World History Notes

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* They provided the cheap labor needed at the time to meet the demands of a competitive textiles market.
* How the system worked:
* 1. A textile merchant, based in a town, bought wool from a sheep farmer.
* 2. He delivered this raw material, along with instructions about what he needed, to a household in the countryside.
* 3. Family members carded the wool, spun it, and wove it into cloth on a hand loom.
* 4. The merchant paid them for their work and took the cloth to another workshop, where other workers dyed the cloth and otherwise completed the processing.
* 5. The merchant then retrieved the finished fabric, which was ready for sale in the textile market.
* The whole process was relatively inefficient.
* **Factory System**
* The domestic system naturally gave way to the factory system.
* Some cloth merchants decided that they could save themselves time and better meet rising demand by gathering workers together in a single factory.
* The merchants provided their workers all the machines and tools necessary to complete whatever job was required of them.
* In a factory, merchant-entrepreneurs could supervise their workers.
* They could also take advantage of innovations in technology and new sources of energy, especially the steam engine.
* The invention of large scale, repetitive-motion machines powered by new sources of energy simplified the entire production process.
* This led to an improvement in production of goods, and enabled the expansion of markets.
* The idea of a factory and the shift to simplification were two key aspects of what became known as mass production.
* The desire to speed up the manufacturing process even more led to the use of the moving assembly line.
* An assembly line carried a product on a conveyer belt or track from one station to the next.
* Starting in 1913, Henry Ford of the United States built his Model-T automobile using an assembly line.
* All these changes increased efficiency and productivity. They also lowered the cost to produce many goods.
* Lower costs meant lower prices for consumers. Lower prices and rising wages helped create more demand for the goods being manufactured.
* **A Revolution in Agriculture**
* The mechanization that took place in industry also helped transform agriculture.
* No longer did farmers have to harvest their grain with hand tools.
* In the 1830s, the American inventor Cyrus McCormick developed a horse-drawn mechanical reaper that could cut and collect the grain.
* Through mechanization, farmers could expand their production while cutting back on the amount of labor needed to produce food.
* The increase in food production led to a sharp increase in population. This meant more workers to push industrialization forward.
* Farmers learned ways to improve the soil with chemical fertilizers and cover crops.
* Cover crops were a way to add nutrients to the soil from being plowed under the soil, dying, and decaying.
* **Financing Industry**
* The banking system also played a key role in industrialization.
* Private banks took their customers’ savings and loaned it out to manufacturers, who would then use that capital to build bigger businesses. Banks still work this way today.
* Governments also set up national banks to improve domestic and international trade.
* Together, private and national banks provided financial backing that stimulated the growth of industry.