

western farmer whether it was supplied directly from corn or its product, pork, so long as he held the monopoly of its production. But genius and Yankee perseverance did not stop here; and the coal mines were explored for more light, and they had just begun to yield it in the shape of kerosene, when the discovery of the oil wells burst upon the wondering west. Camphene, fluid and kerosene from coal were at once extinguished by the floods from the oil wells, and corn that had become the great staple not only for food, but light, had to give place in turn to the new power.

While genius was busy carving out a fortune for this new product, she was not unmindful of the great staple corn, and by new modes of culture and new implements so cheapened its cost that it retained an important place in commercial circles. Of late, in consequence of forcing a double amount of freight on the northern transportation lines, the price of this staple at the west has gone down below the cost of production, while at the seaboard it commands a pretty fair price. Should this state of things continue, corn will cease to be named among the agricultural staples arriving at tide-water from the west. The present price of corn at New York is sixty-two cents, and at Chicago twenty-two, showing a cost of forty cents for freight, at least double the ordinary rates. The average cost of placing corn in the Chicago market from the country stations is nine cents, that is, eight cents for freight, and one cent for selling. The buyer must have three cents for buying, shelling and shipping at the station, which leaves to the farmer just ten cents a bushel, only one-half of its net cost of production, after allowing a fair price for the use of land, fixtures, etc. Now it is nonsense to suppose that farmers will continue to grow corn any great length of time at this rate; in fact but few farmers would have the ability to do it, even if they chose to make the attempt. The re-opening of the southern trade, or the re-opening of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, with increased competition among the northern transportation lines must, at no distant day, bring down these enormous freights to a reasonable standard. It will be seen that a reduction of twenty-five per cent. will have the effect to keep up the supply, but if reduced to twenty cents a bushel, would leave a handsome profit to the western farmer. The ordinary lake freight is five cents a bushel to Buffalo, but last fall it was up to fifteen on an average; all we need ask to leave us the monopoly of corn is the abolition of the extra lake freight. We can see the reason why corn cannot be laid down in New York at less than the present price, and yet pay the parties a fair profit. With twenty-five cents at the country stations for shelled corn, the western farmer would be well satisfied, as that would leave him a round profit; the average freight to Chicago, eight cents, re-shipping, two

cents; to Buffalo, five cents, re-shipping, one cent; to New York, thirteen cents; insurance one cent—total fifty-five cents. As some one must be paid for advancing the money and looking after the shipment and sales we add for that purpose five cents a bushel, a sum ample in all respects. This will make the entire cost at which corn should be laid down in New York sixty cents a bushel of fifty-six pounds. With these facts before him the eastern farmer will know whether or not he can compete with the west in this staple, and meet his brother farmers of the prairie on change in the seaboard cities.

It is generally supposed that the whole of the State of Illinois is a great corn producing country, but such is not the fact. The northern counties seldom produce a surplus over the local demand, being more occupied with the culture of spring wheat and the products of the dairy. The south half of the State as often purchases as sells, and it is the central portion that produces the immense supply that has made the State famous for this great staple. The south part of the State is known as *Egypt*, and is valuable for the grape, the peach, and other fruits that require a long season and a hot sun. The climate corresponds with that of at least four degrees of latitude further south on the Atlantic slope, or equal to that of the Carolinas, north of Columbia, South Carolina, though from its inland position, subject to more sudden changes of weather. In the more southern portion of this section, the winter wheat harvest commences the 25th of May. It is therefore strictly within the cotton growing region, and extensive preparations are being made to try the effect of free labor with this crop. A large portion of the inhabitants are more or less familiar with its culture, and we have no doubt of its success. The great error with people settling in that part of the State, has been their ignoring the idea of the low summer latitude, that is so marked a feature in the climate. The general elevation of the country is three to six hundred feet above the level of the sea, and on the whole possessing a climate soft and delicious as that of Italy. This part of the State has never been appreciated, because not understood, but now the war, by stimulating the growth of cotton, of tobacco, and of sugar, in the more northern portions of the region adapted to them, will people that part of the State with an industrious and enterprising population.

The lands are among the richest, and as they can be purchased at a low price, we shall expect to see immigration directed to that interesting part of the west. The Germans of Western Texas have proved that cotton can be profitably cultivated with free labor. With these facts before us, we need have no misgivings of the result, when backed with northern industry, northern skill, and northern implements on the rich soil of the basin of *Egypt*.