NOTES ON OATS FOR THE SOUTHERN STATES.

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In the February Journal of Heredity there appeared a very interesting article on "The Origin of Cultivated Oats" by Dr. L. Trabut, director of the botanical service of the Government of Algeria. This paper was originally presented by Dr. Trabut at the Fourth Congress of Genetics in Paris in 1911. It does not discuss in detail the origin of all varieties of cultivated oats, but only of those which are commonly grown in the Mediterranean region of southern Europe and northern Africa. The usually accepted theory that *Avena fatua* is the parent of the varieties of oats grown in the north of Europe is accepted by Dr. Trabut, but he brings forward quite convincing evidence to show that the cultivated oats of the Mediterranean region have been produced from *A. sterilis*, a wild form which is still common there. The character on which the separation between derivatives from *A. fatua* and *A. sterilis* is made is the method of disarticulation of the second kernel in the spikelet. In *A. fatua* and varieties produced from it, the rachilla breaks off at the base of the second kernel and remains attached to the inner face of the primary one. On the other hand, in *A. sterilis* and its derivatives, the second kernel carries its rachilla with it when disarticulated. Dr. Trabut describes and illustrates a very interesting series showing the transition from the wild to the best cultivated forms. The paper is of much value to botanists and agronomists in that it adds to the general knowledge of the origin of our cultivated plants and emphasizes the fact that certain varieties of oats are particularly adapted to warm climates because they have been derived from a wild species which is native to a subtropical region.

The theory that all our cultivated varieties of oats have not been derived from *Avena fatua*, but that certain forms adapted to warm climates have been developed from *A. sterilis*, is not, however, entirely new. In a paper presented before the third annual meeting of the American Breeders' Association Mr. J. B. Norton makes the following statements:

"It has been generally accepted that *Avena fatua*, the common wild oat of Europe and Asia, is the progenitor of all our cultivated forms. Such, how-