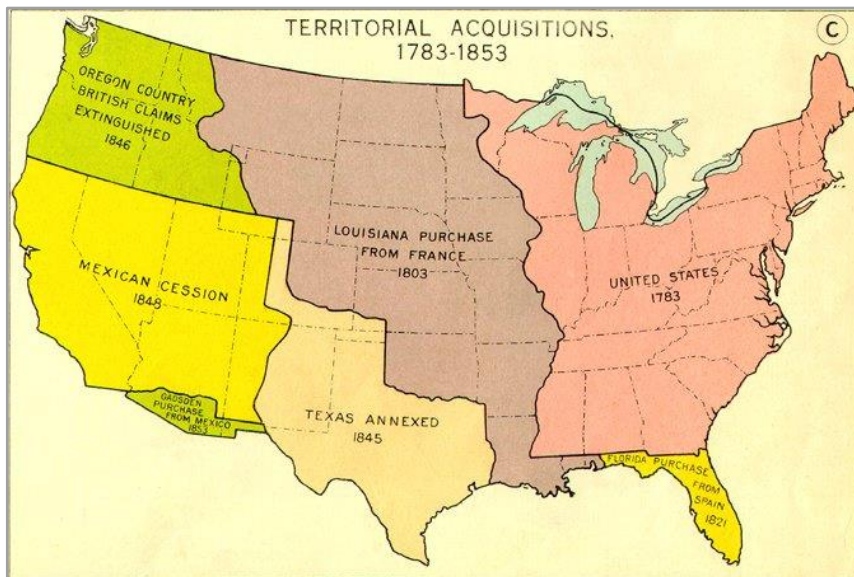


The Artios Home Companion Series

Unit 27: Expansion Incites Division

Teacher Overview

“The principal question during the years 1841-1847 was the annexation of territory. The Whig administration was wrecked by Tyler’s coming to power; and the Democratic principle of strict construction prevailed in domestic matters.... The five years from 1848 to 1853 were full of excitement and danger. At the beginning of the period Congress had to face three hotly disputed questions: (1) the boundaries of Texas; (2) the future of New Mexico; (3) the future of California...”
– Albert Bushnell Hart



Territorial Acquisitions from 1783 – 1853

Key People

Martin Van Buren
William Henry Harrison
John Tyler
Henry Clay

Vocabulary

Lesson 1:
patronates

Lesson 2:
None

Reading and Assignments

In this unit, students will:

- Complete two lessons in which they will learn about **renewed expansion in the United States** and **the results of the Mexican War**, journaling and answering discussion questions as they read.
- Define vocabulary words.
- Finish reading *Frankenstein*, journaling as they read.
- Learn about the various **Components of Literature**.
- Visit www.ArtiosHCS.com for additional resources.

Leading Ideas

History is HIS Story.

God’s story of love, mercy, and redemption through Christ.

He made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he

purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

— Ephesians 1:9-10

God’s providential hand governs and times all events and provides for his Creation according to His plan and purposes.

The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us.

— Acts 17:24-27

Godly leadership and servanthood are necessary for one to be a true reforming influence.

Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

— Matthew 20:26-28

God raises up and removes leaders.

He changes times and seasons; he deposes kings and raises up others. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning.

— Daniel 2:21

Literature and Composition

Unit 27: Book Study - Writing a Book Analysis

Frankenstein

by Mary Shelley

Literature for Units 24 – 28

<http://www.archive.org/stream/cu31924105428902#page/n19/mode/2up>

Unit 27 – Assignments

- Read the information on **Components of Literature** and answer the following review questions.
 - What are the six elements that need to be considered when evaluating literature?
 - Into what two groups are they divided?
 - Who are the major characters in *Frankenstein*? How are they described in the novel?
 - What are the incidents in the novel?
 - What is the setting of the novel?
 - What is meant by plot? How are the incidents arranged?

- Reflect on the quote from Mary Shelley’s introduction,

“Frightful must it be; for supremely frightful would be the effect of any human endeavour to mock the stupendous mechanism of the Creator of the world. His success would terrify the artist...”

 How does *Frankenstein* illustrate this quote?
- What is Mary Shelley’s worldview? How can you tell?
- Finish your reading of *Frankenstein*.
- On your genre chart, continue to add information about how *Frankenstein* fits each genre.

Unit 27 – Assignment Background

Components of Literature

Excerpt adapted from *Elementary Guide to Literary Criticism*
by F. V. N. Painter

In every important work of fiction there are six things to be considered, namely, the characters, the incidents, the environment, the plot, the purpose, and the view or philosophy of life. The first three elements constitute the materials out of which the novelist builds his work; the last three supply the general plan by which he builds it. The excellence of the work, as in architecture, depends both on the character of the materials and on the manner in which they are put together. When Solomon constructed his famous temple he not only used cedar and gold but also joined them together according to a wise design and noble purpose. These various elements are worthy of separate consideration.

Characters

The characters of a novel are of prime importance. As in actual life, they give tone to the society to which we are introduced. They should be clearly individualized and maintain throughout a reasonable consistency. They may be taken from any class of society. It is not enough that the characters be described in their outward

appearance and experiences, the author must also reveal the hidden springs of motive and disposition. The great potentialities of human nature both for good and evil will be brought to light, and thus mimic the world of the novelist, and will reflect the life of the great real world in its more tragic aspects.

Incidents

By the incidents of a novel we mean the acts and experiences of the characters. They make up the connected and progressive story. The incidents may be as varied as the occurrences of human life, sweeping the whole range of toil, sorrow, and joy. They may be either comic or tragic. The interest of a work of fiction depends largely upon its incidents. Separately they may be entertaining, absorbing, or thrilling; and taken together in their sequence they may carry us forward irresistibly to the conclusion. They should be in keeping with the time and place, and the several acts of the personages should be in harmony with their character and culture.

Setting

As in real life, the personages of a novel or romance live and move in the midst of an environment. They are placed in the midst of circumstances, upon which they act and by which they are acted upon. They may live on land or sea, in the country or in the city, amid the wildness of unsubdued forests or the culture of long-established communities. They may be surrounded by intelligence and luxury or by ignorance and squalor.

The environment is brought before us by description. The descriptive passages should be true to fact and graphic enough to enable the reader to picture the scenes in his mind; but they should not be so long drawn as to encumber or impede the story. Description is subordinate in fiction; instead of being an end in itself, its purpose is to throw light upon the characters and incidents of the story.

