

INVENTORY OF SEEDS AND PLANTS IMPORTED BY THE OFFICE OF FOREIGN SEED AND PLANT IN- TRODUCTION DURING THE PERIOD FROM APRIL 1 TO MAY 31, 1920 (NO. 63; NOS. 49797 TO 50647).

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT.

This inventory, for the period of April and May, 1920, gives some idea of the voluminous stream of plant immigrants which is now pouring into America unchecked by the war. It represents 15 arrivals for every working day of the period, and when one tries to forecast the future of any 15 new arrivals, the size of this undertaking becomes apparent. To find every day for 15 more or less new plants a suitable home in which they will grow, be studied by some observing mind, and have a chance to prove whether or not they are desirable newcomers would be a decided undertaking in itself; but when one considers that each immigrant is not merely a single individual but represents from a dozen cuttings to a hundred thousand seeds, the real difficulties of the undertaking begin to appear. Not only this: There are the immigrants which have come in earlier and which still require attention. To-day these represent a certain proportion of the more than 50,000 arrivals which have been scattered all over America for the past 23 years, during which period this office has attempted to supervise their arrival and distribution.

While 10,000 amateur and professional agriculturists are on the lists of those who want to take care of these immigrants, the limitations of any one experimenter are soon reached, because the testing of a new introduction takes years and requires more money than many people feel they can afford to spend. But the interest in new plants is bound to grow with our appreciation of the fact that they have great wealth-producing power and that our dooryards and parks, our forests and landscapes, are to mean vastly more to our children than they do to us. With that growth is coming a larger number of experimenters and a greater expenditure of time and money upon this phase of American life.

I find it increasingly difficult to single out the most important introductions from 851 arrivals, particularly since so many of them seem important; but perhaps my long, though often superficial,