

Attempt of a short essay about the industrial revolution

The industrial revolution is the result of the substitution of competition for the medieval system of production and distribution. I would like to explain how the industrial revolution increased the wealth of industrialising nations and why it increased well-being much less and much later than it did with wealth. Firstly I shall examine how the industrial revolution could produce wealth, secondly how it could have produced well-being and finally why well-being was not improved as much as wealth.

The wealth is substantially "In the public sense, all objects, esp. material objects, which have economic utility". The facts leading to the industrial revolution are the reasons why goods start falling in price, boosting trade, producing wealth.

Three different elements paved the way to the industrial revolution: scientific and technological discoveries, the puritanism mentality in middle-class and the enclosures law. All these caused, in a direct or indirect way, the agrarian revolution, the rapid growth of population (due to food produce more efficiently in enclosures), the revolution in manufacturing industry, the expansion of trade, the revolution in the distribution of wealth, the born of the capitalists and also the misery of working people.

After the agriculture revolution food was produced more efficiently and fewer peasants were required, so they moved from country to industrialised cities (urbanisation). These cities were near coal mines because transport costs and the production required investments in machines that only organised centre of production could provide. This is the reason both to the expansion of dependent work and to the born of capitalists, which caused an enormous difference in the social conditions of production means' owners and workers. Goods had to be transported throughout the England (later in Europe and all over the world) and efficient means of communication were necessary. For this reason the first rail-road was built in England (1825), also bridges, canals, turnpike roads were built. However all these elements would have no meaning unless they are seen under the point of view of competition, as Adam Smith did in his "Wealth of nations" (1776) looking for the causes of wealth. It's competition which forced the productive system to put the cheapest and best product on the market, I would say also the most efficient under the production and distribution aspects. But only a puritan mentality could transport this concept into reality, pushed by his imperative of doing the best he can and at the very beginning allowed by the enclosures law.

Now that I have showed the most important aspects of the increasing of wealth I shall briefly deal with the possibility of producing well-being.

As a matter of fact wealth could be distributed also to the working class, and some actually was, for example food after agrarian revolution, but misery of working people increased dramatically and at the same time middle-class got richer and richer. Even if poverty couldn't probably have been solved, profits could have also improved the social condition of the poorest. The wealth of capitalists could have gone to workers, maybe it ought to because they actually produced it.

This happened for these reasons: Capitalists didn't care about workers because they didn't see the relation between the goods they produced and the people who bought them and they were only interested in cutting off costs and beating the competition. Economical sciences hadn't really understood this link and they focused too much on wealth and too less on well-being. However Marx

understood that and he also wrote a specific essay on the way increasing wages of workers increases well-being and not much prices. Of course as capitalists got richer they got more powerful and as the dominant class they ruled. Particularly at that time workers' interests and middle-class' interests were opposite, but the more the industrial revolution developed the more middle-class got richer and more powerful compared with workers, defeating trade unions very often until a working social class conscience was born and workers got a little more power.