Plot

By plot, we mean the manner in which the incidents of a story are arranged with reference to the final issue. The incidents may be loosely connected or they may be so skillfully ordered as to arouse the reader's breathless interest. A skillful plot presupposes dramatic talent. While a skillfully arranged plot is not an essential element in a work of fiction, it is always a source of interest and power.

Aim/Purpose

Every work of fiction has an aim or purpose. Sometimes the author merely aims at telling an interesting story which has no other significance than to provoke a smile or a tear. Sometimes it may be intended to illustrate a period in history or the manners of a particular locality. Sometimes it is designed to throw light on some phase of human character or human experience. And again, it may be a vehicle for conveying some form of teaching or for illustrating the growth of culture and character. In studying a work of fiction the purpose should be clearly apprehended, for the merit of a novel or romance depends in a measure upon the author's aim and his degree of success in realizing it.

Author's Worldview

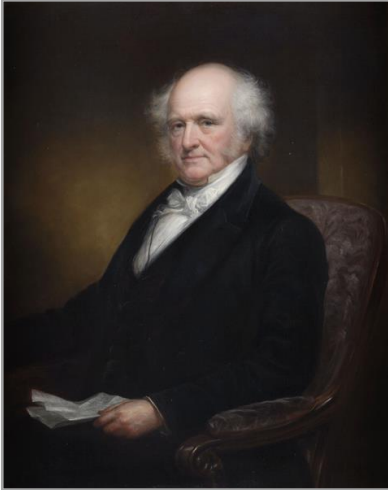
Every work of fiction, consciously or unconsciously to the author, is apt to embody a particular view or philosophy of life. Every thoughtful person has convictions in regard to God, nature, and man. He may believe in a personal deity or an unconscious force as the source of all things. He may think of nature as a creation or as a product of impersonal natural law. He may think of man as an immortal being or as a creature whose existence ceases with death. But whatever may be an author's fundamental beliefs, they will inevitably color his work.

Lesson One

History Overview and Assignments Renewed Expansion

“The principal question during the years 1841-1847 was the annexation of territory. The Whig administration was wrecked by Tyler’s coming to power; and the Democratic principle of strict construction prevailed in domestic matters...”

– Albert Bushnell Hart



Van Buren

Reading and Assignments

- Review the discussion questions and vocabulary, then read the article: *Renewed Expansion*, pages 6-13.
- Narrate about today’s reading using the appropriate notebook page. Be sure to answer the discussion questions and include key people, events, and dates within the narration.
- Define the vocabulary words in the context of the reading and put the word and its definition in the vocabulary section of your history notebook.
- Be sure to visit www.ArtiosHCS.com for additional resources.

Vocabulary

patronates

Key People

Martin Van Buren
John Tyler

William Henry Harrison
Henry Clay

Discussion Questions

1. Why was John Tyler nominated for vice president?
2. Why did Tyler veto the bank bills in 1842?
3. Why did Tyler veto the tariff bills in 1842?
4. What was the boundary line fixed by the treaty of 1842?
5. Why was Van Buren not nominated in 1844?
6. Why did the Liberty men refuse to vote for Clay?
7. Describe the conflict between Taylor and the Mexicans in 1846.
8. What was the object of the Wilmot Proviso?
9. What was the Northwest Angle of Nova Scotia?

Adapted from the book:

Essentials in American History

by Albert Bushnell Hart

Renewed Expansion (1841-1847)

The abolition controversy did not yet disturb the course of party politics. In the campaign of 1840 the Democrats nominated Van Buren for a second term. The anti-Jackson men, who had now formally taken the name of the Whig party, nominated William Henry Harrison of Ohio for president, and John Tyler of Virginia, a discontented Democrat, for vice president. The Whigs expected to reestablish the national bank, appropriate money for internal improvements, and, if possible, revive a protective tariff.

It was a boisterous campaign, full of great mass meetings. Somebody said that Harrison was fit only to sit in his log cabin and drink hard cider; the Whigs took up the slur; and log cabins on wheels, amply provided with barrels of hard cider, were used as a popular argument to voters. The Democrats were really beaten by the panic of 1837, for hard times still continued. Harrison was chosen by 234 electoral votes to 60 for Van Buren, on a popular majority of about 140,000; and the Whigs secured both houses of the next Congress.

A month after his inauguration Harrison died, and John Tyler succeeded to the presidency. Though elected by the Whigs, he did not accept their principles, and vetoed (August and September, 1841) two successive bills intended to restore the main features of the old United States Bank; whereupon every member of his Cabinet, except Webster, resigned. Tyler also came into collision with the party Whigs over the tariff. Though the

Compromise of 1833 was to have taken full effect in 1842, they were determined to substitute a high protective measure. Tyler vetoed two bills, but finally signed the tariff of 1842, which went back substantially to the scale of the tariff of 1832, raised the average duties from about 24 per cent to 35 per cent, and completely upset the Compromise of 1833. Throughout the remainder of his administration, Tyler quarreled with Congress.

About this time the progress of popular government led to two serious disturbances in the states. The holders of land in the Old Dutch patroonates in New York paid to the descendants of the patrons an annual ground rent, or "quitrent," of from \$7 to \$18 a year for each hundred acres. In 1839 these tenants began to refuse payment, to parade the country in masks and disguises and to attack and kill sheriffs and rent payers. After several years of agitation, the landlords agreed to accept lump money payments from former tenants.

A more alarming popular movement arose in Rhode Island because no one could vote there except a "freeman," — that is, a man holding real estate worth \$14, or renting for \$7 a year — or the eldest son of such a man. A "People's Party," including both freemen and non-voters, held a convention in 1841 to adopt a more liberal state constitution, took a popular vote on it, declared it adopted, and elected Thomas W. Dorr governor in defiance of the existing government. Dorr attempted by

force to take the possession of the state arsenal (1842), but his men deserted him. The governor under the old charter vainly called on President Tyler to send United States troops to help him; but Dorr had fled the state. Returning the following October, Dorr was tried for treason and sentenced to imprisonment. He did accomplish his goal, however, for the suffrage was at eventually enlarged by the regular government.



