



Women Have Always Ridden Bicycles

Members of this class were born in 1880. If they graduated from high school, they would have done so in 1898. If they attended college (very unlikely), they would have finished in 1902.

Members of this class include Douglas MacArthur, W. C. Fields (born William Claude Dukenfield), and Helen Keller.

English novelist George Eliot; President James Garfield; James Whistler's mother, Anna; and desperado Billy the Kid have always been dead.

Mindset List

1. Youngsters their age have always had about a one in ten chance of graduating from high school.
2. When away on business, their fathers might have sneaked off to enjoy “Ruby Lips” or “Tantalizing Torsos” at the local burlesque establishment.
3. Their parents could go to the Bowery Theater to see *Nellie, the Beautiful Cloak Model*, then stay and have a drink with the actors.
4. Their elders have never thought darkened theaters were morally acceptable.
5. Most kids their age have left school, having gone to work at around the age of fourteen.
6. They’ve always heard about buffalo chips being used out West for fuel.
7. Sectional rivalries between North and South, East and West, have always been spreading like bumper crops.
8. They’ve always been eating steak butchered in Chicago from Texas “dogies.”

9. Lone cowboys have always been turning into corporate “ranch hands.”
10. Dodge City is losing its reputation as a wild and woolly cow town.
11. Many of them have a dead sibling or two.
12. Their roving uncles may have enjoyed shooting dwindling numbers of buffalo from what the Indians call “the Iron Horse.”
13. Machines have always talked.
14. Farming and mining have always been “industries.”
15. They’ve always heard how the West is closing up for good.
16. Big cities have always been sordid but fascinating places—with unpaved roads, palatial mansions, crowded firetraps, daring shows, unsightly and smelly sewers, scrumptious restaurants, omnipresent manure, and fantastic orchestras.
17. Typewriters, with their new QWERTY keyboards, have become the new “literary pianos” and are fast making business letters

and other documents copied with perfect penmanship seem obsolete.

18. Folks have always been intrigued by trained fleas, mermaids, Siamese twins, and “egresses.”
19. Huck Finn has always had doubts about “sivilization.”
20. Californians have always been trying to put Chinese laundries out of business.
21. The boys among them have always been told that women’s suffrage may lead to immoral ticket-splitting and political independence.
22. Cornelius Vanderbilt alone has always hired more people for his agricultural experiments than does the entire United States Department of Agriculture.
23. Women have always ridden bicycles.
24. The very, very rich have always referred to their seventy-room mansions, with no trace of irony, as “cottages.”
25. They’ve grown up hearing about the nation’s trauma over the assassination of President Garfield by that nutty office-seeker.

26. Children and factories have always needed each other.
27. Jim Crow has always created problems for African Americans in the South.
28. In the improbable event that members of this class go to college, they may find that “moral philosophy” is now obsolete.
29. Joseph Pulitzer has always grabbed the attention of their parents with newspaper headlines like BAPTIZED IN BLOOD.
30. Due process has always been used to protect corporations, not freed slaves.
31. Roman Catholics have always been the object of suspicion and fear.
32. The First Lady has always been a college graduate.
33. A gentleman never refers to a lady’s “limbs” as “legs.”
34. Police have always stopped horse-drawn carriages for speeding.
35. North-South marriages have become only slightly more acceptable.

36. Twilight in Pittsburgh has always come early.
37. Indians have never wanted to quarrel about God.
38. “Bees” have always meant popular gatherings on the Plains.
39. They’ve grown up perplexed by the claims of “gold bugs” and “silverites,” each claiming that their metallic basis for American currency would lead to prosperity and that the other’s would lead to ruin.
40. Choosing to dwell in “apartments,” such as those in the Dakota in New York City, gentlemen have always been willing “to live on mere shelves beneath a common roof.”
41. Urban America has always chosen to stay up later and later.
42. Railroads have always been enjoying their much improved brakes, which have revolutionized their engines’ usage and efficiency on all sorts of terrains and helped spread commerce to new regions of the land.
43. They’ve always been admonished to rise at five in order to thrive.

