

sian vegetable.'"<sup>1</sup> There is, however, another side to the case. In all probability, as shown by A. DE CANDOLLE,<sup>2</sup> it was Persia where the spinach was first raised as a vegetable; but the date given by him, "from the time of the Graeco-Roman civilization," is far too early.<sup>3</sup> A. de Candolle's statement that the Arabs did not carry the plant to Spain has already been rectified by L. LECLERC;<sup>4</sup> as his work is usually not in the hands of botanists or other students using de Candolle, this may aptly be pointed out here.

According to a treatise on agriculture (*Kitāb el-falāha*) written by Ibn al-Awwām of Spain toward the end of the eleventh century, spinach was cultivated in Spain at that time.<sup>5</sup> Ibn Haddjāj had then even written a special treatise on the cultivation of the vegetable, saying that it was sown at Sevilla in January. From Spain it spread to the rest of Europe. Additional evidence is afforded by the very name of the plant, which is of Persian origin, and was carried by the Arabs to Europe. The Persian designation is *aspanāh*, *aspanāj* or *asfināj*; Arabic *isfenāh* or *isbenāh*. Hence Mediæval Latin *spinachium* or *spinarium*,<sup>6</sup> Spanish

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<sup>1</sup> The outcry of WATERS (Essays on the Chinese Language, p. 347) against the looseness of the term Po-se, and his denunciation of the "Persian vegetable" as "an example of the loose way in which the word is used," are entirely out of place. It is utterly incorrect to say that "they have made it include, beside Persia itself, Syria, Turkey, and the Roman Empire, and sometimes they seem to use it as a sort of general designation for the abode of any barbarian people to the south-west of the Middle Kingdom." Po-se is a good transcription of Pārsa, the native designation of Persia, and strictly refers to Persia and to nought else. When F. P. Smith applied the name *po-ts'ai* to *Convolvulus reptans*, this was one of the numerous confusions and errors to which he fell victim. Likewise is it untrue, as asserted by Watters, that the term has been applied even to beet and carrot and other vegetables not indigenous in Persia. As on so many other points, Watters was badly informed on this subject also.

<sup>2</sup> Origin of Cultivated Plants, pp. 98-100.

<sup>3</sup> This conclusion, again, is the immediate outcome of Bretschneider's Chang-kienomania: for A. DE CANDOLLE says, "Bretschneider tells us that the Chinese name signifies 'herb of Persia,' and that Western vegetables were commonly introduced into China a century before the Christian era."

<sup>4</sup> Traité des simples, Vol. I, p. 61.

<sup>5</sup> L. LECLERC, Histoire de la médecine arabe, Vol. II, p. 112. The Arabic work has been translated into French by CLÉMENT-MULLET under the title Ibn al Awwam, le livre de l'agriculture (2 vols., Paris, 1864-67). De Candolle's erroneous theory that "the European cultivation must have come from the East about the fifteenth century," unfortunately still holds sway, and is perpetuated, for instance, in the last edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica.

<sup>6</sup> The earliest occurrence of this term quoted by DU CANGE refers to the year 1351, and is contained in the Transactio inter Abbatem et Monachos Crassenses. Spinach served the Christian monks of Europe as well as the Buddhists of China. O. SCHRADER (Reallexikon, p. 788) asserts that the vegetable is first mentioned by Albertus Magnus (1193-1280) under the name *spinachium*, but he fails to give a