

so that in 1603 a much more legible printing in larger characters was issued, which probably resulted in stopping the sale of the first edition printed in much smaller characters. However, the popularity of the work steadily increasing, the blocks of the second edition were doubtless soon worn out, so that 50 years after the first edition was published the original blocks of this edition were in better condition than those of the 1603 reprint. Ch'êng Shao-ch'i himself or some enterprising bookseller possibly bought the old blocks, pretended to revise them, and put this pirated reprint on the market.

The copy of the 1640 spurious edition secured for the Library of Congress has the original preface by Wang Shih-ch'êng, dated 1590, but only one of the three folios it covers is printed from the original block, the other two folios being from different blocks, having characters engraved with heavier strokes. There are two new prefaces in this edition and an entirely new list of compilers, all, of course, printed from new blocks. Unfortunately, books 51 and 52, treating of animals and man, are missing from this copy, which is otherwise in good condition.

*First edition  
of the Pen ts'ao  
kang mu of 1590  
A. D.*

Of the very rare first edition of the *Pên ts'ao kang mu* published in 1590 the Library of Congress now has a nearly complete copy, the lacking preface, list of compilers, and several folios deliberately changed in the spurious 1640 reprint being supplied by photographs, the text of books 1 to 50 and two books of illustrations being printed from the original blocks in the 1640 reprint.

As was noted in the report of the Librarian of Congress for 1924-25, this first edition contains the earliest known mention of the American cereal maize growing in China. It reached the wild regions of western China less than a century after the discovery of America. Li Shih-chên's detailed description and crude figure given under *yü shu shu* leave no doubt as to its identity with maize.

In addition to the very valuable reprint of 1640 and photographic copies of the parts of the original 1590 edition, a very good early Japanese reprint of the *Pên ts'ao kang mu* edited by Jakusui To was secured last year. This revised edition was published in 1714 A. D. and has two supplements written by Jakusui To, one