



American History, 1859-1861. Causes of the Civil War

French Ensor Chadwick

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The most dramatic and most momentous episode in the history of the United States is undoubtedly the Civil War, into which the country slowly drifted for nearly ten years, but which burst out with amazing suddenness and unexpectedness. In the first four chapters the author intentionally restates this discussion in the light of the intense sectional rivalry and mutual dislike revealed over the election of Abraham Lincoln to the presidency; and he shows the economic importance of slave-grown products and the significance of the political theory of state rights at the time of the outbreak. The narrative begins in 1859, with the John Brown raid. In the next chapter the political events of 1859 and 1860 are described. Chapters VII and VIII are on the election of 1860. The process of secession and the attitude of Buchanan occupy chapters IX and X. Chapter XI deals with the first and utterly unsuccessful attempt at compromise. In chapters XII to XV there is a thorough discussion of the status of the Federal forts in the South, and of the attitude of Buchanan's administration, culminating in the episode of the Star of the West. Chapter XVI is upon the second attempt at compromise, in February, 1861. With chapter XVII begins Lincoln's administration and the development of its policy. Chapter XIX in detail expounds the final outbreak in the fall of Fort Sumter...

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