state, or it is kept at this height, and round and bushy, that it may yield a large crop of leaves. When it is about eighteen inches high, the leading shoots are pinched off, and the shrub is forced to throw out laterals. Naturally, it has a tendency to grow tall and straggling, with few side shoots. The object of pruning, or rather pinching off the ends of the shoots with the fingers, is to force each plant to form hundreds of little shoots, and to assume a round and bushy outline. As the leaves used in making tea are produced yearly at the ends of the shoots, the object of this system of treatment is apparent. It is practised during the tea-gathering season, so that nothing may be wasted, all being made into tea.* A small crop of leaves may be gathered the third year after planting. In the eighth or tenth year, the produce may be considered at its maximum.

In China, in consequence of the continual plucking of the leaves, the tea plant remains in full bearing only twenty-five or thirty years, when it becomes feeble and stunted, and can no longer be cultivated profitably. The usual annual product is as follows:

Tea produced in 3d year, 10 pounds to an acre.
Tea produced in 4th year, 30 pounds to an acre.
Tea produced in 5th year, 80 pounds to an acre.
Tea produced in 6th year, 120 pounds to an acre.
Tea produced in 7th year, 150 pounds to an acre.
Tea produced in 8th year, 200 pounds to an acre.
Tea produced in 9th year, 250 pounds to an acre.
Tea produced in 10th year, 300 pounds to an acre.

For ten or fifteen years longer, the maximum of 300 pounds may be kept up by judicious management. The Chinese cultivators are most careful in gathering the leaves. They know well that the continual plucking has a tendency to make the bushes unhealthy, and consequently they do not gather from very young plants, nor from those which are not vigorous and healthy. For the first three years the chief object is to form the plants, as has been already described. Stunted, unhealthy bushes are always passed by in the gathering season.

While the instruction thus derived from the experience of the Chinese is worthy the attention of every American cultivator, a servile adherence to it is not desired. With our superior implements and superior skill in husbandry, and with the unceasing efforts of our people to improve upon past usages, it can hardly be otherwise than that the labor of cultivating and manufacturing tea will be greatly facilitated, and that acceptable and even improved qualities may soon be produced at lower prices than the imported varieties now command in general commerce. In accordance with this practical view, a note has been prepared for the instruction of those to whom the plants are to be committed for culture, in the following words:

"The tea plant is a half-hardy evergreen shrub, thickly branched, with dark coriaceous foliage. Under cultivation it grows from four to six feet high. It is seldom attacked by insects, and is sufficiently hardy to flourish where the temperature in winter does not fall below

*The early spring, before budding, will doubtless prove the proper time.

12° of Fahrenheit. It may be readily propagated from seeds, from layers, and from cuttings. The seeds may be sown from two to three inches deep, in rows, and they will germinate in from two to three months. They grow from six to ten inches high the first season, and in the following spring may be planted out to the sites in which they are to remain. The ground should be kept clear of weeds, and occasionally loosened about their roots. In September the lower branches may be laid in the ground, and kept covered with sandy soil, until the next autumn, when they should be severed from the parent stock and removed to the plantations prepared for them. Cuttings may be taken in October from well-ripened shoots. The operator should cut smoothly across, at a joint, with a sharp knife, and remove two or three of the lower leaves, and then plant the cuttings in boxes of sand, making them firm with a small dibber. The boxes should then be placed in a cold frame and kept shaded during sunshine. In the next spring, those that have taken root will begin to grow, when their progress may be accelerated by a gentle bottom heat; and in autumn they may be planted out in rows, six feet apart, the shrubs standing five feet apart along the row."

In order that this enterprise may be judiciously conducted, it is proposed to supply to each experimenter, in those regions in which the shrub may be expected to flourish in the open air, a sufficient number of plants to occupy a few square rods of ground. Accordingly, there will be but one consignment to each congressional district, and that to some intelligent and responsible person, selected with the assistance of the representative of the district. As it is supposed that the plant cannot be cultivated in the open air north of the northern boundaries of Tennessee and North Carolina, but must be protected in heated conservatories and green-houses during the winter, they will be distributed among from fifty to a hundred persons in the States, respectively, north of the above-named line, for the gratification of the taste and the curiosity of the public. The names and address of these persons, also, have been obtained through the aid of their representatives in Congress. The distribution will be made in February and March, 1860, and the intended recipients will be duly notified thereof.

