

## ■ Essential Question:

- How did reformers try to address social problems in America from 1820 to 1850?

## ■ CPUSH Agenda for Unit 4.5:

- Antebellum Social Reforms

# Antebellum Reforms

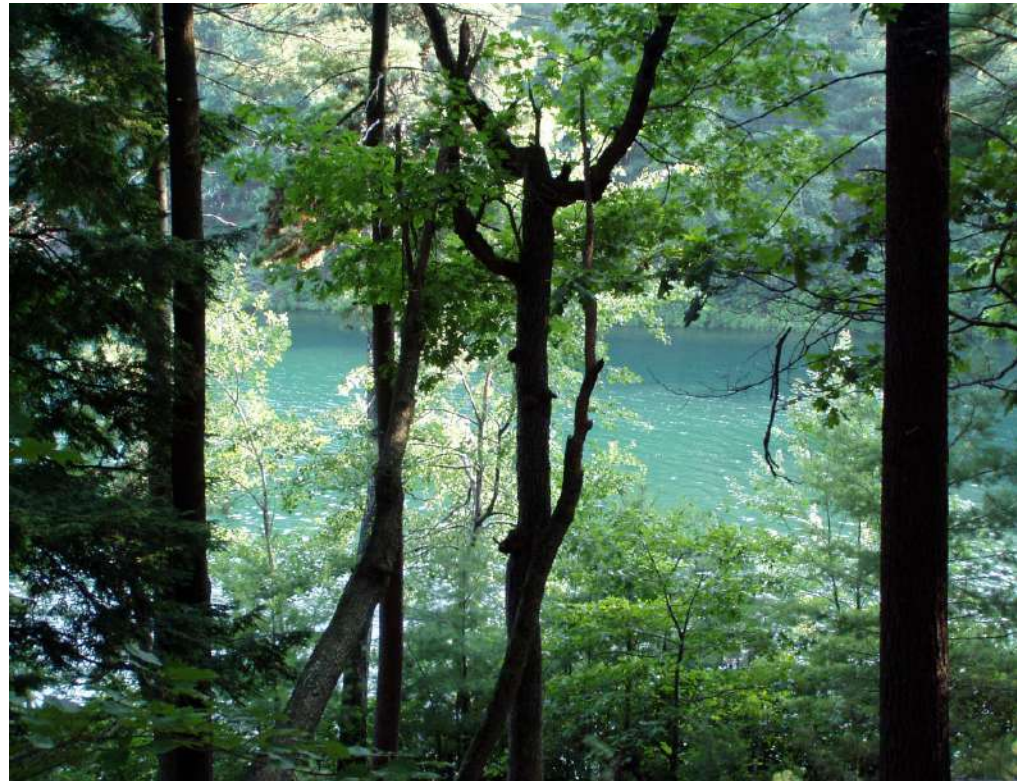
During the early antebellum era from 1800 to 1840, a number of social reformers fought to bring an end to a wide variety of social evils



From 1800 to the 1850s, a series of reforms were taking place in the United States

Ralph Waldo Emerson  
and Henry David Thoreau  
led the Transcendentalist  
movement

Thoreau's book, Walden Pond, advocated civil disobedience, an idea used by many reformers to solve social problems



