

The demand for large-fruited varieties of olives for pickling purposes may make the Tafahi olive (No. 44709) from the Fayum Oasis of Egypt peculiarly interesting to olive growers, for it is 4.5 cm. long and 3 cm. in shorter diameter, according to Prof. S. C. Mason, who arranged for its introduction.

It is a curious fact that in Great Britain black currants are looked upon as a delicacy, while in America little or no attention is paid to this fruit, although it is peculiarly adapted to cultivation in the extreme North. Collections of black and red currants are represented in this inventory under Nos. 44475 to 44499, 44581 to 44587, 44638 to 44648, 44706, 44707, and 44904.

The Chinese grafted jujube has reached a stage in this country where it will soon go on a commercial basis, but the investigation of all the other forms of the jujube which are to be found in the world should go on, and the tropical species from Khartum, *Ziziphus mucronata* (No. 44748), may be of value.

The question whether it would ever be profitable to cultivate the species of *Acacia* which yield the gum arabic of commerce is one which can hardly be expected to be answered a priori. The fact that to-day the Brazilian sources of Para rubber have sunk into insignificance in comparison with the plantation rubber from the cultivated Para rubber trees in the East Indies should certainly make advisable an investigation of the possibilities of desert plantations of these gum-producing plants. For this purpose two of the African gum acacias have been introduced (Nos. 44922 and 44923).

The new problem of growing chestnuts in orchards, which the chestnut bark disease has brought up, has attracted attention to the smaller species of oriental chestnut trees, such as *Castanea mollissima*, and to the hybrids between our chinkapin and the Japanese chestnut. Is it not possible that a dwarf species of the related genus *Castanopsis* may have value in this breeding work? Seeds of this species, *Castanea mollissima* (No. 44448), from Nanking, have been sent in by Rev. Joseph Bailie, of Nanking, who has just had the distressing experience of being beaten nearly to death by Chinese bandits while at work to help the Chinese establish a better forest policy.

The introduction by Mr. H. M. Curran of a species of cactus, *Cephalocereus lanuginosus* (No. 44454), from Curaçao, which has attractive red fruits, brings up the whole question of the utilization of the fruits of the *Opuntias* in this country. With thousands of acres in California where the best fruit-bearing varieties will grow to perfection and with hundreds of people in the Eastern States who have been accustomed from their childhood in the Mediterranean region to eat the "fico d'India," it seems unfortunate that a method has not been devised for the removal of the small spicules which are