The Chinese processes of gathering, rolling, drying, coloring, scenting, and packing tea for commerce, have frequently been described in English and American publications, and partially in the Patent Office Report for 1857. Rolling, coloring, and scenting will probably be wholly omitted in the manufacture in this country. The discussion of the other operations will be in season hereafter, when the public mind shall have been drawn more practically and interestedly to the subject.

Pyrethrum caucasicum, 250 *plants:* This plant, from which the Persian insect powder is obtained, is partially known in the United States. It was described in the Patent Office Report for 1857. It bears white flowers, in July and August, like those of the oxeye daisy, (chrysanthemum leucanthemum,) and is propagated by the division of its root and by seeds. It is a herbaceous perennial, and flowers the first year.

Achillea rosea, 200 *plants:* A pretty border plant, with beautiful red flower, having an aromatic, agreeable smell, and bitter, pungent

taste. It is a variety of the common perennial, (achillea millefolium,) in the dry pastures and on the steep banks of rivers in Great Britain, known as millfoil, or yarrow, which has been used medicinally as a narcotic, and applied to the manufacture of beer. The usual height of the achillea rosea is six inches, but the flower stem ascends twelve inches above it. The flowering season is in June, July, and August, the brilliant hues becoming pale as the season advances.

The cork tree, (*quercus suber*,) 250 *plants:* This tree is fully described in the Patent Office Report for 1858, and has been partially introduced to the country by means of the distribution of a large quantity of its acorns; yet, so general has been the neglect or want of knowledge respecting their culture, that the successful propagation from acorns at this garden is deemed essential to the success of the experiment. The habitat of the cork tree does not, probably, extend north of Maryland.

The mahonia, 5,000 *plants:* This is an evergreen shrub, four feet high, having yellow flowers, succeeded by brilliant red berries. It is known in some parts of the United States, whence, indeed, it was introduced to Europe. It is, probably, the mahonia fascicularis; natural order, berberideæ.

Seedling strawberries, 1,000 *plants.*

Virgilia lutea, 200 *plants:* This is a deciduous shrub. It attains a height of fifteen feet, and, in Europe, flowers in June and July. It is a native of North America, and is well known in Tennessee. The wood is yellow, and dyes a beautiful saffron color.

The camphor tree, 21 *plants:* There are already a few specimens of this tree in botanical collections in the United States. It is a native of Japan. The roots, wood, and leaves have a strong odor of camphor, which is found everywhere in the interstices of the fibers of the wood and in the pith, but most abundantly in the crevices and knots. The camphor of commerce is obtained not only from this tree, (laurus camphora,) but also from the dryobalanops camphora, a native of Sumatra, which yields a harder, more brittle, and more highly-valued gum. The camphor tree is tall and divided into many branches, covered with smooth greenish bark. It may be propagated from seeds or from cuttings.

Pinus edulis, 100 *plants:* This tree is from Oregon. It is of rapid growth, and very ornamental. The Indians esteem the seeds a great delicacy.

Sycamore fig, 50 *plants:* The platanus occidentalis of Linnæus, commonly called button-wood or cotton tree, is erroneously called sycamore also. The true sycamore, in size and appearance, resembles a mulberry tree, but bears a species of fig. It is found in Palestine, and is believed to be the tree mentioned in Luke xvii: 6, and elsewhere in the New Testament.

Arbor vitæ, (*species, thuja,*) 1,500 *plants:* The arbor vitæ of the United States, (thuja occidentalis,) is a well-known evergreen shrub, assuming the form and height of a tree in Canada, its native locality, and growing best in swamps and marshes. That now introduced very nearly resembles the American species; but Mr. Fortune states that, in China, it is the most ornamental of the species he has seen.

Rhus succedanea, (*wax plant,*) 150 *plants:* An evergreen shrub,

ten feet high. It is half-hardy, and flowers in June. It was first introduced into England, from China, in 1768. The plants now under cultivation are from seeds obtained in Japan. The seeds yield an oil, by expression, of the consistence of suet, which is used in China and Japan for making candles. Its sap is resinous, and might be used as varnish.

Tung oil tree, 50 *plants:* Also from Japan.

Oodung, and other ornamental trees from Japan.

Olea fragrans, or fragrant olive, called Lan-hoa by the Chinese, who use the leaves and blossoms in scenting their teas.

