

47214 to 47220—Continued.

kombe Oliv.) by being glabrous. The seeds of this species are recommended for use in medicine in preference to those of any other, chiefly because they yield crystalline strophanthin, whereas the established official *Strophanthus* yields this glucosid in an amorphous condition. Used for poisoning arrows. (Adapted from *Holland, Useful Plants of Nigeria, pt. 3, p. 447.*)

47218. STROPHANTHUS HISPIDUS A. DC. Apocynaceæ.

The seeds are an important drug, worth about 2 to 2½ shillings (48 to 60 cents) per pound wholesale, commonly shipped in the pods, but more often taken out, freed from the awns, and packed in bales. The seeds are poisonous, the active principle being strophanthin; used in Nigeria and generally in tropical Africa for arrow poison. It may be propagated by seed, but the commercial supply is obtained, so far, from wild plants, strong climbers making the seed difficult to collect, though, according to Dalziel, as a shrub with long lax branches it is capable of being grown in the neighborhood of towns and villages. The seed pods are available in October at Abepa, Kabba Province, where the plant is said to be plentiful. The seeds take several months to ripen. Billington reports collecting a pod in October, then not quite ripe, after noting its development for 10 months. (Adapted from *Holland, Useful Plants of Nigeria, pt. 3, p. 448.*)

47219. SYNSEPALUM DULCIFICUM (Schum.) Daniell. Sapotaceæ.

“*Agbayun.*”

This tropical African tree flowers in the months of June, July, and August, and usually produces a number of oblong or oval berries which resemble olives; they are dull green at first, but gradually change, as they ripen, into a dusky red. The seeds are inclosed in a thin, soft, slightly saccharine pulp which, when eaten, has the peculiar property of making the most sour and acidulous substances seem intensely sweet, so that citric or tartaric acids, lime juice, vinegar, and all sour immature fruits eaten thereafter taste as if they were composed solely of saccharine matter. The duration of this effect depends upon the amount of berries eaten, and the degree of maturity they have attained; when a sufficient quantity has been taken their influence is commonly perceptible throughout the day. This peculiar principle, however, is soon dissipated if the fruits are suffered to remain in a ripe condition for a length of time; preserved fruits brought to England not only lost this property but became extremely insipid. The natives of the Gold Coast often use them to render their stale and acidulated kankies [maize bread] more palatable and to give sweetness to sour palm wine and pitto [beer made from maize]. (Adapted from *Pharmaceutical Journal, vol. 11, p. 446.*)

47220. VITEX GRANDIFOLIA Guerke. Verbenaceæ.

“*Oricia.*” Near the River Num, *Vitex grandifolia* is a small tree with the habit of an *Aralia*, growing to a height of 25 feet. In Akwapim it is a shrub, 10 feet in height, with cream-colored flowers, found at an altitude of 1,000 feet. The fruit is edible, about the size of a small plum, and is made into a kind of honey. The wood is used for making large drums. (Adapted from *Holland, Useful Plants of Nigeria, pt. 3, p. 526.*)