

THE NATIONAL POLICY.

TRACTS FOR THE TIMES---NUMBER 2.

SUBJECT:

BRITISH FREE TRADE,

HOW IT AFFECTS THE AGRICULTURE AND THE
FOREIGN COMMERCE OF THE UNION.

CONDUCTED BY JOHN WILLIAMS,

EDITOR OF "THE IRON AGE."

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JOHN A. NORTON, BOOKSELLER AND PUBLISHER,
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The following articles, from the pen of HENRY C. CAREY, Esq., LL.D., have been published in THE IRON AGE; but believing their more general circulation at this time may be of utility in removing the very common misapprehension which prevails as to the effect of depending upon a foreign market for the breadstuffs we produce, I have printed them in the present form.

I commend their study to every man who would understand the inevitable consequences which must result from a persistence in the present unwise policy advocated by the champions of British Free Trade amongst us. The letter of Mr. Langley, which is also printed, contains facts which are very significant in this connection.

JOHN WILLIAMS,

Editor THE IRON AGE.

BRITISH FREE TRADE.

WHY DO WE IMPORT WHEAT AND WHEATEN FLOUR?

Twenty years since crops abroad were short, causing famine in Ireland, and making great demand on us for supplies of food. As a consequence of this, our exports of "breadstuffs" trebled in a single year, thenineteen millions of the fiscal year 1846 becoming fifty-seven in that of 1847. The then Secretary of the Treasury was Mr. Robert J. Walker, author of the tariff of 1846; under which British free trade had, just before the close of the latter year, become the law of the land. Greatly elated at the increased foreign demand for food, he placed the whole to the credit of his free trade policy, and, at the opening of Congress in December, 1847, furnished that body with an estimate of our foreign commerce in the future, based upon the idea that each and every succeeding year was to exhibit changes similar to the one which had then occurred. The total domestic exports having grown in 1847 from \$101,000,000 to \$150,000,000, those of 1848 were to reach \$222,000,000, and those of 1849 \$329,000,000, the essential part of this extraordinary increase to be in the form of "breadstuffs," with which we were, in his belief, to supply the European world.

Of the time that since has passed, more than ten years were spent under the free trade *regime* established by the author of these predictions. During four of the remaining years we had the highly improved free trade tariff of 1857, under which Southern slave-owners were steadily gaining the predominance which finally prompted them to an effort at independence which led to war. Since then, we have been feeding millions of men engaged in an effort at maintaining the authority of the Union and restoring domestic peace.

Throughout the whole of this long term of years the British free trade system has had a fuller and fairer trial than had here

ever before been given to any other system whatsoever. Throughout the whole of it the inventive faculties of our countrymen have been given towards facilitating extraction of the soil and its transport to distant markets, increase in the number of reaping and threshing machines having kept steady pace with increase in the number of miles of railroad, and in the number and power of engines, each and every step in this direction having been in perfect harmony with the magnificent free trade predictions of 1847. What, however, is the point at which we have now arrived? Have we reached, or even approached, the port towards which the national ship was supposed to be then directed? Has the great foreign demand for food arisen? Had it done so, has there been any growth in our power to meet it? Nothing of the kind. So far the reverse is it, that not only have we now almost wholly lost the great natural market that has in all the past been furnished by the West Indies and South America, but are now dependent on France for supplies of wheat, and likely so to become to an extent greater than now exists. As a consequence of this, flour rises here with a rise in the price of that only commodity, California gold, with which we now pay for foreign food—wheat now commanding here a price that is almost thrice as great as has been that of France for the past three years.

How must it be in the years that are ahead? To obtain an answer to this question we must begin by studying the past. At the date of the prediction above referred to, the average crop of wheat might have been taken at 126,000,000 bushels, giving $5\frac{3}{4}$ per head of the population. In 1860, it was $5\frac{1}{2}$ per head. Last year, that of the loyal States was 148,000,000, and the total probably a little more than 165,000,000, or less than 5 per head. This year, so far as can now be judged, it can scarcely exceed 160,000,000, or $4\frac{1}{2}$ per head; while the actual British consumption is 6 per head. Taking, then, into consideration the present rapid increase of population, it seems to us quite clear that instead of giving "breadstuffs" for iron, we shall be compelled to give gold, and very much of it, too, in exchange for food.

Of the causes of this extraordinary state of things we shall speak in another article.

