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Child Labor in England During the Nineteenth Century

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my loving parents who provided me with all what I need by their endless support, patience and encouragement.

To my brothers and sisters: Ismail, Ibrahim, Meriem and Zineb.

I also dedicate this work to cheerful and dearest friends:

Maneltouali Houdamissaoui, Fatimahabbali and Hanan Kahloun

To all who share with me happy time at university during the years of my study.

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Abstract:

The aim of this study is to examine one of the important social issues spread in England during the 19th century which is child labor. In this regard, the extended essay is divided into two chapters; the first chapter deals with an overview about the Victorian society and the impact of Industrial Revolution on people mainly children. It aims to shed light on the social life during the nineteenth century in Britain. As for the second chapter, it seeks to investigate the problem of child labor during the Victorian age, and the reasons behind the spread of this phenomenon during that period. It also tackles the main jobs accomplished by children, as well as the major consequences which resulted from this issue.

Key words: 19th Century, Victorian period, social life, Industrial Revolution, child labor.

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General Introduction

General Introduction

The nineteenth century was a century of transformation. England was under the reign of Queen Victoria from 1837 till 1901 which was the longest reign ever in British history.

The Victorian era was an age of change; it witnessed different events in economy, science and society that led to the great progress of the country. However the division of society into three different social classes: the upper class, the middle class and the working class which led to the concepts known as class conflicts. As well as, men dominated society and they enjoyed all their rights as citizens, whereas women were prevented from their legal rights such as education, work, owning a property and the right to vote; they were placed at home to be just successful housewives to take care of their husbands and to raise their children. . On the other side, the era knew some problems such as poverty, famine, disease, child labor

In nineteenth centuries Great Britain became the first country to industrialize. Because of this, it was also the first country where the nature of children's work changed so dramatically that child labor became seen as a social problem and a political issue. Child labor refers to the employment of children in any work that deprives children of their childhood, interferes with their ability to attend regular school, and that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful.

This phenomenon did not begin with the advent of the industrial revolution. The young had always worked alongside their parents in the home, in the field, and as apprentices in skilled and semi-skilled trades, but the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw a drastic change in the type of labor children performed. Increasingly employed in factories and mines, children were thrust into dangerous and unhealthy situations within the adult working world, prompting reformers to call for legislative change and Romantic and Victorian writers to offer sympathetic representations of working children in their poetry and fiction.

The interest of this research work is centered on the following questions: what was child labor in England during the nineteenth century? And what were the main jobs performed by children at that time and consequences behind this issue? And at last how the British government attempt to abolish child labor?

The research work is divided into two chapters; the first one entitled definition of the main concepts deals with the historical background of the Victorian era. Our concern will be on social life, economy and the impact of industrial revolution, the first chapter defines as well as the issue child labor.

The second chapter entitled child labor exposes the issues of child labor during the Victorian age, and the reasons behind the spread of this phenomenon, the chapter also deals with the main jobs accomplished by children, as well as the major consequences which resulted from this issue.

**Chapter one:
Definition of the Main
Concepts**

Chapter One: Definition of the main concepts

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1.1. Introduction

Historians divide the history of England into a series of periods. From the ancient Britain to the modern age, these periods are spans of time in which each one of them has its own particular features whether in the social life, literature, religion, or other aspects. Thus, the Victorian era is one of these periods which have its own characteristics from advance in medical, scientific, and technological knowledge to change in population growth and location. This chapter aims to shed light on political, social and historical background of the Victorian age and look into the effect of industrial revolution like social classes, child labor as an example.

1.2. Victorian Age

The adjective « Victorian » was first used in 1851 by E.P (Briggs Asa, 1963, p. 66) but the reality of Victorianism went back to the accession of Queen Victoria to the crown in 1837. The Victorian era refers to the period of Queen Victoria who reigned between 1837 until her death in 1901 (Carter and McRae, 1997, p. 125) .She was the first English monarch to see her name given to the period of her reign whilst still alive.

According to William E. Burns (2010) the British Empire under Queen Victoria was at its zenith of power and prestige (p. 154). During the Victorian age, England changed as much as dramatically as it had in all of its previous history. It was that in the nineteenth century that England reached its height as a world imperial power.

Within the same meaning of thought, Queen Victoria came to the throne in 1837, a moment when the monarchy was not famous, and the number of London's citizens was about 2 million inhabitants. Yet, the number of population increased at the time of her death to become about 6 million inhabitants; a period when Britain became the most powerful manufacturing country (Carter and McRae, 1997, p. 271). However, regrettably there were several incidents which ended the era of the Queen's

reign not as good as its starting; like the Crimean War (1854-6), The Indian Mutiny of 1857, and the death of the husband of Victoria in 1861, which drove the Queen to be Widow and led several protestants to oppose the monarchy (p. 125).

The Victorian era was characterized by paradoxes and contradictions; Which means that the Victorian witnessed so many political conflicts and struggles, but they also experienced a period that was known by “high Victorian England” (1851-1867). During that period, work and progress were the main values. The national mood of people at that time was influenced by prosperity through free trade .besides the sense of national security and trust in institutions which resulted in a stable society; this was in addition to the belief in the moral code of order and change.

