THE NAME OF THE SOY BEAN: A CHAPTER IN ITS BOTANICAL HISTORY.

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In connection with a study of the oriental species of *Phaseolus* cultivated in India, Japan, China and elsewhere, most of which species have been under test for a number of years at Arlington Farm, Virginia, it became necessary to clear up the botanical identity of each. The botanical literature showed that there was a diversity of opinion among botanists regarding the identity of certain species described by Linnaeus, especially *Phaseolus radiatus*, *P. max*, and *P. mungo*. The most far reaching studies on this problem were those made by Prain.¹ Prain's conclusions were based on his wide knowledge of the Indian species, but only a limited acquaintance with those of Japan and China. Unfortunately in his studies he did not have access to any of the old material on which the Linnaean names are based. His conclusions at that time were that the name *P. radiatus* belongs to the species cultivated under the name Mung; *P. mungo* to the one called Tikari in twining varieties, and Urd or Urid in bushy sorts; and that *P. max* is a composite species based partly on a Mexican plant and partly on the cadelium of Rumphius which latter is the soy bean.

In connection with the writer's studies of *Phaseolus*, it became evident that there still existed discrepancies in the literature which did not seem reconcilable with any conclusions yet published.

Perhaps the most interesting of these problems is that which concerns the identity of *Phaseolus max* Linn. Linnaeus' original description of this plant is as follows: