

The Rising Colossus

It is inevitable that devastation, chaos, fear, hatred and bitterness follow in the wake of war. The Civil War was no exception.

No amount of legislation could wave aside the ideological, economic and social differences which had separated North and South before the war. These differences still remained when the war ended in 1865.

But the Union now held all the trump cards. The Confederacy had been beaten on the battlefield, and many of its cities and towns had been utterly destroyed. Also, on the economic side, many of the big plantations and farms had become overgrown with weeds while the cream of Southern manhood was away fighting the war. It would take many years to nurse the South back to economic health.

President Abraham Lincoln had been tragically assassinated by John Wilkes Booth while attending a performance at Ford's Theater, only five days after Lee had surrendered at Appomattox Court House. Had Lincoln lived to preside over the immediate post-war reconstruction era, things might have gone much more smoothly. But the assassin's bullet put an end to Lincoln's plans of a moderate policy toward the defeated South.

President Andrew Johnson

Vice President Andrew Johnson succeeded to the presidency (1865-69). Unfortunately, he was not the giant that Lincoln was. Like Lincoln, Johnson had been born in poverty and he never attended one day of school. He taught himself to read in his teens, and, with his wife's encouragement, learned to write.

Johnson's tailor shop became a place of debate for the local people of Greenville, Tennessee. He was elected alderman, mayor, and was elected to the state legislature. He then became a U.S. Congressman, governor of Tennessee, and eventually was elected to the Senate — where he championed the cause of the small farmer and the mountaineer against the Northern tycoons and Southern plantation aristocrats.

When Tennessee seceded from the Union, Johnson was the only one

among the Southern senators who stayed behind in Washington — and was quickly branded a traitor back in Tennessee.

Lincoln chose Andrew Johnson as the man to run as vice-president with him, and both he and Lincoln won the election of 1861. When the assassin's bullet cut short Lincoln's life, this honest, yet simple man found himself catapulted into the White House.

But President Johnson didn't have adequate training to make a good, wise president. He proved no match for the powerful men who controlled Congress at the time. A long tug-of-war between the President and Congress resulted — with Congress winning most of the battles.

Chaos in the South

President Andrew Johnson favored following Lincoln's plan of leniency toward the defeated South. He surveyed the situation in the Southern states after the war, and saw they were in need of much help — not condemnation and punishment as many Northerners wanted to mete out to them.

Though the North prospered during the Civil War (partly as a result of war contracts) the South was invaded, and much of it was destroyed during this conflict. In fact, in 1865, much of Dixieland lay in ruins. It had been utterly shattered by the four-year war.

After the collapse of the Confederate government, law and order had broken down; and in many areas of the South, armed gangs of desperadoes roamed the countryside. These desperadoes included *deserters* (from both Union and Confederate armies), *criminals* and *looters* — whose criminal acts of violence and robbery terrorized the South during the chaotic period following the Civil War.

The economy of the South was in shambles. Trade was at a virtual standstill, most factories were closed, banks were shut, many roads were destroyed, and the railroads were unable to function because many of their engines and rolling stock had been destroyed during the war, or was now too dilapidated to run.

The huge cotton fields were choked with weeds. King Cotton was no longer King — but was itself reduced to a penniless beggar. It took ten years for the cotton production in the South to reach its pre-war level.

The war had also paralyzed the schools and churches, and there was no political institution to run the Southern states. The Civil War had brought wrack and ruin to much of the South and had shattered the whole Southern way of life. Lincoln's wartime Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863 had destroyed forever the essential feature of the Southern way of life — slavery. Things would never be the same in the South from that day forward.

How could the devastated land of Dixie be brought back to economic life? How could its political institutions be rebuilt — without the inclusion of the South's "peculiar institution" of slavery? And how could the rebel states be brought back into the Union?

The natural legacy of fear, distrust, hatred and bitterness which followed in the wake of the Civil War would make any healing of the Union difficult, prolonged.

How could the South, and the Union, cope with three and one half million freed slaves? To place three and a half million slaves in a meaningful social and economic position alongside the whites would have been a formidable task even without a war. But with the devastation and the bitterness which flowed from the Civil War, this task would be rendered much more difficult.

It is true that many slaves, once freed, believed their future life would be one long, happy holiday — a sort of prolonged picnic. And it is also true that some of the freed slaves resorted to robbery and plunder. But undoubtedly the majority realized they would have to get work and walk a tight rope if they were not to be treated harshly by their former masters — in spite of any Union decrees, and despite the help of federal agents to enforce the Emancipation Proclamation.

An outburst of lawlessness followed the emancipation of the slaves; and there was an increase in the Negro death-rate, which resulted from poverty and disease. Under the system of slavery (detestable as it was) the Negro slave had been given food, shelter, and a certain amount of security.

But *emancipation* guaranteed him none of these. Everywhere the newly-freed slave turned, he found race prejudice. A presidential proclamation could not wipe out overnight two hundred and fifty long years of bigotry and discrimination!

Southern whites, who had always looked upon the black man as inferior, could not quickly change their minds and attitudes toward blacks. It would take a long time for the whites to come to the place where they could look upon the blacks as their potential equals.