In the scope of this, BurgessWillson(1958, p.80) speaks that:

The Victorian Age thus had a large number of problems to face. In many ways, it was an age of progress of railway –building, steam ships reforms of all kinds but it was also an age of doubt. There was too much poverty, too much injustice, too much ugliness and too little certainty about faith or morals – thus it became also an age of crusaders and reformers and theorist

Furthermore, it was the period of the industrial revolution that made England known top nation thanks to the development in trade and industry.(Williams,2004, p.1) It created new world to the Victorians and the texture of their daily life. It marks the most fundamental transformation of human life in the history of England and its people in. In fact England had witnessed many innovations in different field such as philosophy, science, and technology. For example railway lines that connected England’s major cities as the Liverpool and Manchester Railway opened the first public railway line in the world.

1.3. Literature during the Victorian Age

The Victorian literature is the literature produced during the reign of Queen Victoria; it takes its beginning exactly with the death of Sir Walter Scott in 1832 and went up to 1914. The Victorian era can be characterized as a great age of literature because it was a period that witnessed an intensive production in literature especially by poets and novelists, philosophers and essayists (Cuddon , 1970, p.245). Within this context Sharpe and Henderson (2004:469) assert that:

The energy of Victorian literature its most striking trait, and self-exploration is its favorite theme. Victorians produced a staggeringly large body of literature renowned for its variety. Their writing is distinguished by its particularity, eccentricity, long-windedness earnestness, ornateness, fantasy, humor, experimentation and self-consciousness

The Victorian era is often regarded as a high point in English literature and it is the literature that covers the whole of the nineteenth century. It is a literature that speaks of an age which witnessed great change, it reflects the intellectual patterns of the Victorian age dealing with the status question through on the examination of society, the law, industrialism and historical ideals, it has no main mission point the finger at social problems to raise people consciousness (Fletcher, 2002, p. 119).

Moreover, the dominant genre in Victorian literature was the novel (Cuddon, 1970, p. 167). Significant Victorian novelist and poet include “Matthew Arnold, the Bronte sisters, Christina Rossetti, Robert Browning, Joseph Conrad, , George Eliot, Benjamin Disraeli, Elizabeth Gaskell “ they created legacy works which become ubiquitous with continuing appeal (Carter, Mc Rae. 2001). Apparently, with much to justify the period’s greatest authors; Charles Dickens represents a vivid and suitable image to the Victorian era and literature through his works as ‘The most popular of all English novelists’ (Huntington, 2002, p. 137).

The Victorian literature has a lot to do with the fast cultural change, national pride, and strong belief in social classes, religion and moral values; through what is known by romanticism and realism, when the novel becomes a very important tool in use for expression of the life and society. Generally speaking, novels written in the Victorian era and especially those done by Dickens, allow the readers to have a clear image about the society of England at that time.

1.4. Social life during the Victorian Era

England was under the reign of Queen Victorian which was the longest reign ever in British history (Lh  r  te and Barriat, 2001, p. 204). Thus, England knew great change in the economic, social and scientific life, which deeply affected the people's value, moral and principle.

Generally speaking, nothing may speak and describe the Victorian society like its search of self-definition; because the sixty three years of Victoria's reign were noticeable by social changes. Within this context Sharpe and Henderson (2004) claim that "the sixty three years of Victoria's reign were marked by momentous and intimidating social changes"(p. 451).

Despite of all problems, contradiction and conflicts that Britain faced, and the threat of losing the real meaning of society, the Victorian era could be described as an age of reform. Like Thompson (cited in Sharpe and Henderson, 2004, p. 460)claims that:

The whole meaning of Victorian England is lost if it is thought of as a country of stuffy complacency and black top hated moral piggery. Itsfrowsty crinolines and dingy hansom cabs its gas lit houses and over ornate draperies concealed a people engaged in a tremendously exciting adventure _ the daring experiment of fitting industrial man into a democratic society

Once more, as it is taken into consideration; Britain was smoothly moving to a state of becoming Europe's most stable and prosperous country. Different events and incidents mark this transfer among which The Industrial Revolution, the railway age, and steam engines are noticeably observed. Thus, it can be described as an age of transition. Moreover, the Victorian period witnessed a deep religious thinking that reflects in a wide range of attitudes in helping the poor and fighting for reform (Grellet, 1999, p.106-107). This situation inspired several Victorians writers who attempted to depict a real picture of their society (Cockshut, 1993,p49). Through many of their works, these writers revealed their commitment towards their social environment during the nineteenth century.

1.4.1. Social Classes

English society in the nineteenth century consisted of hierarchical structure containing the upper class, the middle class and the working class. This difference in social classes could be distinguished by inequality in wealth, education, working and living condition. The classes lived in separate areas and they observed different social customs (Mitchell, 2009, p. 17). Social classes became a major issue in the 19th century and this lasted well into 20th century, British society in the 1800's encompasses three primary social classes: the upper class, the middle class, and the working class. David Cody, Associate professor of English at Hartwick College describes the Victorian class structure:

Early in the nineteenth century the labels "working class" and "middle class" were already coming into common usage. The old hereditary aristocracy, reinforced by the new gentry who owed their success to commerce, industry, and the profession, evolved into an "upper class" (its consciousness formed in large part by the Public School and Universities) which tenaciously maintained control over the politic system depriving not only the working class but the middle class of a voice in the political process. ("social classes" the Victorian Web. 2002)

Three common social classes recognized in many societies. Also it based on variety of criteria such as access to economic power, the level of economic reward, the values, expectation, beliefs and experiences of a social group.

