

Pre-civil war: slavery by another name

[History](#)



Pre-Civil War: Slavery by Another Name

The civil war occurred and experienced from 1861 to 1865 yielded to massive destruction and economic instability. In the inception of the 19th century, the favorable climate as well as the fertile soil in the south promoted the growth of large-scale plantations such as cotton and tobacco. Agriculture enabled the farmers to obtain huge profits and few of the populace saw the need for industrial prosperity. Statistically, 80% of the workforce personnel labored on the farms. At this time, the southerners did not practice slavery and the numbers of blacks was almost equal to that of the whites. The only large cities in the south before the civil war were those located along the coast and they served as ports to ship agricultural produce to the North or to Europe.

In the pre war period, only a tenth of the southerners lived in urban areas. Transportation between cities was hard except by water, the agricultural economy of the South seemed to go down while the northern manufacturers experienced a boom. A smaller percentage of the white southerners were literate compared to the whites in the northern region. Children living in the south spent less time in school and the men belonged to democratic political party and tended to engage in agriculture.

Post-Civil War

The Southern economy was not strong before the civil war because of some major reasons. They include the fact that profits were made since free labor was offered. To add on, they planted minimal cash crops hence more industries were not necessary. Following the civil war, the south was affected and the labor force decreased by a third. This is evident from the fact that 250, 000 individuals died and 300, 000 were wounded. The natural resource <https://assignbuster.com/pre-civil-war-slavery-by-another-name/>

factor, the equipment factor, also affected the economy of the south. New inventions such as the combine harvesters and the corn planters could not be of advantage to cotton farmers of the south. The cultivator was another invention, although it too expensive for the small-scale farmers.

Former slaves that offered free labour tried to survive in the face of the crisis. Considering that minimal southerners owned slaves before the war, it is ironic that most of the populace believed that secession was a noble cause despite their suffering. Former planters were in debts and could not even hire workers hence needed workers that could not be paid until they harvested crops. This led to the tenant system that involved dividing land into smaller plots. Those that lacked the money to buy farm supplies and lands became tenant farmers and sharecroppers. The tenant farmers were expected to pay the landowner rent for the land as well as house, the however had the privilege of owning whatever they wanted and make use of them as they pleased (Moore). The case was different with sharecroppers who toiled on the farmers' lands and had no say on most farm decisions. They were paid after harvests.

Convict leasing was also conducted in the south, it involved a system of penal labour (Moore). This system provided prisoner labour to private parties like the plantation owners and corporations. This system however involved slaves and was abolished in 1942 during WWII. Racism seemed to stretch further amongst the populace and the norm still evidently permeates the American society (Moore).

Work Cited

Moore, Barry. (2014, January 25). " Slavery by another Name." You Tube. You Tube Inc., 25Th January 2014. Web. 21st May 2015.
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