

Chapter 17

The Old South Begins a New Life

THE SHARECROPPER SYSTEM DEVELOPS

A YOUNG CONFEDERATE officer in his gray uniform rode up a long lane of moss-covered oaks to the big white house which he called home. No servant waited to take his horse to the barn and no loved one crossed the porch to welcome him. After the fall of Vicksburg in 1863, his family had fled to Carolina to escape the Union armies which swept over the Mississippi. The shutters were closed. The door was locked. The place was deserted.

The officer walked around the house, stumbling through his mother's flower beds where weeds occupied the berths of hyacinths and jonquils. A few yards behind the house he found the kitchen of home-burned brick and nearby, the log house where slaves had done the family washing. A little farther on he came to the smokehouse. Hams and sides of bacon had been cured there in hog-killing time. He poked his head inside sniffing for the old familiar smell of smoking pork and burning wood. The rafters were empty.

Through weeds waist-high he stomped a path to the poultry yard, the pigeon roost, and the dove cote. He stood still, listening

for the quaint call of the guinea hens and the startled warning of the peacock at the approach of strangers. Well he knew the fowls had been roasted and eaten by the invading army that lived off the land. He passed the barn without hearing a neigh of a horse or the bray of a mule. The stock had been taken to pull the supply wagons of a Union army or as mounts for Union cavalry. A few vines of beans clung to the fence of the vegetable garden where okra, peppers, cabbage, onions, eggplant, peas, and squashes were grown to feed his family and the hundred slaves his father had owned. In the orchard hard green knobs on the branches of peach trees brought a ray of hope. Something was still growing.

Walking back to the house he pondered what to do. He had nothing left but land. As he gazed down the tree-lined lane, he saw a mule cart driving up to the carriage entrance of the old mansion. In the cart was one of his former slaves with his wife and children. The soldier smiled and stepped forward to greet him. Both were bankrupt – the former master and the former slave. One was a landowner without labor to cultivate his fields. The other was a farmer without an acre to plow. The two men made a deal.

“How about planting cotton on shares?” the owner asked. “I’ll borrow enough money to feed us until we sell the crop. Then you take half and I’ll take half.”

The freedman gladly moved into his cabin on the old home ground. The sharecropper system aided former masters and former slaves in making a difficult adjustment. This plan partially restored agriculture all over the South. The sharecropper would get from one third to one half of the value of the crop.

White families, too poor to own land, also farmed plots of ground on the shares. After the War Between the States, the sharecropper system largely replaced slave labor because the freedmen preferred it. They were working for themselves. In 1875 a planter in Arkansas told a Congressman who had gone down South to investigate conditions that cotton picking was more successful with free labor than with slaves:

During slave times we never got through picking so early or saved the whole crop in such good order as now. Sometimes the cotton was not all gathered before March. Now the fields are usually stripped clean before frost comes.

COTTON LEADS THE WAY TO PROSPERITY

THE NEGROES, reared on the land, knew how to plant, chop, and pick cotton. When freed they turned first to the only work they knew how to do well enough to earn a livelihood. In the mild climate they could find some kind of field work nearly every month in the year. With farming on the share the desolate plantations slowly took on new life. Many tracts of land remained idle because the owners waited for better times. Progress was slow during

the first ten years after the war when the southerners were hampered by the troubles of the reconstruction period.

By 1880 a new spirit took root among the people. On the level lowlands of the southern states fields burst into fluffy blossoms as before the war. Negroes sang as of old to lighten the load of the long white picking bags which they dragged behind them down the rows of cotton plants. Mule-drawn wagons waited in line at busy cotton gins. As prosperity increased with the years, levees and docks groaned under the weight of cotton, baled with burlap and bound with metal tape. At Savannah, New Orleans, and Mobile deckhands heaved the bales of precious fiber on board the freighters to the rhythmic chant of the work song, “Roll The Cotton Down.”

After the war the southerners knew they must find a way to reestablish themselves. What was the way? It was to build factories for turning cotton into cloth on or near the same plantations where it was grown. The planters could then sell their cotton near home. This would save the expense of hauling it long distances for shipment to the textile mills of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and across the seas in Europe. Any country, to be independent of other nations, needs to manufacture enough products to supply its own people. Long before the War Between the States, far-seeing men had realized that the South, to become self-supporting and independent, must develop manufacturing and not depend entirely upon agriculture. The small plantation factories began with a Whitney gin which combed the sticky seeds from the cotton bolls. Little by little machines were added to spin the fiber.

Four years before the war began, one inventor advertised that his machine could

gin and spin into yarn 100 bales of cotton, each one weighing 500 pounds, between the first of September and the first of March. His sales argument emphasized the fact that his machine could be operated by five little girls, eight to twelve years of age; by one girl twelve to fourteen; and by three older men and women too crippled or too feeble to toil in the fields. It was not necessary, the inventor declared, to use the strong young slaves needed for the hard labor of planting, chopping, and picking cotton. Thus, before the war, did child labor begin in the cotton mills of the South.

