

THE POLITICS OF IOWA DURING THE CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION

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The politics of Iowa during the civil war and reconstruction by Olynthus B. Clark

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OLYNTHUS B. CLARK

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CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION

BY
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PREFACE

This work is intended to be a contribution to the history of politics in Iowa, during the period from 1860 to 1873, and more especially, through the State as a unit, to throw light upon the National situation. It aims to show the attitude of the State toward the National issues and the part played therein. It traces the changes in political opinion and the attendant party reorganizations. Thus is followed the solidarity of the Republican party, the shifting policy of the Democracy, the question of a "Union" party with the attendant third-party, fusion schemes, to the culmination of the Reconstruction issues in the Liberal Movement. Since the particular field is unworked, it has seemed best to follow, in the main, the chronological method of treatment.

The study is the outgrowth of investigation into the politics of the northern States, during the period of the Civil War and Reconstruction, being carried on by Professor William A. Dunning of Columbia University. In the preparation of this work, the author is indebted to Professor Dunning, not only for his inspiration in its writing, but for his careful reading and revision of the manuscript. Special mention is due Mr. Fred K. Deming, sometime student of the writer, for his aid rendered in the gathering of data. The writer himself is responsible for the many shortcomings of the work.

O. B. C.

APRIL 22, 1911.

