

Quadrant II – Notes

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Unit: II -USA as a Global Power

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Module No: 4

Name of the Presenter: Mrs. Leila Ribeiro

Agriculture and Industry in the USA

Great changes occurred in agriculture during the 19th century. Factors responsible for this agricultural revolution were the following:

Mechanization- It became more commercialized, there was regional specialization. Another factor was westward expansion where millions of settlers settled in the west which were farming regions, and brought more lands under cultivation. Government support was a very important factor. Government passed several acts. Also, the Department of Agriculture was set up. So tremendous help was given by the government to the farmers. Railroads too played a very important role in the agricultural revolution. They helped farmers by bringing for them machinery and taking their products to distant markets. And finally irrigation techniques boosted farming.

As for developments in industry, after the Civil War the industrial revolution gained momentum in the USA.

There were several reasons for economic growth in the USA such as large amount of raw materials, expanding population, influx of immigrants, help given by the government and finally leadership by the nation's leading entrepreneurs namely Carnegie, Rockefeller, Vanderbilt, Morgan.

Some of the characteristics of this economic development:

The emergence of large-scale business enterprise.

There was the development of institutions through which capital was obtained more effectively.

Few corporations acquired monopolies in important branches of manufacturing.

So the major problem was that economic power was now concentrated in the hands of a few.

And at the same time, it was not possible for the government to control these big corporations, as it would destroy private enterprise.