During the first half-century of our nation's growth the government played only a minor role in the promotion of agriculture. The search for new plant varieties during this era was largely in the hands of individuals and farmers' associations. However, agriculturists realized that they could not cope with the problems of importing and disseminating new varieties and conducting experimental work without government aid. Organizations like the Berkshire Agricultural Society made repeated demands for Federal assistance. The grain and sugar interests wanted government help in the importation of new seed stocks.

Dufour and Associates

The first move by Congress to encourage the introduction of new agricultural products was the Act of May 1, 1802. John James Dufour and his associates were authorized to purchase up to four sections of land, northwest of the Ohio River between the Great Miami River and the Indian boundary line, at the rate of two dollars per acre, "in order to promote the culture of the vine within the territory of the United States." This act was passed in response to the demands of many men for an American wine industry, and to help overcome serious difficulties encountered in growing the European grape in the eastern United States.

After operating for a number of years, Dufour reported that he had succeeded in making wine of good quality. However, he and his associates ran into financial difficulties. In 1813 they applied to Congress for a remission of their debt or an extension of time for payment. The Committee on the Public Lands of the House reported on Dufour's lack of success "...owing to many difficulties and embarrassments incident to their new establishment, the length of time which must elapse before vine-dressers
can receive a reward for their labor, together with some misfortunes peculiar to themselves.” In 1818 Congress granted Dufour and his associates a five-year extension on their lands, but the project was never successful. (1)

THE TOMBIGBEE ASSOCIATION

A group of French emigrants known as the Tombigbee Association settled in western Alabama in 1819 to raise grapes and olives. The government had granted the association four townships of 92,160 acres, with the stipulation that at least one acre of each quarter section was to be planted in vine. Five hundred olive trees also were to be planted in the settlement unless it were found impossible to grow the olive in that climate.

The land selected was near the junction of the Tombigbee and Black Warrior rivers. It sold for two dollars per acre, and the failure of any one of the emigrants to pay for his land was cause for forfeiture of the benefits of the grant to all the settlers. This provision of the law was finally repealed after repeated complaints by the emigrants. A Treasury Department report in 1822 showed that eighty-one families had actually settled by that time, with 2,500 acres under cultivation, and 10,000 vines planted.

The young colony soon ran into difficulties and many of the colonists failed to live up to their contracts with the government. An inspection of the project by the Treasury Department revealed that members of the association were composed chiefly of refugee military officers and merchants, with little knowledge of agriculture. The region selected was a wilderness, and hunger forced the settlers to cultivate food crops instead of the grape and olive. (2)

A lack of roads and other transportation facilities limited the settlement temporarily to small lots around the town of Aigleville (Eagleville). Exorbitant prices for corn and foodstuffs charged by their American neighbors soon exhausted the settlers’ funds. Squatters moved into the settlement and threatened the most violent vengeance on those who should interfere with them. There was trouble in clearing the land for planting the vine and olive. The cuttings arrived out of season from Europe and died. The olive was peculiarly unsuccessful. Each winter’s frost killed the tree except for the roots, and these put up fresh shoots which in turn were frozen the following winter.

The settlers were given several extensions of time on the payments for their land, but the project never succeeded. Further
attempts to establish the vine and olive in the southeastern part of the country continued for two generations with little success.

THE TREASURY CIRCULAR OF 1819

William H. Crawford, Secretary of the Treasury, attempted to stimulate interest in plant introduction with the Treasury circular of 1819. This document called for the assistance of naval and consular officials in foreign countries in sending to this country whatever plants or seeds they might deem of value to American farmers. Found in the archives of the Treasury Department, this circular states clearly the problem and its relations to American agriculture at that time:

The introduction of useful plants, not before cultivated, or of such as are of superior quality to those which have been previously introduced, is an object of great importance to every civilized state, but more particularly to one recently organized, in which the progress of improvements of every kind, has not to contend with ancient and deep rooted prejudices. The introduction of such inventions, the results of the labour and science of other nations, is still more important, especially to the United States, whose institutions secure to the importer no exclusive advantage from their introduction. Your attention is respectfully solicited to these important subjects.