Out of this seemingly indestructible prejudice came the Black Codes of 1865, which grew up in the former slave states. The general aim of these Black Codes was to "keep the Negro in his place." The Black Codes acknowledged the slave's freedom (the Federal Government eventually forced this on the South — with an army), and these codes guaranteed the blacks certain rights.

But they were clearly *discriminatory* in many ways. Negroes could not bear arms, testify against whites in court, or mix socially with whites. Furthermore, blacks were unable to find many jobs other than as farmhands or domestic servants.

And they were required to have a steady job — or else they could be

arrested for vagrancy. The Black Codes were specifically designed to keep blacks under the permanent control of the whites. These codes, therefore, aroused a fierce outcry in the North.

The Freedmen's Bureau

How would the victorious North deal with the problem of the freed slaves?

The Freedmen's Bureau was established in March, 1865 to deal with this problem. It provided relief work for blacks, but was designed primarily to look after the freed slaves. The Bureau did offer relief work to both whites and blacks — and saved many thousands from starvation.

The Freedmen's Bureau found jobs for many of the former slaves, and it also established thousands of public schools, and many hospitals. Yet, it was bitterly detested in the South in spite of any good which it did. Perhaps part of this hatred of the Freedmen's Bureau was because it was an instrument of the conquering Yankee Government. And it was, therefore, considered a tool to perpetuate the power of the Republican party in the South.

And many of the Bureau's employees, especially its officers, were dishonest and corrupt. Even President Grant later referred to them as "a useless and dangerous set."

When the Civil War ended, many Northerners were ready to get revenge — were ready to punish the Southerners for seceding from the Union and starting a bloody Civil War.

But President Lincoln favored a moderate policy — a policy of reconciliation — not of revenge. He, in his second inaugural speech in March, 1865, had called upon the American people "to bind up the nation's wounds."

On a Collision Course

Even though President Andrew Johnson was very bitter toward Jefferson Davis and other Confederate leaders, he didn't want to see the South treated harshly. He himself had owned slaves, and he didn't want to see the blacks and whites suddenly become equals. He fully planned to carry out Lincoln's policy of moderation toward the defeated South.

But President Johnson and the Republican-controlled Congress were soon to collide head on. A number of radical congressional leaders were determined to see that the South had to pay for its act of rebellion. They insisted, even if the President didn't agree with them, that the South be punished for its insurrection.

Under the strong leadership of such men as Thaddeus Stevens and Charles Sumner, Congress had its own plan of reconstruction. The

Congress rejected the President's plan of moderation. They were determined to put the South under military rule — in order to force on the South those changes which they thought should be made.

But President Johnson got the jump on Congress. In May, 1865, while Congress was recessed, Johnson issued *a general amnesty*, pardoning all who had taken part in the rebellion, except the main leaders, former Congressmen and officers in the U.S. armed forces.

Furthermore, according to his very generous offer, all Southern states could elect their own governments and choose their own representatives in Congress. All of the rebel states ratified the Thirteenth Amendment which abolished slavery — except Mississippi. So by the end of 1865, every Southern state had its own government. Reconstruction had begun.

But the struggle between Johnson and the Congress had just begun. Since Congress was not in session, the President had decided to go ahead with his own program of Reconstruction without seeking their advice or counsel. This rankled them. Furthermore, they felt he was too lenient on the former rebels.

Congress, therefore, flatly refused to admit the new members from the Southern states and drew up their own plan of Reconstruction. In 1866, Congress passed a Civil Rights act — giving equal rights to all citizens regardless of their color. President Johnson promptly vetoed the bill, and Congress quickly overrode his veto. The purpose of this Civil Rights Bill was to counteract the Black Codes which the Southern states had enacted as a means of keeping the blacks in their place.

Congress then passed the Fourteenth Amendment in 1866 — which gave the first clear-cut definition of what constituted U.S. citizenship. Tennessee was the only state to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment, and thus to rejoin the Union. All the other Southern states voted against it. Though the amendment was temporarily defeated, this act of Southern defiance did much to hurt the South.

Congressional Reconstruction

Now the radicals in Congress began their program of Reconstruction for the South. In the Reconstruction Acts of 1867, they divided the ten unreconstructed states into five military districts, each under the command of a major general. These military men would serve as military governors until the reconstructed states returned to the Union.

But before a rebel state could rejoin the Union, it would have to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment. President Johnson vetoed the Reconstruction Acts, but the Republican-controlled Congress easily passed them over his veto — and they were put into immediate effect through-

out the South. The Reconstruction Acts were backed up by five military governors, with 20,000 troops at their disposal.

The Radical Republicans had won their battle over the President in their attempt to impose a "hard peace" on the defeated South. They were now in a position to punish the South for their acts of rebellion.

Now, the Congress went gunning for the President — who had kept vetoing their programs. Johnson had never acted like a Southerner during the Civil War, but now it seemed like he had joined the Confederacy. They would now punish him also. But how?

In 1867, the Radicals had passed two laws — both of them clearly unconstitutional: 1) *The Tenure of Office Act* prevented President Johnson from dismissing certain officials, including Cabinet members. They were especially fearful that the President would sack the Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton, who would be needed to direct their plans in using the army to enforce their program on the South.

2) To further curb the President's power, Congress then passed the *Command of the Army Act* — which prohibited the President from issuing orders to the army — except through the commanding general, whom the President couldn't remove without Senate approval.

