

ZIZIPHUS JUJUBA (Rhamnaceae), 17752 and 30488. **Jujube** . From China. "These trees are now about 12 feet high. They bore their first crop in 1920, and this year the crop was heavy. The fruits are as large as prunes, and very fine when processed." (R. S. Elliott, Fresno, Calif., October 16, 1923.)

The Chinese Hairy Chestnut.

(*Castanea mollissima* Blume.)

Interest in our native chestnut has recently been reawakened by conditions affecting our tannin industry. The American chestnut furnished one of the most important sources of tannin, providing annually over 47 per cent of the material used here. For twenty years the blight fungus has ravaged our native chestnut forests and it would seem to be only a question of a few years when this valuable tree will be entirely wiped out. The users of tannin material are naturally concerned over the outlook and are casting about for substitutes to take the place of our valuable native tree.

A number of years ago the Office of Foreign Seed and Plant Introduction inaugurated work, looking toward the securing of blight-resistant chestnuts and related species from foreign sources. During the last sixteen years more than a hundred different lots of chestnuts have been brought in, catalogued, tested and distributed. Special attention has been given to the Chinese hairy chestnut, known botanically as *Castanea mollissima* and commonly referred to in our records as the mollissima chestnut of China. The late Frank N. Meyer, agricultural explorer of this office, discovered the true blight fungus on the mollissima type in China early in June, 1913. This discovery cleared up much of the mystery surrounding the origin of the disease and suggested the desirability of thoroughly testing the Chinese species here, especially as it gave evidence of being more or less resistant. Between the years 1906 and 1914 large seed importations of the Chinese hairy chestnut were made, chiefly through Mr. Meyer's efforts, who secured them from northeastern China, mainly the province of Chihli to the north and northeast of Peking. These early importations of seeds were sent to Chico, Calif., and grown at our Plant Introduction Garden there. During the past ten years more than ten thousand young trees of the Chinese hairy chestnut have been grown and distributed to all parts of the United States. A good many of these trees have gone to public parks, others have been placed in the hands of foresters, and a considerable number have found their way into test nurseries and gardens of private experimenters. With a view to ascertaining what had happened to the trees, a questionnaire was distributed with the result that the mortality from one cause or another is shown to have been very heavy. Of the 10,595 trees dis-