CHAPTER 20

POLITICAL REALIGNMENTS IN THE 1890s

SUMMARY
Economic depression dominated the 1890s and reshaped political alignments and attitudes.

Politics of Stalemate
America’s White male voters of the 1870s and 1880s displayed a keen interest in partisan politics. Southern states increasingly disfranchised Black men.

The Party Deadlock
While Democrats emphasized decentralized power located in the states, the Republicans favored a more active national government. Voters generally adhered to their pre-Civil War loyalties, basically stalemating national government. The New England and many Northern states went Republican and Southern states went Democratic, leaving elections dependent upon a few key “swing” states—New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois—and national politics at a cautious standstill.

Experiments in the States
With national politics at a standstill, most governmental action and reform occurred at the state and local level, especially with the establishment of new regulatory commissions and bureaus. Such actions eventually prompted federal action as well.

Reestablishing Presidential Power
Between 1880 and 1900, American presidents succeeded in reasserting the authority of their office, which had been weakened considerably by the Johnson impeachment, the Grant scandals, and the electoral controversy of 1876. By the late 1890s, they had laid the basis for the modern powerful presidency.

Republicans in Power: The Billion-Dollar Congress
In 1888, the Republicans broke the electoral stalemate by winning control of the presidency and both houses of Congress. Despite Democratic efforts to stall Congressional votes, the Republicans enacted the Reed rules and adopted their party’s program.

Tariffs, Trusts and Silver
In the following two years, the Republicans enacted a significant legislative program including the McKinley Tariff, the Sherman Antitrust Act and the Sherman Silver Purchase Acts.

The 1890 Elections
Americans rejected the Republican’s activism by crushing them in the elections of 1890, allowing the Democrats to gain new power, especially in the Midwest.
The Rise of the Populist Movement
By the summer of 1890, Farmers’ Alliance organizers were recruiting huge numbers of unhappy farmers, sometimes at the rate of 1,000 a week, leading to a political movement known as Populism.

The Farm Problem
Populism surged as a response to an agrarian sense of social and economic loss based on what they perceived as low farm prices, high railroad rates, and burdensome mortgages. Though their complaints were in some ways justified, they were not altogether valid. What is important, however, is that they believed they were oppressed, and that angered them.

The Fast-Growing Farmers' Alliance
Farmers organized the Grange and the Farmers’ Alliance, which sponsored social and economic programs, but also tried to influence politics, adopting the Ocala Demands in 1890. In the South, the Alliance enjoyed considerable success within the Democratic party; in the North and West, it successfully ran many of its own candidates.

The People’s Party
In 1892, the Alliance led in the formation of the Populist party, which collected over one million votes for its 1892 presidential candidate. The party began to lose strength thereafter. In the South, racism played a major role in the decline of Populism. While it existed, Populism was one of the most powerful reform movements in American history.

The Crisis of the Depression
Grover Cleveland and the Democratic party swept the election of 1892, but then faced a severe depression brought on by the too rapid expansion of the American economy.

The Panic of 1893
The depression of the 1890s started with the Panic of 1893. As the economy slumped into a crisis, banks failed at record rates, factories and mines shut down, and millions were put out of work. The next year was worse, and the economic crisis lingered into the latter days of the 1890s.

Coxey’s Army and the Pullman Strike
The depression led to numerous protests demanding relief for workers and farmers. Jacob Coxey led hundreds of unemployed men on a march on Washington, spurring other “armies” to march as well. Disaffected workers at the Pullman Palace Car Company went on strike, spurring other railroad workers in the American Railway Union to do the same. The Pullman Strike shut down the railroads of the West and produced the Socialist leader Eugene Debs.
The Miners of the Midwest
The depression also led to a strike in bituminous coal mines by the new United Mine Workers. The violence which followed pitted workers against capital, but also divided the “old,” mostly English and Irish miners and the “new” miners from southern and eastern Europe.