President Johnson promptly proceeded to dismiss Edwin M. Stanton, his Secretary of War, who had apparently revealed Cabinet secrets to radicals.

Impeaching the President

Congress then retaliated by impeaching the President. In 1868, Congress began impeachment proceedings. They charged Johnson with violating the Tenure of Office Act, accused him of not enforcing the Reconstruction Acts, and claimed he treated Congress disrespectfully.

When the Senate voted on the impeachment issue in May, 1868, thirty-five members voted for impeachment, and nineteen against. This was *one* vote short of the necessary two-thirds majority required for an impeachment to succeed. The leader behind Johnson's impeachment, Thaddeus Stevens, died in August — a disappointed man!

The prestige of the office of the president would have been seriously tarnished, and the power of that high office greatly limited — had the radicals succeeded in convicting the President by a two-thirds Senate vote. This is the only time any U.S. President has ever been impeached.

During Johnson's impeachment, he was also accused of partiality toward the South, of having been drunken when he was inaugurated vice-president, and was even accused of being implicated in Lincoln's assassination. (Johnson had been quite ill just before his inauguration as

vice-president, and apparently took a drink to steady himself — and was therefore accused of being drunk.)

“Black Reconstruction”

“Black Reconstruction” is a label which was given to the brief period when Radical Republican governments were in power in the Southern states which had rebelled.

But in no state did any Negroes ever control the government. The black slaves had been freed by U.S. proclamation in 1863, but most of them were illiterate. They were not, therefore, in any position to take over the government in any of the states. Since they were outnumbered in the South by about two to one, they didn’t even have sufficient numerical strength to take control of government in the former Confederate states.

During this time of “military government” in the South, there was much discontent and violence. It was during this period that *carpetbaggers* came into prominence. The term “carpetbaggers” refers to Northerners who moved into the South during this Reconstruction period immediately following the Civil War.

Who were these “carpetbaggers”? What did they stand for? Some of them were honest businessmen wishing to invest their money in the South and make their fortunes there. Others were schoolteachers who often had “high ideals” but also frequently combined their ideals with “smug hostility” toward Southerners and all things Southern.

But some of the carpetbaggers were openly seeking either plunder or political office. Therefore all carpetbaggers became greatly detested by Southerners. In fact the term “carpetbaggers” was a Southern term which suggested that these people could stuff all their belongings into a carpetbag, or suitcase.

They aroused bitter feelings in the South when they entered politics. The radical Republican Party of the North had put the Southern States under military rule in 1867, and at the same time temporarily took away the voting rights from many prominent Southern whites. Furthermore, the Northerners encouraged the newly-emancipated slaves to vote for the Republicans. Several carpetbaggers even became governors, and others served either in the state or national legislatures.

It is only fair to add, however, that the so-called “carpetbag” governments did accomplish a great deal of good in the South. They helped to build roads, levees, public school systems, they helped to guarantee Negroes their civil rights, and they helped to draw up “enlightened constitutions.”

But they were not successful in the long run, for they often proved

to be wasteful, inexperienced or corrupt. Eventually, they lost all power in the South.

Scalawags

But, more detested than the “carpetbaggers” were a group or class of Southerners called “scalawags.”

Who were the scalawags?

Any Southerner who worked *with* Northern Republicans and with Negroes to control politics in the South after the Civil War was disparagingly called a “scalawag.” The word “scalawag” was originally applied to *worthless cattle*. The majority of “scalawags” were planters and businessmen who had opposed withdrawal (secession) from the Union. Many of them were embittered toward Jefferson Davis and the leaders of the rebellion — for they (these so-called “scalawags”) not only had opposed secession, but they also had lost much of their wealth, power and prestige through that fraternal war.

Undoubtedly some “scalawags” sought personal gain and aggrandizement, but others sincerely believed the South had to get rid of its prewar social and racial views if it wished to survive and prosper. They therefore, helped bring about educational and social reforms and helped pass laws allowing Negroes to vote. They gradually disappeared from the old South during the 1870s as Democrats regained control.

The Ku Klux Klan

Many Southerners bitterly resented and stubbornly resisted Northern programs to force down their throats laws and a way of life which they didn't wish to accept.

Various clubs and secretive organizations arose to oppose federal government reforms, and the advancement of the blacks. The *Ku Klux Klan* began in 1865 when a circle (*kuklos*) of young men in Tennessee dressed in white sheets and hoods for a party. During the party, they enjoyed themselves in an amusing frolic of scaring Negroes. This gave birth to the idea of using this means to intimidate blacks throughout the South.

In 1867, Ku Klux Klan groups were organized throughout the entire South, under the command of a Grand Wizard. Members of the Klan rode by night through Negro camps, beat up scalawags and carpetbaggers, and whipped and hanged Negroes. They used intimidation to scare colored voters away from the voting polls. *The Knights of the White Camelia* were also organized to prevent Negroes from voting.

These organizations used threats, pressure and outright violence to obtain their ends. The federal government finally had to move vigorously against them. Their effective power was eventually broken in the

South, but not before they had achieved a measure of success in forcing Negroes and carpetbaggers out of Southern politics.

