



VICTORIAN PERIOD IN THE UK

LECTURE 8

Plan

- 1. The Queens' Victoria Personal Life.**
- 2. The Irish Famine.**
- 3. War, Rebellion and Politics in Victorian era.**
- 4. Growth of the Empire.**
- 5. An Age of Science.**
- 6. Social Changes.**
- 7. Education and Language.**



The Queens' Victoria Personal Life

- Victorian period (1837-1901),
- was the only daughter of Edward, Duke of Kent, fourth son of George III,
- became heir to the throne because her three uncles had no children who survived,
- In 1837 was crowned at the age of 18 (Hanover dynasty),
- in 1840, married her German cousin Albert (became a Saxe-Coburg),
- was deeply in love with her husband and their marriage was blessed with 9 children,
- Became a widow at 42, sank into depression, was nicknamed “the Widow of Windsor”.

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The Irish Famine

1845 -1846

Reasons:

- ✓ potato was exported to enrich landlords,
- ✓ 8 million Irish population survived almost entirely on potatoes,
- ✓ blight (disease) ruined the potato crop in 1845 -1846

Causes:

- ✓ killed almost one million Irish people,
- ✓ one million more emigrated to America, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Britain.

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The Irish Famine

What was done to help?

- allowed the import of cheap corn from America, but it came too late to save people,
- 1849, Queen Victoria visited Ireland – negative reaction – “Famine Queen”,
- Queen Victoria personally donated £5,000 (a very substantial sum in those days),
- Queen Victoria involved in many charities.

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The Crimean War

The Crimean War (1854 – 1856), the fighting took place in Crimea

The sides of the military conflict:

- the Russian Empire,
- an alliance of Britain, France, the Ottoman Empire (Turkey),

Reasons of war:

- Russian army invaded a part of the Ottoman Empire that is now part of Romania.
- Turkey declared war on Russia.
- Britain and France feared that if Russia was not stopped, it would win control of the Balkans and declared war on Russia.

Causes:

- ✓ the Russians lost, in March 1856 a peace treaty was signed,
- ✓ Your Date Here bitter cold, disease, and battle wounds took many soldiers lives.

The Crimean War

The nurse Florence Nightingale “Lady with the Lamp”:

- ✓ took care of the soldiers,
- ✓ introduced modern nursing and sanitation practices,
- ✓ saved many lives.

The queen Victoria:

- ✓ organized relief efforts (knitted socks and mittens),
- ✓ visited soldiers in hospitals.
- ✓ wrote letters to war widows.

Rebellion of Indian soldiers

- rebellion of Indian soldiers in 1857-1859.
- the rebellion was stopped by British troops,
- India came under full control of England,
- queen Victoria proudly announced India as a “jewel of her crown”,
- queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India in 1877.

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The Chartists

The aim of Chartism:

- ✓ to extend democracy to working classes men,
- ✓ to give working classes men the right to vote.

The events:

- According the Reform Act of 1832, the majority of working people had no right vote
- the people's Charter was written in 1838. The main six points of the Charter were:
 - ✓ votes for all adult males;
 - ✓ voting by secret ballot;
 - ✓ elections for Parliament every year;
 - ✓ Mps should be paid a salary and should not have to own property;
 - ✓ all constituencies should be the same size.

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The Chartists

- there were many Chartist demonstrations,
- the petition in 1848 had 6 million signatures of support (the population of Great Britain was only 26.9 million= 20% of population),
- the Parliament didn't agree to Chartists demands
- the movement faded because of weak leadership.

Conclusion:

- ✓ the Chartists failed in the short term,
- ✓ in the long run all their demands (except annual parliaments) were achieved and are part of the UK parliamentary system and democracy today.

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Growth of the Empire

- Queen Victoria was a keen supporter the colonial expansion.
- By the end of Victorian period, Britain had gained more overseas lands than any other nation in history.
- The empire included countries in every continent and islands, in every ocean including colonies in the Caribbean, Canada, Africa, Asia, Australia and the Pacific.
- The empire covered both hemispheres, it was known as **“the empire on which the sun never sets”**

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An Age of Science

Medicine

- ✓ **improving sanitation and cleanliness** (methods were developed by Florence Nightingale),
- ✓ **creating the system of household sewage system** (the engineer Joseph Bazalgette), **street cleaning, building of pavement,**
- ✓ modern hospitals were built,
- ✓ **inventing the world's first vaccine** to prevention of small-pox (Edward Jenner an English doctor). Free vaccination was made available in 1840,
- ✓ **using of painkillers** (in the 1840s, a Scottish doctor Sir James Simpson put patients under chloroform to ease childbirth pains)
- ✓ ***X or Röntgen rays***
- ✓ **developing chemical disinfectants** (In the 1860s doctor Lister). He began to practice antiseptic surgery in Glasgow in 1865.

