"An Epitaph For Dixie" -- Of Red Necks And Silver Tongues

By HARRY ASHMORE

The most speciacular, and perhaps the most significant manifestation of the de-cline of the Southern aristocratic tradition is to be found in politics. Here, too, the form survived the fact: the manner of the squire still seems to come naturally to the men who occupy the governors' mansions and sit in the Congressional seats, even though many of them owe their success to the calculated exploitation of humble origins.

and sit in the Congressional seats, even though many of them owe their success to the calculated exploitation of humble origins.

The calculated exploitation of humble origins, and the calculated exploitation of humble origins, and the calculated exploitation of humble origins, and the calculated in the calculated in the calculated in the calculated in the calculated into resentment against the old Confederates who had been called forth to restore order after the Reconstruction but who seemed incapable of anything more. In the back country three began to be ugit who seemed incapable of anything more. In the back country three began to be ugit as ich may also with the calculation of the calculation of the calculation of the calculation of the calculation. In some of the states the new leaders broke out the banners of Populism and proclaimed a new party. In others they machinery, as in South Carolina, where the one-eyed curmudgeon, Ben Tillman, routed the partician Wasel fampton. It was a political movement which drew its momentum and its color from the mass of poor whites. (Negroes participated only satisfy, before they were summarify disfranchised.) Yet the new crusade was never really out of the control of the rising class of ruling families. The real objects of its wrath were foreign for the most part: the trusts, the Eastern banks, the railroads, all those Yankee moneyed interest in agriculture that, despite the harsh words, united the largest land-owner and the porest share-cropper. It produced a few internal reforms, notably the begin-resolute its lase paved the way for the rise of the Southern demangogues.

Peak Of Tillmanism

a falla shooting.

Thus the many continued to be governed by the few, with the few commonly set. Thus the many dynasties that would survey for many years, The poor whites had louder voice, and sometimes made it louder voice, and sometimes made it anily they relied on the men they sent Washington or the state capital not only speak for them, but to tell them what ing a continuing crusade against the old aristocracy — even though as a political force the Virginians were quickly and fi-nally routed. A fair sample of the branch-head oratory of the time is provided by this polemic upon a proposed investigation of one of his antitrust proposals by the re-doubtable Governor Jeff Davis of Ar-kansas:

kansas:

Whom did they send for, my follow elitizans? Did they send for the laborer: did they send for the laborer: did they send for the mechanic; did they send for the press and their arms and their backs to the heat and the burdens of the day? No, they sent for the insurance agents from Pine Blidf, from Helena and from Fort Smith. They sent for a high-collared crowd — that crowd that wears cept over the tops of their collars. They sent for the crowd that, when they shake hands with you, they only give you the tips of two fingers.

Demagagues Challenged

Demagogues Chollenged
This sort of thing outraged and sometimes alarmed those Southerners who professed to gentility, and the demagogues
did not go unchallenged. But in order to
contest with one of the rural knights, a
man had lo meet him on his own ground,
man had beneet him on his own ground,
man had beneet him on his own ground,
mer evening for a political meeting demanded red meat and a fair splattering
of cratorical blood. They came to hear
somebody given hell; the Yankee would
do, or Wall Street, or the city folks, and,
increasingly in later years, the Negro.
This was perhaps a natural consequence
of the last war and the degeneration of
the air shout is glory, the leadership
of the folks out in significant of the lost work
and combaility stance: since Appomatiox
the South had had little to be for, and
man downthing and widespread
and a political condition had been creace,
and a political condition had been creace,
which shaped candidates to its own spetial requirement.

THE POLITICAL SOUTH

Southern politics are complex, To neucomers in the South, as populate the Saucoast, their motivations are obscuree and confusing. In this chapter of "An Epitaph for Ostice," South Carolina - born Harry Athmore, executive editor of the Arkamas Gazette, delves into the economic and social factors which have dominated the politics of the region and examines the present era of change as the rural South become urban and industrial. —The Editors.

Cotton Ed Vs. F.D.R

As a young reporter I had the privilege of watching one of the last of the great stump speakers in action — Cotton Ed Smith of South Carolina. When he finally wint to his reward Ed had served 36 continuous years in the Dittled States Senate, standing four-square from first to last upon a first privilege of the state of the state

outsider and the role of martyr was one he could play to the hit.

