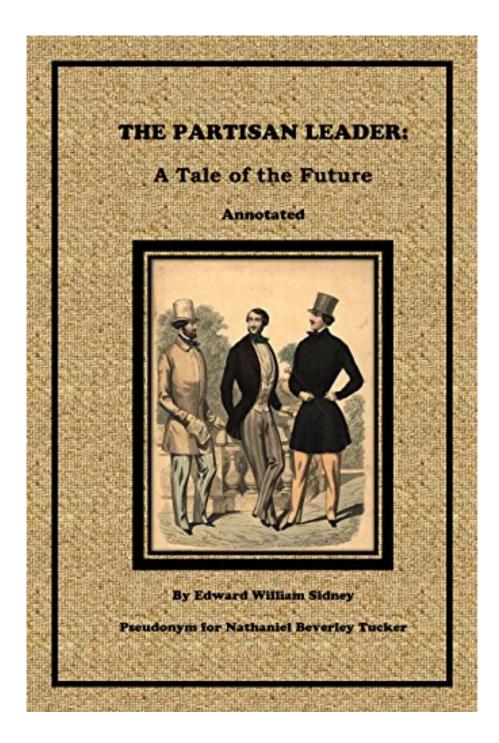


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This novel was first secretly printed in the year 1836 in an attempt to foil the election of Martin Van Buren, whom the author fears will carry out what he considers the imperial policies of Andrew Jackson, "King Andrew the First." The author predicts that the rights of the States will be abused and finally lost. Written in the early 1830s after the South Carolina Nullification Crisis, Tucker has woven a futuristic (for that time) romantic-politico yarn that shall take place in the year 1848. The book is set in the State of Virginia. Here the masses are participating in a guerilla war opposing the invasive and occupying Federal army, whose goal is to prevent Virginians from joining an already seceded Confederacy of Southern States. The author has been called the "architect of Confederate nationalism." He primed the Southern mind for secession years before his dream of the "Southern Confederacy" was finally realized. Of course, he never lived to see the rise nor the fall of the Confederate States of America, but some of his predictions are startlingly uncanny. Newly typeset and formatted to be compatible with the innovations of the electronic reader, this book is a "must read" for the "Civil War Buff," or anyone who loves a good story.

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Actually a Pretty Entertaining Book

By Jason Galbraith

Like "Anticipations of the Future," this is a book by a Southern Fire-Eater about the long-anticipated Civil War. Indeed, this author, Nathaniel Beverly Tucker, anticipated the Civil War in 1836 (to take place in 1849). Indeed, Tucker was so far ahead of his time that he actually died of old age before the South seceded and the war began.

Unlike "Anticipations of the Future," this book has characters you actually care about. It is built around the Trevor family of southern Virginia, one branch of which (patriarch Hugh) has 12 children (although we only meet four, Owen, Douglas, Arthur and Virginia) and the other branch of which (patriarch Bernard) has two daughters, Delia and Lucia. The premise of "The Partisan Leader" is that in the winter of 1848-49, every slave state except Virginia, Maryland and Delaware secedes as a protest against the fourth Presidential term of Martin van Buren (originally elected President in 1836, the year the book was written). It is sort of ironic that van Buren's last run for President was indeed in 1848 on a radically anti-slavery platform, but he got around 10% of the popular vote and no electoral votes.

Douglas Trevor is the title character of this book and spends about a third of it in command of a group of a thousand or more partisans in southwest Virginia. Tucker, unlike Edmund Ruffin (the author of "Anticipations of the Future"), understood that the Civil War would have a guerrilla phase when states

sought to secede but the Federal government had enough troops in the state to prevent that. Guerrilla activity in the real Civil War was strongest in Missouri; in "The Partisan Leader" it appears to be limited to Virginia, as 12 other states seceded at the same time and the Federal government belatedly realized it could lose Virginia. Ruffin's prediction of six states seceding at the same time was more realistic, but his vision of other Southern states successfully preventing the movement of Federal troops was not. Tucker does, however, make some of the same mistakes Ruffin made: the Feds never call for volunteers, appealing to the people of the North to create a war-fighting army as they did in reality, and the U.S. Army doesn't make a beeline for the Confederate capital city, as it did in reality.

Tucker seems to have been motivated to write his speculative fiction by a desire to prevent the 1836 election of Van Buren. He was probably running out of time as states then voted on various days throughout the fall, which explains why he ended the book practically in the middle of the story, with the title character a prisoner of the US Army, about to be tried for treason in a kangaroo court, but with his old Army buddies planning to bust him out. The narrator is an 1849 graduate of the Citadel who takes command of the partisan band (whose next target is Richmond) after the capture of Douglas Trevor. In a single sentence he assures us that Virginia and the South won the war, but we don't get to see it. I deduct one star from the book for being so foreshortened, but it is still worth reading.

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