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The Impact of the Industrial Revolution on the British Working Class in the 18th and 19th centuries

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to :

The soul of my Father ,

A great gratitude to my dear mother ,

My respectful husband Farid ,

My lovely son Mohammed Belkacem ,

And my only brother Ali

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Great thanks go to my supervisor Miss Nadia Mansouri , especially for her patience

Thanks to PrBorsali , PrMoustfaoui and others whose pieces of advice were really practical

I am grateful also to my classmates ' support

Abstract

The Industrial Revolution was one of the most important events in human history in the eighteenth century. It took its origin in Britain from 1750 to 1850. It occurred when industries as textile and iron witnessed the use of machinery and other sectors as agriculture and transportation became developed due to the use of steam power. Those significant economic changes had transformed Britain from an agricultural economy to an industrial one. Such economic changes were accompanied by significant changes on the social life as well. This study examines the social impact of the Industrial Revolution on the working class people and how they succeeded in achieving their social and political ambitions. This analysis shows that technological advancement was the key mechanism to develop a country yet in regard to fairness and democratic participation of all the parts of the society. This in turn would promote a sense of community and the well being of the society.

Keywords : The Industrial Revolution, economic changes, social impact, working class, technological advancement, democracy.

الملخص :

تعد الثورة الصناعية احد ابرز الأحداث التي ميزت تاريخ البشرية في القرن الثامن عشر. أول ما ظهرت هذه الثورة في بريطانيا ما بين 1750-1850. كان ظهورها ملازما لإدخال الآلة في المجال الصناعي كصناعة النسيج و الحديد. كما شهدت هذه الفترة من الزمن استخدام طاقات جديدة كالطاقة البخارية التي أدت إلى تطور معتبر في وسائل النقل والفلحة. هذه التغيرات الاقتصادية انتقلت ببريطانيا من بلد ذو اقتصاد زراعي إلى اقتصاد أساسه الصناعة مما استدعى تحولات بارزة في الحياة الاجتماعية للبلد. و عليه تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل الانعكاسات الاجتماعية للثورة الصناعية على الطبقة العاملة في بريطانيا وكيف تمكنت هذه الطبقة من تحقيق طموحاتها السياسية والاجتماعية. أسفرت نتائج هذا التحليل على أن تطور البلد وازدهارها يستدعي هذا التطور التكنولوجي ولكن بمراعاة العدالة الاجتماعية والمشاركة الديمقراطية لكامل أطراف المجتمع الأمر الذي يؤدي إلى استتباب الاستقرار داخل المجتمع.

الكلمات المفتاحية : الثورة الصناعية ، التغيرات الاقتصادية ، الانعكاسات الاجتماعية ، الطبقة العاملة ، التطور التكنولوجي ، الديمقراطية .

List of Acronyms

MP Member of Parliament

SS Steam Ship

TU Trade Union Congress

LI Liberal Independent Party

SDF Society of Democratic Federation

FS Fabian Society

WWI World War One

Table of Contents

Dedication	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract	iv
List of Acronyms	v
General Introduction.....	1
Introduction	4
1.The Origins of the Industrial Revolution in Britain	4
1. 1 The Factors Leading to the Industrial Revolution in Britain.....	4
1.2The Circumstances Helping the Emergence of the Industrial Revolution in Britain	7
2. Definitions of the Concept of the Industrial Revolution	8
3.Development Aspects.....	9
Conclusion.....	17
Introduction	18
1. Working Conditions	18
2.Women and Child Labour	21
3. Living Conditions.....	23
4. The Workers Movement for Change	26
Conclusion.....	31
Introduction	33
1. The Rise of Political Consciousness.....	33
2.The Rise of Public Sympathy with the Workers	35
3.The Government’s Response.....	38
Conclusion.....	45
General Conclusion	46
Works Cited	48

General Introduction

The Industrial Revolution is one of the most significant events in human history during the eighteenth century. It started in Britain from 1750 to 1850. This period of time witnessed the mechanization of agriculture and textile and iron industries. New sources of energy, mainly steam power were also used to run the industrial machines. Making use of machinery and the new energy sources marked the shift from an agrarian handicraft economy to an industrial one. The transformation of the economic structure resulted in significant social changes.

Technological advancement helped to quicken manufacturing processes and allowed for mass production. Steam power made industrial and agricultural machines run faster. It also helped improvements in the means of transportation which in turn accelerated carrying goods and reduced the costs of carrying coal and raw materials to the industrial factories. Fast and cheap transportation itself facilitated importing and exporting processes and thus enhancing both domestic and foreign trade.

The increase in productivity and the success in global trade would directly affect the economic progress of the country. The country's incomes doubled, wages increased, living standards improved, population grew and services and recreation became possible.

The Industrial Revolution in Britain brought significant improvements to the country yet it had bad effects on the working class people. Those people who used to live in rural areas practising handicraft activities and eventually moved to the new industrial cities to be part of the workforce were suffering during the Industrial Revolution. The capitalistic industrial economy caused serious exploitation of this large part of the society. There was

then a great struggle between the employers and the employees so as to improve both working and living standards of the working class.

In spite of the fact that the Industrial Revolution was the event that brought the British society into huge prosperity, it was frequently criticized by socialists and writers as Charles Dickens, Wordsworth and others. Their critiques were mainly related to its social impacts. In this respect, this dissertation aims at studying the negative social consequences of these economic changes on the British ordinary people. Accordingly, the main research questions are: How did the Industrial Revolution affect the working class people? How did the workers reacted towards the situation? And did the workers succeed to achieve their social and political rights? To answer these questions and relying on a qualitative theory, this work will hold a three chapter structure.

The first chapter will cover the context of the Industrial Revolution in Britain 1750-1850. It includes the factors and circumstances by which the Industrial Revolution took its origin in Britain. Next, some definitions to the concept of the Industrial Revolution were given in this chapter. And finally, the considerable changes that were brought to the country by the Industrial Revolution and affected the main aspects of life are also mentioned in the last part of this chapter.

The second chapter depicts the experiences of the working class people mainly in relation to the rise of factories. Workers including women and children were challenging to live during the Industrial Revolution. Serious regulations with the factory system, unhealthy environment, low wages and indifferent government about their situation resulted in workers' protests against the situation. Some of the worker's movements for change are clearly mentioned in this chapter.

The third chapter will then assess how successful was the workers' movement to change their conditions and achieve their social and political rights within a democratic society. This chapter deals firstly with the rise of the workers' awareness after a long time struggle and the importance of class unification to achieve the ultimate goals. Next, the sympathy of the other parts of the society might help to double pressures on the government to improve the workers' situation. Finally, the last part of this chapter will include the government's response to the working class movement through passing a series of reform acts that would eventually improve the workers' conditions and change the political scene in the country to be more democratic.

Though the Industrial Revolution in Britain took place between the periods of time 1750-1850, the fruits of the working class movement to improve their conditions were successfully achieved after the second half of the nineteenth century. Thus, many important events could take place throughout this long period and might not be mentioned in this paper. The focus then will be on the experiences of this part of the society mainly because of the changes from an agricultural to an industrial society and what efforts were made to ameliorate the situation.

Chapter one :

The Context of the Industrial
Revolution in Britain

Introduction

One of the most outstanding achievements in human history during the eighteenth century was the Industrial Revolution. It took its origins in Britain and was considered a turning point in the country's history as it influenced almost every aspect of daily life. By 1850, the Industrial Revolution transformed Britain into the world's first and richest industrial nation. This chapter is devoted to identify why Britain was the birth place of the Industrial Revolution, the various definitions that were given to the concept of the Industrial Revolution, and how it developed aspects of life in the country.

1.The Origins of the Industrial Revolution in Britain

1. 1 The Factors Leading to the Industrial Revolution in Britain

The combination of some factors and circumstances helped Britain to be the first industrialized country and the world's leading economic power. The Agricultural Revolution, the country's vast natural resources, development in transport, the increased demand for the British products and the technological inventions were considered some of the main causes of the Industrial Revolution in Britain.

At the early eighteenth century, the transformations in agriculture and farming paved the way to the Industrial Revolution. The use of land changed from a big number of small strips used by small groups of local farmers into consolidated large farms owned by private land owners. This change of land distribution was a response to the demand of people with money and influence like village squires who were supported by the MP through whom the parliament passed a series of measures called the Enclosure Acts during the Agricultural Revolution(McDowall117).

