



#### THE BREEDER AND HIS PRODUCT

Mr. N. A. Jones and one of his hybrid wheats. Men like Jones in New York and Etter in California are necessary for agricultural progress and prosperity, the basis of our civilization. Is it not just and expedient that a system of plant patents be perfected to protect breeders, and insure their reaping a sufficient reward from their lifelong labours to prevent pecuniary difficulties and other worries interfering with their work? See N. A. Jones—Plant Breeder, P. 103 (Frontispiece).

# IS THE CHINESE HEREDITY INFERIOR?

CHO WANG

*Cornell University, Ithaca, New York*

ACCORDING to the view of most biologists the ultimate value and accomplishments of any people are determined by its heredity. The negro race has been accused of its relatively low mental ability and consequently its poor contribution to civilization. The white race is very proud of its heredity; geographical and other forces have been operating in favor of the showing up of its potential ability. The yellow race, especially the Chinese, has long been regarded as a mystery to the western people, and the value of its heredity is rarely understood.

It is very interesting to note that many foreigners, especially Americans who have been observing and studying the Chinese for many years, have come to the conclusion that the Chinese are hereditarily very strong. Unfortunately this worthy idea is often overlooked or unknown to many—particularly to the Chinese. In order to accomplish any task the performer must have confidence in his ability, and a friendly, sympathetic understanding of others. A consideration of the Chinese heredity, therefore, is not only enlightening to the foreigner, but imperative to all Chinese.

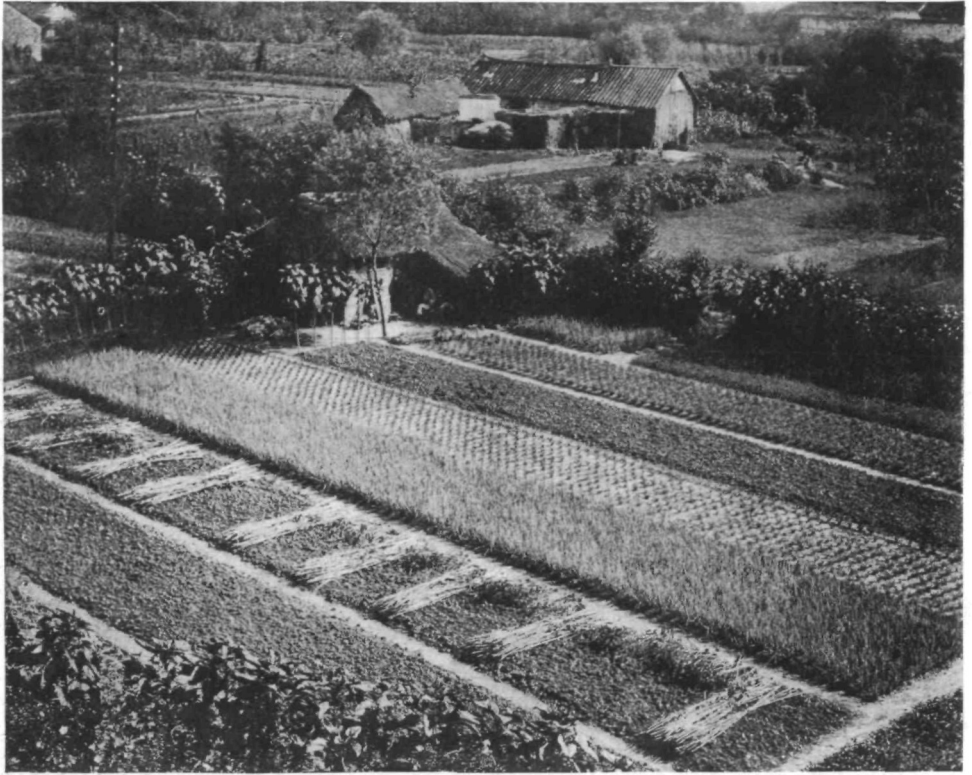
One of the most accurate criteria with which to measure the heredity of a people is its historical accomplishment. Chinese history and civilization are the longest of the unbroken, living ones of the world, and who has the slightest doubt that they are due to heredity? The Emperor Hwang-ti invented the compass and his Queen the silk-worm culture long before Greece or Rome came into existence. One after another of such epoch-making inventions as gun powder, printing, and others were contributed to the world by the

slant-eyed Chinese. These facts demonstrate clearly that the Chinese are not lacking in originality; if they had never accomplished anything else, they would be justified in being proud of themselves.

