VUS 8a notes– continued. IMMIGRATION

**Terms:**

Ellis Island-

Assimilation-

Melting pot-

Chinese Exclusion Act-

Immigration Restriction Act-

Immigration

* Prior to 1871, most immigrants came from northern and western Europe (Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Norway, and Sweden). From 1871 until 1921, most immigrants came from southern and eastern Europe (Italy, Greece, Poland, Russia, present-day Hungary, and former Yugoslavia), as well as Asia (China and Japan).

Like earlier immigrants, these immigrants came to America seeking freedom and better lives for their families.

* Immigrants made valuable contributions to the dramatic industrial growth. Chinese workers helped to build the Transcontinental Railroad. Immigrants worked in textile and steel mills in the Northeast and the clothing industry in New York City. Slavs, Italians, and Poles worked in the coal mines of the East. They often worked for very low pay and endured dangerous working conditions to help build the nation’s industrial strength.
* During this period, immigrants from Europe entered America through Ellis Island in New York harbor. Their first view of America was the Statue of Liberty, following the voyage across the Atlantic.
* Immigrants began the process of assimilation into American “melting pot.” While often settling in ethnic neighborhoods in the growing cities, worked hard to learn English, adopt American customs, and become American citizens. The public schools served an essential role in the process of assimilation.
* Despite the valuable contributions, immigrants often faced hardship and hostility. -Resentment that immigrants would take jobs for lower pay than American workers would accept, & prejudice based on religious and cultural differences.

Mounting resentment led Congress to limit immigration through the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the Immigration Restriction Act of 1921. These laws effectively cut off most immigration to America for the next several decades; however, the immigrants of this period and their descendants continued to contribute immeasurably to American society.

Growth of cities

* As the nation’s industrial growth continued, cities such as Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and New York grew rapidly as manufacturing and transportation centers. Factories in the large cities provided jobs, but workers’ families often lived in harsh conditions, crowded into tenements and slums.
* The rapid growth of cities caused housing shortages and the need for new public services, such as sewage and water systems and public transportation. New York City was the first city to begin construction of a subway system around the turn of the twentieth century, and many cities built trolley or streetcar lines.

Admission of new states

As the population moved westward, many new states in the Great Plains and Rocky Mountains regions were added to the United States. By the early twentieth century, all the states that make up the continental United States today, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, had been admitted.