44. They've been taught that acres of diamonds are just dandy.
45. For much of the nation the whistle to signal quitting time has always been the finest sound in the world.
46. The Knights of Labor have always been riding into oblivion.
47. "Buckwheats" and "hayseeds" have always been ridiculed.
48. Except when it comes to "goos goos," city political machines have always tolerated human frailty.
49. The market for grain and cotton has always been global.
50. Land has always been taxed much more heavily than personal income.

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The Verdict, a periodical of the late nineteenth century, once depicted John D. Rockefeller playing with a toy building that looks just like a Federalist government building. Perhaps it's a little piggy bank, for John D. is finding little bags of money—or "boodle"—spilling out of the bottom. He looks ferociously greedy

and intense, and the caption has him exclaiming, "What a Funny Little Government!" Millions of Americans furiously believed that Rockefeller and his fellow leviathans of wealth had toyed with the federal and state governments. In the cartoon published in The Verdict he is actually fondling the federal government as a toy. Thus he was enjoying a late childhood. In contrast, most children during this period left school at fourteen and went to work. They had hardly any toys, making do with wooden tops that spin, hoops that you hit with a stick to keep them wheeling down the road, and (if they were lucky) kites. The girls played with rag dolls. In this era children were considered to be future adults and not much more. Yet what they experienced in American life was remarkable and unparalleled.

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Although fewer than one in ten of them graduated from high school, the class of 1898 has witnessed startling changes in American life—transformations that bred both hatred and confidence. When they were born, the United States was a young country with a serious rift between North and South and a swath of vast resources in soil, timber, and minerals. By the time they graduated from high school, if they did, America was a behemoth of production, making a fair bid to become a world power. There has been only one main constant: standards of respectability have largely remained the same.

Forty years earlier, on the eve of the Civil War, their fathers had aspired to own their own round barn; now their sons aspire to become the boss of many urban men. The West—probably America's Last West—has killed thousands, brought wealth to

thousands of others, and enthralled millions. Cities have become polyglot. Impoverished Sicilians never thought of themselves as Italians until they went to New York City, where they discovered they had a lot more in common with Little Italy than with Little Poland. Reconstruction in the South has always been in the past, and the “freedman,” though no longer the slave of men, has remained the slave of society. Railroads have found their way to nearly everywhere, so that both the horse and the horse-drawn wagon have become much less important, and the cattle trails have pushed ever farther west. Thin and superstrong steel walls have made skyscrapers possible, and elevators have made the top floors a cinch to get to. Just tell the operator where you want to go.

By the time they were born, there had always been telephones, phonographs, and lightbulbs, however seldom these devices were actually used. Many have chosen not to bear the expense of a telephone “just to talk.” If they lived east of the Missouri River, they would have traveled long-distance by rail, but their few counterparts in the West would more likely have done so by stagecoach, with horses changed every ten miles and a home station every fifth stop for grub, liquor, and maybe a room for the night. It would take them five hours to traverse fifty miles this way, and strong tobacco was discouraged in such close quarters and hair oil was to be avoided under such dusty conditions. If a class member grew up in the New West, he or she probably would have attended a small pioneer schoolhouse like the ones put up within days of a settlement, but would have likely had to go far in order to find a high school.

Already, however, thirty-one states require some grammar school attendance, and many Americans believe that graduation from a “high” school will become the great equalizer between rich and poor. Meanwhile, back east they would have grown up

celebrating Memorial Days held in late May and seen parading veterans of the Mexican War and maybe even the occasional veteran of the War of 1812. These events have always been tinged with sadness, as moralistic speakers droned on about the nation's losing a sense of sacrifice and gratefulness, but they could also be fun.