Semi-military organizations such as the *Red Shirts of South Carolina*, and the *White League of Louisiana* were created by Southerners to help them regain political control.

Another means of preventing blacks from voting was through complicated *literacy tests* and *poll taxes*. Still another device used was the "Grandfather Clause." This political device was especially helpful when the politicians found that property qualifications, poll taxes and literacy tests also prevented many poor whites from voting. The state of Louisiana passed the "Grandfather Clause" preventing ex-slaves from voting. If one's grandfather hadn't voted (before 1867) then he was out of luck. Since blacks didn't vote before the Reconstruction Act of March, 1867, this effectively prevented them from voting.

Supreme Court Decisions

Though the Supreme Court finally invalidated the crude "Grandfather Clause" technique of excluding black voters, yet it upheld the Southern demand for social separation of the races.

The Supreme Court (in civil rights cases of 1883) held that the Fourteenth Amendment prevented only discriminatory political acts of states — and didn't outlaw social discrimination by individuals.

Segregation

According to this interpretation, Congress had exceeded its authority in passing the Civil Rights Act of 1875 — requiring individuals to furnish equal access to such facilities as theaters, hotels, transportation. The Court instructed blacks to appeal to their state legislatures in order to secure equal public accommodations.

The Supreme Court's decisions permitted discrimination on racial grounds, and Southern legislatures, during the following decades, gradually required the separation of the races at public facilities, restaurants, and on trains.

Finally in 1896 the Supreme Court ruling (*Plessy V. Ferguson*) said that so long as the facilities were substantially "equal" — even if they were *separate* no constitutional rights were abridged. This racial separation, the Court said, did not imply inferiority, nor could either legislation or the Constitution "eradicate racial instincts or . . . abolish distinctions made upon physical differences. . . ." But one of the Supreme Court members, Justice Harlan, dissented. He declared: "Our Constitution is color-blind." He thought the idea of equal accommodations for blacks and whites was a "thin disguise" which would not really mislead anyone.

Booker T. Washington, head of Tuskegee Institute, had indicated the black man's acceptance of segregation. He appealed to his fellow blacks to educate themselves, learn trades, establish businesses and produce members of society who could earn for themselves equality.

He branded the idea of social equality the "extremist folly," and apparently accepted the Jim Crow laws which required segregation in the South. He said: "In all things that are purely social, we can be as separate as the fingers, yet *one* as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress."

Booker T. Washington did not believe it proper that the black man be deprived of his right to vote — by whatsoever means. He opposed any measure that permitted "an ignorant and poverty-stricken white man to vote" while at the same time it kept a "black man in the same condition" from casting his vote.

The fact remains, that after the Emancipation Proclamation, and even after a number of amendments were passed, social, economic and political equality were not available to most blacks especially in the South.

As Reconstruction progressed, and as time healed the old divisions, many in the North gradually turned against the use of military force as a means of forcing Republican policies down the throats of the South. And, doubtless, they must have come to see that only persuasion, not force, can effect a complete, lasting change in people's hearts and minds and attitudes.

How America Stole Alaska

One of the most notable achievement of President Andrew Johnson's administration was in the realm of foreign affairs. His Secretary of State, on behalf of the U.S., made one of the most fantastic purchases ever made in the history of the world. Secretary Seward bought Alaska *for only two cents per acre!*

How did the purchase of Alaska come about?

The Russian Tsar, desiring to know if Siberia was connected to North America, commissioned a Dane named Vitus Bering to explore the area. Bering sighted St. Lawrence Island in August, 1728, but failed to sight the American mainland. He probably actually sighted the mainland (Alaska) in 1732, though effective discovery of Alaska (known as Russian America) and the exploration of its southern coast awaited his second voyage in 1741.

Russia eventually claimed all of Alaska and established settlements, making advances to the south. She claimed the western part of what is now Canada, and planned to occupy a site on Vancouver Island.

This worried Mexico, who at the time claimed all of the western

part of America as far north as Vancouver Island. It also alarmed Britain and the United States.

As we saw in a previous chapter, the Russians established a colony in northern California in 1812. Eventually, they had a thriving colony of about four hundred settlers in northern California. This colony was established for the purpose of supplying food to the starving Russian settlements in Alaska.

In 1823, President Monroe had issued his now-famous Monroe Doctrine, in which he warned other nations not to attempt to colonize in the Western Hemisphere. He, in effect, said this domain was under the watchful eye of the American Eagle, and any nation who tried to colonize, or who attempted to interfere in the Americas, would collide head on with the United States.

America's war with Mexico (1846-48) put an exclamation point after the Monroe Doctrine. At the conclusion of that war, the U.S. acquired the southwest part of America (California, Arizona, New Mexico, etc.) from Mexico — primarily as a result of the spoils of victory.

Nations in Central and South America (as well as the European powers) took notice of the increasing strength and vigor of the "Colossus to the North" — as America came to be called by her southern neighbors.

The Tsars also seem to have been impressed with America's growing strength, and with Russia's extreme vulnerability in Alaska and in her possessions to the south.

It seems clear that when President Monroe issued his Monroe Doctrine, he clearly had the growing menace of the Russian Empire in Alaska and along the whole Pacific Coast in mind. Monroe was especially concerned about the Russian Colony at Fort Ross in Alta California.

