

Nebraska, Iowa, Oklahoma, Minnesota, the Dakotas — had been only slightly penetrated. This region, with a rainfall not too abundant and not too scanty, with a cultivable soil extending from eight inches to twenty feet under the ground, with hardly a rock in its whole extent, with scarcely a tree, except where it bordered on the streams, has been pronounced by competent scientists the finest farming country to which man has ever set the plow. Our mineral wealth was likewise lying everywhere ready to the uses of the new generation. The United States now supplies the world with half its copper, but in 1865 it was importing a considerable part of its own supply. It was not till 1859 that the first "oil gusher" of western Pennsylvania opened up an entirely new source of wealth. Though we had the largest coal deposits known to geologists, we were bringing large supplies of this indispensable necessity from Nova Scotia. It has been said that coal and iron are the two mineral products that have chiefly affected modern civilization. Certainly the nations that have made the greatest progress industrially and commercially — England, Germany, America — are the three that possess these minerals in largest amount. From sixty to seventy per cent of all the known