## Problem #1

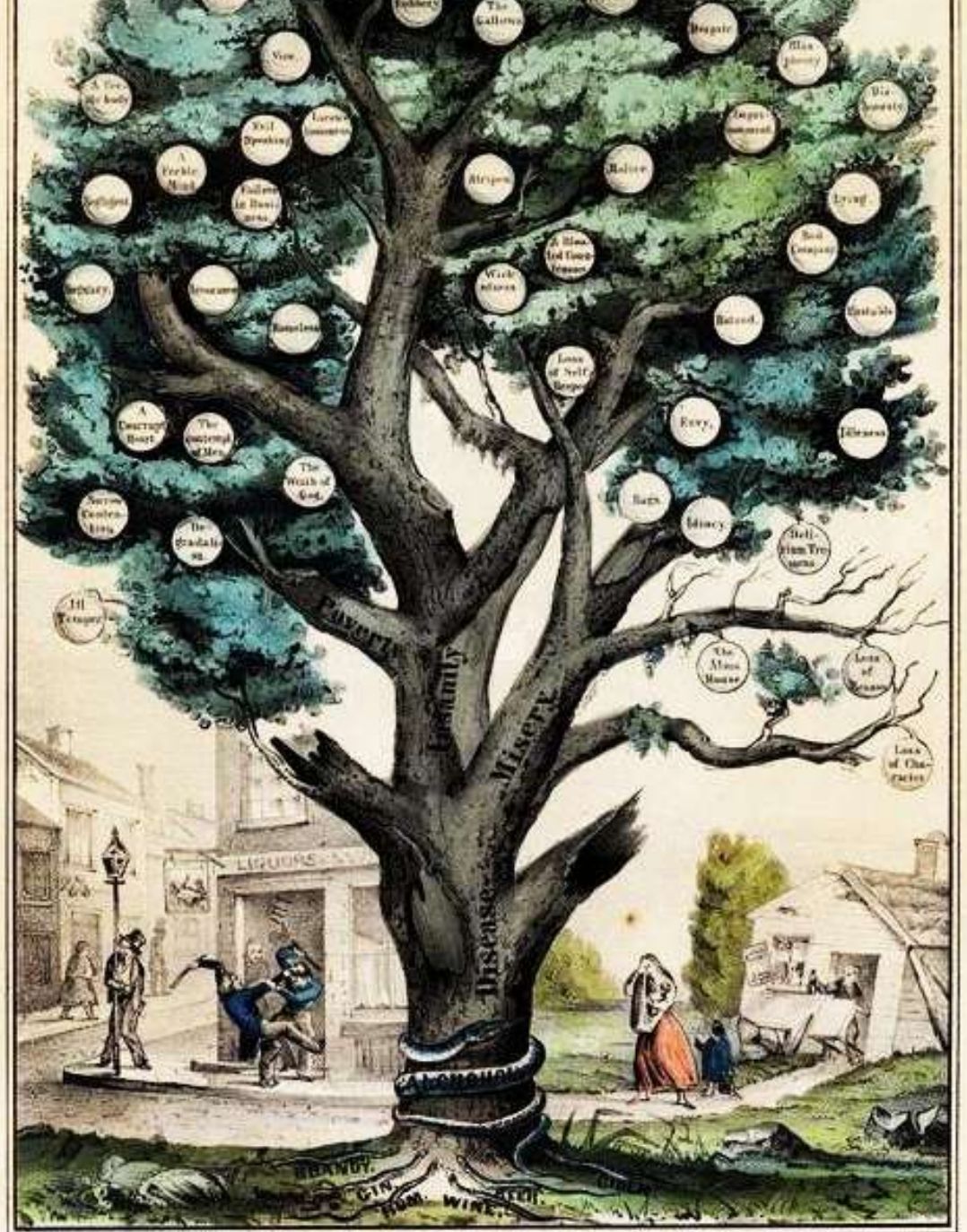
...[There are many people] who know that they ought to be religious, but they are afraid if they become [faithful] they shall be laughed at by their companions. Such persons never will give up their false shame...until they are so excited that they cannot contain themselves any longer.

—Evangelist Charles Finney



By 1800, church membership in was low and falling; Just 1 out of 15 people in America was a member of a church

Poverty, crime, and immorality seemed to be increasing at an alarming rate



THE TREE OF INTemperance.



From 1800 to the 1830s, a series of **religious revivals** swept across America called the Second Great Awakening

*The Benevolent Empire, 1825–1846*



**Evangelical ministers** like Charles Finney used emotional, soul-shaking sermons to convert the masses



*When the church finds its members falling into gross and scandalous sins, then it is time for the church to awake and cry to God for a Revival of Religion.*



Revivals involved highly emotional “**tent revivals**” with thousands of people in attendance



