

# UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF



## INVENTORY No. 74



Washington, D. C.

Issued June, 1925

### SEEDS AND PLANTS IMPORTED BY THE OFFICE OF FOREIGN SEED AND PLANT INTRODUCTION, BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY, DURING THE PERIOD FROM JANUARY 1 TO MARCH 31, 1923 (S. P. I. NOS. 56145 TO 56790)

#### CONTENTS

Introductory statement.....	Page 1
Inventory.....	5
Index of common and scientific names.....	39

#### INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

**T**HIS INVENTORY contains a record of some unusually rare plants which have been collected by Agricultural Explorer Joseph F. Rock, whose travels in the western part of the Province of Yunnan, China, have been carried on regardless of the unsettled conditions in that region. He has been obliged not only to take the usual risks of travel at high altitudes on primitive mountain passes where a misstep might mean instant death, run the usual dangers from infectious diseases, like pneumonic plague and dysentery, and bear the severe nervous strain of loneliness, but he also has had to keep out of the way of the roving bands of Tibetans and the Chinese soldiers carrying on an almost continuous conflict along the Tibetan border of Yunnan.

Collecting dried specimens or taking photographs of plants under such conditions requires great skill, an unusual knowledge of oriental languages, and a wide acquaintance with Asiatic plants. When, however, to the collecting of specimens and the taking of photographs is added the gathering and packing of living seeds and plants and getting them alive to America, requiring more than two months by letter post, the nature of the problem which Mr. Rock has had to solve is more correctly stated. Much of the material gathered on the Likiang Snow Range has had to come by special messenger as letter post over mountain passes at 12,000 feet altitude and be plunged into the torrid humidity of the Rangoon post office, to remain in that steaming atmosphere until the post bags were finally unloaded in the dry Italian air of Brindisi. To pack cuttings and seeds of high-mountain plants for such a voyage and have them arrive alive in Washington is a tribute to the attention to detail which Mr. Rock has shown, and it is to be hoped that his efforts will be repaid by the large number of species which have survived the ordeal and will thrive in this country.

By one of those fatalities of things, the trees which were most desired from Yunnan, Yunnan chestnuts and species of the related genus *Castanopsis*, are known to have very short-lived seeds which are particularly hard to transport. Although almost every conceivable method of packing was tried, nearly all the seeds of these genera perished on the way. It is believed, however, that enough lived to establish some of the species in America.

Mr. Rock's material described in this inventory came mainly from the general region of Likiang, which lies more than 8,000 feet above sea level, near the great mountain range around which the Yangtze River meanders on its way to the Pacific, a region of deep gorges and snow-capped mountain peaks.