Ilex vomitoria: This plant, according to Burnett, is known as yopon and emetic holly. It is indigenous to North Carolina, and found along the coast thence to Florida. Its properties were known to the Indians, who used an infusion of its leaves as an agreeable beverage, and at a certain time in the year purified themselves by drinking it very strong, and in copious drafts, for two or three days, throughout which period it operated as an emetic. Though it is not pleasing to the uneducated taste, poor people in the eastern portions of North Carolina use it as a substitute for tea; and the captains of many vessels take supplies of it to sea, because, as they believe, the sailors are in better condition while using it than when supplied with coffee. It usually grows wild, but, when brought under cultivation and training, it becomes a beautiful tree, though not often more than fifteen feet high.

It is the popular belief in the United States that this plant is identical with the Ilex Paraguayensis, Yerba maté, or Jesuits' tea, of Paraguay; but this is an error. Nor is the Ilex gongonha, of Brazil, identical with either. The tree of Paraguay is greatly superior, and possesses an importance in that country little appreciated elsewhere. In 1854, the president of the province of Paraná alluded, in his annual message, to the fact that wheat had been an article of export, but had been abandoned because "a large portion of the population, eschewing the labor required in the production of the cereals, rush to the virgin forests, and there, stripping the evergreen leaves and the tender branches of the Ilex Paraguayensis, easily convert them into the popular South American beverage known as the yerba maté, or hewa Paraguaya, and thus amass fortunes, or obtain a livelihood without the intervention of persevering industry or great exertion." Large quantities of this kind of tea were annually exported from the province of Paraná until interdicted by the government.

"While in Paranaguá," says an authority already quoted, (Kidder and Fletcher's Brazil,) "I observed many raw-hide cases, which the blacks were unloading from mules, or conveying to the ships riding at anchor in the beautiful bay. Upon inquiry, I learned that these packages, weighing about one hundred and twenty pounds each, consisted of maté. This substance, so little known out of South America, forms truly the principal refreshing beverage of the Spanish-Americans south of the equator, and millions of dollars are annually expended in Buenos Ayres, Bolivia, Peru, and Chili, in its consumption. This town of Paranaguá, containing about three thousand inhabitants, exports every year nearly a million dollars' worth of maté.

"It can be gathered during the whole year. Parties go into the

forest, or places where it abounds, and break off the branches with the leaves. A process of kiln-drying is resorted to in the woods, and afterward the branches and leaves are transported to some rude mill, and there they are, by water-power, pounded in mortars.

"The substance, after this operation, is almost a powder, though small stems, denuded of their bark, are always permitted to remain. By this simple process the maté is prepared for market. Its preparation for drinking is equally simple. A small quantity of the leaf, either with or without sugar, is placed in a common bowl, upon which cold water is poured. After standing a short time boiling water is added, and it is at once ready for use. Americans who have visited Buenos Ayres or Montevideo, may remember to have seen, on a fine summer evening, the denizens of that portion of the world engaged in sipping, through long tubes inserted into highly-ornamented cocoanut bowls, a liquid which, though not so palatable as iced juleps, is certainly far less harmful. These citizens of Montevideo and Buenos Ayres were enjoying, with their bombilhas, a refreshing draught of maté. It must be imbibed through a tube, on account of the particles of leaf and stem which float upon the surface of the liquid. This tube has a fine globular strainer at the end.

"Great virtues are ascribed to this tea. It supplies the place of meat and drink. Indians, who have been laboring at the oar all day, feel immediately refreshed by a cup of the herb, mixed simply with river water. In Chili and Peru, the people believe that they could not exist without it, and many persons take it every hour of the day. Its use was learned from the natives; but, having been adopted, it spread among the Spaniards and Portuguese, until the demand became so great as to render the herb of Paraguay almost as fatal to the Indians of this part of America as mines and pearl fisheries had been elsewhere.

"It grows wild, and never has been successfully cultivated, although attempts were made by the Jesuits of Paraguay to transplant it from the forests to their plantations. These attempts have been considered by many without result; still, there are others who consider that the experiment justifies further efforts, and are urging this day the domestication, so to speak, and the cultivation of maté under a regular system."

