DAWN of the COTTON CENTURY

BY DANIEL J. SULLY

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IN ALL discussions regarding cotton two facts are paramount; first, that cotton controls the world; and second that the nations that reap a prodigal harvest from the sale of cotton goods depend upon America for the raw supply.

The American people have begun to realize the significance in the fact that alien nations that never saw a cotton plant have long since entered the kingdom of Cotton and now divide dominion among themselves, excluding the United States—the country in which the cotton is grown.

The reign of cotton is forever. As long as the race survives cotton goods will be worn in multiplying forms, but the countries that now sell the finished products of cotton to the world have no assurance of permanence in that trade. America's ultimate control in the cotton world is inevitable. Our manifest destiny as a world trader in cotton goods looms as a menace across the horizon of European states. America's future in this fabric has awakened the statesmen of all countries save our own. The wealth and progress of the United States are enduringly interwoven with the coming civilization of all cotton-consuming continents. The home for the dynasty of cotton is in the land of Dixie, not in London and Liverpool.

Knowing our latent power, we can afford to look candidly at some contemporary facts. They are not flattering to our national pride. They reveal a world of opportunity passed by.

If we turn aside for a moment from the paradox and irony or spinners in Lancashire St. Gall or Chemnitz, 3,000 miles and more from a cotton field, turning out finished cotton garments for many peoples, including some of the Americans who grew the raw material, we can admire the value of cotton goods massed in the great world movements of trade. From the factories of Europe and Japan countless ships carry increasing cargoes of cotton fabrics to every civilized port. Goods woven of this staple constitute a vast proportion of the merchandise hauled by train across all continents, and where modern methods of transportation pause primitive and picturesque carriers take up the burden of the world's cotton output and trudge with these goods to eager customers along the most remote frontiers. Cotton cloth paves the way for Christianity in the jungles of the Dark Continent; to the savages of the Congo cotton cloth is more precious than ivory or gold. Under the midnight sun arctic dogs drag sleds laden with cotton goods. The condor and the eagle look down wonderingly upon pack trains carrying the product of European cotton mills across the Andes. The yak goes burdened with cotton goods into Tibet. Godowns along Chinese streams are stored with cotton goods awaiting shipment, and to the upper reaches of the Yang-tse and Hoang-ho the native Chinese trader on his junk carries cotton cloths and garments to interior tribes. Burros laden with cotton goods from England and Germany pick their way across the mountains of Mexico. The elephants of India and the camels of the Levant and Egypt carry cotton goods.

And the unique and almost unbelievable fact is that this incredible volume of traffic in cotton goods is engineered by countries that do not and cannot raise the raw supply. The energy and ambition of Europe and Japan are pledged to transporting cotton goods to the remotest door, but America, which furnishes the unmanufactured product and makes possible the commercial invasion of the world, has little share in the profit from that conquest.

The contest among the powers to-day is for trade and cotton in some form is the chief commodity carried. As never before in history, the ships that cross and recross the sea "are weaving the warp and the woof of the world's civilization." The ships of western Europe go forth laden with cotton goods. England leads in the mighty world traffic. That kingdom has had the far-seeing wisdom to provide cheap transportation between the factories of England and the consuming countries. And Germany's wonderful rise to rivalry is due to the clear vision that sees the future of its empire on the sea. The new successes of Japan are founded upon the multiplying exports from its cotton mills. The Sunrise Kingdom is actually selling abroad more cotton goods than silk, and hitherto silk has been commercially supreme in the far east. In fact, cotton goods constitute the most important factor in the commerce of every great country except America.

There is portent of great and revolutionary changes in the world's trade in cotton goods. It is inconceivable that other nations can go on at the expense of America, winning trade triumphs with a commodity which they do not naturally possess, which they cannot obtain in sufficient quantities outside of the United States, and which they could not manufacture at a profit but for the fact that we sell the product near and, at times, even below the cost of raising it. There is no logical reason why the United States should sell Europe only $4,000,000 worth of finished cotton goods a year while that part of the world exports to us more than $50,000,000 worth. And there is no logical reason why it should continue to be possible and profitable for a little half-frozen country on the roof of Europe to reach out to America, purchase hundreds of thousands of bales of cotton, and, after carrying them across the Atlantic, ship them back to the United States in finished form and in quantities amounting in value to $15,000,000 in a year.

We have been unjustifiably jubilant regarding our foreign trade. We do sell abroad enormous quantities of goods and materials, but in respect to cotton it is largely the raw product, on which there is little profit. Alone of all the industrial nations the United States is not an important factor in the sale of cotton goods to mankind. For instance, of the international demand for cotton yarns we supply less than one-third of one per cent.