Northeast Boundary Controversy

Other sorts of land questions and territorial questions made the years 1841 to 1845 momentous. One of them was a renewed controversy with Great Britain over the Maine boundary. By the treaty of 1783, the line was to run “from the

northwest angle of Nova Scotia, viz. that angle which is formed by a line drawn due north from the source of Saint Croix River to the Highlands; along the said Highlands which divide those rivers that empty themselves into the river St. Lawrence, from those which fall into the Atlantic Ocean, to the northwestern most head of Connecticut River.” It was soon found that the two governments did not agree as to what stream was the St. Croix, nor where to locate the northwest angle, nor where the Highlands were, nor even what was meant by “Atlantic Ocean.”

In 1821 the line was run from the Atlantic to a point called Mars Hill; the British insisted that the “Highlands” lay there, and the Americans insisted that they were beyond the St. John River. After a vain attempt at arbitration (1827-1831), the state of Maine in the “Aroostook War” (1838) attempted to seize part of the disputed territory. Webster remained in Tyler’s Cabinet long enough to settle this question: in 1842 he negotiated the Webster-Ashburton treaty, by which the disputed territory was divided, and each party got about half. The settlement was creditable and satisfactory to both sides, and ended a controversy that threatened to bring on war.

Until about 1820, the interior of North America was still little known; but in that year Major Long explored part of the Rocky Mountain chain, and from that time trade developed on what was called the Santa Fe Trail, a road leading southwestward from the Missouri River to the Rio Grande (p.324). In 1832 Bonneville’s party went as far west as Great Salt Lake, crossing the Rockies with a wagon train, and some of them reached the Pacific.

Farther north the American Fur Trading Company in the twenties opened up a route to Oregon; and in 1834 Nathaniel J. Wyeth of Massachusetts guided a party of settlers to Fort Hall, north of Great Salt Lake, and thence to Oregon. In 1836 Dr. Marcus Whitman and other missionaries to the northern Native Americans went out along this route. In the winter of 1842-1843 Dr. Whitman came east from Oregon by a dangerous, roundabout route, partly on business of the mission, partly because he supposed that Webster was willing to give up all claims to Oregon. There was no such danger; the country was awake to the importance of a Pacific outlet; and there is no contemporary evidence to show that Whitman saw Webster or influenced the president. In 1843 he joined an expedition formed by other people and with it returned to Oregon.

A young army officer named John C. Fremont, aided by good guides, in the forties made three long explorations westward. In the first (1842) he went up the Platte River to its headwaters, and crossed over the Rocky Mountain divide by the South Pass to the headwaters of the Colorado. In 1843 he went through the mountains via Great Salt Lake to Oregon, and then across the Sierra Nevada to California. In 1845 he was sent off with an armed party and again reached California. He was a poor explorer, and made no proper surveys; but he was a son-in-law of Senator Benton of Missouri, young, dashing, and good-looking, and got the name of "Pathfinder" for his exploits.

One of Tyler's lines of policy was to annex Texas; and he made John C. Calhoun Secretary of State for that express

purpose. Calhoun negotiated a treaty of annexation (April 12, 1844), which was rejected in the Senate by a vote of 35 to 16; and the scheme went over. The arguments in favor of annexation were these: (1) that the Texans were simply Americans across the border; (2) that Texas was a rich and fertile country which would add wealth to the Union; (3) that annexation was a natural form of expansion; (4) that it was simply a "reannexation" of territory rightly a part of the Union from 1803 to 1819; (5) that it would retain for the slaveholders a needed control of the Senate.

Both the antislavery people and the abolitionists violently opposed annexation: (1) because it would bring into the Union more territory to be a field of slavery; (2) because it would give to the slaveholding influence perpetual control of the national government; (3) because it would probably bring on war with Mexico.

The question of Texas came up again in the campaign of 1844. The natural candidates were Clay and Van Buren, both of whom publicly declaimed against annexation. Clay was unanimously nominated by the Whigs. In the Democratic convention Van Buren had at first a majority of the delegates, but was deprived of his nomination by the unexpected re adoption of the two-thirds rule; and James K. Polk of Tennessee was nominated because he was known to favor annexation. The Democratic platform declared for "the reoccupation of Oregon and the reannexation of Texas at the earliest practicable period." Clay then felt compelled to change his ground by saying that he would be glad to see Texas annexed, "without dishonor, without war, with the common consent of the Union,

and upon just and fair terms.”

The Liberty or Abolition party nominated James G. Birney, but in the election of 1844 got only 62,000 popular votes against 1,299,000 for Clay and 1,337,000 for Polk; yet, it decided the national election by deliberately drawing off enough Clay votes in New York to throw that close state for Polk, whose electoral vote was 170 to 105 for Clay. The Liberty men hoped thus to compel the Whigs to take anti-slavery ground.

Congress and President Tyler did not wait for the new administration: since annexation seemed to have the approval of the majority of the people, a joint resolution passed the House by a vote of 120 to 98, and the Senate by 27 to 25 (March 1, 1845), permitting the admission of Texas as a state on very favorable terms. No territory had ever before been annexed by this method; but Texas accepted and came into the Union as a full-fledged state in December, 1845. Under the terms of the joint resolution, she retained all her public lands, and might later, with her own consent, be subdivided into five states, all presumably slave states, except that slavery was to be prohibited in the new state or states north of the line of 36° 30'. As to the Mexican boundary, the joint resolution took no ground; but President Polk's theory was that Texas included everything that Texas claimed; that is, all the territory as far as the Rio Grande.

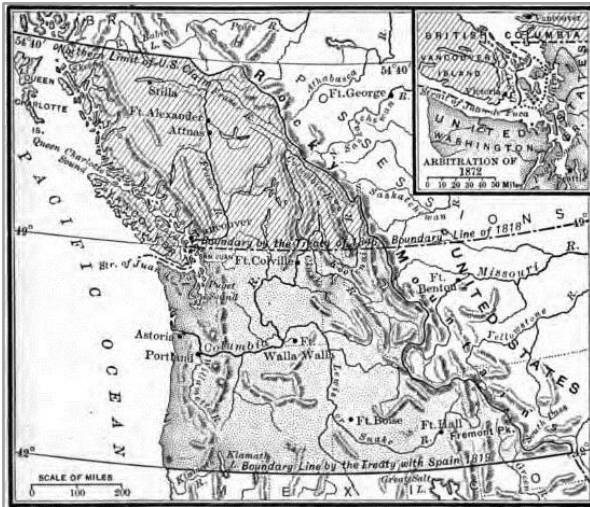
Few presidents have been so successful in carrying out what they undertook as James K. Polk, Tyler's successor. He was born in 1795, was a graduate of the University of North Carolina, was fourteen years a member of the House of Representatives (four years Speaker), and

then for one term governor of Tennessee. He had large public experience, and an imperious and far-reaching mind. The defect of Polk's character was his lack of moral principle as to the property of our neighbor, Mexico. His diary shows clearly that his real intentions and purposes were very different from those that he put forward in public. From the first he meant not only to annex Texas, but also to add to the Union the enormous belt of territory stretching from the Gulf to the Pacific, to gain the port of San Francisco for Pacific trade, and to turn over the greater part of the new territories to slavery.

