

Chapter 5

The Age of Industrialization

Q.1A Explain the following:

Women workers in Britain attacked the Spinning Jenny.

Ans.: Women workers in Britain attacked the Spinning Jenny because it speeded up the spinning process, and consequently, reduced labour demand. By the use of this machine, a single worker could turn a number of spindles, and spin several threads at a time. This caused a valid fear of unemployment among women working in the woolen industry. Thus, uncertainty of jobs made workers hostile to the introduction of new technology. Till date, they had survived on hand spinning, but this was replaced in peril by the new machine. So when the Spinning Jenny was introduced in the woolen industry women started attacking the new machines and this conflict over the introduction of the Jenny continued for a long time.

Q.1B Explain the following:

In the seventeenth century, merchants from towns in Europe began employing peasants and artisans within the villages.

Ans.: In the seventeenth century, the trade and commerce guild controlled the market, raw materials, employees, and also production of goods in the towns. World trade expanded at very fast rate during this time. The acquisition of colonies was also responsible for increase in demand. The producers in towns failed to produce the required quantity of products. So, the merchants from towns in Europe started moving to the countryside because they could not expand production within towns. This was because urban crafts and trade guilds were powerful there. There were associations of producers that trained crafts people, maintained control over

production, regulated competition and prices and restricted the entry of new people into the trade. Rulers granted different guilds the monopoly right to produce and trade in specific products. This created problems for merchants who wanted to increase production by employing more men. Therefore, they turned to peasants and artisans who lived in villages.

Q.1C Explain the following:

The port of Surat declined by the end of the eighteenth century.

Ans.: The port of Surat declined by the end of the eighteenth century on account of the growing power of European companies in trade with India. The port of Surat was an important pre-colonial port. It connected India to the Gulf and Red Sea ports. A vibrant sea trade was operated through this port. A variety of Indian merchants and bankers were involved in this network of export trade. But by the 1750s this network, controlled by Indian merchants, was breaking down. The Europeans secured many concessions from local courts as well as the monopoly rights to trade. European colonies developed the Bombay port in the later half of the 18th century. This led to a decline of the old ports of Surat and Hoogly from where local merchants had operated. Exports slowed and local banks here went bankrupt. The European companies gradually gained power. This resulted in decrease of the activities on Surat Port. Consequently sea trade from surat declined.

Q.1D Explain the following:

The East India Company appointed gomasthas to supervise weavers in India.

Ans.: The English East India Company appointed Gomasthas - The East India Company in India wanted to have trade monopoly over cotton production. The company did not want the Indian weavers to supply their cotton products to other European companies. It tried to eliminate the

traders and brokers connected with the cloth trade and established a direct control over the weavers by appointing paid servants called the gomasthas to supervise weavers, collect supplies, and examine the quality of cloth. These gomasthas gave loans to the weavers to purchase the raw material for their productions. Once they took loans, weavers they were obligated to the British and they had to hand over the cloth they produced to the gomastha only. They could not take it to any other trader.

Q.2A Write True or False against each statement:

At the end of the nineteenth century, about 80 percent of the total workforce in Europe was employed in the technologically advanced industrial sector.

Ans.: False

Q.2B Write True or False against each statement:

The international market for fine textiles was dominated by India till the eighteenth century.

Ans.: True

Q.2C Write True or False against each statement:

The American Civil War resulted in the reduction of cotton exports from India.

Ans.: True

Q.2D Write True or False against each statement:

The introduction of the fly shuttle enabled handloom workers to improve their productivity.

Ans.: True

Q.3 Explain what is meant by proto-industrialization.

Ans.: Even before factories began to be set up in England and Europe, there was large-scale industrial production for an international market.

This period was referred to as proto – industrialization by the historians because this is the phase of industrialization that was not based on the factory system.

Discuss

Q.1 Why did some industrialists in nineteenth-century Europe prefer hand labour over machines?

Ans.: Some industrialists were reluctant to introduce new machines and preferred hand labour over machines because of the following reasons:

(i) Availability of cheap labour: People from villages started moving to cities in search of work. So, there was no shortage of human labour during nineteenth century Europe. Industrialists can hire more workers at lower cost than a machine.

(ii) Seasonal industries: In many industries such as gas works and breweries the demand for labour was seasonal. So industrialists usually preferred hand labour, in seasonal industries.

(iii) Demand for Specified products: Market demands of variety of designs and colour and specific type could not be fulfilled by machine made products. Intricate designs and colours in clothes could be done by human-skills only. These things could be produced only manually. So, to produce a specific range of products only hand labor can be used.