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An Age of Science

- discovered **stars and planets**; Sir John Herschel, named 250 minor planets, and classified 5,000 clusters of little stars,
- the **discovery of photography**, inventor Fox Talbot, 1834,
- radiant heat**, Professor Tyndall, 1863,
- experiments in electricity**, Sir William Thomson, 1863,
- the first **electric light** flashed over the troubled waters from the South Foreland lighthouse, (December in 1858), though private houses were not lit till 1878.

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An Age of Science

- **study of plant and animal life**, Charles Darwin, in 1859, *The Origin of Species*.

Engineering:

- During the 1840s Roads and railroads appeared, trains became the chief form of transport for passengers, freight, post and newspapers,
- London's underground system (Metropolitan District Railway) - was the world's first, was opened in 1863. The first electric underground opened in 1890.

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Social changes

Upper and middle class

- grew in numbers and had money to spend,
- they built large elaborate houses filled with china, paintings.
- women managed the household, with servants (a cook, a butler and coachman), they didn't have a job, apart from helping charities.
- Employed servants gave more women leisure time to try new sports, such as archery, tennis and croquet.
- Children from wealthy Victorian families saw little of their parents except at tea-time.

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Social changes

Lower class

- The enormous difference between the wealthier Victorians and the poverty of the working class.
- There was virtually no help for the unemployed, sick, old or poor at this time. People either starved, begged in the streets or were sent to the local workhouse.
- Some families were so poor that everyone had to earn what they could.
- Most poor children did not go to school as they were expected to work.
- Children worked in factories, businesses, climbing chimneys, and in mines. The industrial revolution called for a huge labour force and children were cheap to employ.

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Education

Upper class

- got the best education,
- public schools (fee paying, boarding school) such as Eton or Rugby,
- girls were educated at home by governesses (education would harm them), singing, dancing, sewing were more important than academic subjects.

Middle class

- grammar schools (fee-paying, boarding schools).

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Education

Lower class (at the beginning 19 century)

- ✓ charity or church school (a “ragged school”) for the poorest children and orphans,
- ✓ Sunday school (given children a religious education).

Education

Lower class (during Victorian period)

Education for children was reformed completely

A lot of Acts were introduced to regulate or restrict children's employment

- ✓ 1802 forbade children from working more than 12 hours per day and banned children doing night work,
- ✓ 1819 Factories Act restricted children working more than twelve hours per day in cotton mills,
- ✓ 1833 factories Act required that child workers receive two hours schooling each day,
- ✓ In 1891, The Fee Grant Act made elementary education free and compulsory,
- ✓ 1899 Education Act raised the school leaving age to 12.

Education

The Victorian education reforms laid firm foundation stones for the comprehensive state education system that Britain has today.

Though, there was a great opposition:

- ✓ factory owners did not want to lose the cheap labour that children provided.
- ✓ the churches wanted to keep their control over education.
- ✓ the upper classes believed that education would make poor people think and find their lives dissatisfying and revolt against the established order.

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Education

- ✓ **At the beginning of Victoria's reign** children were working in mills, factories, mines, and other establishments doing all types of work.
- ✓ **At the end of the Victorian era** all British children aged between five and twelve **were at school.**

Language

19th century English **borrowed** many words as a result of two main historical factors:

1. the Industrial Revolution, which created new words for things and ideas that had not previously existed;
2. the rise of the British Empire, during which time English adopted many foreign words.

Language

The first group:

- **scientific terms:** *oxygen, protein, nuclear, vaccine, Lens, refraction, electron, chromosome, chloroform, caffeine, centigrade, bacteria, chronometer and claustrophobia, biology, petrology, morphology, histology, laeontology, ethnology, entomology, taxonomy, etc.*
- **the new products, machines and processes:** *train, engine, reservoir, pulley, combustion, piston, hydraulic, condenser, electricity, telephone, telegraph, lithograph, camera, vacuum, cylinder, apparatus, pump, syphon, locomotive, factory, railway, horsepower, typewriter, cityscape, airplane.*

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Language

The second group:

- **Native American words:** *raccoon, opossum, moose, chipmunk, skunk, tomato, squash, hickory, squash, canoe, squaw, papoose, wigwam, moccasin, tomahawk, peace-pipe, pale-face, war-path.*
- **Canadian words:** *hoser, hydro, chesterfield, igloo, anorak, toboggan, canoe, kayak, parka, muskeg, caribou, moose.*

Conclusion

For many people Victorian era was a time of profound change:

- ✓ industrialization,
- ✓ urbanization,
- ✓ new technologies and new scientific discoveries.
- ✓ the General Education Act of 1870 - by which all children in Britain received compulsory and free schooling
- ✓ Education and literacy levels rised.

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