They would have had no memory of their bachelor uncle's spending New Year's Day visiting eligible women during "at home" calls, as by the year they were born, the practice was considered disrespectful because of the excessive number of visits. But they will recall the safe drawing-room spookiness of Halloween, which has always been a young person's holiday. Their older brothers and sisters have always been in on the bicycling craze—and now that these students are graduating from high school, so are they. Like many young people in the United States, they have had to endure the opinion of elders that bicycle races on Sundays are sinful, and so is spending money on lamps, bells, and cyclometers. Someone has always been trying to ride a bicycle so fast that he can cover a mile in a minute.

If they should be lucky enough to go to college—out of 400 Americans, 399 have not and most likely never will—they have a good chance of attending a coeducational one, as most of these schools are now. Meanwhile, they've had history, reading, math, spelling, and elocution drilled into their heads, and have had to follow such penmanship rules as "Keep the top of the pen holder pointing to the right shoulder." They have grown up primarily reading traditional newspapers, with earnest reports of events beneath "tombstones," or stacked headlines. The newer papers, such as those published by William Randolph Hearst and, to a lesser extent, Joseph Pulitzer, scream a lot of fabricated news in seventy-two-point type.

They may well have read these newspapers in oversized houses with dormers and cupolas running riot outside (though if they grew up in New York City they might have lived in the new luxury apartments such as the Dakota and the Navarro). These architectural flourishes have always been a salute to the value of tradition and aristocracy. They've also celebrated how new machinery could produce fancy arches and towers on the facades of ordinary homes. Furnished rooms are so crowded with all manner of ornament that moving around has become a small challenge. Stomachs and divans alike are overstuffed. Etiquette has always been as lavishly ruled as penmanship. Virtue and vice are clearly defined and should never be confused with each other.

When the boys grow up, they expect to acquire the virility that can come only from a beard, or at least a thick mustache. Their mothers might have overindulged them with the Little Lord Fauntleroy look of pampered children, but they have sought to outgrow that as soon as their mothers weren't paying attention or the camera had gone away. The girls would graduate from being all that is sugar and spice to becoming stern mistresses of households. Their long hair was a beauty prize, but like everything else it had to be governed, usually in ringlets. Bustles have been de rigueur, but with women now riding bikes, dare anyone think the bustle is doomed?

For entertainment they have always had the circus and Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West, which has at times drawn around forty thousand people for a single show. They may have attended melodramas on Broadway or in other parts of the country, with their parents. Minstrel and burlesque and even vaudeville variety shows, with their racy jokes and tight-stocking ladies, might well, however, be a bit too daring. Athletics has always been called "sport," and there has always been something

a bit unsavory about playing it for money. The boys have always followed professional boxing, though, even if the new requirement of padded gloves has eliminated some of the risk and thus some of the adventure. They may also have tried to throw “basketballs” into “peach baskets,” though that’s mainly something a YMCA lad might participate in.

If class members live beyond the present era, they will have their own children in the first two decades of the next century. Their grandchildren could be born midcentury, and their great-grandkids could be born around 1980. Yet they themselves have always grown up with infant mortality, and it is hardly unusual for them to have a dead infant sibling, or even two.

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As they’ve grown up, they have been surrounded by a variety of intense hatreds—by all sorts of groups against all sorts of other groups. These patterns of mutual loathing persisted regardless of the state of their family life and regardless of American confidence about the vitality of national growth. Their parents also grew up with bitter rivalries as normal, but they were simpler: basically North versus South. The class of 1898 has matured with much more complicated sectional and political resentments. Whether such things ever affected them directly, the daily papers have always covered them all; to them these unhappy trends are part of American life—unless, like young Douglas MacArthur, they have spent most of their time isolated on military bases or in academies. Newspaper accounts, bolstered by new printing presses that can put out thousands of copies in just a few hours, have always carried these sagas of constant spite.