Russia agreed (in 1824) to limit all future settlements on the North American continent to Alaska. But, for nearly twenty years the Russians remained in northern California.

The Russian Bear Departs

In 1841 the Russians sold — lock, stock, and barrel — their California colony at Fort Ross to Johann August Sutter for \$30,000. They left their fort and their livestock behind, and retreated to Alaska.

During the 1800s friction developed in the fishing waters around Alaska. There were about 300 whaling vessels in the waters off Russian America by the mid 1800s, and the majority of them were American. When the Crimean War erupted in 1854, Russia's Pacific colonies were placed in a very vulnerable position. Britain and Russia were antagonists in that war. The British were strongly entrenched in Canada, and could threaten Russian America if they chose.

These facts led Imperial Russia to seriously consider selling Russian America (Alaska) to the United States. The Russian minister in Washington was instructed in 1857 to hint that Russia might be willing to sell its colony. Russo-American negotiations for the sale of Alaska were commenced in 1859, but the sudden outbreak of the American Civil War caused a delay in further negotiations. Then in February, 1867, only two years after the Civil War ended, Russia's minister returned to Washington with imperial instructions to enter into negotiations concerning the sale of Russian America.

Why Russia Sold Alaska

It is difficult to understand why Russia sold Alaska. Uppermost in the minds of the Russians seems to have been their desire, through the sale of Alaska, to embroil Britain and the United States in a controversy over the American territories — thereby diverting British attention, and British sea power, from the straits of Constantinople.

With this in mind, the Russians were apparently eager to push the sale, and a Russo-American treaty was hastily completed on March 30, 1867. A price of \$7,200,000 had already been agreed upon. This unbelievably low price amounted to about two cents per acre! The Senate approved the purchase on April 9th, but the appropriation didn't pass Congress until the following year — July 1868.

Shortly after Russia sold Alaska to America, most of the Russians packed up and went back to Russia.

But America's purchase of Alaska stirred up a storm of protest in the United States. Many Americans — exhibiting an uncanny ability to see all the way to the end of their noses — believed Alaska was a snow and ice covered, worthless wasteland. They referred to it as "Seward's Icebox," and "Seward's Folly."

Subsequent events have proved Alaska (meaning "Great Land") to have been an extremely wise and valuable purchase. The annual income from fishing, mining, lumbering and trading is many times the cost of the original purchase.

And now, America's richest oil deposits are on the north slopes of Alaska. When the trans-Alaska pipeline is completed, America will have another secure source of energy, which will make her less dependent on Mideast oil — and therefore much less vulnerable to international blackmail.

The strategic importance of Alaska cannot be calculated in dollars. One of Alaska's islands (Little Diomedé Island) is only about two and a half miles from Russia's Big Diomedé Island.

In addition to the economic and strategic value of Alaska (America's largest state — comprising about one-sixth of all the U.S.) — is the

recreational value of the "great land." Each year many thousands of Americans travel to Alaska in order to hunt, fish, ski and partake of other rugged outdoor sports activities.

What blinded the eyes of the Russians to cause them to sell Alaska to America for only two cents an acre? Surely the Russians have been kicking themselves ever since for having let the United States steal this rich piece of real estate from them.

Did America acquire Alaska because of the far-sightedness of her leaders — because of their great wisdom? Or, did some Guiding Hand direct America's expansion — as Americans energetically went about fulfilling their hopes and dreams of Manifest Destiny?

Surely America's destiny was intended to include the fabulous land of Alaska — America's "last frontier."

The Grant Administration

The next president of the United States, after Andrew Johnson, was Civil War hero General Ulysses S. Grant.

Grant had served well in the Mexican War — but resigned his captaincy a few years afterward — apparently because of whispers of drunkenness. During the next eight years, he failed at job after job. When the Civil War broke out, he was working as a laborer and clerk in his father's leather shop — taking orders from two of his younger brothers.