The richer land owners were interested in investing their money in land as they realized that farming had become beneficial. They felt that it was a necessity to join the pieces of land so that they would be able to use efficient techniques of production on large scale. In this respect, agricultural equipment and new methods to double productivity were used. For example, a seed drill machine was invented by JethroTullto sow corn seed in straight lines and fixed intervals. It helped farmers to easily weed land and produce more crops. In addition a modern technique of crop rotation was introduced by Charles Townshend called the four field system by which various crops were planted and reversed (rotated) the following season.

The enclosure and farming improvements made possible food production more efficient. Britain was then able to feed the growing population at low prices and less labour. This population in turn would supply factories with labourforce later on in the emerging British industry. Moreover, growing animal food was also possible and the agriculturalist Robert Bakewellintroduced a new breed of rapid-fattening sheep with finer wool and taster meat. It was then possible to the British to eat the freshmeat all the year round and the British meat market became large(McDowall 118). Agriculture then became a business. That was to say in addition to grow food to feed population, farmers started producing more quantities to be sold for profits and better quality of meat rose its demand from other countries.

Britain was rich in mineral resources like coal and iron ore which were needed in manufacturing process. Coal was needed as an alternative source of power instead of wood. Most of wood was used in smelting iron ore. Coal became the key factor that helped successful industrialization. It was used to produce steam power on which industry depended.

During the eighteenth century, many efforts were done to make life better in the British cities. As a result, roads were enlarged to enable carriage drawn by horses pass each other. Moreover, in addition to water ways, those roads represented a dynamic factor to

facilitate good carrying from or to the industrial towns. They would also help to import raw materials and export goods to other countries or to the British colonies.

Cheap products due to rapid and less expensive transportation stimulated other countries to demand British goods. By the mid eighteenth century, countries were buying British uniforms for their armies. Those cheap products were also demanded by large number of people inside the country. To fulfill both internal and external demands, entrepreneurs had to adopt new methods of manufacturing goods as the old system of production was incapable of producing enough quantities. This could only be achieved by a series of inventions. In doing so, those individuals introduced the Industrial Revolution that marked the radical break with the traditional economy.

Inventions were the motor of the Industrial Revolution. Every day work which was done by hand at home or in farmland using manual tools was then done by machines. Because of the growth of population, early instruments used in cottage industry relying on hand work were ineffective to supply the needs of great number of consumers. There was then a necessity for more developed technology and inventions as the steam engine. In addition, old pumps using animal such as horses walking in circles to pump water from mines were insufficient. Some efforts were made to develop more effective machines such as Thomas Newcomen's atmospheric engine in 1712. Yet this solution was ineffective until the steam engine was invented by the Scottish engineer, James Watt in 1775. Those inventions increased productivity therefore merchants and entrepreneurs thought of innovating more machines and look for more efficient manufacturing processes and higher profitability. In doing so the Industrial Revolution was introduced.

1.2 The Circumstances Helping the Emergence of the Industrial Revolution in Britain

There were also some circumstances that helped Britain to be the birth place of the Industrial Revolution. Those circumstances included political stability, the country's power as an imperial leading power, naval supremacy, population growth and finance and national policies.

Britain was politically stable and this provided a suitable business climate. In addition, unlike the continental countries, Britain placed fewer restrictions on private entrepreneurs who were given more freedom and their properties were protected.

Britain was also a leading colonial power. The British empire expanded to cover around a quarter of the world's surface (America, Asia, Africa and the Pacific) (Easton et al 274). This gave Britain an access to get more raw materials to run its factories. The British imported cotton from India, Jamaica and Africa, wool from Australia and New Zealand and gold from Australia and South Africa. They also imported tea from India; sugar and wheat from Australia and timber from Canada.

The British naval dominance helped a lot Britain's foreign trade. Britain had qualified sailors and well trained fleets of merchant ships. This was beneficial for both importing raw materials and exporting goods. Goods (swords, knives and clothes) were exchanged with slaves from Africa to be taken to the West Indies. Those slaves worked in plantations from which British ships transported sugar to Britain. And to which eventually the finished products were exported as external markets.

Developments in living conditions during the eighteenth century in Britain helped the rise of population growth and decline of death rates. Many people who had lost their land because of the enclosure moved to towns looking for work in the commercial cities around factories. They eventually became part of the new industrial working class.

Profits from trade and cottage industry with the West Indies were used for constructing factories. The effective central bank and flexible credit facilities to the entrepreneurs who were interested in leading the change of industrialization represented a ready supply of capital to finance new factories. This money could also be invested in inventions, to pay for experiments and to develop new industrial machines in Britain. Paper instruments were used to simplify capital transactions. Middle class people also demanded mass produced goods to fulfill their needs of fine clothes and household items. In addition, contrary to the rest of Europe, Britain had no internal custom's barriers (tariff) to hinder internal commerce. This enhanced the efficient movement of raw materials and manufactured products. Besides, the government passed laws that protected private properties and encouraged capitalism. Moreover, scientific ideas were welcomed and highly financed and this formed a fertile land for inventions which were the motor of the industrial revolution.

2. Definitions of the Concept of the Industrial Revolution

Different definitions were given to the concept of Industrial Revolution. The Oxford dictionary defined the concept of the Industrial Revolution as “The period in the 18th and 19th centuries in Europe and the US when machines began to be used to do work, and industry grew rapidly” (662).

It was also defined by George Clark in his article The English Industrial Revolution, 1760-1860 to reflect the quick change in basic sectors of industry as cotton textile industry, iron steel industry and transportation. This change is mainly based on the use of mechanical innovations and new sources of power(5).

In the Historical Journal Understanding the Industrial Revolution, it is defined by as “The transition from one kind of society and economy to another. Primarily from agricultural to industrial primacy” (Hoppit222).

Another definition is given to this concept by Spielvogel in his book *Western Civilization A Brief History* in which the Industrial Revolution refers to the period during which the process of production necessitated making use of new sources of energy mainly coal and steam to power labour saving devices. The use of such machines caused a decline in the number of workers. It also involved creating new work regulations that provided more productivity and brought higher profits(582).

According to Steven M, Beaudoin in his article the Industrial Revolution it is the process of adapting new technologies in manufacturing products and replacing animal and human labour by steam power to increase productivity and develop transportation(70).

3.Development Aspects

Prior the Industrial Revolution Britain was quite a different place to the one that exists today. Industrialization was a turning point in the country's history. New kindsofenergy, industry, roads and means of transportation and new laws of production were introduced with the factory system. Almost every aspect of daily life was influenced in some way. Around 1850, a whole series of new developments in technology led to even greater technological and economic progress. A revolution in certain sectors chiefly transport, population, agriculture and industry resulted in the development of the whole aspects of life in the country

3.1.Transportation

Before the Industrial Revolution, access to the other parts of the country was not easy. Roads were poor and means of transportation were ineffective. People had to rely on themselves or using animals as the galloping horse. Life was slow and people were limited to their villages where they had lived for generations. Moreover, the distribution of products was limited to the locality in which they were produced.

When the Industrial Revolution started, industrialists demanded new means of transportation and more roads to accelerate goods carrying and people's movement. Rich

merchants required faster and cheaper roads to transport coal to their factories and carry products to markets to be sold. As a consequence, more innovations, new inventions and a network of canals were built from 1760 to 1830.

As far as methods of building roads were concerned, Scottish engineers introduced more effective technique for constructing roads. Mack Adam for example, proposed crushed rock in a thin layer and Thomas Telford suggested using stones. Thus, turnpike roads became quicker and the danger of water and frost was reduced. This motivated the progress of industry around the country.

Tunnels and bridges were also built to deliver manufactured products and to invest in industry rapidly. Efficient roads across rivers were also needed therefore Abraham Darby built an iron bridge in the world in 1779 to join a small mining town with nearby factories in the city of Coalbrookdale. The British engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel worked on the first tunnel under the river Thames and designed the SS Great Britain, the first iron steamship. Steamships replaced the sailing ones.

Roads, bridges, tunnels and canals encouraged the progress of the industry around the country. But it was the railroads that gave the Industrial Revolution a new phase. It evolved both the British internal and external economy in the 1830s and 1840s. Wooden rails were replaced with cast iron rails by entrepreneurs. And significant changes took place after the invention of steam engine by James Watt which made machines (trains and ships) run quickly. In 1804, the English engineer Richard Trevithic invented the steam locomotive enabled carrying 70 passengers and 10 tonnes of ore at 5 miles per hour. The first railway line was built between coalfields in Darlington to seaport of Stockton in northeast England in 1825. Five years later, a modern track joining Manchester cotton industry to the port of Liverpool transported products that would be exported. It was the first railway to join two major towns.

Faster and less expensive transport made possible the economic success of the Industrial Revolution. Importing and exporting processes became easier. Coal price decreased as it was expensive because of the cost of moving it. In addition, lower price of coal resulted in cheap cotton weaving and high profits for mill owners.