First, Aristocracy or the upper class which was wealthy and dominant, it consisted of aristocrats ruling families, nobles, titled people and religious hierarchs. those people had a fortune to born with their high status and they did not have to make much effort to earn their place in society , People from the upper class were mostly extremely wealthy and better living conditions, they hold the most of political power and other facilities which were out of the reach of the other two classes. (William, 2004p.307)

With the rise of industrialization, the British aristocracy became strongly involved in the development of mining, canals and railways. As landowners who controlled most of the country's agriculture. Moreover, their lives were comfortable; country house with a lot of servants and whose income derived from landed estate. When the eldest son inherited the estate, he was expected to do something useful as taking part in parliament, local affairs (Mitchell, 2009, p 21).

Women of upper class did not work, but it was expected for them to stay at home until they get married, According to the traditional family pattern, the women were supposed to look after the household chores and take care of children, in terms of education also those belonging to the rich families got the best tutors to provide education. The fact that they represented the royal class gave these people an advantage at everything.

Second, during the nineteenth century a new class of citizenry emerged in British society known as "the middle class"; as a result of Industrial Revolution and the enormous rise in population from 10.5 Million in 1885 to 37 Million in 1901 (Ford, 1982, p22)

The Middle class was the next in social ranking, it consisted of bankers, large shopkeepers businessmen, doctors, engineers, architects, lawyers and the clergy (Mitchell, 2009, p.20). Thus, with the change of commercial and industrial society, the

middle-class grew larger with the rise of industrialists and factory owners. They became central to the Bourgeois identity of the nineteenth century (Williams, 2004, p.175).

In addition to that, Middle-class women might act as housekeepers or general servants in the households of theirkins, it was a strategy for middle-class families to maintain adult women outside commercial or professional activities (Williams, 2004, p.262).The middle class of the period befallen more rich and powerful force in the society, whereas, despite of the fact that new acts and rules have been created; the working class remains poor and forced to work in bad conditions (Carter and McRae, 1996, p. 126).

Third, lower class or working class was the lower rank of social classes had almost no political power. They were industrial laborers, farmers, domestic servants, tailors, bricklayer, bakers, commercial clerks and other professionals and they rarely went to school. Also, the working classes (both men and women) did visible work. Their labor was physical and often dirty; it showed in their clothes and their hands. They were paid a daily or weekly wage. They were found in unskilled and skilled jobs; mining, fishing, transportation, industry and other manual trade. In addition to that, their interest was just earning to stay alive and struggling the poverty and illness.(Mitchell, 2009, p18)

During that time, many children never attended school and half of them grew up unable to read and write, and ended up in a workhouse, which housed and fed people who had no power to support themselves, otherwise they were put to work. Boys and girls had to start work very young and they often helped in the work done by older member of the family.(Ibid)

1.4.2. Class Conflicts

Class conflict refers to the concept of underlying tensions or antagonisms which exist in society due to competing socioeconomic interests and desires between people of different classes. Class conflict is thought to play a fundamental role in history of class societies (such as capitalism and feudalism) by Marxists as Karl Marx in his

book *The Communist Manifesto* and the anarchist Mikhail Bakunin. Generally this class struggle-or class conflict is conflict between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The proletariat is the social class which doesn't have means of production that the bourgeoisie has (Forster, 1974, p189).

Moreover, class conflict can take many different forms: Direct violence, such as wars fought for resources and cheap labor; indirect violence, such as deaths from poverty, starvation, illness or unsafe working conditions; compulsion, such as the threat of losing a job or pulling an important investment; or ideology, either intentionally (as with books and articles promoting capitalism) or unintentionally (as with the promotion of consumerism through advertising).

As Marx saw the development of class conflict between classes was initially confined to individual factories. He predicted that class conflict between life conditions the bourgeoisie and the proletariat would lead to capitalism's downfall, and the increasing homogenization within each class, individual struggles become generalized to coalitions across factories Increasingly class conflict is manifested at the societal level.

Marx was mad that the workers were forced to work without any say in the business. He believed that since the workers make the things, they should say where they go and for how much, instead of the rich owners. They had to work hard to earn a living, while making the rich richer just doing simple office work. Since they had to earn money to buy food, and jobs were the only things that give money, they had no choice but to work for the rich who made the business.

The rich became richer while the worker hauled and lifted and did all of that hard manual stuff no one really likes to do. Karl Marx thought that their labor limited their freedom. He wanted the workers to unite and take over the business, so that they could all be prosperous. He thought that the common man deserved to run the business, and that the rich were not better than the commoner. In addition to that, the class struggle of the working class can succeed only if it is transformed from an

economic into a political struggle, that is, into the 'struggle of class against class' in which workers become aware of their historic interests and seek to wrest political power from the capitalists. Marx believed that the economic class struggle in fact had an inherent tendency to become political (Alex, 1983, p187).

During the age of industrialism, the whole society was dominated mainly by a two-class system. That is, there was a huge gap between the rich and the poor, a social middle-class was more or less non-existent. As a consequence, a huge contrast developed between the higher and the lower social classes. They also suggested that history was itself the unfolding product of successive stages of class conflict which by the nineteenth century had in Britain reached the stage of struggle between the middle and working classes (Williams, 2004, p189). In general speaking, the class struggle should therefore not be seen as an objective necessity, a law of history, but should instead be reinterpreted in subjective terms, as a sort of, social poetry. In other words, the idea of the class war is a myth (Gregory, 2005, p 209).