A strong Democratic majority appeared in both houses of Congress in 1845-1846, and speedily repealed the recent Whig financial legislation. The Independent Treasury system, which had been repealed by the Whigs in 1841, was restored; and the treasury has ever since remained the principal custodian of public funds. Robert J. Walker, Secretary of the Treasury, drafted and presented to Congress a measure that became law as the tariff of July 30, 1846. The duties on luxuries were very high, reaching 100 per cent on brandy and spirits; on ordinary manufactured goods they were only about 30 percent; the average on dutiable goods was about 25 percent; and the annual proceeds in a few years were twice as great as those of the tariff of 1842.

For Polk's designs on California, it was highly desirable to settle the long-standing controversy with Great Britain over Oregon, a name then applied to the whole Pacific slope from California to the Russian possessions. By extinguishing the Spanish claims (1819) and the Russian (1824), the United States and Great Britain were left

the sole competitors for this fine country. The claims of the United States rested on: (1) discovery by Captain Gray (1792); (2) first exploration by Lewis and Clark (1805); (3) first settlement by Astor (1811); (4) first permanent settlement, in the Willamette valley (1832). The British claim was based chiefly on the establishment of posts by the Hudson's Bay Company, but that company persistently kept out permanent settlers.

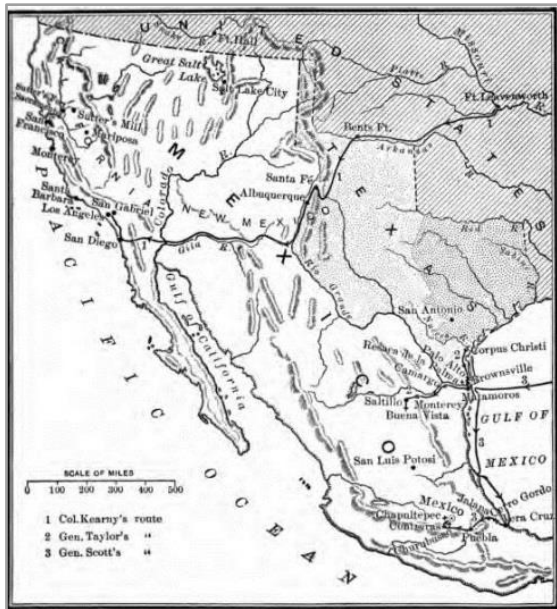


Northwest Boundary Controversy

In 1826 Great Britain offered to divide the Oregon country on the line of the Columbia and Kootenai rivers; and between 1818 and 1846 the United States repeatedly offered to extend to the Pacific the 49th parallel, which was already the boundary as far west as the Rocky Mountains; nevertheless, a Democratic campaign cry in 1844 was “Fifty-four Forty, or Fight”; that is, a claim to the whole coast as far north as Russian America. It was therefore a surprise to the country when (June, 1846) Polk made a treaty accepting the compromise line of the 49th parallel, from the Rocky Mountains to the coast of Puget Sound; and the northwestern controversy was thus settled after fifty-four years of dispute.

The understanding with Great Britain came because President Polk had no mind to fight two wars at once, and for many reasons he expected a war with Mexico: (1) The annexation of Texas in 1845 caused the Mexican government to make boisterous threats, on the ground that Texas was still Mexican territory, threats that could easily have been settled by a little diplomacy. (2) Mexico had been exasperatingly slow in settling claims for outrages against the persons and property of Americans; and those claims were now hard pressed by Polk. (3) Mexico absolutely rejected the boundary claimed by the Texan constitution of 1836; in fact, this included part of the old province of New Mexico and the town of Santa Fe, which was no more Texan than St. Louis. (4) Polk was determined to annex California, by any means; and he secretly instructed our consul at Monterey, near San Francisco, to do all in his power to induce the native Californians to revolt, just as the Texans had done.

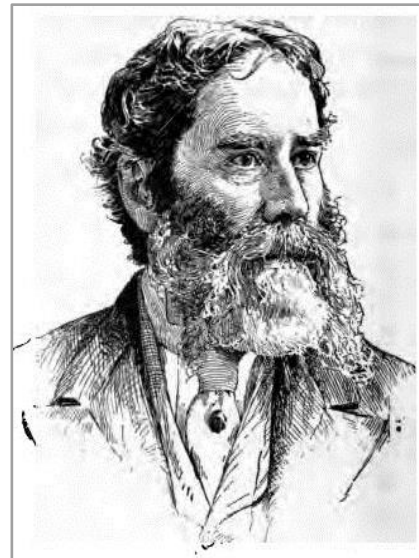
Polk was willing to get what he wanted without fighting, and in 1845 he sent John Slidell to Mexico to buy California if possible. The Mexicans would not even receive him, and made preparations for war. Without waiting to hear from Slidell, Polk ordered General Zachary Taylor, who was stationed at Corpus Christi on the Nueces River, to advance with his troops to the Rio Grande, where he closed the trade of the river with his guns. The inevitable collision came April 24, 1846, when the Mexicans attacked a body of American cavalymen on the northern or eastern side of the Rio Grande.



