**EARLY INDUSTRIALIZATION**

**Interpreting Primary Sources**

Reading 1:

The operatives work thirteen hours a day in the summer time, and from daylight to dark in the winter. At half past four in the morning the factory bell rings, and at five the girls must be in the mills....So fatigued...are numbers of girls that they go to bed soon after their evening meal, and endeavor by a comparatively long sleep to resuscitate their weakened frames for the toil of the coming day.

*The Harbinger*, 1846

**Reading 2:**

Rule first: Each one to enter the house without unnecessary noise or confusion, and hang up their bonnet, shawl, coat, etc., etc., in the entry.

Rule second: Each one to have their place at the table during meals, the two which have worked the greatest length of time in the Factory, to sit on each side of the head of the table, so that all new hands will of course take their seats lower down, according to the length of time they have been here.

Rule three: It is expected that order and good manners will be preserved at table during meals--and at all other times either upstairs or down.

Rule fourth: There is no unnecessary dirt to be brought into the house by the Boarders, such as apple cores or peels, or nut shells, etc.

Rule fifth: Each boarder is to take her turn in making the bed and sweeping the chamber in which she sleeps.

Rule sixth: Those who have worked the longest in the Factory are to sleep in the North Chamber and the new hands will sleep in the South Chamber.

Rule seventh: As a lamp will be lighted every night upstairs and placed in a lanthorn, it is expected that no boarder will take a light into the chambers.

Rule eighth: The doors will be closed at ten o'clock at night, winter and summer, at which time each boarder will be expected to retire to bed.

Rule ninth: Sunday being appointed by our Creator as a Day of Rest and Religious Exercises, it is expected that all boarders will have sufficient discretion as to pay suitable attention to the day, and if they cannot attend to some place of Public Worship they will keep within doors and improve their time in reading, writing, and in other valuable and harmless employment.

Rules at a mill boardinghouse

Reading 3:

There is no class of mechanics in New York who average so great an amount of work for so little money as the journey shoemakers....There are hundreds of them in the city constantly wandering from shop to shop in search of work, while many of them have families in a state of absolute want....We have been in more than fifty cellars in different parts of the city, each inhabited by a shoemaker and his family. The floor is made of rough plank laid loosely down, the ceiling is not quite so high as a tall man. The walls are dark and damp, and a wide desolate fireplace yawns in the center to the right of the entrance. There is no outlet back and of course no yard privileges of any kind. The miserable room is lighted only by a shallow sash, partly projecting above the surface of the ground and by the little light that struggles down the steep and rotting stairs. In this...often live the man with his work-bench, his wife and five or six children of all ages, and perhaps a palsied grandfather or grandmother and often both. In one corner is a squalid bed and the room elsewhere is occupied by the work-bench, a cradle made from a dry-goods box, two or three broken, seatless chairs, a stew-pan and a kettle.

*New York Daily Tribune*, 1845

Reading 4:

We...agree to work for such wages per week, and prices by the job, as the Company may see fit to pay....We also agree not to be engaged in any combination, whereby the work may be impeded, or the company's interest in any work injured....

Work contract, Cocheco Manufacturing Company, Dover, New Hampshire

Reading 5:

Just as there is sun at noonday, capital, under its present hostile and unnatural state, is fast reducing labor to utter dependence and slavish beggary....This talk about the continued prosperity, happy condition, and future independence of the producing class of this country...is all fiction, moonshine.

*Voice of Industry*, 1845

Reading 6:

Are you an American citizen? Then you are a joint-owner of the public lands. Why not take enough of your property to provide yourself a home? Why not vote yourself a farm?...Are you tired of slavery--of drudging for others--of poverty and its attendant miseries? Then vote yourself a farm?...Join with your neighbors to form a true American party, having for its guidance the principles of the American revolution, and whose chief measures shall be-

1. To limit the quantity of land that any one man may henceforth monopolize or inherit; and 2. To make the public lands free to actual settlers only, each having the right to sell his improvements to any man not possessed of other land.