Coal and iron industries evolved as great quantities of them were needed for constructing railroad and running trains and locomotives. Building railroads and iron bridges created more opportunities of jobs as a large number of laborers were needed to lay railway tracks. Moreover skillful people were required to follow constructing the railways. Thus a great importance was given to mechanical engineering in Britain around 1840.

As traveling conditions progressed and travel times decreased, people were now no longer isolated and their lives became dynamic. Horse drawn carriages were replaced by new means of transport. The first public railway line was opened in 1825 from Liverpool to Manchester. Traveling for holidays became common and new services were provided along the travelers trip as distributing magazines and newspapers. Moreover, commodities became more rapidly available as fresh flowers. Around 40 million train journeys were made in Britain in 1848. A trip from London to Edinburgh used to take around 12 days before the Industrial Revolution. By 1850, this time period was shortened to 12 hours when the whole country was linked by rails.

3.2 Population

Before the Industrial Revolution Britain was an agricultural society and life for the majority of people was the life of the farmer. People used to work on small fields in rural areas harvesting small crops every year. Clothes were produced locally and agriculture could provide only for few people. The environment was dirty with no sewage systems and water supplies were polluted this gave rise to diseases. Infant mortality was high and life span was short especially the poor.

During the eighteenth century, efforts were made to improve living conditions, cities became healthier and streets became larger. By 1760s, house owners had to pay a local tax that its amount was decided by the local council or corporation. The towns then became so clean that they became the wonder of Europe. Thanks to technological advancement that led eventually to significant changes in living standards. During the Industrial Revolution death rates decreased and Britain's population doubled from 6.5 million in 1700 to 21 million in 1851(Sultana 46). Mass production also made possible to supply the great number of growing population.

Moreover, the enclosure process resulted in the migration of many people from rural to urban society to become part of the industrial working class. Industrial towns like Manchester and London then grew. Manchester population for instance moved from 25000 in 1770 to 30000 in 1850. Prior the Industrial Revolution, 80 percent of the British people used to live and work on small farms in rural regions and only 20 percent in cities. This pattern was reversed by 1850 due to industrialization. 80 percent of people were centralized around factories in industrial cities leaving only 20 percent of population to live in the countryside.

As people moved to urban communities, they had to adapt to new conditions. The overall standards of living improved and salaries increased from 25 pounds in 1750 to 44 pounds in 1860. People now had to buy things they did not use to buy in countryside. People also started to marry at a young age and the family size became larger(Porter 312). Development in transportation made life dynamic and people then moved quickly from one part of the country to the other. Holidays, commodities and services became more available. House equipment developed after the progress in iron industry.

3.3 Agriculture

Agriculture was still the main economic activity in Britain before the Industrial Revolution. Around 80 percent of the people used to work in villages harvesting little crops

each year. Agriculture could provide only for few people since this activity was based mainly on hand work, animals and waterwheels.

Because of the enclosure and while the aristocrats became interested in investing their money in land, new methods and inventions were encouraged so as to make farming more efficient and the farms more productive. Fewer people were required to work on the fields since machines replaced them on the farm. For example, reaping machines were used to harvest crops and others to separate the valuable grain from the stalk of wheat and barley plants. In addition in 1840s manure and fertilizers were widely used to help land fertility and thus productivity. Those machines and fertilizers once again rose land productivity and doubled profits. Britain was then able to feed the growing population.

Improvements in transportation and the use of steam engine to power agricultural machines also helped the advancement of agriculture. Total agricultural output had increased into 220 per cent between 1700 and 1850(Sultana47). Compared to the other European countries, the British output per acre in 1851 was 100 while in France it was 80, 56 in Germany, 94 in the Netherland and 78 in Ireland around 1851 (Sultana 53).

3.4. Trade

Technological advancement doubled productivity in cotton textile. This required importing great quantities of raw cotton. For instance the amount of money to export raw cotton increased from 2.5 million pounds in 1760 to 366 million by 1840 mainly from South America. British clothes was the most important product of factories and the chief product to be sold everywhere in the world. Internal consumption was also encouraged because of the clothes cheap price. This gave the opportunity for millions of poor people to wear cotton clothes. In addition, villagers who used to grow their own needs and managed without having

to buy very much, became now so busy and had to buy things they did not use to do before. It was then the first stage to an active local trade.

The price of the products was cheap due to rapid and less expensive transportation. Britain became well known overseas for its high quality and low cost exports. This created huge foreign markets and encouraged the development of the economy. Increasing productivity motivated entrepreneurs to invest their profits in new equipment that would double productivity. Iron and steel exports moved from 16,770 tons in 1765-1774 to 30,717 in 1795-1804. Exported woolen goods rose from 4,356,000 to 6,323,000 and cotton from 236,000 to 371,000 during the same period (Porter 313). Trade then expanded and the British economy progressed.

3.5 Industry

Prior to the Industrial Revolution, agriculture was still known to be the basic activity in British economy. Few number of people was working in manufacturing, trade and mining. Manufacturing goods was localized since it was mainly based on manual materials, animals and water wheels. Villages and cities were small and roads joining them were poor. Therefore, people had to rely upon themselves to produce their needs.

Before 1750, there was a small scale production in industry. Workers enjoyed to work as independent masters working at their own speed. Yet the workshops were too small and the available materials were not enough to supply the demands of the growing population. In cottage industry for example, the skilled handloom weavers working in their backrooms using water machinery. That is why fast flowing streams were so important in the first phase of the Industrial Revolution. Water power was also used in the first spinning mills. Entrepreneurs then had to build factories close to rivers and streams since they were the source of power for the early machines.

In the eighteenth century industry had undergone massive changes. Thanks to machines that doubled weavers output. James Hargreaves's spinning jenny in 1765 saved time and efforts by enabling one worker to make eight times the previous amount of yarn (Mark Easton et al 270). In 1768, Richard Arkwright invented the water frame. However the demand for more cotton products required more developed technology. It was in 1775 when James Watt invented the steam engine that revolutionized cotton industry. It was powered by coal therefore factories were no longer needed to be located next to water sources. The steam engine was faster this provided more practical manufacturing processes that increased productivity.

Steam powered mills with automatic weaving machines started to be built in 1779. And they were now built in cities close to workers and customers. Watt improved a rotary engine that could drive machines in 1782 as a result it was possible to use steam power in spinning and weaving cotton. In 1787, Edmund Cartwright invented the power loom that permitted more production with less number of workers. In addition Eli Whitney's cotton gin enabled to clean big amounts of raw cotton in 1793. Those technological inventions helped Manchester to be the most important center of cotton and the world's first industrial city. British cotton goods became the chief product to be exported. By 1830, cotton represented 20 per cent of the British imports and cotton products represented 50 percent of its exports. Moreover, because of the clothes' cheap price, millions of poor people could buy cotton clothes.

Iron industry also witnessed radical transformation during the Industrial Revolution. Old processes of production that relied on charcoal could provide only few quantities of iron. It was until the 18th century when modern ways to smelt iron were used. They were mainly based on the use of coke which was smokeless fuel that burn much hotter than the ordinary

coal. In addition, thanks to Henry Cort's puddling and rolling system in 1780. It was a process by which impurities were released using coke. This made iron quality became better and cheaper to manufacture. Coke replaced charcoal as a fuel to smelt iron ore this solved the problem of charcoal shortage and its rising price (Porter 313). Iron foundries were then built close to coal fields and iron and coal industries became then strongly related.

Moreover, more practical pumps were required to reduce water seepage from deep mines. It was the Scottish engineer James Watt who developed Thomas Newcomen's atmospheric engine (1712) which was powered by air pressure using power from steam itself. Watt's innovation helped to pump water 3 times rapidly. In addition, in 1815 Humphrey David invented a safety lamp that helped coal miners to work in light instead of candle light long hours without fear of explosion. This doubled coal output which was required for smelting iron and to make the agricultural and industrial machines run more quickly.

Development in transportation helped the industrialists to carry merchandise and coal over long distances quickly and at a reasonable price. This influenced the price of manufactured goods later on. Moreover, iron industry was enlarged and other uses of iron were founded. In addition to using iron in railways, bridges, and industrial machines, it was used in knives, forks, iron pots and pans for household kitchens. It was also used as a building material in factories and houses such as London's Crystal Palace that had a roof walls made of iron frames.

One of the major secrets of the Industrial Revolution was the way goods were produced. Producing goods on a large scale involving many laborers and specialized machines in one place was the method of production that was called the Factory System. Before the factory system was introduced, manufacturing used to take place in small workshops or in coal workers' cottages using simple materials. When the factory system took place, production became centralized and all processes were being housed in one location.

