

*kang mu* by Li Shih-chên, first published in 1590 A. D., and still to-day the standard Chinese treatise on materia medica. The original edition is very rare. No copy was known even in China or Japan until some 12 years ago, when Dr. M. Shirai, the well-known mycologist and phytopathologist of the college of agriculture of the Imperial Japanese University of Tokyo, found a copy on sale that had long been in the possession of a family of Japanese physicians.

Professor Shirai supplied the Library of Congress with a manuscript copy of certain parts of this work in 1918 and had a photograph made for Dr. B. Laufer, of the Field Museum, of Chicago, of the description and figure of maize, the first known record of this American plant in the Far East. Repeated search in the book markets of China and Japan in 1915, 1918, and again in 1926 failed to bring to light any copies of the original 1590 edition of this great work. In the meantime the copy found by Doctor Shirai was purchased by the botanical library of the University of Kyoto, Japan. Recently Doctor Shirai located another copy of this edition of the *Pên ts'ao kang mu* in the Cabinet Library in the Imperial Palace grounds in Tokyo.

In November, 1926, there was offered for sale in Tokyo a copy of the *Pên ts'ao kang mu* that differed from any in the Library of Congress, and it was accordingly purchased at a very moderate price, as the last two books were missing. This edition purported to be a new revised issue edited by Ch'êng Chia-hsiang (*tsu* Shao-ch'i), whose preface was dated 1640 A. D., just at the end of the Ming dynasty.

In this preface Ch'êng Chia-hsiang states that he "deleted, added, revised, and corrected" the *Pên ts'ao kang mu* of Li Shih-chên. He added one paragraph to the detailed bibliography of Chinese herbals given by Li Shih-chên and, contrary to the Chinese custom, wrote an account of himself and of the reprint. He says of himself: "He was a man of extensive learning, and had a large collection of books and was clever at searching out hidden meanings," and goes on to say, "He also liked the *Pên ts'ao kang mu* which Li Tung-pi [Li Shih-chên]