

from sea level up to 2000 m. altitude, but does not occur where the winters are severe. It is abundant in Fukien, Hunan, and Hupeh, and more especially so in western Szechwan where it is partial to red sandstone and forms pure forests. The trunk is mast-like; the branches numerous, slender, short, and horizontally spreading, giving a lax, pyramidal appearance to the tree. The leaves, usually dark green above, are frequently more or less glaucescent. After felling, sprouts spring from the old stumps and develop into new trees. This peculiarity explains why this tree is still common in regions near densely populated areas. *Cunninghamia* is the *Shan shu* of the Chinese, and is esteemed the most useful of all their timber trees. The wood is fragrant, soft, and easily worked; and is extensively employed in all branches of carpentry, in general construction work for pillars and planking, and as masts for native boats. It is also the principal coffin wood of central and western China, the fragrant properties being considered to act as a preservative. In parts of western Szechwan, notably in the Chienchang valley of the Tung river, a few days' journey west of Fulin, whole forests of this tree were engulfed by an earthquake two or three centuries ago. The wood of these trees is today mined and furnishes the most valuable of all coffin material. From these logs, known as *Hsiang-mu*, 'fragrant wood', or *Yin-chen-mu*, 'long-buried wood', planks of huge size can be cut, and a coffin made of them sells for a thousand to fifteen hundred ounces of silver. This buried wood is pale brown, close in texture, but easily worked and pleasantly fragrant. Trees of this conifer, equalling in size those buried giants, cannot be found in China today except as rare and isolated specimens associated with temples or shrines." (C. S. Sargent, *Plantae Wilsonianae*, vol. 2, p. 51-52, 1914.)

*Dioscorea* sp. (Dioscoreaceae.) 44588. Yam tuber from Ogbomosho, Nigeria, West Africa. Presented by Dr. George Green. The natives plant yams following a good shower in the summer or dry season (November to March). Such a storm usually comes about the end of January. The yams are cut cross-wise into sections about three inches thick, and these sections are cut longitudinally. Only 1 piece is planted, about 4 inches deep, in each of the hills or heaps, which are about 3 feet in diameter, 2 feet in height, and 4 feet apart. A tuft of grass is placed on top of the hill to protect the