In those days South Carolina required candidates for state-wide office to appear together in joint debate in each county. Thus the campaig produced a sort of touring stock company, with the principals, their handlers, and the press traveling together through the hot surmmer months. The production improved as the run conjector through the hot surmmer months. The production improved as the run conjector through the production in the production in

The Philadelphia Story

The Philadelphia Story
But Ed's masterpiace was The Philadelphia Story. So far as I know this was never set down verbatim at the time and the following rendition is based on my memory, and that of Turner Catledge, the managing editor of The New York Times, who heard it as a reporter and has always regarded it as a genn never surpassed even in his native Mississiph. The Story was Ed's version of his famous boil from the Democratic National Convention two years when he was the proposition of the proposition of the state of the proposition of

page of the property of the property of the property of the struggle for human rights. But the other night, up yonder in Pickens County, I had started out with the fields of Rumymede and proceeded to the point where I had the boys in gray half-old the property of the pr

ed, blue-gummed, kinky-headed Senegam-bian!

"And he started praying and I started walking. And as I pushed through those great doors, and walked across that vast rotunda, it seemed to me that old John Callboun leaned down from his mansion in the sky and whispered in my ear, "You lid right, Ed..."

"The Philadelphia Story had all the ba-tring scene on election night when, with nonest tears coursing into his grizzled moustache, he posed for photographers on he statchouse grounds wearing the red hirt of Reconstruction and cultothing the ear leg of Wade Hampton's bronze charg-er. I suppose the Story shocked many of

to whoop and holler as Ed built his cilmanse didn't really object to being prayed over by a Sengambian, and din't believe Ed did either. And, most remarkable of all, nobody enopyed the performance more than the Negroes who stood, white teeth gleaming in the dark, at the rear of the crowd. 'Hot dann,' hey would chortle, ''Old Ed's pourin't it on tonjaht.'. The real significance of the Philadelphia Story, I think, was its magnificent irrelevance. South Carolina was perhaps as hard hit by the depression as any state in the union; recovery was painfully slow from the collapse of prices and credit.

wong with the Southern Way of Life.

I suppose Cotion Ed would have to be classified as a demagogue by any standard definition. Yet his sins were of omission, not of commission. I don't think be intended to inflame his followers, or launch them on any course of action behavior of the commission of action behavior of the commission of

The Theme
This, of course, was not true of all of those who learned to successfully ring changes on the time-tested theme. There were thin-lipped, hating men among them; the elder Talmadge of Georgia and Bilbo of Mississippi were conspicuous examples, and the contemporary Easiland fits the pattern. It is, for example, a long distance in spirit fine tin text from Cotton Edis and the contemporary Easiland fits the pattern. It is, for example, a long distance in spirit fine tin text from Cotton Edis and the contemporary Easiland's solemn call to the Mississippi Association of Citizens Councils to subvert the government of the United States:

the government of the United States:

"The anti-segregation decisions are dishonest decisions, Although rendered by Judges whose sworn duty it was to uphold the law and to protect and preserve the constitution of the United States, these decisions were dictated by political pressure groups bent upon the destruction of the American system of government, and the mongrelization of the them violated their online of office. They have disgraced the high office they hold. The court has responded to a radical pro-Communist political movement in this country. . We in the South cannot stay longer on the defensive. This is the road to destruction and death. We must take the offense."

Even if one concedes Eastland's cerity, in the context of this troubled he stands indicted of gross irresponsil. There is no echo of Confederate benee: the ghost evoked by these rec words is that of the latter-day Ku Klansman, armed with rope and fa stalking his prey outside the law.

Klansman, armed with rope and faggot, stalking his prey outside the July.

Still, as I have suggested, this florid framework of one-party Southern campaigning has not finally established its own Gresham's law in which the hod candidate as highly individual business. There were rural courthouse rings, and some of the cities — most notably Memphis — provided local political machines of the standard American type. But most of the itians built their carveers on an intensely personal following. An old hand in North Carolinas built their carveers on an intensely personal following. An old hand in North Carolina built their carveers on an intensely personal following. An old hand in North Carolina built their carveers on an intensely personal following. An old hand in North Carolina built their carveers on an intensely personal following. An old hand in North Carolina built their carveers of the states; roughly one-quarter of the votes, he figured, could be delivered by negotiation with local leaders; but at least half had to be persuaded. The persuading, of course, had to be done in person, from the stump.