WHY ARE WE NOW GIVING GOLD FOR WHEAT?

In our last it was shown that whereas twenty years since our average crop of wheat gave $5\frac{3}{4}$ bushels for each individual of our population, it has since been gradually declining in its proportion, until it now stands at little more than 4; and, that to this it is due that not only have all past British free trade predictions in relation to supplying the world with "breadstuffs" been thus falsified, but that we have now become importers instead of exporters of the materials of bread. That our readers may understand the cause of this we give the following facts, from a very valuable work of recent date.*

Kentucky, Missouri, and Tennessee are best adapted to corn, and wheat cannot be regarded as the great staple of any of them. Cotton is the staple of the last, the others being unsurpassed for raising stock, and there being no reason whatsoever why they should give much attention to the wheat culture. North Carolina raises some wheat, but south or southwest of that State, both soil and climate are adverse to its production.

"Indiana, Illinois, and 'the far West,' are," says our author, "pointed to us as the great wheat regions, to which we are to look for wheat to supply the world. The common idea," as he continues, "is that this whole region is peculiarly adapted thereto, but this, like many other popular theories, may not be strictly correct. The prairie soil—the virgin soil of the West—when first broken up generally produces good wheat. But virgin soil will not last; like virgin beauty it becomes old and faded with age. It consists of friable mold, and when by cultivation and exposure to the atmosphere it becomes completely pulverized and then covered with surface water, as much of it frequently is, the frost will heave the wheat out of the ground, and it is winter-killed. If the plants are so fortunate as to escape winter-killing, this friable mold, when dry, is an almost impalpable powder, and the high prairie winds will blow it from the roots of the plants, exposing them to the dry and parching rays of the sun, and then what winter has spared the summer kills."

As a consequence of this it is that we find Solon Robinson, the well-known agricultural editor, telling his readers that wheat is "the most precarious crop in the west;" Mr. Ellsworth, of Indiana, an extensive farmer and able agriculturist, meanwhile writing as follows:

"After a full consideration of the subject, I am satisfied that stock raising, at the West, is much more profitable than raising grain. The profits of wheat appear well in expectation, on paper, but the prospect is blasted by a severe winter—ap-

* *The Wheat Plant*, by J. H. Klippart; Corresponding Secretary of the Ohio Board of Agriculture, Cincinnati, 1860.

pearance of insects—bad weather in harvesting, in threshing, or transporting to market; or last, a fluctuation in the market itself."

Throughout New England "much labor," says our author "may produce small crops, but all, we believe, will agree that it is not, and cannot be, a wheat-producing section."

What then remains? Only the States north of the James and the Ohio, and east of Indiana. Among them stands out most conspicuously Virginia, as possessing advantages for the wheat culture nowhere else exceeded. What has there been the course of affairs is shown in the following extract from a discourse delivered some twelve years since by one of her most distinguished citizens:

"How many of our people do we see disposing of their lands at ruinous prices, and relinquishing their birth-places and friends, to settle themselves in the West; and many not so much from choice as from actual inability to support their families and rear and educate their children out of the produce of their exhausted lands—once fertile, but rendered barren and unproductive by a ruinous system of cultivation."

Maryland and Delaware are exhausted and unproductive, and thus do we find ourselves reduced to Ohio and Pennsylvania, New York and Southern Michigan, in reference to which our author speaks as follows:

"Ohio stands at the head of all the wheat-growing States in the aggregate of her production. Her crop in 1850 was 23 millions of bushels. * * * The geological survey of the State gives the reason, and confirms the statement, that 'a large mixture of clay in the soil is necessary to the perfect growth of wheat,' and that the absence of it from the soil of the prairies of the West would prevent them from ever becoming permanently good wheat-producing sections.

"Thus, the reports of the geological survey of Ohio show the soil to be clayey,' 'clayey loam,' and 'clay sub-soil,' and it produces $16\frac{1}{2}$ bushels to each inhabitant; while Indiana, with a richer soil, produces only $8\frac{1}{2}$ bushels, and Illinois, with a still richer soil, only 7 to each. Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware, as well as New York, were formerly great wheat-producing sections. But many parts of New York, that formerly produced 25 bushels to the acre, do not now average over 5 bushels; and many parts of Maryland, Virginia, and Delaware, that formerly produced abundantly, will not now pay the cost of cultivation. EXHAUSTION is written all over them, in language too plain to be misunderstood.

