

E-Learning Study Material
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The Social Effects of The MEIJI

RESTORATION in Japan:-

In Japan in 1853, only 3% of the national population was receiving a formal Education. The Farmers, tradesmen and Soldiers received their own specific training, but no formal education. By 1878, however 25% were by 1885, 42% and 1897, 95% were receiving some formal Education, at least at the primary level which would be equal to our elementary schools. This had a great effect on Japan because with these educated people, it was then possible for Japan to rapidly manufacture steel and iron and rubber

production and train people to grow more food with the aid of new farm tractors. Because of this last innovation, the Japanese people ate better and became healthier.

Eventually, their population skyrocketed and Japan became a very crowded chain of islands. To reduce this crowding and to search for supply of raw materials Japan began to look for new lands to expand into. With their new modern weapons and methods, they began to build an empire in Asia.

The Emperor MEIJI knew that for Japan to be successful her modernization effort she would have to copy western ways. Here are some ~~exam~~ examples:

(a) The government also built model factories in Steel, Cement, Plate Glass, Fire Brick, woolen textiles, and ~~Spinning~~ Spinning Industries. They were set up on a profit-making basis but with the primary aim of introducing European production methods and techniques into Japan.

(b) Reforms in other fields were far reaching: Education was made compulsory, all restrictions were lifted on Japanese going abroad. Christianity was permitted, vaccinations, postal service, telegraphs and steamships were introduced, torture was abolished. European dress was prescribed for officials (with the Emperor showing the way by adopting Western military dress) ~~and~~ and European and American advisors were freely employed.

The Meiji reforms brought great changes both within Japan and in Japan's place in world affairs. Japan strengthened itself enough to remain a sovereign nation in the face of Western colonizing powers and indeed became a colonizing power itself. During the Taisho period (1912-1945) Japanese citizens began to ask for more voice in the government and for more social freedoms. During this time, Japanese society and the Japanese political system were significantly more open than they were ~~either~~ either before or after. The ~~same~~ period has often been called the period of "Taisho Democracy."