



# Chapter Nineteen

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## **The Incorporation of America, 1865–1900**

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# Chapter Focus Questions

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- ✦ What led to the rise of big business and the formation of the national labor movement?
- ✦ How was southern society transformed?
- ✦ What caused the growth of cities?
- ✦ What was the Gilded Age?
- ✦ How did education change?
- ✦ How did commercial amusements and organized sports develop?

# Packintown, Chicago, Illinois

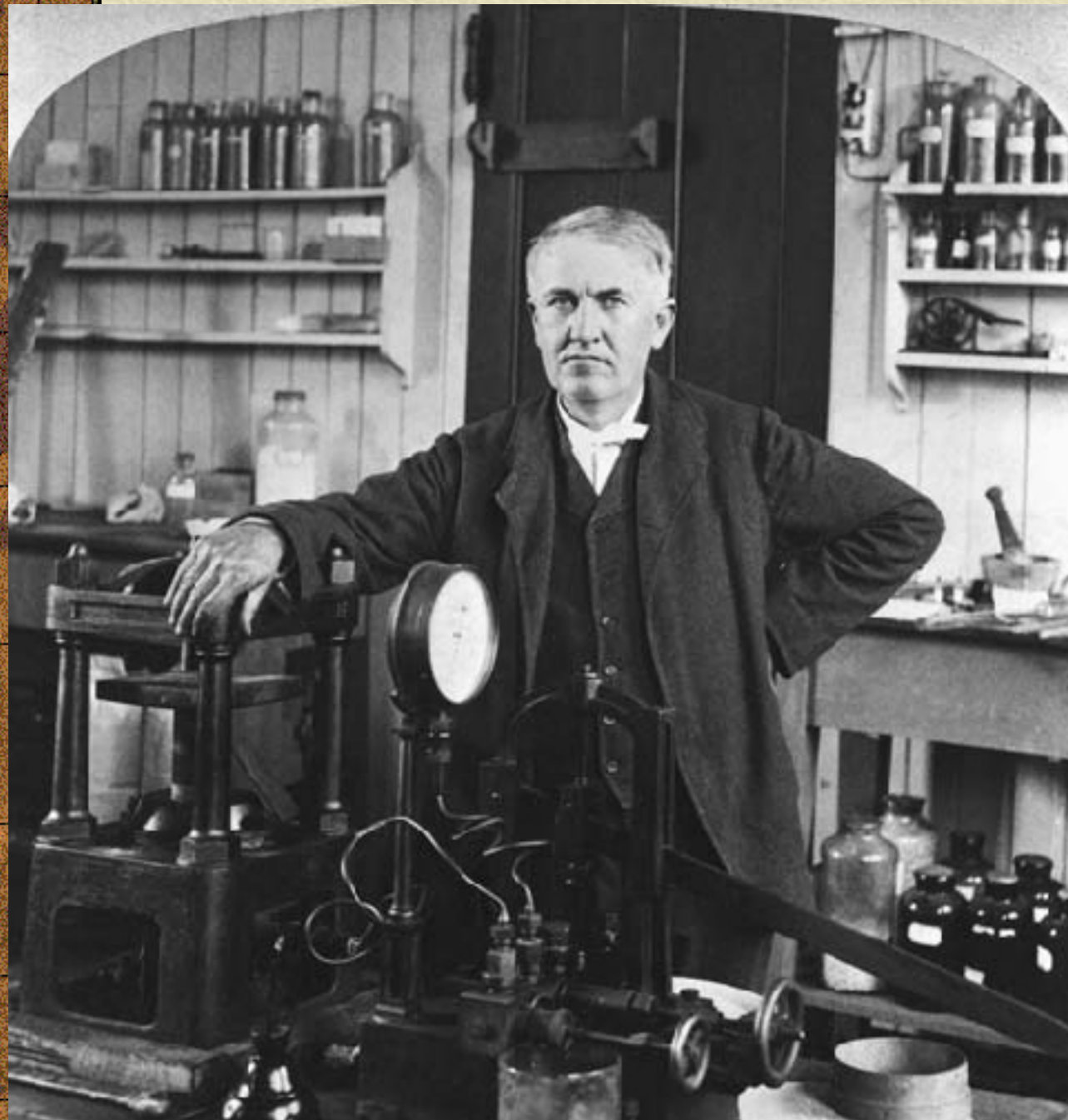
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- ✦ Packintown mirrored the industrial age.
  - ◆ It attracted immigrants from all over Europe, offering them jobs based on skill, tenure in America, and low wages.
- ✦ The immigrant groups settling in the Chicago neighborhood maintained their ethnic identities and institutions.
- ✦ The one common meeting place was the saloon.
- ✦ The meatpacking houses were a model of monopoly capitalism with huge, specialized factories that polluted the Chicago River and air.
- ✦ Spurred by technology, the Chicago meatpacking companies controlled all aspects of the industry.