A Beleaguered President
President Cleveland blamed the depression entirely on the Sherman Silver Purchase Act and the free coinage of silver. He pushed for its repeal in 1893, splitting, and, in combination with the depression, wrecking the Democratic party.

Breaking the Party Deadlock
The depression led to a new Republican supremacy and made the Democratic party little more than a southern, sectional party.

Changing Attitudes
The depression also changed the country’s traditional social views. Many Americans now saw poverty as a failure of the economy rather than the individual, so they demanded reforms to help the poor and unemployed, an important step toward national authority and activism.

“Everybody Works but Father”
The entrance of women and children into the labor force accelerated during the depression because employers made jobs available to them because they were paid less than men. Men still dominated in business offices, but more clerks, telegraph and telephone operators, and teachers were women during and after the 1890s. Children’s increasing presence in the workforce led to more calls for protective laws.

Changing Themes in Literature
Rejecting the romanticism that had dominated before, during and immediately after the Civil War, realistic and naturalistic writers portrayed everyday life as it was. They wrote regional stories and emphasized “true” relationships between people. Notable authors include Joel Chandler Harris, Mark Twain, William Dean Howells, Stephen Crane, Frank Norris, and Theodore Dreiser.

The Presidential Election of 1896
The Republican dominance initiated in 1894 was solidified with the victory of William McKinley over the Democrat and Populist William Jennings Bryan. The election, known as the “battle of the standards,” focused primarily on the debate over the gold or silver monetary standard.
The Mystique of Silver
People wanted a solution to the depression, and many, believing that the more money in circulation the better, favored the free coinage of silver. It also became a patriotic and moral symbol. For some it represented independence because the rest of the world was abandoning the coinage of silver. For others it embodied the interests of the common people, especially farmers in the West, against the industrial elites of the Northeast.

The Republicans and Gold
Opposing the silverite argument, McKinley and the Republicans promised a return to the gold standard, which they claimed would end the depression.

The Democrats and Silver
Although somewhat divided over the silver issue, the silver Democrats controlled the party, endorsing its free coinage and nominating William Jennings Bryan after he captured the convention with the oratory of his “Cross of Gold” speech.

Campaign and Election
McKinley won the election handily over Bryan, the Democratic and Populist candidate. The People’s party vanished after 1896, but major parts of its presidential platform were later incorporated into law.

The McKinley Administration
McKinley’s government took over as the economy began to recover and prosper, allowing them to raise the protective tariff, demonetize silver with the Gold Standard Act, and shift from promoting to regulating industrialism. By the time of McKinley's assassination and Theodore Roosevelt's ascent to the presidency, the Republican party had clearly emerged as the dominant party associated with progress and prosperity, as Americans rallied to reform the system that had produced the depression of the 1890s.

Conclusion: A Decade’s Dramatic Changes
The 1890s was a decade of change. They influenced and shaped nearly everything—society, culture, politics, and the economy—that came after them, making them as much a part of the twentieth century as of the nineteenth.
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After mastering this chapter, you should be able to

1. Discuss the stalemate of partisan politics in the 1870s and 1880s.
2. Explain the rise of the early state regulatory commissions.
3. Trace the reassertion of presidential power from 1876 to 1888.
4. Identify and describe the legislation passed by the Republican party in 1890 and the voters' response to that “billion-dollar Congress.”
5. Describe and evaluate the American agrarians’ grievances in the late nineteenth century.
6. Trace the growth of the farmers’ protest from the Grange through the Farmers’ Alliance.
7. Detail the establishment of the Populist party, its platform, and its first presidential election.
8. Discuss the march of “Coxey’s Army” and the “great” Pullman strike of 1894 and its importance in the 1890s.
9. Explain the divisions between capital and labor and between “old” and “new” miners in the Midwestern coal strike of 1894.
10. Describe the changes in American attitudes toward poverty brought on by the depression of the 1890s.
11. Describe the changes in the American work force brought on by the depression of the 1890s.
12. Trace the rise of the new realist and naturalist movements in American literature and explain why they emerged.
13. Explain how the silver issue served as a symbol for a social and political movement.
14. Compare and contrast the Democratic and Republican presidential campaigns of 1896.
15. Evaluate the role of the election and administration of William McKinley in the emergence of modern urban, industrial government and politics.
GLOSSARY

To build your social science vocabulary, familiarize yourself with the following terms:

1. **poll tax** a tax charged against each person, often for the right to vote. "In 1877, Georgia adopted the poll tax . . ."

