Vedensky." (Meyer.)

19605. PRUNUS sp.

Plum.

From Khabarovsk, Siberia. "(No. 571, Nov. 6, 1906.) A yellow plum, said to be of good flavor, growing vigorously in the rather unfavorable climate. Obtained from the garden of Gen. M. Vedensky." (Meyer.)

19606 and 19607. CUMINUM CYMINUM.

Cumin.

From Malta. Presented by Dr. J. Borg, curator, San Antonio Gardens. Received December 27, 1906.

"Samples of the best variety of cumin, *Kemmun bla sufa*, i. e., cumin without wool. Cumin has been grown in Malta since time immemorial. In Geofroy's *Materia Medica*, published in Venice in 1742, it is stated that cumin *in Melita insula copiose scriitur*; indeed, until recently it was not grown anywhere else in the Mediterranean. A peculiarity well worth mentioning is that cumin, although very largely grown in Malta, is never used by us in any way whatever, although we almost daily make use of anise seed, wild fennel, and caraway seed as condiments and for sweetmeats. Cumin is grown only to be exported to the continent, mostly to Hamburg, Germany. The price of cumin in ordinary years varies from £2 to £3 per kantar (Maltese hundredweight of 100 rotolo = 175 pounds). But this year, 1906, the price has gone up to £7 per kantar, said to be owing to the failure of the crop in Morocco. Cumin is used in Germany and Holland for the manufacture of some kinds of liquors and for flavoring dishes and pastry.

"Cumin is sown toward the end of March or beginning of April and the crop is ready toward the 15th of June. When it is about 1 inch high gangs of women are employed with small hoes who squat on the cumin and proceed to scratch the soil around it and to remove the weeds. They trample and bruise the cumin so much that it is a sorry sight to see a field of cumin just tilled, but the cumin seems to enjoy this treatment, and in a fortnight the bruised plants form into bushy balls of the deepest green, thickly set together and covered all over with umbels of small purplish flowers.

"We have two varieties of cumin, or rather the type and its variety. The typical cumin has the fruit or seed covered with longish downy hairs; the variety *bla sufa* is without hairs and is much less subject to mildew than the type. This is probably explained by the fact that the dew is retained by the hairs of the fruit and the growth of the fungus is favored. Both varieties are always found more or less mixed, as the beardless variety has a tendency to revert to the type, but to check the mildew our agriculturists are careful to