

**PINK AND PURPLE.**

Pink and purple, arching over  
Meadow-slopes thick set with clover  
Pink and purple and blue together—  
O the perfect summer weather!  
O the corn, with green leaves gleaming  
O the roses deep in drooping  
Wherefore, darling, do you hurry?  
Come and bind the spell of fairy!

Pink and purple dimly fading,  
Fainter colors intermingling—  
Hill in dusk, the insect chorus,  
Till that night is falling over us,  
In the east a star is burning—  
Signal, dear, of the retreating;  
And the baby's eyes are weary  
Come and bind the spell of fairy!

Pink and purple gone together,  
O the perfect summer weather!  
O the dark blue, arching over  
Meadow-slopes, thick set with clover!  
O the careless insect-drooping!  
O the tender baby-crooning!  
And the love that does not hurry,  
Making all a world of fairy.  
From THE ATLANTIC FOR AUGUST.

**COAL IN NEBRASKA.**

**Distribution of Coal in the Northwestern States and Territories.**

A lecture delivered before the State Normal Institute of Nebraska at Crete, Tuesday evening July 21, 1874 by Prof. C. D. WILBER, Inspector of Mining Lands.

"Food and fuel are articles of first importance in national as well as domestic economy. Food sustains animal life and keeps the vital machinery in motion.

Fuel is our defense against the rigors of winter and gives us power to become citizens of all climates.

In domestic economy fuel makes the home possible, and while food enables us to maintain our natural forces and energies fuel enlarges their sphere of action. With a torch, man may go where he pleases.

We consume fuel and the result is an amount of heat, definite and fixed for each kind of fuel used.

We consume food and the result is strength, which also bears an exact ratio to the kind or class of food.

The production and preparation of these articles compel the constant labor of all civilized nations, and their cost is a large portion of the price we pay as a ransom from barbarism.

In the conservation of forces it has been shown that in the uses of both food and fuel, combustion and consumption are identical, that in either case heat, simply and only, is generated, in the former instance to propel the human and in the latter, the artificial machine.

In both, fuel and food, Carbon is the chief element—the constant quantity, and while we have a vast range as to the forms of Carbon, animal or vegetable which may be most useful, we have for the last 50 years settled the question that the most valuable form of Carbon is coal.

Coal is the most valuable of all the kinds of fuel because it contains the greatest amount of heat in the smallest space. It is found in nature ready made, kindles at a touch and yields its wonderful treasures of heat without cost.

In our day the extraordinary value of coal as fuel has been reached from its cheap and instant power to generate steam which is now doing or performing the general drudgery of mankind. It is estimated that the aggregate power of steam engines now in use sustained by coal in all countries is equal to the combined muscular energies of 1,000,000,000 of men or that the present activity of steam is equal to the muscular strength of the entire human race, who are entirely willing to have King Coal furnish this all potent energy of steam to form and fashion, spin and weave, dig down mountains, fill up valleys, cook our food, do the washing, carry us abroad around the world and bring us safe home again, in short, do anything except voting.

The distribution of coal is therefore a subject of the greatest importance in any inventory of Materials on which to base our national prosperity, and consequently we find that there is more active search now made for coal in the various countries of the globe than for gold, silver or precious stones.

We read that Solomon, who knew nothing, challenged nature to reveal to him the true wisdom or riches. He said, "What is true wisdom to be found? It is not in gold, nor in silver, nor in precious stones, nor in any of our day's miracles, but in the manifold uses of coal." Solomon would have said that the wisdom of the Creator can not anywhere be so clearly seen as in the adaptation of the thousand uses of coal to the wants of man.

Its gradations of heat are so nicely graduated that its least service renders "December as pleasant as May." Upon further enquiry it reduces the heat to a fluid state. At 4000° Fahrenheit, the melting point of Iron is reached. In the Argand burner coal gas 11000° Fahrenheit is at hand which subdues nearly all earth and gives man dominion over the mineral kingdom.

Therefore King—crowned with the common consent of every nation in history. It turns night into day for all our cities, so that there is light except of our choice. All our streets are guided with it and every dwelling has an efficient beauty within which disappears with the rising of the sun, and when the true millennium comes it will take its rise from a drop of water furnished us by the mighty spirit of King Coal.

It is no wonder, then, that civilized nations are very vigilant in searching the earth for the purpose of finding new coal deposits.

In an examination of the northern and western states and territories, during the past 12 years on this very errand I have met scores of geologists, English, French, Prussian, Dutch, Austrian and American, looking for our placers of black diamonds and quietly investing millions of dollars—exchanging gold for coal.

In this search which has been very intelligent and minute for the last 30 years, every part of the habitable globe has been examined.

