An Important Introduction of Seeds from Western China to the Arnold Arboretum

Within the past few years it has been the policy of the Arnold Arboretum to make modest grants to strategically located institutions and individuals in support of cooperative collection of seeds as well as botanical specimens essential to the proper identification of the former. Last year the very large seed collection, comprising about 2,300 numbers, made by Mr. Yu in 1937 in western China was distributed through the Arboretum. From a grant made in the early part of 1938 to the Fan Memorial Institute of Biology in Peiping the Arboretum has just received, in one shipment, 585 packages of seeds from Yunnan-Sikang, in southwestern China. Over one-half of the numbers represent woody species, the remainder herbaceous forms. The field work was done by Mr. T.T. Yu during the past collecting season. The seeds were shipped from Yunnan-fu in April and delivered in Boston on July 12, a commentary on the delays in transportation to which such material is subject due to present unsettled conditions in China. The botanical material, shipped at the same time, has not yet been received.

Selections from the woody species will be made for trial at the Arboretum, while excess material will be distributed to the various correspondents of the institution who may be interested in new introductions. With little information as to whether or not the various species may prove to be hardy in New England, it seems to be better policy to give such current introductions rather wide distribution, so that if the species fails to survive with us, it may be found to thrive elsewhere.

The seeds of the herbaceous species, mostly determined to the genus, have been turned over to the Massachusetts Horticultural Society for distribution to its members. This current shipment from war-torn China is potent evidence that plant hunting is still actively going on in these unsettled times.

Note

The Arboretum is always recommending new plants to the horticulturally minded public, though it is not always possible to get such new things in large quantity. Both Prinsepia sinensis and P. uniflora are two excellent, vigorous-growing, thorny shrubs which are not grown much in this country outside of botanic gardens but they have been described from time to time in this Bulletin and recommended. The trouble has been the inability to get seed. Now it may be obtained for $0.50 per pound (cleaned, packed, and delivered to the Post Office at Harbin, Manchoukuo) from:

Mr. A. Woeikoff, The Garden of Manchurian Flora, P. O. Box 33, Harbin, Manchoukuo. Those interested should write immediately.

Donald Wyman