

Reconstruction and Its Effects**Section 2**

Reconstructing Society

Terms and Names

scalawag White Southerner who joined the Republican Party

carpetbagger Northerner who moved to the South after the war

Hiram Revels First African-American senator

sharecropping System in which landowners leased a few acres of land to farmworkers in return for a portion of their crops

tenant farming Renting land from landowners for cash

Before You Read

In the last section, you learned about presidential and congressional Reconstruction plans. In this section, you will read how Reconstruction affected Southern society.

As You Read

Use a chart to take notes on the problems facing the South after the Civil War and the way people tried to solve these problems.

CONDITIONS IN THE POSTWAR SOUTH; POLITICS IN THE POSTWAR SOUTH (Pages 383–387)
What political groups existed in the postwar South?

By 1870, all former Confederate states had been readmitted to the Union. Republicans—the party that had long opposed slavery—ran their governments.

The South faced terrible economic conditions throughout Reconstruction. Many plantations and small farms remained destroyed. The population of the South also was devastated. More than one-fifth of the adult white men of the Confederacy died in the war. Tens of thousands of Southern African-American men also died. The women and children who stayed home often suffered malnutrition and illness.

The Southern state governments began public works programs to repair the region's physical damage. They also provided social services. State governments raised taxes to pay for these programs.

Three different groups made up the Republican party in the South. **Scalawags** were white Southerners. They were small farmers who did not want wealthy planters to regain power. **Carpetbaggers** were Northerners who had moved South. Some moved there to reform Southern society. Others moved there to make money. The third group was African Americans eager to vote and take part in politics.

The differences between the three Republican groups led to a lack of unity in the party. Meanwhile, the issue of African American rights divided Southern society as a whole. Some whites thought that the end of slavery would help the South. But

Section 2, *continued*

most Southern whites refused to accept equal rights for African Americans.

1. What three groups made up the Republican Party after the war?

FORMER SLAVES FACE MANY CHALLENGES (Pages 387–389)
How did former slaves improve their situation?

African Americans worked hard to improve their lives during Reconstruction. Many African Americans moved to find family members who had been sold elsewhere in the South. The Freedmen’s Bureau worked to reunite African-American families. Once reunited, African Americans married and raised their families.

Thousands of African Americans of all ages sought an education. African-American groups organized schools, colleges, and universities. They raised money to buy land and to pay teachers’ salaries.

After the war, many African Americans founded their own churches. African-American ministers often became important community leaders. African Americans also formed thousands of volunteer organizations. These organizations provided financial and emotional support for their members.

After the war, many African Americans participated in government. Not only did they vote, but they organized conventions to demand equal rights and protection under the law. Some joined the new state governments. More than a dozen African Americans served in the U.S. Congress. Among these was **Hiram Revels**, the first African-American senator.

2. In what ways did African Americans participate in government after the war?

CHANGES IN THE SOUTHERN ECONOMY (Pages 389–392)

How did the Southern economy change after the war?

African Americans wanted to own and farm their own land. They had been promised “forty acres and a mule” by General Sherman. Congress, though, did not honor this promise.

Meanwhile, Southern planters wanted to return to the plantation system. To regain their control of land and labor, Southern planters turned to two systems that kept African Americans under their control.

One system was known as **sharecropping**. To survive, many former slaves became sharecroppers. Sharecropping is a system in which landowners give a few acres of land to their farmworkers. The farmers keep a small portion of their crops and give the rest to the landowner.

Another system in which whites controlled the labor of African Americans was **tenant farming**. Tenant farmers rented land from the landowners for cash.

Another change in the Southern economy was the fact that cotton was no longer in great demand. The world demand for Southern cotton began to drop as other countries increased their cotton production. As a result, the price of Southern cotton fell dramatically.

3. How did planters regain control of the land and labor in the South?