Within the limits of the thespian tra-

The Southern Record

A Solid Vore

But it is in another essential test of the contemporary liberal faith that the Southern delegations, until very recent years, have measured up far more consistently than the representatives of other sections of the country. Indeed, from the days of Grover Cleveland forward, it has been the section of the country. Indeed, from the days of Grover Cleveland forward, it has been the section of the country. Indeed, from the days of Grover Cleveland forward, it has been the section of the country into World War I, nor could Franklin Roosevelt have made the necessary commitments that kept Great Britain a bastion against Nazi Germany and finally put the United States in the section of Caihoun's old demand for tariff for reenue only, they have been the influence that kept the Democratic Party internationalist throughout its history, and thereby drew the most consistent and perhaps the most against a significant dividing line between the section of the region self-interest; the South's two great crops, cotton and tobacco, have depended upon export markets and have been in trouble since forcign trade began to wither in the Thirties. Yet, whatever the motive, I believe with a country of the Republic And if I am correct in this view, one of the most alarming trends of the day is the visible shifting of the Southern political position on the figure of the region of the region in self-interest; the Southern political position on the fluence on the Republic And if I am correct in this view, one of the most alarming trends of the day is the visible shifting of the Southern political position on the region of the region of the region beginned to the region of the day is the visible shifting of the Southern political position on the region of t

votion to free trade was the product of an agrarian society, although it was undoubtedly colored by a sentimental sense of identification with the British cousins everyeas. But, comparable ties of blood and sentiment did not blind the old New England manufacturers to the need for productive sqriffs to build a wall between markets and the cotton mills of Manchester. Today the greatest concentra-

Mailloi in an approving ratio discussion of what amounts to the old America First program.

Increasingly nowadays Southern congressmen in their dissertations before the home folks are applying a new equation to home folks are applying a new equation to should be pouring tax money into a high dam in Pakistan when we haven't yet developed the Arkansas, the Ouachita, and the Rod; if we should be spending American ash to clean up the British and French mess in the Suez Canal when the harbor at Mobile needs attention. No one is yet advocating Fortress America; but a substantial number are launched on a constant of the state of

The Best Of The Breed
I have death there primarily with the national figures, the Southerners who go forth to do battle in the great arena at Washington. They are, I think, the best of the local political breed, and I suggest that in any dispassionate measurement of their collective capacity (this presupposes settine the race issue naide) they would rate well above the average in citter house of Congress, V. O. Key, Jr., author of the October of the Congress, V. O. Key, Jr., author of the October of the Well and the sponsibly the bulk of the Southerners behaved in that time when the fever of McCarthyism racked the nation. It is true, as some cynics have suggested, that they were unjeuly fitted by personal experience to recognize a dema-

aristocractic "tendency, to regard the re-sponsibilities of governance more as the guardianship of a patrimony than as the duty of a corporation lawyer — or a walking delegate — to use the means at hand, whether fair or foul, to advance the momentary interest of his client, ... "In any case the Jeffersonian strain of political doctrine runs more strongly in Mississippi than in, let us say, Ohio, Af-ter all, Mr. Jefferson served his ap-prenticeabilp in what would cledy be called a Southern county courthouse gang."

States Handicapped

where he has to start trading, with whom, and for what.

In these legislative bear pits the Southern political system has reached its lowest ebb, Here even the original system has reached its lowest beautiful to the system of the system of

NEXT SUNDAY — Computations on a

OUR ROBUST CONSTITUTION

A Roadblock For Balky Witnesses

in realty is a criminal offense He denied ever being a mem-lagainst the United States. He derew the minimum penalty, one made a frank disclosure of varimonth in Jail and a 810 fine, so a communist associations. He reasonable search and seizure. Chapman was prosecuted under a law originally enacted by Combination of the search of the sea

Grover Cleveland's administration was lit up by a tasty scandal carly in 1894. It involved the United States Senate. A bill growth of the Chapman results of the content of

Chapman refused to answer ground, that was rejected as meastern sets to whether his improve sentimental."

With respect to Congress: In the statistical property power, he declared: "CHAPMAN'S CASE is not just stock for a member of the Seriale.

RUT HE DID NOT INVOKE in the 5th Amendment privilege against compulsory self-incritant witnesses are still interiminate him and this expose the property of the state of the congress in the state of the congress in the state of the congress. No inquiry is an attainalism were germinating. The clebrated walkins decisim that his answers miled in the state of the Congress. No inquiry is an attainalism were germinating. The clebrated walkins decisim that the residue the property of the state of the Congress. No inquiry is an attainalism were germinating. The clebrated walkins decisim that the residue to and in furtherance of a legitly incriminate him and this expose the property of the congress. No inquiry is an attainalism were germinating. The clebrated walkins decisim the stake of the Congress. No inquiry is an attainalism were germinating. No witness can be compelled to include the private affairs of a citizen! He was indicated and convicted of "contempt of Congress," which can Activities.