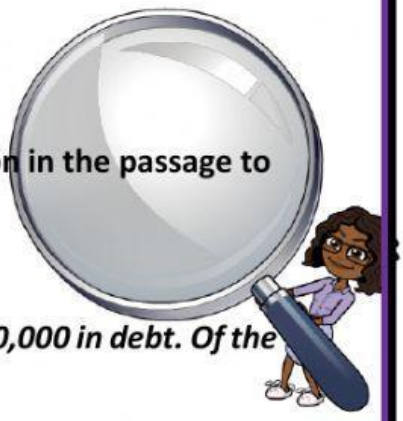
The social and economic effects of the Civil war and Blockade running on the Bahamas *



Instructions: Read the information below. Use the information in the passage to help you complete the assignment on page 3.

Before blockade running, The Bahamas' treasury was about 50,000 in debt. Of the 4,000 people living there, most of them were poor.

The opening of the American Civil War in 1861 had the same electrifying effect on the Bahama Islands as the prince's kiss had on the Sleeping Beauty.

The islands suddenly shook off their sleepy coats of centuries and became the clearing house for trade, intrigue, and high adventure. Nassau, [which had] a mostly poor population, ***overnight became the host to a reckless, wealthy, and extravagant crowd of men from many nations and many ranks.***

There were newspaper correspondents, English navy officers on leave with half pay, underwriters, entertainers, adventurers, spies, crooks, and bums. ***Out-islanders flocked to Nassau to grab a share of the gold which flowed like water.*** One visitor reported that there were traders of so many nationalities in Nassau, that the languages on the streets reminded him of the tongues of Babel.

All ***this transformation happened because it was near enough to the Confederate coast*** to serve as a port that could receive Southern cotton and to supply Southern war needs.

Between 1861 and 1865 about 400 vessels entered Nassau from Confederate ports, 156 of these coming from Charleston and 164 from Wilmington. During the period of the War 588 ships left Nassau for Southern ports, though 432 of these ostensibly cleared for New Brunswick or ports in the West Indies." Nassau harbor, which used to be quiet, was teeming with activity during these war years.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Blockade running had many positive and negative effects on Nassau and the islands.

Many new building projects took place. **The streets were widened and streetlights and curbstones were added to Bay Street for the first time.**

The **happy social life of Nassau centered around the Royal Victoria Hotel** in Nassau. The hotel had been started in 1859 as a government project which would cost £6000. **Because of the money coming in from bootlegging, the government decided to finish the hotel in 1861.**

They purchased elegant plate, China, glassware, a grand piano and expensive furnishings. The hotel was always crowded with blockade-runners, their wives, Confederate agents, and war correspondents.

People running from war in the Southern Confederate states and islanders from the Family islands looking for work, flocked to Nassau. This caused the population to increase. Not everyone could enjoy the comfortable living that the Royal Victoria offered. There were many who wanted less fancy and expensive accommodations.

For them housing was a real problem. **Out-islanders, who came to Nassau often doubled up in houses with relatives or friends**. However, most of the houses had not more than three or four rooms, **so overcrowding was a problem**.

Many family island residents also left their children with relatives so that they could have a chance to make money in Nassau.

All the money flowing through the island along with the crowds of people, **increased crime, lawlessness and immorality in Nassau.**

When the war ended in 1865, slowly, things began to get very quiet again and Nassau returned to resemble its sleepy past. Once again people had to find ways to escape poverty.

* Some information from **Blockade-Running in the Bahamas During the Civil War*** by THELMA PETERS

Adapted and edited by Dale Marshall for 8th and 9th grade students

Read the questions carefully. Answer each question completely. Use the passage that you read above to help you complete it.

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1.) Within which years did the Civil war took place?

The American Civil war took place from year _____ to_____.

2.) Which important tourist hotel was built and operated during the Blockade running era?

The _____was completed during this time, in the year _____.

3.) **Complete the chart below**

Positive effects of the Blockade era on Nassau	Negative effects of the Blockade era on The Bahamas
1.)	1.)
2.)	2.)
3.)	3.)

10 points total marks



LIVEWORKSHEETS