2. **literacy test** a test of reading ability used to prevent African Americans and others from registering to vote. "... the famous 'grandfather clause,' which used a literacy test . . ."

3. **commissions** groups charged with a public function, especially regulation. "... state bureaus and commissions were established to regulate the new industrial society".

4. **bipartisan** supported by or consisting of members of two political parties. "... the act created a bipartisan Civil Service Commission . . ."

5. **public domain** without legal protection of patent, copyright, or registration; government-owned land. "He . . . forced . . . companies to surrender millions of acres of fraudulently occupied public domain . . ."

6. **reciprocity** a policy whereby countries grant corresponding, mutual rights or privileges to the citizens of each, especially in trade relations. "... it also included a novel reciprocity provision that allowed the president to lower duties if other countries did the same".

7. **trust** a combination of businesses to eliminate competition and control prices. "It declared illegal "... 'every . . . combination in the form of trust . . . in restraint of trade . . .'"

8. **lien** a claim against property as security for satisfaction of an obligation. "... many southern farmers were trapped in the crop lien system that kept them in debt".

9. **cooperative** jointly owned and operated for mutual benefit. "... between 1886 and 1892, cooperative enterprises blossomed in the South".

10. **platform** a statement of the public principles and policies of a political party or group. "... the Alliance adopted the Ocala Demands, the platform it pushed for as long as it existed."

11. **special session** an unscheduled legislative session called by an executive for specific purposes. "... Cleveland summoned Congress into special session . . ."
12. **romanticism** a style of art and literature emphasizing emotion, imagination and freedom of form. "In the years after the Civil War, literature often reflected the mood of romanticism . . "

13. **realism** a style of art and literature emphasizing realistic depiction of everyday life. ". . . a number of talented authors began to reject . . . escapism, turning instead to realism . . ."

14. **naturalism** a style of art and literature emphasizing a detailed, clinical, deterministic view of life. "The depression also gave point to a growing movement in literature toward . . . naturalism."

15. **imperialism** the policy of achieving economic or political power over other nations. "Bryan stressed the issues of imperialism and the trusts . . ."

**IDENTIFICATION**

Briefly identify the meaning and significance of the following terms.

1. state commissions ____________________________________________

2. Populism __________________________________________________

3. Coxey's army ________________________________________________

4. Pullman strike ______________________________________________

5. The Alliance Movement _______________________________________

6. realism ____________________________________________________
7. naturalism

8. free silver coinage

9. “battle of the standards”

10. William McKinley

MATCHING

A. Match the following court decisions with the appropriate description.

   ___ 1. Minor v. Happersett  a. declared that a state could regulate private property “affected with the public interest”
   ___ 2. Munn v. Illinois  b. endorsed an injunction in a labor strike
   ___ 3. Wabash R. R. v. Illinois  c. allowed literacy tests for voter registration
   ___ 4. United States v. E. C. Knight.  d. upheld state’s right to deny women the vote
   ___ 5. In re Debs  e. ruled that a state could not regulate commerce that extended beyond its borders

   b ruled that the Sherman Antitrust Act did not apply to manufacturing
B. Match the following authors with the appropriate description.