"Ohio has reached her maximum of wheat production, and, if not retrograding, is at least stationary. [The crop of 1860 was but 15 millions, or little more than half that of 1850.] Thirteen bushels to the acre may be set down as an average production, and this average must continue to grow rapidly less, till, like the exhausted lands of Virginia, her soil will not produce enough to support the cultivator, unless an improved system of husbandry is introduced to increase its fertility. One great source of deterioration in exhausting our soils, has been in the

manufacture of potash, and the exports of it to foreign countries, or to our manufactories. In this way our soil has been robbed of an ingredient without which no plant can mature, and no cereal grain form. As our forests have disappeared, this source of deterioration must be cut off, but a serious injury has been inflicted, which nothing can cure but the refurnishing of the potash to the soil. How it can be done, is the great inquiry for our farmers.

"The export of our flour has been another source of exhaustion to the soil, in taking away from it the phosphate of lime that is necessary to give plumpness to the kernel.

"This exhaustion can be more easily remedied by the application of bone dust. For many years the English farmers have carried on a large traffic in old bones, paying five dollars a ton for them. This has stimulated many to gather them up, and even rob the battle fields of Europe of the bones of their brave defenders, to enrich the wheat fields of England. By this course, the fields of England have been made more productive, while the countries from which the bones are taken have been permanently injured by their loss.

"The English, too, have sent to every island of South America to procure niter, in the form of guano, to fertilize their fields, while the American not only imports little or none, but negligently wastes that which nature forces on them.

"*The idea of skinning the soil of our wheat-growing sections, with a view of abandoning them soon and going West to procure new and fertile wheat land, must itself be abandoned, as we are on the western verge of the permanently good wheat-producing section.*

"Our only resource now is to preserve our wheat lands where they are not exhausted, and to restore them where they are. Under judicious and scientific tillage, the lands of England, that have been under cultivation for hundreds of years, now produce twenty-five bushels to the acre. This is done by a liberal use of lime, plaster, clover, and a judicious rotation of crops. In wheat-raising, this rotation is clover and corn. Peas, beans, turnips, beets and carrots, all furnish a good rotation, and good food for sheep, which are good on wheat land. In fact, the culture of wheat and raising of sheep should go together. *The rotating crops furnish food for the sheep, and the sheep furnish the best of manure for wheat land.* All the manure derived from the sheep should be carefully preserved for enriching their land. It is highly concentrated, and prepares the land for a generous crop of wheat at a small expense. The manuring agent consumes the crop that gives the land rest from wheat culture, and prepares the soil for another crop of wheat."

Such were the facts, and such was the advice given seven years since. Turning back, however, to the Patent Office Report of a few years earlier date, we find the presentation of a state of things almost precisely similar, closing with an estimate by its writer, Dr. Lee, a high agricultural authority, that it "would be improper to estimate *the total annual waste of this country at an amount less than equal to the mineral constituents of 1,500,000,000 bushels of corn.* To suppose," as he continues, "that this state of things can continue, and we as a nation remain prosperous, is simply ridiculous. We have as yet much

virgin soil, and it will be long ere we reap the reward of our present improvidence. It is merely a question of time, and time will solve the problem in a most unmistakable manner. With our earth-butcherly and prodigality, we are each year losing the intrinsic essence of our vitality. Our country has not yet grown feeble from the loss of its life-blood, but the hour is fixed when, if our present system continue, the last throb of the nation's heart will have ceased, and America, Greece and Rome will stand together among the ruins of the past. The question of economy should be, not how much do we annually produce, but how much of our annual production is saved to the soil. Labor employed in robbing the earth of its capital stock of fertilizing matter is worse than labor thrown away. In the latter case, it is a loss to the present generation—in the former, it becomes an inheritance of poverty for our successors. Man is but a tenant of the soil, and he is guilty of a crime when he reduces its value for other tenants who are to come after him."