In the United States we have special reasons for determining our coal areas. The railroad kings want to know, because coal deposits determine the direction of the railways. Uncle Samuel wants to know for he sets a reward of \$10 per acre upon all coal land. The capitalist wants to know, because the value of lands is enhanced 1000 per cent if underlain with a workable vein of coal in a favorable location. The real estate speculator wants to know for obvious reasons, and so great is the eagerness for coal lands that frauds and misstatements are most common. A local newspaper can start a coal mine on short notice and a geologist can be bought for a small sum of money.

The great American coal fields are well known.

1. The Appalachian coal fields contain 200,000 square miles and include Pennsylvania, Eastern Ohio and Kentucky, Western Virginia, Northern Alabama and northwest Georgia.

2. The Illinois coal fields contain 90,000 square miles; 35,000 in Illinois, 6,000 in Indiana and 9,000 in western Kentucky.

3. The Iowa and Missouri coal fields are estimated by D. D. Owen, the father of American Geology, to contain 55,000 square miles.

(The Kansas and Nebraska coal field is separated by the Missouri river and should be considered as the western part of the same system of coal measures.)

4. The great Colorado coal field contains over 300,000 square miles and is the largest coal field in the world. It extends from New Mexico, on the south through eastern Colorado, Utah, Wyoming and Montana, far north into the British Provinces. Its existence was hardly known 50 years ago. It has been and is now the subject of national and special surveys made in the interests of government, railroad companies and capitalists, as already stated. Its discovery and development gives the world an assurance of a new Empire, whose riches shall far outshine the wealth of "Orcus or of Ind"—a new realm of mineral resources, whose grandeur unfolding for a thousand years can be only dimly seen in the light of to-day. Every trans-continental railway will pass directly through it and carry its pure coals and rich ores, not only to the towns and markets of the Pacific slope, but also to the fertile plains of the Missouri river and her splendid system of valleys. It is the Eldorado of our future history.

We have seen that southeastern Nebraska is included in the same coal measure as western Iowa. We shall now inquire what are the practical facts pertaining to these coal measures and what are the prospects for coal in Nebraska. While the coal field or coal measures of Iowa include the entire area of the carboniferous formation, according to Owen, we find upon close examination that the area of land containing workable coal is exceedingly limited. Thus after a most careful and costly examination the really valuable coal measures of Iowa dwindle down to a single basin extending northwest and southeast in the valley of the Des Moines river not over 150 miles in length and 50 in breadth; and in Missouri the principal coal basin yielding coal for use, has north and south in the valley of the Chariton river, and does not exceed 150 miles in length by 30 in width.

The Iowa and Missouri area of coal surface available for mining, instead of being 55,000 square miles is less than 12,000 square miles. This result has been deduced from an extensive series of borings or test wells on the line of every railroad both in Iowa and Missouri, viz: B. & M., C. R. I. & P., C. & N. W., Dulac & Sioux City, also along the entire line of the Hannibal and St. Joe Railroad, St. Louis and Kansas City, Missouri Pacific, Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad in Missouri. About one hundred test borings were made at depths varying from 500 to 1500 feet. They were put down at a cost of over \$150,000. The result may be stated as follows:

In western Iowa and northwestern Missouri all the coal seams found at these depths are too thin to be of any practical use or value. As many as 10 seams have been passed through in these deep borings, but in no instance has a workable vein or seam of coal been reached in the vast area above described. West of the Missouri river both in Nebraska and Kansas, the search has been equally severe along the following lines of railroad: On the Kansas Pacific between Kansas City and Denver; The M. R. F. S. and G. L. L. and G. St. Joe and Denver; Atchison and Nebraska Railroad in Nebraska; U. P., Missouri Pacific between Atchison and Kansas City; and A. T. and S. F. In all these borings, deep or shallow, we find invariably thin coal veins from 4 inches

to 25 inches in thickness. In one instance at Leavenworth a coal shaft was put down to the depth of 710 feet because the State Geologist, Prof. Swallow, assured the citizens from a boring that a thick vein of coal would be reached. The boring or test well report showed "9 feet coal and slate" which the citizens interpreted as at least 7 feet of good coal. After expending \$100,000 23 inches of coal was found. The cost of mining at this depth is greater than the price of coal, so that the foolish expenditure is a public loss, from which wiser counsels might have saved them.

In the test well at Lincoln 900 feet was reached, and a vein of coal 4 feet 9 inches deep was reported at a depth of nearly 500 feet. There was no special pains taken to save all the chips or bits of coal made by the drill; no careful measure taken either on striking or leaving the vein (?), and no discrimination to ascertain whether the chips were all coal, or both coal and slate. The results of the Lincoln experiment are therefore vague and uncertain, and the citizens have not one dollar worth of faith in the reported coal vein. If they had, a shaft would have been completed before this date.