____ 1. Mark Twain  a. attacked the power of the big corporations in *The Octopus*

____ 2. William Dean Howells  b. portrayed a grim world of the exhausted factory worker in *Sister Carrie*

____ 3. Stephen Crane  c. changed American prose style by replacing literary language with common speech and dialect

____ 4. Frank Norris  d. portrayed wise youth explaining currency to famous people

____ 5. Theodore Dreiser  e. described the evils of industrial society in a utopian novel, *A Traveler from Altruria*

f. depicted the impact of poverty in *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*

COMPLETION

Answer the question or complete the statement by filling in the blanks with the correct word or words.

1. The Speaker of the House who broke a legislative deadlock with significant changes in congressional rules was _____________.

2. In 1883, Congress legislated the establishment of a Civil Service Commission with the ____________ Act.

3. Foremost in the Ocala Demands of the Farmers' Alliance was the _____________.

4. The ___________________________ allowed men who had failed the literacy test to vote, provided their fathers or grandfathers had before 1867.

5. In the presidential elections of 1876 through 1896, an average percentage of about ____________ of the electorate voted.

6. In 1887, Congress provided for federal investigation and oversight of railroads with the establishment of the _________________.

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7. In 1892, the Populist party nominated __________ for the presidency.

8. The __________ represented the Alliance political platform.

9. William Harvey extolled the merits of silver coinage in a book entitled ____________.

10. In 1897, Republicans raised the tariff rates to record levels with the ____________ Tariff.

TRUE/FALSE

Mark the following statements either T (True) or F (False).

___ 1. In 1892, southern Populists tried to unite Black and White farmers.

___ 2. As a result of farm women’s activism, the Populist party supported giving women the vote.

___ 3. While the Republican party of the 1870s and 1880s supported increased power and activity at the national level of government, the Democrats emphasized decentralized government with more power and activity at the state and local level.

___ 4. In the election of 1894, Democrats won the greatest victory in congressional history.

___ 5. During the depression of the 1890s, an increasing number of Americans blamed unemployment on individual failure.

___ 6. Between the years 1877 and 1888, the American presidency lost power as Congress reasserted much power and authority that it had lost during the period of the Civil War and Reconstruction.

___ 7. Southern Democrats Thomas Watson and Leonidas Polk used fraud and manipulation to defeat Populist candidates in 1892.

___ 8. Between 1877 and 1900, southern states disfranchised African Americans with laws establishing poll taxes, "eight box" balloting, literacy tests, and "grandfather" clauses.

___ 9. In 1893, economic overexpansion led to a panic and depression, which President Cleveland mistakenly blamed on the Sherman Silver Purchase Act.

___ 10. The central belief of silverites was a quantity theory of money.
MULTIPLE CHOICE

Circle the one alternative that best completes the statement or answers the question.

1. The McKinley Tariff did not
   a. raise the tariff rate by 4 percent to the highest level it had ever been.
   b. use duties to promote new industries like the tin-plate used for the new canned foods.
   c. give the president power to reciprocate if other countries lowered tariff rates.
   d. permit the president to raise rates to protect threatened American industries.

2. The Colored Farmers' National Alliance ended when
   a. a posse lynched fifteen strikers.
   b. prices on cotton increased significantly.
   c. southern planters used strike breakers in the cotton fields.
   d. the Farmers' Alliance leadership expelled all African Americans from the organization.

3. In 1890, the American electorate
   a. rejected Democratic legislative activism by crushing the party in the congressional elections.
   b. rejected Republican legislative activism by crushing the party in the congressional elections.
   c. rejected the legislative passiveness of both major parties by electing many third-party and especially Populist candidates to Congress.
   d. rejected Republican passiveness by crushing the party in the congressional elections.

4. During the 1890s, writers who rejected romanticism often wrote
   a. regional stories depicting everyday life.
   b. grand epic stories in which the hero always defeated the villain.
   c. disparaging tales about ethnic groups that perpetuated anti-immigrant feelings.
   d. political pamphlets championing their candidate.