(iv) Demand of Specified people: In Victorian age, the aristocrats and other upper class people preferred articles made by hand only. Hand-made

products came to symbolize refinement and class. They were better finished and carefully designed.

(v) Investment and Maintenance: Machines were costly, ineffective, difficult to repair, and needed huge capital investments and maintaining these machines was an expensive affair. The wear and tear of machines was costly. At that point of time machines were not as effective as they were declared by their inventors and manufacturers. Hence, industrialists were cautious about using them.

Q.2 How did the East India Company procure regular supplies of cotton and silk textiles from Indian weavers?

Ans.: After establishing political power, the East India Company successfully procured regular supplies of cotton and silk textiles from Indian weavers via a series of actions. These actions were aimed at eliminating competition from other colonial powers, controlling costs and ensuring regular supplies of cotton and silk goods for Britain.

The Company took several measures in this connection:

(i) Appointed gomasthas to supervise weavers: Company appointed paid servants called the gomasthas to supervise weavers, collect supplies, and examine the quality of cloth. Gomasthas were mainly appointed to eliminate the traders and brokers connected with the cloth trade. With the help of these Gomasthas the company established a direct control over the weavers.

(ii) Loan or advances system: It prevented Company weavers from dealing with other buyers. The Company introduced the system of advances. Once an order was placed, the weavers were given loans to purchase the raw material for their production. Those who took loans, had no choice but to hand over the cloth to the gomastha. This prevented the weavers from going to any other trader. They were bound to weave only for the Company.

(iii) The weavers lost the space to bargain for prices and sell to different buyers. Because they have taken advances from the Gomasthas, those loans and advances had tied them to the Company so they can't trade with any one and the price they received from the Company was low.

All the above facts made it easy for the East India Company to procure regular supplies of cotton and silk textile from Indian weavers.

Q.3 Imagine that you have been asked to write an article for an encyclopedia on Britain and the history of cotton. Write your piece using information from the entire chapter.

Ans.: During 1730s England set up the earliest factories. But the number of factories multiplied only during the late 18th century. Cotton was the symbol of this era for its production which boomed in the late 19th century. During this time, merchants would trade with rural people in textile production. A clothier would buy wool from a wool stapler, carry it to the spinners, and then, take the yarn to the weavers, fuller and dyers for further levels of production. London was the finishing centre for these goods.

In 1760s, 2.5 million pounds of raw cotton was imported in Britain to feed its cotton industry, which soared to 22 million pounds by 1787. This happened because of the invention of the cotton mill and new machines, and better management under one roof. It improved the quality and made the production faster.

Most inventions in the textile production sector were met with disregard and hatred by the workers because machines implied less hand labour and lower employment needs. The Spinning Jenny was one example of such invention.

Before such technological advancements, Britain imported silk and cotton goods from India in vast numbers. Fine textiles from India were in high demand in England. Later, Manchester became the hub of cotton production. Subsequently, India was turned into the major buyer of British cotton goods.

In the early 19th century, factories became an intimate part of England. Now attention was paid to the mills forgetting the bylanes and the workshops. During the First World War, British factories were too busy providing for war needs. Hence, demand for Indian textiles rose once again. The history of cotton in Britain is replete with such fluctuations of demand and supply.

Q.4 Why did industrial production in India increase during the First World War?

Ans.: Industrial production in India increased during the First World War because British mills became busy with tending to war needs. Manchester imports decreased, and Indian mills suddenly had a huge home market to

supply. Industrial growth in India was slow but India witnessed increased industrial production during the First World War due to following reasons:

1) In this period, the textile mills of Britain began to manufacture cloth to meet the needs of the English army. Hence, imports of cloths from Manchester declined sharply. As a result, the Indian mills got the opportunity to manufacture and supply cloth for the vast home market.

2) British industries became busy in producing and supplying war-needs. Hence, they stopped exporting British goods or clothes for colonial markets like that in India.

3) It was a good opportunity for Indian industries to fill in empty Indian markets with their products. It was done so. Therefore, industrial production in India increased.

4) Also, the British colonial government asked Indian factories to supply the war needs like – jute bags, cloth or army uniforms, tents and leather boots, horse, and mule saddle, etc.

5) The increased demands of a variety of products led to the setting up of new factories and old ones increased their production.

6) Many new workers were employed and everyone was made to work longer hours. Thus, during the war period, the industrial production boomed in India.