Almost at the moment when these words were being written, the Finance Minister of the Union was amusing our people with calculations having for their object to prove that an agricultural people we were, and as such must remain, and that if we would but adopt in full the British free trade doctrines, the time would speedily arrive when our annual exports of "breadstuffs" would count by hundreds, if not even thousands, of millions of dollars! Since then we have, with slight exception, been moving steadily in the direction towards which he pointed—inventing machines for facilitating the tearing out of the soil, and making roads for its transportation to the distant market; the result now exhibiting itself in the Agricultural Report for the present month, in which we find it stated that "*the prospect on the first of June was for seventenths of a crop.*" How entirely the facts there presented, in reference to the wheat-producing powers of the Western States, are in accordance with those given by the author of the excellent volume to which we have referred, will be seen by those who read the following extract:

"The total yield of wheat in Ohio and Indiana appears to have suffered most from winter-killing. A prospect for thirty-four per cent. of a crop of winter wheat in Indiana is sufficiently discouraging. An increase of four-tenths of the average growth of spring wheat will afford some relief, and ought to bring up the average

to half a crop. Ohio is reported at four-tenths for winter wheat, with two and a half-tenths more for spring wheat than usual. A very little better prospect for winter wheat than Indiana, and not quite so large an increase of spring wheat will give about the same result—half an average crop.

“Illinois, now our greatest wheat-growing State, promises seven-tenths of a crop of winter wheat. As the spring wheat, which is the main dependence for a crop in portions of the State is nearly as good as usual, at least three-fourths of a crop of that should be expected in that State. In Wisconsin, the winter wheat is reported at six and one-third tenths, with one and three-fourths more spring wheat than usual, which should secure three fourths of an average crop for this State. In Iowa the appearance of winter wheat is nine-tenths; spring, ten and three-fourths tenths; breadth of the latter sown, twelve and one-eighth tenths. This should give at least an average crop for Iowa. In Missouri a prospect for a full crop of winter wheat is reported with one-half tenth or five per cent. more than the usual breadth of spring wheat, looking nearly as well as usual at this season of the year.”

In our next we propose to show how widely different has been the course of affairs in countries whose policy has been to bring consumers and producers nearer together, and thus to make a market on the land for all its products.

WHY FRANCE NOW EXPORTS WHEAT.

Forty years since, under a system of long continued, steady and thoroughly effective protection, France supplied the outer world with silks, cottons, linens, woolens, and other products of her various industries, to the extent of 500,000,000 francs or.....\$100,000,000

Fifteen years since, under the same highly protective system, her exports had reached the amount of.....\$250,000,000

Six years since, under the same system, they had attained the extraordinary height of.....\$400,000,000

Then it was that there was negotiated between England and France a commercial treaty providing for the abrogation of antiquated prohibition and restrictions, and which, therefore, was heralded forth as a British free trade measure. In reality, however, it gave to France a system more intelligently protective than any now existing in any other country of the world; one under which the export of domestic products has already risen to the extraordinary height of nearly.....\$600,000,000

Such having been the result of efficient protection in a country possessing little coal or iron ore, no gold or silver mines, and no cotton fields; one in which schools have been few, armies great, taxes heavy, and population almost stationary; let us now compare it with that which has been obtained in another country in which, in the same period, population has trebled, while schools have been sextupled; one in which coal and iron ore exist to an extent elsewhere entirely unequaled; one that has controlled the cotton commerce of the world; one capable of supplying the world with sheep's wool; and one that possesses the most profitable gold and silver mines the world has ever known; to wit, these United States:

Forty years since our domestic exports had risen to
 nearly.....\$70,000,000
 Ten years later they were..... 100,000,000
 Twenty years since they amounted to..... 150,000,000
 Six years since, in the year before the breaking out
 of the rebellion, they were, exclusive of specie... 300,000,000
 For the fiscal year just now completed they are es-
 timated at a gold value not exceeding..... 260,000,000

Compared with the growth of population, the movement has therefore been as follows:

| | 1825. | 1860. | 1865. |
|-------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| French Exports, per head..... | \$3 | \$11 | \$16 |
| American “ “ | 6 | 9 | 7 |

Under intelligent protection the first have more than quintupled, while under British free trade the second, exclusive of specie, have scarcely at all increased. This is certainly an extraordinary exhibit, but, extraordinary as it is, it is in perfect accordance with the teachings of those eminent men, who, from the days of Hamilton, have sought to teach our people that it was in efficient protection we were to find the real road towards an extensive foreign commerce and real freedom of trade. France has done what Hamilton, Clay, and Jackson urged as proper to be done; and, as a necessary consequence, her export of the products of her soil has grown at a rate more rapid than the world till now has ever known. We have followed in the direction indicated by our British free trade masters, and the result exhibits itself in the fact, that our foreign commerce is this day little more per head than it

had been in the disastrous decade that followed the close of the great wars of the French Revolution.