Don states ("System of Gardening and Botany") that "there are three kinds of Paraguay tea, but all procured from the same plant. These go under the names of caa-cuys, caa-mini, and caa-guazu. The first is prepared from the buds, when the leaves are scarcely expanded; the second of the membrane of the leaves stripped off the ribs before roasting; and the third consists of the leaves roasted entire, without any selection. The caa-cuys does not keep, and is consequently all used in Paraguay; and the aromatic bitterness even of the others is lessened by time and partly dissipated by carriage. The principal harvests of this herb are reaped in the eastern parts of Paraguay, and about the mountains of Maracaya; but it is also cultivated in the marshy valleys between the hills. The natives boast of the innumerable qualities the tea possesses, and in the mining countries its use is almost universal, from the opinion that prevails among the Spaniards

that the wines are there prejudicial to health. Like opium, it produces some singular effects; it gives sleep to the restless and spirits to the torpid. Persons who have once contracted the habit of taking it do not find it an easy matter to leave it off, or even to use it in moderation, although, when drank to excess, it brings on disorders similar to those which are produced by the immoderate use of spiritous liquors."

Grape vines, 25,000 *plants:* These embrace seedlings and rooted cuttings from not less than fifty varieties of native and foreign grapes, among which may be named:

Hungarian, four varieties.
El Paso, seedlings and cuttings, two varieties, the blue and the white.
Hartford prolific, Connecticut.
Clinton, New York.
Diana, Massachusetts.
Concord, Massachusetts.
Seedling, Massachusetts.
Union Village, Ohio.
Delaware, Ohio.
Rebecca, New York.
Saluda, South Carolina.
Scuppernong, North Carolina and Virginia.
Washita, white, Arkansas.
Devereaux, South Carolina.
Herbemont's Madeira, Georgia.
Lenoir, the Carolinas.
Anna, Ohio.
Logan, New York.
Catawba, southern.
Isabella, North Carolina.
Wyoming, Pennsylvania.
Red Venango, Tennessee.
Canby's August, southern.
Black July, France.
Minor, Massachusetts.
Clara, Pennsylvania.
Elbling, northern.
Lincoln Downer, northern.
Traminer, Germany.
Trollinger, northern.
Chasselas de Fontainebleau, France.
Sweet water, foreign.
Black Hamburg, foreign.
Seedless, (large,) Egypt.
Lady's finger, (berries three inches long, three fourths of an inch in diameter, delicious flavor,) Egypt.
Grahamii, northern.
Frankenthal, foreign.
Dracot amber, Massachusetts.
Grevaduly, Massachusetts.

Henshaw, Pennsylvania.
Franklin, (fruit black,) Pennsylvania.
Burgundy, (fruit black,) foreign.
Black prince, (fruit black,) foreign.
Harris, (fruit black,) northern.
To-kalon, (fruit red,) New York.
Emily, (fruit red,) northern.
Garrigues, (fruit dark purple,) Delaware.
Cassady, (fruit white,) northern.

In view of the generally received opinion that the native vines alone are adapted to the production of good wine in the United States, it is proper to explain that the object in introducing foreign varieties into this collection is to produce such hybrids as may inherit the better qualities of both originals. It is believed that salutary and important results may be realized from the skillful, careful, and persistent prosecution of experiments of this character.

SEEDS FOR DISTRIBUTION.

In the fulfillment of orders made previous to the appropriation of March, 1859, an assortment of seeds has been imported from Europe, and portions of them distributed among the State and local agricultural societies in those sections of the Union to which they are believed to be applicable respectively, while an adequate quantity of each has been retained for propagation at this garden. Among those possessing novelty or merit may be named the following:

Early Washington peas: An excellent pea of American origin, though produced from European varieties; known as the extra-early.

Chautong yellow oil pea: From China; it abounds in oil, but is not suitable for edible uses.

Chautong green oil pea: Same origin, and varying but little from the above.

Matchless marrow pea: An excellent variety, the merits of which are well known in the United States.

Ice drum lettuce: A fine variety.

White Paris cos lettuce: Also a good and well-known variety.

White solid celery: An admirable variety.

New York purple egg-plant.

Early Winningstadt cabbage: English; one of the best varieties, of easy culture and delicious flavor.

Dutch horn carrot: An excellent and well-known variety.

Onion, (Bassel:) From Egypt; not equal to varieties now cultivated in the United States.

Melochia, (Corchorus olitorius: A novel plant, the leaves of which afford a mucilage relished in soup.

Ice-cream watermelon.

New hybrid Marvel of Peru: A pretty flowering border plant, blooming from June to September; adapted to light soils.

