

Polygonum tinctorium (Polygonaceae), 45605. From China. Collected by Mr. Frank N. Meyer, Agricultural Explorer for this Department. "(No. 2443a. Hankow, China. June 14, 1917.) An annual herb, much cultivated throughout northern and central China for the blue dye it produces, which however, fades easily. It is sown on rich lands towards the end of February, and the first cutting is made during June, and a much smaller one during August. Further north the sowing takes place later and but one cutting can be obtained. To procure the dye-material the plants are deposited in plastered pits, water is poured over them and they are allowed to decay for several weeks; then the stems are taken out and the water is allowed to evaporate. When at last the slimy mass in the pit has become sufficiently dry, quicklime is added and thoroughly mixed and the material is allowed to dry out until it can be well worked. It is then taken out and kept in tubs, barrels, and other vessels until needed for dyeing. The freshly dyed cloth possesses a most unpleasant odor, which can often be detected for a considerable distance. Slowly, however, the wind takes away the odor and garments can then be made from it. The dye seems to be used almost exclusively for the dyeing of coarse cotton cloth. Chinese name of the plant *Liao lan*." (Meyer.)

Saccharum officinarum (Poaceae), 45519. **Sugar cane.** From Reduit, Mauritius. Presented by the Director, Department of Agriculture. **White Tanna.** This is the widest grown of all the sugar cane varieties on the Island of Mauritius, occupying forty-seven per cent of all the land given over to sugar cane raising. It is a variety which is grown equally well on the highlands or lowlands. There are two sources from which this variety came. It arose as a sport on several estates of the Colony, and has since been widely cultivated. It was also received from the Department of Agriculture of New South Wales in 1895. The present variety is probably descended in part from each of the sources mentioned above. (Adapted from Henri Robert, *Sugar-Cane, Varieties in Mauritius.*)