

The change in the value of farm land and buildings has proceeded at different rates, in the various regions and States. Regional and State figures indicate the steady western movement, characterizing the expansion of agriculture during the last 100 years. By 1870, the settlement of the West had hardly begun and the Southern States had not recovered from the Civil War nor changed from the hand-labor system of cotton production. Hence, in 1870, a large proportion of the value of farm land and buildings was concentrated in the eastern part of the United States. For example, in 1870, the Corn Belt States had more than two-fifths of the total value of land and buildings in the

United States; by 1959, the share of these States had been reduced to a third. In 1870, the West accounted for less than 2.4 percent of the value of land and buildings; by 1959, the West accounted for one-fifth of the total for the 48 conterminous States. Variations in the rate of growth in the different parts of the country have been large. The extent of settlement, the type of agriculture, the scale of farming, the availability of credit, the development of irrigation, the ratio of workers to farmland, industrialization, and price fluctuations for various farm products have affected the rate of growth among regions and among States.