The collectors of the different ports of the United States will cheerfully cooperate with you in this interesting and beneficent undertaking, and become the distributors of the collections of plants and seeds which may be consigned by you to their care. It will greatly facilitate the distribution, if the article shall be sent directly to those sections of the Union, where the soil and climate are adapted to their culture.

At present, no expense can be authorized, in relation to these objects. Should the result of these suggestions answer my expectations, it is possible that the attention of the national legislature may be attracted to the subject, and that some provisions may be made, especially in relation to useful inventions.

I have the honour to be, very respectively, sir, your most obedient servant.

WM. H. CRAWFORD

One introduction which may be attributed to this circular was the work of Consul Appleton in Italy. He sent in "barrels of the Lupinella" of Italy, which was received and distributed by Crawford. Very little was actually accomplished by the circular, however, because no money was authorized for the work.

In addition to this circular, Crawford’s interest in agriculture is recorded by the Southern Cultivator of Augusta, Georgia. A letter from a correspondent reporter that Crawford, while Secretary of the Treasury, procured seeds of the d (doub) grass and of the teak tree from India. He sent them to Thomas Spalding, Sapelo Island, Georgia, who convinced himself that doub grass was identical with the Bermuda grass introduced in Colonial days.
THE TREASURY CIRCULAR OF 1827

The second Treasury circular was largely the work of John Quincy Adams. Months before this circular was issued, Adams noted in his diary that he had discussed the matter at some length with friends and "...thought we might venture upon some small expense to collect certain specific seeds or plants and have them planted in the garden of the Columbian Institute." Adams suggested to Southard, Secretary of the Navy, that a circular letter be sent to the captains of our public ships requesting that they lend their assistance in cooperation with the consuls to effect the object. He also recommended that an alphabetical list be made of the plants recommended for importation, their uses and the countries from which they would be procured.

As in the previous circular, no expense could be authorized, but the hope was expressed that Congress might make some provision to defray expenses incurred. The second circular went into much more detail than did the first. Information on the cultivation, the preferred climate and soil, the propagation, and the uses of each plant was requested. Southard endorsed the circular with a request for cooperation addressed to the ships of the Navy. Detailed directions for putting up and transmitting seeds and plants accompanied the circular. These were necessary to insure the live arrival of seeds and plants in the United States from distant overseas locations.

Probably such materials were to be sent to Washington to be placed in the government botanic garden, which Adams is supposed to have established for receiving and distributing them. This was the nucleus of the botanic and propagating gardens which were greatly expanded a quarter century later. (3)

ASSISTANCE OF THE NAVY

Before a special office for plant introduction was established, the Navy had greater opportunities to render voluntary assistance in this work than did any other department of the government. Captains of merchant and naval vessels often owned farms, and used their positions to bring livestock and plants from abroad for trial. Navy Captain Jesse Elliott, for example, overindulged his interest in foreign livestock to the extent of giving his animals preferred passage aboard ship to the discomfort of his men. The

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1 See Appendix Sections I, II, and III.
resulting complaints led to a court martial for Elliott and the issuance of a general order forbidding the transportation of livestock aboard public vessels.

The Navy kept a squadron in the Mediterranean, and many plant items were sent back from that region. The orders of the Navy Department to Commander William Crane in 1827, furnish a typical example.

It will probably be in your power, while protecting the commercial, to add something to the agricultural interests of the nation, by procuring information respecting valuable animals, seeds, and plants, and importing such as you can, conveniently, without inattention to your more appropriate duties, or expense to the Government. There are many scientific, agricultural, and Botanical institutions, to which your collections might be profitably intrusted, and by which whatever you procure will be used to the most extensive advantage of the country. Among those is the Columbian Institute of this city.