Mexican War

Polk prepared a message to Congress, demanding war on the ground that the claims were not settled, and that Slidell had been rejected. Before it was sent in, dispatches from Taylor announced the Mexican attack, and in a special message of May 11, 1846, Polk did not scruple to declare that “War exists, and, notwithstanding all our efforts to avoid it, exists by the act of Mexico herself.” Two days later Congress passed an act “for the prosecution of the existing war,” because “by the act of the Republic of Mexico a state of war exists.” The wrath of the antislavery men over the purpose of enlarging the slave power was expressed by James Russell Lowell in the fiercest satire of his Biglow Papers:

*“They may talk o’ Freedom’s airy
Till they’re purple in the face, --
It’s a grand gret cemetery
Fer the barthrights of our race;
They jest want this Californy
So’s to lug new slave states in
To abuse ye, an’ to scorn ye,
An’ to plunder ye like sin!”*



James Russell Lowell, about 1880

The war was not fairly begun before President Polk tried to purchase a peace through General Santa Anna, formerly dictator of the Mexican republic; and he asked Congress for \$2,000,000 to be used for “negotiations” (August 1, 1840). The absolute determination of the North not to take in more slave territory was expressed by an amendment of David Wilmot of Pennsylvania, which was added by the House to the “Two Million Bill.” This “Wilmot Proviso” declared that, “As an express and fundamental condition to the acquisition of any territory... neither slavery nor involuntary servitude shall ever exist in any part of the said territory.” The bill failed through a technicality, but the South was aroused. Abraham Lincoln, in 1847-1849, voted in Congress forty-two times for the principle of the Wilmot Proviso; but he voted in vain, for the Senate always showed an adverse majority.

Though the Mexican War was begun on false pretexts, and for the unrighteous purpose of the conquest of California, it was carried on brilliantly by land and sea. General Taylor pressed steadily forward;

beat the Mexicans in the war battles of Palo Alto (May 8) and Resaca de la Palma (May 9), on the north side of the Rio Grande; then crossed the river, and again defeated the Mexicans at Monterey (September 21-23). Santa Anna, on returning to Mexico, took the patriot side, and organized a new army, with which he vainly attacked Taylor at Buena Vista (February 22, 23, 1847).

In 1846 the administration began to be nervous about Taylor's popularity, and ordered General Winfield Scott, commander in chief of the army, to make a direct attack on the heart of Mexico. Scott landed and took Vera Cruz (March, 1847), and then fought his way steadily up into the mountains, pushed the Mexicans back at Cerro Gordo (April 18), and marched down into the valley of Mexico (August). In a succession of hard fights, Scott beat the enemy back and advanced toward the city of Mexico, which he attacked with about 6,000 disposable troops and finally captured, September 14, 1847. The Mexican government was broken up, and thereafter was unable to put in the field anything more than bands of guerrillas.

The belt of territory from Texas to the Pacific Ocean was occupied almost without resistance. In June, 1846, General Stephen W. Kearny marched by the Santa Fe Trail from the Missouri River, with about 1,600 men; and on August 18 entered Santa Fe without firing a shot. He set up a civil government, and then with a small number of troops started on westward to take possession of California. But California was already conquered. In June, 1846, the three hundred American settlers in California revolted and founded the Bear Flag Republic; and Fremont, in defiance of orders to let the native Californians set up

their own government, brought his little force of troops to aid the Americans (July 5). Then a naval force under Commodore Sloat reached California (July 7, 1846). There was a brief war with the native Californians, ending with two battles near San Gabriel (January 8, 9, 1847), after which time there was no disputing the physical fact that the Americans were in possession of the country.



Santa Barbara Mission, California
Founded in 1786

After the Santa Anna plan failed, Polk commissioned N. P. Trist, a clerk in the State Department, to make terms with Mexico. Trist proved inexperienced, quarrelsome, and insubordinate. He renewed the attempt to buy a peace from Santa Anna, but no body of reputable Mexicans would take the responsibility of dismembering their country; and Trist was recalled (October, 1847).

It was a dangerous crisis, for the two strongest members of the president's Cabinet wanted him to take the whole of Mexico. Polk's diary says, "I replied that I was not prepared to go to that extent... that I had in my last message declared that I did not contemplate the conquest of Mexico." The recall of Trist startled the Mexicans, who persuaded him to make a treaty, on the basis of agreeing to pay to the Mexican

leaders (nominally to the Mexican treasury) \$15,000,000; Mexico gave up all claim to Texas as far as the Rio Grande, and ceded the whole of New Mexico and California. This treaty was accepted by Polk and approved by the Senate. Thus, the Mexican War resulted in a great increase of territory, gained by bullying and fighting a weak neighbor. The war cost about \$100,000,000 and the lives of 13,000 of the 100,000 soldiers engaged.

The annexation of California at once brought up the question of the control of the routes across Central America. When the war broke out, the overland route to California took from three to eight months' time; and the voyage around the Horn lasted from three to four months. People began to use the various short cuts across the narrow lands and at once revived the idea of an isthmian canal. Therefore, in 1846, a treaty proposed by New Granada (now the United States of Colombia) was accepted by the United States, which guaranteed the Isthmus of Panama against seizure or interference, while New Granada guaranteed to the United States equality of use of any canal or roadway across the isthmus.

The only other practicable canal route across Central America was through the Lake of Nicaragua; and Great Britain claimed a "protectorate" over the neighboring Mosquito tribes. This pretension caused a crisis in our relations with Great Britain, leading to the Clayton-

Bulwer treaty (April 19, 1850), which was a fair compromise under the conditions of the time, and favorable to both parties. It secured common use and neutral control of the Nicaragua route, and the British agreed not to make any settlements in Central America. The principle of neutral and common use of a canal was also to be extended to the Isthmus of Panama.

The principal question during the years 1841-1847 was the annexation of territory. The Whig administration was wrecked by Tyler's coming to power; and the Democratic principle of strict construction prevailed in domestic matters.

Between 1842 and 1846, the Maine and Oregon boundary questions were settled, and Texas was annexed. That state with its actual boundaries might have been peacefully incorporated into the Union, but the claim to the Rio Grande seemed to the Mexicans robbery. President Polk, a masterful man, seized the opportunity to force the issue of war, in order to annex New Mexico and California. He got more than he bargained for, when he found our army in possession of a country too disrupted even to ask for terms of peace; but almost by accident, a treaty of peace was reached in 1848.