France imports raw materials, combines them with her own food, and then exports them in a finished form. We export our soil in the various forms of potash, cotton, pork, and wheat, and then re-import them in a finished form. The first is always importing manure, while the second is always exporting it. The results of these different modes of operation exhibit themselves in the fact that France, with a stationary population and limited territory, has, in half a century, carried up her wheat crop from one hundred and fifty to three hundred millions of bushels—from less than five bushels per head to fully eight; whilst we, with a territory unlimited and a population rapidly growing in numbers and intelligence, have passed downwards from nearly six bushels per head in 1846 to little more than four in 1866.

At the present moment wheat so abounds in France that prices are lower than have almost ever before been known, and there exists an agricultural crisis. Referring thereto, and endeavoring to console the farmers in their troubles, the *Journal des Economistes*, the most radical free trade journal in Europe, speaks as follows :

“That which, above all, agriculture claims is the multiplication of markets, its greatest need being that of a non agricultural population. The prosperity of that of Britain is almost wholly due to the great part that manufactures there perform. What is it that presents itself to view in our poorest provinces? A people thinly scattered and almost entirely rural; not working within reach of a market; consuming on the spot their own local productions; with few or no towns, no industry, and no commerce beyond that which is strictly necessary for satisfying the limited wants of their inhabitants. There, the poor proprietor divides the produce with miserable tenants, the inevitable result of agriculture without a market. Our manufacturing departments, on the other hand, are by far the best cultivated, and for that reason the most productive. There, our agriculture has proved her ability to realize by other means, but in an equal degree, the wonders of English husbandry. *Wherever a large centre of consumption is formed the neighboring farmers are the first to profit by it. This law is infallible, and allows of no exception; and thus is explained the enormous value of land near to the great cities of the world.* In proportion as markets are defective, agriculture is compelled to feed, in some sort on itself; the division of labor, or the adaption of culture to the soil, being thus forbidden, it then labors not for profit, but merely to live, and must content itself with wheat, rye, or some other cereal, at any price, let the result be what it may, ruinous as is this course of proceeding, the farmer has no choice. New markets being opened, a new state of things arises—production, in view of profit, of commodities to suit the market. Agriculture then changes its character; it is transformed, and becomes itself industrial.”

“The real reason for decline in the price of wheat is not” says the journalist in continuation, “difficult to discover; it is simply the excess of its production. Within half a century agriculture has made immense progress, and most especially within the last fifteen years. To-day it turns against itself, improvement in the cultivation of corn lands by better rotation, manuring and subsoil plowing—conversion of silicious land, formerly devoted to rye, to the production of wheat—improvement

of lands—clearing of forests—extension of drainage and liming—having, one and all, borne their fruits. The production of wheat has doubled in half a century, increasing from an annual average of fifty millions of hectolitres (22 gals.) to that of one hundred millions. Not only has agriculture become more productive, but it has also largely gained in security. The frequency of high prices formerly was due to bad cultivation; climacteric conditions in our day exert less influence on the yield. The harvest of 1863 was 111,274,000 hectolitres, more than double that of 1820, notwithstanding a season in many respects less favorable.”

France protects her farmers by making a market in the land for each and all of its almost infinite variety of products. As a consequence *she exports*, in the various forms of silks and satins, cottons and woollens, paper, perfumery, chemicals, flour, locomotives, &c., &c., *food alone to an amount greater than that of our total commerce with the outside world.* Receiving in exchange the gold of California and Australia, she maintains a special circulation, while exhibiting her independence of British movements by keeping the rate of interest at less than half of that demanded by the Bank of England.

We, on the contrary, compel our farmers to dependence on poor and distant markets, and to destruction of the powers of the soil they need to cultivate. As a consequence, we import both cloth and iron, and have no wheat to sell. The daily increasing adverse balance is settled for with bonds whose interest must be paid in gold. Owners of the most productive mines in the world, we use paper because of inability to command the services of the precious metals. The Western farmer borrows money at a rate of interest thrice greater than that paid by his French competitor, and then mortgages his farm to his British free trade masters as security for the price of rails required for enabling him still more rapidly to destroy the powers of the soil. Those rails are laid over land that abounds in coal and ore, the conversion of which into rails and castings would, by giving him a market, quadruple the value of his farm. In default of that market his land is sold by the sheriff, he himself, meanwhile, going to the polls to vote, perhaps, a copperhead British free trade ticket.

