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A CENTURY OF INDO-AMERICAN TRADE RELATIONS
(1783-1881)

by
Panchanand Misra, Bhagalpur
(Summary)

In this paper an attempt has been made to analyse the Indo-American trade between 1783-1880. Since their independence in 1783, American merchants took keen interest in Indian trade. In spite of some early adversities the volume of American trade with India did grow and from 1784 to 1850 was period of slow, but steady growth. From 1851 to 1859 the volume of trade increased substantially. From 1859-1865 the period was one of decline. However, from 1866-1880 a gradual restoration of trade came about.

AMERICA'S MANIFEST DESTINY & MEXICO

by
Dr. M.B. Deopujari

The purpose of the paper "America's Manifest Destiny and Mexico" is to offer an interpretive study of American expansionism during the forties of the last century in terms of American nationalism. The thirteen colonies which revolted against Britain and eventually formed the Union were a nation in the making. Sectional differences and antagonisms existed from the very beginning and yet we may speak of the United States as a political nation, whose leaders, imbued with patriotic fervour were dreaming of a bright future for their country.

The acquisition of Louisiana from France set the course of American expansion. By the treaty of Louisiana purchase, the U.S. secured islands of New Orleans and the west bank of the Mississippi river (Treaty, May 2, 1803)¹. On December 20, 1803, as the U.S. stars and stripes ascended the public buildings at New Orleans, this fortunate event, essentially a product of European rivalries, strengthened the spirit of national unity and more importantly, fostered an optimistic outlook. It appeared to the leaders that the U.S. had a noble destiny to fulfil². Spain was a declining power in the Americas. Napoleon's ambition to found an empire in the New world had ended in smoke. Relations with Britain were to remain unfriendly for several years to come. The treaty of Ghent (December 1814) left several problems unsolved. But it fixed the northern boundary of Louisiana along the forty-ninth parallel to the Rocky Mountains,

leaving the Oregon country "free and open" to both countries for a period of ten years but subject to renewal³. The U.S. pressed upon the boundaries of the Spanish Empire. The U.S. occupied West Florida in 1813 and acquired the remainder in 1819. In this enterprise Andrew Jackson played a prominent role⁴. Mexico became independent of Spain in 1823. Texas, as large as France and blessed with fertile river valleys, adjoined Louisiana. The Spanish Government had neglected their province. Fearing trouble from U.S. expansionists and filibusters, the Spanish Viceroy, just two years before the termination of Spanish rule, had invited Americans from Missouri and other U.S. States to colonise Texas. There were till then three main settlements (at San Antonio, La Bahia and Nacogdoches). A Roman Catholic empresario from Missouri planted the first settlement⁵. Independent Mexico failed to realize that such a policy would turn Texas into a U.S. colony before long. Texas would have been annexed even without the rise of slavery question⁶. The Mexican Colonization Law of 1824 restricted immigration by laying down certain conditions to be fulfilled by the new settlers. In 1830 immigrants from the United States were excluded. But this hardly helped Mexico to keep Texas attached to the Mexican Republic. The new comers were hardy frontiersmen. No sooner was a determined effort by Santa Anna's Government made to strengthen the hold of the Republic on Texas then open warfare started between the Texans and the Mexicans. The former were assisted directly or indirectly by American volunteers from the southern and western States who offered their services. The spirit of the 'warhawks' of which Jackson was an embodiment was unloosed. The U.S. did not stand neutral in this affair. Sam Houston, a typical pioneer and an able soldier, won a decisive victory over the Mexican troops defeating Santa Anna himself on the banks of the Jacints (April 21, 1836). Texas became independent of Mexico but right from the beginning its leaders worked for its incorporation into the rapidly expanding and prosperous American nation. Britain, France and Spain did not want it to be so annexed and add to the resources of the emerging "Northern Colossus". Mexico, as befitted a sovereign nation, looked upon Texas as a rebellious province exactly as the Union Government was to regard the confederated seceding slaves States. Mexico hoped for sympathy and support from Britain, the only power in the New World capable of giving such aid. The treaty settlement with Spain in 1821 had given Spain complete control of Texas. President Adams (1825-1829) regretted that his treaty had not taken some or all of Texas and accepting the line of the Sabine. Instead Joel R. Poinsett took up the appoi-

ntment as the first Minister of the United States to Mexico and was instructed by Secretary of State Henry Clay in 1825 and 1827 to get the boundry rectified so as to include land up to the Brazos River, the Colorado River of Texas and the watershed of the Rio de Grand. President Jackson (1829-1837) continued the effort to purchase Texas through his Minister Anthony Butler. The President wanted the boundary to river from the Rio Grande River to 37° north parallel and thence due west to the Pacific Ocean to include the San Francisco Bay. But Mexico would not accept these terms.⁷ The Texan revolt embittered relations between the two countries. The Americans sought to complete the process of continental expansion by methods which were bound to recoil on themselves.