In 1824, Captain John Harris, USN, brought seeds of the large type of lima beans from Peru. The bean became quite popular in subsequent years. The American Farmer published instances of clover and alfalfa importations by naval officers. Ballard, a captain with the Mediterranean Squadron, brought about five bushels of *lupinella* from Italy and distributed it among friends near Annapolis. Commander Jacob Jones sent a keg of alfalfa seed from Valparaiso in 1827 to John S. Skinner, a postmaster and editor of the American Farmer.

Skinner, a former naval officer, was with Francis Scott Key at the bombardment of Fort McHenry and is said to have had a part in writing the National Anthem. For nearly half a century he enlisted the aid of prominent naval officers in bringing foreign livestock and seeds into America. The seeds Skinner received were liberally distributed under his frank as postmaster.²

The House of Representatives passed a Resolution in 1830 requesting the assistance of the Navy and our officials in foreign countries in securing new varieties of sugar cane and other plants suitable to the American soil and climate. Under Lieutenant-Commandant Boerum, the West India Squadron procured several varieties of sugar cane from the Island of Trinidad. These cuttings were brought to Pensacola and distributed by the governor of Florida.

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THE WILKES EXPEDITION

This expedition, sent out in 1838, was the first major effort made by the Navy to encourage plant introduction. Commander Charles Wilkes headed the expedition which cruised the Pacific from 1838 to 1842 under orders to secure any noteworthy new agricultural plants. The botanist, William Rich, accompanied the expedition to collect botanical specimens, agricultural seeds, and plants.

Other nations, particularly France and England, had long been dispatching botanists on plant explorations. In 1821 the French Government sent a corvette under Samuel Perottet to collect a load of rare plants and seeds including the Morus multicaulis from the Philippine Islands and parts of Asia.3

Introductions From Madeira—All the information available regarding seeds and plants brought back by the Wilkes Expedition comes from two volumes of the original letters from members of the expedition to the Secretary of the Navy. A shipment of fifteen kinds of plants, roots, and seeds was made to John McArau of Philadelphia, from Funchal, Madeira, in 1838. Another box of seeds collected at Madeira, with directions for planting, was sent from Rio de Janeiro. To Buist, a florist at Philadelphia, Wilkes sent “Box No. 5” which contained seeds from Madeira, St. Iago, and the vicinity of Rio de Janeiro. There were also roots of various Brazilian plants. A box of seeds was delivered by the Navy agent at Philadelphia to John Kann, who distributed them to members of the Philadelphia Horticultural Society.

Early in 1840, William Rich shipped to Boston two cases of seeds given him by the Government Botanic Garden of Sydney, New South Wales. Some of the seeds were from “rare if not new plants.” Rich requested that these be placed in the hands of persons who would take proper care of them.

Fiji Tomatoes—In October of that same year, Wilkes sent James Paulding, then Secretary of the Navy, twenty-eight papers of seed including some of a tomato from the Fiji Islands. These tomato seed had no visible effect on our tomato culture, but a variety of some significance did come from the Fijis in 1862. Most of the seeds in the papers from the Fijis came from ornamental shrubs

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3 The Morus multicaulis, the mulberry for feeding the silkworm, caused great speculation in America for many years during the first half of the nineteenth century.
and trees. These were distributed to ten different individuals in the eastern part of the country. About the same time, Titian R. Peale, "Scientist," sent flower seeds from Honolulu to his family in the United States.

On November 9 Wilkes wrote that he had shipped aboard the *Lausanne* consigned to the Navy agent in New York, seeds and roots, flower seeds, and "1 box Sandwich Island wheat." Joseph Drayton, also a member of the expedition, sent watermelon and muskmelon seeds from Tonga Taboo and the Sandwich Islands to a friend in New Jersey. Wilkes later wrote:

> I have the honor to inform you that I have sent to New York per ship Lausanne, one of Wards boxes with living plants from the Figi Islands . . . and have requested the Navy Agent to hold them subject to your orders . . . Much time has been consumed in gathering and preserving these seeds, and it will be a loss of credit to the Expedition if it should fail to benefit the Country by the introduction of the many new and valuable plants among this collection.