The writer is fully aware of the repeated accusations that the Chinese are a backward people. It is granted that the Chinese developed a high civilization in ancient times, but it is said that their heads are bent to the past, and that, consequently, progress decreased and finally changed to stagnation; and the glorious days of China are in the past. The writer does not deny that there was a slowing down movement starting about the Christian era, but he does deny that the condition may be termed "backwardness." The retardation of Chinese civilization was not caused by Chinese religion, philosophy, habit of thinking or any other already attributed agencies, but mainly by geographical isolation. During the Han Dynasty (85 B.C. to 327 A.D.) the Chinese had conquered all that was to be conquered, secured all their material desires within the boundaries of their Empire, and, above all, attained higher culture and civilization than all their neighboring states. Is it not human nature to "slow down," if a people are satisfied with what they have, with no fear of conquerors or competitors? Have not the Chinese been awakened during the last few decades by the influence of Westerners? Has the retardation of Chinese civilization anything to do with heredity?

## A PHILOSOPHICAL PEOPLE

The Chinese are proverbially known as a moral people, so it is rather unnecessary to dwell any longer to prove that they are a superior people morally.

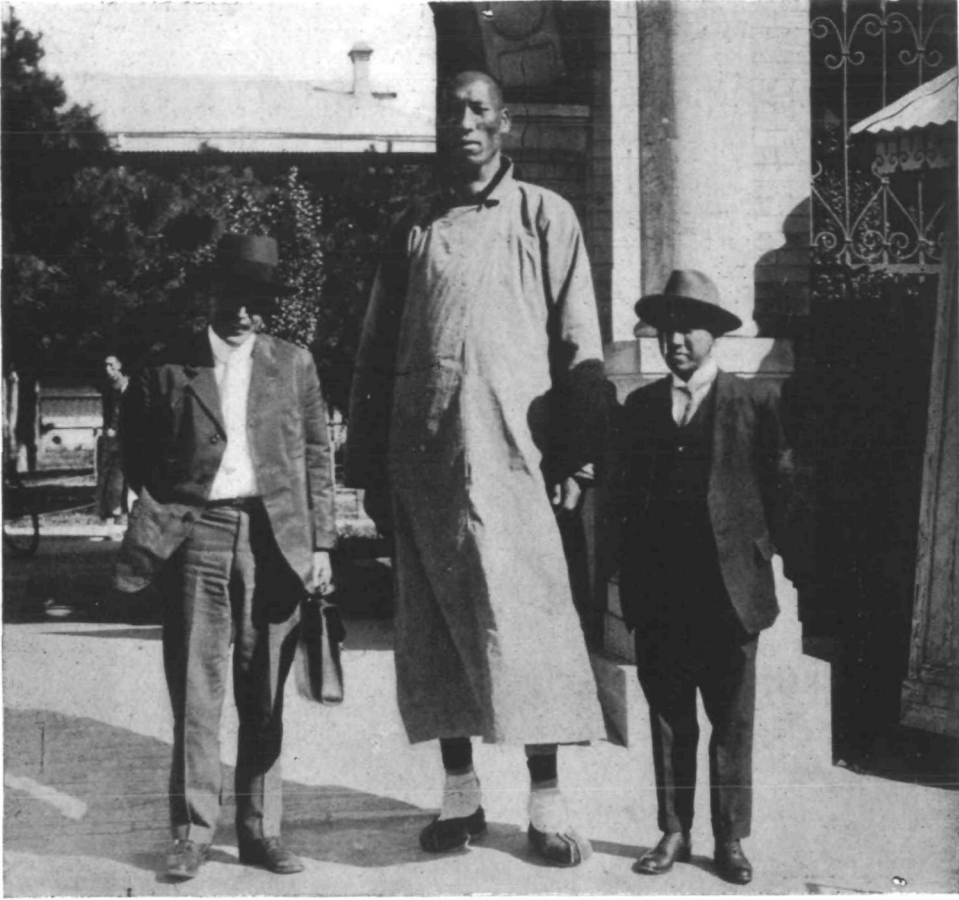


**A CHINESE FARM**

China is better known for her urban arts, many of which are parasitic in character, than she is for her agriculture. We do not often consider how her teeming cities and crowded market places are supplied with food. There are no large tracts of land cultivated as a unit, as is done under our extensive methods. Each farm is worked by the farmer and his family, who themselves do most of the work, as there are very few draft animals. This picture was taken from the wall of Nanking, looking toward the city. (Fig. 1)

