

specialize their industries should be the aim of those who control our large mills or contemplate the re-organization of existing ones. If all the big tweed and other cloth mills were in the county of Lanark, for example all the big knitting mills in another county, and the carpet mills in another centre, it would be the better for the future of each trade as a sort of hereditary skill is acquired and the problem of expert labor is greatly lessened. This centralization of special industries in certain districts of Great Britain and on the continent of Europe accounts for the remarkable success and prosperity of these manufacturing centres. Those who are promoting large new factories in these lines of trade make a mistake when they allow themselves to be tempted from a recognized centre of their trade to an out of the way village for the sake of a bonus or exemption from taxes. We speak, of course, of large concerns operated on the modern factory system. Small mills depending on local trade, and started to fill a local need, are of course on a different footing.

NEW SOURCES OF COTTON SUPPLY.

When one recalls the memorable cotton famine which marked the progress of the American Civil War, and which caused such deep distress throughout the cotton manufacturing districts of England, one can only wonder why British cotton mill owners have up till now remained so indifferent to the question of cotton cultivation in the British colonies and dependencies, especially when one considers the large area which is undoubtedly suited in a greater or less degree for cotton planting. It is true that cotton growing in India and Egypt has made great strides of recent years, and the latter country will still further increase its cotton fields upon the operation of the great irrigation works, radiating from the new dam on the Nile at Assouan, but vast stretches of lands adapted to cotton in South and Central Africa still lie fallow, and it has remained for the Emperor William of Germany to show Britons how the thing can be done. We mentioned recently how he sent over to Booker T. Washington's Industrial School in Alabama for a few negro students to go out to Togaland with implements and cotton seed to teach the nations how to grow it. It is gratifying to know that such practical demonstrations of what is being done by other nations are now having some effect on those in charge of the agricultural

departments of our own colonies. Good samples of cotton have been produced in Natal, the Transvaal, Uganda, Central Africa, and the West African settlements, British North Borneo and parts of the Australian continent. Sir Alfred Jones has communicated to the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce the fact that the experiments in West Africa have been successful, and anticipates a great future for the African Cotton fields. It is said that the quality of the fibre produced in West Africa excels that of the Indian plant, and that hopes are entertained for the production of a quality quite equal to Egyptian.

The Cotton Growing Association has also, through Mr. Chamberlain's influence, secured the free carriage of cotton on West African railways for two years, as well as the privilege of sending the cotton through shipping companies that will carry the first 1,000 tons in each bottom free of freight charges. A consignment of 26 bales grown in South Africa from seed supplied by the Chamber, has arrived at Liverpool, and been sold for 5½d. per pound, being three farthings higher than middling American. This cotton will be used as a substitute for rough Peruvian for mixing with wool. Some time must elapse before the African cotton fields can rival those of Egypt or America; but it is to be hoped that British and Canadian cotton manufacturers will now realize how important it is to their trade that the next great war in which the United States may engage shall not leave our mills helplessly dependent on the cotton growers of the Southern States. To do so would be to invite a worse calamity than the cotton famine of 1861-5. Sir Alfred Jones wants to grow cotton in the West Indies as well as in Africa, and hopes Lancashire will be weaving Jamaica-grown cotton before very long.

Cotton is like wool in one respect. That is, each country where cotton is grown produces a staple differing more or less in character from any other, so that each class of cotton is found to be particularly adapted to some special line of goods. Thus every new cotton growing area extends the uses of cotton fabrics and their adaptability to special needs in the arts and industries, and it should be to the manufacturers' interest to extend the area of cotton planting to every variety of soil and climate capable of producing it. Hitherto this object has not been appreciated by cotton manufacturers, who have been supinely indifferent to the agricultural end of their business.