The farm papers of the time show that other Navy officers were sending back seeds of plants expected to be useful to the farmer. An African maize, reported as an excellent cattle feed (possibly a grain sorghum), was sent back from the coast of Africa. From Italy, Commodore Charles Stewart brought back an "Etrurian wheat." Daniel Zollickofer, who tested seeds of this new wheat, wrote the farm papers that it was a superior introduction, and anticipated that the country would owe its gratitude to Stewart.

The Wilkes Expedition was not expected to spend all its time on agricultural objectives, and no instance of a first introduction can definitely be attributed to its members. Seeds and plants collected were placed for trial with reputable horticulturists. Botanical collections brought to Washington by the expedition made it necessary to construct a greenhouse in 1842. This later became known as the Botanic Garden.

### EAST INDIA AND CHINA SEA SQUADRON

A decade after the return of the Wilkes Expedition, a planter from Louisiana wrote the Patent Office calling attention to the degeneration of sugar cane in his state. He suggested that the situation could be remedied by procuring some seed of new varieties from a foreign country, through the help of our foreign consuls and naval commanders.

The Secretary of the Navy, William Graham, initiated this work by ordering the East India Squadron to secure sugar cane cuttings and samples of whatever other plants and seeds they might
find during their tour of duty. The Sloop of War Marion was to be held in readiness to rush the collection back to the states. The idea of securing sugar cane was probably suggested by Leonard Wray's book, The Practical Sugar Planter, published in 1848.4 This book called attention to the Salangore cane, which Commander Aulick had direction to secure at Penang, off the west coast of the Malay Peninsula. Aulick also was instructed to give special attention to procuring seeds of the tea plant. He reported in the winter of 1852 that he had obtained cuttings and roots of the Salangore cane as well as a few samples of the Otaheite and Mauritius canes which some of the Penang planters preferred to the Salangore.

The Marion was immediately ordered to take passage home, and another ship of the squadron, the St. Mary's was instructed to secure an additional supply of the Salangore sugar cane seed. When the Marion arrived home, the roots and cuttings were found to be decayed and worthless. Aulick assured the Secretary of the Navy that the plants had been packed by persons highly recommended, and had been well cared for while on board his ship. Specific instructions, however, were given for packing future shipments. Later that same year the St. Mary's arrived in Philadelphia with a cargo of cane.

THE PERRY EXPEDITION AND JAMES MORROW

One of the duties of the Perry Naval Expedition, sent to Japan in 1853 to open that country to trade with the United States, was to exchange agricultural implements and seeds with the Japanese. Dr. James Morrow accompanied the expedition as the representative of the Agricultural Division of the Patent Office and recorded in his Journal detailed information. Morrow was in charge of American agricultural implements and seeds to be exchanged and his instructions were to "...carefully note and collect all indigenous vegetable products within your sphere of operations, with a view to their introduction into the United States, preserving seeds and dried specimens of as many plants as possible." 5

An oversight occurred in the instructions, for no funds were pro-

4 A Complete Account of the Cultivation and Manufacture of the Sugar-cane, according to the Latest and Most Improved Processes. "Describing and comparing the different systems pursued in the East and West Indies and the Straits of Malacca, and the Relative expenses and advantages attendant upon each: Being the result of sixteen years' experience as a sugar planter in those countries."
5 See Appendix IV for full text of this letter of instructions from Edward Everett of the State Department.
vided for purchasing plant materials. The Interior Department, however, did authorize necessary expenditures for collecting and shipping the sugar cane cuttings to the United States. Morrow's first opportunity to buy seeds came at Hong Kong. He notified Perry of his lack of funds, and Perry gave him a small advance until he could receive further instructions.