1.5. Industrial Revolution

Industrial Revolution began about 1780 in Britain. The term Industrial Revolution identifies its meaning with economic growth (Mokyr, 1999:1). England was the first country to move from agricultural economy to one based on industry (Mitchell, 2009:2). According to Joel Mokyr (1999:7-8):

Some modern economists have defined the Industrial Revolution as a shift from an economy in which capital was primarily of the circulating kind (e.g., seed in agriculture and raw materials in domestic industry) to one in which the main form which capital took was fixed capital (e.g. machines, mines, and structures).

The early years of the 18th century, many changes happened in several parts of the world and took place in the life and work of people (Taibi, 2008, p.79). These changes are the results of the development of industrialization. During the Victorian age (1830-1901), England faced economic social and cultural changes that brought England to its highest point of development as a world power (Christ and Robinson).

The population of London expanded from about two Million inhabitants when Victoria came to the throne in 1837 to six and half million at the time of her death 1901 .In the late of 18th century and early of 19th century, England went through a number of technological, economic, and social change which are considered in total as the industrial revolution (Carter and McRae, 1997, p. 271).

1.5.1. Definition of the Industrial Revolution

The term Industrial Revolution refers to them and to the period. The definition of this term is quite difficult, it can be defined as the rapid industrial growth that began in England during the middle of the eighteenth century and then spread over the next 50 years to many other countries, including the United States. According to the dictionary definition, “The revolution depended on devices such as the steam engine, which were invented at a rapidly increasing rate during the period.” It is also defined as the rapid growth of certain sectors of manufacturing industry, in particular cotton and iron, from the later eighteen to the early nineteenth century (Rahan, 2011, p. 205).

1.5.2. The impact of industrial Revolution

The Victorian era is well known by the great development of the Industrial Revolution which had officially begun in 1750 in England. It marks the most fundamental transformation of human life in the history of the world (Hobsbawm 1999, p XI). The rapid development of manufacturing with the flow of industrial revolution makes things easy and facile in the latter part of the 18th century by the presentation of coal and steam engine, which has put England the richest country in the world at that time, and the process continued throughout the period (Huntington, 2002, p. 180).

In the nineteenth century Britain became the center of new ideology of free trade, of new technology and of continuing industrial inventions. During this period, the main invention of steam power was exploited for fast railways and ships, for printing process, for industrial looms and for agricultural machinery (Carter and McRae, 1997:272). In addition, the exploitation of iron and steel led to the discovery of new power and to the invention of new machines that increased production.

In communication, telegraph and the railways lines minimized the distance and improved the growth of commerce (Merizig, 2013:18). Besides, cotton and woolen cloth were the basic material of industrial revolution, and by the middle of the nineteenth century the demand for those materials increased which led to better production (McDowall, 1989:123).

In addition to that, the industrial revolution created profound changes in the British society at that time, because the growth of London and other cities in Great Britain marked a change from a way of life based on the land to a modern economy based on manufacturing and financial institution (Carter and McRae, 1997, p. 71). Thus, the economy during that time was changing from agricultural to an industrial one. In addition to poverty, diseases and social problems, the European society at that time suffered from the economic depression following the Industrial Revolution.

Industrial revolution has a positive effects as well as a negative effect in the British society during the nineteenth century. Firstly, the positive effect emerges in bringing railways, manufacturing developments and wealth to the country and making Britain the first industrial and financial nation in the world as well as its leading imperial power, in addition Work became more regimented and disciplined, and began to take place outside the home. The whole family had to work in factories, even kids. Therefore, Engles argued that:

The Industrial Revolution's mainly developments were the invention of the steam engine and the cotton industry. As the improvement of technology, the steam engine could produce more power with less energy than before. As a result, it leads to the improvement and industrialization in other areas.

(Lane, 1978, p.16)

Moreover, working conditions were often much less than satisfactory for many of those employed in the new factory systems and children were the worst during the Industrial Revolution⁷ Workplaces were often poorly ventilated, over-crowded, and replete with safety hazards. Men, women, and children in a similar way were

employed at survival pay in unhealthy and dangerous environments. It left children crippled, deformed and without a future employment for the rest of their lives. This greatly effected not only the child, but the family as well. There was no compensation or laws to support these families affected by the terrible working conditions from the Industrial Revolution.

When the Industrial Revolution started in the 18th century, the great majority of people lived in the countryside. But, the growth of cities coincided with the growth of industry, and rapid urbanization continues to increase in contemporary times. By 2008, for the first time in human history, more people in the world lived in cities than in rural areas. In general, living conditions and sanitation in urban centers were often deplorable. However, this Revolution encouraged the growth of capitalism and science by improving the quality of life of the workers, increased production levels for the factories and mills. The New Lanark Mill, owned by Robert Owen, introduced many new reforms to this mill that gave better hygiene, better housing and better physical and mental welfare for his workers.

Victorians faced; increase of population, development in science, new visions in religion, and transformation in the way of life from an ordinary into a modern and more complex one. This situation inspired many Victorian authors to give pictures equally image about their society through the effects of the industrial revolution (Cuddon, 1992, p. 270). Charles Dickens was among them, the highest point of poverty and suffering of people were the main topics of his writings, which had been presented in most of his works.

Industrial revolution is a shift from using tools to make products to using new sources of energy, from home to the factory, from country to the city, from human or animal power to engines powered. It increased tremendously bringing wealth and power to Great Britain which became the super power of the world during the nineteenth century.

1.6. Child Labor Defined

One of the worst social effects of the industrial revolution was child labor, a phenomenon that culminated during this time. The increased number of families led to create the work houses and the growing of population made a world of children, the children of the poor who lived in the work house were expected to work by the age of six or seven they were useful to factory owners because they were easy to discipline unlike adults they were cheap. Therefore, in the nineteenth century the condition of poor children was to become a main area of social reform because it was a response to the fact that children were suffering and their sufferings were public (McDowall 1999, p.120).

