Industrialization and Pollution during the 18th And 19th Century

Before industrialization, most of the British nationals were mainly farmers who reared crops and livestock. However, the scale of production was relatively low, and therefore, farming was done on small pieces of land. Industrialization which started during the early 18th century saw an increase in the country’s population by 30 million people (Janković 468; Lenton, Pichler and Weisz, 16). It is attributed to the improved living standards of people. The industrial revolution first occurred in England which can be explained by the great wealth that the empires that existed in the country possessed (Allen, 87). One of the long term effects of industrialization in England in the 19th century is pollution (Lenton, Pichler and Weisz, 25). It is straightforward that air and water pollution were the leading in England, a country that colonized almost the whole world nations ranging from The United States of America to African nations (Janković, 468). Therefore, it had a rich source of raw materials. Moreover, the country had a robust and established political system. Coal, the largest source of energy of the steam engine gave rise to thick clouds of smog that hung dangerously on many urban centres where industrialization was at its peak (Lenton, Pichler and Weisz, 31). Pollution was realized for the first time in the 19th century when scientists experimented the hair of their fellow earlier
scientists, for example, Dr. Isaac Newton and Napoleon Bonaparte (Allen, 78). Consequently, the results of the analysis indicated high levels of lead and Mercury, one the most toxic chemicals ever known. Therefore, industrialization in England came with its air, water and land pollution in the country.

Although the British were aware of the soot that hung over their major industrial cities, they did not predict the infection it will have in the 21st century since during the 18th and 19th century the pollution was not widespread. Moreover, it never dawned on them that there will be excess use of fossil fuels and coal which would be depleted or have a significant environmental effect. The industrialization of the 19th and 18th century resulted in people depending on carbon fuels (Lenton, Pichler and Weisz 52). Consequently, countries all over the world have created policies directed toward environmental sustainability to reduce the number of carbon sources of energy used, and therefore, a substantial penalty has been set for parties that engage in producing carbon sources of energy (Janković, 376). The developing world and growing economies are currently the largest affected by pollution due to striving to make their countries wealthier. However, by 1990s, the impact of air pollution had started being well-set, and mid-1990s media campaigns started creating public awareness of the air pollution and its estimated global climate effect. Currently, it is predicted that that air pollution has reached the limits and this can lead to significant health effects to both human and animal life (Lenton, Pichler and Weisz, 49).

Notably, the world temperatures in the dry areas are becoming unbearable, and the wet areas are becoming more humid a concept commonly referred to as global warming.

Industrialization not only polluted the air of major cities, but also the water was unfit for human and animal consumption. In fact, according to research, the salmon were rarely available on the upper stream side of River Thames near the London Bridge by the year 1833.
The building and construction act of the major cities improved sanitation but by directing the dirt to major rivers serving the country. Consequently, research suggests that fish could not survive in the River Thames (Sinha, 540). Surprisingly, people still used water from the rivers for drinking and other domestic chores. As a result, major outbreaks of cholera occurred in the country between the year 1831 and 1836 (Lenton, Pichler and Weisz, 33). Pollution continued to be a common menace in the country as more industries were set up. This issue was never tabled in any platform until the late 20th century. The first Salmon is reported to appear in the River Thames in the year 1994. In the year 1960, people started recognizing the ugly sites that were left behind by these factories (Sinha, 421). Moreover, the Wastes were either dumped into the rivers or burnt. Most of the dangerous chemicals found their way into the underground water sources such as springs. Notably, the chemicals such as lead and mercury entered human’s food chain either through the animals that drank the water or food that was cooked by the water from the contaminated rivers.

Deforestation and land clearance are the first effects of Industrialization in England. To create room for the building of the industries land was cleared. Moreover, cutting down of all vegetative material was necessary to provide building materials. After the industries had been set up, more people were bound to settle around those areas. Consequently, more vegetation had to be cleared to create space for the creation of houses for the population. Transport systems such as railways to transport raw materials and finished products had to find a way in the industrialized areas. In most instances, the trees which were cut had matured over a much extended period. It is worth noting, therefore, that the trees held the soil particles together and prevented its movement. As result of cutting down of the trees, landslides, and floods downstream was the order of the day (Sinha, 400).
The history of Industrialization and pollution serve as a rich source of information not only to England but the entire world. Developing nations whose main agenda is to be industrialized should learn a lesson from what happened in England (air, water, and land pollution). For example, the leadership of the country realized that water pollution from the industries was detrimental. Therefore, the country laid down measures to make cleaning up of the river. Machines for the cleaning of River Thames were built. Currently, the River has the lowest levels of water pollution which are significant achievement. Therefore, countries should set policies regarding industrialization and environmental sustainability since many people depend on these natural resources. Most of the environmental risks the world is facing today are because of failure to learn from the mistakes done in the past. Therefore, the history Industrialization in England in the 18th and 19th century serves to tell us how industrialization can be a disaster if it is not well managed.
Works Cited


