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HOW TO COMPETE WITH FOREIGN CLOTH

A Study of the Position of Hand-Spinning,
Hand-Weaving, and Cotton Mills in the
Economics of Cloth-production in India.

By

M. P. GANDHI, M.A., F.R.Econ.S., F.S.S.

Secretary, Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta ; Secretary,
International Chamber of Commerce, Indian
National Committee, 1929-31, Joint Secretary,
Swadeshi Prachar Samiti, Calcutta.

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- (5) Messrs. G. A. Natesan & Co.,
George Town,
Madras.
- (6) M. P. Gandhi, Esq.,
c/o, Indian Chamber of Commerce,
135, Canning Street, Calcutta.

Foreword by Sir P. C. RAY

This monograph on the Position of Hand-spinning, Hand-weaving, and Cotton Mills in the Economics of Cloth Production in India is a very opportune publication, and I congratulate its painstaking author who is intimately connected with various Commercial Organisations for indicating in a very clear, lucid and convincing manner, the methods of combating the foreign cloth evil by producing the cloth required, from internal sources. The author has made a strong appeal to the hand-loom weavers to take increasingly to the use of hand-spun yarn, for the manufacture of their products, and to the mills for engaging themselves in the production of finer fabrics, in order to replace similar foreign goods, and to the people to put a restraint on their fastidiousness in taste, and to patronize *Khaddar*, i.e., hand-woven cloth made out of hand-spun yarn, even at a sacrifice of taste, convenience, and money, and where that is not possible to use cloth made by Indian mills.

The author has had the rare fortune of having the proofs of his book gone through by Mahatma Gandhi, and it will be considerable satisfaction to the public to know that the book has met with the general

approval of Mahatmaji. I am also glad to find that he has incorporated some suggestions made by Mahatmaji and thus made his book more useful and authoritative.

The author has rightly laid considerable stress on the importance of hand-spinning and hand-weaving and I entirely endorse his observation that a spinning wheel in every home and a group of hand-looms in every village should be the formula of the new dispensation in India. I also trust that the Nationalist Government will encourage hand-loom weaving in the manner which he has suggested and which has met with the approval of Mahatmaji *viz.*, that there should be a prohibitive tariff duty on imports of foreign cloth, and that the Indian mills should be precluded, by legislation if necessary, from engaging themselves in the production of certain kinds of cloth which will be the speciality of hand-looms. In *Swadeshi* lies the emancipation of the country and I fervently trust that none of my countrymen will use any *Bideshi* cloth in the future.

I must also invite the attention of the reader to the very interesting and up-to-date statistics compiled by the author and to Appendix No. I containing an estimate of the *per capita* expenditure on cloth, and to Appendix No. II giving in a very telling

(iii)

manner, the landmarks of the policy of the British Government in regard to the Indian cotton industry, which has brought about its decline.

I have great pleasure in commending Mr. M. P. Gandhi's useful and ably written monograph, to the attention of the public and I hope it will meet with the appreciation it deserves.

P. C. RAY

University College of Science,
Calcutta.

The 6th February, 1931.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

Encouraged by the very favourable response and appreciation that my last monograph on "The Indian Cotton Textile Industry—its past, present and future" met with from the public and the press in India, in Great Britain and in other countries, I have ventured to publish this monograph on the "Position of Hand-spinning, Hand-weaving and the Cotton mills in the Economics of Cloth Production in India". I am placing it before the public at a time when the question of making India self-sufficient in respect of the supply of cloth required by her is engaging the serious attention of the public. The *Swadeshi* movement is one of the chief items in the present political movement for the attainment of *Swaraj* launched under the auspices of the Indian National Congress by Mahatma Gandhi, the greatest living person in the world.

I must acknowledge here my deep gratefulness to Mahatma Gandhi for having gone through the proofs of this book and for making several valuable suggestions, some of which I have been able to incorporate in this book. I must also mention here that the present attractive and appropriate title of the book "How to Compete with Foreign Cloth" was suggested by Mahatma Gandhi.

Almost all the information in the book is brought up-to-date, and is based on the latest books, publications, reports and other literature to which I had easy access in the excellent and well-equipped library of the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta. I must also express my thanks to my friend Mr. T. Maloney, Secretary of the Bombay Millowners' Association for supplying me with much useful information on the subject at all times.

