

THE ECONOMIC HISTORY  
OF  
THE UNITED STATES

BY  
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PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

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OF THE UNITED STATES

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S. M. B.

## PREFACE

THE purpose of this book is not to rehearse the events common to political and constitutional histories of the United States, but rather to emphasize the points neglected by them. The keynote of all American history, from whatever standpoint it may be written, is found in the efforts of a virile and energetic people to appropriate and develop the wonderful natural resources of a new continent and there to realize their ideals of liberty and government. The economic history of the United States is largely the story of the achievements of a people working under free competition, untrammelled by custom, tradition, or political limitations, and whose changing conditions of environment constantly compelled new adaptations and promoted ingenuity and energy of character. The history of this economic struggle is not one whit less interesting or dramatic than the political history of the same period, while it is absolutely essential to a thorough understanding of the latter.

When this book was put into manuscript, this story had nowhere been told in connected form, and it was to supply this lack that it was written. Beginning with the explorations and settlements that led to the colonization of the continent, there is traced the growth of industry, agriculture, commerce, transportation, population, and labor, from the simple, isolated agricultural communities of the colonies to the complex industrial and commercial society of to-day. In each period the important events are emphasized, and the attempt is made to bring out clearly their causal relations. While the chronological order of presentation has been followed in general,

related chapters are so grouped that the thread of the narrative is broken as little as possible. Owing to the inaccessibility of many of the data upon which the reasoning and conclusions are based, as well as the lack of any other single volume covering just the same ground, it has been thought desirable to state clearly though concisely the chief facts involved. Where the statistical form of presentation was possible, they have been condensed into a statistical table. The endeavor has been made, however, to keep the facts subordinate and to interrupt as little as possible the continuity of the narrative.

The book has been written for high-school as well as college students. An effort has been made to adapt the subject matter to students of both grades by the addition of a number of Suggestive Topics and Questions, with Selected References at the end of each chapter, which can be used for further research at the discretion of the teacher. The chapter bibliographies contain a few only of the most accessible references; a full bibliography is appended at the end of the book.

My acknowledgments and thanks are due many friends for aid and encouragement during the preparation of this volume, but especially to Professors G. M. Fisk, of the University of Illinois, and E. D. Jones, of the University of Michigan, for reading the manuscript and making many valuable suggestions; to my colleagues, W. M. Adriance, E. S. Corwin, Edgar Dawson, C. H. McIlwain, Royal Meeker, W. S. Myers, H. R. Shipman, C. W. Spencer, H. R. Spencer, and W. L. Whittlesey, for reading portions of the proof and correcting errors of fact and expression. But most of all my sincere thanks are due my wife, whose assistance and sympathy have greatly lightened the task of writing this book in every stage of its preparation.

ERNEST LUDLOW BOGART.

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October 20, 1907.

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