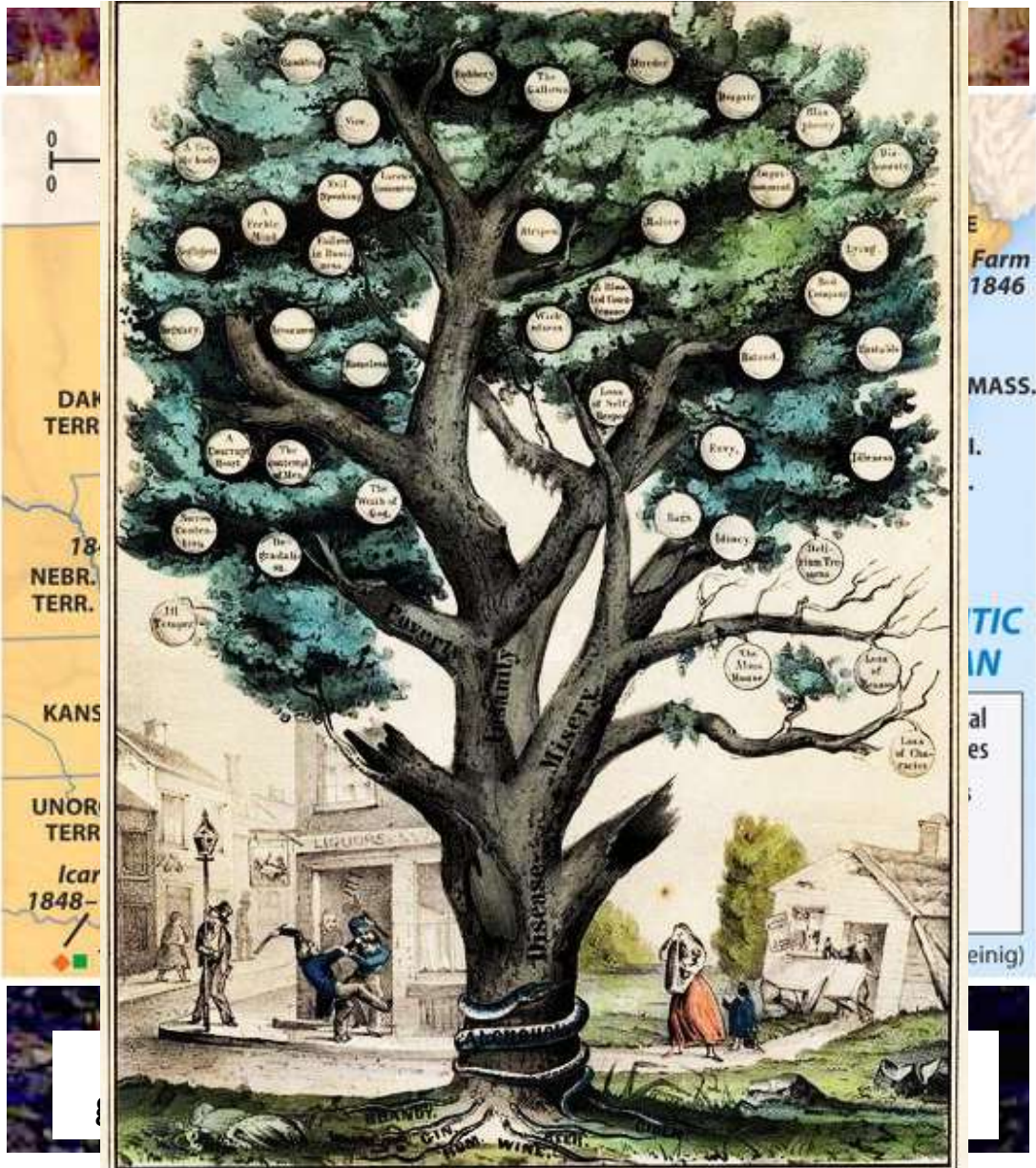
The Second Great Awakening had an important impact on American history

By 1850, 1 in 6  
Americans was a  
member of a church

Joseph Smith created the Mormon Church

New utopian communities were created as many people wanted to live

Devout Christians  
were committed to  
reforming society





# Problem #2



THE DRUNKARDS PROGRESS.  
FROM THE FIRST GLASS TO THE GRAVE.



By 1800, alcohol abuse was seen as a serious problem

Whiskey was cheap to make and buy

By 1820, the typical adult drank more than 7 gallons of alcohol per year (Today, its 2.6 gallons)

Alcohol was linked to crime, debt, abuse, work problems



One of the first reform movements was to **get people to stop drinking** called temperance

Reformers convinced people to **make a “pledge”** to not drink

The Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) played an important role in the temperance movement

