

3921. VITIS VINIFERA.**Grape.**

From Italy. Received through Messrs. Lathrop and Fairchild (No. 269), November 18, 1899.

The Sultanina rosea Seedless Raisin Grape was procured at Saonara, near Padua.

"This grape, though a fairly good table sort, and worthy of cultivation for this purpose, is primarily for raisin production, and will meet with the keenest appreciation from raisin growers. The story of the mother plant from which these were taken is that a certain Signor Santonetti, a wealthy Roman gentleman, formerly Major Domo of the Pope, gave a friend several plants ten years ago, taken from specimens in the gardens of the Vatican. The truth of this story I do not vouch for, and think it more probable that the grape was introduced from Smyrna by the Armenian monks, who have a large monastery near Saonara, and are constantly going and coming between Asia Minor and Italy. My attention was called to the grape by Father Giacomo Issanerdeus, an Armenian monk of San Lazare. The grape is a vigorous grower, and a moderately heavy producer, I am told. Like certain Riessling varieties, it often flowers two or three times a year. On the old mother plant I saw at Saonara there were blossoms, young grapes, and matured bunches. The bunches are twelve to sixteen inches long, loose, with ovate or elliptical, rose-colored berries, which are seedless so far as my observation goes, only occasional rudimentary seeds being met with. Regarding the flavor, I can report from hearsay that it is excellent, very sweet and juicy. From personal experience with *unripe* bunches, it does not appear to be superior to many other sorts. The fruit ripens here in September, and by the 20th all the ripe bunches had been picked, and only a few green ones in the deep shade were obtainable. The young plants sent are grafted on resistant American stocks, and when seen in the nursery were not in a rapidly growing condition, too large grafting wood having been taken. This grape should be given the most serious attention, both by raisin growers and breeders of new varieties, as it has remarkable possibilities. That it has not become more generally known in Italy may be explained by the fact that no raisins to speak of are made in this part of the country and the Italian vine grower is bound by tradition and will plant no new sorts. The Sultanina vines thrive in rich, sandy soil, receive only stable manure, resist drought very well, and are pruned and trimmed in the ordinary ways. An abundance of sunlight is required." (*Distributed.*)

3971. LACTUCA.**Lettuce.**

From Edfu, Egypt. Received through Messrs. Lathrop and Fairchild (No. 290), December 28, 1899.

Arabic "Khass." "A sample of seed of a lettuce used for the preparation of oil. The culture is extensive in Egypt and the method of making the oil is quite similar to that for the sesame oil. (See description under No. 3972.) The oil is considered by the natives as inferior to sesame, whether in quality or yield I was unable to make out. Mr. George Bonaparte of the Agricultural College of Cairo says it is an excellent table oil."

3972. SESAMUM INDICUM.**Sesame.**

From Edfu, Egypt. Received through Messrs. Lathrop and Fairchild (No. 291), December 28, 1899.

"Simsim." "The seed is sown in rotation with sorghum, often while the sorghum is ripening, between the rows. The land is irrigated once, immediately after sowing, and a second time when two inches high. No more water is then applied to the crop. The plants thrive on poor land. Planted here in November, the crop ripens in four months. The plants are cut green and exposed to the sun until dry. The seed is threshed with flails, ground fine, and put in collapsable baskets of matting, 1 foot in diameter. These baskets, full of sesame meal, are piled up one on the other under a screw press, and vertical pressure is applied until the oil flows out and is collected in a small pit below the press. The oil sells in Egypt for about \$8.50 per 100 pounds. It is used as a table oil, but is considered inferior to olive oil."