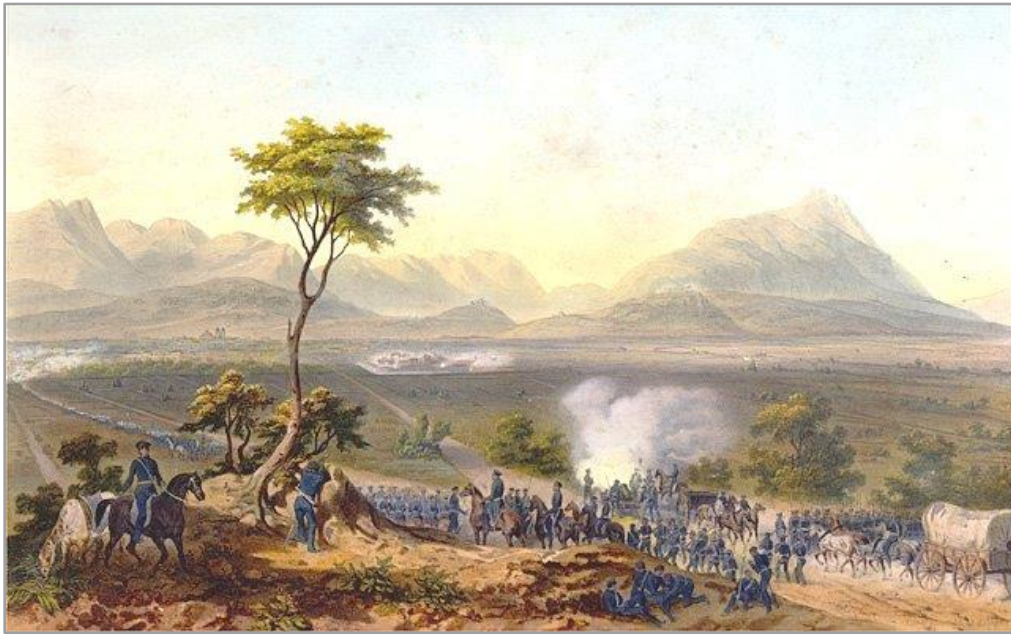
Polk's designs on California, and above all the discussion of the Wilmot Proviso, aroused the North to the new and frightful crisis that had arisen over slavery in the new territories.

Lesson Two

History Overview and Assignments Expansion Stirs Up Turmoil

“The five years from 1848 to 1853 were full of excitement and danger. At the beginning of the period Congress had to face three hotly disputed questions: (1) the boundaries of Texas; (2) the future of New Mexico; (3) the future of California...”

– Albert Bushnell Hart



The US Troops marching on Monterrey during the Mexican-American War

Reading and Assignments

- Review the discussion questions, then read the article: *Results of the Mexican War*, pages 15-21.
- Narrate about today's reading using the appropriate notebook page. Be sure to answer the discussion questions and include key people, events, and dates within the narration.
- Be sure to visit www.ArtiosHCS.com for additional resources.

Key People and Events

Lewis Cass
Henry Clay
John C. Calhoun
Daniel Webster
Compromise of 1850
Franklin Pierce

Discussion Questions

1. Why did the Free-soilers object to Lewis Cass?
2. Why did Taylor wish to form a state government in California?

3. Why did Clay think that slavery did not exist in New Mexico?
4. What was the need for a new fugitive slave act in 1850?
5. Do you think that Daniel Webster's Seventh of March Speech was a bid for the presidency?
6. What did Calhoun think would save the Union?
7. Why didn't Taylor favor the Compromise of 1850?
8. Why was Franklin Pierce nominated for the presidency?
9. What was the Underground Railroad?
10. Describe the book *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Adapted from the book:

Essentials in American History

by Albert Bushnell Hart

Results of the Mexican War (1848-1853)

Polk's astute plans for making California a slaveholding region were brought to naught by a few grains of yellow metal. On January 24, 1848, about a week before the treaty of peace was signed, James W. Marshall of New Jersey picked up some flakes of gold in the race of a new sawmill about sixty miles from Sutter's Fort, now called Sacramento. The news spread like the cry of fire; within six months the coast settlements were almost deserted; the inhabitants hurried to the gold diggings, which were "placers" (gravel reaches or terraces) yielding gold in dust, coarser particles, and nuggets. Soon all sorts of merchandise rose in price three times over; and some miners, by their individual labor, were taking from \$3000 to \$5000 a month at the diggings.

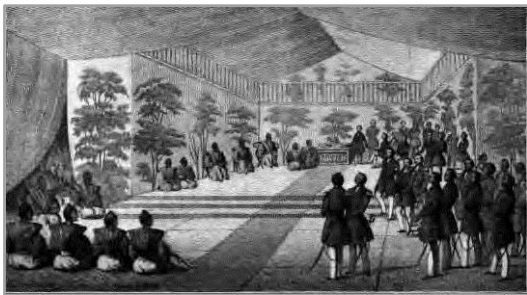
The next year thousands of Forty-niners "made their way to California, some around Cape Horn, some across the Isthmus of Panama or Nicaragua, some in wagon trains straight west across the plains. Between fifty thousand and one hundred thousand people poured into

California, and in two seasons more than \$30,000,000 of gold was taken out. If somebody "struck it rich," "in half an hour a motley multitude, covered with crowbars, pickaxes, spades, rifles, and wash bowls, went streaming over the hills in the direction of the new deposits." The old Spanish mining laws were inadequate, and the criminal laws did not apply to the circumstances; and there was no government to pass new statutes. The miners therefore organized, made their own mining rules, and set up so-called "vigilance committees" for offhand punishment of crime.

Gold mining was not all success. Probably every dollar of placer gold ever found in California cost on the average at least a dollar and a quarter in human toil, besides the waste of human life. After 1853 the yield of exposed placer gold declined, and mining in California gradually became a regular industry backed up by capital. Large streams were turned out of their beds in order to find the placer gold at the bottom of their courses; then the gold was

traced back to the quartz ledges, and stamp mills were set up.

One object of the annexation of California was to secure ports for direct trade with the Pacific islands, China, and Japan. The halfway station of the Sandwich or Hawaiian Islands had for twenty years been under the influence of American missionaries, and the native dynasty recognized that the interests of the United States were greater than those of any other power. Chinese trade, however, was very much hampered by restrictions in Chinese ports. In 1844 Caleb Cushing, sent out by the United States, was able to secure a very desirable commercial treaty by which five Chinese “treaty ports” were designated for American trade; American consuls were allowed to hold courts for cases involving their countrymen; and American merchants and other people got the right to buy pieces of ground for their own occupancy, “and also for hospitals, churches, and cemeteries.”



Perry in Japan, 1854

Japan refused to admit any traders or foreign merchantmen on any terms, till the United States sent Commodore Matthew C. Perry to open up relations. He entered ports where no European vessel had ever been seen; he succeeded in breaking in the shell of the old empire; and he secured a favorable commercial treaty in 1854.