From 1820 to 1830, drinking fell from 7 gallons per person per year to 3 gallons

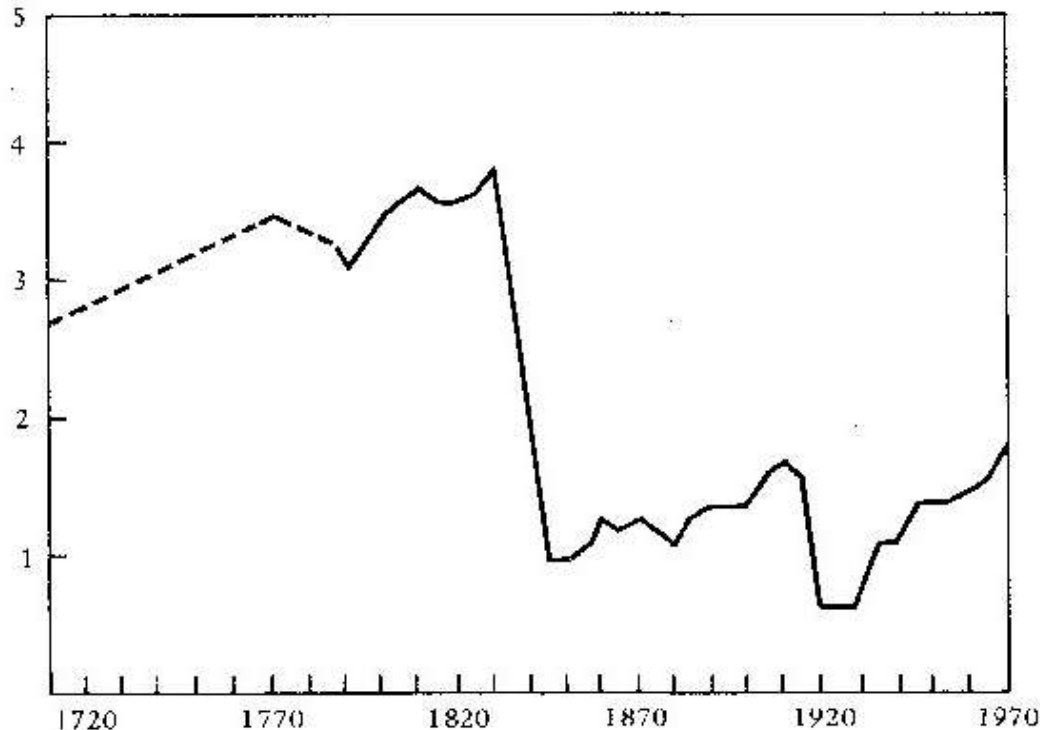


Chart 1.2. ANNUAL CONSUMPTION of ALCOHOL CONTAINED in ALL ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES per CAPITA, in U.S. GALLONS.





## Problem #3

*“The elementary schools throughout the state are irresponsible institutions, established by individuals, from mere motives of private [profit], who are sometimes [lacking] character... and abilities. Ignorance, inattention, and even immorality, prevail to a [sad] extent among their teachers.”*

*—Working Man's Advocate, 1830*

By 1800, the U.S. did not have a true education system for children

Massachusetts and Vermont were the only states with compulsory attendance laws

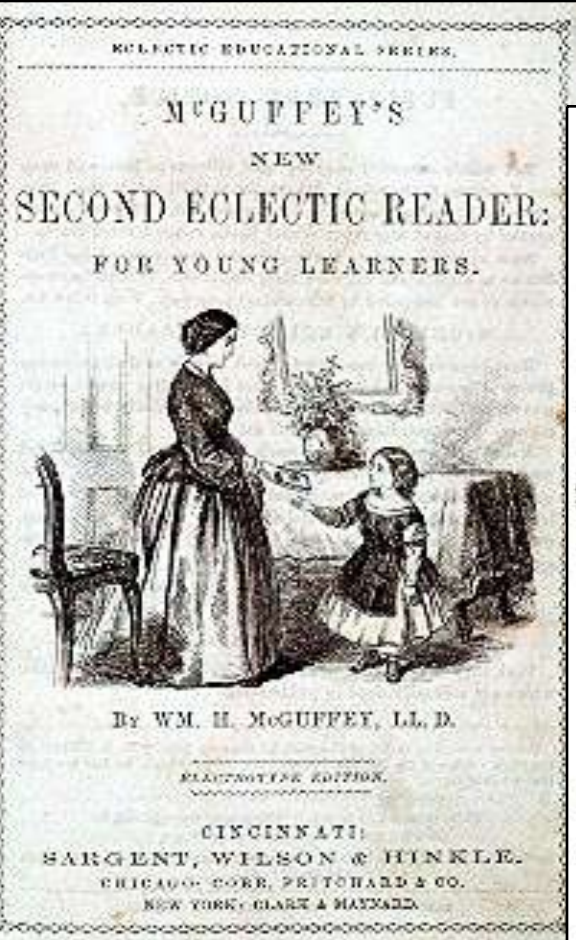
In most states, classes were not divided by age

Few children attended school past the age of 10 years old



Education reformers  
demanded that states create  
public schools for children

Horace Mann helped  
create teacher-training  
and curriculum programs



## LESSON I.

*The New Book.*

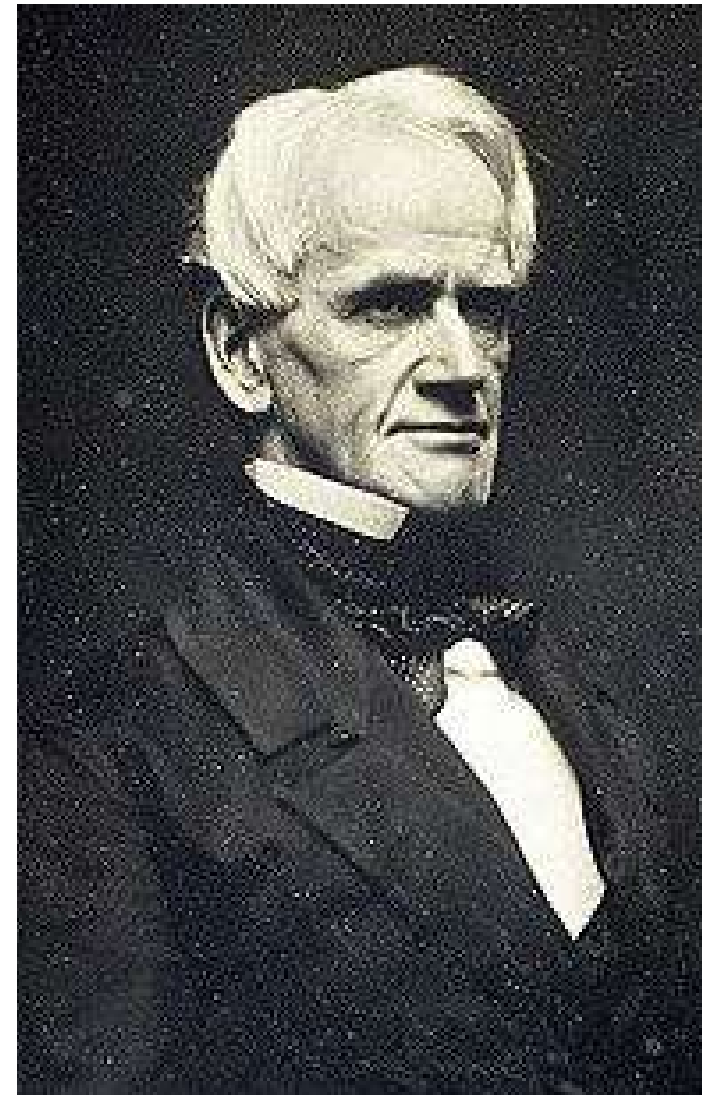
Here is John.

