

Technology changes in 1850-1900s

Technology



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The American economy has boosted, in such a way where positive and negative impacts can reflect on how the society is handled and seen as. New political ideas and inventions come to place, and our economy starts to shift and handle bigger changes. As a result, America used and developed new customs to help progress and grow to our necessities. One of the greatest impacts of technological inventions was the railroad. Railroads were the nation's first "big business" and was a source of rapid transportation. Resources needed to build the nationwide network of railroads led to growth in other industries, for example, the coal and steel network.

By making the technological changes, it increased and branched off into new jobs and products. For example, the railroads allowed farmers to sell their crops to a larger market, yet the railroads were more powerful than individual farmers or farm collectives. They were able to charge the farmers large fees, expenses that farmers barely had enough to cover, in order to transport their goods throughout the expansive country. Much of the technology was either expensive and/or needed large spaces to work effectively and sufficiently.

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In order to promote western expansion, the federal government provided railroad companies with huge subsidies in the form of loans and land grants. Around 80 companies received over 170 million acres of public land and the railroad companies received more than three times the land given away by the Homestead Act. This was when they were offering 160 acres of land free to any citizen who was head of the household. This expanded land ownership

and attracted foreigners to settle in these areas. Another huge invention which impacted the lives of people communicating across the country.

This invention was called the Telegraph, created by Samuel Morse in 1844. By 1900 telegraph lines linked all continents in a global network of cables. This helped the communication travel around and when wars struck, they were able to stay in contact. The invention of the telegraph branched off to a new invention of the telephone, invented by Alexander Graham Bell in 1876. It opened the way for a worldwide communications network. The economic ideas of Laissez-faire capitalism and Social Darwinism, contributed to the rapid industrialization of the late 1800's.

Economists found in Social Darwinism, a way to justify the doctrine of laissez faire. Laissez-faire capitalism argued that business should not be regulated by the government and that they should be regulated by supply and demand. They would also offer goods at low prices and out of their self-interest. In the 1880's trusts and monopolies started to undercut the natural regulation of the market. The second economic idea of Social Darwinism was based on Darwin's theory of natural selection. This theory of natural selection and survival applied to the standards of the business world.