

Identify the issues  
raised by the growth  
of manchester essay  
sample



Great Britain was the marquee nation during the Industrial Revolution and accordingly so, Manchester became one of the leading textile centers of the world. This proliferation was accompanied by a huge influx of population which would lead to issues ranging from those of aesthetics and environmental issues to the increasing harshness of the populace's lives. While bystanders contend that the laborers lived in dreadful conditions, those benefitting from the industrialization naturally assert that the public welfare is not declining.

One of the most obvious negative effects on Manchester's state as a whole was the decline of aesthetic value, and the increase of pollution, which resulted from the pervading textile industry. Often, outsiders would be appalled at the sad state of the city's residences: the smoke-blackened houses and towering, lifeless buildings. For those who were educated and involved in examining the effects of widespread pollution and squalor, Manchester was an even blacker place. Edwin Chadwick, a public health reformer, described the bad ventilation, overcrowding, and general decomposition of the area.

The whole of a labor-intensive town was thick with filth and grime, which served only to weaken the populace in areas such as education, pleasure, and overall health. However, in a preface to a business directory by Wheelan and Co., Manchester is set forth in a positive light, having "remarkable and attractive features." Sadly, it is not difficult to explain the disparity between the comments of Wheelan and Co. and the majority of the other opinions. Being a business enterprise, it is in the interest of the company to put an

encouraging shine on the state of things or else the company could very well flounder.

The prevailing squalor in Manchester led not only to pollution, but also to an upsurge in new and horrific maladies. Cramped, overcrowded living spaces meant that diseases spread without cease, with simple illnesses becoming like sweeping pandemics. Edwin Chadwick posited that the death toll due to the poor living conditions was greater than that held by the wars of the time. However Thomas B. Macauley, a member of parliament, stated that the welfare of citizens is improving because of “ the increase in national wealth which the manufacturing system has produced.” Unfortunately, this is most likely a biased lie because government officials were often apt to place wealth over public welfare. In a similar tone, William Alexander Abram writes in a journal article that “ the sickness and mortality have been reduced to an extent that is almost incredible,” probably in hopes for the approval of the government. However, this statement is contradicted by Thomas Wakley’s article in *The Lancet*, which shows the average age at death of urban citizens to be profoundly lower than that of rural peasants.

It is understandable that as the living conditions of a population decline, so too will their morale. Even casual observers such as a French visitor or an actress could see that the people of Manchester were drained and somber. Great crowds of people toil and shuffle through the streets in autonomous fashion, seeking no interest or pleasure in their surroundings. Leisure seems alien, and it is apparent that every man regards himself as solitary, alone against forces greater than himself. As the poet Robert Southey said, the state in which men worked was enough to sap even the love of God from

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their hearts in a period when religion played a huge role. However, little blame can be foisted upon these men for their lack of aspirations to higher pursuits; it is the fault of the conditions they must place themselves within in order to merely subsist. Flora Tristan, a socialist and women's rights advocate, claims that "the comfort and welfare of the workers have never entered the builder's head." Since the majority of factory workers were men, it is remarkable that women's rights advocate would dedicate such feeling and passion to the cause of men in her journal unless the conditions of the male workers were truly horrific.

Hence, Manchester's growth was a rather grim time indeed; production came at the cost of life, development at the cost of aesthetic value, and efficiency at the cost of morality. Any unbiased witness would agree that the urbanization sacrificed humanity for tangible commodities.

#### References:

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