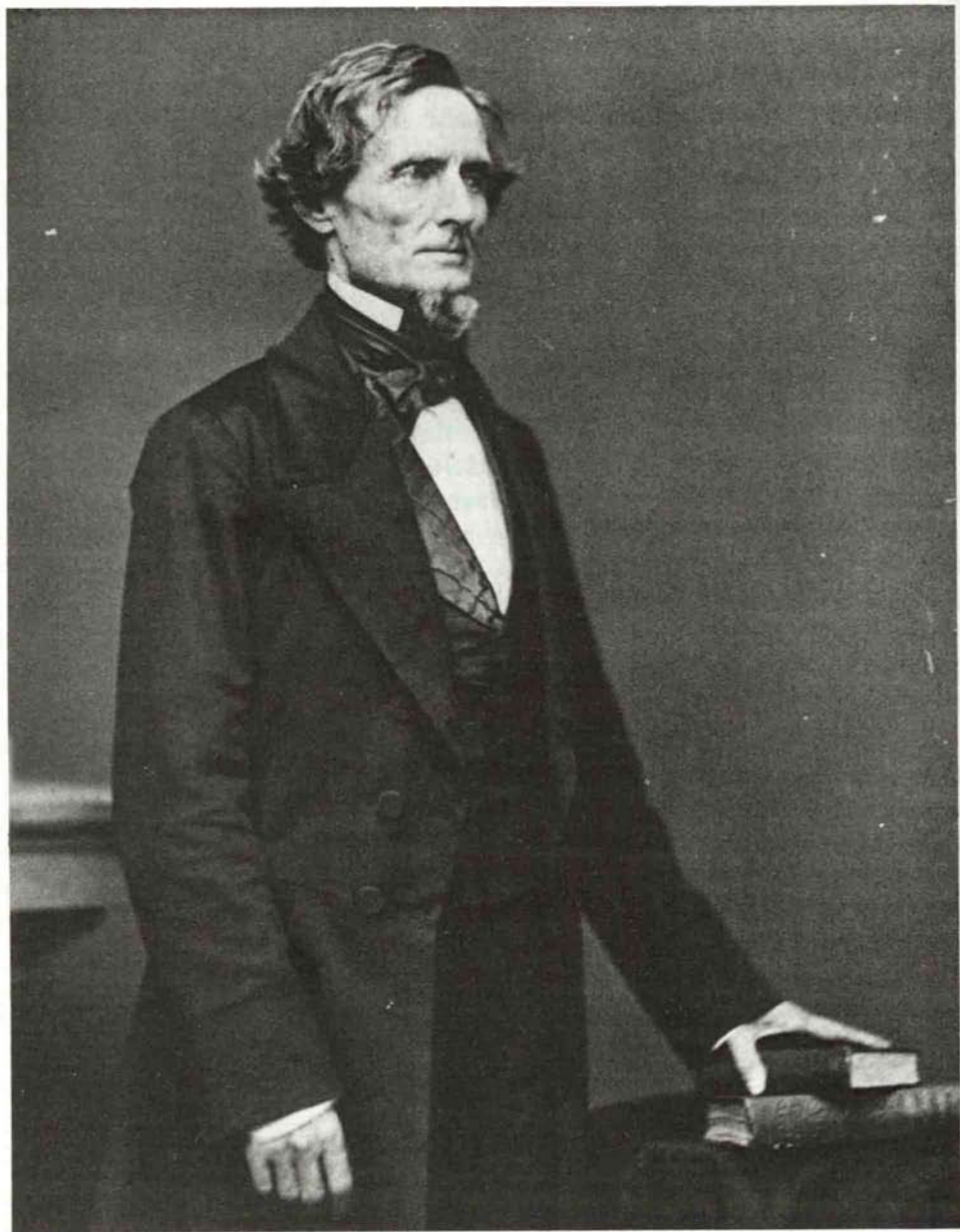
During Grant's administration, graft and corruption occupied the minds of many. Scandals rocked his government. Apparently he was too easily influenced by gifts, and was unable to judge men's intentions and their honesty.

Numerous scandals rocked the nation during this period. Greed was rampant. Even Congress was guilty of the "Salary Grab" (or "Back Pay Grab") when Congress voted its members and the President an increase in salary — and backdated it by two years.

Both Democrats and Republicans dabbled in crooked deals. Nearly \$100,000,000 was stolen from the New York City treasury by "Boss" Tweed, (head of the notorious Tweed Ring in New York) before the members of his gang fled to Europe.

Another scandal, the Whisky Ring, led directly to Grant's private Secretary, Babcock. Grant defended Babcock's innocence, but dismissed him from his post.

The Secretary of War was found selling certain trading privileges on the Indian reservations. All these "crooked deals" were not necessarily Grant's fault, but he proved unable to come to grips with the colossal mess — the widespread bribery and corruption which afflicted the political and economic side of the nation.



Jefferson Davis served as President of the Confederate states (1861-65).
— U.S. Signal Corps Photo

President Hayes

Rutherford B. Hayes (1877-81) became President in March, 1877, after a long three months' wrangle over who should be President — because of confusion in the voting system.

Eventually all the disputed votes were awarded to Hayes, and he was inaugurated as President. Shortly after his inauguration, in March 1877, the last Federal troops were withdrawn from the South. Reconstruction could now be considered over. The nation was at last at "peace." The Democrats had become the real masters of the South. Their white supremacy policies would continue. The North had come to realize they could not force Southerners to accept the blacks as equals. A long process of time, education, Supreme Court decisions, and even more federal troops would be necessary to effect this long-denied "equality" in the South.

America Becomes a World Power

After the purchase of Alaska, the United States was on the threshold of becoming a world power.

During the thirty-five years which followed the Civil War (1865-1900), America achieved a meteoric rise to industrial and military power seldom if ever paralleled in the history of the world.

Britain produced one and a half times more goods than the U.S. in 1860, but by 1900, America had overtaken her and now produced twice as many goods as she did.

Even during the Civil War, the United States continued to grow — expanded its industries, built new railroads, factories and prospered.

No major wars or international developments occurred under the presidencies of: James A. Garfield (1881), Chester A. Arthur (1881-5), Grover Cleveland (1885-9), Benjamin Harrison (1889-93), Grover Cleveland (2nd term — 1893-7). But during this period there was continued *industrial*, and *agricultural* expansion. Several new states were added to the Union between 1865 and 1900: Nebraska, Colorado, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Washington, Idaho, Wyoming and Utah. Many large corporations (or *trusts*) arose during this period. Immigrants continued to pour into the U.S. from Europe. It was during the latter part of the 19th century that immigrants first began to arrive in large numbers from eastern and southern Europe. Before this time the bulk of immigrants had come primarily from the countries of northwest Europe.

