AWAKENING OF REFORM

- Urban problems, including the poverty of working-class families, inspired a new social consciousness among members of the middle class
- Reform movements begun in earlier decades gathered renewed strength in the late 1800s

BOOKS OF SOCIAL CRITICISM

1. Henry George wrote a book in 1879 that became a best-seller & got readers too look more critically at the effects of laissez-faire economics
   - His book, Progress and Poverty, proposed a placing a single tax on land as the solution to poverty
   - George succeeded in calling attention to the alarming inequalities in wealth caused by industrialization
2. Another popular book of social criticism, Looking Backward, 2000-1887, was written by Edward Bellamy in 1888
   - His book envisioned a future era in which a cooperative society had eliminated poverty, greed, and crime
   - Many readers of George's & Bellamy books that they joined various reform movements & organizations to try to implement the authors' ideas
   - Both books encouraged a shift in American public opinion away from pure laissez-faire and toward greater government regulation

SETTLEMENT HOUSES

- Concerned about the lives of the poor, a number of young, idealistic, & well-educated women and men of the middle class settled into immigrant neighborhoods to learn about the problems of immigrant families
- Living in settlement houses, young reformers hoped to relieve effects of poverty by providing social services for people in the neighborhood
- The most famous such experiment was Hull House in Chicago, which was started by Jane Addams & a college classmate in 1889
- Settlement houses taught English to immigrants, childhood education, industrial arts & neighborhood theaters & music schools
- By 1910 there were over 400 settlement houses in America's largest cities
- Settlement workers were civic-minded volunteers whose work provided the foundation in a later era for the professional social worker
- Settlement workers were political activists who crusaded for child-labor laws, housing reform, and women's rights
- (Two settlement workers, Frances Perkins & Harry Hopkins, were leaders in President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal programs in the 1930s)

SOCIAL GOSPEL

- In the 1880s & 1890s, a number of Protestant clergymen espoused the cause of social justice for the poor—especially the urban poor
- They preached what they called the Social Gospel, or the importance of applying Christian principles to social problems
- Leading the Social Gospel movement in the late 19th & early 20th centuries, was a New York minister, Walter Rauschenbusch, who worked in New York City's Hell Kitchen & wrote several books urging organized religions to take up the cause of social justice
- His Social Gospel preaching linked Christianity with Progressive reforms & encouraged middle-class Protestants to attack urban problems

RELIGION AND SOCIETY

- All religions found the need to adapt to the stresses & challenged of modern urban living
- Many new immigrants were Catholic & Catholic leaders inspired immigrants by defending the Knights of Labor & the cause of organized labor
- Among Protestants, Dwight Moody & his Moody Bible Institute founded in Chicago would help generations of urban evangelists to adapt traditional Christianity to city life
- The Salvation Army, from England in 1879, provided basic necessities of life for the homeless & the poor, while preaching the Christian gospel
- Members of urban middle class were attracted to the message of Mary Baker Eddy, who taught that good health was a result of correct thinking about "Father Mother God." By the time she died in 1910, thousands had joined the church she founded, known as Christian Science

FAMILIES AND WOMEN IN URBAN SOCIETY

- Urban life placed severe strains on parents and their children by isolating them from the extended family & village support
- Divorce rates increased to 1 in 12 marriages by 1900 because state legislatures expanded grounds for divorce to include cruelty & desertion
- Another consequence of the shift from rural to urban living was a reduction in family size
- Children were an economic asset on the farm, where their labor was needed at an early age
- In the city, children were more of an economic liability
- Therefore, in the late 1800s, the national average for birthrates & family size continued to drop
- The cause of women's suffrage, launched at Seneca Falls in 1848, was carried forward by a number of middle-class women
- In 1890, two of the pioneer feminists of the 1840s, Elizabeth Cady Stanton & Susan B. Anthony of New York, helped found the National American Woman Suffrage Association to secure the vote for women
- A western state, Wyoming, was the first to grant full suffrage to women, in 1869
- By 1900, some states allowed women to vote in local elections, and most states allowed women to own & control property after marriage