Chinese Seeds—Morrow's Journal records that his first collection was a small box of flower seeds secured in September, 1853. These he sent to the president of the Philadelphia Horticultural Society. At Macao, in October, Perry instructed Morrow to precede him to Canton and to collect as many seeds as possible. They were to be put aboard the clipper ship Coarser which was to return the sick of the squadron to America. Morrow collected vegetable seeds from the vicinity of Canton and field seeds of rice, beans, and wheat from a northern province. Along with two other shipments these were sent to New York and Philadelphia. These shipments from around Canton also included tea seed, cotton, Chinese cabbage, and varieties of such common vegetables as cabbage, turnips, greens, peas, and beans.

The Japanese Emperor sent Morrow a small bag of thirty kinds of garden seeds from the Imperial Gardens at Tokyo. Barley, wheat, turnips, and various other garden seeds were procured in Japan at other times. In the spring of 1854 Morrow sent large papers of seed to the Department of the Interior. Other packages were sent to the seedsmen, Landreth and Buist of Philadelphia, and to gardeners in South Carolina. Morrow obtained large quantities of field, garden, and flower seeds in Simoda Bay. These are listed and described as “White Pease, Black beans, Red beans, Buck-wheat, Broom corn, Small red beans (soya), Large white pease, Small white pease.” Rice, wheat, barley, and a number of vegetable and flower seeds were procured at the same time. That summer, Morrow potted some plants among which were three persimmons and a honeysuckle.

Plant Spoilage—Morrow's attempts to bring back living plants must have been particularly exasperating. Many of his plants died on the way down from Japan to China. At first he had no glass cases for their protection, and the plants were badly wilted at sea by salt water and wind. The Navy apparently had neither the space to shelter the plants nor an understanding of their needs. Seeds were exposed to rain, and plants subjected to salt spray or
placed in unsuitable locations. At Macao, Morrow ordered fourteen cases constructed for his plants, and those put in jars soon improved.

When glasses in the cases were found broken, more plants were secured in Java. Sugar canes obtained there by the *Lexington* were stowed in glass cases. Many of these plants were brought through safely, and in 1855 Congress appropriated $1,500 for the erection of a suitable house for the Japanese plants. Four plants each, of several kinds of persimmons, tangerines, kumquats, roses, and ornamentals were brought back. Tobacco and cotton seeds from the island of Mauritius were forwarded to the Patent Office. The ship *Plymouth* arrived at Norfolk in January, 1855, with four boxes of sugar cane seedlings of Salingore and Mauritius and three barrels of the best wheat of Cape Town.

**THE WATER WITCH**

About the same time that Perry was in Japan, Lieutenants Page and Donaldson aboard the *Water Witch* engaged in a reconnaissance of the Paraguay River. They collected seeds and botanical specimens which they forwarded to the Patent Office. Among these seeds was the mate, or *Paraguay Tea*—the familiar beverage of the Paraguay River region.

Another expedition contemporary with these voyages was the John Rogers Surveying Expedition to the North Pacific Ocean. Charles Wright, botanist of the expedition, collected many seeds which he sent to the Botanical Garden and the Smithsonian Institute at Washington. Wright, however, was primarily interested in collecting botanical specimens, and there is no record of any significant plant introduction resulting from either of these expeditions.

**JOURNEY OF THE RELEASE**

In an attempt to secure viable sugar cane cuttings, the Patent Office sent the Naval barque *Release* to South America in 1856. Previous attempts to collect the cuttings in the East Indies had not been successful because most of the cargo died during the long trip home. The expedition was given an appropriation of $10,000 and relieved of regular naval assignments in order to hasten the return of the cuttings. The Patent Office hoped that this importation and another from China would completely change
the cultivation of sugar cane in the United States. At that time
the trip was unique because the Release was the first American
naval vessel sent out on a purely agricultural mission.