The principal issue in the presidential

election of 1848 was the future of New Mexico and California. The Whigs nominated General Zachary Taylor. Van Buren’s friends soon after 1844 formed what was called the “Barnburner” faction of Democrats in New York; and when the Democratic convention of May, 1848, refused their delegates full recognition, and then nominated for president a “dough-face,” or northern proslavery man, Lewis Cass of Michigan, on a noncommittal platform, the Barnburners bolted. They combined with the Free-soilers (who included the former Liberty men) in nominating Van Buren for president, on the platform of “Free Soil, Free Speech, Free Labor, and Free Men.” This combination polled nearly 300,000 votes and threw New York over from the Democratic to the Whig side, thus allowing Zachary Taylor, a slaveholder, to be elected by 163 electoral votes to 127 for Cass.

From 1846 to 1849 several different propositions were made for settling the question of whether slavery was to be legal in California and New Mexico: (1) the Wilmot Proviso, excluding slavery by act of Congress; (2) establishment of slavery by act of Congress; (3) continuation of the 36° 30’ compromise line from Texas to the Pacific; (4) “popular sovereignty,” which was a suggestion by Cass that the question be left to the people of the respective territories; (5) “executive regulations,” through the Walker Bill, which would have given to the president authority to form a government. None of the five propositions could get a majority in both houses of Congress, and the only action bearing on the question was an act organizing the Territory of Oregon (August 14, 1848) with a prohibition of slavery.

As soon as Taylor became president (March 4, 1849), he used his influence and authority to bring about a state constitutional convention in California. That convention drew up a state constitution (September, 1849) which definitely prevented either a compromise line or local slavery on the Pacific coast; for it declared that California extended all the way along the coast from Mexico to Oregon, and it absolutely forbade slavery. Free miners, working with their own hands, would not permit slaveholders to come out with their slaves and compete in the placers. A state government was immediately organized without waiting for any act of Congress.

The air was full of slavery questions. Antislavery men felt that the time had come for some action that would put a stop to the domestic slave trade almost under the shadow of the Capitol; and Abraham Lincoln introduced a bill (January, 1849) for gradual emancipation of the slaves in the District of Columbia. The Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 had never worked well, and a decision of the Supreme Court (*Prigg vs. Pennsylvania*, 1842) took away much of its force. Besides, there was a regular system for aiding fugitives to escape, popularly known as the “Underground Railroad,” in which more than 3,000 people are known to have taken part; and through which, from 1830 to 1860, upward of 60,000 slaves escaped. Fugitives were kept in the houses of abolitionists, forwarded from place to place at night or hidden in out-of-the-way places; and if the pursuers came, they were finally shipped across the Lakes to free Canada. The South demanded that a more effective fugitive slave law be provided, and bills for that

purpose were introduced.

Behind all these questions was the larger issue of the relative power of free and slave states. Up to 1849 the principle of balancing states continued; Arkansas (slave) was admitted in 1836, and Michigan (free) in 1837, Florida and Texas (slave) in 1845, and Iowa and Wisconsin (free) in 1846 and 1848. To admit California as a free state meant permanent superiority of the North in the Senate, for there was nowhere a southern territory ready to enter the Union.

To settle all these complicated questions once for all, Henry Clay, “The Great Pacificator,” came forward in January, 1850, with a compromise measure which he urged with all his energies, and which was carried into effect seven months later. He declared, “No earthly power could induce me to vote for a specific measure for the introduction of slavery where it had not before existed”; but he believed that New Mexico and California were already free by Mexican law, and therefore that the North might safely accept his plan.

The Compromise of 1850 was really made possible by Daniel Webster, as leader of the “Cotton,” or commercial, Whigs of the North. In his famous “Seventh of March Speech,” he argued that the North had not done its duty to the South, and was putting the Union in danger by refusing a fair compromise. As for slavery in New Mexico, he was sure that it could never be profitable there, and he summed up his principles in the striking phrase, “I would not take pains to reaffirm an ordinance of nature nor to reenact the will of God.”

Perhaps there was some danger to the Union: the Virginia legislature voted for

“determined resistance at all hazards”; and a convention was called to meet at Nashville to discuss the question of separation. Robert Toombs of Georgia declared in open Congress, “I do not hesitate to avow... in the presence of the living God, that if... you seek to drive us from... California... I am for disunion.” In milder terms John C. Calhoun, in the last speech of his life, argued against a compromise, because the only thing that could pacify the South was for the North to stop the agitation of the slavery question, and to promise that nothing should be done by Congress contrary to the interests of slavery: as he said, “ If you, who represent the stronger portion, cannot agree to settle... on the broad principle of justice and duty, say so; and let the states we both represent agree to separate.”

Northern senators like Salmon P. Chase of Ohio skirted the idea that the Union was in danger, and denounced any compromise as a yielding of principle to empty threats. They looked on Webster as a man who had always been opposed to slavery but was now betraying his own section, in the hope of getting southern support for the presidency.

President Taylor, who was under the influence of Senator William H. Seward of New York, leader of the “Conscience Whigs,” refused to favor Clay’s compromise; but he died suddenly in July, 1850. Vice-President Millard Fillmore of New York became president and signed in succession the five bills into which the Clay Compromise had been divided. (1) By the first bill New Mexico was organized as a territory comprising lands on both sides of the Rio Grande, but Texas received \$10,000,000 as indemnity for accepting

her present limits; the real issue was carefully avoided by providing (a) that “the Constitution and all laws which are not locally inapplicable” should apply to New Mexico; (b) that no citizen of the United States should be deprived of his “life, liberty, or property except by the judgment of his peers and the law of the land”; (c) that when admitted as a state “the said Territory... shall be admitted into the Union, with or without slavery, as their constitution may prescribe at the time of admission.” This was a tacit permission to hold slaves while it remained a territory. (2) The next bill admitted California as a free state. (3) The Utah Bill, with provisions like those of the New Mexico Bill, organized a territory north of New Mexico, apparently intended to be free. (4) A new fugitive slave act provided for a system of United States Commissioners to try cases in a “summary manner.” (5) Another act prohibited the slave trade in the District of Columbia.

Among the new senators in 1849 was William H. Seward of New York, who at once came forward as a leading antislavery man in Congress. Born in 1801, Seward went to Union College and was for a short time tutor in a slaveholding family in the South. He went into politics in New York State and was twice Whig governor of New York (1839-1843). His intimate friend and political manager was Thurlow Weed, one of the most adroit, long-headed, and unscrupulous politicians in the history of the country.