In the cities the Irish machine politicians have always hated the “goos goos,” the good-government types who want to scale back favors from city hall and put everything on an “objective” civil footing. But what about the Irish fellow who’s lost his job and needs a handout or a break in exchange for a vote? He’ll do a good job as an extra sweeping the streets and can always work as a “floater,” voting in election wards where he isn’t actually registered, in exchange. What’s the harm o’ that? And what’s the peril of having a little drink on Sundays? But the “goos goos,” often the old Protestant types, are always in favor of the blue laws. They seem to have little patience for human flaws. And they certainly don’t know how to grease the wheels of a big city.

Many of the city bosses have always been Catholic, and when members of the class of 1898 were small children, the American Protective Association launched a campaign of hatred against Catholics, depicting them as the ruination of American cities, a bunch of undesirables who would drink and drive the country to destruction, people who prefer a garish statue of the Virgin to a good Presbyterian sermon. In New England some Protestants have always declined to celebrate Christmas because they have seen it as a “Papist” holiday. Catholics and Chinese alike have always been despised. White laundry owners in California have tried to drive Chinese-owned laundries out of business by applying a double standard in building codes.

Meanwhile, the “labor elites” in the United States—those born here and mainly of white Anglo-Saxon Protestant background—have long hated all manner of immigrants: the Greeks, Czechs, Russians, Romanians, Poles, Italians, and others who came through Castle Garden and then the “isle of tears,” Ellis Island, and moved into the crowded and filthy enclaves of New York and other major Eastern cities. The current wave of immigration has always been

deemed “new”: mothers and fathers of the class of 1898 have always said our immigrants no longer come from Britain, France, and Germany but from southern and eastern Europe, and they are people who talk funny, dress funny, and act funny in all sorts of ways. Their demeanor of fear but also of hope, of cowering while also being patient, is by now quite familiar to Protestants on the East Coast. Very different were the less peculiar “Old” Immigrants, such as the Dukenfield family from Britain, who claimed royal ancestry and birthed class member W. C. Dukenfield, who left home at eleven to become a vaudeville juggler. At fifteen, he adopted “W. C. Fields” as his stage name.

Beyond bosses versus goo-goos and Old America versus New Immigrants, there has always been resentful labor against resentful capital. Andrew Carnegie has never allowed himself to be undersold, and John D. Rockefeller has rarely owned less than 90 percent of the oil refining capacity in the country. Dinner parties for the rich, in what Mark Twain has been calling the Gilded Age, have always meant lavish meals of buffet Russe, columbine of chicken, ruddy duck, and vanilla mousse in the capacious dining halls of seventy-room “cottages.” The enterprises of the rich have always been protected by presidents who sent in strikebreakers and by courts that, as in Minnesota, struck down state regulations of a large railroad on the grounds that a corporation was a “person” sheltered by the Fourteenth Amendment. Although labor organizations have always been plumping for Saturdays off (with the same pay) in the name of having something called a “weekend,” these machine-age aristocrats have never supported such preposterous ideas.

Mining the coal and butchering the hogs have worked people to death—this has never been a figure of speech—but the big boys have always said that this must be how God wants it.

One of their pastors, Henry Ward Beecher, once said that if a man cannot live on bread and water, he is not fit to live. City families of nine have slept on the floor in two shivering rooms; they have survived on tiny portions of bread, potatoes, and molasses; they have worn tatters for clothes and cardboard for shoes. Yet if not God, then it has always been Mr. Darwin, who must have decreed that only the fit do—and should—survive and prosper. The rich men have always felt that the best way to grow is to put profits back into expansion and not into the men who help make them. In Chicago the mass slaughter of cattle has always been rapid, and reinvestment in new meatpacking plants has always been immediate. Thus the great meatpacking tycoon Mr. Gustavus Franklin Swift has always been swift by name and by nature. He and these other great men have wanted to make not just the “boodle,” but also the world.

