

1948

May, light yellow blushed with red, and had the appearance of being waxed. The tree is about 4½ feet high." (J. H. Arnold, Shafter, Calif., January 1, 1924.)

The Tangsi cherry is the earliest fruiting cherry in the United States, the trees maturing their fruit in California as early as the latter part of March or the first part of April. Although the fruit is small, as compared with the commonly cultivated varieties, it is of excellent quality. The quality, of the fruit, combined with the early-maturing habit of the tree, make this species promising for breeding experiments.

PRUNUS SALICINA (Amygdalaceae), 43176. **Japanese plum.** From Auckland, New Zealand. Variety "Alpha." Last summer this bore remarkably well, and the fruit was very fine, with a real plum flavor. We planted the tree three years ago." (Mrs. William Mulligan, Santa Barbara, Calif., December 29, 1923.)

PYRUS CHINENSIS X COMMUNIS (Malaceae), 28497. **Pear.** Originally from the collection of the late Dr. Walter Van Fleet at Little Silver, N. J. "This hybrid pear, received four years ago, bore for the first time this year. The crop consisted of nine pears, weighing about 10 ounces each, of uniform size and appearance. They resemble somewhat the Kieffer pear, but are shorter, thicker, and have a more uneven surface. In color the skin is a greenish yellow. The flesh is white, and although somewhat coarse in texture, is finer than that of Kieffer. For canning also we found them superior to Kieffer." (F. M. White, Romeo, Mich., January 9, 1924.)

Yerba Mate

(*Ilex paraguariensis* St. Hil.)

Few plants have had so much mystery and romance associated with them as the yerba mate of South America. Originally used by the natives in the making of a ceremonial and invigorating drink, it was early adopted by the Portuguese and Spaniards and very soon became of such prime importance commercially that many attempts were made to monopolize its culture and preparation for market. These efforts led to many conflicts, considerable bloodshed, petty wars and in one case the setting up of a sort of a little kingdom, governed in such fashion that no outsiders were allowed to enter it lest they learn the secrets of the wonderful drink, and carry the knowledge to the outside world. Some adventurous spirits finally dared to enter the forbidden country, and were seized and kept in bondage for many years. A few escaped with their lives but with practically no knowledge of the mysterious plant, its culture and propagation.