

Economic Developments in the North: A Commercial Revolution

Economies

- The differences in the economies of North and South became sharper as the West took over food production and the South became more dependent on slaves and cash crops, while the Northeast focused its efforts on industrialization.

Industrialization

- Allowed the Northern factories to grow and become profitable.
- Allowed Western farmers to become more productive with inventions like the steel plow, the mechanical reaper, the threshing machine.
- South benefited from the Eli Whitney's cotton gin but did not embrace the other changes.

Factories

- The factory system spread from New England textile mills to other businesses, and a series of inventors and innovators helped revolutionize America, especially in the North.
- **Francis Lowell** opened a textile factory in Massachusetts and transformed the workforce by hiring females. Lowell's factory girls were predominantly young, single girls from nearby farms who were supervised by strict matrons and housed in chaperoned dormitories.

Population Growth

- The nation's total population grew by about a third, the population of towns and cities of 8,000 or more increased by 90%.
- In 1860 one in seven Americans lived in a city.
- Rapid growth caused issues in cities.