# Revolutions in Technology and Transportation

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- ✦ The post-Civil War era saw a tremendous boom in business and technology. Inventors like Alexander Graham Bell and Thomas Edison brought new products to Americans.
  - By 1900, Americans had produced over 4,000 cars.
  - In 1903, the Wright Brothers pioneered airplane flight.
- ✦ Railroads stimulated development, creating a national market.
- ✦ Industry grew at a pace previously unimaginable.



In 1887, Thomas Alva Edison (1847–1931) moved his laboratory from Menlo Park to West Orange, New Jersey. This photograph, taken in 1901, shows him in what many historians consider the first industrial research facility. Here, he invented the alkaline storage battery, the phonograph, and the kinoscope, the first machine to allow one person at a time to view motion pictures.

# Patterns of Industry



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## ✦ Map: Patterns of Industry, 1900

✦ Industrial manufacturing concentrated in the Northeast and Midwest.



**MAP 19.1 Patterns of Industry, 1900** Industrial manufacturing concentrated in the Northeast and Midwest, while the raw materials for production came mostly from other parts of the nation.

# Mechanization Takes Command

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- ✦ The second industrial revolution was based on the application of new technology to increase labor productivity and the volume of goods.
- ✦ By the early 20th century, the United States produced one-third of the world's industrial goods.
- ✦ Continuous machine production characterized many industries.
- ✦ Coal provided the energy for this second industrial revolution.
- ✦ Assembly line production, beginning with meat-packing, spread throughout American industry.