The boring now going on down at Beatrice has reached a depth of nearly 1000 feet. At Lincoln the Leavenworth vein should have been reached at a depth of 1100 feet, and at Beatrice at a depth of 1200 or 1300 feet, judging from the depth of the several veins of the coal measure taken in connection with the topography of the country.

Other deep borings have been made in the State, and they uniformly point to the same conclusion, viz. thin and non-workable veins of coal at all depths from the surface in eastern and southeastern Nebraska.

We can put down 40 or 50 more test wells in this State at a cost of \$150,000 or \$200,000 as has been done in Iowa and Missouri east of the river, and be scarcely more certain than we now are, that the deep lying veins of the upper, middle, and lower coal measures are worthless.

The only good resulting from these deep and costly soundings is realized generally by the "artful dodger" who creates the local fever for a test-well, and enjoys the profits of the job, and when the inevitable failure is announced it is easy to appease the subscribers to the "sinking fund" by saying "we didn't go deep enough" or "the drill broke" or "stuck fast," or some other palaver that will serve the purpose. The proposed expenditure of \$25,000 for a coal shaft in Otoe county, if a majority of voters decide in the affirmative, should be carefully reviewed in the light of these facts before the tax is voted or levied for the purpose of sinking a coal shaft through these non-paying coal-measures. We submit that the evidence already accumulated is enough to prevent the waste of this money; for the experiment, from all the analogies in the case, is certain to be a failure. The citizens of Otoe will find, if they go deep enough with their shaft, poverty and bankruptcy long before they reach China.

Passing by the Leavenworth mine we find at Kansas City, a deep test well near the city. It passes through the same series of thin veins, one of them being thicker than the others, but not workable.

At Fort Scott, and several points on the M. R. Fort Scott & Gulf Railroad, deep soundings were also made. At the last named place the boring passed through 11 veins varying from 4 to 24 inches, all equally worthless.

At Lawrence, Topeka, and as far west as Junction City, depths have been reached from 500 to 900 feet, with the same cheerless returns, viz. no workable coal at any depth below the surface. These facts are much at variance with Prof. Swallow's eloquent statement that "Kansas is underlain with an immense coal vein 7 feet in thickness, and contains one-seventh of all the coal in the United States." (See Swallow's Report, Geology of Kansas, 1864.)

It is noticeable in the deep soundings above described, that the coal strata invariably decrease in thickness going west from the Missouri river, and we may safely conclude that every vestige of the old coal measures has entirely disappeared before we reach the western boundary of Kansas or Nebraska.

There is not an out-crop of the old coal measure in any of the territories west of these two States nor are they exposed anywhere in the rude breaks or up-casts of the Rocky Mountains.

The upper or surface vein of coal in Nebraska and Kansas has a variable thickness, and occupies a large area in each of the four States, viz: south-east Nebraska, southwest Iowa, north-west Missouri and northeast Kansas. It has many out-crops, as it lies near the surface and is cut by ravines, by which means we have been able to determine its value accurately. In the vicinity of White Cloud, Kansas, and Rulo and Falls City, Nebraska, and on the Iowa Reservation, and the lower portion of the great Nemaha Valley, it attains the greatest thickness, varying from 10 to 27 inches, but it does not average 18 inches. The "Richardson county coal" is a part of this coal seam, and it measures from 17 to 24 inches in drifts or cuttings near the Nemaha river. Of this only 8 or 12 inches is good fuel, the lower part of the vein being very sulphurous, and unfit for use. It can never be mined

except to supply a local demand among farmers and towns in the vicinity of out-crops of more than average thickness. At Tecumseh this vein has thinned out to less than 10 inches, and has almost, if not entirely, disappeared before reaching the valley of the Big Blue River. But it appears to have a greater range north and south. It is found north and northwest of Omaha, and in all the river counties of south-east Nebraska and Kansas. All statements however, such as have been made concerning this vein "that it will increase to four or four and a-half feet in drift-mining" are simply and only efforts of pure imagination by some, pure fiction by others. Seeing that the upper or surface vein has neither thickness, quality, nor reliability, and that all the lower veins are uniformly thin and useless, we anxiously inquire what, and where, are the sources of fuel for the State of Nebraska? The people of western Iowa and northeast Kansas have the same concern in this question. It is a fore-gone conclusion with all the people of these States that coal is abundant, but very deep, and hence the views here will not be generally accepted. It is very desirable to please the people and gain the applause of our fellow citizens, especially just before election, but it is exceedingly difficult to do this by making a coal mine in every county. The only practical road out of these difficulties is to make timely arrangements to procure our coal from places where it is both cheap and of good quality. Those who will still persist in throwing away sums of money in a vain search for coal, led on by irresponsible parties, may recall the old maxim, too late; "the fool and his money soon part company." Those who are thus duped into these expenses call it "developing the country" and there is no law against it.