Factory system required a big number of workers in single place yet few of them were skilled as most of the manufacturing process was done by machines. The traditional weavers and millers skills were then no longer needed. They were replaced by workers who were only required to do repetitive activities looking after the machinery and producing huge volumes of goods in low prices. This was the process that was called mass production.

When the work place changed from artisans' shops and peasants' cottage to the factory, new regulations took place. Workers were now no longer owners of the means of production they were paid wages as they were machine operators. The factory owners designed rigid regulations to be followed by the workers. Employees had to work regular hours under tough conditions and getting low wages to produce the maximum output. Those laws were strongly debated among the laborers later on.

Conclusion

Prior to the Industrial Revolution, old manufacturing processes were insufficient to supply the needs of whole population. Thanks to the Industrial Revolution and technological advancement, the society could finally evolve and thrive. The use of automated machines, steam power and innovated ways of production in factories made mass production possible. Food production increased to supply the growing population, certain diseases were eradicated, towns grew and life span extended. Industries as weaving and spinning, equipment of agriculture and iron smelting also progressed. Moreover, making use of nature through bridges, navigated rivers and even railways increased people's mobility. Cheap transportation influenced the merchandise prices as a result both domestic and foreign trades improved and the national economy then progressed. However, at the time that productivity and living conditions of some improved, there were also rigid regulations of employment and miserable living standards for the working class. The industrial Revolution took a long time to be beneficial for the working class.

Chapter Two :

The Negative Impact of the Industrial
Revolution on the Working Class

Introduction

The Industrial Revolution during the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries brought great prosperity to Britain. However, aspects of development did not reach all the classes of the society. Industrialization had affected ordinary people who formed the working class negatively. This chapter depicts those negative effects in terms of labourers' hard working conditions, exploitation of women, and the use of child labour. It will also show how the Industrial Revolution influenced the lives of the workers outside the factory. And finally the workers' reactions and attempts for change will be clearly mentioned in this chapter.

1. Working Conditions

The Industrial Revolution meant the change of the society from being rural to being urban. In Britain, the process of enclosure caused a great deal of social unrest to many farmers who were forced off the land they had farmed for generations and moved to towns around coal and iron fields and industrial factories to be part of the new industrial working class. The heart of the new industrial town was the factory where by the process of production transformed from working by hand to a work done by machines.

There was then a break with the old preindustrial work patterns and the employers made great efforts to create a well-disciplined labor force. The technology of machine age and the desire of increased profits imposed a harsh new way of work on laborers during the early decades of the Industrial Revolution. There was a great variety between the factory system and working in the farm. In the countryside where farmers worked at their own pace in their farms, homes or small shops, their work varied according to the season. They were not limited with a time format. The harvest time could be followed by inactivity period. Weavers and spinners in their turn used to take a leisure pace after two or three days work until the coming week's demand.

As industrialization was a new event in the late 18th century, there were no initial laws to regulate industry. The bosses who keen for high profits needed to keep their machines running all the time to produce the maximum output. Moreover, the free-market capitalism limited the government's role to regulate the basis of industry in workplaces. Thus, the employers created a system of time work around twelve to sixteen hours a day, six days a week (Mark Easton et al 279). In addition, the workers were firstly forced to work long hours for low wages and without complaining about the hazardous conditions fearful of losing their jobs. This was because the owners realized that they might replace them with other unemployed people who were waiting and ready to join any job as specialized machinery required unskilled workers. It was also possible to replace them with women and children as they were paid less than men.

Moreover, unlike in the cottages, the workers had to follow a rigid schedule set of common laws while doing their tasks in the factories. The working day started at all seasons at six p.m. and workers who came two minutes late would lose half an hour's wages. Workers could never leave before the end of the working day unless they took the overseers permission and had given their name to the gatekeeper otherwise ten silver groschen would be taken from their wage. Being late several times led to dismissal. Chatting with fellow workers was prohibited. It was also prohibited to smoke during the working hours otherwise five silver groschen would be taken of the worker's wage. Those who washed their hands or faces in the workshops and not in the places devoted for the purpose should be punished of five silver groschen. The overseers had to be obeyed without questions otherwise those who disobeyed would be dismissed.

The working conditions and experiences of the working class differed from one person to another (men, women, children) and from one industry to another. The situation was generally tragic as employers applied their own rules where they usually cut with safety

measures in favor of high profits. Each industry had its hazardous conditions. In the textile mills for example the workers commonly faced accidents from machines which had no security devices. A worker could lose a limb, a finger or even his or her life. The sick or those who were injured lose their jobs. Mills were also dusty, dirty and workers might breath air filled with lint thus their lungs were in danger.

In the mines, working conditions were even worse than the factory. Miners often struggle to survive. The Industrial Revolution required huge quantities of coal and iron. Inside the mines, men were in charge of digging the coal out whereas mules, horses, women and children had to carry out the coal out. The workers often worked in darkness and coal dust destroyed their lungs. Tunnels high usually didn't exceed 3 or 4 feet as a result miners' bodies might be deformed. In addition, the miners' lives were in danger of flooding, explosion and the fall of tunnels. Moreover, to purify iron, the temperature sometimes rose into 130 degrees which caused a great danger to the workers' health. There was also neither medical care nor compensation for those who became injured. They would simply lose their jobs.

The new discipline and working regular long hours as perfect as possible to accomplish their owners' goals seemed to be repetitive, boring, brutal and uncomfortable for the workers. In the first phase of the Industrial Revolution, there were no laws to prevent child full time labour, women from working in the coal mines and no laws to identify what factories should do with their wastes. Besides, Laissez Faire policy and the free capitalist market where the government should not intervene to organize business, gave the owners the opportunity to create and apply their own standards on the laborers and generate as much profits as they could. This caused both physical and psychological damage to the working class who felt, exploitation, inhumanity and injustice. The workers had no representatives in Parliament to secure their rights since only the wealthy could vote in Britain. Although they

had little power to bargain with their employers calling for higher wages and better working conditions, the workers started to work hard to change their situation.

2. Women and Child Labour

Both women and children formed a great part of workforce in the early factories and mines. They had contributed significantly in their families' income. Actually, women and child labour was not certainly new as the preindustrial cottage industry used to involve the efforts of the entire family including women and children. When men moved from villages to industrial cities, they took their wives and children with them and eventually worked in the mines and factories (Spielvogel 602). However, in the early Industrial Revolution women and children were exploited more than ever and significantly in a more systematic way. In the early industrial mills, mines and factories where specialized machines replaced skilled workers, the owners used less expensive unskilled labour to reduce the cost of production. Women and children represented then the cheap labour force.

When the Industrial Revolution started, children were considered ideal employees. Both boys and girls started working at an early age. Factory owners in textile mills appreciated certain characteristics of child labour. There were some tasks that could be performed more easily by children rather than adults. Their small size for example made it easy to fit between the new machinery to repair broken threads or to collect the dropped fluff under the weaving machines while they were operating. Thus their lives were in danger or at least they might lose their fingers or be seriously injured.

The overseers were paid as much as they kept children working as hard as they could (Mark Easton et al 300). To keep children awake throughout the working hours, the overseers sometimes took them up by the legs and dipped them over head in a cistern full of water then sent them to work (Spielvogel 602). Many child workers were less than nine years

old and had to work from half past five in the morning to seven in the evening. They rarely stopped to eat except at dinner. When they did not do their work right or fell asleep, the child workers were frequently beaten by the overseers. When the working hours finished they usually returned home very tired(Easton Et al 297).

Moreover, children represented cheap supply of labour. They were paid little and their families were happy for the extra income. In 1838, children less than eighteen represented twenty-nine percent of the total workforce of the cotton factories(Spielvogel 601) working twelve hours a day six days a week. Education at that time was not compulsory that was why there was little concern about it and the majority of the working class families were unable to send their children to study any way. One of the concerned industrialists, Frederick Engels, a German industrial and philosopher, wrote extensively in his book *Conditions of the Working Class* in England about this situation:

A mass of children work the whole week through in the mills or at home, and therefore cannot attend school. The evening schools[...] are almost abandoned or attended without benefit. It is asking too much, that young workers, who have been using themselves up twelve hours in the day, should go to school from eight to ten at night. And those who try it usually fall asleep[...]Moreover, the interval from one Sunday to the next is too long for children to remember in the second sitting what they learned a week before.(cited in *Western Civilization A Brief History* 296).