Here is the record, up to the date of writing, disclosing America's unsuccess as an international trader in cotton goods:

IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF COTTON GOODS FOR THE TEN MONTHS ENDING OCTOBER, 1908.

Imports of Cotton Cloths, Dyed, Unbleached, Painted, Etc.

From	
England	$5,705,453
France	517,047
Germany	329,819
Switzerland	297,360
Other Europe	228,818
Japan	80,526
Other countries	1,297
Total	$7,160,320

WHERE COTTON THREAD COMES FROM—THE GREAT COATS MILLS SCOTLAND

A JAPANESE COTTON SPINNER

Imports of Cotton Clothing (Knit Goods).

From	
England	$ 92,939
France	193,610
Germany	5,732,330
Switzerland	229,825
Other countries	28,320
Other clothing	3,007,658
Total	$9,284,652

Imports of Laces, Edgings, Embroideries, Insertions, Trimmings, Lace Curtains, Etc.

From	
England	$ 4,607,791
Belgium	196,959
France	5,745,798
Germany	3,008,967
Switzerland	8,526,309
Other Europe	154,017
Asia and Oceanica	159,085
Other countries	24,581
Plushes, thread, etc	5,918,400
Total	$28,341,907
Total imports	$44,786,879

Exports of Cotton Goods, Dyed, Unbleached, Painted, Etc.

To	
England	$ 398,475
Germany	3,847
Turkey	112,165
Other Europe	62,684
British North America	463,780
Central America	1,349,332
Mexico	143,956
Argentina	107,982
Chinese Empire	4,028,650
Other countries	7,606,617
Total	$14,277,488

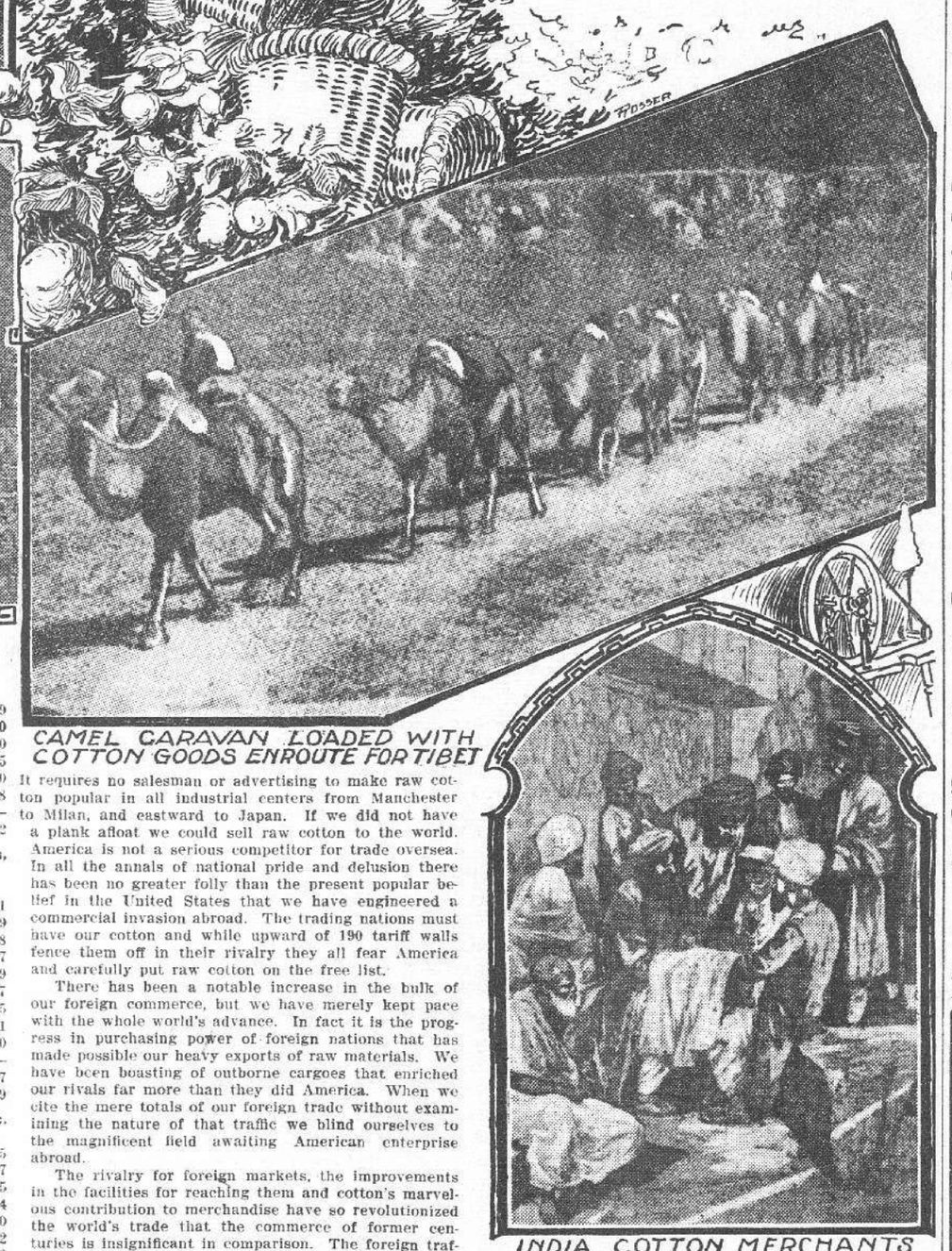
Exports of Clothing.