There are Ann and Jane.

Ann has a new book.

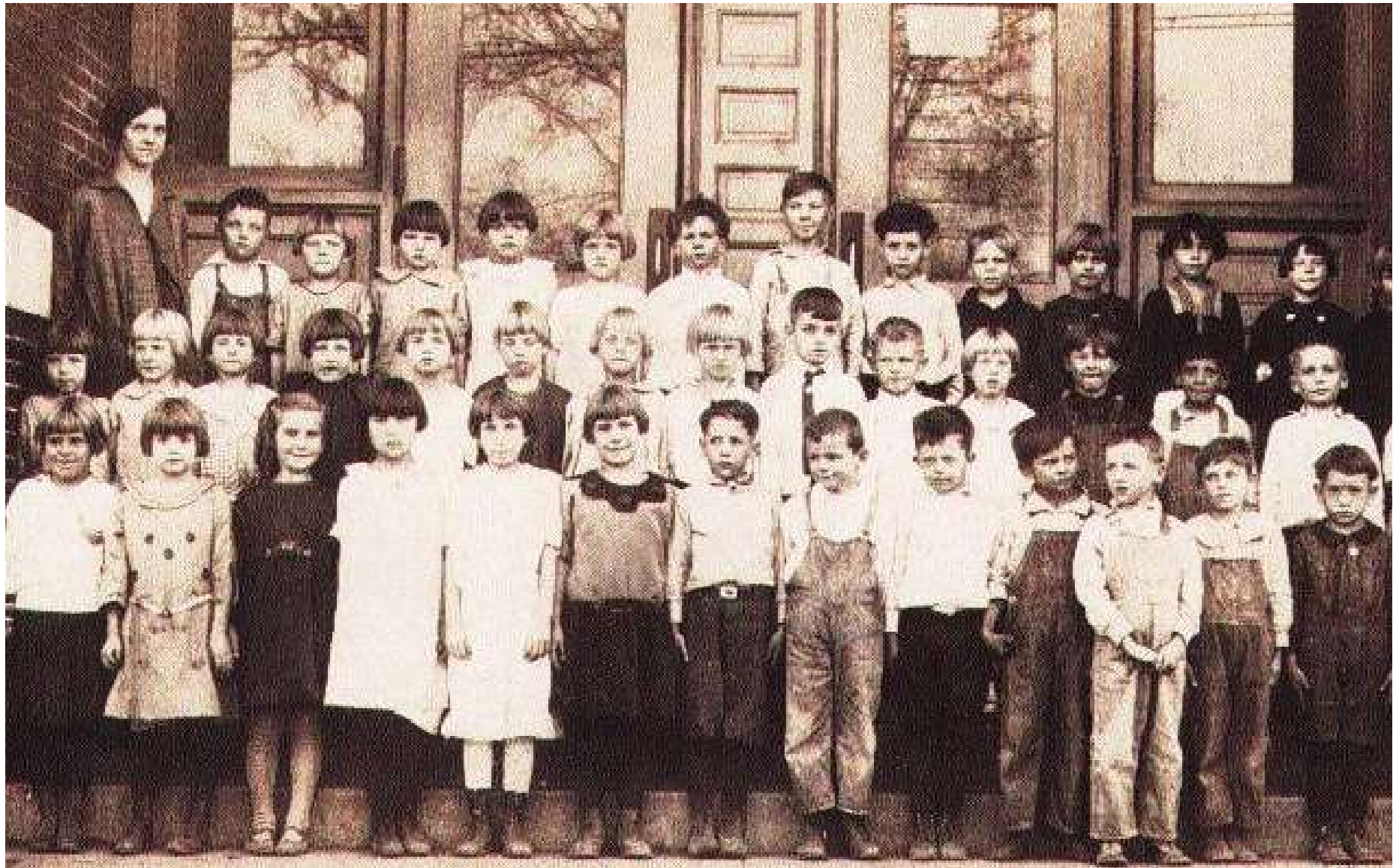
It is the first book.