5. Which of the following is not true of American farmers in the 1865-1890 period?
   a. Prices for their crops declined.
   b. Their purchasing power declined.
   c. Farm mortgages were common.
   d. Their productivity increased.
6. Which best describes the source of agrarian anger and protest in the late nineteenth century?
   a. Farm prices fell far more than did prices for other commodities.
   b. Railroad rates increased dramatically between 1870 and 1900.
   c. Farmers perceived their social and economic position as declining throughout the period.
   d. all of the above

7. In 1894, Jacob S. Coxey led a march on Washington to demand
   a. road construction financed with paper money.
   b. coinage of silver at a ratio to gold of 16 to 1.
   c. an immediate and significant reduction of the tariff.
   d. a "subtreasury" system for American farmers.

8. Leaders of the Southern Farmers' Alliance
   a. formed the first major People's party.
   b. tried to capture the Democratic party.
   c. eschewed politics for more radical methods.
   d. often crossed over to the Republican party.

9. In the Pullman Strike of 1894, Cleveland's intervention
   a. gave business the court injunction as a new weapon against labor.
   b. ensured the success of the strike.
   c. failed to end the strike.
   d. gave workers the protection of a court injunction.

10. Which group was the first to be seriously affected by the wave of “new” immigrants to America from southern and eastern Europe?
    a. railroad workers
    b. midwestern farmers
    c. midwestern miners
    d. southern sharecroppers

11. Which of the following lists events in the correct chronological order?
    a. Republican policy to regulate industry, Panic of 1893, Republican policy to promote industry
    b. Republican policy to promote industry, Republican policy to regulate industry, Panic of 1893
    c. Republican policy to promote industry, Panic of 1893, Republican policy to regulate industry
    d. none of the above
12. Support for free silver coinage grew rapidly from 1894 to 1896 because
   a. the issue offered a simple, compelling answer for economic crisis.
   b. workers joined farmers in support of coinage.
   c. Cleveland Democrats joined workers in support of coinage.
   d. all of the above

13. Which best describes the decision that shattered the Populist party in 1896?
   a. the endorsement for the presidency of the Democratic candidate William
      Jennings Bryan
   b. the admission of African Americans to the party's ranks
   c. the nomination of their own candidate, James Weaver, for the presidency
   d. the expulsion of all African-American members in an attempt to attract more
      southern support

14. McKinley's first term in office was characterized by
   a. increased economic prosperity.
   b. gold discoveries that inflated the currency.
   c. presidential activism.
   d. all of the above

15. By 1900 McKinley had begun prodding the Republican party toward a new policy of
   a. monetary inflation through silver coinage.
   b. promoting economic growth with subsidies and tariffs.
   c. regulating and controlling industry.
   d. another increase in tariff rates.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

To check your understanding of the key issues of this period, solve the following
problems:

1. Why were the presidential elections of the “Gilded Age” so very close?

2. The Populists’ political rebellion defined the American response to industrialism. True or false? Explain your answer.

3. What was the basic difference in the approaches of the Republican and Democratic parties to the problems of the 1890s? Why did Americans choose the Republican approach?

4. Was the silver issue a symbol of class differences? Of sectional differences? Explain your answers.
5. What determined the outcome of the Populist-Democratic contest in the South? Did class differences play a significant role? Did race play a significant role?

CRITICAL THINKING EXERCISE

Using material in Chapter 20 of the text and the Primary Sources provided below, please answer the questions that follow the documents.