In the mines, the situation was even worse for children who sat the whole working hours in darkness. Children's job was harder than that in the factories. They had to carry heavy loads of coal several times a day, sometimes in low passages which might make their bodies deformed. Their work was repetitive and really demoralizing. They used to work around twelve hours regularly from six in the morning. They stopped two or three minutes to eat a small piece of bread and cheese which they took with them in their pockets. Sometimes,

they could not eat because of dust, polluted air, damp and high temperature that made their workplaces as an oven(Spielvogel 603)

Especially terrible in the early Industrial Revolution was the use of pauper apprentices. Those children then were employed long hours under severe discipline receiving little amounts of food and their bodies deformed because of being kept long hours in unusual positions(Spielvogel 601). In addition, children's wages were less than that of adults and they were sometimes given vouchers which were only used at stores that belonged to the factory owners themselves. Children then would buy clothes or basic food necessary for their everyday life. This system provided the factory owners with extra profits on sales again.

The Industrial Revolution significantly changed the family role. In preindustrial agrarian society, families worked together as a unit of production, women were mothers and participants in food producing, clothes making and goods necessary for the household. They usually found a time to play and interact with the members of the family. Things changed dramatically with industrialization. During the industrial Revolution, although the members of the working class family worked to serve one economic goal, they worked in various places. Work made it possible for women to keep their families survival. In difficult circumstances, both in factories or in coal mines carrying heavy baskets of coal and working in harsh treatments, mothers struggled to save their families from poverty and starvation. They were also worry of losing some of their children since infants' death rate was high due to diseases and starvation.

3. Living Conditions

The Industrial Revolution was responsible for making the gap wider between the British social classes. The aristocrats that included the royal families, land owners and those who possessed enormous wealth represented the top of the social hierarchy. They generally

lived in manors and stately houses and had both land and political power. The Industrial Revolution brought huge riches and higher standards of living to those people. Their children were educated, better food and medical care was provided. Inside homes, there was always a maid servant to look after the children.

As far as the middle class was concerned, this class which was created along with the working class was called the bourgeoisie and was formed by the owners of the means of production, the new factories and mines, doctors, lawyers, inventors, skilled artisans, entrepreneurs and merchants that invested their profits in factories. Their living conditions were more comfortable than that of the industrial working class. Their homes were well-furnished and spacious with ready supply water. They ate well, wore fancy clothes and the roads around their houses were paved. The middle class women did not have to go out to work they rather focused on raising their children. Their homes were far from the city centers where there was larger space for big homes and pure air. The houses were also close to railways to be able to join their work in towns(Mark Easton et al 298).. Their children also went to school.

While the enclosure increased the productivity and profits of the wealthy land owners, it was considered as the destruction of the standards of ordinary farmers' lifestyle. Farmers were forced off the lands which had supported their families for many generations. They became homeless and unable to produce their own food. When the Industrial Revolution began, a great number of workers was needed. Thus those farmers migrated from their villages to the new industrial cities where they lived close to factories and around coal or iron mines. The new industrial towns became source of wealth for the nation yet they also affected the working class negatively. Work in the new industrial cities had influenced the workers' lives outside the factories as well. For many skilled workers the quality of life decreased

greatly during the Industrial Revolution from that of the rural agricultural society. They were the bosses, their surrounding was clean and their small cottages seemed happy and peaceful.

The new houses were now symbols of hard times and misery. In contrast to the wealthy and middle class people, the working class lived in slums with no access to running water, sewage or sanitation system. Rubbish was rotted in the roads and wastes were dumped into rivers. This in turn created a fertile land for diseases as cholera. Toxic rivers which were used as drinking water sources caused serious crises of cholera between 1831 and 1866. The air was polluted because of the factories fumes and the steam power. In addition, steam engines caused noise pollution. Such poor public health conditions in the dirty and overcrowded neighborhood contributed to the quick spread of diseases as cholera, tuberculosis, typhus, typhoid and influenza. Malnutrition, dirt and poor health care increased death rates and infant mortality reduced the average life expectancy.

Houses were backed very closely to each other living no rooms for ventilation. The buildings were unplanned and houses were built quickly and cheaply to meet the demands of those poor people. The uninhabitable background of the buildings depicted the misery and the wretched living conditions of those industrial workers. Unlike the upper and the middle class women, the working class women became part of the workforce and their children could not join schools. Children had to spend all the light of the day working together with men and women so as to enable their families to survive. Their labour was considered ideal for the industrialists so as to keep the costs of production low and the profits high. As a result, the working class lived in poverty whereas the bosses grew wealthy. To forget all such hard conditions, many of the workers became addicted to alcohol or taking drugs. This in turn resulted in the spread of crime. Here is a description to what life looked like in the urban areas of the industrial workers:

As social order makes family life almost impossible for the worker. In a comfortless, filthy house, hardly good enough for mere nightly shelter, [...] no domestic comfort is possible. The husband works the whole day through, perhaps the wife also and the elder children, all in different places; they meet night and morning only[...]What family life is possible under such conditions? [...]The consequence is a perpetual succession of family troubles(Mark Easton et al 298).

Both the brutal working conditions and the hard living conditions provoked the industrial working class to react strongly to call for better working and living conditions so as to benefit eventually from the improvements that the Industrial Revolution brought to both the upper and middle classes.

3. The Workers Movement for Change

Low wages, poor public health, malnutrition, dreadful housing and hazardous working conditions were the characteristics that described the working class lives in the industrial cities. Those features marked a complete transformation in work habits and the workers' previous lifestyle. The factory system and the introduction of machinery brought huge profits to the upper and middle classes while the industrial workers had to wait until the second half of the nineteenth century to receive the benefits of industrialization.

Workers found it difficult to adapt to their new lives in the city and started to call for better conditions and political rights. The workers rebellion started soon after the first development of industrialization and passed by various phases. Some workers first committed some crimes as stealing to express their disappointment towards the hazardous living conditions they lived. Compared to other classes of the society, the working men lived in a serious poverty. It was hard to the working men to understand why they were the ones who did more to realize prosperity yet they were the ones who had to suffer. They felt that they

were tools of production in the service of the bourgeoisie and developed a strong feeling of hate towards them. Crime then spread everywhere and those who caught were arrested and punished severely.

The workers realized soon that this form of rebellion was fruitless. Individuals' protest against the social order was voiceless as the bourgeoisie may crush them using wealth and political power. Theft, the primitive form of protest in a single form could never express the labourers' public opinion. The workers however should find an alternative solution. They then thought of acting collectively so as to make their opposition to the bourgeoisie more effective(Engels 151).

Workers started then to form labour organizations so as to get decent wages and better living conditions. The British government passed series of Combination Acts as those in 1799 and 1800 to prevent workers' associations. Yet the regulations failed to stop the establishment of trade unions. The skilled workers in a number of new industries as cotton spinners, coal miners, iron workers and shipwrights formed new associations. The purposes of such early trade unions were limited as their struggles against the bosses were meant only to achieve progress for the members of their own associations (Spielvogel604).Miners in Northumberland for example had carried a bitter strike to obtain their goals in 1810, handloom weavers in Glasgow protested in 1813 and also cotton spinners did so in Manchester in 1818. Those illegal activities became legal in 1824 when Parliament repealed the Combination Acts and permitted workers unions.

During the 1820s and 1830s, trade unions took another dimension. Workers started to think of creating national unions. Robert Owen(1771-1858), a famous cotton magnate and social reformer was one of the leaders who believed in the establishment of voluntary associations which would bring cooperative benefits rather than competitive living. Owen's thoughts and plans resulted in the emergence of Grand National Consolidated Trade Union in

February 1834. It was a national federation of trade unions that aimed at coordinating a general strike for the eight-hours working day. There was little support from the working class to this strike and consequently the movement failed(Spielvogel605).

In addition to trade unionism, Luddism was another type of the working class collective action during the first decades of the Industrial Revolution. It was the first violent reaction against the results of industrialization on the labourers. It took place in 1811. The Luddites were skilled craftspeople and they were called so as their leader was General Ned Ludd. When the automated looms became used in textile factories, the experience of the skilled workers was no longer needed. That was because those machines could be operated by cheap, relatively unskilled labourers. As a result those craftspeople became jobless. The Luddites protested against wages reduction, the use of automated looms in textile mills and being jobless.

Luddites first sent threatening messages to the factory owners and manufacturers in Nottingham. The letters were often signed by General Ludd. The weavers then attacked the machines which they thought threatened their lives. Moreover, the protesters assassinated an owner of a cotton mill. The government responded violently against the actions of the Luddites. Breaking the machines was considered an offence and those who caught guilty might be killed, imprisoned or deported to Australia as punishment.

Although Luddites were attacked by the government, their actions inspired many workers to act collectively in the future. The Luddites movement showed that there should be a political action which would develop the labourers situation and the new type of life which they were obliged to accept.

