

slave . . . [and, the text concludes] nothing could make up for loss of freedom. . . ." (page 130).

This passage occurs in a chapter on nineteenth century America. Nothing comparable is said about slavery in the colonial period. In fact, slavery in the colonial period is treated in a chapter that presents colonial life as one of unrestrained achievement. The colonial period is a period of progress, of material advance; plantations served colonial enterprise and slaves served on plantations. In this context, which exudes utilitarian values, slavery may appear to the uncritical reader as an eminently useful—and good—institution.

The account of the colonial period may lend itself to a second inference (perhaps incompatible with the one above). The tone of the discussion of the colonial period is one of relentless optimism. Colonial America was a going concern, as these section headings suggest: "Ability counted more than birth in America," "A sturdy middle class developed," "Colonists could better themselves," "Royal governors had a hard time." "Free American air" is contrasted with the stuff unfree Europe breathed. The setting is one described by Turner, and in it slavery by implication appears as an aberrant condition of relatively little importance. And although success is attributed in large part to American opportunity, at one point race is credited in a discussion of craftsmen like Benjamin Franklin—"men of good racial stock and ability" (page 29).

Abolition, Civil War, Reconstruction

Although the book's treatment of slavery is unsatisfactory, the worst of it may be cancelled out by the discussion of the antislavery movement. "Here," the discussion begins, "was a system (slavery) that denied all the values of the American system to millions of Americans. Slaves had no share in economic opportunity, no part in politics, no rights to education, and not much chance at moral improvement. Slavery was completely out of line with American ideals" (page 151). But in its account of the antislavery movement, the book gives the impression that it was unfortunate that anyone insisted too strenuously that these American ideals should be extended to Negroes. Moderate men who "tried to end slavery by appealing to the American sense of fair play" are contrasted favorably with abolitionists, "men who thought they could get results by making everybody angry" (page 152). To incite hatred was the intention of the abolitionists, according to the text. Although the text does not advocate the view attributed to the South—that "the real danger to the welfare of the United States came not from slavery, but from abolitionists"—it evidently admires a statement cited from Daniel Webster "that abolitionists accomplished nothing good or useful."

In a chapter heading the book makes obeisance to the argument that state rights "led to" the Civil War, but the substance of the chapter itself focuses on the problems of slavery, and especially the extension