

A Political History of Slavery: Being an Account of the Slavery Controversy From the Earliest Agitations in the Eighteenth Century to the Close of the ... Period in America (Classic Reprint)

William Henry Smith

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Excerpt from A Political History of Slavery: Being an Account of the Slavery Controversy From the Earliest Agitations in the Eighteenth Century to the Close of the Reconstruction Period in America

This work differs from most histories treating of the same period in confining its narration largely to a specific purpose. The author undertakes to cover the whole time from the first signs in America of active hostility to slavery down to the reconstruction of the United States Constitution as an anti-slavery instrument. But he does not undertake an adequate account of the origin and spirit of slavery in this country, nor of the growth of the anti-slavery agitation at the North, nor of Secession, nor of the Civil War and what came after. He traverses this period from first to last with the one primary purpose of telling the Political History of Slavery.

Incidentally there is much reference to all the other topics, but only as they contribute to the development of this political story. To read the work for the full record of either Abolition propagandism or Secession, or for a consecutive and detailed narrative of the Civil War, would be disappointing. The author did not set himself to any of these tasks, and they had already been essayed, at any rate, in many volumes and by all sorts and conditions of writers. What he did attempt is merely to use such facts in all these fields as are essential to the political history he was presenting.

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