Labor—in the hodgepodge assortment of moderate union men, anarchists, socialists, and other idealists or malcontents—has never gone along with any of these notions. Some are for free enterprise, but many have always thought that in time capitalism would be the cause of its own downfall by paying its workers so little that there would be no one able to buy the goods. By the time the class of 1898 was in elementary school, the labor movement, thanks in part to a lethal riot in the Haymarket area of Chicago, had become largely discredited. Despite what many have called desperate working conditions, the Knights of Labor, perhaps the country’s most important organization for the workingman, has started to seem not perfect and gentle but flawed and violent.

Members of the class of 1898 have grown up in a nation divided six ways to Sunday. The Not just classes, but also regions, have been in on the act. The North has always loathed the South, and in the unlikely event that an older brother or sister from Cleveland wanted to marry someone from Savannah, the family would have to “see about that.” Republicans in the North have always been “waving the bloody shirt” and reminding voters that it was southern Democrats who spilled the blood of rebellion and betrayal. In the South lynching and poll taxes have inexorably kept blacks away from voting booths. The black-faced clown “Jim Crow,” who pretends that everything is really all right amid all that bigotry, has always pervaded the old Confederacy, now mired in strictly enforced regulations governing the lives of black people.

And then there have always been the enormous hatreds borne by settlers out West. Ever since members of the class were born, those trying to make it in the country’s Last West have been aggrieved. Choosing to head west as a result of financial panics, such as the one in 1873, or deciding to do so because they were restless or ambitious or couldn’t make it anywhere else, they have gone out there in the millions. They’ve gone to pan for gold, drive cattle, plant wheat, lay track, herd sheep, survey sections, pull the teeth of whiskey-anesthetized cowboys in boomtowns, or to do thousands of other things. Many have dreamt of what is impossible in the Old World: the freely held farm, all their own. Many of them, lacking any source of timber on the prairie, have always built their damp but well-insulated sod houses—“soddies”—with thick prairie turf buttressed with stucco and plaster. By and large these westerners have always had a sod-size chip on their sweaty shoulders. And they’ve always had a couple of enemies: Indians and Easterners.

Four years before members of the class were born, the reckless but heroic “Long Hair,” General George Custer, as he sought “fresh laurels,” led his blue-coated cavalry into total defeat in Montana. It was the Indians’ last big win. Ever since—and for years before—the Indians have always lost. Overmatched by sheer numbers of palefaces with superior firepower, or subject to the white man’s diseases, prey to the white man’s liquor, betrayed by the white man’s broken treaties, or devastated by the white man’s shooting of essential buffalo for sport (even from railroad trains), they have largely been subdued. Their last big loss was in South Dakota when members of this class were ten; and their parents, who read the papers, have often said it must have had something to do with a “Ghost Dance” that had gotten out of hand.

As members of the class of 1898 have grown up, the solution seems to be the establishment of reservations, where Indians can be educated and civilized and instructed on how to make a living, mostly as farmers. They have never had any interest in the Christian tradition. They say they do not wish to quarrel about God as the white man does.

Nearly as much as Indians, Easterners have always been despised in the West. During the period of the West’s settlement, which seems at an end now that class members are about to graduate from high school, it has always been guys with striped pants and silk ties who sit in big offices in New York, Boston, and Chicago who’ve done all sorts of nefarious things to little people. For sodbusters trying to get cheap land, Easterners have always defrauded the government land office and bought up huge swaths of the stuff and then sold it for a high price. For wheat farmers, some of them trying to “dry” farm, Easterners have always owned the railroads and managed to

charge huge hauling prices. Or Easterners have made fun of Westerners when the latter went to the big Eastern cities, where they were called “hayseeds” who couldn’t get used to sophisticated trends and unneighborly neighbors. It is Easterners who live high on the hog back in the filthy cities, such as Pittsburgh, where the air is so dirty that twilight always comes early.