In the debate of 1850, Seward was the recognized spokesman of the antislavery opponents of the compromise. His argument was that compromises settled nothing, and that it was useless to try to

provide for questions before they came up. In his speech Seward let fall a phrase which stamped him in the minds of the South as an implacable enemy: "The Constitution devotes the domain to union, to justice, to defense, to welfare, and to liberty. But there is a higher law than the Constitution, which regulates our authority over the domain, and devotes it to the same noble purpose." What he meant to say was that the law of God agreed with the Constitution; what he was understood to say was that the higher law nullified the Constitution, which undoubtedly recognized slavery as existing in some states and territories.

Bilked of the expected slaveholding state in California, the extreme southerners now turned to Cuba, so rich, so near to the United States, so abounding in slaves. Polk had even offered a hundred million dollars for the island in 1848. Several expeditions of "filibusters," that is, of volunteer adventurers, were fitted out in New Orleans; and one of them, under one Lopez, landed in Cuba (August, 1851) with nearly 500 men. The expedition was captured by the Spaniards, and Lopez with about fifty of his followers was executed. On hearing the news, the populace of New Orleans attacked the Spanish consulate. President Fillmore, while strongly censuring the expedition, did what he could to save the remaining prisoners, and a proper apology was made to Spain for the New Orleans incident.

The radical antislavery people showed their discontent with the compromise by violent resistance to the fugitive slave law, of which several instances should be mentioned. In February, 1851, an undoubted fugitive named Shadrach was

arrested in Boston and brought before the United States Commissioner. An eyewitness said, "We heard a shout from the courthouse continued into a yell of triumph, and in an instant after down the steps came two huge African men bearing the prisoner between them with his clothes half torn off... and they went off toward Cambridge, like a black squall, the crowd driving along with them and cheering as they went." In September, 1851, a man named Gorsuch, who had pursued runaways to Christiana, Pennsylvania, was killed by his own slaves. An attempt was made to frighten the abolitionists by trying for treason a Quaker named Castner Hanway, who was present and refused to aid Gorsuch. The prosecution, however, broke down, and the slayers of Gorsuch were not found. In 1854, while a fugitive named Burns was confined in the United States courthouse in Boston, a mob of abolitionists, in an attempt to rescue him, broke in the door and killed one of the deputy marshals.

The breakdown of prosecutions against the rescuers, in these and other like instances, showed that northern public sentiment was so strong against slavery that it was not worthwhile to appeal to the fugitive slave law. The spectacle of a hunted fugitive, sent back to lifelong captivity for no crime except that of being an African slave, brought home the conditions of slavery to thousands of northern people.

The hostility to slavery was voiced by the legislatures of most of the northern states in the "Personal Liberty Bills." Under the fugitive slave laws of 1793 and 1850, a free African who was suspected of being a fugitive could be arrested and his status

determined without any opportunity for the cross-examination of witnesses; and in several instances free men were thus kidnapped and sent into slavery. To address this danger, in about 1840 the northern states began to pass acts to compel a jury trial for alleged fugitives, and to forbid their officials to take any part in the proceedings against such persons. So far the states were acting within their rights; but after the Act of 1850, new statutes were passed in all the northern states except two, interfering in various ways with the operation of the national fugitive slave statute and the Constitution. All these acts showed that the free states, Constitution or no Constitution, would not recognize any responsibility for slavery.



Runaway Slave
Picture Used in Newspaper Advertisements

In this time of storm and stress, the person who perhaps did most to affect the history of the country was Harriet Beecher Stowe, through her story *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, published first as a serial in 1851, and afterward in many editions in book form. The book was not primarily intended to be a political weapon; but it expressed a bitter sense of injustice at the system of

man owning man, and it made the whole world see the human side of the African character, the kinship between men of every race. It was the only antislavery book widely read and discussed in the South.

How far *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is a truthful picture of slavery has been much disputed. Mrs. Stowe had indeed seen something of slave life in Kentucky; and some of the incidents, such as Eliza's escape on the ice, were actual events. The purpose of the book was to call attention to the inevitable cruelty of human bondage and its degrading effect on the master; and to that end the author made use of harrowing scenes, all of which were possible under slavery, and many of which could be paralleled by extracts from the southern newspapers of the time.

Uncle Tom's Cabin called men to the real question of the day, away from artificial politics. No serious issue existed between the two political parties: the Whigs no longer wanted a bank, or national internal improvements, or a protective tariff; but there was a strong and fierce division of opinion inside each party on the slavery question. Nevertheless, in the political campaign of 1852, both Whigs and Democrats insisted that the compromise was "finality," and that the antislavery people were making all the trouble because they would keep on discussing it. The Whigs nominated Winfield Scott of Virginia, a good soldier, but a weak candidate. For the Democratic nomination, there was a fierce competition between Cass, Douglas of Illinois, Buchanan of Pennsylvania, and Marcy of New York; but the place went to an inconspicuous man, Franklin Pierce of New Hampshire, who had been for two terms a

member of Congress, and for one term a senator, and had served creditably in the Mexican War. The former Free-soil party was reorganized as the Free Democracy. Pierce received 254 electoral votes to 42 for Scott. Though the Whigs polled nearly 1,400,000 popular votes against 1,600,000 for the Democratic ticket, and 155,000 for the Free Democrats, they carried only four states.

The five years from 1848 to 1853 were full of excitement and danger. At the beginning of the period Congress had to face three hotly disputed questions: (1) the boundaries of Texas; (2) the future of New Mexico; (3) the future of California. The South insisted that the recently annexed territory should be divided by the compromise line of $36^{\circ} 30'$ extended to the Pacific; the North insisted that both California and New Mexico should remain free. At the same time the questions of slavery in the District of Columbia, and of fugitive slaves, came in to confuse the issue.

After four years of exhausting discussion, all these issues were apparently adjusted by the Compromise of 1850. The people of California secured a free-state government, and Congress cut down the Texan territorial claim; a new and more severe fugitive slave law was passed; and the slave trade in the District of Columbia was prohibited. New Mexico was divided into the two territories of Utah and New Mexico, in each of which slaveholders were allowed to settle with their slaves if they chose, the expectation being that New Mexico would become a slave state.

Yet, as soon as the compromise had been passed, four new issues arose out of slavery: (1) the annexation of Cuba; (2) the nullification of the fugitive slave law by violence and by “personal liberty laws”; (3) the revival of the abolition spirit under the stimulus of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*; (4) the defeat of the Whigs, which showed that slavery had caused fatal internal divisions in that party as a national organization.