With a territory of very small extent, and wholly destitute of natural advantages, France, by means of the protection accorded to her farmers, is enabled, through her *Credit Mobilier*, to grant aid to railroads throughout Europe, and now to extend her operations in that direction to some of those among ourselves. With a territory ten times larger, and twenty times more abounding in the natural elements of wealth, the people of these United States exhibit themselves throughout the civilized world as beggars for the aid required for enabling them to purchase the iron required for giving them new facilities for distributing, in the forms of corn, cotton, and tobacco, their soil among the civilized communities of Europe. We are, nevertheless, accustomed freely to boast the universal intelligence of our people!

THE SUPPLY OF BREADSTUFFS.

[The following letter by Mr. W. H. Langley, an extensive miller of Gallipolis, under date of June 10th, 1866, will be read with deep interest by those who are considering the serious subject of our prospective supply of breadstuffs. The writer states:

Let us examine how our supply will stand for the coming year. The Agricultural Bureau at Washington, in its report for November, 1865, says the crop of wheat for the year

| | |
|--|-------------|
| 1863 was..... | 179,404,036 |
| 1864 was..... | 160,695,823 |
| 1865 was..... | 148,522,829 |
| From the last deduct for deficiency in quality | 14,068,694 |

Net crop in 1865.....134,454,135

On hand of crop of 1864, at harvest time,

| | |
|------------|------------|
| 1865 | 26,241,698 |
|------------|------------|

| | |
|------------------|-------------|
| Total, 1865..... | 160,695,833 |
|------------------|-------------|

Now this is the quantity we should have had on hand last year at harvest, and, from all the information I have been able to get, I am well satisfied that the whole of it will be exhausted before any of the new crop will be in market. I was fully convinced at harvest last year that we had a very short supply of breadstuffs to last us through the ensuing year, and on several occasions through last fall and winter wrote to my friends in the Eastern cities, saying that, if gold declined to par, it could have but a temporary effect on breadstuffs, that is, wheat flour, and claimed that the supply in the country was so small that we had none to spare for export, and that prices must continue to advance until it reached a point that would admit of importation from foreign countries, or until we raised another and a better crop than for the last two years. Being engaged in the manufacture of flour, principally for shipment to the eastern cities, and the crop of 1865 around us being almost a total failure, and not much better for 1864, we either had to go from home to buy wheat, or let our mill stand. The latter we did not wish to do, as we had established a good and large trade for our brands of flours, in the eastern cities, and did not like to lose it, and knowing that our brands would always command the best price going, and believing that owing to much of the wheat in the country being poor, light, damaged, and unsound, if we could succeed in getting high grades of old wheat, of the crop of 1864, to keep running; we could make money, for we thought such grades as it would make must be higher relatively than other grades. And in pursuance of this belief we went into the Cincinnati market, and for the last six months or more I think we have bought full three-fourths

or more, of all the choice old red and white wheat that came into that market, and, until recently, succeeded in getting enough of such to keep our wheels in motion about three-fourths of the time. More recently, finding that old winter wheat has become very scarce, especially for choice grades, we have turned our attention to Minnesota spring wheat, extra and choice quality, and have bought from 60,000 to 70,000 bushels of it, which we are now making into a very nice flour of choice quality, for spring-wheat flour. Thus far the result of the venture has been far more favorable than we anticipated, and, while there are a dozen of mills along the river, from Pittsburgh to Louisville, I do not know of one that has been so constantly in motion as ours, or that has done more than a local trade. Owing to the high price of wheat, the difficulty of keeping up a supply, and the relative lower price for common and medium grades of flour east, millers would not take the risk of buying wheat and making flour for shipment east. Many of them preferred letting their mills stand, while others ran just so much of the time as was necessary to supply the local demand. Being thus engaged in the business, we have fully understood the necessity of being correctly and fully advised of the state of the stocks in the country, and of the prospects for a supply from the growing crops, and have made it my business, since last harvest, to get all information on the subject possible; and principally with that object in view have made eight trips from this point to the eastern cities in that time—each trip from here down the river to Cincinnati, remaining there from one to six days each trip—while there picking up all information I could get. From there passing up through the central part of the State to Pittsburgh, embracing all opportunities that presented themselves to gather information as to stocks in the country, prospects for growing crops, &c., returning sometimes by the same route, and sometimes *via* Baltimore, through Delaware and Maryland, to Wheeling or Parkersburgh, then by the river home, thus having an opportunity of seeing and hearing from much wheat-growing territory. Have just returned from one of those trips east, and after posting up all information collected, and from my own observation, I arrive at the following conclusion:

