

COTTON

but it was almost unknown, except as a garden plant, until after the Revolutionary War. At the beginning of that conflict General Delagall had thirty acres under cultivation near Savannah, Ga. In 1748 seven bags of cotton-wool were exported to England from Charleston, S. C., valued at £3 11s. 5d. a bag. There were two or three other small shipments afterwards, before the war. At Liverpool eight bags shipped from the United States in 1784 were seized, on the ground that so much cotton could not be produced in the United States. In 1786 the first sea-island cotton was raised, off the coast of Georgia, and its exportation began in 1788 by Alexander Bissell, of St. Simon's Island. The seeds were obtained from the Bahama Islands. The first successful crop of this variety was raised by William Elliott on Hilton Head Island, in 1790. It has always commanded a higher price on account of its being more staple than any other variety. In 1791 the cotton crop in the United States was 2,000,000 lbs. The invention and introduction of the cotton-gin (see WHITNEY, ELI) caused a sudden and enormous increase in the production of cotton. In 1801 the cotton crop in the United States was 48,000,000 lbs., of which 20,000,000 lbs. were exported. The increase in its production was greatly accelerated, and the product of the year ending in June, 1860, on a surface of little less than 11,000 square miles, was over 5,387,000 bales, or over 2,500,000,000 lbs. The value of the cotton crop in 1791 was about \$30,000; of that of 1859-60 over \$220,000,000. The annual production of cotton in the United States was less for several years after 1860. The Civil War interfered with it; but in 1871 it was nearly 4,000,000 bales, or about 1,800,000,000 lbs. In 1890 the total crop amounted to 7,313,726 bales, or 3,218,000,000 lbs. The commercial cotton crop of the year ending Aug. 31, 1900, was in several respects one of the most remarkable in the history of this industry.

Cotton. Mention is made of cotton "planted as an experiment" in the region of the Carolinas so early as 1621, and its limited growth there is noted in 1666. In 1736 it was cultivated in gardens as far north as latitude 36°, on the eastern shore of Maryland. Forty years later it was cultivated on Cape May, N. J.;

more than a century, had held supremacy in this industry, by over 500,000 bales. Another feature of this crop was its total value as compared with that of the preceding year, which was the largest on record; for, although over 2,000,000 bales less, its value was over \$29,000,000 greater. The commercial crop aggregated 9,142,838 commercial bales, valued at \$334,847,868. Of this total value sea-island cotton represented \$5,578,536.

"King Cotton" was a popular personification of the cotton-plant. Its supremacy in commerce and politics was strongly asserted by the politicians of the cotton-growing States when civil war was ripening. "You dare not make war upon cotton; no power on earth dare make war upon it. Cotton is *King!*" said Senator James Hammond, of South Carolina. "Cotton is King!" shouted back the submissive spindles of the North. A Northern poet sang:

Old Cotton will pleasantly reign
When other kings painfully fall,
And ever and ever remain
The mightiest monarch of all."

A Senator from Texas exclaimed on the floor of Congress, "I say, Cotton is King, and he waves his sceptre not only over these thirty-three States, but over the island of Great Britain and over Continental Europe; and there is no crowned head there that does not bend the knee in fealty, and acknowledge allegiance to the monarch." This boasting was caused by the erroneous estimate by the politicians of the money value of the cotton crop compared with the other agricultural products of the United States. It was asserted that it was greater than all the latter combined. The census of 1860 showed that the wheat crop alone exceeded in value the cotton crop by \$57,000,000; and the value of the combined crops of hay and cereals exceeded that of cotton over \$900,000,000. The sovereignty of cotton was tested by the Civil War. At its close a poet wrote:

"*Cotton* and *Corn* were mighty kings,
Who differed, at times, on certain things,
To the country's dire confusion;
Corn was peaceable, mild, and just,
But *Cotton* was fond of saying, 'You must!'
So after he'd boasted, bullied, and cussed,
He got up a revolution.
But in course of time the bubble is bursted,
And *Corn* is King and *Cotton*—is worsted."