

chên in the original edition of the *Pen ts'ao kang mu*. Almost all the plants mentioned in this supplement are those recently introduced into the Orient, such as the peanut, foreign pepper, jack fruit, etc. This supplement is in four books and has a separate preface dated 1714 A. D.

*A rare Chinese
herbal preserved
in a Japanese edi-
tion.*

A very interesting Japanese reprint of a famous Chinese work is the *Shên Nung pên ts'ao ching su*, by Min Hsi-yung (*tzu Chung-ch'un*), a native of Ch'ang-shu in the Soochow Prefecture. This work is in 30 books bound in 10 volumes, in two portfolios. The author's preface is dated 1625, and the reprint is said to be an example of early Japanese printing with movable type. The *Shên Nung pên ts'ao ching* is the oldest herbal and materia medica known to the Chinese, and this interesting commentary gives perhaps the fullest account yet published on what remains of this ancient work.

Min Hsi-yung's commentary on the *Shên Nung pên ts'ao ching* is well known to Chinese bibliographers and is mentioned in the Imperial Catalogue, as it was included in the great *Ssu k'u ch'üan shu* manuscript library prepared by order of the Emperor Ch'ien Lung. In spite of this fact it was severely criticized by the compilers of the Imperial Catalogue.

It is highly probable that many other Chinese works that have been lost in China or have become very rare will be found to have been preserved in Japan or Korea, thanks to the very good grade of paper commonly used in these countries for works of this character.

Thanks to the active cooperation of Mr. Michael J. Hagerty, translator of Chinese in the Bureau of Plant Industry of the United States Department of Agriculture, it has been possible in many cases to present critical data gleaned from the writings of Chinese bibliographers in regard to the works under discussion, and in some cases to give translations that give at least a little of the flavor of the original Chinese. It has, unfortunately, been impossible to print more than a very small fraction of Mr. Hagerty's notes and translations, which were especially complete and thorough in the case of the Chinese agricultural and botanical works included in last year's purchases.