My efforts will have been amply rewarded if the publication of this monograph at this juncture is successful in the appeal I have made to the people to extend their patronage to *Swadeshi* cloth in general and to *Khaddar*, i.e., hand-woven cloth made out of hand-spun yarn, in particular, with a view to provide a suitable supplementary occupation, viz., spinning, to a large section of the people, who have periods of enforced idleness extending to six months in a year. The provision of such a suitable supplementary occupation will increase the purchasing power of the masses and ensure them a better standard of living. Even apart from considerations of philanthropy, raising the standard of living of the masses is a business proposition in as much as it will bring about the prosperity of the various industries not only of this country but of the whole world.

I trust that those who have the welfare of the country at heart will co-operate in extending their

patronage to cloth made inside the country in order to substitute the foreign imports of cloth and yarn and thus to help in retaining inside the country the large sum of money which is exported at present for providing the people of India with clothing.

I need hardly observe that the views expressed in this monograph are my own and have no necessary connection with any of the Associations with which I am connected.

135, Canning Street,
Calcutta.
The 15th February 1931.

} M. P. GANDHI

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A SHORT LIST OF COMMON INDIAN WORDS.

Titles of Reverence and Respect.

WORD	MEANING
Mahatma or Mahatmaji ...	A title of Gandhi—meaning “Great Soul”

Terms regarding Hand-spinning and Hand-weaving.

Charkha ...	... The spinning wheel.
Takli ...	... A small portable instrument for spinning. It can be manipulated with the thumb and the fore-finger and is so small that it can be carried in a pocket without inconvenience.
Muslin ...	... A cotton fabric of exquisite fineness of texture and light weight produced at Dacca in former times. Some idea of the fineness of the cloth may be gathered from the fact that a whole piece, 20 yards long by 1 yard wide, could be passed through the aperture of an ordinary sized finger ring— <i>Glossary of terms relating to hand-made cotton fabrics, published by the Department of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, India—1930.</i>

Political Terms.

Swadeshi ...	... Belonging to, or made in, one's own country.
Bideshi ...	... Belonging to, or made in, foreign countries.
Swaraj ...	... Self-Government.

Indian Coinage.

Anna	...	...	Very slightly more than one penny. $\frac{1}{8}$ of a rupee.
Rupee	...	...	About one shilling six pence.
Lakh	...	...	About seven thousand five hundred pounds sterling.
Crore	About seven hundred fifty thousand pounds sterling.

Numerals.

Lakh	One hundred thousand ; $\frac{1}{10}$ of a million.
Crore	10 millions.

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Capital Paid-up	,, 1,00,00,000
Reserve Fund	,, 90,00,000

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V. Mehta, K.C.S.I., Mr. Paliram Mathradas.

Current Deposit Accounts.

From 25th December to 25th June, interest is allowed at 2½ per cent. on daily balances of Rs. 300 to Rs. 1,00,000. From 25th June to 25th December interest is allowed at 2 per cent. on daily balance. On sums exceeding Rs. 1,00,000 interest is allowed by special arrangement. No interest will be allowed which does not amount to Rs. 3 per half-year.

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Capital Paid up	„ 30,00,000
Reserve Fund	„ 24,15,000

Directors :

Sir Lalubhai Samaldas, Kt., C.I.E. (*Chairman*).

Sheth Durgaprasad Shambhuprasad Laekari (Mill Agent, Ahmedabad).

Bhaskarrao V. Mehta, Esq., M.A., LL.B. (Bhavnagar).

Maganlal H. Kantavala, Esq., M.A. (Agent, The Maharaja Mills Co., Ltd., Baroda).

R. B. Govindhbhai Hathibhai Desai, Late Naib Dewan, Baroda ; Sheth Pransukhbhai Mafatlal of the Shorrock Mills, Ltd., Ahmedabad ; Mr. Manilal B. Nanavati, B.A., LL.B., M.A. (Penn.), Sar Suba, Baroda State, Baroda, and Raj Ratna Bhaillal Dajibhai, Amin, B.A., M.S.C.I. (Managing Agent, Alembic Chemical Works, Ltd.), Baroda.

Current Deposit Accounts.

With effect from 1st October, 1926, interest on daily balances from Rs. 300 to Rs. 1,00,000 will be at 2½ per cent. from 1st January to 30th June, and at 2 per cent. from 1st July to 31st December, and on sums over Rs. 1,00,000 by special arrangement. No interest which does not come to Rs. 3 per half-year will be allowed.

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