The present supply of coal for Nebraska comes mainly from the mines in the Des Moines Valley, also from mines in the valley of the Chariton river, Mo., and from mines in southeastern Kansas, in the vicinity of Fort Scott. These coals differ but little in ability to produce heat or steam. The Fort Scott coal being free from impurities, is generally preferred.

A ton of these coals is equal to 3 cords of such wood as we find growing west of the Missouri river. Coal at \$8 per ton in Nebraska, establishes the price of wood as fuel at \$2.66 per cord. If some persons more remote give \$9 per ton for coal, it is only giving \$3 per cord for wood. Those, therefore, who complain of a scarcity of fuel in Nebraska, can only complain that wood is \$3 per cord. The policy of railroad companies in regard to local freights, should be especially low, so that any where in eastern Nebraska coal can be afforded at \$6 per ton—the equivalent of wood fuel at \$2 per cord. Upon this basis we have fuel from eastern and southern mines both cheap and abundant. The great fault appears to be that it is not mined beneath the soil of Nebraska.

A family of five persons will consume an average of 5 tons annually, costing from \$35 to \$45. This will require the proceeds of three acres of wheat, or 3 acres of corn, or the price of a cow, or a 3-year old steer. Is the fuel bill for a year really a burden to any farmer in Nebraska? With equal reason we could complain of the cost of clothing, which is the same as saying that we would greatly prosper if we could dispense with food and clothing altogether. We respectfully refer the fuel-fauntlers to a residence with some of the Indian tribes whose habits and fashions make their burdens easy in this respect.

The comparative value of mineral fuel or coal and vegetable fuel (wood, corn, and sunflower) may be interesting to farmers who are now trying experiments with the various kinds of fuel in Nebraska and other western States where coal and timber are not abundant. The best experiments give the following results:

An average corn-stalk and one ear will yield six ounces combustible matter.

An average sunflower yields nineteen ounces.

One ton corn-stalks and ears yields 450 lbs combustible matter.

One ton of sunflowers yields 650 pounds.

One cord cottonwood 600 pounds. One ton of coal 1700 pounds.

The unexplored sources of coal in Nebraska are the Tertiary, Cretaceous and Permian formations, occupying the middle and western portions of the State. The Permian formation has been found by Professor Aughey, of the State University, to occupy a considerable portion of eastern Nebraska immediately overlying the reeking coal measures, as already described. It is probable that this formation will be found to contain useful veins of Lignite or brown coal. The Cretaceous and Tertiary formations lie further west and crop out like courses of shingles as we ascend a house roof.

These formations contain a series of valuable coals, comprising the great Colorado coal field which we have briefly described.

In Kansas, on the Kansas Pacific Railroad near Fort Harker or Ellsworth Station, 225 miles west of Kansas City, two veins were found, 24 and 34 feet in thickness. In Nebraska partial examinations have been made in the valley of the Republican, and several out-crops have been found, indicating that we may find both veins upon careful search. It is evident

that they will be found much farther east in Nebraska than in Kansas, because the trend or direction of these coal bearing rocks is toward the north-east. The most natural supply of good coal to a very large portion of Nebraska is, or rather should be, the great deposits of coal or lignite, first reached on the Union Pacific about 600 miles west of Omaha. These deposits consist of 11 veins, 5 of which are workable, varying in thickness from 6 to 27 feet. Their outcrops are cut by the U. P. R. R. at intervals of 100 miles. This coal is very pure and easily mined. It can be placed upon the car for \$1.50 per ton, and should, with a liberal railroad policy, be delivered at Omaha for \$6.50 per ton, and at Kearney Junction for \$5 per ton, or at any point between Kearney and Lincoln, for at least \$6 per ton.

It would be eminently proper here to show the advantages resulting from a thorough geological survey of the State which should be carried on in connection with its well endowed and prosperous University. The schools of the State always need systematic instruction in geology and natural history, and no lessons would be so acceptable and profitable as those derived from your beautiful domain. The most profitable mining in Nebraska, however, will be found in the upper stratum or alluvium, and will be carried on in placer diggings of various dimensions. The diligent worker in this class of mines will be surely rewarded with much fine gold. The earth must be deeply stirred and a little time must intervene between shaking the earth and taking the "dust."

The golden harvest now in sight in Nebraska has more power to charm the eye and gladden the heart than all the gold and silver of the Rocky Mountains. Whoever owns but 50 acres from the surface of the earth to its centre—owns a wedge of gold and if he cultivates it he has a life-endowment.

If therefore, the Creator did not confer upon the State of Nebraska every mineral value, yet its soil has a productive power adequate to supply all the needs of its citizens.

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