

—in October—were busily stripping the trees of these leaves, and carrying them away in great baskets, to be used as winter forage—all of the second crop of leaves being made use of in that way.

Wherever I went there was ample evidence of the importance of the silk industry. In the little hamlets and farmhouses that I entered I frequently found the fittings for silkworm rearing. At this season the old baskets—great, flat, narrow-rimmed ones—in which the silkworms are fed in May and June, were being used to dry the late crop of cotton bolls. One frequently saw rows of these baskets in the house yards overspread with a small lot of bolls exposed to the sun to hasten their opening.

The mulberry is grown in little orchards or narrow groves lining the banks of the canals and irrigating ditches. The trees have the appearance of osier-willow stumps from the habit of the natives of cutting off all the shoots close to the stump during the feeding season, in May and June. These shoots are either stripped at once of their leaves, or are made up into bundles and taken home to be stripped afterwards. A traveller going through this same region in midsummer has noted that all the mulberries have a wintry appearance, or resemble a collection of dead stumps, but the rains which fall copiously during June and July, and the natural fertility of the soil, which is increased by cultivation and fertilizing immediately after the branches are removed, soon bring out a succulent new growth, developing a second and enormous crop of leaves, the same, in fact, which were being gathered at the season of the year of my visit. The traveller referred to above, Mr. Fortune, says that the worms are fed in the numerous little farm cottages, commonly in dark rooms fitted up with shelves placed one above another from the ground to the roof of the house. The worms are kept in the big bamboo sieves or baskets already described, evidently exactly after the manner which I had observed in Japan. The silk products of this district are considered among the finest of China, and the output must be very considerable. Those interested in the culture of the silkworm from the native Chinese standpoint, should see the little translation made by a missionary of an old Chinese work on the subject, which recently came into the possession of the Department of Agriculture.

The country penetrated is practically without forest areas. The main cultures, as stated, are rice and cotton, with the mulberry growing in little orchard strips along the banks of the canals. Usually at each farmhouse there would be a few trees—peach, plum, etc. The common shade trees are the weeping willow, occurring scatteringly along the canals, a species