Name: _____ Date: _____

Weavers, Iron Smelters and Factory Owners

Q1. Why did the Indian iron smelting industry decline in the nineteenth century?

Ans. _____

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Q1. Why did the Indian iron smelting industry decline in the nineteenth century?

Ans. Indian iron smelting industry began to decline in the nineteenth century due to the following reasons:

i. The new forest law colonial government prevented people from entering the reserved forests. Thus, the iron smelters were not able to find wood for charcoal and iron ore for producing iron.

ii. Defying forest laws, they often entered the forests secretly and collected wood, but they could not sustain their occupation on this basis for long. Many gave up their craft and looked for other means of livelihood.

iii. In some areas the government did grant access to the forest. But the iron smelters had to pay a very high tax to the forest department for every furnace they used. This reduced their income.

iv. Moreover, by the late nineteenth century iron and steel was being imported from Britain. Ironsmiths in India began using the imported iron to manufacture utensils and implements. This inevitably lowered the demand for iron produced by local smelters.

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