It has always been Easterners who have used big money in order to bring barbed wire to the West, thus shutting off open access to the land. Easterners have taken away the romance of the grizzled gold prospectors, who, against long odds, tried to hit pay dirt with their picks and/or find it in their pans; or have erased the portrait of the cowboys, who, despite a life of loneliness, blizzards, rattlesnakes, and endless hours, have always been figures of gutsy sinew and grit. Expensive drill bits and “geological engineers” have always replaced the panhandlers, while cowboys are now more properly referred to as “ranch hands.” A cowboy has never gotten rich; a cattleman almost never fails to do so.

Class members have grown up in a world where the legend and the transformation of the West have coexisted. But now in their eighteenth year, the matter is settled: the corporations have won. Mining and farming and ranching are now industries—just as they are back in the much-loathed East. The old cowboy in the West is as much stuck in the routines of the large ranch as is the Ukrainian immigrant stuck doing the same old thing every day, every hour, in the broiling steel mill back east.

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And yet, as class members are on the verge of graduating from high school, this *mélange* of mutual hatreds seems to be

diminishing and turning into something else, something much more hopeful. As hatreds begin to wane ever so slightly, the other passion of the past eighteen years—confidence—has always seemed to wax. The undeniable facts seem to be that America is now an industrial producer on a par with Britain, Germany, and France and is the breadbasket not just for the rest of the country but also for fickle world markets. Railroads have improved—much heavier loads are now possible because of new technologies in braking. Thanks to railroads, Minneapolis has become the nation's flour merchant and Milwaukee the nation's brewer. New immigrants have had a desperate time adjusting to all sorts of new conditions—including challenges of the English language and fragmented factory work—but they also report that in America they don't have to tip their hats to the local land baron and that everything they enjoy is better here. "It is Sunday, and I have had my bath and milk," one immigrant has written to folks back home as he praised the paradise that, to him, is America. Immigrants, even if some returned home, have always helped to make America an industrial colossus. Maybe they will even become Americans rather than Slovaks or Macedonians who happen to be in America! After all, they're starting their school day with the Pledge of Allegiance now.

As for the West, it's over, isn't it? In 1890, the Census Bureau announced the end of the frontier. It's now a place of barbed wire, huge farms and ranches, machine-driven mining and farming, and rail lines everywhere. There's no need for a cowboy when the railroad can transport cattle much more easily and quickly; no need for a scythe when horse-drawn (thirty at a time) reapers and combines can cut the wheat in a tenth of the time; no need for a pan in a sluice when the gold can be drilled

for. The great Wisconsin historian Frederick Jackson Turner has argued that the West has been a uniquely American promoter of cooperation and equality—that this stuff didn't all come to us from the Old World. Western folks gathering from miles around for quilting bees and hardy women in long calico skirts shooting bears and burning buffalo chips for fuel are unique to the American experience. But Professor Turner also says the West is done. Western farmers have organized to fight the railroads, the middlemen, and the bankers and to do battle with the gold standard and high tariffs; but when class members were sixteen, this populist revolt lost its last great battle in 1896, when William McKinley was elected president. The East had won.

No doubt the West itself will be forgotten by the next generation. The celebrations of it in dime novels about Bat Master-son and Bill Cody's Wild West shows with Annie Oakley and Sitting Bull should almost certainly become things of the past soon. Why, even primitive Dodge City has become what Huck Finn called "sivilized." In a decade, no one will care any longer about the boring old West.

The question of the freedmen has likewise become settled. The Negro hero of American whites has always been Booker T. Washington, who established an institute in Alabama for the professional training of black men to make a good living apart from whites. The Supreme Court has recently agreed wholeheartedly. Not many listen to another, more radical, black leader—William Edward Burghardt DuBois—who insists that if Negroes are to be fully American, they must also have exactly the same rights as the white man, even if it means an end to separation. This is almost certainly a pipe dream, and a dangerous one.

