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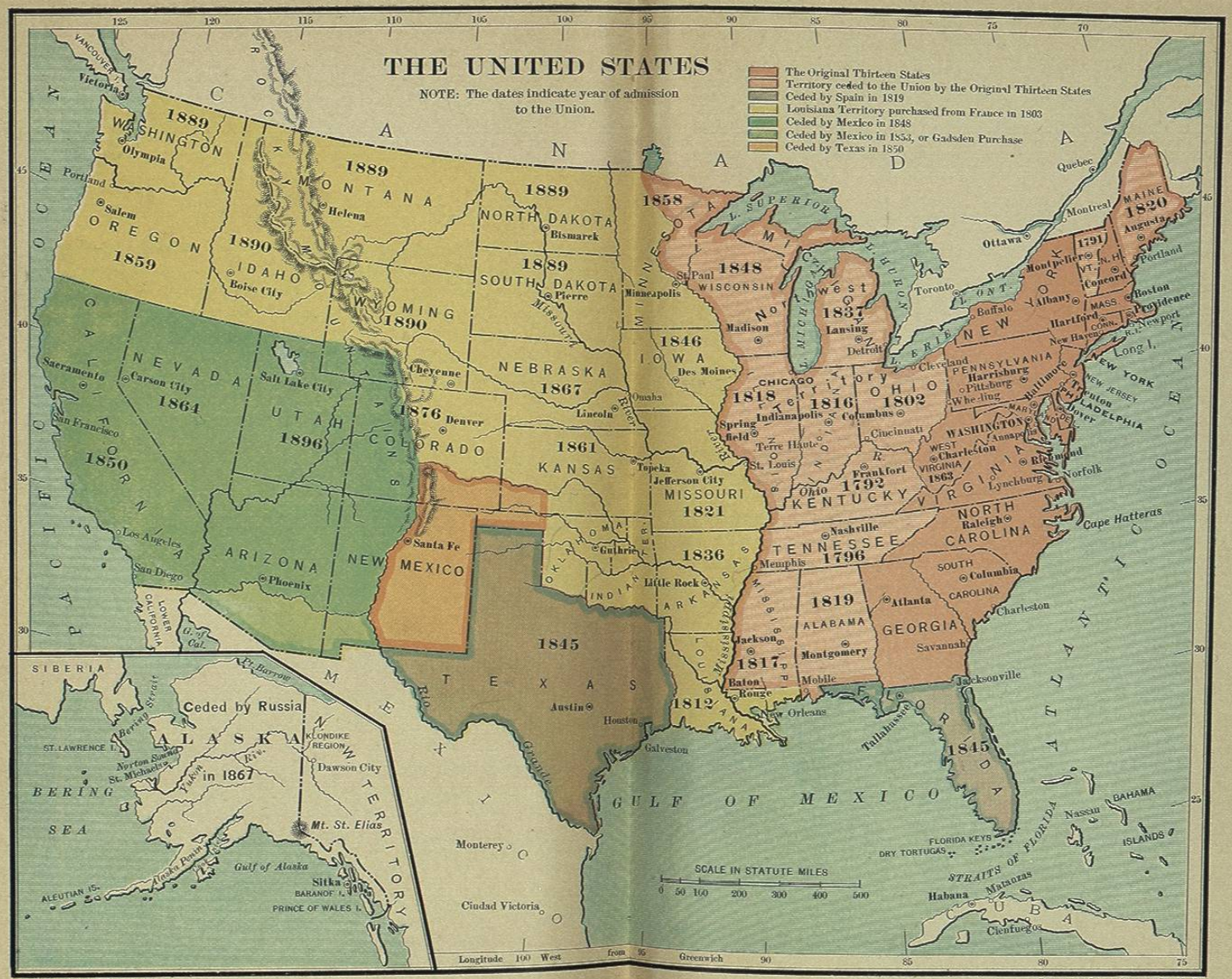
THE UNITED STATES

American History. — The most important of all histories to an American is that of his own country. Not only does it appeal to his patriotism, but in it is found as nowhere else the story of self-government by the people. Moreover, during the last fifty years few nations have equalled the United States in contributions to the sum of human welfare and progress. A history so interesting and comprehensive cannot be summed up nor will it be sought in the limited compass of any compendium. This book deals primarily with European history. It will therefore be the object of this chapter to merely touch upon those points wherein the United States have come in contact with the rest of the world, rather than to narrate internal and domestic affairs.

Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848). **The Gadsden Purchase** (1853). The last half century is bounded at both its beginning and end by a war, the one with Mexico, the most powerful and most populous of the Spanish-American states, and the other, in 1898, with Spain herself. The first war, after a series of American successes, was terminated by the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (February 2, 1848). Thereby the United States secured from Mexico the cession of 526,078 square miles and agreed to pay in return $15,000,000 and to satisfy claims of American citizens against Mexico to the amount of $3,250,000. This cession was rounded out in 1853, when Mr. Gadsden, for the sum of $10,000,000, purchased from Mexico, to which he was the American minister, 45,535 square miles south of the river Gila. From the region thus acquired have been carved California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, and part of Wyoming, Colorado and New Mexico.