In 1860 there were about 160 cotton mills in the South. Their yearly output sold for more than \$8,000,000. During the war these mills were worked so hard that the machinery wore out. Some were destroyed by invading armies. In 1870 there were fewer mills operating than in 1860. After the war when a number of the large plantations began to break up into smaller farms, factories moved into towns and villages. However, the growth was slow because people long accustomed to farm tools had to be trained to handle machinery. Then, too, there was little money to be invested. In some communities people invested their savings on an instalment plan to gather capital for mills. The subscriptions to the stock amounted to fifty cents or a dollar a week, and it took two to four years to pay for a single share. Since this sum was enough to pay in part for the machinery and the buildings, the factory equipment was often purchased on the instalment plan. In this way the southerners were able to develop industry to provide employment and raise their standard of living.

To establish a mill, some town boun-

daries were changed to reduce taxes on a factory site. Sometimes, taxes were not assessed upon mills until they were operating on a paying basis. This same plan had been used in New England after the Revolutionary War to start manufacturing and relieve the hard times that followed that war.

PREWAR CROPS CONTRIBUTE TO POSTWAR RECOVERY

WHILE COTTON LED the way toward a new industrial South, many people clung to the security of the land, earning their living in agriculture. To rebuild their broken fortunes the southerners started with the land, growing the same crops on the same plantations as before the war. From the early colonial days rice had been the leading crop in the lowlands of Georgia and South Carolina. With the invention of Whitney's gin, cotton had become the leading crop.

Twenty-five years before the Declaration of Independence, the first sugar cane had been planted in New Orleans. A transport with two hundred French soldiers on board had made a stopover for supplies at a port on San Domingo, an island in the West Indies. The vessel was bound for New Orleans. Jesuits living in San Domingo had asked the captain to take along some cane for the Jesuits in New Orleans. They also sent a few Negroes who knew how to make sugar from the plant. The Jesuits of New Orleans planted the cane in their garden and cultivated it with great care. French planters, out of curiosity, had accepted cane from the priests to try out on their own plantations. It took years to develop a variety of cane that would thrive in the

climate of Louisiana and to develop a process for making sugar from the sweet syrup. Nearly fifty years after the first cane was planted in the Jesuits' garden, a Spanish planter proudly presented two loaves of white sugar to a Spanish official. At a grand dinner the official had displayed the little loaves of sugar and then dropped them into a pot of coffee. He gave each guest a sip of the sweetened drink. However, it took years to perfect a process for making white crystals which could be shipped long distances without spoiling.

After the War Between the States, sugar mills were built in the cane-growing region of Louisiana. This was the southeastern part through which the Mississippi River meanders to the Gulf of Mexico. Year after year, for centuries, flood waters of the great river had washed over this flat land, leaving a film of fresh earth washed down from upstream. In this rich black soil of the delta region where the climate was hot and humid, the sugar cane grew thick and tall.

However, while rice, cotton, and sugar were big plantation products, small crops did more to bring a new way of life to the South than did the big crops. When fruits and vegetables were produced, many of the large plantations began to break up into small farms and garden tracts. These products had been grown on the old plantations for household use but not much for the market. A Mississippi planter of pre-war days wrote in his diary:

March 4, 1844 – Received a lot of fruit trees from a nursery in Tennessee, 30 varieties of apple, 6 of plum, and 3 of pear.

April 9, 1845 – Ridging up one acre, intending to plant sweet potatoes. Planted squash on the 5th and the 8th.

April 24, 1845 – Planted my watermelon patch today.

February 14, 1854 – Sowed cabbage, lettuce,

and celery yesterday, and peas, parsnips, and beets today. Planted 2 barrels of Irish potatoes on the 11th.

March 27, 1855 – Began planting cotton today.

April 9, 1855 – Planting rice near the creek.

April 18, 1855 – Sowed two acres of corn yesterday. Plowed one acre of millet today. Finished planting cotton on the 16th. Thermometer was 94 degrees yesterday.

April 20, 1855 – Planted two dozen hills of Chinese sugar cane received from Atlanta, Georgia.

June 27, 1855 – Magnificent rain; began this eve and rained about one half an hour. Glorious! GLORIOUS!

The Mississippi planter who raised fruits and vegetables to feed his family and his slaves, depended upon cotton, rice, and cane to bring in the money. Little did he dream that the day would come when hothouse gardeners in his neighborhood would sell their fresh vegetables daily, for cash, in northern states covered with snow. The warm Gulf States gradually became the winter gardens of Minnesota, Illinois, Ohio, New York, and Massachusetts. Fast transportation made this possible. The Railroad Act, passed by Congress during the war, provided for the building of the first continental railroad. Later, the railroad “boom” struck the South, opening new markets for new products from new farms and new factories. With more in common the two sections of the country grew closer together.