Another effort for change by the British labourers to develop their conditions was done by the chartist. Their movement was called Chartism, the first considerable political movement of the working class in to achieve democracy in the 19th century (Spielvogel 605).

The growth of the industrial capitalism and urbanization in Britain in the 19th century and the failure of the working class to gain the right to vote due to the Reform Bill of 1832 led to people's charter of 1838. The Reform Bill 1832 admitted the middle class into parliamentary system while the working class remained politically voiceless. The labourers then felt marginalized and started to call for reforms to make the political system more democratic.

The Chartists would begin to plan their campaign trying to affect real electoral change in Britain. The charter, the document from which the Chartists took their name, was a bill that could be presented to Parliament demanding the good for the working class. It was introduced to Parliament by William Lovett. He was the founder of the London Working Men's Association, and Ireland's Feergus O Connor. Such an association aimed at seeking by every legal means to place all classes of society in possession of their equal political and social rights.

Although Chartism had gained more than one million signatures, the chartists' petition was rejected by the House of Commons. As a reaction many Chartists walked in strikes and some others reacted violently by destroying machines in factories. Those who were caught guilty were imprisoned by the police and others were exiled to Australia. In 1842, another petition was signed by three million names and presented to Parliament. This petition was rejected too.

Later on and in 1848 when revolutions in Europe stimulated the chartists' thoughts, a third document was drawn up by the chartists. It was a six point charter listing the chartists political demands. The points which were mentioned in the bill included a universal male suffrage for every man over twentyone years of age, equal electoral constituencies where there must be similar representation to the same number of electors, payment for members of Parliament, members of Parliament do not have to be property owners thus the choice of constituency representatives might be for a rich or a poor man and no property qualification

would determine this choice, secret ballot and finally an annual session of Parliament(Knapman 117).

Chartism gained a large amount of support from the working class in the industrial cities. This can be understood from the great number of signatures provided to chartists petitions each time. To make Chartism a mass movement, Chartists used a network of newspapers. Some Chartists were newspaper reporters the fact that helped to a quick spread of their messages and keep the supporters up to date with the events. Chartist leaders frequently met in conferences and meetings using an oratorical style to attract the audience and convince their supporters to fight corruption and ask for democracy in an industrial society.

Chartism as a movement was first considered unsuccessful. There was a lack of unity and disagreements over tactics. The goals were clear yet there was not a completely unification about what to do when Parliament rejected their demands. There was usually a fragmentation and radical differences among the leaders about the means that should be taken to achieve their goals. Some of the leaders as William Lovett thought that moral force, pamphlets, mass meetings and taking petitions to the government were useful methods to address their messages and convince those in power of moral right of electoral reform. Others as Feargus O' Connor believed that peaceful ways were useless, threatening, using violence and physical force and riots was the effective way to put pressures on politicians to concede manhood suffrage and other political demands.

In this way, Chartism had largely played itself out. It was no longer caused a threat to the British government even though the National Association was established in 1840 to coordinate its work across the country. Its leadership appeared weak and its supporters did not know which direction they had to follow.

Although Chartism had been judged unsuccessful, Chartists campaign for electoral reform played an important role in the development of democracy in Britain. The movement

had not totally failed; its ability to gather enormous support and unify millions of working class men and women was a significant doctrine. The working class then obtained a sense of consciousness that made them change the workers movement to solve their problems(Morris 402). It was a political education that enabled them to realize the points of people's charter later on(Spielvogel 605). In spite of the fact that Chartism was a short time failed movement, in a long term, it created a self confidence in the working class people. The workers influence persisted and reformers continued to campaign for electoral reforms. Most of their demands were eventually passed into law especially in the Reform Act of 1867(right to vote) and the Ballot Act in 1872 (Roberts 386). The Chartist issues of democracy and the rights of citizenship remain highly relevant today.

Collective movements as that of Luddites, Chartists and trade unions in general were meant to protect the working men against the exploitation of the bourgeoisie. They worked hard to achieve democracy, regulate the rate of wages and counteract the use of machinery that led to wages reduction. Moreover, they wanted to help jobless men financially(Engels 151). To achieve their purposes, the protesters sometimes acted peacefully and others in a violent way. This form of opposition was often isolated and limited to certain localities and the evil doers were punished severely. From another hand the movement played themselves out due to the lack of organization as that of Chartism. All in all the workers reactions whether individually or in groups was meant to air the working class rejection to the existing conditions and ask for equal social and political rights of citizens in an industrial society.

Conclusion

During the Industrial Revolution, the working class in Britain had experienced enormous changes compared to their preindustrial life and this caused social unrest. This was due to the cut with the system of work organization and everyday life style. Since there were

no laws to protect the employees from the employers' greed and strict disciplines in the workplaces, the workers reacted immediately to express their disappointment about the situation. The workers' movement passed by different phases and was meant to change the miserable living and working conditions. They also fought to achieve their social and political rights. Although the workers' first reactions were to some extent unsuccessful in the short term, they had a long term positive results.

Chapter Three :

The Effectiveness of the
Working Class Movement

Introduction

The hard living conditions and the rigid discipline in working environment during the Industrial Revolution provoked the working class peoples' opinion. The government played no role to regulate the situation. As a result, the workers revolted to achieve their social and political rights. This chapter is dedicated to assess how successful the labour movement was, what benefits this movement had brought to the workers and whether the workers achieved the goals that they were calling for throughout a long time of conflicts.

1. The Rise of Political Consciousness

During the Industrial Revolution, the nature of work changed from that of the workers in rural areas. The introduction of machinery as means of production created a serious threat to the workers position and lives. Industrialization created two distinct worlds, a world of the working class which struggled to survive, and another of the owners who competed. In other words the employers were opportunistic whereas the employees were revolutionary and dynamic. When there is no common point between the two classes on which industry is based, there should be a struggle then to regulate the environment around them and live in harmony with each other. In his book, *The Conditions of The Working Class in England*, Engels commented about the situation saying: "The working man often feel that the bourgeoisie treats him as a chattel, as its property, and for this reason he must come forward as its enemy[...] he can save his manhood only in hatred and rebellion against the bourgeoisie" (150).

The first step by the workers to express their disagreement about the situation in which they worked and lived was done violently by individuals. Yet they soon understood that complaining individually would have little power to achieve their goals. However, acting collectively would have better an opportunity of making the bosses listen to their interests. As

industrialization resulted in a widespread abuse of the labourers, including women and children, workers become more conscious that there was a necessity to change their mentalities and move from violence to a peaceful way that would give their requests a sense of legality. The key solution then was working collectively in an organized way through labour associations and trade unions. This would give them a sense of membership and strengthen their efforts to put more pressure on those in power to pass laws that could help them regain their dignity and identify themselves as human beings.

Thus, workers in the same trade or the same industry started to unite together and appoint leaders among themselves to negotiate their interests with the owners and rise their demands to Parliament to get their social and political rights. Those unions had played an important role in improving the working class working environment in work places and rising their wages as a main determiner of good living standards. High living conditions were mainly based on how much money a person gains so as to be able to afford for housing, enough food, health care, education and recreation. In order to rise the wages and then the living conditions, the very important step to be taken was that of putting limits to women and child labour that formed a cheap workforce during the Industrial Revolution. This was clearly mentioned in Engels' book *The Conditions of the Working Class in England*: “They wanted also to keep up the demand for labour by limiting the number of apprentices and so to keep the wages high and counteract wage reduction due to the use of machinery” (151).

The workers' movements were not completely successful at the time they started yet they were not totally a failure. First, there was hostility from the employers who often used wealth and power to oppose their attempts. In addition, the government supported the owners to restrict this political activism through its soldiers to stop protests or through passing laws that forbade the workers unions. However, the workers' collective actions created in them a sense of unity and membership that gave them hope to continue their campaign and their

demands were gradually accepted by the law. This was mentioned in Richardson's book: *Western Civilization A Brief History*

It had not been totally failure either. Its true significance stemmed from its ability to arouse and organize millions of working-class men and women, to give them a sense of working class consciousness that they had not really possessed before. This political education of working people was important to ultimate acceptance of all the people's charter in the future (605).

2. The Rise of Public Sympathy with the Workers

The reports written by the visitors and commissioners about the conditions of works in the workplaces during the Industrial Revolution raised public interest towards these issues. This was considered a support for the labour movement that might actively strengthen their call for change. The Industrial Revolution which changed Britain from agrarian villages to a nation of factory cities was accompanied by social changes that shocked the public opinion and aroused the historian anger. Industrialization then was seriously criticized especially about the use of child labour. The intensive exploitation of children was seen as the most significant event that caused disappointment among the public (Nardinelli 739).