Ann must keep it nice and  
clean.





By 1850, every state had publically-funded schools  
(but schools in the South and West were not very good)



## Problem #4

1. Women were unable to vote
2. Single women could own her own property
3. Married women had no control over her property or her children
4. Women could not initiate divorce
5. Women could not sign a contract or sue in court without her husband's permission

Women's opportunities were limited by the cult of domesticity



Women were **expected to oversee the family and home while their husbands worked to provide money**

**Married women had no property rights and could not file for divorce**

**Women could not vote, run for political office, or sue in court**

Women like Susan B. Anthony advocated for women's rights



Sojourner Truth used speeches to  
advocate for **women's rights**



An escaped slave,  
Sojourner Truth sued  
her former master to get  
her son

Her most famous  
speech, "**Ain't I a  
Woman**", demanded  
women gain the rights  
of men

She was **also an  
outspoken abolitionist**

## THE FIRST CONVENTION

EVER CALLED TO DISCUSS THE

Civil and Political Rights of Women,

SENECA FALLS, N. Y., JULY 19, 20, 1848.

WOMAN'S RIGHTS CONVENTION.

### Our Roll of Honor

Containing all the  
Signatures to the "Declaration of Sentiments"  
Set Forth by the First

Woman's Rights Convention,

held at  
Seneca Falls, New York  
July 19-20, 1848

#### LADIES:

Lucretia Mott

Sophronia Taylor

Rachel D. Beeson

This meeting  
was important,  
but failed to  
gain any major  
goals of the  
women's rights  
movement

In 1848, Elizabeth Cady Stanton & Lucretia Mott organized the first women's rights meeting, the Seneca Falls Convention

The convention produced the Declaration of Sentiments, a list of demands including property rights for women and the right to vote

*"We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men AND WOMEN are created equal"*

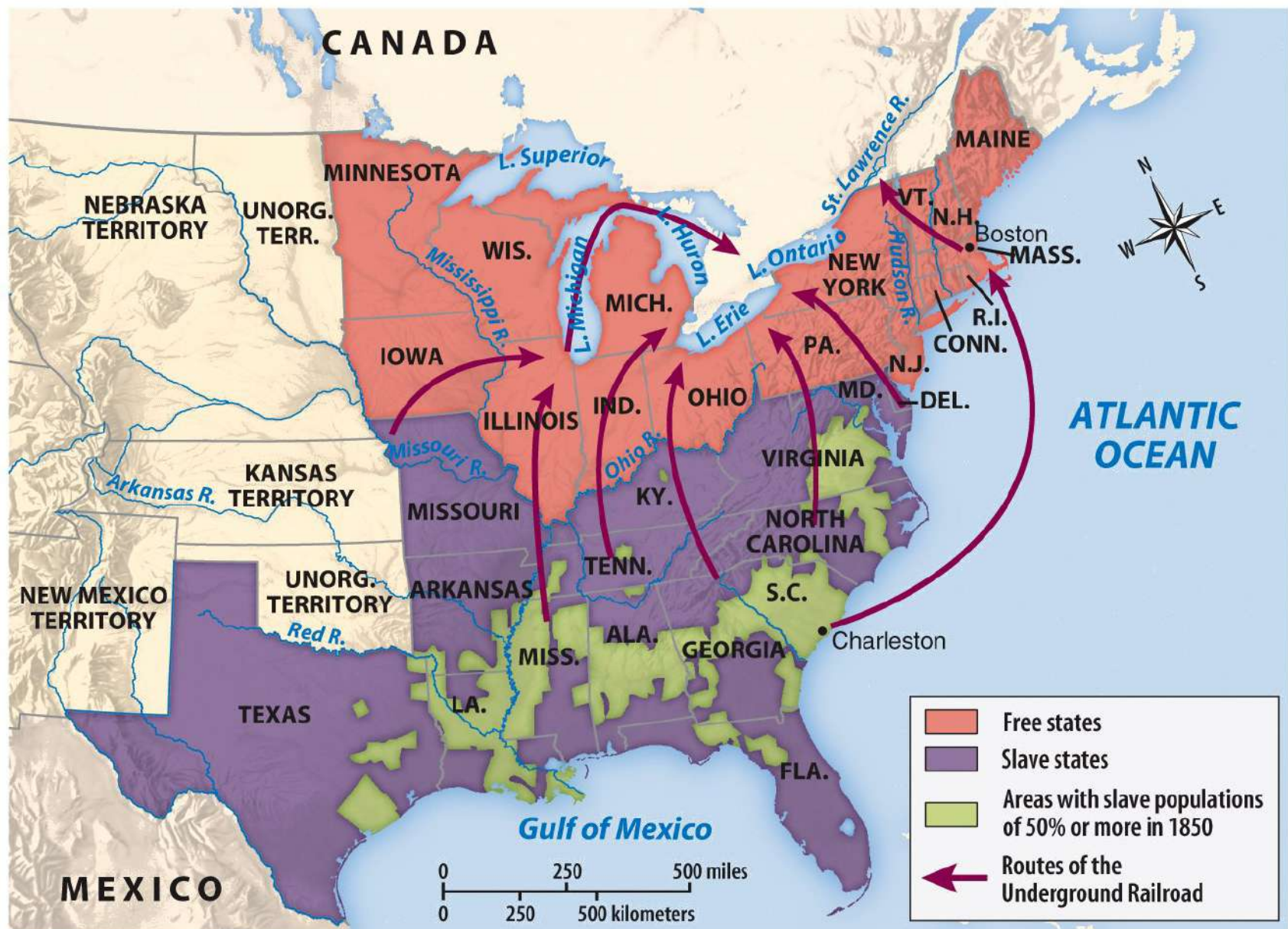
*"The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries on the part of men toward women, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her."*