# Expanding the Market for Goods

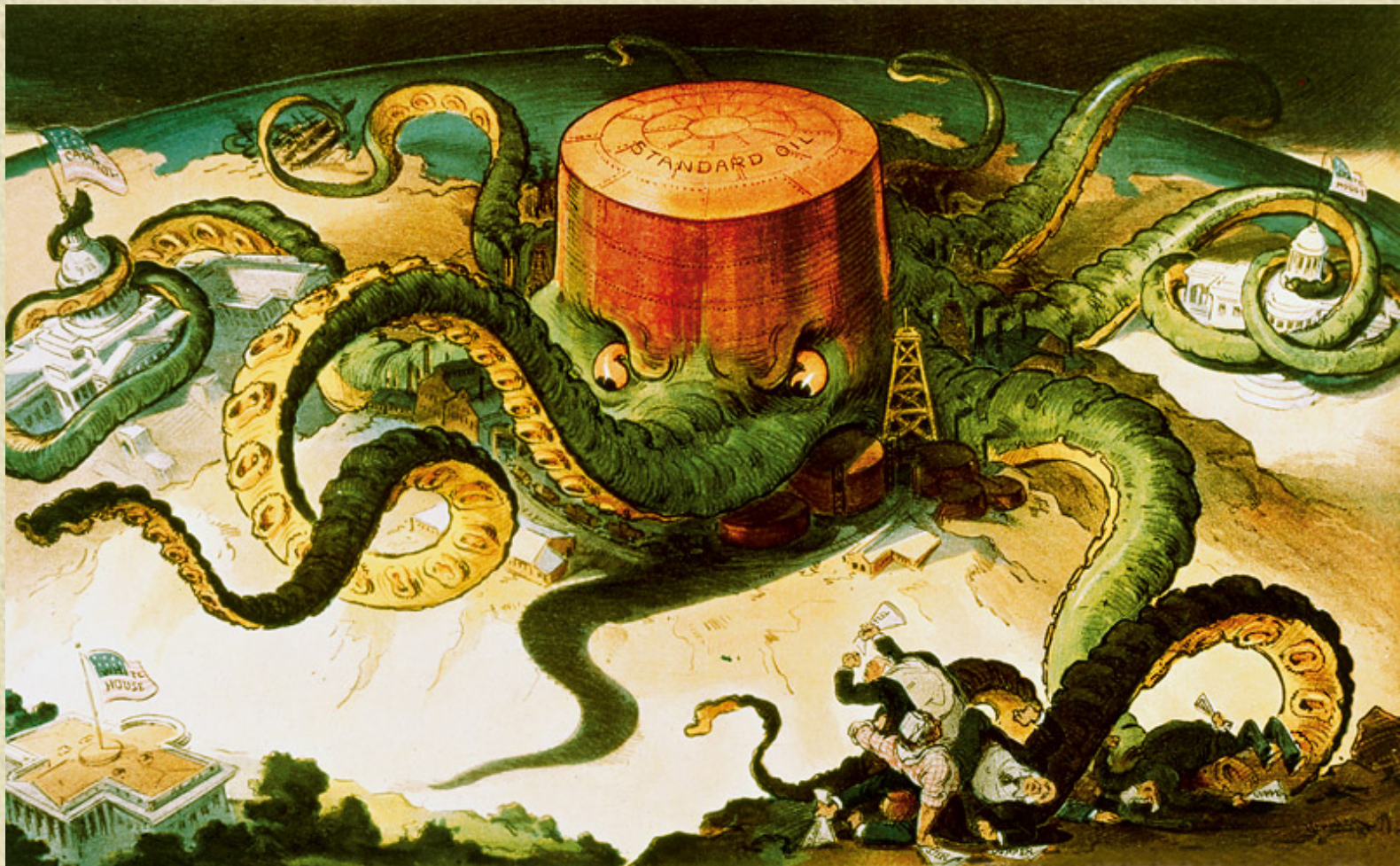
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- ✦ New techniques for marketing and merchandising distributed the growing volume of goods.
  - Rural free delivery enabled Sears and Montgomery Ward to thrive and required that these companies set up sophisticated ways of reaching their customers.
  - Chain stores developed in other retail areas, frequently specializing in specific consumer goods.
  - Department stores captured the urban market.
  - Advertising firms helped companies reach customers.

# Integration, Combination, and Merger

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- ✦ Business leaders tried to gain control over the economy and to enlarge the commercial empire.
- ✦ Periodic depressions wiped out weaker competitors and enabled the survivors to grow to unprecedented heights.
- ✦ Businesses employed:
  - *vertical integration* to control every step of production
  - *horizontal combination* to control the market for a single product.
- ✦ The Sherman Antitrust Act (1890) hampered unionization but did not prevent the continued consolidation of American business.



John D. Rockefeller, who formed the Standard Oil Company in 1870, sought to control all aspects of the industry, from the transportation of crude oil to the marketing and distribution of the final products. By the end of the decade, after making shrewd deals with the railroads and underselling his rivals, he managed to control 90 percent of the oil-refining industry. To further consolidate his interests, in 1882 Rockefeller created the Standard Oil Trust, which, by integrating both vertically and horizontally, became a model for other corporations and an inspiration for critical commentary and antitrust legislation. This cartoon, published in *Puck* in 1904, shows the stranglehold Standard Oil had on government and industry alike. In 1911, in response to an antitrust suit, the Supreme Court ordered the company to break up.

# The Gospel of Wealth

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- ✦ American business leaders saw their success as an indication of their own personal virtues.
- ✦ A “gospel of wealth” seemed to justify ruthless financial maneuvering by men like Jay Gould.
- ✦ More acceptable was the model presented by Andrew Carnegie, a self-made multimillionaire who brought efficiency to the steel industry.
- ✦ Captains of industry seemed to fulfill the lessons of Charles Darwin—survival of the fittest.