In increasing numbers Negro farm hands left the fields of Alabama and Mississippi to work in the growing industrial cities of Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Illinois. Northerners moved down South to establish mills and to go into business. Southerners went West. Some sold their fine plantations for two to ten dollars an acre. Some advertised their holdings for fifty cents an acre. A few returned

Confederate soldiers had sold out and migrated to Mexico and Brazil. General Lee, beloved southern leader, advised his countrymen to remain and “share the fate of their respective states. The South requires the aid of her sons now more than at any period of her history.” Most of them stayed, enduring the stormy period of reconstruction. During this time perplexing problems arose that had not been solved even a hundred years later.

THE POSTWAR ADJUSTMENT WAS DIFFICULT FOR ALL

BEFORE ALL of the Confederate soldiers had surrendered, Lincoln was dead. The Vice President, Andrew Johnson, took over his high office and tackled the difficult problems of reconstruction in the seceded states. Although Johnson attempted to carry out Lincoln’s plans, “with malice toward none,” he failed. The confusion that existed was well expressed in an editorial appearing in the *North American Review*:

There is hardly a Senator or member of Congress now who does not think that he has hit upon a sovereign remedy for the southern ill, if he can only secure its adoption, but there is no general agreement on anything.

Objecting to the President’s lenient policy, Congress demanded the right to deal with the southern problems.

Thaddeus Stevens, a lawyer elected to the House of Representatives from Pennsylvania, stirred the spirit of revenge in Congress. “Old Thad,” in his seventies, was a bitter enemy of the South. Under his powerful leadership, Congress passed the Great Reconstruction Act on March 2,

1867, and two additional acts establishing military governments in the seceded states. All three acts were vetoed by President Johnson but were passed over his veto.

The seceded states were divided into five military districts, each of which was governed by a military officer. This officer supervised the registration of voters in his district. All men who had taken part in the war in any way were denied the right to vote. This ruling prevented most of the educated men and property owners from holding office or selecting any one for office. All male citizens “of whatever race, color, or previous condition” were allowed to vote and choose delegates to a constitutional convention where a new constitution would be framed to be submitted to the registered voters. If this constitution was ratified and accepted by Congress and the legislature ratified the Fourteenth Amendment, the state would belong to the Union again. The states would again send Representatives and Senators to Congress. The Fourteenth Amendment finally read:

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

The main purpose of the Fourteenth Amendment was to protect the freed Negroes in their rights, including the vote. Other articles excluded former Confederates from the right to hold office until Congress restored their citizenship and outlawed the debts of the Confederacy.

The educated, planting families were not allowed to vote or hold office. With few exceptions, they had taken part in the war. For generations, the members of these families had been the governors, congressmen, judges, army officers, and legislators. The governments of the southern states were then operated by Negroes and poor whites, many of whom could neither read nor write. Unscrupulous men from the North settled in the South to take advantage of this situation. Although some may have been interested in helping to rebuild the South, the majority were there to make money for themselves and by any means.

In this period it was the fashion to carry traveling bags made of Brussels carpet in bright, flowery designs. Because many of these adventurers owned little except what they carried in their suitcases, they were nicknamed carpetbaggers.

Since the President objected to this injustice under military rule, "Old Thad" welcomed any opportunity to strike down his foe. On March 2, 1867, along with the Reconstruction Act, Congress passed the Tenure of Office Act, denying the President the right to discharge any member of his cabinet without consent of the Senate. Johnson removed his Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton, his enemy in the cabinet and a friend of Stevens. (According to the Constitution, a President of the United States can be impeached by the House of Representatives for failure to execute the law.) Johnson declared he had not failed to obey the Tenure of Office Act because Stanton had been appointed by Lincoln. In fiery speeches, "Old Thad" accused the President of "high crimes and misdemeanors" and called for his impeachment.

By a two-thirds vote of the House of Representatives, Johnson was impeached.

The Constitution provides that the Senate shall hold the trial of an impeached President, with the Chief Justice of the United States presiding. With the South under military rule, there were fifty-four Senators, and a two-thirds vote was necessary to convict Johnson. After nearly two months of the trial, the vote was taken on May 26, 1868. Chief Justice Salmon P. Chase, asked each Senator the same question:

"Is Andrew Johnson, President of the United States, guilty or not guilty of a high misdemeanor, as charged . . . ?"

Each Senator rose from his seat and stood to answer.

"Guilty," said thirty-five.

"Not guilty," replied nineteen.

Johnson escaped removal from office by only one vote, and completed his term of office.