# Problem #5





# Slave rebellions and escape through the Underground Railroad became more common





In the 1830s, **abolitionism**  
(the desire to emancipate  
all slaves) grew radical

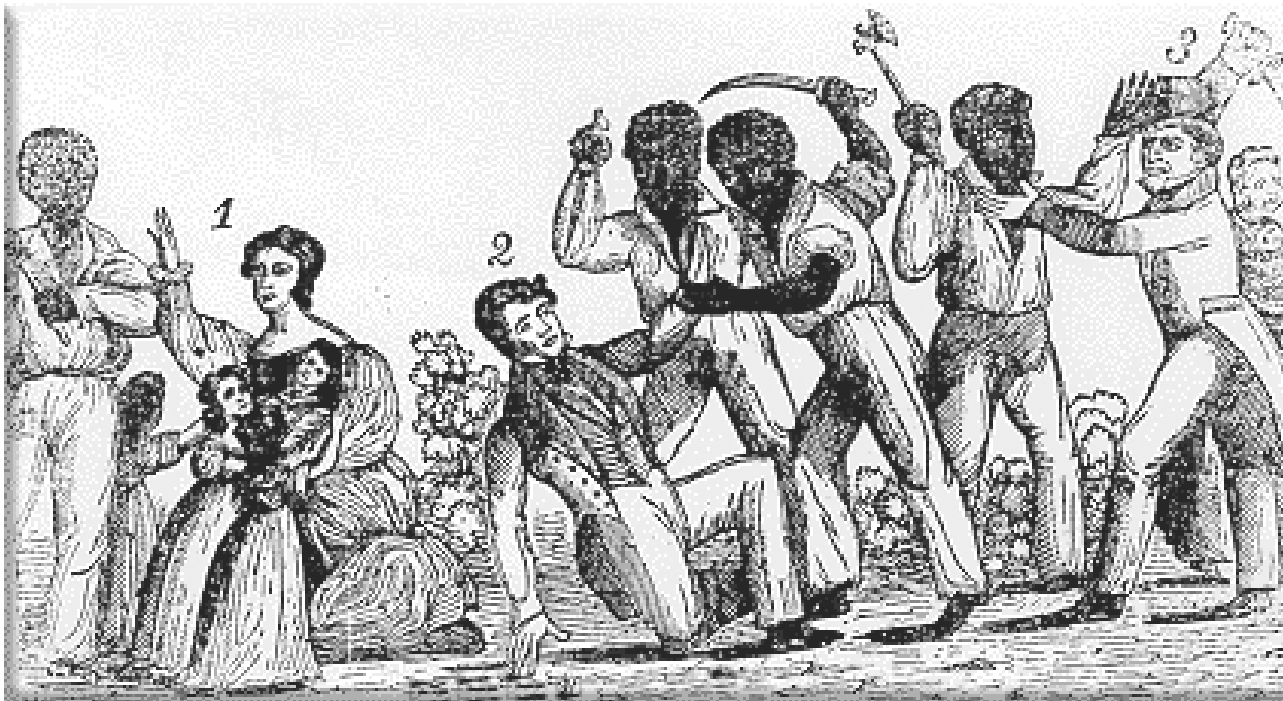
Abolition grew more  
popular in the North, but  
was seen as a threat to the  
“Southern way of life”



In 1831, Nat Turner, a Virginia slave, led a **rebellion** against the white slave owners

Turner **believed he was seeing signs he was supposed to lead a rebellion (A solar eclipse)**

Turner and his followers freed dozens of slaves and killed 60 white men, women and children



