

THE AMERICAN WAR

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The American war by Newman Hall

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By NEWMAN HALL, LL.D.

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THE AMERICAN WAR.

In this lecture I propose briefly to trace the course of American history in relation to the present war, and then to reply to the questions—Had the South a right to secede? Is the North justified in waging war to restore the Union? How far is the question of Slavery mixed up with the quarrel? On which side should the sympathy of England be enlisted?

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

The quarrel between the North and the South, though it has only just developed in war, is of long growth. There are physical differences of climate, causing differences of labor, of production, of commercial interests, and of character. Added to this, we must bear in mind the original difference between the colonists. The North was peopled chiefly by the puritan and republican party, escaping from the tyranny of the Stuart kings. The South was peopled chiefly by the cavalier, aristocratic, and monarchical party. The result of the combined action of difference in the original settlers, and difference in the physical features of the countries occupied, was unavoidable. Moreover, emigration naturally flowed

more to the North, as better suited for the energies of Europeans. The labor market of the South was supplied by the importation of Negro slaves. This increased the difference between the North and the South. In the North, partly from motives of political economy, still more from a deeply-rooted love of freedom and from religious considerations, slavery was gradually abolished, while in the South it rapidly increased. Thus, from the beginning, the North and South were different in character, with interests which from being not identical, eventually became antagonistic.

The colonies, having revolted from Great Britain, were constituted as the United States, and on July 4, 1776, the famous Declaration of Independence was issued. The fundamental principle of the Union was this—that while united with the other States for general national objects, each State retained its own sovereign right to regulate its separate affairs. The Union, as such, might deal with commerce, taxation for national purposes, peace and war, foreign relations, and the territories belonging to the States in common; but it could not, as a Union, in any way interfere with the local taxation and expenditure, or the domestic institutions of the several States composing that Union.

Each State was to send two members to the Senate, or Upper House of Congress. And for every 33,000 of population, subsequently raised to 120,000, one member was to be sent to the Lower House, or House of Repre-

sentatives. It is evident that those districts which most increased in population would enlarge their power in Congress, by the increased number of their representatives. Though the South increased, the ratio of increase was much greater in the North. Thus, while originally Virginia sent ten members as compared with six from New York, now, Virginia sends eleven members, while New York sends thirty. Thus the power which rested originally with the South, has gone over to the North by the operation of natural causes and in accordance with the constitution. But this transfer, in every stage of its process, has increased the rivalry between North and South.

The States forming the original Union were thirteen. The thinly occupied districts where as yet there was no sufficient population for self-government, were called Territories, and, as the common property of the Union were governed by Congress. A certain amount of population was a qualification for the Territories to claim admission as new States. As each State sent two members to the Senate, it soon became a question of importance whether the State applying for admission would strengthen the interests of the North, or those of the South. This depended on whether the new State was a Slave State or a Free. The original desire and intention of the founders of the Union was to get rid of slavery altogether. This was seen in the decree of Congress in 1787, forbidding slavery in any of the territories N. W. of the river

Ohio ; as well as by the gradual abolition of slavery in the several Northern States, by the action of their respective governments.

In 1820, a great struggle took place on the question of the admission of Missouri. This district formed part of the territory of Louisiana, where slavery existed when it was purchased from France in 1803. "If admitted, it must be as *Free*," said the North ; "because it is N. W. of the Ohio, and therefore subject to the law of 1787." "If admitted, it must be as *Slave*," said the South ; "because in fact, slavery exists there already." Agreement was brought about by what is called the *Missouri Compromise*. Missouri was admitted as a Slave-State ; but it was decreed that slavery should not be allowed in any State hereafter to be annexed above a certain geographical line ; viz., 36° 30' N. Latitude. South of that limit, the question might be determined by the inhabitants of the district ; in American phrase it was left to "Squatter Sovereignty."

In 1832, another fierce controversy arose. There had been during many years a conflict of interests in relation to tariffs. During war with Great Britain no manufactures were imported. The demand had to be supplied by home produce. Factories sprang up in the North. When peace was proclaimed, and British goods threatened to deluge the market, a high protective duty was put on them by the United States Government, in the interest of their own manufactures. But these manufac-

turers were Northerners. The produce of the South was agricultural only. There were advocates of both systems in the Slave States and in the Free. Yet for the most part the North became protectionists, while the South were chiefly in favor of free-trade. A high tariff in 1832 caused great discontent in South Carolina, which State proceeded to pass an act of "Nullification," refusing to obey the laws of the united government. Their opposition was yielded to, and a modified tariff hastily adopted, in order to preserve the Union from the threatened danger of dismemberment. But on that occasion, President Jackson, in his annual "message" protested that "The right of a single State to absolve themselves from the most solemn obligations cannot be acknowledged."

Another contention arose in connection with Texas, which was a province of Mexico, where slavery had been abolished. A land of freedom in their close neighborhood was a grievance to the Southerners. So, a party of them entered Texas, fomented an insurrection, and raised the standard of revolt. The Mexican army was defeated, and the Southerners demanded that Texas should be recognized and admitted as a new and Slave State. Their cry was "Texas or disunion." Long discussions arose, terminating in the admission of Texas, and consequently a war with Mexico.

Slaves were continually escaping from the southern into the northern States. Here, by the constitution, they were not safe, as the southern masters might claim and