In 1868 Ulysses S. Grant, hero of Vicksburg and Appomattox and the most popular man in the nation, was elected President of the United States, to succeed Johnson. Grant, elected on the Republican ticket, supported the Congressional plan of reconstruction, which resulted in carpetbag rule in the South. Unscrupulous politicians spread the story that freedmen who voted the Republican ticket would receive "forty acres and a mule." Some Negroes came to the polls carrying a halter to take home the mule General Grant was to give them. Other swindlers sold, red, white, and blue sticks for one dollar each, for Negroes to use in staking off the forty acres the Government had in store for them. All freedmen were not so easily fooled. Many saved their meager earnings to buy land for themselves, sometimes

forty acres from their former masters. They continued to live in the same neighborhood that was home to them. As a general rule the freedmen who chose to stay on their old plantations, earning wages or sharing crops, suffered less in making the adjustment from slavery to freedom than did those who uprooted themselves, and wandered from place to place looking for a free mule.

Under the protection of United States soldiers, elections were held to select delegates to conventions to form new constitutions. Most of the voters and candidates were Negroes or carpetbaggers, since all who had taken any part in the war were disfranchised. Because they were enjoying their privileges the delegates sometimes took many months to make a constitution. Then, when legislatures were chosen under the new constitution, the legislators extended the time of the sessions for the same reason. In South Carolina in 1873 three-fourths of the state legislature were Negroes, inexperienced in government. The public debt swelled to enormous proportions through unwise spending. In refurbishing the state house, five-dollar clocks were replaced by new ones costing \$600; \$4 looking glasses by \$600 mirrors; and \$1 chairs by new ones at \$60 each. Taxes paid for a free restaurant for members where hams, oysters, and champagne were served. The rich state of Louisiana probably suffered more from carpetbag rule than any other.

Although many southerners had been pardoned by Congress and allowed to hold office, general amnesty was withheld. In May, 1872 an Act of Congress restored the right to vote and hold office to all former Confederates, except certain leaders like Jefferson Davis, President of the Con-

federacy, and Generals Joseph E. Johnston and G.T. Beauregard of the army. Not until June 6, 1898, was full amnesty granted to all southerners, except a few leaders, who had taken part in the war.

Although Grant was reelected in 1872 for another four years, the people were generally dissatisfied with his Administration by the end of his second term. Grant was a soldier rather than a statesman. Being honest himself, he failed to detect dishonesty in officials he selected for office. His Presidential years were marred with widespread corruption in government circles. Congress voted to raise the pay of the President, Cabinet officers, and Congressmen when the country was in the throes of a depression following the Panic of 1873. It was discovered that a "Whiskey Ring" had been cheating the Government out of millions of dollars in taxes and that Grant's own secretary was involved in the scandal.

Money was scarce and times were hard but Grant was still a popular man. Fearing he might decide to run for a third time, the House of Representatives passed a resolution that any departure from the two-term precedent set by Washington "would be unwise, unpatriotic, and fraught with peril to our free institutions."

In 1876 the Republicans nominated Rutherford B. Hayes, governor of Ohio, as their Presidential candidate at their convention in Cincinnati. The Democrats assembled in St. Louis and nominated Samuel J. Tilden of New York. Tilden was well known for his part in destroying the "Tweed Ring" that had ruled New York City with a political machine. Boss Tweed and his associates had stolen many millions of dollars from the taxpayers of New York by various schemes. Tilden was in the public eye while Hayes was little known

outside his home state of Ohio. The vote was so close that the election was contested in four states, Oregon, South Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana. It was decided by a commission of five Representatives, five Senators, and five Associate Justices of the Supreme Court selected by the two houses of Congress. On March 2, Hayes was declared elected. He was secretly sworn into office the following day because the fourth of March was on Sunday in the year 1877.

Although the Democrats were disgruntled, the public soon learned that the new President was a fair-minded man. He knew how to choose strong and capable men for his Cabinet. He asked a former Confederate officer from Tennessee to be Postmaster General in his Cabinet. He even considered appointing the Confederate General, Joseph E. Johnston, as Secretary of War. The Republican Party would not approve that. President Hayes determined to bring the southerners back into the Union, in spirit as well as in form. He ordered the return of United States troops from the former seceded states where the carpetbag governments soon tottered and fell. The southerners themselves recovered control of their governments to begin the task of meeting the public debt piled up by the carpetbaggers; to restore business and find markets; and to rebuild their war-torn land. The year 1877 marks the end of an era when the South turned its back upon an old way of life to build a new way in the future.

