

As Robert Fortune, who, in 1845, shipped 21,000 tea seedlings from Shanghai to the Himalayas. These arrived safely and started the Indian tea industry of today. Fortune is also credited with long list of plants introduced to Europe from China.

Dr Bretschneider, a Russian physician in Peking in the late 19th century, sent seeds to Botanic Gardens in Europe as well as to the Arnold Arboretum in U.S.A. Species of Syringa, Pyrus, and Hydrangea were mentioned.

Since the beginning of the 20th century hundreds of valuable plants have been introduced from China to Europe and America. Among the most important are: soybean, tung oil, species of Lespedeza, Citrus, disease-resistant pears and chestnuts, the jujubee, persimmons, Lychee, Lungan, and some bamboos.

Introduction of western plants into China. The introduction of strictly foreign plants into China began at about the time of Wu-ti (140-86 B.C.). The great Asiatic movement of plants in the hands of man initiated then continued steadily until the 14th century and thereafter. From western Asia and Europe there came into China a long line of flowers, vegetables and fruits, including the Pistacia, pomegranate, and cultivated walnut, cabbage and cauliflower, garden pea and bean, spinach, sugar beet, carrot, lettuce, cucumber, watermelon, and numerous other vegetables.

In the 16th century another stage of this great economic conquest began, when species of plants from the Americas were first introduced into China and acclimatized. These included the peanut, tomato, Irish potato, sweet potato, and corn. By 1656 the pineapple, the guava, and the custard apple, all American had established Chinese names.

More recently, papaya, some pineapple and many sugar-cane varieties have been introduced from the Hawaiian Is.; slash and longleaf pine, selected varieties of citrus, pecan, and avocado from U.S.A. About 16 years ago half a dozen species of Eucalyptus were introduced to S.China.

In closing Dr Li emphasized that this immensely fascinating field of international plant study and exchange is one of the most logical ways of bringing about world peace and prosperity. "In the gardens of the world mankind is seen at his best. It behoves us in these days when time and space begin to disappear, to renew our interests, one people in another; and to concentrate upon and foster these constructive forces rather than the destructive ones which so stealthily creep upon us. Here then is the field of conquest for all

students of plants for international co-operation, serving the people of all lands, bringing to their rooms new flowers, and to their tables new fruits."

In reply to a question Dr Li told something of the temple gardens that the Buddhists establish wherever they go. The maiden-hair tree (Ginkgo biloba) grown by the priests was mentioned in a rather unexpected connection, as the seeds are served with rice for food.

The different kinds of tung oil trees are known to the Chinese as "three-year tung" that quickly cones to maturity (Aleurites fordii) and "thousand-year tung" (A. montana) that is reputed to be very long-lived. A. molluccana, known also on the Kermadec Is. is used as an ornamental plant.

A question about the system of classification used in the older writings on Chinese plants called forth an interesting demonstration of the way in which the characters of the written language illustrate the very early grouping of plants into herbs and trees.

Our vote of thanks could express only very inadequately our appreciation of Dr Li's choice of subject and his picturesque presentation of his "chop suey" (菜肉).

#### MR DUNCAN'S GARDEN

Even at this late date some mention should be made of the Society's visit on the 6th December to Mr S.Duncan's garden at Tawa Flat.

In a valley enclosed by pines and with a wide range of exotic trees providing all degrees of shade and shelter, Mr Duncan has succeeded in establishing hundreds of our lesser-known trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants. From the smallest cuttings and seedlings being propagated in pots to a 70-year old kauri of exceptional height, there seems to be little that is too difficult for him to persuade to grow.

An adjacent grassy slope is allotted to flowering manukas and ground orchids, and we saw also a flourishing rockery, a hillside of choice Hebes, mostly in flower, and a shrubbery containing rare natives of especial horticultural value.

Members with gardens found their fingers itching - and not in vain - for cuttings and small plants, and many will have cause to remember gratefully, in seasons to come Mr Duncan's skill as a propagator and generosity as a host.

Mrs W.F. Samson.