

INVENTORY OF SEEDS AND PLANTS IMPORTED BY THE OFFICE OF FOREIGN SEED AND PLANT INTRO- DUCTION DURING THE PERIOD FROM JUNE 1 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 1920 (NO. 64; NOS. 50648 TO 51357).

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT.

During the period covered by this inventory three agricultural explorers were in the field for the Bureau of Plant Industry. Wilson Popenoe finished his plant hunting in Guatemala and Costa Rica, and after a brief stay in the Canal Zone, commenced work in the Colombian highlands. Dr. H. L. Shantz was making his way through British East Africa, preparatory to coming down the Nile. Joseph F. Rock, who has joined the force of this office and has become an agricultural explorer for it, was on his way to Siam and Burma to search for seeds of the tree which yields the chaulmoogra oil that has proved so successful in the treatment of leprosy.

Mr. Rock sent in from the island of Oahu (Territory of Hawaii) a showy tree hibiscus (*Hibiscus brackenridgei*, No. 50693), bearing yellow flowers 6 inches across.

From Guatemala Mr. Popenoe sent in the zacate blanco (*Ixophorus unisetus*, No. 50650), one of the best native forage grasses for moist places such as the Everglades. From the region around El Barranquillo, Guatemala, which is exceedingly dry for a large part of the year, he sent a collection of flowering trees and shrubs which should find a home in southern Florida and California.

Mr. Popenoe also obtained seeds of a rare species of *Persea* (*P. caerulea*, No. 51032), related to the avocado, which bears racemes of black fruits the size of large peas. Whether or not this has value as a stock for the avocado remains to be seen. Certainly the avocado industry is becoming of such importance as to warrant the assembling of all the species of the genus *Persea*, to which the avocado belongs, preparatory to a systematic study of their possibilities for breeding purposes.

The pejibaye palm (*Guilielma utilis*), a very ancient food plant of Costa Rica, Mr. Popenoe thinks is remarkably promising. It