EDUCATION BEGINS ANEW AFTER WAR

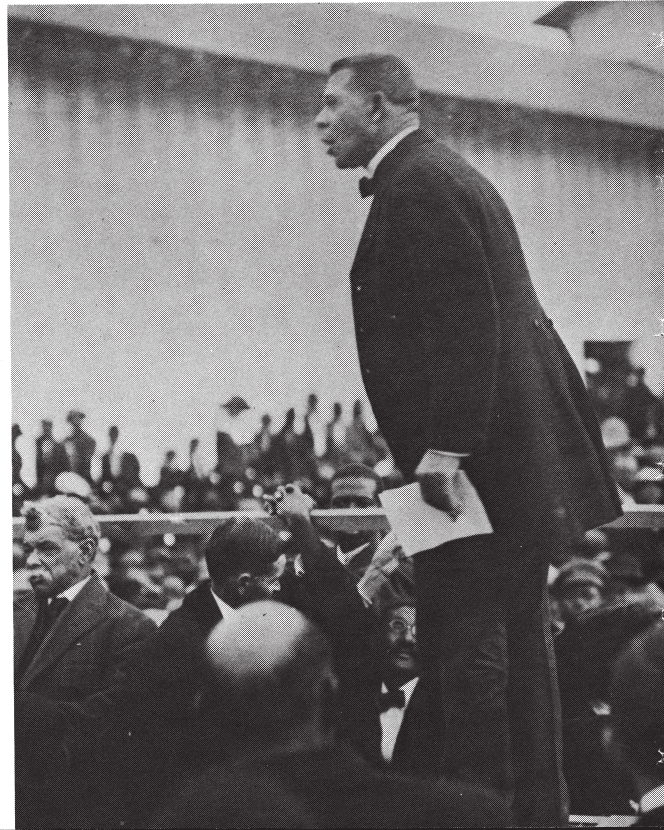
ON MARCH 3, 1865, before Lee surrendered, Congress passed a bill establishing a "Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and

Abandoned Lands," under the War Department. This Freedmen's Bureau was intended to aid the newly-freed slaves in adjusting to their new way of life. Hundreds of Negro families wandering from place to place had been a great burden to the Union armies. Some willingly chopped wood, dug trenches, and picked cotton in abandoned fields, and others did not understand why they should work when they were free.

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON SPEAKING IN SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA

Born a slave in Virginia, Booker T. Washington was seven years old when the Emancipation Proclamation freed him, and his family moved to West Virginia. After receiving an education at Hampton Institute, he devoted his life to the education and betterment of his own people. He traveled widely, advising Negroes to save their money to buy farms, to go into business, and to be self-supporting and independent. For his great service, his bust was placed in the New York University Hall of Fame, a long road from a slave cabin on a plantation.

Tuskegee Institute





TOMPKINS HALL, TUSKEGEE INSTITUTE, TUSKEGEE, ALABAMA

Tuskegee Institute

Tompkins Hall is one of the buildings on the campus of Tuskegee Institute, the famous school founded by Booker T. Washington in 1881 for Negroes. This school started in a small shanty with about forty students, all adults. Booker T. Washington began with teaching freedmen how to earn a living in new ways as carpenters, bricklayers, blacksmiths, cooks, farmers, and many trades, along with general schooling. Today, the school provides courses for college degrees.

Education was necessary. It was the only way the freedmen could learn to take care of themselves. As the Union armies advanced, a number of schools were started in churches and old barracks. Here reading and writing were taught by Northern volunteers, ministers, and women from the neighboring plantations, where some of the freed Negroes had stayed on.

It was not uncommon to see children and white-haired grandfathers spelling out loud in a class on a wide front porch, or outdoors under magnolia and live oak trees.

After the war ended, the state legislature of Florida passed resolutions to “establish

schools for freedmen when the number of children of persons of color, in any county or counties will warrant the same.” Other states did likewise. However, laws for education were only a small beginning, and results were disappointing. Schools for both black and white children were few in number and the teachers were poorly trained. Under the Freedmen’s Bureau, favorites of the carpetbaggers, some of whom could barely read and write, at times were hired to teach school. Negroes lost interest in poor schools, and the better teachers quit. When the Reconstruction period ended, property

owners were so burdened with debts piled up under carpetbag rule, that little money could be spared for education. Yet, as fast as possible, schools were built for both black and white children to give them the best education possible.

Learning to read and write was not enough. It took time for colleges and universities to recover from the ravages of war. In 1874, a professor in Louisiana University wrote in his diary:

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER IN HIS LABORATORY AT TUSKEGEE INSTITUTE

George Washington Carver, born of slave parents on a farm in Missouri near the end of the War Between the States, came to be known as "The Peanut Wizard." In his laboratory at Tuskegee Institute, he developed foods, beverages, medicines, cosmetics, dyes, paints, and numerous household products from peanuts. From the sweet potato he made about forty products. Dr. Carver received many medals, scrolls, and honorary degrees for his scientific experiments that included soil building, cotton-growing, and plant diseases.

Tuskegee Institute



Many a time during the year have we been doubtful of rations one and two days ahead – even sometimes of a morning we did not know that we could have anything for dinner. And this is a state school.