TEMPERANCE & MORALITY

- Another cause that attracted the attention of urban reformers was the temperance movement
- Women believed excessive drinking of alcohol by male factory workers was a principal cause of poverty for immigrant & working-class families
- The Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) was formed in 1874
- Advocating total abstinence from alcohol, the WCTU under the leadership of Frances Willard of Illinois had 500,000 members by 1898
- The Antisaloon League, founded in 1893, became a powerful political force & by 1916 had got 21 states to close down all saloons & bars
- Unwilling to wait for laws to change, Carry Nation of Kansas created a sensation by raiding saloon & smashing barrels of beer with a hatchet
- Moralists thought of cities as a breeding ground for vice, obscenity, & prostitution
- Anthony Comstock of New York formed the Society for the Suppression of Vice to be the watchdog of American morals
- He got Congress in 1873 to pass the 'Comstock Law,' which prohibited mailing or transportation of obscene, lewd material, or photographs
INTELLECTUAL & CULTURAL MOVEMENTS

- The change from an agricultural to an industrial economy & from rural to urban living affected all areas of life, culture, education, arts & sports

CHANGES IN EDUCATION

- The complexity of modern life, along with the intellectual influence of Darwin's theory of evolution, raised challenging questions about what schools & universities should teach

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Elementary schools after 1865 taught reading, writing, arithmetic & the values promote in the standard texts, McGuffey's readers
- New compulsory laws, dramatically increased the number of children enrolled in public schools
- As a result, the literacy rate rose to 90% of the population by 1900s
- Sending kids to kindergarten (concept borrowed from Germany) became popular & showed a growing interest in early-childhood education
- Perhaps even more significant was the growing support for tax-supported public high schools
- At first these schools followed the college preparatory curriculum of private academies, but soon the public high schools became more comprehensive and began to emphasize the vocational and citizenship education for a changing urban society

HIGHER EDUCATION

- The number of U.S. colleges increased in the late 1800s largely as a result of:
  1. Land grant colleges established under the Morrill Act of 1862 & 1890
  2. Universities founded by wealth philanthropists (University of Chicago by John Rockefeller)
  3. Founding of new colleges for women, such as Smith, Bryn Mawr, and Mount Holyoke
- By 1900, 715 of the colleges admitted women, who represented more than 33% of the attending students
- There were also significant changes in the college curriculum
- Soon after becoming president of Harvard in 1869, Charles Eliot reduced the number of required courses and introduced electives (courses chosen by students) to accommodate the teaching of modern languages and the sciences: physics, chemistry, biology, and geology
- John Hopkins University was founded in Baltimore in 1876 as the first American institution to specialize in advanced graduate studies
- John Hopkins emphasized research and free inquiry
- As a result of such innovations in curriculum, the U.S. produced its first generation of students who could compete with Europeans
- However, there was a trend in another direction as life at many colleges became dominated by social activities, fraternities, and sports

SOCIAL SCIENCES & THE PROFESSIONS

- The application of the scientific method & the theory of evolution to human affairs revolutionized the social sciences in the late 1800s
- The new social sciences included behavioral psychology, sociology, anthropology, and political science
- Richard Ely of John Hopkins attacked laissez-faire economic though as outdated & used economics to study labor unions, trusts, and other existing economic institutions not only to understand them but to suggest remedies for economic problems
- Evolutionary theory influenced leading sociologists (Lester Ward), political scientists (Woodrow Wilson), and historians (Frederick Turner) to study human behavior
- In the legal profession, Oliver Wendell Holmes taught that the law should evolve with the times in response to changing needs and not remain restricted by legal precedents and judicial decisions of the past
- Clarence Darrow, a famous lawyer, argued that criminal behavior could be caused by a person's environment of poverty, neglect, & abuse
- Other professions-doctors, educators, & social workers also began applying scientific theory & methodology to their work
- The leading black intellectual of his day, W.E.B. Du Bois, was the first African American to receive a doctorate from Harvard
- Du Bois used the new statistical methods of sociology to study crime in an urban neighborhood
- As an activist, he advocated full equal rights for blacks, integrated schools, and equal access to higher education for the "talented tenth" of African American youth
- Although fewer than 5% of Americans attended college before 1900, the new trends in education & the professions would have a big impact on progressive legislation and liberal reforms in the 1900s