Susan B. Anthony, *Bread Not Ballots* (1867)
Mary Elizabeth Lease, *Populist Crusader* (1892)

Susan B. Anthony, *Bread Not Ballots* (c. 1867)

It is said women do not need the ballot for their protection because they are supported by men. Statistics show that there are 3,000,000 women in this nation supporting themselves. In the crowded cities of the East they are compelled to work in shops, stores and factories for the merest pittance. In New York alone, there are over 50,000 of these women receiving less than fifty cents a day. Women wage-earners in different occupations have organized themselves into trades unions, from time to time, and made their strikes to get justice at the hands of their employers just as men had done, but I have yet to learn of a successful strike of any body of women. The best organized one I ever knew was that of the collar laundry women of the city of Troy, N.Y., the great emporium for the manufacture of shirts, collars and cuffs. They formed a trades union of several hundred members and demanded an increase of wages. It was refused. So one May morning in 1867, each woman threw down her scissors and her needle, her starch-pan and flat-iron, and for three long months not one returned to the factories. At the end of that time they were literally starved out, and majority of them were compelled to go back, but not at their old wages, for their employers cut them down to even a lower figure.

In the winter following I met the president of this union, a bright young Irish girl, and asked her, “Do you not think if you had been 500 carpenters or 500 masons, you would have succeeded?” “Certainly,” she said, and then she told me of 200 bricklayers who had the year before been on strike and gained every point with their employers. “What could have made the difference? Their 200 were but a fraction of that trade, while your 500 absolutely controlled yours.” Finally she said, “It was because the editors ridiculed and denounced us.” “Did they ridicule and denounce the bricklayers?” “No.” “What did they say about you?” “Why, that our wages were good enough now, better than those of any other working woman except teachers; and if we weren’t satisfied, we had better go and get married... . . . It must have been because our employers bribed the editors.” . . . In the case of the bricklayers, no editor, either Democrat or Republican, would have accepted the proffer of a bribe, because he would have known that if he denounced or ridiculed those men, not only they but all the trades union men of the city at the next election would vote solidly against the nominees advocated by the editor. If those collar laundrywomen had been voters, they would have held, in that little city of Troy, the “balance of political power.”

There are many women equally well qualified with men for principals and superintendents of schools, and yet, while three-fourths of the teachers are women, nearly all of them are relegated to subordinate positions on half or at most two-thirds the salaries paid to me . . . sex alone settles the question. . . .

And then again you say, “Capital, not the vote, regulates labor.” Granted, for the sake of argument, that capital does control the labor of women. . . . but no one with eyes to see and ears to hear, will concede for a moment that capital absolutely dominates the work and wages of the free and enfranchised men of this republic. It is in order to lift the millions of our wage earning women into a position of as much power over their own labor as men possess, that they should be invested with the franchise. This ought to be done not only for the sake of justice to the women, but to the men with whom they compete; for, just so long as there is a degraded class of labor in the market, it always will be used by the capitalists to checkmate and undermine the superior classes.

Now that as a result of the agitation for equality of chances, and through the invention of machinery, there has come a great revolution in the world of economics, so that wherever a man may go to earn an honest dollar, a woman may go also, there is no escape from the conclusion that she must be clothed with equal power to protect herself. That power is the ballot, the symbol of freedom and equality, without which no citizen is sure of keeping even that which he hath, much less of getting that which he hath not.
Mary Elizabeth Lease, *Populist Crusader* (1892)

Yet, after all our years of toil and privation, dangers and hardships upon the Western frontier, monopoly is taking our homes from us by an infamous system of mortgage foreclosure, the most infamous that has ever disgraced the statutes of a civilized nation. It takes from us at the rate of five hundred a month the homes that represent the best years of our life, our toil, our hopes, our happiness. How did it happen? The government, at the bid of Wall Street, repudiated its contracts with the people; the circulating medium was contracted in the interest of Shylock from $54 per capita to less than $8 per capita; or, as Senator Plumb tells us, “Our debts were increased, while the means to pay them was decreased;” or as grand Senator Steward puts it, “For twenty years the market value of the dollar has gone up and the market value of labor has gone down, till today the American laborer, in bitterness and wrath, asks which is the worst—the black slavery that has gone or the white slavery that has come?”