Prelude to Spanish-American War

Following the Civil War of 1861-65, America was to enjoy a third of a century of uninterrupted peace — except for a few skirmishes with certain Indian tribes.

But Americans had long been troubled by the way Spain was conducting affairs in Cuba. Many influential Americans had long disapproved of the Spanish administration in Cuba. They charged the Spaniards who ruled that island with being corrupt, tyrannical and cruel.

Spanish restrictions on trade and industry, high taxes and indifference toward education and social welfare had kept Cuba a poor and backward island.

The Spanish government had been so weak and its policies so badly carried out that the Cubans rose in revolt in 1895 — demanding their *independence*. Spain began sending troops (200,000 in all) to crush the revolt. The Governor of Cuba, Valeriano Weyler, crammed large numbers of civilians into concentration camps, where many thousands died from hunger, exposure, and disease due to unsanitary living conditions.

Conditions in the Spanish-operated concentration camps were horrendous and Spanish cruelties and atrocities were detestable. But America's "yellow journalism" greatly exaggerated the evils of Spanish rule in Cuba. This was especially true of Joseph Pulitzer's *New York World*, — and William Randolph Hearst's recently founded *New York Journal*. A news correspondent in Cuba is said to have wired Hearst a message saying that there was no war in Cuba. He got a swift directive from Hearst: "You furnish the pictures, and I'll furnish the war!"

The American people held an intense and traditional sympathy for a colonial people struggling for independence — ever since America won her's in 1776. These sentiments caused a popular demand for America to take action in Cuba that would put an end to the oppressive and cruel Spanish rule, and would free the Cubans so they could rule themselves as they saw fit. Many influential leaders of the nation — especially in Congress — began to clamor for war.

President Grover Cleveland had been able to resist giving in to the popular demand for war with Spain, and President William McKinley was himself strongly opposed to war. But the clamor became louder and louder. Increasingly, it became harder to resist all the pressures of moving America toward the brink of war.

In November, 1897, President McKinley used U.S. influence to pressure Spain into granting Cuba limited self-government within the Spanish Empire. But it was a case of too little too late. The rebel insurgents demanded *complete independence*. So the struggle went on.

"Remember the Maine!"

In the meantime, pro-Spanish mobs in Havana began rioting in protest against self-government. This moved America to send the battleship *Maine* to Havana in order to protect American lives and property. The *Maine* arrived in Havana harbor on January 25th, 1898. Three

weeks later, on February 15th, a deafening explosion blew up the battleship and killed over 260 American seamen.

Who or what had caused the *Maine* to explode? Was it purely an accident? Did *Cuban insurgents* blow up the *Maine* so America would think the Spanish did it — and declare war on Spain? Or, did Spanish agents actually blow up the *Maine* in order to remove this American threat from Havana harbor? No one will ever know.

But the Americans were firmly convinced this was wanton murder of 260 U.S. lives, and Spain would have to pay for this act of savage brutality! “Remember the *Maine*!” became a popular slogan of the time, and some lengthened this to, “Remember the *Maine*, to hell with Spain!” Americans were now fighting mad, and right or wrong, they were rolling up their sleeves ready for action.

Somehow, many Americans believed the previous pronouncement of the Monroe Doctrine gave them the *right* — nay, the *duty* — to interfere in the affairs of the nations of Central or Southern America — whenever they thought it wise to do so.

Even though Spain offered to submit the question of who blew up the *Maine* to arbitration, the American public had already acted as judge and jury: Spain was guilty, and there were no if’s, and’s or but’s about it! America’s outraged public instantly blamed Spain, and demanded immediate war!

Pressure had now built up to the point where even President McKinley (who had *tried* to avoid war) was unable to resist any longer. In March, 1898, he sent three notes demanding that Spain grant full independence to Cuba. Spain granted an armistice, but flatly refused to grant independence. War was now inevitable.

War Is Declared

President McKinley at last yielded to the war party in Congress, and sent a special message to Congress declaring that “the war in Cuba must stop.” On April 11, he asked Congress for the authority to use armed force “to secure and full and final termination of hostilities between the Government of Spain and the people of Cuba.”

Congress’ response was swift and emphatic. On April 20, it passed resolutions declaring that “the people of Cuba are, and of right ought to be, free and independent,” and demanded that Spain immediately relinquish authority over Cuba and withdraw its forces from the island. Congress also authorized the President to use the army and navy to enforce America’s demand.

A fourth resolution clearly renounced any idea of annexing Cuba. (But it is a fact that the U.S. had planned to annex that island several years earlier!)

Spain severed diplomatic relations with the U.S. and declared war on America on April 24th; and the U.S. followed this with a declaration of war on Spain on April 25th (made retroactive to the 21st). At last war had come! President McKinley immediately called for 125,000 volunteers.

From the beginning, the war was pathetically one-sided. The U.S. wasn't fully prepared for war, but Spain was even less prepared for combat — especially with so formidable a power as the U.S.