Moreover, the lower classes families, in the early and mid-Victorian period, would not be able to support and to feed themselves if the children had not been employed. The following quote will show this:

[...] but for the vast majority of children 'childhood', if it existed at all, was effectively over by the age of 10. Beyond that age, and often earlier, children within the lower classes were required to contribute to family income or to maintain themselves. Even children who did not earn a wage worked long hours in the service of their parents and others at home, in the streets, in fields, and in factories (Harris, 1994, p. 48)

In some towns of Britain, rarely anybody above the age of four was not working. The children of the working class were forced to work. An example is Dickens's character David in his novel *David Copperfield* who worked at age of 12 in Blacking Factory. Many children worked 16 hours per day under harsh conditions, and many of the more fortunate ones found employment as apprentices in respectable trades or as general servants (Mikanova, 2005, p167).

1.6.Conclusion

To sum up, the first chapter lines out the social life of Victorian society during the nineteenth century. Then it deals with the British Empire that witnessed conflicts and social issues like poverty, diseases, famine and child labour. When it comes to describing Great Britain in the Victorian period, words or phrases like the Industrial Revolution, reform, and change would come to mind. Many changes appeared in many fields as a result of the Industrial Revolution. The class division and the gap between the social classes was a remarkable element in the Victorian society. This chapter paves the way to the second one which will tackle with child labor.

Chapter Two:

Child Labor

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2.1. Introduction

The glorious Victorian era may captivate fashionistas and trendsetters, but the subject of child labor during this age still remains a squirmy issue. During the Industrial Revolution, British farms, textile mills and mines hired children to work long, difficult hours in horrific environments. Children received harsh punishment and low or no wages. As the period ended, lawmakers began creating laws protecting children from exploitation.

2.2. Child Labor during the English Industrialization

The term “child labor” is often defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development; it refers to work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and injurious to children as well as interferes with their schooling by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school; obliging them to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.

Child labor involves children being enslaved, separated from their families, exposed to serious hazards and illnesses and/or left to fend for themselves on the streets of large cities – often at a very early age. Whether or not particular forms of “work” can be called “child labor” depends on the child’s age, the type and hours of work performed, the conditions under which it is performed and the objectives pursued by individual countries. The answer varies from country to country, as well as among sectors within countries. (International Labor Organization ILO, 2002)

In a recent work, historian Catherine Schmitz said that “child labor refers to work that impedes children’s access to education and is harmful to their physical, mental, moral, developmental, and social well-being.”(Schmitz, 2004, p.1) It is said that child labor is a world-wide issue that is affecting the mentality of millions of children, in which many historians argue that child labor was not created by the Industrial Revolution, considering that it had existed before, but that industrialization produced jobs for them.

Moreover, child labor was to arouse the strongest of emotions during the Victorian Era, it was certainly not a new phenomenon. In England children had always worked, while Britain was a primarily agrarian society, much of the work was “hidden,” being in the fields and a part of a family’s work structure.

In the same line of thought, poor children have always started work as soon as their parents could find employment for them but much of pre-industrial Britain, there simply was not very much work available for children. This changed with industrialization. The new factories and mines were hungry for workers and required the execution of simple tasks that could easily be performed by children. The result was a surge in child labor presenting a new kind of problem that Victorian society had to tackle (Griffin, 2007 NP).

Besides, Victoria’s England was a child-dominated society. Throughout her long reign, the development of child labor during the English industrialization was a controversial matter for historians. Indeed, that economic revolution mainly enabled the English nation to grow wealthier; it also brought forward new social problems. Child labor was one of them.

Some historians argue that the Industrial Revolution was a cause of improvement of child labor in England, while others affirm that the number of children working at that time remained the same as before the Industrial Revolution. Among these historians is English Oxford's professor of economic history Jane Humphries. In 2010, she affirmed that, according to her inquiry, “during most of the 18th century only around 35 per cent of ten-year-old working-class boys were in the labor force while the figure for 1791-1820 (when a large scale industrialization started) was 55 per cent, rising to 60 per cent for the period of 1821-1850.” (Keys, 2010 p.233)

Other historians focus on the causes of child labor increase. They argue that child labor enlarged in the context of the Industrial Revolution and the post Napoleonic War, not only because factory owners employed more children but because of a growth of population. Indeed, it would appear that the population grew, therefore the

number of children grew as well, and produced thereby, younger workforce for factory owners.

According to Jane Humphries, child labor may have increased by 20% between the eighteenth century and 1820. She is not the only one to draw that conclusion. Indeed, historian Edward Palmer Thompson argues: “there was a drastic increased in exploitation of child labor between 1780 and 1840 and every historian acquainted with the sources knows that this is so.” (Thompson, 2002, p. 311)

Consequently, the Industrial Revolution could have been the cause of an increase in child labor in England, but it also seems to have come from a long-established practice of hiring the children from the lower-classes on farms and in craft workshops. Children undoubtedly contributed to the work in industries even if the exact number of them has remained unknown.