Trifolium incarnatum: A good flowering variety, but tender; adapted to lawns.

Pyrethrum caucasicum: A fine flowering herbaceous perennial plant, already described. It is in character like the feverfew.

Linum grandiflorum rubrum: Grand red flowered flax; height, eighteen inches; blooms from May to September.

Trifolium Alexandrinum: From Egpyt; a poor variety of clover, like lucern.

Broughton early seed wheat: Has been highly commended wherever it has been fairly tried. Mr. Peter Gorman, of Howard county, Maryland, says of it: "I received from the Patent Office, in the autumn of 1858, a half bushel of 'Tappahannock wheat,' which I sowed broadcast, with the aid of a small plough to cover it suitably, the 16th of October, 1858. On the 17th June, 1859, it was ripe and fit for harvest, but I did not cut it until the 21st. In August, I had it threshed by a machine, and found the yield to be sixteen bushels and two quarts merchantable wheat, weighing sixty-three pounds to the bushel, and a half bushel of small, light wheat. It ripens sixteen days sooner than other wheat, and thus escapes various diseases and casualties."

Orzomondo barley: European; very fine.

Sow-tow: China cotton seed; not known to have germinated. The specimens of the fiber are very white.

PLANTS FROM PALESTINE.

On the 12th of April, 1859, the Rev. J. T. Barclay, a Christian missionary from the United States to Jerusalem, in compliance with a request of the Patent Office, shipped at Jaffa (the ancient port of Joppa, thirty-one miles northwest of Jerusalem) a quantity of the seeds named in the following list; but, in consequence of unexpected delays in their transmission, they were not received at Washington until the 25th of October, when many of them were found apparently damaged from their protracted exposure. A portion of each variety has been retained for experiment and propagation, and the rest distributed among the State and local agricultural societies in the regions of the country to which they are believed to be adapted respectively. Minute descriptions of these plants had not been received from Mr. Barclay at the date of this report; and their classification and characteristics have in some cases been sought with no better guide than the local Arab names afford:

Carob tree, (Ceratonia siliqua:) This name is derived from *Κερας*, a horn, which was given to this tree because of its long, horn-like pods, containing a sweet fecula, and known in commerce as Algaroba beans. The Arabic name is khârûb. It is generally considered the locust tree of Scripture, and its fruit has been called St. John's bread, while the shells of the pods are supposed to be the husks of which the prodigal son desired to partake with the swine. The tree is common in the south of Spain. Its quality improves the further south it is found. In the south of Italy and of Greece it prospers well, and affords abundant fodder for swine and sheep. In Syria it is still more valuable, and in Egypt the pods are so thick, and so charged with sugar, as to be regarded as a delicacy by the common people, the dry pulp in which the seeds are buried being remarkably nutritious. It is said that

singers have derived benefit from chewing this fruit, their voices being thereby rendered more flexible. The carat weight of four grains is believed to have originated in the adoption of the seed of this tree as a standard.

Foosduck, or fôostûk, (*Pistacia vera:*) This tree is common in the valley of Jericho, and elsewhere in Syria. It also abounds in Sicily, where it is cultivated for its nuts. The flowers come forth in clusters, and of herbaceous color, in April and May.

Senawber, or snowber: This also is a pistacia, (terebinthus,) but is ranked by Arab writers among the pine or turpentine trees. Its nuts are shaped like the filbert, long and pointed, the kernel being pale, greenish, sweet, and more oily than that of the almond. It grows in Syria, Arabia, Persia, and the island of Cyprus. The Cyprus turpentine is procured from the trunk, by wounding the bark in several places, in the month of July. From these wounds the turpentine flows upon receptacles arranged for the purpose, and, becoming condensed in the night, is scraped off in the morning, but is again liquified in the sun and strained for use. It is obtained in small quantities, however, four large trees yielding but two pounds, nine ounces, and six drachms. It is hence often adulterated in commerce.

Doora-esh-shamy, or Syrian maize: A hardy plant in Syria and Egypt. In Egypt there is also a variety called Doora-neely, which grows twelve or fifteen feet high, bearing, sometimes, from fifteen hundred to two thousand kernels of small corn in a single head or top. It propagates itself by new shoots from the old roots in the spring. There is also in Syria a Doora-es-seify, which is millet. Several varieties of it are now well known in the United States. The Doora-neely affords a very coarse meal, of which bread is made by the laboring people of Egypt, but it is more suitable for their horses and cattle.

