A Variety of Coix lachryma-jobi.

Introduction.

In the January of 1928, the writers were resident at the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, Trinidad, B.W.I., and selection work was carried out on a small, very mixed plot of Job's Tears, (Coix lachryma-jobi L. var. mayuen Stapf.)

These notes have been compiled, however, not only to describe the manner in which the selection work has been carried out, but also to further the knowledge of a little known plant of wide tropical distribution, and wider economic potentialities.

History and Distribution.

The wild species of Coix lachryma-jobi with large hard shining seeds seems to have been known to Pliny, and is indigenous to the Old World.

The edible subspecies is very distinct from this wild form, having soft hulls and a graceful tall habit quite opposed to the bushy poorly prolific wild variety.

Both forms and varieties thereof are now however, (as their numerous vernacular names indicate), of wide tropical distribution and are cultivated either for grain, forage or ornament throughout India, China and Japan, Federated Malay States, the Philippine Islands, Java, U.S.A. and tropical America.

The plant is grown for food by the hill-tribes of Northern India and the seed of the wild form is used for ornamental work, bead-making and rosaries throughout hot countries generally. It occurs as a weed of cultivation in the rice-fields and ditches of Bengal and is common up to 5,000 ft. in Ceylon.

In the Philippine Islands the edible form is rapidly assuming importance, owing to the publicity given it there by the