In a recent book dealing with the evolution of the working-class in the industrialization of Great Britain, English historian Edward asserts the idea that children, along with skilled and unskilled adult workers started to industrialize the country as soon as the 1780's. He described the Industrial Revolution as “an Industrial Revolution which was created by women and children at least as much as it was by male artisans and factory owners” (Belchem, 1990, p. 11)

2.3. Types of Jobs Done by Children

The Victorian Age was a time of tremendous changes in Great Britain's economy. Factories and machines were built to accommodate the demands of a growing population; along with industrialization came the practice of child labor in which young children were forced to work due to their family's poor economic conditions. Many jobs were available to these children who were paid very little and often worked in unfavorable conditions.

2.3.1. The Coal Mining Industry

Mining, being the key industry, was highly widespread in the country. By 1800's, there were 170 coal mines in England; this industry was the main industry that contributed to child labor in the early nineteenth century. (Banting, 2012, p. 24)

Mining operations used children to sort rocks in the mining carts because their small size allowed them to fit in the carts. They could be trappers, opening and shutting wooden trapdoors the day long, to make fresh air enter and flow into mine tunnels.

The smaller children were employed for that simple task, because most of the time, the shafts leading the doors were really narrow. Therefore, young boys or girls were generally between four and seven-year-old. Creeping into the shafts and sitting long hours in the dark, children enabled other miners to breathe oxygen. Besides, if the job was simple and not really dangerous, children had the entire responsibility of the whole miners' lives. They could also be in charge of the doors which separated the mine division.

As a result, the child had to open the door each time workers needed to pass by, and shut it after them. When children got older and stronger, they became putters. They pushed trucks along tunnels to bring it from one place to another, filling it of the coal miners loosened from its place. Some children worked in pairs, as hurriers and thrusters. They carried large tubs filled with coal along the tunnels (Fohlen, Claude, 2012, p.146)

One child was pulling the tub, the other was pushing it. Getters, often teenagers and men, extracted coal from the seam. Mule driver was also a common child's task in mines. On the surface, children were employed to sort out the coal. Other mines existed where children occupied the same place. There were lead mines, tin mines, copper mines, especially in Cornwall. Following the discovery of coke, obtained by burning coal, numerous foundries appeared. The mining industry had been therefore a major and necessary activity during the industrialization of England.

2.3.2. The Textile Industry

Child labor was a common practice in the textile industry and chiefly because of the introduction of a large number of Parish apprentices. While spinning and weaving techniques had evolved into a simple automatic process, skilled apprentices were called up, but factory owners encouraged the employment of unskilled children and women. Therefore, following the advent of mechanization in textile mills, all of children turned to be an advantageous work-force for the employers.

Paul Mantoux underlines the fact that factory owners favored unskilled children, because machinery supplanted skill workers: “two steam-looms, looking after by a fifteen-year-old boy, could weave three and a half pieces of material, while in the same time a skilled weaver, using the fly-shuttle, wove only one.” (Mantoux, 2013, p. 244)

Besides, a child was enough to look after two steam looms. In factories, young workers performed different tasks. Most of them were scavengers, crawling under the loom to clean it of what could break the loom mechanism, that is to say the dust, the dirt or broken pieces of thread. They prepared and spun cotton, flax, wool or silk. Those cutting and repairing the threads in the looms were called piercer. They were also employed for dyeing materials and threads. When garment was finally woven, they folded and packed it. The number of children working in the textile industry was almost equal to the number of children working in English mines.

2.3.3. Chimney Sweeping

A Victorian Child Chimney Sweep may have been the most dangerous job for children in the 1800's, particularly when the child first began doing the job; Chimney sweeping was a work largely widespread in cities, and was commonly performed by children. That trade had been industrialized later than the others because of a resistance to mechanized tools.

The work of children did not seem substitutable by machines. Indeed, their work was to clear ash and deposits of soot from chimneys, to avoid home fires. The work was done when the child's head poked out of the flue. To perform that task, they

used small hand- brushes. Most of chimney sweep apprentices came from workhouses and were trained from four-year-old. Their small size enabled them to fit easily inside flues, contrarily to adults, as flues could be as narrow as eight inches. Early in the morning, children went out in the streets and called slogans to alert potential customers of their presence.

According to English historian Benita Cullingford, chimney sweeps, also called climbing boys and girls, had existed in England since the twelfth century. Consequently, following the process of urbanization and the advent of the coal mining industry appeared an increase in the demand of chimney sweeps services (Cullingford, 2001, p.31) sold to farmers manure. Most of the master's income came from the soot trade. In order to maximize his incomes, the master made children sleep in the workshop, on bags full of soot, where they were covered with black from top to bottom. Some argue that industrialization made increase the number of child labor in towns. Again, because of a consequent lack of proof, it is hard to give an exact number of working children. Nonetheless, what is obvious is that chimney sweeping appeared to be a flourishing trade during the industrialization of England. Thus the Industrial Revolution had given birth to the chimney sweep stereotype, encountered in the literature of the nineteenth century, that is to say: a young boy, calling and walking around the streets, covered by black soot.

2.3.4. In Agriculture

Britain had a long tradition of agricultural child labor, in which children were most often recruited to scare crows or lead animals to pasture. With the rise of industrialization, and particularly the development of coalmining, more children began entering the workforce at an earlier age. Children were on average five times cheaper to employ than adults, and were expected to work the same hours.