Private colleges also promoted education after the war. Among these schools was Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, founded for Negroes by Booker T. Washington. Although born a slave in 1856, Washington was educated at Hampton Institute in Virginia, an American Missionary Association school for training Negroes and Indians to be teachers and farmers, and to be self-supporting. At the age of twenty-five, Washington left Hampton Institute where he had been teaching, to become principal of a school in Tuskegee, Alabama. When he arrived, he learned that the school had not yet been built. On July 4, 1881, he opened his school in a shanty and enrolled forty students. Books and tools shared their time as they worked together. From this poor beginning grew Tuskegee Institute in which thousands of Negroes acquired skills in the trades and learned to make a living in new and better ways.

In 1896, Booker T. Washington invited the Negro scientist, Dr. George Washington Carver, then teaching at Iowa State College, to join the faculty of Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, as director of the Department of Agriculture. Dr. Carver, also born in slavery, brought fame to Tuskegee where he developed many new products from sweet potatoes and peanuts. George Washington Carver – scientist, artist, and musician, and Booker T. Washington – teacher, author, and lecturer, are buried on the campus of the college where they gave years of their lives to educate their own people.

In a hundred years, with education and

ambition, the Negro has won a high place in the professions, sports, arts, and in many other phases of American life.

IN THE MOUNTAIN REGIONS

THE SOUTHERN mountain people, largely of Scotch Irish and English ancestry with a sprinkling of French, are the descendants of the first American settlers. Their forefathers weathered Atlantic gales in sailing ships bound for the Carolinas. On rugged hillsides in a wilderness, they cleared a few acres and planted corn. From trees chopped down to clear the land, they erected log cabins and fashioned their furniture. The woods were full of game and the streams were stocked with fish. Their hogs roamed in the forest to fatten on acorns and their cattle grazed on wild hay. These first Americans were a proud and independent people who raised their own food, wove their own cloth, made their own laws, and created their own fun. Most important, they fought for their rights as free men. Their descendants are living today in the valley of the Tennessee River which has its headwaters in the mountains of eastern Tennessee, northern Georgia, and western regions of Virginia and North Carolina.

To a mountaineer, a "foreigner" was anyone who was not born on the ridge. Back in the hills a woman turned her spinning wheel while her children played about her feet. She had time to think about many things while her hands were busy with spinning. Sometimes, her back was bent over a washboard, while her hands rubbed clothes up and down, stopping now and then to smear homemade soap — soft, brown, and slimy — over the soiled knees

of homespun trousers. She distrusted a little the new ways and new notions which drifted in from the outside, that world beyond the mountains. In living apart, the everyday language of these descendants of early Americans still retains words and phrases from the time of Queen Elizabeth I.

The mountaineer plucked his homemade dulcimer and sang the "lonesome tunes" of the backwoodsman who led a lonely life and liked it. These ballads were often sad, telling a story of hardship on that first frontier.

In performing these tunes, which can still be heard today, the singer slides his voice from phrase to phrase, holds a long note like a sigh, and catches a breath when and where he needs it. The "lonesome tune" is slow, with long-held notes that echo down in the "holler." The verses are many in ballads and they tell a long story. Why hurry? There is plenty of time.

Of necessity, the early settlers were hunters. It was every boy's ambition to learn to shoot straight and to own a "huntin' houn'." The sun filtered through the blue-gray mist that wrapped the hills in a smoky haze. The tang of autumn was in the morning air. It was a good day for squirrel huntin'. The porch may sag and the door may creak but chores can wait for another day — tomorrow and tomorrow. Shortly after sun-up the mountaineer, with a gun on his shoulder and a hound at his heels, was trailing through the timberland where the trees were red and gold.

For generations these rural dwellers earned their living on the land. The men walked behind the plow; the women picked cotton; and the children pulled green and white striped worms off the leaves of tobacco plants. In time, the land wore out.

The soil did not supply enough food for healthy, growing plants. Heavy rains washed away the top dirt, and left worthless clay, and dug gullies through the fields. Some moved west to fresh land, but the time came when farms in new country were neither cheap nor plentiful. Then the hill farmer tried to stay on his home plot and earn a living through new methods of farming that gradually redeemed his land. Some succeeded, and others failed.

In recent years the tourists have begun to bring new prosperity to the mountaineers. When the summer days are hot and the air is stifling in the lowlands, the trees and streams of the Blue Ridge and the Great Smokies invite the vacationist to linger in the highlands. The tourist takes home a water jug fashioned from clay in a farmer's pit; a rag rug braided by hand or woven on a hand loom; a candlewick bedspread home-made in a mountain cabin. A cherished souvenir of a vacation trip is something real and personal. In meeting tourists, the mountaineers are becoming less suspicious of the "foreigner." However, jobs in industry are doing more than anything else to raise the living standards of people now living in the mountain region of the South.

