3290 to 3297. HIBISCUS ESCULENTUS. **Okra.**

From Algeria. Received through Mr. W. T. Swingle, March, 1899. Donated by Dr. Trabut, Government Botanist of Algeria.

Dr. Trabut has made an extensive trial of a large number of named varieties of *okra*. This vegetable is of great importance in the eastern and northern Mediterranean regions. The varieties should be carefully tested in the South in comparison with the best American varieties.

3290.
3291. *Blanc Louisiana.* White Louisiana.
3292. *Gombo a gros fruits.* Large fruited okra.
3293. *Gombo nain vert hatif.* Dwarf early green okra.
3294. *Sultan Giant de Roumaine.*
3295. *Gombo d'Egypte.* Egyptian gumbo.
3296. *Gombo nain ameliore.*
3297. *Gombo a fruit rouge.*

3298. HEDERA HELIX AFRICANA. **Ivy.**

From Algeria. Received through Mr. W. T. Swingle, March, 1899, from the Jardin d'Essai, Mustapha.

A variety of the English ivy, for warm countries.

3299. LAGENARIA. **Gourd.**

From Algeria. Given Mr. W. T. Swingle by an Arab proprietor at Blidah.

Karet-el-Hhalm. A gourd attaining a length of 2 to 4 feet. The fruits are said to be very good if cooked when from 8 to 10 inches long. (See No. 3171.)

3300. IPOMOEA BATATAS. **Sweet potato.**

From Blidah, Algeria. Received through Mr. W. T. Swingle, March, 1899.

A new variety of sweet potato, originated from seed by M. Fontaine. This sort is remarkable in having flesh which turns red when cooked. It is said to be of a superior flavor.

3300a. FICUS CARICA. **Caprifig.**

From Algeria. Received through Mr. W. T. Swingle, April, 1899. Imported in cooperation with the Division of Entomology.

This number comprises several shipments of the winter generation of fruits (mamme) of the caprifig, collected from the foothills of the mountains in Kabylia, near Algiers. Care was taken to secure caprifigs which were matured and yet still firm. Each caprifig was wrapped separately in tin foil, and then small packages were made up and sent to Washington by mail. A number of different shipments were made. As in the case of the trial shipments made in the spring of 1898 from Naples to New York, it was found that caprifigs packed in this way arrived in America in good condition, provided they were firm when picked. These caprifigs, upon their receipt, were turned over to the Division of Entomology, and forwarded by the latter to Mr. George C. Roeding, of Fresno, Cal., who received them in April, 1899, "the first shipment of forty figs arriving April 6. The fruits received were cut down, placed in open fruit jars, and these hung in a caprifig tree growing in the orchard, the tree having been previously prepared for the insects by covering with sheeting. Five other shipments were received between the date named and April 15, the greater part of the fruits being handled in the manner described." (*Roeding.*)

As a result of this importation, the caprifig insect (*Blastophaga*) became established in caprifig trees in Mr. Roeding's orchard. As has been demonstrated by Mr. Roeding and Dr. Eisen, the presence of this insect is absolutely necessary to carry on the culture of Smyrna figs on a commercial scale, since Smyrna figs require pollination in order to set their fruit. Hand pollination, which has been practiced to some extent in California by Mr. Roeding and Dr. Eisen, is altogether too expensive to be feasible in commercial plantations. In the fig-producing regions of southern Italy, Sicily, north Africa, Greece, and Asia Minor this pollination of the figs used for drying is accomplished through the agency of the *Blastophaga*, which lives in the caprifigs.