Santa Anna was a centralist but not endowed with qualities of real greatness. The Mexicans were divided into two factions, the liberals who advocated a decentralised federal form of government and the conservatives who desired to perpetuate the domination of the church and landlords. But both federalists or centralists were united in opposing the aggressive designs of their neighbour. Santa Anna's rise to power marked the victory of conservative forces. For nine years Mexico, under difficult circumstances, refused to accept Texan demand telling the U.S. that annexation of Texas would lead to war and the war came when this was done by President Polk in 1845. The Mexican Minister at Washington, General J.N. Almonte, left for his country protesting the injustice of 'despoiling a friendly nation of her territory'. Americans had, from the day of Thomas Jefferson's Louisiana purchase, laboured hard to colonise the sparsely inhabited spaces of the middle west. The call of adventure apart, compulsion of geography, consideration of security, needs of trade and commerce and patriotic urges had kept the Americans on the move. The coming of the Industrial Revolution accelerated the process. The railroads and shipping enterprise were the agencies of change from agrarianism to industrialism. In Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, the Americans were assertive, bellicose and even unscrupulous. The south-western frontier area was the scene of this conflict. Independent Texas claimed Rio Grande, Sann Houston having made Santa Anna surrender it. The Mexico Congress repudiated the agreement made under duress. In any case the U.S. could hardly lay a morally defensible claim to this territory. It was 'the spell of expansion' that made the generation of the forties envision a democratic nation stretching from sea to sea⁸. John L. O' Sullivan, the editor of the Democratic Review, expressed the sentiment of the

nation in the magic working phrase "Manifest Destiny". He spoke about the mission of America, which was to spread freedom through the world. O'Sullivan justified America's claim to Oregon in the issue of the *Morning News* published in New York as "the right of our manifest destin to overspread and to possess the whole of the continent which Providence has given us for the great experiment of liberty"⁹. It was Mexico's misfortune that it stood in the way of the colossus. Mexico fell a victim to Manifest Destiny. Britain and France sympathised with Mexico but did nothing to avert the catastrophe. Santa Anna relinquished the Presidency in 1844. Herrera who took over realised Mexico's peril. Polk, like Jackson and Tyler, believed in the new gospel. He sent out feelers to the Mexican President to receive a representative from the U. S. Government for negotiations. John Slidell was to get Mexico agree to a "better boundary"—all the territory east and north of Del Norte from its mouth to the ocean, about 32° north. The President was willing to pay forty millions for the new territory comprising New Mexico and Upper California. The U. S. involvement in China trade was growing and San Francisco Bay was an important area coveted by the U.S. It was thought that both Great Britain and France wanted to gain possession of California. In 1845 California had a population of 15,000 whites and 24,000 Indians. Since 1838 it was for all practical purposes independent of Mexico. As a matter of fact, Britain had no intention to acquire colonies in North or South America and make an enemy of the U.S. The latter had concluded a treaty with New Granada in 1846 indicating her intention to check British expansion. The treaty gave her preferential rights to use the Panamanian isthmus¹⁰.

Herrera's cautious policy was offensive to the Mexican nationalists. In 1846 Paredes became President. Under his leadership the Nationalists prepared to defend the entire national territory. The Mexicans had received encouragement from Britain. The British press opined that Mexico would be able to beat the U. S. in case of armed hostilities. The Mexican cavalry was supposed to be formidable and the advantage of fighting in a country lacking in means of communication told in Mexico's favour¹¹. The treaty between Britan and America concluded on June 15, 1846, settled the Oregon boundary, so that there remained little possibility of Britain backing or supporting the defiant Mexicans. Mexico fought as best as she could under the circumstances¹². The Mexican war was not considered just by the Whigs. Sectional differences had become sharp and found expression in public utterances of the leaders and journalists¹³. But there was no sabotage of the war effort. The war was the nation's war. The Americans commanded a

better organised artillery, warships and economic resources. Even so, the Mexicans did not yield easily. The treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, ratified in March 1848, gave the U.S. all it wanted. Mexico lost all its provinces on the Pacific coast. A few jingoists talked of annexing the whole of Mexico. Though the victory “remade the map of North America, rounding out the United States to continental proportions”, it, at the same time, “helped to lay the train of events which ended in the great struggle between the States of the South and of the North”. The challenge to American nationalism came from its own people—the southerners—who had done so much to colonise the Missi-ssippi Valley, Louisiana and Texas.

