

Q1. MAKE A PRÉCIS OF THE FOLLOWING PASSAGE IN ABOUT ONE THIRD OF ITS LENGTH. Suggest a suitable title also. (20)

Besant describing the "middle class" of the 19th century wrote "In the first place it was for more a class apart. "In no sense did it belong to society. Men in professions of any kind (except in the Army and Navy) could only belong to society by right of birth and family connections; men in trade—~~bankers were still accounted tradesmen~~—could not possibly belong to society. That is to say, if they went to live in the country they were not called upon by the country families and in the town they were not admitted by the men into their clubs, or by ladies into their houses... The middle class knew its own place, respected itself, made its own society for itself, and cheerfully accorded to rank the deference due."

respect

Since then, however, the life of the middle classes had undergone great changes as their numbers had swelled and their influence had increased.

Their already well-developed consciousness of their own importance had deepened. More critical than they had been in the past of certain aspects of aristocratic life, they were ~~also~~ more concerned with the plight of the poor and the importance of their own values of society, thrift, hard work, piety and respectability ~~thrift, hard work, piety and respectability~~ as examples of ideal behavior for the guidance of the lower orders. Above all they were respectable. There were divergences of opinion as to what exactly was respectable and what was not. There were, nevertheless, certain conventions, which were universally recognized: wild and drunken behaviors were certainly not respectable, nor were godlessness or avert promiscuity, not an ill-ordered home life, unconventional manners, self-indulgence or flamboyant clothes and personal adornments.

confident &
stylish

THE RISE OF THE MIDDLE CLASS

Besant observed that in the nineteenth century the middle class was socially excluded. Professionals and traders, despite inherent rights or kinships, were denied entry into the public spaces of villages and towns. In response, they valued self-worth and built their own community. With growing population and power, they disparaged the extravagance of elites and showed concern for the poor class. They emphasized virtues and developed their own respectable norms that condemned drinking, impiety, unchastity, disorderliness, bad manners and vanity.