Do you wonder the women are joining the Alliance? I wonder if there is a woman in this broad land who can afford to stay out of the Alliance. Our loyal, white-ribbon women should be heart and hand in this Farmers’ Alliance movement, for the men whom we have sent to represent us are the only men in the councils of this nation who have not been elected on a liquor platform; and I want to say here, with exultant pride, that the five farmer Congressmen and the United States Senator we have sent up from Kansas—the liquor traffic, Wall Street, “nor the gates of hell shall not prevail against them.”

It would sound boastful were I to detail to you the active, earnest part the Kansas women took in the recent campaign. A Republican majority of 82,000 was reduced to less than 8,000, when we elected 97 representatives, 5 out of 7 Congressmen, and a United States Senator, for to the women of Kansas belongs the credit of defeating John J. Ingalls. He is feeling badly about it yet, too, for he said today that “women and Indians were the only class that would scalp a dead man.” I rejoice that he realizes that he is politically dead.

I might weary you to tell you in detail how the Alliance women found time from cares of home and children to prepare the tempting, generous viands for the Alliance picnic dinners; where hungry thousands and tens of thousands gathered in the forests and groves to listen to the words of impassioned oratory, oftentimes from woman’s lips, that nerved the men of Kansas to forget their party prejudice and vote for “Mollie and the babies.” And not only did they find their way to the voters’ hearts, through their stomachs, but they sang their way as well. I hold here a book of Alliance songs, composed and set to music by an Alliance woman, Mrs. Florence Olmstead of Bulter County, Kan., that did much toward molding public sentiment. Alliance Glee Clubs composed of women, gave us such stirring melodies as the nation has not heard since the Tippecanoe and Tyler campaign of 1840. And while I am individualizing, let me call your attention to a book written also by an Alliance woman. I wish a copy of it could be placed in the hands of every woman in this land. “The Fate of a Fool” is written by Mrs. Emma G. Curtis of Colorado. This book in the hands of women would teach them to be just and generous toward women, and help them to forgive and condemn in each other the sins so sweetly forgiven when committed by men.

Let no one for a moment believe that this uprising and federation of the people is but a passing episode in politics. It is a religious as well as a political movement, for we seek to put into practical operation the teachings and precepts of Jesus of Nazareth. We seek to enact justice and equity between man and man. We seek to bring the nation back to the constitutional liberties guaranteed us by our forefathers. The voice that is coming up today from the mystic chords of the American heart is the same voice that Lincoln heard blending with the guns of Fort Sumter and the Wilderness, and it is breaking into a clarion cry today that will be heard around the world.

Crowns will fall, thrones will tremble, kingdoms will disappear, the divine right of kings and the divine right of capital will fade away like the mists of the morning, when the Angel of Liberty shall kindle the fires of justice in the hearts of men. “Exact justice to all, special privileges to none.” No more millionaires, and no more paupers; no more gold kings, silver kings and oil kings, and no more little waifs of humanity starving for a crust of bread. No more gaunt faced, hollow-eyed girls in the factories, and no more little boys reared in poverty and crime for the penitentiaries and the gallows. But we shall have the golden age of which Isaiah sang and the prophets have so long foretold; when the farmers shall be prosperous and happy, dwelling under their own vine and fig tree; when the laborer shall have that for which he toils; when occupancy and use shall be the only title to land, and everyone shall obey the divine injunction, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.” When men shall be just and generous, little less than gods, and women shall be just and charitable toward each other, little less than angels; when we shall have not a government of the people by capitalists, but a government of the people, by the people.
1. After reading the text, describe the social and economic complaints of both urban and industrial workers.

2. Describe the change in popular attitudes toward the impoverished during the economic depression of 1893.

3. Were the political and economic orientations of either the Republicans or Democrats adequate to the needs of workers and farmers?

4. Evaluate Susan B. Anthony’s speech as a response to the problems of working women. Were her proposals adequate to meet their needs?

5. Define Mary Elizabeth Lease’s protest against capitalist exploitation of workers and farmers and her feminist emphasis on women’s suffrage. Would her emphasis on protest better serve the working people than Anthony’s promotion of voting?