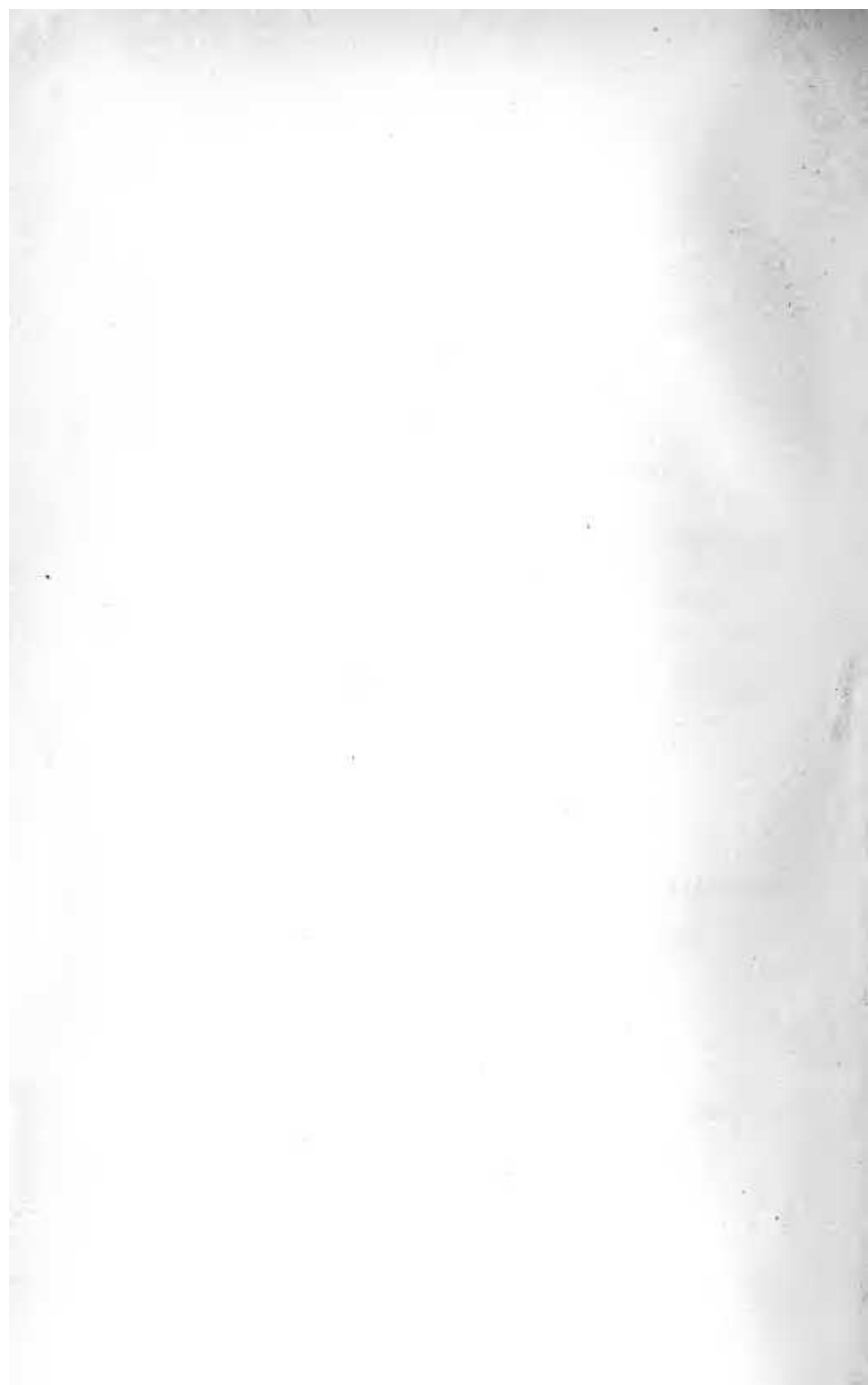


TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	I.	INTRODUCTION: THE ANTE-BELLUM POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION OF IOWA — 1854 TO 1859.	1
		Political parties and their contest for the control of the State — Study of elections — Leading men — The new Constitution — Break-up of the Democracy — The political situation.	
CHAPTER	II.	POLITICAL PARTIES IN 1860.	14
		Iowa in the National Conventions — The State nominating conventions — The four party tickets — The campaign — The Wide-awakes — The election — Study of the vote.	
CHAPTER	III.	POST-ELECTION ISSUES.	54
		Attitude toward secession — Formation of opinion — Republicans generally united against — Democracy divided — Attitude toward compromise — Republican position one of opposition — Democrats generally favor compromise.	
CHAPTER	IV.	IOWA'S DEFENSE OF THE UNION.	74
		The first "Union" movements — Democrats hold "Union" meetings and favor conciliation — The Republicans inaugurate the policy of coercion — Non-partisan response to call to arms — The extra session of the legislature, 1861 — Politics — Iowa on a war footing.	
CHAPTER	V.	POLITICAL READJUSTMENT OF 1861.	105
		The question of party reorganization — The Democracy — Republicans — The party conventions — A "People's" party — Question of a "Union" party — Second series of State conventions — Attitude of Republicans — The fusion movement — Election.	

CHAPTER VI. POLITICAL SOLIDARITY OF 1862. 134

Preliminaries of the party conventions — The Ninth General Assembly — Indictments for treason — Political situation — The State conventions of 1862 — No third party — Issues of the canvass — Question of the soldier vote — Attitude toward emancipation — Election.

CHAPTER VII. THE REPUBLICAN PARTY, THE "PARTY OF THE UNION". .. 172

Position of the Republicans in 1863 — Maintenance of their organization — The "Party of the Union" — State convention — Course of the Democracy — Party divided but maintains organization — Democrats again swap candidates — The campaign — The soldier vote — Election of 1863.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: THE ANTE-BELLUM POLIT-
ICAL TRANSFORMATION OF IOWA

1854-1859

The political transformation of Iowa during the decade preceding the Civil War is one of the land-marks of the State's history. By 1858 the change from the old Democratic régime to the dominance of the Republican party was complete. Although slight changes appear before, this transformation practically began in 1854 by the election of a Whig Governor, James W. Grimes, and ended in 1859 in the choice of Samuel J. Kirkwood, over the Democratic veteran, Augustus C. Dodge. Within these five years the Republican party supplanted the compromising Whig party and became the champion of the issues against the now time-serving Democracy. Before the end of the decade the Republicans came to control the administrative offices of the State, both branches of the legislature, the judicial offices, and the vast complex of local functionaries. They then retired the Democratic members of Iowa from the House of Representatives and the United States Senate.

But while the Republican supremacy was real and the political transformation of the State was complete, yet the Republican majorities were not beyond the danger mark. There was always present the possibility of an overthrow in any active and determined campaign which the Democrats might inaugurate—a fact not always realized or at least acknowledged by partisans. In fact