Lieutenant C. C. Simms was placed in charge of the Release,
with Townend Glover of the Patent Office heading the agricul­
tural activities. These instructions for the voyage, from the
Commissioner of Patents, form an accurate description of the
expedition’s work.

. . . you have been selected to go to South America to procure a fresh supply
of the Cuttings of the Sugar Cane for . . . experiment in our Southern States. . . .

The United States Brigg “Release” has been fitted out by the Navy Depart­
ment . . . you will please repair on board, forthwith, providing yourself with the
necessary provisions for your support, for two months to be paid for out of your
regular salary.

You will receive . . . adequate means and personal directions for the procure­
ment, packing, transportation, and delivery of the Canes . . . you are requested
to proceed in the “Release,” with all possible dispatch to the port of Georgetown
in Demarara, and procure as many cuttings of the most healthy and hardy varieties
of the Sugar Cane which grow in that region, as can be safely packed in the
boxes provided for that purpose, and cause them to be compactly stowed, below
deck, in said vessel, which will then proceed to the port of La Guayra, in Venezuela.

You will next proceed to the most elevated regions of Caracas, where the Sugar
Cane is successfully grown and obtain as many bundles of Cane Cuttings as can
be safely stowed in any place which may be unoccupied in said vessel, and then
proceed directly to New Orleans, where you will receive further orders.

Should you find it convenient to procure any valuable seeds which would be
likely to thrive in any part of the United States you are hereby authorized to
purchase a small quantity of each kind for experiment from the funds which
will be placed in your hands by Mr. Browne.

On February 7, 1857, The New Orleans Picayune reported the
Release had arrived “. . . with over 1,000 boxes of cane cuttings,
plantain, banana, eddo and other plants including buck yam roots.
The cuttings had been made with a great deal of care, and several
planters who examined those not in boxes, expressed themselves
highly pleased. . . ."

Cane Borers Imported—Great benefits were expected to accrue
to the sugar interests. But several days later, the cane cuttings were
found to be badly infested with the cane borer. One planter who
inspected the cuttings thought only one box in six of any value.
But he took some home which he intended to plant at a distance
from other canes to prevent infestation! The Plaquemine Sentinel
reported this planter brought them a piece of the cane through
which the borer had made a perfect road or tunnel. Some judged
the enterprise a failure and said it was “worse than that if it intro-
duces the terrible borer worm into Louisiana." The Patent Office reported in 1857 that the cuttings were thriving and were expected to compensate amply for the introduction.

Glover, who procured the canes, came to America from England in 1836 to engage in agricultural experiments. He eventually became an entomologist in the Department of Agriculture and later taught at Maryland Agricultural College. His importation of additional cane borers into Louisiana is a commentary upon the rudimentary state of entomology and plant quarantine in his day.

**DIPLOMATIC ASSISTANCE**

Diplomatic officials also were called upon to procure plant introductions while residing in foreign countries. The many separate instances of such assistance do not tell a connected story. But they do show the devotion of many of the consuls to the improvement of national agriculture, and indicate that the Patent Office never expected to operate without the consuls' support.

In 1849, John Davis, the consul at Canton, China, sent seeds to America. These had been given to him by S. Wells Williams, a prominent missionary and linguist, who later served as interpreter for the Perry expedition to Japan. Williams obtained this supply from another missionary who in turn had received them from a Chinese physician. Davis sent a second box of seeds to the Patent Office in June of 1849 which he had also received through Williams. During the summer and autumn of that year, Williams continued to gather seeds for the Patent Office, including Japanese persimmon, olive, watermelon, and muskmelon seeds.

**THE IRISH POTATO**

An American consul at Panama in 1851 made an enormous contribution to the agricultural wealth of the United States, probably without suspecting the significance of his act. This consul, whose name is not known, sent a small quantity of potatoes from South America, the original home of the "Irish potato," to the Reverend Chauncey Goodrich, of Utica, New York.