Knit goods	$ 1,095,781
All other	2,246,120
Cotton waste	2,164,347
Yarn	405,691
All other	2,434,381
Total	$ 8,346,320
Total exports	$22,623,808

An analysis of this trade in cotton goods reveals that of our exports more than $6,000,000 worth consists of unbleached cloths, while of our imports more than $22,000,000 worth consists of finer fabrics, including embroideries, laces and curtains. Altogether the figures show that while we exported in the 10 months ending with October, 1908, $22,000,000 worth of the output of our cotton mills, the nations sold to us almost 100 per cent. more than we sold to them.

It is a grotesque and almost unbelievable item in the commerce of this age that a resourceful nation like America, the producer of the world's cotton, should buy back two dollars' worth of cotton goods for every dollar's worth it ships abroad.

When our competitors buy from us eight or nine million bales of unmanufactured cotton, it is a mark of their enterprise, not of ours. The greater part of our foreign trade is the result of suction from abroad, not of propulsion from America. The need of the nations is for our raw cotton and they send their ships to get it. If we were aborigines and raised cotton we could sell it.



CAMEL CARAVAN LOADED WITH COTTON GOODS ENROUTE FOR TIBET

It requires no salesman or advertising to make raw cotton popular in all industrial centers from Manchester to Milan, and eastward to Japan. If we did not have a plank afloat we could sell raw cotton to the world. America is not a serious competitor for trade oversea. In all the annals of national pride and delusion there has been no greater folly than the present popular belief in the United States that we have engineered a commercial invasion abroad. The trading nations must have our cotton and while upward of 190 tariff walls fence them off in their rivalry they all fear America and carefully put raw cotton on the free list.

There has been a notable increase in the bulk of our foreign commerce, but we have merely kept pace with the whole world's advance. In fact it is the progress in purchasing power of foreign nations that has made possible our heavy exports of raw materials. We have been boasting of outborne cargoes that enriched our rivals far more than they did America. When we cite the mere totals of our foreign trade without examining the nature of that traffic we blind ourselves to the magnificent field awaiting American enterprise abroad.

The rivalry for foreign markets, the improvements in the facilities for reaching them and cotton's marvelous contribution to merchandise have so revolutionized the world's trade that the commerce of former centuries is insignificant in comparison. The foreign traffic of any of the leading industrial nations to-day exceeds in volume and value the total foreign trade of all countries combined a hundred years ago! The annual external trade of even so diminutive a country as the Netherlands exceeds the billion-dollar mark. And this astounding increase in the trade of nations, creating virtually a new earth, is due in large measure to the volume of cotton manufacture and the world-wide sale of cotton goods. We fail to keep in mind that in that world traffic America does not share. We have been boasting of mere bulk—boasting while we have been sending to industrial Europe the raw supply without which it could not compete with America for a year.

Gladstone estimated that the wealth accumulated by the nations during the first 50 years of the nineteenth century equaled all that had been stored up by mankind in the preceding 1800 years, and that their multiplying fortunes between 1850 and 1870 duplicated the record of the foregoing fifty. So that in those 70 years the increase of the world's wealth exceeded by 100 per cent. the piled-up treasures of all lands in all the preceding centuries since the birth of Christ. And the accumulations since 1870 are literally beyond compute.