This engraving of steel manufacturing at Andrew Carnegie's plant in 1886 features a Bessemer Converter, which converts molten pig iron into steel. The process was named after Sir Henry Bessemer of Sheffield, England, who first patented the process in 1855.

SOURCE: The Granger Collection, New York (0009141/4E452.14).

# The Wage System

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- ✦ In the late nineteenth century, the American labor force was transformed.
  - ◆ The number of Americans working for wages dramatically grew.
  - ◆ Immigrants met the demands of new industries.
  - ◆ Mechanization transformed labor by changing employer-employee relations and creating new categories of workers.
- ✦ In the older trades such as machine tooling and textiles, craft traditions were maintained while new industrial systems were added.

# New Opportunities and Old Obstacles

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- ✦ Women workers moved into clerical positions created by the advent of the typewriter and telephone, and into retail as salespeople.
- ✦ Racism kept African Americans and Chinese out of most skilled positions.
- ✦ Factory work was a dangerous and tedious ten- to twelve-hour stint.
- ✦ Periodic depressions threw millions of workers out of jobs.



Thomas Nast (1840–1902), the most famous political cartoonist of the 1860s and 1870s, used his art to comment on pressing political issues, such as the plight of former slaves during Reconstruction, the evils of machine politics, and the rivalry between the national political parties. His drawings were made into wood engravings that were then printed in newspapers or popular magazines such as *Harper's Weekly*. In this cartoon published in 1871, Nast depicts Columbia protecting a Chinese immigrant from a racist mob.

SOURCE: Stock Montage, Inc./Historical Pictures Collection.



# The Knights of Labor

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- ✦ The Knights of Labor, led by Terence V. Powderly, tried with some success to mobilize labor to take control of their own industries.
- ✦ The Knights:
  - urged workplace cooperation as the alternative to the wage system
  - set up small cooperatives in various industries
  - joined the fight for an 8-hour workday
- ✦ Workers normally excluded from craft unions joined the Knights, including unskilled workers, women, and African Americans.



At the 1886 General Assembly of the Knights of Labor, which met in Richmond, Virginia, sixteen women attended as delegates. Elizabeth Rodgers, the first woman in Chicago to join the Knights and the first woman to serve as a master workman in a district assembly, attended with her two-week old daughter. The convention established a Department of Women's Work and appointed Leonora M. Barry, a hosiery worker, as general investigator.

SOURCE: Corbis/Bettmann.

# The Decline of the Knights of Labor

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- ✦ The Knights lost their crusade for an 8-hour workday due to a violent incident at Chicago's Haymarket Square.
- ✦ Employers pooled resources to rid their factories of union organizers; the Knights lost and the wage system won.

# The American Federation of Labor

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- ✦ The American Federation of Labor, led by Samuel Gompers, organized skilled workers within the wage system.
- ✦ The AFL:
  - did not organize unskilled workers, females, or racial and ethnic minorities
  - focused on short-term goals of higher wages, shorter hours and collective bargaining.
- ✦ Unlike other unions, the AFL did achieve a degree of respectability.