Mexico’s social structure militated against national unity. The Independence movement had been supported by wealthy landowners. The Whites, the Mestizos and the Indians had not yet learned to cooperate in a common cause. The military leaders seized power after the brief experiment of monarchical rule. For a quarter of a century, Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna dominated Mexican politics. Santa Anna was “craft and unscrupulous, with few convictions and little administrative ability”. But he was immensely popular with the military. When he came to power (1834) he abolished the federal constitution. The “Seven Laws” of 1836, providing for election of president for an eight-year term, set up a centralist regime. Texas was united with Coahuila as one State. Frequent disturbances led to unrest among the people. Foreigners—Americans and French suffered¹⁴. Santa Anna was elected President eleven times between 1832—1855. During this period Texas was lost and Arizona was sold. Santa Anna was defeated by Zachary Taylor in the battle of Buena Vista near Saltillo. Scott landed at Vera Cruz in 1847 and after much fighting occupied Mexico City in February 1848.

The Mexican War could not be truthfully described as a crusade for democracy. While B. F. Porter of Alabama in an article “The Mission of America” characterised the war as a divine instrument for spreading American institutions and ideals to the Pacific, the Northerners protested the injustice, aggressiveness and rank materialism that had led to the war. On May 9, 1846, it was reported that a detachment of Taylor’s army had been attacked on the Texas side of the Rio Grande. Abraham Lincoln later wanted to know whether the spot on which the blood was shed was actually a part of American soil. In New England, James Russell Lowell turned his poetic gift to satirising the war party in the Biglow Papers. Mexico survived as an independent Republic, thanks to highminded Americans like Lincoln.

The Mexican war is a problem study in American history. Mexicans have not forgotten the war, a great tragedy for them which deprived them of half of their territory. The debate on the "war guilt" in this case continues as it does in case of every war. Self-criticism even to the point of self-abasement is a noticeable trait of historians in America. Maybe, the war was the result of Manifest Destiny as interpreted by American leaders like Taylor and Polk. This concept was imperialistic and in part at least, racist. But essentially it was the expression of militant nationalism.

NOTES

1. *Readings in American History*: Volume I, 1492-1865, edited by Biesle, Ezell Fite, Second edition, Houghton M. C. pp. 153, 155, 158.
A Diplomatic History of the American People —Thomas A. Bailey, Sixth edition. Appleton-Century - Crofts. Inc., New York, 1958, p. 160.
2. *American Foreign Policy*—Documents edited by Dorothy Burne Goebel, Holt New York, 1961. p. 42, 43.
3. Bailey; *A Diplomatic History of the American People*. p. 160.
4. Samuel Flagg Bemis; *A Diplomatic History of the United States*, Revised edition, Henry Holt, New York. pp. 216, 220.
5. Dana Gardner Munro, *The Latin American Republics*, Third edition, George G. Herrap; p. 256; Webb Walter Prescott: *The Great Plains*, (1331), pp. 171, 173.
6. Dana Munro; *The Latin American Republics*, pp. 355, 357 (*Mexico*)
7. *American Foreign Policy* (Goebel), pp. 75, 84, 86, 89.
8. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.; *The Age of Jackson*, Boston Little Brown and Company, 1953, pp. 174, 175.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 371; *Life of John L.O. Sullivan*, pp. 427, 428 (Foot-note). O,Sullivan, had actually used the phrase in July 1845, but it was he December editorial which made it popular.
10. Fagg; *Latin America*. pp. 1005, 1006 U.S. and Latin American Relations)
11. Henry Bamford Parkes; *A History of Mexico*, London, Eyre & Spottiswoode (First edition, 1962) William Benton; *The Voice of Latin America*, Weidnfeld and Nicolson, London, 1962, pp. 139, 140.
12. Paxon, *American Frontiers*, pp. 355, 357, 358.
13. Dana; *Latin America*, pp. 349, 356, 359.
14. *The Mexican War. Was it Manifest Destiny?* American Problem Studies, Holt, Rinehard and Winston, 1963. *Introduction, Reflections on the War and whose war Guilt* pp. 85; 106; *The Story of the Mexican War*, by Robert Selph Henry Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., New York, Chapter 1.

THE KING AND THE COMMONER : INDIAN COTTON AND AMERICAN COTTON TAX

BY

DWIJENDRA TRIPATHI

Before leaving the shores of India on January 16, 1864, Captain Raphael Semmes of the Confederate cruiser "Alabama", looked at the Western Ghats and reflected : "British India is the most formidable competitor of the Confederate States for the production of cotton for the supply of the spindles and looms of the world" Semmes had anchored on the Malabar Coast for barely three days, but the period