These great measures once carried, wealth...would consist of the accumulated products of human labor, instead of a hoggish monopoly of God's labor; and the antagonism of capital and labor would forever cease.

*True Workingman*, 1846

Questions To Think About

1. What conditions did early l9th century factory operatives work and live under?

2. How was the status of craftsmen changing during the early l9th century?

**3. What solutions did workers propose?**

**IMMIGRATION**

Interpreting Statistics

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Immigration as a Source of Population Increase** | |
| **Year** | **Percent of Total Population Increase** |
| 1820s | 4 percent |
| 1830s | 13 percent |
| 1840s | 23 percent |
| 1850s | 34 percent |
| 1860s | 25 percent |
| 1870s | 27 percent |
| 1880s | 41 percent |
| 1890s | 28 percent |

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| **Immigration to the U.S.** | | | | |
| **Year** | **Number** | **Percentage of Composition** | | |
| **Irish** | **English** | **German** |
| 1820 | 8,385 |  |  |  |
| 1830 | 23,322 |  |  |  |
| 1840 | 84,066 | 47 | 10 | 35 |
| 1850 | 369,980 | 44 | 14 | 21 |
| 1860 | 153,640 | 32 | 19 | 35 |

Questions To Think About

1. During which decades was immigration the greatest source of population increase?

2. Where did most pre-Civil War immigrants come from?

**EDUCATION**

**Interpreting Statistics**

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| **School Enrollment, Whites ages 5-19 (1861)** | | | |
|  | **Percent Enrolled In School** | **Percent Actually Attending** | **Days in School** **Year** |
| **Northeast** | 62 % | 59 % | 150 |
| **South** | 76 % | 57 % | 116 |
| **West** | 30 % | 45 % | 80 |

**Questions To Think About**

1. Why do you think school enrollment was higher in the West than in the South?

2. What difference do you think it meant that children in the Northeast were more likely to attend school than those in other regions of the country?

**WEALTH DISTRIBUTION**

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| **Economic Growth and Stratification of Wealth** | | | | |
| **Year** | **Population in millions** | **Nonfarm Labor Force** | **Per Capita** **Wealth** | **Wealth Owned By Top l0 Percent** |
| 1800 | 5.3 | 21.0 | 64.4 | 4 percent |
| 1820 | 17.4 | 17.1 | 67.7 | 50 percent |
| 1840 | 9.6 | 36.6 | 100.0 | 55 percent |
| 1860 | 31.4 | 46.8 | 137.0 | 60 percent |

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| **Distribution of Wealth** | | | |
| **City** | **Year** | **Proportion of wealth owned by:** | |
| **Richest 1 Percent** | **Richest 3 Percent** |
| Boston | 1848 | 42 percent | 64 percent |
| Brooklyn | 1841 | 37 | -- |
| New York | 1845 | 40 | 66 percent |

Per Capita Wealth: 1840 = 100.0

|  |  |
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| **Concentration of Wealth in Farming Areas, 1860** | |
| **Place** | **Proportion of Property Held by Richest 10 Percent of Farmowners** |
| Southern black belt counties | 64 |
| Trempealeau County, Wisconsin | 39 |
| 11 Vermont counties | 38 |

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| **Concentration of Wealth in a northeastern and a western town, 1860** | | |
| **Place** | **Proportion of adult males** | **Proportion of real property** |
| Jacksonville, Illinois | 69 | 80 |
| Northampton, Massachusetts | 68 | 72 |

With no real estate held by richest 10 percent

**Questions To Think About**

1. Did the distribution of income and wealth grow more or less equal during the decades before the Civil War?

2. A famous Frenchman named Alexis de Tocqueville said that the defining characteristic of pre-Civil War America was "equality of condition." Others have called this era the "age of the common man." Do statistics on the distribution of wealth support or contradict these views? In what sense, if any, might these observers have been correct?