# An Internal Colony

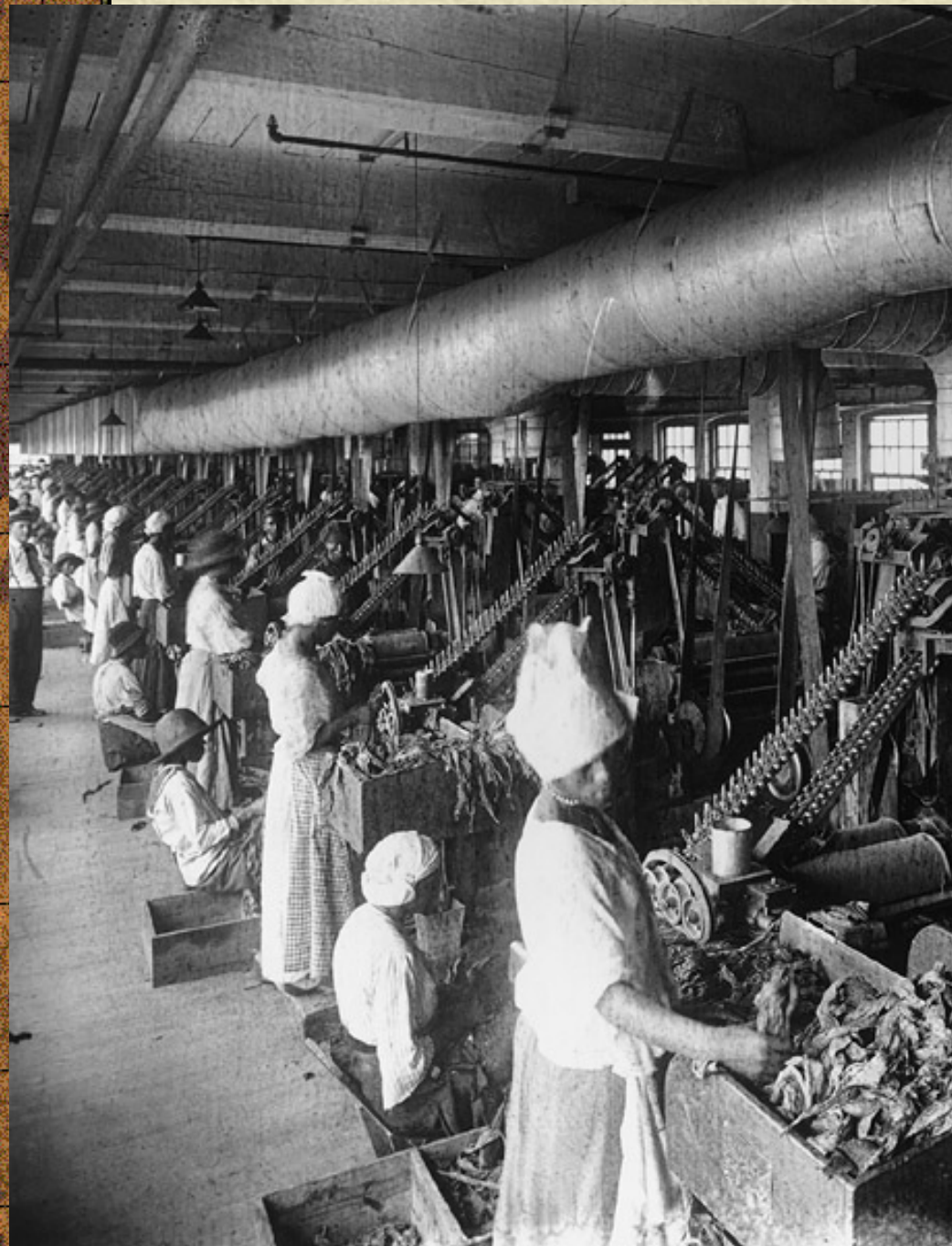
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- ✦ Southerners like Henry Grady envisioned a “New South” that would take advantage of the region’s resources and become a manufacturing center.
- ✦ Northern investors bought up much of the South’s manufacturing and natural resources, often eliminating southern competition.
- ✦ Southern communities launched cotton mill campaigns to boost the textile industry.
- ✦ By the 1920s northern investors held much of the South’s wealth, including the major textile mills.
- ✦ For the most part, southern industry produced raw materials for northern consumption and became the nation’s internal colony.

# Southern Labor

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- ✦ Most southern factories were white-only or else rigidly segregated.
  - ◆ African Americans were allowed low-paying jobs with railroads while African-American women typically worked as domestics.
- ✦ With the exception of the Knights of Labor, white workers generally protected their racial position.
- ✦ Wages were much lower for southerners than outside of the region, a situation that was worsened by widespread use of child and convict labor.