TEXTILES LEAD THE WAY

BEFORE THE WAR Between the States, much of the South was plantation country. Manufacturing with hand tools was done on these estates to supply the family and servants with clothing and other necessities. After the conflict had ended in 1865, the region began to build a new way of life with new industries. Since cotton was the leading crop, textiles came first. The weaving of cloth is still the major industry

although much yardage is produced from other fibers as well as from cotton.

Twenty years before Lee's surrender at Appomattox, William Gregg had established a cotton mill in Horse Creek Valley, South Carolina. For this Gregg is remembered as the "father of southern cotton manufacture." Like many far-seeing men in the South, he believed that cotton should go from the field to the factory instead of being shipped to the northern states to be manufactured. His mill was still doing business a century later, weaving in one year enough cloth to encircle the earth twice at the equator.

In 1895 the Massachusetts Cotton Mills of Lowell erected a factory near Rome, Georgia, which has grown to great size. Other mills from New England moved into the South where labor was plentiful and cotton was near at hand. By the middle of the twentieth century three-fourths of the textiles produced in this country were woven in southern mills. Over a period of a hundred years these mills had been operated by water, steam, and electric power.

The by-products and various new processes shared in the output of these mills. A young veteran of World War I started a cotton mill when he was released from military service. He decided to try to make rayon, processed from wood pulp and cotton linters, left over when the seeds were crushed for oil. There was a time when plantation owners were quite discouraged with the cotton crop because it took the time of so many slaves to pick the seeds from the fluffy white lint. They welcomed Whitney's gin that combed out the worthless seeds. The early planters little dreamed that the sticky little seeds would some day become so valuable that

scientists would actually be working to develop a plant with more of them.

Textiles once meant woolens, cottons, linens, and silk. During the 1920's rayon became a staple fabric and its use increased for clothing, tire-cord, and carpeting. Rayon ushered in a feverish period of experiment in which textiles moved out of the plant and animal kingdoms into a fabulous world of chemistry. New chemical fabrics, known as synthetics, created a revolution in the textile industry. Sheep ranchers and cotton growers were worried. They wondered if their products of ancient lineage were doomed by modern science.

Gradually, manufacturers of synthetics began using wool and cotton to strengthen some chemical fabrics. Blends became popular. The cloth in a dress or suit may be made from air, natural gas, coal, petroleum, corn, wood, varied chemical compounds, cotton, and wool.

When synthetics cut into the cotton market, many plantation owners sowed their cotton fields with grasses to provide year-round pasture. They went into the cattle business. The wooden shacks and the fenced "patches" of the sharecroppers began to disappear in the rolling country of Alabama and other states. Instead of farms averaging a hundred acres, the "ranches" took in as much as 3000 acres. The small farmer and the tenant farmer then sought employment elsewhere. Some migrated to the northern states. Others stayed to work in the new mills developing all over the South. The same revolution is taking place in the South that occurred in the North — but a hundred years later. People are leaving the farms to work in the mills. Rural life is declining but not so rapidly as it did in the North.

Although cotton mills began moving

from New England soon after the War Between the States, the South remained rural. The synthetic industry began in the South. It started with a southern pattern. Chemical industries need water, air, and space. The South has all three in abundance. Electricity can be obtained from both hydroelectric plants at river dams and from steam plants operated with coal from mines in the Appalachians. Since electric power can be carried for miles by wire, the new mills were located in the country where land was cheap. Today, one story buildings, simplest and cheapest to operate, sprawl over acres of ground, and give comfort in light, air, and space. Automatic lint eliminators protect the lungs of the employees. In a mild climate these one-story mills can be adequately heated in winter and air-cooled in summer. The grounds are landscaped with grass and flowers. There is plenty of parking space for cars.

Workmen for these mills are largely recruited from the displaced farmhands in the neighborhood. Cotton pickers, thrown out of work by cotton-picking machines, were grateful for employment in these mills sprouting along the country roads. Families still clinging to their small farms were glad to work for wages at a mill within driving distance of their homes. They did not ask for a raise in pay when assigned to night duty. The night shifts gave them the opportunity of spending a few daylight hours in their fields and gardens. A southern workman, owning a few chickens, a garden, and a cow, could afford to work for lower wages than were paid for the same job in a northern industrial center.

Southern mill owners with lower operating costs were able to sell their textiles for a lower price. They took the

business from northern mills. By the middle of the century mill hands were being laid off in Fall River, New Bedford, and Lawrence, Massachusetts, and in other textile centers throughout New England. In 1951, when more than 35 woolen and worsted mills went out of business or moved away, 40,000 jobs were lost. Unable to compete, these mills were gradually closing doors and moving South, to join the manufacturers of cottons and synthetics. In order to save the mills which provided employment and payrolls, workmen in some towns agreed to surrender benefits and accept reduced wages. These stop-gap measures cannot long hold the mills by the river banks. Textiles are headed South to streamlined, air-conditioned electric plants in the open country. Some mill owners have found it necessary to build houses nearby for the mechanics who have followed them to new locations in the South.