Agricultural work varied by region and function but many common tasks were found on farms. Arable land needed to be ploughed, harrowed and planted. Weeds and stones had to be dug up. Manure was spread to improve soil fertility. Reaping, mowing, threshing and gleaning were part of the annual cycle in cereal agriculture. Draught animals had to be tended. Dairying required the production of milk, butter and

cheese and the marketing of those goods. And there were more specialized aspects of agricultural work such as hedging and ditching, market gardening and fruit picking. These tasks had been carried out for centuries

Furthermore, farm work was too hard to exercise, and it is often done in very bad conditions. In addition to inadequate labor laws, children who worked in agriculture faced exposure to dangerous weather conditions, equipment, pesticides and insecticides. Because their bodies were still growing and they were continually developing mentally, children were even more vulnerable to the harsh conditions faced by all farm workers.

In terms of equipment, using tools designed for the muscle power of an adult can have hazardous consequences. Often times, children operate heavy equipment unsupervised and without adequate training beforehand. Children who work in the fields also used dangerous tools like sharp knives to perform their duties.

Like other farm workers, at that time children experienced heat-related conditions from intense sun exposure. This included heat exhaustion, heat stroke, dehydration, and even death. At a young age, they might also be less aware of their body's functions, and thus less able to recognize these conditions when they were occurring.

2.4. Consequences of Child Labor

Child labor was the worst phenomenon during the Industrial Revolution. Workplaces were frequently poorly ventilated, over-crowded, and replete with safety hazards. With the spread of child labor in England, children suffered from harsh, and sometimes deadly, working conditions. As factories increased, the owners of factories, mills and mines needed agile employees who were too young and uneducated to complain about wages and the unfair treatment they repeatedly would endure at the hands of shop owners, managers and supervisors. Children, then, were the ideal type of employee. The types of jobs they often performed were risky and the work hours were grueling. Besides these problems, children were to face a variety of physical dangers - and death - from forced labor.

2.4.1 Injuries and Illnesses

Children contracted scarlet fever, measles and polio from foul water, open drains and unsanitary toilets. Match factories made matches with phosphorous, which rotted children's jaws or teeth. Children who happened to be tardy were punished by carrying weights around their necks; this caused back and neck injuries. Older children often died from coal dust, lung disease, asbestos exposure or cancer. Toxic fumes caused early respiratory disease and tuberculosis. Machinery scalped long hair children or crushed tiny hands. Others died by falling into machines while they slept.

In addition to that, physical injuries and mutilations were caused by badly maintained machinery on farms and in factories, machete accidents in plantations, and any number of hazards encountered in industries such as mining, ceramics and fireworks manufacture. Furthermore, kids were incessantly exposed to roof falls, gas explosions, and drowning in the shafts, As well pesticide poisoning is one of the biggest killers of child laborers; pesticides kill more children than diphtheria, malaria, polio and tetanus combined. The global death toll each year from pesticides is supposed to be approximately 40,000.

Additionally, long-term health problems, such as respiratory disease, asbestosis and a variety of cancers, are common in countries where children are forced to work with dangerous chemicals, in addition to, exhaustion and malnutrition that are a result of employed children performing heavy manual labor, working long hours in unbearable conditions and not earning enough to feed themselves adequately.

Furthermore, children suffered from the first known industrial disease 'chimney sweeps' cancer' caused by the constant irritation of coal tar soot on the naked skin. Sadly there are recorded instances where these climbing boys choked and suffocated to death from inhaling the chimney dust or from getting stuck in the narrow and convoluted chimney flues. Casualties were also frequent as many boys were maimed or killed from falling or from being badly burned.

Besides, living conditions were equally dreadful. These young chimney sweeps would sleep in cellars on bags of soot collected from the chimneys they swept. Over

and over again, the soot would be dumped out of one of these bags and that same bag would then be used as a blanket at night. They were often sickly, rarely bathed, and learned to beg handouts of food and clothing from their customers as all the money they earned went to their masters. The soot they collected was sold to farmers for fertilizer.

2.4.2. Treatment

The treatment of children in factories was habitually cruel and unusual, and the children's safety was generally neglected. The youngest children, who were not old enough to work with the machines, were commonly sent to be assistants to textile workers. The people whom the children served would beat them, verbally abuse them and treated them as slaves, and take no consideration for their safety; which led to growth deficiency is prevalent among working children, who tend to be shorter and lighter than other children; these deficiencies also impact on their adult life.

Working long hours, child laborers are frequently denied a basic school education, normal social interaction, personal development and emotional support from their family. George one of several children who were suffering from the bad and inhuman treatment, he worked as a farm boy under a man who never missed an opportunity to thrash him, no exception to the rule, all poor boys in those days were badly treated even when parents were aware of their children's abuse, poverty often meant they were unable to take any effective action (Edward, 1922, NP).

2.5. Abolition of Child Labor

Great changes took place inside the country of England. The domestic policies supported an abolition of child labor and adapted at the evolution of economy and organization of labor. Between the years of 1750 and 1802, no laws existed to protect children from callous labor conditions. Children as young as five years old worked in factories and mills.

Since child labor climax appeared during the Victorian era, it is not surprising that politicians had been deeply involved in the matter during that period because it became noticeable that protection was needed, in which Mill argued that:

“.... Children should be protected ... from being overworked. Laboring for too many hours in the day, or on work beyond their strength, should not be permitted to them, for if permitted it may always be compelled. Freedom of contract, in the case of children, is but another word for freedom of coercion. Education also, the best which circumstances admit of their receiving, is not a thing which parents or relatives ... should have it in their power to withhold”.(Mill, 1965, p. 95).

2.5.1 Factory Acts

The Factory acts were a series of parliamentary acts passed during the nineteenth century in Britain to deal with the issue of child labor; the aim of this legislation was to regulate and control the circumstances under which children worked. Parliament began investigating child labor. In 1802, the first Factory Act was passed. The government was reluctant to interfere with the freedom of employers and workers to come to their own agreements about wages and working conditions.