The processing of raw tobacco employed thousands of African American women, who sorted, stripped, stemmed, and hung tobacco leaves as part of the redrying process. After mechanization was introduced, white women took jobs as cigarette rollers, but black women kept the worst, most monotonous jobs in the tobacco factories. The women shown in this photograph are stemming tobacco in a Virginia factory while their white male supervisor oversees their labor.

SOURCE: Cook Collection, Valentine Museum/Richmond History Center.

# The Transformation of Piedmont Communities

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- ✦ The Piedmont (the area from southern Virginia through northern Alabama) developed into a textile-producing center with dozens of small industrial towns.
- ✦ As cotton and tobacco prices fell, farmers sent their children into the mills to pay off debts.
- ✦ Gradually they moved into these company-dominated mill villages.
- ✦ Mill superintendents used teachers and clergy to inculcate the company's work ethic in the community.
- ✦ Mill village residents developed their own cultures, reinforced by a sense of connection to one another.



# The Foreign-Born Population

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- ✦ After the Civil War, European immigrants settled primarily in the industrial districts of the Northeast and Midwest.
- ✦ Map: Population of Foreign Birth by Region, 1880



**MAP 19.2 Population of Foreign Birth by Region, 1880** European immigrants after the Civil War settled primarily in the industrial districts of the northern Midwest and parts of the Northeast. French Canadians continued to settle in Maine, Cubans in Florida, and Mexicans in the Southwest, where earlier immigrants had established thriving communities.

SOURCE: Clifford L. Lord and Elizabeth H. Lord, *Lord & Lord Historical Atlas of the United States* (New York: Holt, 1953).

# Populating the City

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- ✦ In the years after the Civil War, manufacturing moved from rural areas to the city.
  - ◆ Millions of people followed these jobs to American cities, making the United States an urban nation.
- ✦ Many migrants came from rural areas in the United States.
- ✦ Immigrants and their children accounted for most of the urban population growth.
  - ◆ Immigrants came because of economic opportunities.
  - ◆ Success depended on the skills the immigrants brought with them.
- ✦ Groups tended to live near their countrymen and to work in similar trades.
  - ◆ Newcomers frequently moved in search of better opportunities.

# The Urban Landscape

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- ✦ People were packed into dumbbell tenements in working-class neighborhoods.
- ✦ Wealthy neighborhoods gleamed with new mansions, townhouses, and brownstones.
- ✦ Several cities experienced devastating fires, allowing architects to transform the urban landscape as part of the City Beautiful movement.
- ✦ Streetcars and subways also altered the spatial design of cities.
- ✦ The extension of transportation allowed residential suburbs to emerge on the periphery of the cities.



In his watercolor *The Bowery at Night*, painted in 1885, W. Louis Sonntag Jr. shows a New York City scene transformed by electric light. Electricity transformed the city in other ways as well, as seen in the electric streetcars and elevated railroad.

SOURCE: *The Bowery at Night*, 1885. Watercolor. Museum of the City of New York.

# The City and the Environment

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- ✦ Despite technological innovations, pollution continued to be an unsolved problem.
- ✦ Overcrowding and inadequate sanitation bred a variety of diseases.
- ✦ Attempts to clean up city water supplies and eliminate waste often led to:
  - ◆ polluting rivers
  - ◆ building sewage treatment plants
  - ◆ creating garbage dumps on nearby rural lands

