COTTON

but it was almost unknown, except as a
garden plant, until after the Revolution-
ary War. At the beginning of that con-

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 east-
ern 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 $20,000,000 greater. The commercial crop aggregated 9,142,833 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 boast 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."