Goodrich's interest in potato breeding sprang from the widespread want and suffering in Europe and the crop failures in America due to the severe epidemic of potato rot during 1843-47. He attributed the blight to long-continued asexual propagation, which he thought had weakened the vigor and disease resistance
of the tubers. Sexual reproduction should rejuvenate the potato. Goodrich allowed the potato flowers to pollinate naturally, and in this way crossed the old seed stocks with the new potatoes from South America. Rigid selections of superior plants were made from hundreds of seedlings.

**Special Varieties**—He called one of the South American potatoes the “Rough Purple Chili,” believing it had come from that country. “From naturally fertilized seed balls of this variety, produced in 1852,” the potato authority, Stuart, tells us, “he grew some seedlings in 1853; and from this lot one was selected as worthy of propagation.” This seedling was introduced in 1857 under the name of “Garnet Chili.” This variety and other natural hybrids selected by Goodrich were the breeding stocks of numerous successive potato breeders. Most of the 200 or more potato varieties found today in the United States descended from the original consignment by the unknown consul in Panama. (4)

**HELP OF OTHER CONSULS**

Many other American consular officials cooperated in securing seeds for the Patent Office. Charles Huffnagle, the consul at Calcutta, sent a shipment of *Dacca cotton* seed to Edmund Burke in 1849. John P. Brown, of the United States Legation at Constantinople, complied with Mason’s request for 100 bushels of the best *flint wheat* of Turkey. All of the consuls were expected to gather information on the agriculture of the countries where they were stationed. Chile and Peru were looked upon as sources of valuable seeds, especially of wheat, alfalfa, and beans, and special attention was given to the exchange of seeds with those countries. Several varieties of pepper, beans, and corn were received from Callao, Peru, in exchange for American seeds sent there. From Algeria, 12,000 pounds of wheat were procured by the American consul, John J. Mahony. Two Wardian cases of plants of great economic value were sent from Ningpo, China, by D. S. MacGowan in 1856. The Consulate-General of Egypt sent a quantity of seeds of different kinds collected there during his residence. Townsend Harris, Minister-Resident at Yedo, Japan, sent a box of various seeds to the Patent Office in 1861.

**Japanese Contributions**—Robert H. Pruyn, Minister-Resident at Tokyo in 1862, sent eighteen boxes of upland rice and grape cuttings from the government of Japan to the Department of Agriculture. Both items were quite welcome—the rice because
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of the loss of the southern supply during the Civil War, and the grape cuttings in view of the efforts to found a native wine industry in the eastern United States. Commissioner Newton was notified that another shipment of 900 choice grapevines had been sent by the Japanese government. Pruyn also tried to procure sorghum seeds. Newton expressed the widespread interest in the agricultural plants of Japan when he wrote:

Our people look upon every natural production of this description ... with a more lively interest than upon similar articles from any other country; believing as they do, that they are actual and rare acquisitions—unexpectedly coming from a hitherto unknown and inaccessible country—capable, perhaps, of improvement in our soil and climate, under the progressive ideas of our people.

Thomas Hogg, American consul in Japan from 1865-75, sent Japanese plants to America to be propagated by Parson's Nursery in Long Island; one of these was a hydrangea. Other consuls sent seeds and plants to friends or brought them back occasionally with the idea of capitalizing on them. Plant introduction by diplomatic officials became less important when the Department of Agriculture expanded its activities and depended more upon its own agents for plant materials.

Bibliography

1. 6 U.S. Statutes at Large, 47-48.
2. 3 U.S. Statutes at Large, 374, 667; 17th Congress, 1st Session, Senate Document 70.

*Isaac Newton revealed that Hogg sent choice grape cuttings packed carefully to his brother in New York. At the same time he sent grape cuttings to the Department of Agriculture with little preparation and care. Newton, jealous that the department should have the honor of first introducing valuable new plants, resented this partiality to a commercial firm to the disadvantage of the nation's agriculturists. Newton wrote Hogg expressing his disappointment with his action.*