# “Conspicuous Consumption”

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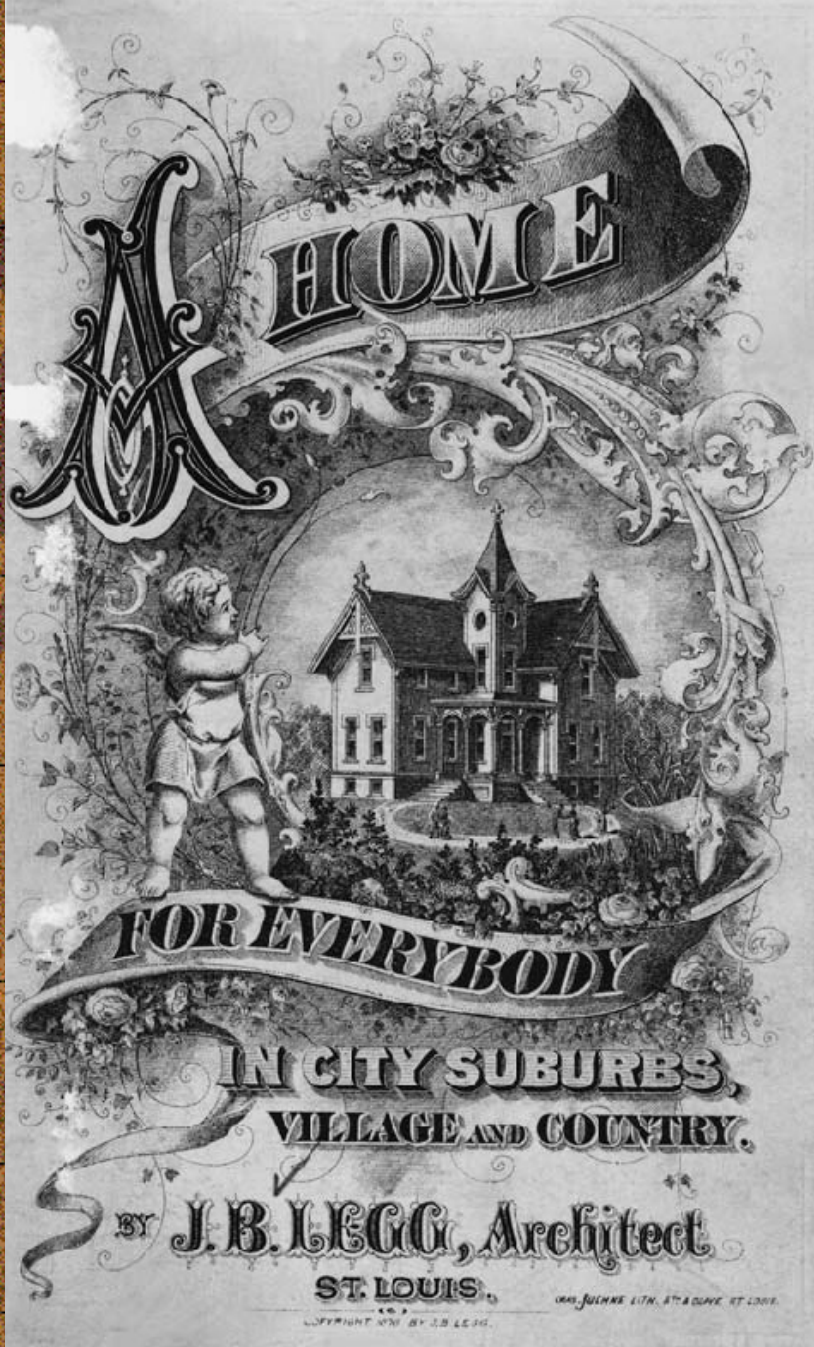
- ✦ The growth of consumer goods and services led to sweeping changes in American behavior and beliefs.
- ✦ The upper classes created a style of “conspicuous consumption“ in order to display their wealth to the world around them.
  - They patronized the arts by funding the galleries and symphonies of their cities.
  - They built vast mansions and engaged in new elite sports.
  - Mansions and wealthy hotels had great open windows so that people passing by could marvel at the wealth displayed within the building.
  - Women adorned themselves with jewels and furs.

# Self-Improvement and the Middle Class

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- ✦ A new “middle class” developed its own sense of gentility.
  - ◆ Salaried employees were now part of the middle class.
- ✦ Aided by expanding transit systems, they moved into suburbs providing both space and privacy but a long commute to and from work.
- ✦ Middle-class women devoted their time to housework.
  - ◆ New technologies simplified household work.
- ✦ The new middle class embraced “culture” and physical exercise for self-improvement and moral uplift.
  - ◆ Middle-class youth found leisure a special aspect of their childhood.





