The Industrial Revolution: The Factory System and Society

Ch. 5 (p. 143-156)
Development of Industry

- **Cottage Industry**
  - Most important before Industrial Revolution
  - Products made in people’s houses ("cottages"), not factories
    - Products sold to businessmen, then sold to public
    - Still practiced, especially in poorer countries
  - Advantages: work at home so able to look after children; didn’t have to move to a city
  - Disadvantages: poorly paid, long hours, little power over negotiating higher prices
Cottage Industry
Development of Industry

• The Factory Age
  – New inventions of Industrial Revolution made Cottage Industry out of date
  – Most inventions very large, required water or steam power
    • Too big to fit in cottages, need more power
  – Factories built to house large machines
    • Built in cities, many people moved there
    • Workers’ housing built around factories
      – Crowded, dirty, noisy, unhealthy, cheaply built
    • Low wages, long hours, unsafe conditions
Workers’ Housing
Factories
Development of Industry

• Child Labour
  – Children of poor families needed to work to help support their families
    • School optional, few poor could read or write
  – Small size made kids useful
    • Textile Industry – picked out loose threads/tangles in looms
    • Chimney Sweeping – sent up chimneys
    • Coal Mining – shuttled loads of coal through small tunnels
  – Poor conditions led to early death, illness
Child Labour
Workers’ Rights

• Social Reformers
  – People who want to change society
  – Many tried to improve the lives of workers

• Workers’ Associations
  – Groups of workers protecting their rights
  – Parliament declared them illegal until 1824

• Factory Acts
  – Laws designed to improve workers’ lives
    • Ex. no child workers under 9; shorter work hours
  – No inspectors to enforce laws though
Society and Culture

- Britain had very strict class system
  - Upper, middle, lower-middle, working, etc
  - Very difficult to move to a higher class
- Accent often reflected class (education)
Society and Culture

• Women During the Industrial Revolution
  – In cottage industry, women could work and look after the home/family
  – Decline of cottage industry forced women out of the home and countryside
    • Rural work: servant for rich family; hired labourers for wealthy farmers
    • Urban work: low-paying factory/mining jobs
  – Paid less than men for the same work
    • Money gave some women more independence
Women During the IR
Society and Culture

• The Poor
  – Lived in city slums (cramped apartments)
    • Often whole families in single rooms
  – Cities grow too fast
    • Streets and sewers not able to handle people
  – Much crime and disease
    • Poverty and unsanitary conditions
  – Some (but not enough) charity relief
    • Many charity workers judgmental, insulting
  – Many go to workhouses
    • Poor work for little food and terrible shelter
Charity
The Poor
Society and Culture

• Population Movement
  – Not just from country to cities
  – Many also moved to British colonies
    • Canada, Australia, 13 Colonies, etc.
    • Offered escape from class system and factory life, cheap land, fresh start
    • Not an easy life either, though
Population Movement
Society and Culture

• Irish Potato Famine
  – Potatoes brought to Europe from the New World
    • Became an essential (“staple”) food for British
    • Ireland grows and eats more than average
  – 1845: Irish potato crop suffers from blight
    • Disease that rotted the potatoes in the fields
    • Led to much hunger and even starvation
    • Many had to sell property, couldn’t pay rent
      – Moved to British cities or colonies overseas
    • Little help came from the English
The Great Famine
Society and Culture

• The Clearances
  – Part of enclosure movement in Scotland
  – Poor farmers kicked off land by landlords
    • Landowners want land to raise sheep
    • Poor farmers given little time to move
  – Farm houses destroyed to keep poor farmers from returning
  – Thousands of Scots forced to find new homes and work
    • Many move to British cities or colonies overseas
The Clearances