Helbeh: A variety of clover, abundant in Egypt. Its stalks, shaded by the tops, are bleached, and are eaten as celery by the poorer classes. It is spoken of in Numbers, chapter xi, in connection with the cucumbers, the melons, the onions, and the garlic of Egypt; though the translators, unacquainted with this plant, have rendered the word leeks in the English version.

Fool: This is the Arabic name of a leguminous plant grown in the delta of the Nile, on the flat lands throughout Syria, and in small tracts in the deep valleys of the mountain ranges of the desert of Sinai. The peas or beans are sold in immense quantities to the desert Arabs, who feed their camels upon them. They are said to be sown broadcast, but this mode of culture is not commended to imitation in this country. The stalks attain the height of eighteen or twenty inches, standing thick and upright, bearing twenty or more round and slender pods, of from four to six peas each, of the size and shape of the marrow-fat pea. They become dark brown and somewhat shriveled when dry. The Arabs, as they pass along the immense fields, are fond of plucking and eating them green; but when dry, they are better suited to the lower animals. They are preferred to maize, or Indian corn, for the camels, being an exceedingly grateful and nutritious food. But little labor is requisite in planting, cultivating,

and gathering them, yet the yield is large. Doubtless they may be cultivated to great advantage in the southern portions of the United States. It is believed that Moll, in his work on agriculture in Algeria, has reference to this pea when he says: "The gray pea [pois gris] is preferred for forage, the yellow and green as food for man."

Semsem: This is the Sesamum Indicum of botany, belonging to the family pedaliaceæ, and is supposed to have been brought originally from India, though it is now cultivated in Arabia and Syria. It is an annual, grows eighteen inches high, and bears a pale purple flower in July. The seeds are used for bread. They are more oily than any of the cereals. This plant is abundantly cultivated in the valleys and on the plains of Syria; and one of the finest valleys in the western part of the hill country of Judea, about equidistant from Jerusalem and Gaza, and from Joppa and Hebron, is named Wady-Semsem, because of its producing this grain. Semsem is found in the Levant also, and in Africa, where it is grown as a pulse. An oil extracted from the seeds, Loudon asserts, will keep many years, at the end of two years becoming so mild as to supply the place of olive oil in making salads, and for other purposes. Puddings are made of the seeds, as of millet or rice. A pound of oil is obtained from four or five pounds of the seeds. The name of this plant has been preserved in the "open sesame" of the Arabian Nights. The bene plant, valued in the United States for its medicinal qualities, is a variety of this species.

Kirsenneh, or kersenna: This is a species of vetch, which ripens with the barley, and is beaten out in like manner. It is extensively cultivated in Syria, and, like lentils and barley, is consumed by the camels.

Lubia, or lubyeh: A species of pea or bean. El-Lûbyeh, a large village west of the lake of Tiberias, having a deep valley on the east and north, and by which passes the road from Nazareth to Tiberias, is named after this plant.

Hummas, or hûmmûs: A species of vetch, growing abundantly on the northern side of Syria, on the undulating lands back of Tyre, and elsewhere.

Addas, or adas: The lentil spoken of in Genesis xxv, 34. The lentil of Europe and of this country is an annual plant, growing about eighteen inches high, and its seeds, contained in pods, are round, flat, and a little convex in the middle. The lentil of Syria is pinkish red when ripe, and is excellent in soups, or when parched over the fire, prepared in which manner it is sold in the shops, being considered by the natives the best food to be taken on long journeys; but it is chiefly cultivated as food for cattle. It is often sown broadcast, but prospers better in drills. March is the time for planting, or as soon as the ground is dry enough for cultivation. A warm, sandy soil is adapted to this plant. It ripens sooner than the pea, and is harvested in like manner. The straw is delicate and nourishing.

Bamya, or burmyeh, (*species, Melochia:*) It is much like the okra, now common in the United States. The pods are six-sided, and grow on a bush from three to five feet high. When green they make excellent soup.

Khoosa and Khyar: These are two varieties of squash adapted to

table use. Syria and Egypt abound in excellent varieties of this vegetable.

Khumbers: An excellent species of flax.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE UNITED STATES AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

This society, as its name imports, is a national institution, and was created in its present form by a convention or congress of farmers, composed of delegates from the several State societies, many of which are not only incorporated, but endowed as permanent State institutions.

