**SUMMARY OF THE TEXT: “The Chief Features of the Industrial Revolution”**

The traditional mediaeval regulations of production and distribution of goods deeply changed during the Industrial Revolution. As a consequence, between 18th and 19th century spread two system of thoughts: Economic Science and Socialism, which analysed differently modern economy and society. The development of Economic Science, which characterized the period of the Industrial Revolution, has four landmarks named as four important economists. The first one is Adam Smith who in “Wealth of Nations” (1776) investigated the causes of growth of wealth that the English society was living. Then in 1798 Malthus in his “Essay on Population” analysed the effects of the first Industrial Revolution and in particular the causes of poverty. The third stage in the growth of the Economic Science is Ricardo’s “Principles of Political Economy and Taxations” (1817), where he investigated the distribution (not production anymore) of goods and wealth in a modern economic system. As a conclusion the last landmark is named by John Stuart Mill who wrote “Principles of Political Economy” in 1848, where he analysed both production and distribution laws and tried to solve the problem how wealth ought to be distributed.

One of the most evident facts of the Industrial Revolution is the growth of population, nevertheless rural population lived a huge decline. As a matter of facts fields had to face many changes between 18th and 19th century: first of all, the introduction of enclosure system, but also the consolidation of small farms into large and so the revolution of the traditional field-system of cultivation. All these events led to the phenomenon of the urban drift and consequently to the decrease in rural population. However, thanks to the mechanical inventions, fields started to be cultivated with a more scientific approach and the first step was the invention of the steam plough. Moreover, the new scientific approach spread agricultural societies, rotation of crops and caused an improvement of breed of cattle.

The growth of industry is another important fact of the Industrial Revolution, indeed is the industry which marked the first stage for the shift from a domestic system to an industrialized one. Inventions like Spinning Jenny, Water – frame, Crompton’s mule and self – acting mule contributed in bringing textile production in factories. Afterwards textile industry became highly important in UK thanks the inventions of steam – engine and power loom. The Iron industry lived a mechanical revolution too, when the steam engine was applicated to blast furnaces and was invented the smelting by pit – coal.

In this period were also improved means of communication, in particular canal system, roads and railroads. As a result, there was an extraordinary growth in commerce and as a consequence the conclusive transformation of the domestic system into a factory system.

So many changes in production implied also a revolution in distribution of wealth. In agriculture an important fact was the rise in rents, due to the spread of enclosure, the consolidation of farms and the high price of corn (because of the French War) and also the rental of lands. Instead the changes in manufacturing world caused disappearance of the relations between masters and men, the substitution of a “cash-nexus” for the human tie and class conflict. So, there were two social classes: capitalists and working class, the first one decided how to produce and distribute wealth whereas the second one lived in misery. Indeed, working class was a victim of fall in wages, fluctuation of trades and rise of prices.

As a conclusion capitalism and the free competition may produce wealth, but not well-being as the misery and the lack of rights of the working class showed during the Industrial Revolution.