



STRYCHNOS SPINOSA.

Natural size photograph of the first fruits produced in America of Plant Introduction No. 9611. The seeds were secured by Messrs. Lathrop and Fairchild at Lourenço Marquez, Portuguese East Africa, in February, 1903, and a tree grown at Miami, Florida, fruited for the first time in April 1911. This is an extremely interesting new subtropical fruit. It is perfectly round like a cannon ball, and has a shell so hard that it has to be cracked with a hammer. This specimen was picked green, sent to Washington and kept for three weeks in my office. While green it has no aroma, but as it ripens it becomes so aromatic that it scents the room with the odor of cloves. The seeds are supposed to be poisonous, since the plant belongs to the same genus as that from which strychnine is obtained, but an examination showed scarcely a trace of this poison in those contained in this fruit. The pulp is about the consistency of a very ripe banana and reminds one of it in flavor, though it has in addition a distinct and pleasing flavor of cloves. When it is considered that this is still a wild fruit and that there are other edible relatives, it becomes worthy of the attention of subtropical plant breeders. (Fairchild.)