United States History to 1877

Posted on August 20, 2019

View this essay online:
https://academic-master.com/united-states-history-to-1877/

English Settlers

During the seventeenth century, the English were not permanently established in America. However, in the next century, they improved their position and totally outpaced their opponents. The English encouraged emigration, settled dozens of colonies, and established them by sending flocks of immigrants so that they could populate the land (Tomlins, 2001). There was a dramatic increase in the population of England during the sixteenth century, and for all those people who were feeling deprived in Britain and were facing poverty, the colonies seemed to become a welcoming place for them.

Advocates of colonization, especially those who were supporting colonization in North America, hoped to make a profit either by bringing raw resources to the colonies or by providing English goods to a new market.

A different group of English immigrants traveled to the rocky soil and cold climate of New England due to their religious beliefs and motives. Most of the people who crossed the Atlantic were traveling with their children and families. People who were living in the colonies of Maryland and Virginia were working on their tobacco fields to make them more profitable, while the people who were residing in the colonies of New England started building towns and churches. Most historians write that major differences between the colonies of New England and the Chesapeake Bay were the major reasons that separated the north and south of the United States.

The troubles in England started in the 1640s when the civil war began, in which supporters of the Church of England and King Charles I stood against Parliament and its supporters. But in 1649, Parliament, in an unexpected move, executed King Charles (Tomlins, 2001). As a result, turmoil started and caused these regions to develop divergent cultures.

Colonial Way Of Life

Life at the start of the colonial period was more difficult. The earlier you arrived in the world of colonial life, the harder it was for you to start an easy life. During the 1600s, immigrants who started their lives in the colonies were actually starting a new life (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009).

They were starting their lives only with the things they had brought when they migrated. All the other

things that they needed for their lives were not easy to obtain. If you ever read history or know any person who lived in colonial times, you would come to know that the majority of the people were farmers. Back in colonial times, most people were at high risk of exposure to different fatal diseases. At the time, among the colonial people, only a few possessed land, while the majority of the people were working either on the lands of greedy landlords or paying a huge amount of rent to the people who owned the land. In today's world, people think that farming is difficult, but back in colonial life, farming was considered an honorable job, and people

who were farming were looked at with great respect. Farmers in colonial life either owned a small plot or worked on a huge piece of land for farming; they produced enough food for their families, and in addition, they also made extra money by selling surplus grain to other people, through which they could buy other things needed for living. Ninety percent of the people during colonial times were farmers. For farming, they mostly relied on their own labor. During colonial times, slavery became legalized, so any farmer who had a slave or two was considered very rich.

The Constitution

In July 1776, a declaration of independence was made under which the American colonies that became independent had to make their own government and their own standards. In 1777, the Articles of Confederation stated that there was no judicial branch, executive, or central government.

But in 1787, it seemed that the country needed to have a strong central government that could properly run the country. At that time, they didn't have any money in the banks, there was no treasury department, and there was no one who could control the finances of the country. The country was heading towards bankruptcy. They did not have an operational army and were open to attack on all fronts. In May 1787, the Constitutional Convention of the US gathered in Philadelphia (Edling, 2003). Delegates from all the states met there and elected George Washington to chair the convention. In this convention, they decided to look deeply at the Articles of Confederation to revise them and make them stronger.

As the convention ended, a plan was introduced, which is also known as the Virginia Plan, which said that there are three branches of government and there will be a system of checks and balances that will prevent any branch from abusing its power against the others. This plan came into debate, and the debate lasted for many weeks. Many states were against this plan, and many were in favor, as this plan was giving representation to the states in Parliament according to their population (Edling, 2003). The debate for and against the Bill of Rights continued and became a hot topic until September 1789, when a bill was submitted with a list of twelve amendments for ratification, of which, other than the first two, the remaining ten became the Bill of Rights.

War Of 1812

The first decade of the 1800s brought much instability to the world. All the European countries were fighting each other under coalitions led by Great Britain and France. The US was not involved in this war, as it wanted to remain neutral during this period, but it was impossible for the US to remain neutral for a decade.

In the early years, i.e., from 1803 to 1806, Americans remained neutral and did not become allies with anyone, but after Britain's seizure of American citizens who were born in the United Kingdom into the British navy, the US suffered from impressment. American President Thomas Jefferson sent a delegate to negotiate terms for halting the impressment of American sailors, but the British didn't make any concessions.

Relations between the United States and the British were becoming weaker day by day. The US Navy captured a UK naval ship in revenge for the impressment of British-born American sailors and set it on fire (Dumbrell, 2006). As a result, British Minister to the United States Thomas Foster met with American President Madison and told him that, due to the recent event, the British were not going to offer any compensation and were not going to end the conflict with the Americans.

As a result, Madison decided to start a war against Britain. On 17th June, Congress passed a bill giving permission to start the war against Britain, which Madison signed the very next day. This war lasted for three years.

Work Cited

Dumbrell, John. *A special relationship: Anglo-American relations from the Cold War to Iraq*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.