**Led to more Southern whites defending slavery, even using the Bible to do so**



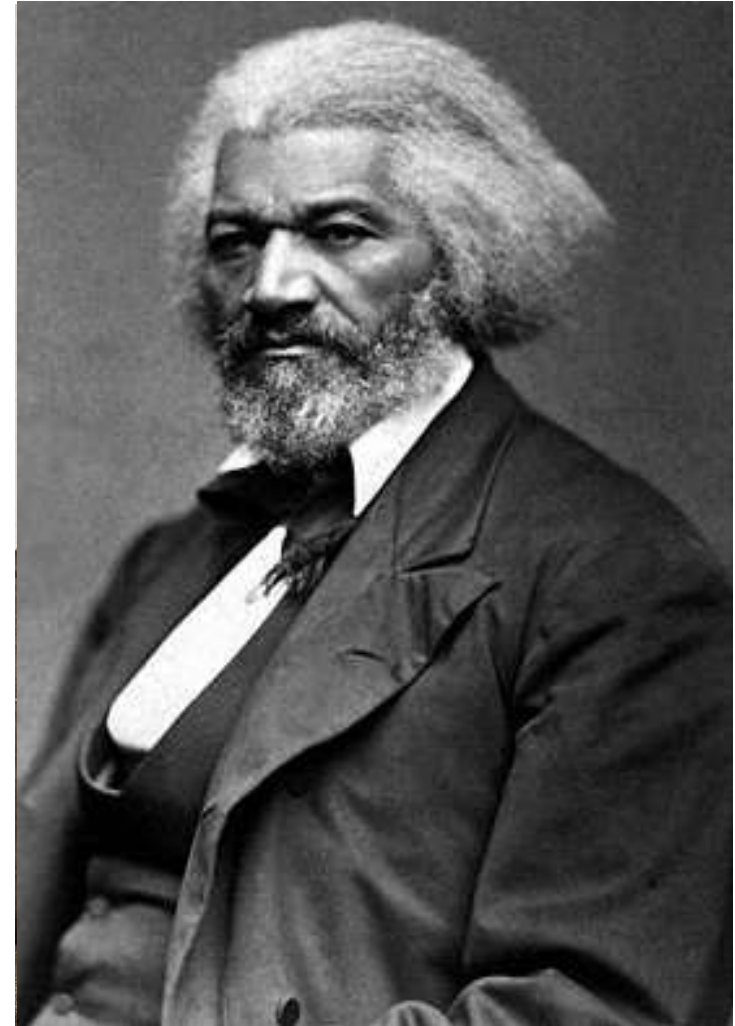
In the 1830s, abolitionism (the desire to emancipate all slaves) grew radical

Abolition grew more popular in the North, but was seen as a threat to the “Southern way of life”

William Lloyd Garrison was America’s leading abolitionist

His American Anti-Slave Society and *The Liberator* newsletter demanded the immediate end to slavery without payment to slave owners

Frederick Douglass was a runaway slave, popular anti-slavery speaker, and author of the North Star newsletter



In the 1830s, abolitionism  
(the desire to emancipate  
all slaves) grew radical

Sarah and Angelina Grimke  
were daughters of a  
southern plantation owner



The Grimke sisters traveled  
across the north **telling of their  
experiences with slavery in the  
south**

# Problem #6

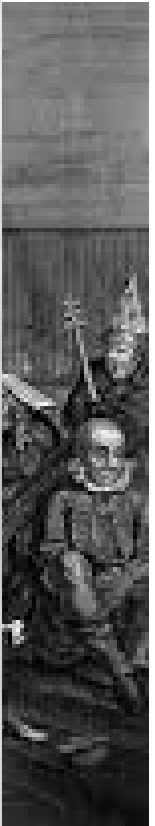
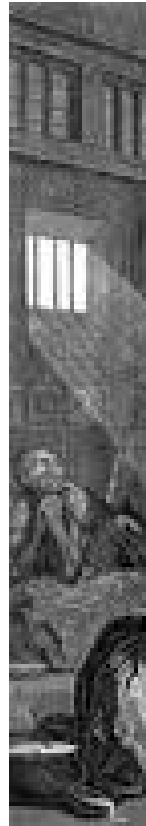
## PRISON AND ASYLUM

- The very poor conditions of the prisons started the reform
- Dorothea Dix lead the Prison and Asylum reform
- The goals were to move children with minor crimes away from adult criminals
- Another goal was to build more Mental Hospitals
- Another goal was to improve the conditions the criminals were forced to live in



# Dorothea Dix led the reforms of asylums and prisons

She saw the bad conditions and thought they deserved better



Between 1845 and 1852 she convinced 9 Southern states to build public hospitals for the mentally ill

# Reviewing Key Themes

## VISUAL SUMMARY

## REFORMING AMERICAN SOCIETY

### RELIGION SPARKS REFORM

The Second Great Awakening brings religious revival, social reform, and a new awareness of what it means to be an American.



### WOMEN AND REFORM

Women reformers expand their reform efforts from movements such as abolition and temperance to include women's social and political rights.

### IMPACT OF SOCIAL REFORM

### SLAVERY AND ABOLITION

Slavery becomes an explosive issue as growing numbers of white and black Americans join reformers working for abolition.



### THE CHANGING WORKPLACE

A growing industrial work force faces problems arising from changes in manufacturing and the creation of the factory system.