2.5.2 Factory Act 1802

The Act 1802 was called “the Health and Morals of Apprentices”. Its promoter was Sir Robert Peel, an MP (and father of the future Prime Minister) who himself was a wealthy factory owner. He was concerned to see that humane standards of treatment were established for the increasing numbers of 'pauper apprentices' employed in factories like his own.

This piece of legislation was the first attempt at reforming working conditions in factories. The Act attempted to legislate for "pauper apprentices" and fixed a maximum twelve hour working day for the children. The basic act was as follows :

- mills must have sufficient windows to ensure a flow of fresh air
- the walls and floor of the mill must be washed regularly
- separate bedrooms must be provided for the two sexes
- there must be no more than two children to a bed
- two suits of clothing must be provided for each child, one to be new each year

- for at least the first four years of their apprenticeship, children must be instructed in reading, writing and arithmetic
- on Sundays, there must be at least an hour's teaching of Christianity, conducted by the local Anglican Minister

Local magistrates had to appoint two inspectors known as visitors to ensure that factories and mills were complying with the Act; one was to be a clergyman and the other a justice of the peace, neither to have any connection with the mill or factory. The visitors had the power to impose fines for non-compliance and the authority to visit at any time of the day to inspect the premises (Humphries, 1980, pp.395-418)

2.5.3. Factory Act 1833

In 1833, the Government passed a Factory Act to improve conditions for children working in factories; the act established criteria for a normal working day in one industry. Young children were working very long hours in workplaces where conditions were often terrible. The basic act was as follows:

- no child workers under nine years of age
- employers must have an age certificate for their child workers
- children of 9-13 years to work no more than nine hours a day
- children of 13-18 years to work no more than 12 hours a day
- children are not to work at night
- two hours schooling each day for children
- four factory inspectors appointed to enforce the law

What made the 1833 Act so important was that it established a system to ensure that regulations were enforced. A small, four-man 'inspectorate of factories' was created, responsible to the Home Office, with powers to impose penalties for infringements in addition to the inspectors produced reports of their visits to individual factories and these were a valuable source of information about child labor .

In the same line of thought, the 1833 Act was a pioneering piece of legislation, and set the pace for further reform. This did, however, prove a difficult process as many employers found ways to evade the new regulations. In 1844, Parliament passed a further Factories Act which in effect was the first health and safety act in Britain. All dangerous machinery was to be securely fenced off, and failure to do so regarded as a criminal offence. No child or young person was to clean mill machinery while it was in motion. The Act limited the hours worked by children to six and a half, with three hours' schooling, and set a maximum 12-hour day for young people between 13 and 18. The 12-hour rule also applied to women.

2.5.4. Chimney Sweeps Act

In 1834, The Chimney Sweeps Act was passed outlawing the apprenticing of any child below the age of ten. Furthermore, no child was to be actually engaged in cleaning chimneys under the age of 14. In 1875, a successful solution was implemented by the Chimney Sweepers' Act which required sweeps to be licensed and made it the duty of the police to enforce all previous legislation. This new act imposed a 10 fine on the defaulters. This act had a great impact in preventing the vice of chimney sweeps

As time passed, the use of chimneys and chimney sweeps declined. Modern heating systems replaced the old chimneys and modern professions replaced the chimney sweepers. (Victorian-Era.org).

2.6. Conclusion

The present chapter has tried to investigate the issues of child labor during the Victorian age, and the reasons behind the spread of this phenomenon at that period. Therefore, the chapter also exposes the main jobs accomplished by children, as well as the major consequences which resulted from this issue. At last, it should be noted that the resulting outcomes were harmful which pushed the government to set up severe rules in order to alleviate and reduce these dangerous effects on young children.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The 19th century witnessed many changes as a result of the Industrial Revolution; which therefore led to the great progress of England in every field. On the other side, the industrial revolution caused many problems such as child labor and poverty, and this led to a significant discrepancy between social classes.

In fact, child labor typically means the employment of children in any manual work with or without payment. Child labor is not only limited to England, as it also happens to be a global phenomenon. This practice deprives children of their childhood, and is harmful to their physical and mental development. In which poverty is considered to be the key causes of child labor, but unfortunately children as young as age seven were lodged in dormitories and worked in shifts, 12 hours at a time, day and night; they mainly worked in agriculture, home-based assembly operations, factories, and mining and in services such as servants.

Besides, factories and machines were built to accommodate the demands of a growing population; along with industrialization came to the practice of child labor in which young children were forced to work because of their family's poor economic conditions. Many jobs were available to these kids who were paid very little and often worked in unfavorable conditions.

Through the present research work, it can be clearly noticed that child labor was a social phenomenon spread in the Victorian society and as the era ended, lawmakers began creating laws protecting children from exploitation. Among these laws it is worth mentioning the Factory Act of 1802 and the Factory Act of 1833 and others in order to reduce and minimize the heavy impact of this issue and offer good and suitable living conditions for young children.

Child labor was an evil during the Victorian age that permanently damaged the bodies and souls of many children because of the hazardous jobs that they accomplished at that time and the bad working condition. By the end of the nineteenth century, the numbers of child laborers in England peaked. Child labor began to decline as the labor and reform movements grew and labor standards in general started

improving, increasing the political power of working people and other social reformers to demand legislation regulating child labor.

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