Such a world with its consuming power is the market that confronts America, the country that alone possesses the commodity indispensable to the nations. Thus far we have neglected our stewardship. During the last fiscal year we sold to the old world only a little over $4,000,000 worth of finished cotton goods. Our best customer in that part of the world was the United Kingdom, which bought from us $1,853,984 worth. But while we were growing foolishly proud over that, England was selling us $23,165,392 worth of cotton goods spun of our material. The itemized columns, placed side by side, are a reproach to resourceful America. Here is the record, preserved by our bureau of statistics:

Exports of Cotton Goods from England to U. S.		Exports of Cotton Goods from the U. S. to England.	
Waste	$ 194,225	Waste	$ 479,351
Unbleached	214,031	Bleached	10,962
Dyed, etc.	10,072,089	Dyed, etc.	36,953
Clothing	204,746	Clothing	989,454
Knit goods	114,489	Yarn	13,835
Curtains,	6,859,918	All other	323,429
Plushes	635,065		
Thread and yarns	3,003,002	Total	$1,853,984
All other	1,867,827		
Total	$23,165,392		

Such is the inglorious story of our traffic with our greatest European customer. And England is adding to its cotton spindles at the rate of more than 200,000 every 30 days! In the last 12 months this increase in the United Kingdom was 2,765,000. And every new mill and every new spindle in England is erected with the confidence that the raw cotton can be obtained from the American planter at prices which beggar him.

King Cotton on a British Throne.

Cotton is the world's king, but it sits on a British throne!

Last year we exported a little over 200,000,000 yards of piece goods, valued at $15,000,000, but at the same time the United Kingdom was selling abroad more than

INDIA COTTON MERCHANTS

6,000,000,000 yards, valued at more than $400,000,000!

If you confront the ordinary jubilant statistician with the cold analysis of our unsuccess abroad the rejoinder is apt to be that, after all, America for many years has had a "favorable balance of trade." In a recent optimistic review of America's foreign commerce it is set forth with much elation that the excess of exports over imports in the past fiscal year amounted in value to $446,000,000. But to get those figures we had to count in $482,000,000 worth of raw cotton shipped abroad; and if we cross out raw cotton from the record our foreign commerce reveals an export trade considerably less than our import, and as unmanufactured cotton is sold abroad through no enterprise on the part of America, but is rather a traffic resulting from our neglect of our opportunity, there is nothing in the mere totals of our foreign traffic to warrant the complacency of our statesmen.

There was a time when Yankee packets carried American wares around the world, but we have abandoned our ships and they have all but vanished from the seas. The federal hand has been busy building breakwaters, scooping out harbors and deepening waterways. Now we are cutting a channel through the hemisphere. Conscious of our strength and in the presence of bewildering achievements at home, we find it difficult to realize that our dominion pauses at the shores of our seas. The decline of our merchant marine from the days of our great achievements is not the result of any decrease in our national vigor. The energy and genius of the American people have simply been withdrawn from the sea. We have expended our ingenuity and strength and riches in exploiting the continent, or at least the northern and western part of it, with the result that we have developed between the two great oceans the most successful industrial nation the world has known.

JOCKEYS AND ODD MASCOTS

One Boy Carries Piebald Rat and Another a Prayer Book in Riding Jacket.

"I knew I should ride a winner this afternoon," said J. Plant, the well-known jockey, after he had steered Arranmore, an outsider, first past the winning post in the race for the Great Tom Plate at Lincoln a few days ago. "I bought a piebald rat this morning for sixpence and regard the animal as an emblem of good luck. I have christened it Arranmore, and it will accompany me wherever I may be riding."

Plant is by no means the only jockey who is superstitious. As a matter of fact, most jockeys carry talismans in one form or another. These range from bits of straw and horseskin, acquired in some curious manner, to jeweled whips and diamond pins presented by owners.

A certain Newmarket stable apprentice who has ridden several winners this year never rides without holding in his mouth a piece of straw, about three inches long, which he found while in the stable one day on the back of the first horse he was asked to ride in a race. For some unaccountable reason he regarded the piece of straw as an omen of good luck, more particularly after he won that first race.

Bits of skin of famous racehorses of the past are very much prized by superstitious jockeys, who would as soon think of riding without a saddle as without this peculiar talisman. If a bit of skin cannot be obtained the jockey contents himself with a few of the hairs out of a famous racehorse's tail.

One well-known jockey was in the habit—and so far as the writer is aware he continues the habit to-day—of carrying a small prayer book in his riding jacket. Quite a romantic story is attached to this mascot. It was sent to the jockey by an old lady who, requiring a certain sum of money to aid her daughter and not knowing where to get it, had the idea of backing the horse ridden by this jockey.

She got a friend to make the bet, and, the horse winning, she obtained all the money she required. Two or three days later the jockey received the little prayer book, with a note explaining the circumstances and saying it was the old lady's first and last bet. She would never forget the jockey, and asked him to accept the prayer book as an emblem of good luck. "And," said the jockey some time ago, "I firmly believe it has been my good talisman, for I have been wonderfully successful since I received it."—Tit-Bits.

Age of Trees.

The pine reaches a maximum age of 700 years; the silver fir, 425; the larch, 275; the red beech, 245; the aspen, 210; the birch, 200; the ash, 170; the elder, 145, and the elm, 130.

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