

value set by them on human offal, it will be sufficient to mention that the barbers most carefully collect and sell, as an article of trade, the somewhat considerable amount of hair of the beards and heads of the hundreds of millions of customers, whom they daily shave. The Chinese know the action of gypsum and lime; and it often happens that they renew the plastering of the kitchens, for the purpose of making use of the old matter for manure.

No Chinese farmer ever sows a seed of corn before it has been soaked in liquid manure diluted with water, and has begun to germinate; and experience has taught him, (so he asserts,) that this operation not only tends to promote the growth and development of the plant, but also to protect the seed from the insects hidden in the ground.

During the summer months, all kinds of vegetable refuse are mixed with turf, straw, grass, peat, weeds and earth, collected into heaps, and when quite dry, set on fire; after several days of slow combustion the entire mass is converted into a kind of black earth. This compost is only employed for the manuring of seeds. When seed time arrives, one man makes holes in the ground; another follows with the seed, which he places in the holes; and a third adds the black earth. The young seed, planted in this manner, grows with such extraordinary vigor that it is thereby enabled to push its rootlets through the hard, solid soil, and to collect its mineral constituents.

The Chinese farmer sows his wheat, after the grains have been soaked in liquid manure, quite close, in seed beds, and afterwards transplants it. Occasionally, also, the soaked grains are immediately sown in the field properly prepared for their reception, at intervals of four inches from each other. The time of transplanting is towards the month of December. In March the seed sends up from seven to nine stalks with ears, but the straw is shorter than with us. I have been told that wheat yields 120 fold more, which amply repays the care and labor bestowed upon it.

It is quite true that what suits one people may not on that account suit all countries and all nations; but one great and incontrovertible truth may, at all events, be learned from Chinese agriculture, viz., that the fields of the Chinese cultivator have preserved their fertility unimpaired and in continued vigor ever since the days of Abraham, and of the building of the first pyramid in Egypt.*

This result, we also learn, has been attained solely and simply by the restitution to the soil of the mineral constituents removed in the produce; or what amounts to the same thing, that this has been effected by the aid of a manure, of which the greater portion is lost to the land in the system of European (and American?) cultivation.

—*Liebig's Modern Agriculture.*

* Vessels of Chinese porcelain are found in the pyramids, of the same shape, and with the same characters of writing on them, as on modern China at the present day.