The effects of urban industrial life on the poor working class were so negative that prostitution, crime and sexual immoralities became common. The British Poor Law Commissioners sounded the alarm of the moral effects of such horrible living situation. They also wrote detailed reports to draw attention to the labourers's poor health situation. Those children's size for example was remarkably short and little than that of the middle class sons. In addition, the workers sons were more likely subjected to illnesses as their bodies were fragile due to malnutrition and poor health care within a dirty environment and contaminated water sources (Spielvogel 605).

Edwin Chadwick(1800-1890), an urban reformer and a lawyer, became a civil servant and a member of government investigatory commissions who was interested in this issue. His job as a secretary of the poor law commission, was to carry out a research about the working class living conditions. The research took him three years of investigation. After that, he wrote in his report on *the Conditions of Labouring Population in Britain* that was published in 1842 detailed facts of the working class conditions(Spielvogel 599). He wrote about the epidemics and diseases due to atmospheric impurities and overcrowded industrial cities throughout the country. He argued that such conditions could be improved by public administration. Some practical measures such as improvements of water supplies and forbidding habitations in streets could be taken seriously by the public authorities. Chadwick needed to advocate a modern sanitary reforms and pure water supplies to improve health care within these urban cities.

A huge number of middle class citizens supported public health reforms of men as Chadwick since they were afraid of diseases such as cholera. The wealthy people and even the city authorities were persuaded then that such conditions might help the spread of this killer disease and started to call for public health reforms. Thanks to Chadwick efforts, six years after his report the British Public Health Act to establish modern sanitary systems was created(Richardson 599). Moreover, both moral and health conditions began to present a serious danger to the middle class society. They felt that crime, illnesses and immoralities would threaten their wellbeing and destroy their social order. This necessitated some reforms to cope with the situation.

The workers social revolution was also supported by philosophers and activists like Karl Marx and Friederich Engels who in their turn gained followers from the working class. Karl Marx, the German philosopher, said that the Industrial Revolution was a result of Capitalism. Capitalism in turn was based on the exploitation of the labourers by the land

owners, owners of factories, banks, shops and railways for profits. Under capitalism, the workers had to work regularly taking wages less than the value of their work. Karl Marx ideas aimed at proposing another system that would provide a fairer distribution of wealth. These ideas marked also the starting points of Socialism and led to Communism where the state had to prevent the ownership of private property(Mark Easton et al, 304).

The Industrial Revolution was a sign of man's domination over nature. And the effects of industrialization influenced almost every aspect of human society. Writers and poets were part of the society who had been influenced by the Industrial Revolution too. S T Coleridge, William Blake, Wordsworth, the novelist Charles Dickens and others turned a critical eye towards the society in which they lived(Sultana 5). The social impact of the Industrial Revolution marked a source of themes in books and novels. Social critiques tackled the hard conditions of labourers whose wages were less than the value of their work and living situation. They also criticized the exploitation of women and the use of children labour. Moreover, the enclosure system was seen as a cut with the farmers style of life and a beginning of social unrest. The workers then had to migrate and adapt to the hard conditions in the new industrial cities. They were also obliged to accept the change from being land owners to employees getting low wages as there was no other alternative to continue to survive.

Poets' critiques were based on the industrialists' focus on the work profits and practical side of life rather than respecting human beings or the natural world around them. Industrialization dehumanized people and greed made factory owners treat the labourers the same as machines. The workers had to work as hard as they could to produce the required goods and bring high profits. Besides, Romantic poets saw the boom of industry as a destruction of nature, and a damage to the beauty of the nature. William Wordsworth for example wrote his critics about this situation and which were cited in Spielvogel's book

Western Civilization A Brief History saying that the destruction of the natural world was the dark side of the great change which was brought to the country by the Industrial Revolution(605). Many factories and houses were built in green spaces. Water resources became stores of factories wastes and trees were cut for the sake of smelting iron. The poets in their works used vocabulary such as materialism, technology, victims, survival and others which reflect the negative side effect of the Industrial Revolution. The authors and the poets works in general were seen as a call for a back to nature movement.

3.The Government's Response

One of the major causes of the Industrial Revolution in Britain was that of Laissez Faire capitalism. It was an economic system whose ideology was based on individualism under which, and in a free market, individuals had the right to apply their own standards while doing business. This created a fertile land for the wealthy factory and mine owners to exploit the working class people. There were then seriously terrible conditions. And the most common feature of this Industrial Revolution was the use of child labour to whom the government had no laws to prevent their abuse and protect them against the risk caused by the use of machinery. The workers felt discontented and began their campaign calling for change and having better conditions. Their attempts passed by various ways firstly in a violent way through crimes and breaking down machines in factories and eventually in a constitutional way through collective bargaining and passing bills to Parliament so as to raise their interests.

The protestors first did not succeed to achieve their goals. Together with the rise of social interests and as the time passed, their campaign formed a serious pressure on the government. The government became totally convinced that it was high time the actual situation was tackled.

The rise in wealth and benefits generated from the Industrial Revolution was simultaneously linked with the rise of the poor people number. And reports by social activists and commissioners about poverty, health problems and the workers misery were all campaigns against the factory system's evils especially the exploitation of little children (Spielvogel 605).

The government then started to look seriously for solutions which would put limits on workers exploitation and ameliorate their living conditions. Those solutions were a series of labour regulation acts passed by the British Parliament during the 1800s as an attempt to improve the conditions of industrial employment. The acts generally restricted the working hours and put some standards that should be respected in workplaces such as age limits, cleanliness and security measures. The following are some of the most important factory acts that showed how effective the labour movement was.

The first factory act passed by Parliament to improve the workers situation was passed in 1802. This act was also known as Health and Morals of Apprentices Act. It was designed to improve conditions of apprentices in cotton mills where the owners used to employ orphan children. It was introduced by Sir Robert Peel, a factory owner of Bury in Lancashire, an MP and the father of the Prime minister Peel. He became interested in the issue of child labour and human standards of treating orphan apprentices who worked in factories like his own. Because of the bad conditions in his mill, an outbreak of fever killed many apprentices. This made him feel responsible and thought of a remedy to the situation. It was then a bill put through Parliament and was called Health and Morals of Apprentices Act. It was a piece of legislation which fixed a maximum twelve hours a day for children to work, the factory rooms had to be cleaned regularly and had several windows that allowed the flow of fresh air and well ventilation. Young persons aged between nine and thirteen had to work no more than twelve hours a day and those who were less than nine years old must not work at all,

apprentices had to be provided with two suits of clothing in addition to stockings, hats and shoes, separate rooms had to be available to separate boys from girls where no more than two children shared a bed, children must be instructed in reading and arithmetic during working hours, on Sundays, children must take at least an hour for learning Christianity. This act was extended in the 1819 Factory Act. Although these acts marked the starting point where the state started to recognize its responsibility towards the working class children conditions and the first step regarding the health of towns, both of the acts lacked enforcement for the application of their principles.

It was then the Factory Act of 1833 in which the previous legislations were strengthened. To put the regulations into practice, four inspectors now were appointed to visit textile factories so as to write their reports and impose penalties on those who broke the law. In spite of the fact that this Act was one of the biggest steps of keeping children's rights during the Industrial Revolution, this act was restricted to only a single department of industry, textile manufacturing. Those instructions were not applied in other industries where there were some of the worst abuses as those in coal mines. The working class situation could be changed and their interests could be heard if all its members in all industries united together. Workers tended to receive fairer treatments in various sectors of industry as they experienced similar circumstances even if their workplaces were different.

In 1842, the first factory act to cover workers in other industries other than the textile industry was passed by Parliament. It was called the Coal Mines Act. This Act is an extension of the factory act of 1833. The government now had to intervene to protect children working in mines through applying the criteria that were applied on children in factories(Heeson 77). The Act was a response against the brutal working conditions that women and children suffer from in mines. There were serious accidents in mines too that resulted in the death of many

labourers mainly children and women. This put forward the issue of those workers in such a job in front of the government to ameliorate their situation too. The act prohibited all females and boys under ten from work under ground in coal mines. Ashley wanted to depict the conditions of the miners to the society at large and excite the public sentiments as a support to his proposed bill so as to call for amelioration. His bill of 1842 was there to reduce the workers hardship and prevent immorality as a social evil which was exposed and started to disturb the well being of the society.