The Clayton-Bulwer Treaty (1850). — Intense excitement followed the discovery of gold in California early in 1848. During the following year between 80,000 and 100,000 eager gold hunters crowded to the newly opened mines. The



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United States already enjoyed the right of transit across the Isthmus of Panama, but it was of supreme importance to open up direct water communication with the distant territory. The consent and coöperation of Nicaragua was obtained by treaty for the construction of a ship canal from San Juan on the Atlantic through the lake of Nicaragua to the Pacific coast. But Great Britain claimed to exercise a protectorate over the Mosquito Indians, who were supposed to occupy the eastern coast through which the canal was to pass. She refused to permit its joint construction by Nicaragua and the United States. In the subsequent negotiations between Mr. Clayton, the American secretary of state, and Sir Henry Bulwer, the British ambassador at Washington, who acted in behalf of the British government, Great Britain scored the diplomatic victory known as the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty. By this treaty both the United States and Great Britain renounced any exclusive control over the proposed ship canal. At the same time, they both agreed to neither occupy, fortify nor colonize Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Mosquito coast or any part of Central America. The British government asserts that the first clause of the treaty is still in force. The American government, on the other hand, maintains that, as "Great Britain has persistently violated her agreement not to colonize the Central American coast," the treaty is void. The Spanish-American war of 1898 has even increased the necessity of a canal connecting the two oceans and has emphasized the fact that it must be under the unshared control of the United States.

Complications with Austria (1849–1854). — Great sympathy was felt for the Hungarians in their struggle with Austria. An agent was sent by President Taylor to obtain definite information as to whether recognition of the revolutionary government was warranted. Afterwards the frigate *Mississippi* was commissioned to bring the exiled leader, Kossuth, to the United States, where he was received with great enthusiasm. The Austrian chargé d'affaires at Washington sharply protested against the despatch of the agent and the reception of Kossuth. Daniel Webster had become secretary of state. He replied in a powerful state paper, setting forth the principles by which the American nation considered itself controlled in dealing with international affairs.

Later on trouble arose over Martin Koszta, a Hungarian refugee, who had filed (1852) his declaration preliminary to naturalization as an American citizen. Visiting Smyrna in Asia Minor, in 1854, he was seized at the instigation of the Austrian consul-general by the crew of an Austrian frigate and thrown into irons. This was in contempt of the fact that he had an American passport in his possession. Demands for his release were refused. Thereupon the captain of an American man-of-war, then in the harbor, prepared to use force and cleared his deck for action. Koszta was then placed by the Austrians under the charge of the French consul-general, and was soon afterwards allowed to return to America.

The Ostend Manifesto (1854.) — The acquisition of Cuba, "the gem of the Antilles," was ardently desired by the Southern states of the American Union. Its chronic misgovernment called forth their sympathy, but, above all, if a possession of the United States, it would add to their political power. Under the direction of President Pierce Messrs. Buchanan, Mason and Soulé, the American ministers to Great Britain, France and Spain, met at Ostend to consult as to the measures necessary for its acquisition (1854). Then they issued the results of their deliberations in what is called the Ostend Manifesto. This paper set forth the grounds on which the annexation of the island was desired. It caused a profound sensation and a measure of apprehension in Europe.

Commodore Perry's Expedition to Japan (1852–1854). — In 1637 all foreign traders, except the Dutch and the Chinese, were expelled from Japan. By exceptional favor the Dutch were permitted to occupy the small, artificial island of Deshima in the harbor of Nagasaki. Their commerce however was severely restricted, no vessels being allowed to enter except one merchantman a year from Batavia, the capital of the Dutch East Indies. Up to the middle of the present century the Japanese jealously maintained their seclusion from the rest of mankind. The country suffered under a dual system of government, whereby the power of the de jure ruler, who resided at Kioto, was curtailed by the de facto ruler, the shogun, who resided at Yedo or Tokio. Meanwhile a party of less illiberal ideas was growing up which, while detesting the foreigners, desired to gain from abroad whatever advantages it could. It was

ignorant and ill-informed, but appreciated the superiority of foreign arms, arts and inventions.

Suddenly, without previous intimation of its coming, an American fleet made its appearance in the bay of Yedo (July 8, 1853). The astounded city was terror-stricken. No such sight had ever been seen in Japanese waters. That fleet had left America late in 1852 under the command of Commodore Perry, who was invested with extraordinary powers for the conclusion of treaties with Japan. As the bearer of a letter from President Fillmore, he refused to enter into communications with any except the highest dignitaries in the land. The Japanese were perplexed but courteous. The letter was delivered to the emperor. Then Commodore Perry sailed away, but returned in the following spring for his answer. His diplomatic ability after tedious negotiations partially broke down the bars of separation. It was agreed that the ports of Shimoda and Hakodate should be open to American vessels, that an American consul should reside at Shimoda and that Americans should enjoy a certain liberty of trade and travel in some of the coast cities. This first treaty between Japan and a foreign state was signed on May 31, 1854. The other nations in quick succession sought and obtained the same advantages. But it was the honor of the United States to have led the way. Without the firing of a shot she had opened Japan to the brotherhood of nations, and had brought Western civilization and commerce to her ports.

