

A. - T H E O R E T I C A L .

1. LITERATURE.

The literature on the making of compost ("synthetic", "Artificial farmyard") manure has in recent years grown to such proportions that it is impossible to summarise more than a fraction of it here. The following discussion will therefore be limited to practical aspects of controlling the fermentation; and on this subject, only some of the more important papers can be mentioned. The subject can be conveniently divided up under several headings.

(1.) Methods of Handling the Material .-

Priority of place should be given to the methods of two workers who have had long experience of the making of compost on a large scale under field conditions, both of them in India. The first is that developed by Howard at Indore, and described by Howard & Wad (1931). This is a very careful method with an elaborate time-table. The technique is different for the dry and wet seasons. During the dry season the material to be composted (various types of straw, etc.) is placed in pits 2ft. deep and measuring 30 x 14 ft. As it is loaded in, it is sprinkled with a slurry made from a little wood ashes, "urine earth" from the cattle-pen, dung, and "fungus material" (half rotted compost) from a previous heap. During the rainy season the pits become flooded and the compost is then made, from similar ingredients, in heaps 2 ft high and 8 ft square. In the case of both heaps and pits the compost is turned on the 16th, 30th, and 60th days from the beginning .