1. That the stock of wheat and flour in the country is so nearly exhausted that it cannot last longer than new wheat makes its appearance, if that long.
2. That the States of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Tennessee, and Georgia, will not, under any circumstances, have over one-third of an average crop, and even that is yet subject to many casualties between this and harvest. What New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, lower part of Illinois and Eastern Pennsylvania will have in excess of this quantity, will be far more than lost in the balance of the dis-

tricts named. The quantity under one-third of an average crop in the State of Ohio alone will be far greater than the excess over one-third named in the districts above. This county will not produce half as much as the seed sown, so say many of our best farmers. A large portion of the farmers throughout the Western States are now buying their bread, a thing they were never known to do before; but they did not raise enough last year to seed and to bread them until this harvest, and I know some who have already commenced buying wheat and flour for next year's supply, and have had applications from some farmers for seed for next fall's sowing, saying there would not be half enough in this county for seed next fall, to say nothing about bread. It is too early yet to make any reliable calculations about the growing spring wheat crop, which, owing to late heavy frosts and other causes, was later in sowing than usual. Though, from the information I have, there has been more than the usual quantity of spring wheat sown, much of the ground sown in fall and winter wheat having, after the failure of that, been plowed up and spring wheat sown on it. The average of the spring wheat crop of 1865, I believe, is considered to have been a very good one, and will not probably be any better, if as good, this year. It has certainly not had as favorable a start as last season. Last year it was sown early, this year very late, some of it as late as the 10th of May. The agricultural report from Washington for February, 1865, gives the crop for the following States for 1864 as follows:

| States. | Bushels. |
|--|-------------|
| New Jersey | 1,582,113 |
| Pennsylvania..... | 12,523,404 |
| Maryland..... | 6,487,946 |
| Delaware..... | 1,054,916 |
| Kentucky..... | 3,882,275 |
| Ohio..... | 20,407,503 |
| Indiana..... | 22,321,376 |
| Illinois..... | 33,371,173 |
| Wisconsin..... | 14,168,317 |
| <hr/> | |
| Total crop for 1864..... | 115,799,071 |
| In the nine State named above deduct estimated crop for this year..... | 38,599,690 |
| <hr/> | |
| Estimated deficiency in the nine States this year, as compared with the year 1864..... | 77,199,381 |
| Now, as shown above, or is claimed by the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce, the crop of 1864 was con- sidered an average crop, which was, as reported by | |

Commissioner Newton.....160,695,823

And as shown above was the quantity we should have had on hand last harvest, for the consumption of the current year, which I claim will be exhausted before the new crop is ready for market. Deduct from this average crop the deficiency this year, estimated for the nine States above named..... 77,199,389

83,496,434

Giving us for the use of the country for the next year, 83,496,434 bushels against 160,695,223 bushels consumed in the current year, or the coming crop deficient in wheat and flour for the consumption of the next year, 77,199,389 bushels. Where is that deficiency to come from? Can Europe supply it? I think not; for if my information is correct, several of the countries of Europe produced less than an average crop of wheat last year, and I have not heard of any large surplus in any country in Europe. Much of their crop of last year was, like our own, very inferior in quality, and secured in bad condition. I know many will say if we had not wheat enough for the consumption of this country, we must eat corn. I would say to those that thousands of the citizens of the West have been using corn bread for months past that never used it to any considerable extent before, and that there are thousands in the West that have not had as much as a pound of flour in their houses for some weeks past. This increased consumption of corn and also potatoes is beginning to tell on the price of these articles throughout the West. Potatoes are very high at all points, and corn is advancing in most of the corn-producing sections of the West. I am told that in the interior of this county corn suitable for bread is selling freely at \$1 per bushel, and is becoming very scarce. Along the rivers and large creeks, where the great surplus of corn is produced, the price has advanced within thirty to forty days 25 to 33 per cent., becoming scarce at many points, and still advancing, and the fact of such high prices for wheat and flour at present, and in prospect, must have the effect of driving thousands to the use of anything that will answer as a substitute for flour, and as a natural consequence must greatly enhance the value of all such articles of food. * * * Since commencing the above I have received several items of information that fully sustain my opinion of short supplies and the deficiency in growing crops.