Dewey Blockades Manila

The island of Cuba was not the scene of the first battle. Manila Bay, in the Philippines, was the first area of conflict. Commodore George Dewey was ordered to sail America's Asiatic Squadron from Hong Kong to Manila Bay. This U.S. fleet of six warships destroyed the entire Spanish fleet of ten vessels, silenced the shore batteries, and captured Cavite without the loss of a single American life, and with no serious damage to any of the U.S. warships.

Commodore Dewey then blockaded Manila harbor while he patiently waited for the arrival of U.S. troops.

In the meantime, America's North Atlantic squadron, commanded by Rear Admiral William T. Sampson, began a partial blockade of Cuba — while prowling the Caribbean Sea on the lookout for the Spanish fleet under command of Admiral Pascual Cervera Topete.

The Spanish fleet was located on May 28th in the harbor of Santiago in eastern Cuba, and the American army began laying siege to that city. As soon as the siege had begun, the governor of Cuba ordered Admiral Cervera to run the naval blockade in order to save his ships.

The Spanish fleet sailed out of Santiago harbor and along the Cuban coast, all the while under hot pursuit by American naval vessels under command of Commodore Winfield S. Schley. A running battle followed, in which all the Spanish ships were either sunk or forced to beach, and their crews were taken prisoners.

Santiago Surrenders

Meanwhile, American forces under Major General William R. Shafter landed 15,000 troops near Santiago. The Spanish forces offered little resistance to the troop landings. Colonel Leonard Wood and Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Roosevelt and their "Rough Riders" took part in that campaign, thereby becoming national heroes. Santiago surrendered on July 17th.

On July 25th, Major General Nelson A. Miles began an invasion of Puerto Rico. His troops met almost no opposition.

In the meantime, several contingents had arrived in the Philippines, as Commodore Dewey continued his blockade of Manila Bay. On August 13th, American forces entered and occupied Manila. This kept Filipino patriots out of the city. Commodore Dewey did not know that an armistice had been signed the previous day, for the cables had been cut.

It was as a result of the Spanish-American War that America acquired her "empire." There is nothing to suggest that the U.S. President, the Congress, or the people entered the war seeking an empire! America just somehow stumbled into her empire — much as Britain had done with her empire.

What were the actual results of the Spanish-American War?

The war proved disastrous for Spain. She lost her last remaining colonies both in the Caribbean, and in the Pacific. Spain also lost many killed and wounded, and her national pride was dealt a serious blow.

What did the U.S. gain from the war with Spain? Firstly, the peace treaty, signed in Paris on December 10, 1898, granted Cuba its independence. And Spain ceded Guam, Puerto Rico and the Philippines to the United States. In return for this, America agreed to pay Spain the face-saving sum of \$20,000,000.

The Spanish-American War only lasted three months, and the price in human casualties was rather light. Only about 400 were killed in combat, while nearly 5,000 died by disease. During that war, America learned that she was not prepared (in the medical field) to fight a foreign war. This caused her to make certain needed changes.

Furthermore, the Spanish-American War underlined the need for America to build a canal across the Isthmus of Central America so she would be better able to move her ships and supplies in any future war.

America's New Empire

The war left America with a number of colonies and overseas territories which she would have to administer. This caused the United States to begin thinking *globally*, not just nationally.

In fact, it was the Spanish-American War which made America into an *imperial power* — and at the same time revealed to herself and to the world that she had achieved the stature of a world power. America already realized that she far outstripped all other nations in industrial production. And she had gone from fifth or sixth as a naval power to the second most powerful maritime power — second only to Great Britain. At last, Americans were beginning to wake up to the fact that they had the means to be a top rank power in the world.

Beginning with the Spanish-American War of 1898, the U.S. had shown the world that it also had the will to use its new-found power on a global scale.

Being a world power, of course, carries with it certain accompanying headaches. The U.S. would soon learn that lesson. Many Americans were strongly against the U.S. becoming an imperial power. They did not want to annex the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Guam, Hawaii, or any other overseas territories.

America's attempt to subdue the Philippines was her first example of the cost of running an empire. She was forced to employ 70,000 U.S. troops over a three-year period in order to subdue the Filipinos. America found little difficulty in ousting Spain from the Philippines, but it took a great deal of time, money and bloodshed to convince the Filipinos of the benefits of the American civilization.

America believed the Spaniards had not wisely ruled the Philippines, and the Filipinos certainly didn't love their masters. What should America do with the Philippines? The U.S. knew that the Filipinos were not well enough *educated* and didn't have sufficient training to rule themselves. So it just seemed natural that the mantle of government should fall on U.S. shoulders.

Also, the U.S. could see that there would be many benefits in having a strong Pacific base in the Philippines — as America's back door to Asia. Furthermore both Japan and Britain expressed approval of U.S. annexation of the Philippines.

The Spanish-American War also stimulated more enthusiasm for a stronger U.S. Navy, which would soon expand from fifth or sixth to second place among the world's war fleets. Without a strong navy, no nation could maintain an overseas empire, or protect its trading rights in far-flung corners of the globe.

Finally, the war forced the world — both friend and foe — to see that America was a very powerful nation. This greatly enhanced America's image abroad. The other nations began to have more respect for this rising colossus of North America. No one had better try pulling the tail feathers of the mighty American Eagle!