Ashley's motives seemed to be not only humanitarian but also religious as he received a huge support from churchmen such as the bishops of Norwich and London (Heeson 69). He emphasized that women who promoted sexuality were inadequate to build families "... they were thus deemed unsuitable for marriage and indeed unfit to be wives and mothers..." (Heeson 75). In addition, neglecting such behaviors and being indifferent in tolerating them would destroy the social order. The government then should find an effective solution to treat such unethical conducts which threatened the society and made its people morals unhealthy. The solution then was moral and religious education.

Technological change, factory system and the law of competitive market put intensive pressure on the workers who experienced totally different conditions from that of their rural life. This resulted in conducting crimes, being violent to resist the bourgeoisie's inhumanity, exploitation and cruelty especially towards children and women. Some workers drunk alcohol as a means to escape these pressures. Thus, the governing class became afraid of losing control over the society and the state had better intervene to ensure the social control and save the wellbeing of the community. Education then is the key mechanism to prevent offences and immorality(Heeson 82). Those little children had to be kept out of the pits and provided with the opportunity to acquire this moral education that would be the surest guide which provided them with the right character that would fit in the society to which they belonged. As a

comment in the House of Common Peter Ainsoworth, an MP and a coal mine owner questioned who would pay the fees of those children and John Buddle introduced the idea of free education to ensure the children's attendance to school and make it compulsory(Heeson 86). The hopes of Ashley Cooper for educational chances for those pit children remained so much wishful thinking. And it depended on the owners' good will to provide schooling to those little poor children as Owen did in his factories.

Despite the fact that Ashely's Coal Mines Act needed more steps to give his thought a practical effect, his report of children's employment commission depicted a picture of a shocking society. He provided the large public with graphic details to tell them that the social unrest of the 1840s was an anti law reaction by the working class people to express that they were unhappy with the existing regulations in the industrial cities. This was also mentioned in Engel's book *The conditions of the Working Class in England: The greed of the industrialists that involved those rural immigrants to work the same as machines to produce mass production and provide higher profits was responsible for those social disturbances. Ashley wanted to make a diagnosis of the evils of society which resulted from different traditions to those of the working class. He also requested those of power to remedy the situation and recognize their responsibility towards this large part of the society(Heeson 87).*

Ashley's efforts were not totally a failure as he promoted that further legislations had to be introduced to add some regulations on the miners age limits, reasonable environment, social and moral education and security while doing their job. His ideas also gave a sense of the necessity of cooperation among all the workers even if they were working for various trades and factories. Isolated local unions and single representation of workers would not have the power to promote universal standards of work to all labourers. Their unification would make more pressures on the government to pass laws that would help the labourers and their families. This gave rise to Trade Union Congress later on.

In 1844 another Factory Act was passed by Parliament in terms of job security measures this time. Job accidents and deaths had to be reported then and all the dangerous machinery had to be securely fenced off. Children and adolescents were prevented from cleaning machines while operating. Moreover his Act emphasized that children between thirteen and eighteen years old had to work six and half an hour a day only. It also supported women and young people in terms of work time limits. Women and young people now worked the same number of hours which involved working no more than twelve hours a day.

The idea of including both women and children in work time limits was extended further in the Factory Act of 1847 by Richard Oastler, John Frelden and the leader of the reform movement in the House of Commons Ashley Cooper, the 7th Earl Shaftesbury. The Act limited the working hours for women and children between thirteen and eighteen to twelve hours. This Act is also known as the Ten Hours Act. Factory acts gradually extended to other sectors and more regulations were added to serve the working class people in the second half of the nineteenth century under the influence of the working class movement.

Thanks to the workers' consciousness, response to the workers demand became faster in the second half of the nineteenth century. Workers started to revise their aims and strategies and understand that their goals could be achieved without revolution. Being close together and developing central organization could put more pressure on the government and make their actions more effective. Moreover, the use of journals and telegraph helped to maintain cohesion and facilitated contact among the unions' supporters. This made the industrial action covered a large scale and took a national character.

To find out an organization that would represent a united voice of the unions and defend their rights, a meeting was hold in 1868 in Manchester by trade council's leaders. The meeting resulted in the foundation of the Trade Union Congress that organized an annual meeting to deal with common problems and the interests of the labour movement. The growth

of the unions' power threatened the government especially after the 1867 Reform Act that enfranchise householders in cities. The government passed a law in 1871 to make trade unionism a legal activity. The right to vote was also extended to those in the countryside in 1884. The number of voters among the working class increased. And the governing power started to recognize the importance of gaining the voices of this large part of the society.

When trade unions became legal, membership among unions increased and even unskilled workers started to organize themselves. This gave birth to mass general unions. The growing power of the working class went simultaneously with the revival of socialism during the 1880s. Many democratic societies were founded in this period as that of the Fabian Society (FS) in 1884. Those democratic societies such as the ILP, the SDF and the FS came together with the trade unionists under the aim of working class voice representation in Parliament. They focused on the importance of intervention to ensure social justice and secure the workers' rights. They also encouraged balance and cohesion among all the members of the society as Ramsy MacDonald described Socialism as an organization of the community and not a social class movement (Cronin and Weiler 49). The alliance of trade unionist and democratic societies gave birth to the Labour Representation Committee in London 1900. It was the organization that set the principles of the Labour Party. This committee was given the name Labour Party officially after the general elections of 1906.

Shortly after words, property qualification was abolished after the WWI according to the Representation of People's Act 1918. All men over twentyone years old could vote whether they owned property or not. It was also the act that made women over 30 years old eligible to vote for the first time. This restriction was repealed in 1928 when all women received the right to vote in the same terms as men. The British Parliament now representing all the social classes rich and poor, men and women, those people in towns and ordinary people in villages. This would change the country for the better since it became a country of

the majority not the few. It was the sense of democracy that the workers and ordinary people in Britain were seeking throughout a long time of struggle. In other words the hard times of the working class during the Industrial Revolution led eventually to the establishment of a democratic country.

Conclusion

Thanks to trade unions movement, the workers now were politically conscious. They had learned from the hard conditions they experienced during the Industrial Revolution how to be well organized and how much unification and continuity could help to achieve fast and effective results. The collective movement strengthened the working class position in the society and brought the majority of their demands into practice. It was the movement that enabled them to change the destiny of politics in Britain and the creation of the labour Party.. Parliament then included representatives of all social classes and Britain became more democratic. All citizens from different areas and social classes had access to equal social and political rights. Aspects of development by the Industrial Revolution then could also benefit the ordinary people in Britain.

General Conclusion

The Industrial Revolution was a turning point in the British history during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It transformed Britain into a machine dependent country. Britain was the first industrial country in the world since there was a combination of certain factors and circumstances that made it a fertile land to the rise of the Industrial Revolution

Thanks to the Agriculture Revolution, food production increased to supply the growing population. Those people would eventually supply factories with a sufficient workforce. Capital supply also helped building factories and encouraged innovations and developing inventions which were the key motor of industrialization. In addition, railways, canals and bridges, good supply of coal, iron and steam power revolutionized transportation which in turn enhanced a successful global trade. Moreover, the country's political stability, its naval supremacy and being a colonial leading power provided the country with more chances to obtain more raw materials to run its factories. All these components resulted in mass production, high profits, high living standards, dynamic life and various services to the British people became possible.

At the time the Industrial Revolution developed aspects of life of the upper and the middle class people, it was the starting point of the hard times for the working class people. The working environment and discipline in the new factories and mines were seriously harmful. Low wages, long working hours, unsafe conditions, the use of women and child labour were all together the reasons behind the working class protests and the trade unions movement.

The labour unions were mainly created to improve the workers working and living conditions yet they frequently faced serious oppositions. Workers as the Luddites protested violently through destroying machines to get fair wages and better conditions however their

efforts were fruitless. The Chartists then moved from violence to a constitutional way to secure their rights. It was then the starting point of the workers' consciousness which eventually and due to unification, continuity and well organized work, workers succeeded to achieve their goals

As the time passed, rules were enforced more strictly to ensure safe working conditions and better quality of life. Trade unionism became more organized in the second half of the 19th century and together with the spread of the socialist ideas that aimed to establish a classless society, the LRC was formed. It was then the organization that led to the emergence of the Labour Party in 1900 that represented workers and trade unions interests in Parliament. The workers then could participate in decision making in the country especially after the abolition of property qualifications in 1918 and the extension of the women's right to vote in 1928. The country now became more democratic as Parliament represented all the different classes of the society.

It was the workers' suffering during the Industrial Revolution in Britain that led to changing the political scene in the country. The workers' social misery created a sense of brotherhood, mutuality, community and awareness that finally determined a class character which was able to realize great achievements as that of the creation of the Labour Party. All in all, technological developments could not ensure the progress of a society unless its ethical values were fairly emphasized.

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