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Women, however, seem a tad more restless. Many of them still insist on closing saloons and on getting the vote—and out West, in places like Montana, they have already gotten it, at least on the state level. Thanks to the new industrialization, the development of new skills such as shorthand and bookkeeping, and new gadgets such as the typewriter, there's more demand for women's services in the big cities. Some of them have gone there by themselves and made and spent their own money. Legs have always been called limbs, but even so, some female members of the class of 1898 might wonder how much more independence might await them. The idea expressed by some feminist intellectuals that they might have the same strong sexual desires as men seems utterly far-fetched and much too daring. Riding bicycles, however, a delightful freedom, is growing more respectable all the time. Now women can don their "somewhat freer clothing" and join the "merry wheelmen" on their "wing'd steeds," now with equal wheel sizes for better balance.

The situation for class members who plan to become farmwives has always been quite different. They have darker expectations. A Department of Agriculture report from more than thirty years earlier remains valid today. It said that the farmer's wife is "a laboring drudge," and that the loneliness and work without end of farm life is, for her, an even heavier burden than that carried by her husband, who is at least free to chat with the hired hands and visit the local towns. Her jobs of making soap, butchering chickens, cooking meals, milking cows, washing clothes, and churning butter—not to mention other tasks such as spinning and hominy hulling—have led to farmwives being overrepresented in the local insane asylums. Though she needed

to be hardy, she has been no less governed than were city women by the "Cult of True Womanhood," with its affirmation of piety, purity, domesticity, and submissiveness. These were qualities that may have led to an all-male jury's acquitting the infamous Lizzie Borden when class members were twelve, for no one could believe that any woman adherent of the Cult could bring down a hatchet on the brow of her sleeping father.

As for the boys in the class, eager to leave their stuffed and ornamented Victorian homes, they surely have a bright future. The nation is not at war and faces no immediate threat in that regard. To be sure, both Mrs. Jefferson Davis *and* Mrs. U. S. Grant say that the Spanish in Cuba fleece the virtue of fine women, and our battleship down there, say the Hearst papers, has been treacherously exploded by Spanish dynamite. Maybe we should do something about all that. But meanwhile, new industry means a comfortable new complexity. Young men who can read reports, add figures, and write memos are at a premium; and these high school graduates are just the ticket. They can easily imagine living in the big city, donning their coats and ties and inevitable derby hats, working as company managers, reading the new newspapers with their comic strips and garish lithographs, sneaking off to a burlesque show, or enjoying themselves at freak shows (where folks have always been deceived by "this way to the egress" signs, as though an egress were something like the Wild Man of Borneo).

They look forward to full participation in the passionate and entertaining battles between Republicans and Democrats, and they are aware that if their wives get the vote, it could lead to "ticket-splitting" in an era when anything less than united support for a single party has always been deemed unethical. These young men look forward to getting ahead and growing into full

and “lusty manhood,” complete with mustache and probably full beard—unlike William McKinley, the first president in years to be bare-faced. Should they be able to go to college, they might be free of the old, moribund subject of “moral philosophy,” a loosely defined study of human nature and society that has now branched out into such useful specialties as economics and sociology. Higher education is changing: A teenager from the Deep South, class member Helen Keller, though blind and deaf, hopes to attend Radcliffe College. And Lucy Hayes, the former first lady, is actually a “college woman,” something even more rare than a “college man.”

If these young men join the millions now rushing into the big cities, they will first be living in a boardinghouse where they can eat like kings and live in comfort for four bucks a week. Thanks to the amazing new lightbulb, they can stay up later reading Mark Twain’s *Pudd’nhead Wilson* or *The American Wheelman* magazine. At the very least they might become a salesman or a merchant, a senior clerk or an insurance man. They may have already read a popular new book by the Reverend Russell Conwell, who says that if you want acres of diamonds, dig in your own backyard. They must now feel confident that if they become industrious men, they will someday have a backyard—and a front yard *and* a horse and buggy—of their very own.

