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CLASS-10TH

(BASED ON N C E R T PATTERN)

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HISTORY

The age of industrialisation

Question 1.

Why were the Victorian industrialists not interested to introduce machines in England ? Give any four reasons.

Or

Why did industrialists not want to get rid of hand labour once machines were introduced ?

Or

Why did some industrialists in the 19th century Europe prefer hand labour to machines ? Give four reasons.

Answer:

The Victorian industrialists were not interested to introduce machines in England. They preferred hand labour to machines. The reasons for this were as mentioned below :

- 1. Abundance of labour and low wages :** There was no shortage of human labour. People had migrated to the cities in large numbers. The wages were also low. On the other hand, machines required huge capital investment.
- 2. Seasonal demand for labour :** Some industries such as gas works and breweries were especially busy through the cold months. So they needed more workers to meet their peak demand. Book binders and printers, catering to Christmas demand, too, needed extra-workers before December. At the waterfront, winter was the time that ships were repaired and spruced up. In all such industries where production fluctuated with the season, industrialists usually preferred hand labour, employing workers for

the season.

3. **Production of goods with different shapes by hand only** : Uniform and standard goods could be produced by machines but some goods with intricate and specific shapes could be made by hand only. In mid-nineteenth century, there were 500 varieties of hammers and 45 kinds of axes that were being produced. Such goods required human skill and not mechanical technology.
(iv) Preference for handmade goods by the upper classes : In the Victorian age, the upper classes preferred handmade goods to symbolise refinement and class. Handmade goods had good finishing. Machinemade goods were generally exported to the colonies.
4. In countries with labour shortage, industrialists were interested in using machines to minimise need for human labour. This was the case in nineteenth-century America. However, Britain had no problem of labour.

Question 2.

Explain how the condition of workers steadily declined in the early 20th century Europe.

Answer:

The factors were as follows :

1. **Abundance of labour and wait for jobs** : There was abundance of labour in the market. Job-seekers had to wait for weeks. They had to spend nights under bridges or in the night Shelters or in Night Refuges or Casual Wards maintained by the Poor Law authorities. One could get a job quickly if he had social connections.
2. **Seasonal work** : Work in many industries such as gas works, breweries was seasonal. There were, therefore, long periods without work. As a result of this, some returned to the countryside while other did odd jobs.
3. **Low wages and less period of employment** : Wages were increased to some extent in the early mid-nineteenth century but as the period of employment was less, the average income was low. About 10 per cent of the urban population was very poor. In periods of economic slump, like the 1830s, the

proportion of unemployed went up to between 35 and 75 per cent in different regions

4. **Introduction of new technology** : The workers were against the introduction of new technology due to fear of unemployment. So, when the Spinning Jenny was introduced in the woolen industry, women workers attacked the new machines.
5. The condition of workers was, therefore, "not satisfactory. However after the 1840s employment opportunities increased due to building activities and transport industry.

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