

NCERT QUESTIONS WITH SOLUTIONS

1. Explain the following
(a) Women workers in Britain attacked the Spinning Jenny.

Ans. Many workers, especially women, were opposed to the use of Spinning Jenny and these machines were targeted and destroyed in many instances of rebellion. Spinning Jenny was capable of speeding up the spinning process and reducing the labour demand. A worker could set in motion a number of spindles and spin several threads at the same time by turning one single wheel. Naturally, the fear of unemployment which was the biggest problem of England in those days made them hostile to spinning jenny. Women who survived on hand spinning attacked them and the conflict continued for a long time.

- (b)** In the seventeenth century merchants from towns in Europe began employing peasants and artisans within the villages.

Ans. Merchants supplied money to artisans and peasants, and successfully persuaded them to produce for an international market.

There was large-scale industrial production for an international market, even before factories began coming up in Europe including England. This mass production for the international market was not based on factories. This phase of industrialisation is referred to as proto industrialisation, by the Historians. It was under the control of merchants and the goods were produced by a large number of producers, not in factories, but producers working within their family farms.

Reasons behind Merchants Moving to Countryside

The demand for goods began growing, with the acquisition of colonies in different parts of the world and expansion of world trade. In towns, these were associations of producers that restricted the entry of new people into the trade, regulated prices and competitions, maintained control over production, and trained craftspeople. In towns, the trade guilds and urban crafts were powerful, hence merchants could not expand production within the towns. The monopoly of right to trade and produce and trade in specific products were granted to different guilds by the rulers. Hence it was very tough for new merchants to set up business in towns, so they found an alternative by turning to the countryside.

Peasants – Reasons Behind Working for Merchants

In the countryside merchants provided work for poor artisans and peasants. Shrinking income from cultivation was supplemented by the income from proto-industrial production. This was a time when open fields were disappearing, and commons were being enclosed. Poor Peasants and Cottagers had to now look for alternative sources of income, who had earlier depended on common lands for their survival, gathering their vegetables, firewood, straw, hay, and berries. All members of the household could not find work as many of them had tiny plots of land.

Peasant households eagerly agreed, when merchants came around and offered advances to produce goods for them. Fuller use of their family labour resources was possible due to this new work given by the merchants. Poor peasants could continue to cultivate their small plots and they could continue to remain in the countryside by working for the merchants.

(c) The port of Surat declined by the end of the eighteenth century.

Ans. The European companies gradually gained power by securing concessions and monopoly rights to trade. This resulted in the decline of old ports through which local merchants operated.

(d) The East India Company appointed gomasthas to supervise weavers in India.

Ans. The English East India Company appointed Gomasthas for the following reasons:

- (i) To eliminate the existence of traders and brokers and establish a direct control over the weavers.
- (ii) To eliminate weavers from dealing with other buyers by means of advances and control. In this manner, weavers who took loans and fees in advance were obligated to the British.

2. Write True or False against each statement:

(a) At the end of the nineteenth century, 80 per cent of the total workforce in Europe was employed in the technologically advanced industrial sector.

(b) The international market for fine textiles was dominated by India till the eighteenth century.

(c) The American Civil War resulted in the reduction of cotton exports from India.

(d) The introduction of the fly shuttle enabled handloom workers to improve their productivity

Ans. (a) False, (b) True, (c) False, (d) True

3. Explain what is meant by proto industrialisation.

Ans. Proto industrialisation was the stage when large scale industrial production took place in the absence of modern factories for international market. A close relationship between town and countryside developed in which a network of close commercial exchange existed between a merchant and a farmer. The former stayed in town and employed producers working in family farms, not in factories. At each stage of production, about 20 to 25 workers were employed by each merchant.

4. Why did some industrialists in nineteenth-century Europe prefer hand labour over machines?

Ans. Machines required large capital investment. Introduction of machines did not necessarily affect the traditional process of production for a long time.

(i) The need for machines varied according to available labour. Where there was plenty of labour, wages were low. Countries like Britain and USA did not have problem of labour shortage. Industrialists had no problem of labour shortage or high wage costs in these countries.

(ii) The wear and tear of machines made investors very cautious and wary of full dependence on machines. They preferred human labour which were more dependable and cheaper in those days.

5. How did the East India Company procure regular supplies of cotton and silk textiles from Indian weavers?

Ans. The English East India Company used different means to procure silk and cotton from the weavers:

- (i) Appointment of paid supervisors called Gomasthas. They also collected supplies and examined cloth quality of the weavers.
- (ii) Prevention of Company weavers from dealing with other buyers through a system of advances and loans.

6. Imagine that you have been asked to write an article for an encyclopaedia on Britain and the history of cotton. Write your piece using information from the entire chapter.

Ans. Britain and history of cotton:

- (i) Cotton textile production became the symbol of industrialisation in Britain in the eighteenth century.
- (ii) The invention of cotton mill by Richard Arkwright made cotton production easier and faster.
- (iii) Factories in England emerged as early as the 1730s and their numbers increased steadily. It was due to changes in the production process of carding (process of preparing cotton or wool fibres prior to spinning), twisting, spinning and rolling.
- (iv) The raw cotton import increased from 2.5 million pounds in 1760 to 22 million pounds in 1787.

(v) The manufacturing industry of Manchester became the largest producer of cotton textiles which were exported to other countries and to her colonies. They produced fine textiles and industrialisation spread to other towns and cities. With the spread of industrialisation in other European nations, competition was fierce and led to monopoly of trade and colonisation.

7. Why did industrial production in India increase during the First World War?

Ans. Till the First World War, industrial growth in India was slow. The war created a dramatically new situation. Manchester imports into India declined due to the war. The British factories became busy with producing things needed for the army. Indian mills now suddenly had a large market to supply. The long war made the Indian factories supply them with jute bags, cloth for army uniforms, tents and leather boots, horse and mule saddles and a host of other items. Many workers were employed for longer hours.

After the war Manchester goods lost their hold on the Indian market. British economy collapsed as it could not compete with the USA, Japan and its European rivals. The Indian industrialists captured the local market. Small scale industries prospered.