Nevertheless all human minds need constant reminding, so a consideration of the "philosophical people" may here be made. For forty centuries the Chinese have been followers of their philosophy of peace and industry; they are always practising and preaching peaceful justice—a noble idea which was gradually recognized by the leading thinkers of the world. Their filial piety, friendship, loyalty, and amiable character are perhaps unsurpassed. But most foreigners are familiar only with the Chinese merchants abroad, and consequently they draw misleading observations and conclusions. The writer does not mean to state that such merchants do not represent the Chi-

nese, but he only wants to make it clear that they represent only one class of Chinese. Students of biology and sociology agree that city life is detrimental to human physique and morality, so there is no wonder that even the Chinese gamble or fight "tong wars." It must be remembered that most of them are deprived of homelife, and have absolutely no such pleasure and refreshment under the category of "social life." Yet the Chinese merchants in the Philippines, Hawaiian Islands, the United States, or elsewhere on the globe, morally are second to none. It seems to the writer that the reason why the Chinese are often hated, despised and ridiculed by those who are not well



A GIANT CHINAMAN

This man is one of two gigantic brothers who are doorkeepers at the government experiment station northwest of Peking. He is very sensitive about his great size, and refused to be photographed, even the director's orders proving ineffective. When invited to stand for his picture with the director and the American visitor the giant was too polite to refuse. The other brother is somewhat shorter. While these men are of exceptional size, they nevertheless serve to remind us that there are many people of no mean stature in Northern China, particularly in the district in which these brothers were born. (Fig. 2.)

informed is simply this: That "man carries his bag of faults on his back"; he always sees the faults of others but seldom his own.

According to the reports of the missionary schools in China, and to the mental measurements of the Board of Education of the Hawaiian Islands, the average Chinese school child is just as able as the American. The high scholarship of the Chinese students in American colleges is well known; the

writer had the pleasure to hear from one of his professors, "My Chinese students are always the best!" /It is true that the Chinese have not yet made any great contribution to pure sciences, but this is due to a lack of scientific environment and not due to deficiency in heredity. Such prominent biologists and eugenicists as East, Castle, Holmes, Popenoe, and Johnson have time and again declared that the Chinese are by no means mentally inferior to any other

people, yet many foreigners think that the Chinese are only fitted to be cooks or laundrymen!

Physically the Chinese are shorter and thinner than the Teutonic people on the average. But the Chinese are a mixed people of many sub-races, so their weight or stature may vary from the highest to the lowest, just as does the American. Travelling writers and moving picture producers, having for their sole purpose financial success, have often too grossly exaggerated the queer Chinese physique and personalities in order to please their reader or audience. Alas, the majority of the world has too often been ruled by illusions! There is little doubt that Chinese school children are not so well developed physically as the American, but this is due to the fact that physical education in the Chinese schools is poorer, and not to inherited deficiencies. If any one has seen the well developed physique of the Chinese farmers with their marvelous rigidity and durability, he will be convinced that the Chinese are not weak physically.

#### SOCIAL AND POLITICAL STANDARDS

We can be assured, then, that the Chinese people are not weak morally, mentally, or physically; but how about their social or political abilities? The social and political standards are determined by history and tradition rather than anything else. They are the results of the tastes and dreams of the people. So if a people changes its tastes and dreams, the social and political standards are changed accordingly. Judging the present Chinese society and government by western standards, they do not measure up very well, but one must know that the Chinese for forty centuries have had and will have forever their peculiar tastes and dreams. They must be judged by that standard. The Chinese are now undergoing a transitional period; they are trying to

adapt themselves to the best arts of the western civilization according to their own ways and conditions. America took more than half a century to develop a strong central government, and "Rome was not built in a day." But despite all the difficulties the Chinese people have had to face, their social and political progress during the last decade has perhaps not been duplicated anywhere at any time. As mentioned above, history is the best measure to ascertain the hereditary ability of a people; is there any place since man has kept his record, where he has had a longer and more peaceful and prosperous life than in China?

The reader might now ask, since so much has been said about the good points of the Chinese heredity, "why don't you tell *why* it is so?" This question may be answered briefly by the following:

(1) The modern Chinese are derived from the mixing of many highly endowed tribes.

(2) In an over-populated country like China natural selection in the form of diseases and famines has been very severe.

(3) There are many Chinese religions or customs which are eugenic, such as ancestor worship, large family system, early marriage, etc.

(4) There is a predominant rural population—85 percent according to the best available statistics—and the farm is the best habitat for human beings.

The Chinese are, therefore, justified in being proud of their heredity. They have led civilization in the past, and they will contribute much in the future. What they need is self-confidence, and recognition of their good heredity by others. They should learn all that can be adapted from the western civilization, yet at the same time preserve and develop what is best in their own.