The United States and China (1858–1892). — The war carried on by the allied British and French against China in 1856–1860 gave much concern to the American government. Hon. W. B. Reed was sent by President Buchanan to watch the course of events and mediate if possible between the contending parties. On behalf of his government he negotiated a commercial treaty with the Chinese, wherein the language of several clauses reveals their well-founded suspicion of Western aims and methods. For six years (1861–1867) Hon. Anson Burlingame was American minister to the "Middle Kingdom." His rare tact made him the virtual director of the empire in its foreign relations. When about to return home, he was tendered and accepted the high position of envoy extraordinary from China to the Western Powers. With French and British secretaries and Chinese attachés he returned to his native country, and

there negotiated a treaty, advantageous and honorable to both China and the United States, which was approved on July 16, 1868. Ten years later (1878) a Chinese embassy was established at Washington, when Chen Lan Pin was received by President Hayes as minister plenipotentiary. Fourteen years later still the Chinese Exclusion Act was introduced to "absolutely prohibit the coming of Chinese persons to the United States." Its object was to prevent the immigration of Chinese laborers. Their immigration had assumed so large proportions as to cause anxiety, specially on the Pacific coast. The bill, called the Geary Act because introduced by Mr. Geary of California, after some modifications was approved by both Houses and received the signature of President Harrison (May 5, 1892).

The Civil War (1861–1865). — The question of slavery had become the most persistent and complex in American political life. Prominent ever since the foundation of the Union, gradually it had crowded all other questions to the background. In 1860 fifteen states employed slave labor. The sixteen other states did not. The former were commonly called Southern or slave states, and the latter Northern or free states. The presidential election of 1860 disclosed the nation drawn up in sectional lines. Mr. Lincoln uttered a great truth when he declared, in 1858, that, "This government cannot permanently endure half slave and half free. . . . It will become all one thing or all the other." An overwhelming electoral defeat proved to the Southern states that they could not in the Union extend their peculiar labor system beyond their own borders. Inside their own borders they believed that system in danger. Eleven states asserted that they had a right to secede, passed enactments withdrawing from the Union, and formed a political association under the name of the Confederate States of America.

The corner-stone of the new state edifice was slavery. The eleven states had seceded in order to extend, or at least perpetuate, slavery. The great majority of the other states regarded secession as a crime and took up arms to maintain the Union. The seceded states took up arms to vindicate their right of secession. Slavery had brought on the armed conflict, but the perpetuity or dissolution of the American Union was the vital issue.

The first gun was fired when Fort Sumter, off Charleston, South Carolina, was attacked by the Confederate General Beauregard, on April 12, 1861. The surrender of the Confederate General Lee to General Grant took place at Appomattox Court House, in Virginia, on April 9, 1865. These two events mark the armed beginning and conclusion of a civil war which, as to the number of soldiers engaged, the number of battles fought and the cost of the struggle, is unequalled in history. To maintain the Union the Federal government brought into the field 2,778,304 soldiers. To overthrow the Union the Confederate government brought into the field nearly 1,000,000. Altogether in that four years' agony there were 2265 engagements, ranging from petty skirmishes between handfuls of men up to pitched battles lasting for days and fought with ferocious determination between hundreds of thousands. Over 360,000 Federal soldiers fell in battle or died of wounds or disease. The Federal debt at the conclusion of the struggle had swollen to $2,808,549,437.55. The entire cost to the victorious party is commonly reckoned at $8,000,000,000, figures so vast that they baffle realization. "Never in the same space of time has there been a material expenditure so great."

The arbitrament of the sword decided two questions which, with equal definiteness and permanence, could be determined in no other way. The first question concerned the American Union, the permanence of which was demonstrated and guaranteed. There was to be but one flag from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the Lakes to the Gulf. The second question concerned the system of human slavery, which was abolished upon the continent. Under the protection of that flag all were to be free men.

On April 14, 1865, the great-hearted president, Mr. Lincoln, was smitten down by the hand of an assassin. In his arduous office he had so borne himself as to win the respect and admiration, not only of his own country, but of the world. His murder called forth universal expressions of grief and horror.

When the war ended there was no proscription of the conquered; no court martials or gibbets blackened the land. The survivors of the victorious and vanquished hosts returned at once to the ordinary avocations of life, and, with no shock to the body politic, devoted themselves to the pursuits of peace. But all the disorders of a four years' war could not disappear in a day. The folly and crime of