Its organization was, therefore, in strict conformity with that of the general government, whilst its position is similar to that of the national societies in foreign countries, such as the Royal Agricultural Society of England and the Imperial Agricultural Society of France.

It resembles the government, also, in being the result or consequence of several unsuccessful experiments, dating almost from the commencement of our national existence.

The records of these efforts constitute, therefore, a part of the complete history of the present society, and have been carefully preserved among its archives.

As early as 1794, the formation of a National Agricultural Society appears to have occupied the attention of Washington, then President of the United States.

A letter addressed by him to Sir John Sinclair, on the 20th of July, 1794, contains the following reference to this subject: "It will be some time, I fear, before an agricultural society, with congressional aid, will be established in this country. We must walk, as other countries have, before we can run; smaller societies must prepare the way for greater; but, with the lights before us, I hope we shall not be so slow in maturation as older nations have been. An attempt, as you will perceive by the inclosed outlines of a plan, is making to establish a State society in Pennsylvania for agricultural improvements. If it succeeds, it will be a step in the ladder; at present, it is too much in embryo to decide upon the result."

The first proposition for the establishment of such an institution was made by Washington, in his annual speech, delivered on the 7th of December, 1796, when he met the two Houses of Congress for the last time. He said: "It will not be doubted that, with reference to either individual or national welfare, agriculture is of primary importance. In proportion as nations advance in population, and other circumstances of maturity, this truth becomes more apparent, and renders the cultivation of the soil more and more an object of public patronage. Institutions for promoting it grow up, supported by the public purse; and to what object can it be dedicated with greater propriety? Among the means which have been employed to this end, none have been attended with greater success than the establishment of boards, composed of proper characters, charged with collecting and diffusing information, and enabled, by premiums and small pecuniary aids, to encourage and assist a spirit of discovery and improvement.

"This species of establishment contributes doubly to the increase of improvement, by stimulating to enterprise and experiment, and by drawing to a common center the results, everywhere, of individual skill and observation, and spreading them thence over the whole nation. Experience, accordingly, has shown that they are very cheap instruments of immense national benefits."

The Senate, in an address in answer to this speech, drawn up by Senator Read, of South Carolina, and adopted, after having been discussed and amended, said: "The necessity of accelerating the establishment of certain useful manufactures by the intervention of the legislative aid and protection, and the encouragement due to agriculture by the creation of boards, (composed of intelligent individuals,) to patronize this primary pursuit of society, are subjects which will readily engage our most serious attention."

A committee of the House of Representatives, composed of Messrs. Swift, of Connecticut, Gregg, of Pennsylvania, and Brent, of Maryland, made a report, on the 11th of January, recommending the institution of a society for that purpose, under the patronage of government, which might act as a common center to all other societies of a similar kind throughout the United States. The report is accompanied by a plan, the principal articles of which are that a society shall be established at the seat of government; that it shall comprehend the Legislature of the United States, the Judges, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of War, the Attorney General, and such other persons as may choose to become members, according to the rules prescribed; that an annual meeting shall be held at the seat of government, at which are to be elected the president, secretary, &c., and a board, to consist of not more than thirty persons, which shall be called the "Board of Agriculture;" that the society shall be a body corporate; that a report shall be made annually, &c. The report concluded with a resolution in these words:

"*Resolved*, That a society for the promotion of agriculture ought to be established at the seat of government of the United States."

The first national association of this description was the "*Columbian Agricultural Society for the promotion of Rural and Domestic Economy*," which was organized by a convention held in Georgetown, District of Columbia, on the 28th of November, 1809, at which a constitution was reported by General John Mason. Osborne Sprigg, Esq., of Maryland, was chosen president, Thompson Mason, Esq., of Virginia, vice president, and David Wiley, Esq., of Georgetown, secretary.

The *first agricultural exhibition in America* was the *national fair* held by this society at the Union Hotel, in Georgetown, District of Columbia, on the 10th of May, 1810. Among other premiums awarded were three, of $100, $80, and $60, respectively, for "two-toothed ram lambs," showing the great importance attached at that early day to improving the breed of sheep.

President Madison wore his inauguration coat, made from the merino wool of Colonel Humphrey's flock, and waistcoat and small clothes made from the wool of the Livingston flock, at Clermont.