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When Industry Began

By the early 1800s, America had machines and factories. Yet, many things were still made by hand. After the Civil War, things changed. Railroads spread across the nation. Goods could move more easily. Machines became more important.

Inventors created new items. Then, businesses recreated them in great quantities. Bankers lent money to help companies grow. By the 1900s, big businesses sold oil, steel, and cars.

Natural resources played a part, too. Forests provided lumber. Rivers offered water power. Miners brought coal and iron ore out of the ground. These are the materials needed for steel. Steel was used to build machines, bridges, railroad tracks, and cars. Oil from underground was changed in **refineries** (rih-FINE-uh-reez). Then, it could be used to run cars and machines.

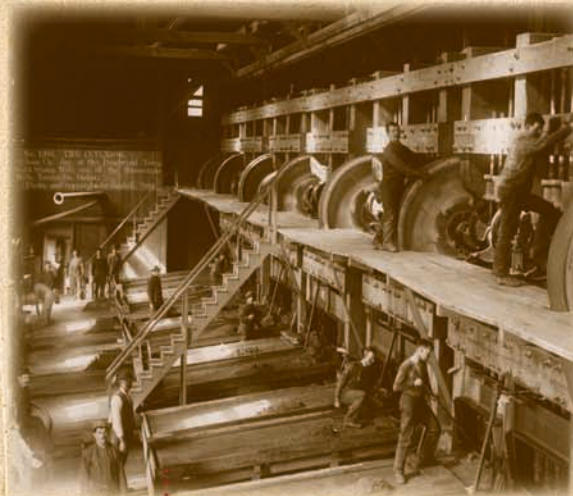
The fastest growth occurred in the North. This change came about because of powerful men. Together they created an **economy** (ih-KAWN-uh-mee) that was the envy of the world.



Men repair steel railroad tracks in 1863.



Lumbermen use a steam locomotive to move huge logs.



In 1888, men work with large machines inside a sawmill.

Fast-Paced Growth

At one time, the United States depended on other countries for goods. By 1890, the country could produce almost everything it needed!

Sweatshops

The rise of factories was not free of problems. Many people, including young children, worked in bad conditions. They had long hours in hot, dirty, and dangerous locations. These places were called **sweatshops**.



A child works in a sweatshop in Virginia.