The textile industry has gone through three revolutions in this country. Before Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin, about seventy-eight percent of the cloth was woolen. When seeds were removed by machinery, cottons swept woolens out of first place. This was the second revolution. Although rayons came into the market during the 1920's, the third revolution did not get into full swing until 1938, when chemists evolved a new fabric, nylon.

The Du Pont Company spent ten years and \$27,000,000 on the first pair of nylon stockings. When the textile industry was occupied with carding, spinning, and weaving, cloth was steadily manufactured as soon as the machinery was installed. A mill could operate on a small capital. With synthetics, as much as \$40,000,000 is invested in research laboratories and

chemical plants before a single yard of a new fabric can be sold. Fields of fleecy white cotton still spot the southern landscape, but Old King Cotton's throne is tottering.

BUSINESS EXPANDS

TEXTILES ALONE did not provide the South's break-through from agriculture to industry. World War II had a large share in it. New defense industries located in the South during the war. They continued to operate during the uneasy peace. Much of the South's industrial growth is still rooted in the soil. The processing of cotton seed, soybean, and peanut oils for margarines, shortenings, and salad oils is a growing industry in a region where food production still holds a leading place.

Since the settlement of Virginia, tobacco has been a favored crop in the southern states. The farmer hauls his product to a neighborhood warehouse. There it is sold by the droning chant of the tobacco auctioneer. Ninety-five percent of the men and women employed in the tobacco industry live in North Carolina, Virginia, and Kentucky. Tobacco is a major source of taxation with a revenue stamp on every package, box, and can.

Although the South is farming country, over half of the land has some trees on it. A description of the Carolinas, published in London in 1732, encouraged settlers to migrate to that colony. It stated:

The lands will not be difficult to clear because there are neither stones nor bushes, but only great trees which do not grow very thick. The custom of the country is, that after having cut down these great trees, they leave the stumps for four or five years to rot, and afterwards easily root them up, in order to fertilize the ground.

All of the stumps were not uprooted. Saplings sprang up to replace the fallen trees where the land was not plowed and cultivated. Timber products, ranging from turpentine and resin to furniture and pulp, add to the industrial wealth. Since most of the battles of the War Between the States were fought in southern territory, soldiers in the Union armies tramped through the woods and learned about the valuable lumber. Among them was an officer from New England who returned to the North Carolina woods and established a furniture factory. Today the manufacture of furniture is a profitable industry in the forested regions of the mountain states. The big wood product is pulp, used for making paper of every kind – from gray newsprint and tan cardboard to white tissue and tinted stationery.

Along the Gulf Coast of Texas and Louisiana an abundance of oil lies under the tidelands. Southern Louisiana has valuable beds of sulfur. Texas boasts that its cow country in the southern part of the state has a growing chemical industry in potash, soda, and chlorine. Nitrate beds in Alabama are ground into fertilizer in the plant at Muscle Shoals.

The city of Birmingham, Alabama, is an example of how natural resources affect a community. The region has an abundance of coal, iron ore, and limestone, the basic ingredients of steel. Birmingham became one of the steel centers in the nation. In this city, stoves, wire, rails, castings, bars, bolts, pipe, machinery, and numerous articles of iron and steel are produced.

THE SOUTH GOES INDUSTRIAL

THE SOUTH, once boastful of its leisurely plantation life, is seeking industry

to give employment to field hands whose jobs have been taken by machinery. Machines have been invented to pick cotton, cut cane, and harvest rice. To attract manufacturing, some towns in the southern states offer to erect buildings with public funds. They rent them on favorable terms to business men who are willing to install machinery and hire the citizens to operate it. Louisiana agreed to exempt some new industries from taxes for ten years. Free water, free sites, and cash grants are sometimes voted by communities to get new factories. To lure manufacturers into the mid-South, state officials and business men advertise the resources of the lower Mississippi Valley. The region has timber, oil, and natural gas; soda ash, lime, and silica; cotton, sweet potatoes, and sugar cane; an abundant supply of willing workmen; and cheap transportation to New Orleans, the gateway to Latin America.

The South, always rich in natural resources, is busy converting its raw materials into manufactured goods – at home. Buildings on the courthouse squares of sleepy towns have new and modern fronts. The latest styles are displayed in the store windows. More southerners are wage earners and have more money to spend. Houses and barns glow with fresh paint, here and there, along a country road. The lightning rod is being replaced with aerials for television. Farms have electric lights. Perhaps no improvement is noticed more than the new, modern school buildings in the villages and out in the country. With increased income, local and state governments can pay for better educational opportunities. With new prosperity, combining agriculture and industry, the South is acquiring a new look.