Taken from J. B. Legg's architecture book, this page illustrates the ideal suburban home. His book, published in 1876, was aimed at the prospering middle class. SOURCE: Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

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# Life in the Streets

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- ✦ Many working-class people felt disenchanting amid the alien and commercial society. To allay the stress, they established close-knit ethnic communities.
  - ◆ Chinese, Mexicans, and African Americans were prevented from living outside of certain ghettos.
  - ◆ European ethnic groups chose to live in closely-knit communities.
- ✦ Many immigrants came without families and lived in boarding houses.
- ✦ For many immigrant families, home became a second workplace where the whole family engaged in productive labor.



The intersection of Orchard and Hester Streets on New York's Lower East Side, photographed ca. 1905. Unlike the middle classes, who worked and played hidden away in offices and private homes, the Jewish lower-class immigrants who lived and worked in this neighborhood spent the greater part of their lives on the streets. SOURCE: Oil over a photograph. The Granger Collection (4E534.23).

# Immigrant Culture

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- ✦ Despite their meager resources, many immigrant families:
  - attempted to imitate middle-class customs of dress and consumption
  - preserved Old World customs
- ✦ Immigrant cultures freely mixed with indigenous cultures to shape the emerging popular cultures of urban America.
- ✦ Promoters found that young people were attracted to ragtime and other African-American music.
- ✦ Promoters also found that amusement parks could attract a mass audience looking for wholesome fun.

# Education

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- ✦ Stimulated by business and civic leaders and the idea of universal free schooling, America's school system grew rapidly at all levels.
  - Only a small minority attended high school or college.
- ✦ Supported by federal land grants, state universities and colleges proliferated and developed their modern form, as did the elite liberal arts and professional schools.
  - Professional education was an important growth area.
  - Women benefited greatly by gaining greater access to colleges.
- ✦ Vocational education also experienced substantial expansion.

# African American Education

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- ✦ African Americans founded their own colleges and vocational schools.
- ✦ Howard University, established for African Americans, had its own medical school.
- ✦ Educator Booker T. Washington founded the Tuskegee Institute to press his call for African Americans to concentrate on vocational training.
  - Washington encouraged African Americans to learn practical, moral, and industrial trades.
  - Teachers and domestic servants were trained through these new schools.



George Washington Carver (1864–1943), who had been born in slavery, had been invited by Booker T. Washington to direct agricultural research at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. A leader in development of agriculture in the New South, Carver promoted crop diversification to rejuvenate soil that was depleted by the continuous planting of cotton and encouraged the cultivation of alternative, high-protein crops such as peanuts and soybeans. He designed his programs in sustainable agriculture mainly for African American farmers and sharecroppers rather than for commercial purposes.

SOURCE:ca.1900.The Granger Collection,New York (0002916).

# Leisure and Public Space

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- ✦ In large cities, varied needs led to the creation of park systems.
- ✦ The working class and middle class had different ideas on using public spaces.
  - ◆ Park planners accommodated these needs by providing the middle-class areas with cultural activities and the working class with space for athletic contests.
  - ◆ Regulations such as no walking on the grass, picnicking, or playing ball without permission were enforced in many parks.



# National Pastimes

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- ✦ Middle and working classes found common ground in a growing number of pastimes.
  - Ragtime, vaudeville, and especially sports brought the two classes together in shared activities that helped to provide a national identity.
- ✦ After the Civil War, baseball emerged as the “national pastime” as professional teams and league play stimulated fan interest.
  - Baseball initially reflected its working-class fans both in style of play and in organization but soon became tied to the business economy.
- ✦ By the 1880s, baseball had become segregated, leading to the creation of the Negro Leagues in the 1920s.



One of the finest American painters of the period, known for realistic depictions of physical exertion in amateur athletics, Thomas Eakins here turned his attention to the commercial baseball park. The batter and catcher appear as well-poised athletes, dignified in their dress and manner—everything that the baseball player of the late nineteenth century was not very likely to be. SOURCE: Thomas Eakins, *Baseball Players*, 1875. Watercolor. The Rhode Island School of Design Museum of Art (36.172).